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Title: A Body of Divinity

Creator(s): Watson, Thomas d. 1686

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CCEL Subjects: All; Sermons; Creeds; Theology

LC Call no: BX9184.A5 W32

LC Subjects:

Christian Denominations

Protestantism

Post-Reformation

Other Protestant denominations

Presbyterianism. Calvinistic Methodism

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A Body of Divinity

Contained In Sermons Upon The Westminster Assembly's Catechism

By Thomas Watson

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Brief Memoir Of Thomas Watson

Compiled by C. H. Spurgeon

Thomas Watson's Body of Practical Divinity is one of the most precious

of the peerless works of the Puritans; and those best acquainted with

it prize it most. Watson was one of the most concise, racy,

illustrative, and suggestive of those eminent divines who made the

Puritan age the Augustan period of evangelical literature. There is a

happy union of sound doctrine, heart-searching experience and practical

wisdom throughout all his works, and his Body of Divinity is, beyond

all the rest, useful to the student and the minister. Although Thomas

Watson issued several most valuable books, comparatively little is

known of him - even the dates of his birth and death are unknown. His

writings are his best memorial; perhaps he needed no other, and

therefore providence forbade the superfluity. We shall not attempt to

discover his pedigree, and, after the manner of antiquarians, derive

his family from a certain famous Wat, whose son distinguished himself

in the Crusades, or in some other insane enterprise; whether blue blood

was in his veins or no is of small consequence, since we know that he

was the seed-royal of the redeemed of the Lord. Some men are their own

ancestors, and, for ought we know, Thomas Watson's genealogy reflected

no fame upon him, but derived all its lustre from his achievements. He

had the happiness to be educated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, which

in those days deserved to be called the School of Saints, the nursing

mother of gigantic evangelical divines. In Kennet's Register and

Chronicle,' is a list of eighty-seven names of Puritan ministers,

including many well-known and loved as preachers and commentators; such

as Anth. Burgess, W. Jenkyn, Ralph Venning, Thomas Brooks, T. White,

Samuel Slater, Thomas Watson, John Rowe, Dr. W. Bates, Stephen

Charnock, Samuel Clarke, Nathaniel Vincent, Dr John Collings, William

Bridge, Samuel Hildersam, Adoniram Bifield, followed by this remark,

These are most of them mentioned in the list of sufferers for

Nonconformity, and appear upon the registers to have been all of

Emmanuel College, beside great numbers, no doubt of the same society,

who were forward preachers up of the unhappy changes of 1641,' etc. In

the margin of the book is the following observation on the foregoing:

It may not be improper to observe how much young students, in both

Universities, fell in with the prejudices of their governors and

tutors. This was the reason that this single College of Emmanuel, in

Cambridge, bred more of the Puritans and Nonconformists than perhaps

any seven of the other Colleges or Halls in either University." Such a

fact as this should attract the prayers of all believers to our

seminaries for the sons of the prophets, since upon the manner in which

these institutions are conducted will depend under God the future

well-being of our churches. The Pastors, College, for the use of whose

students this work is published, earnestly petitions for a place in the

intercessions of the saints.

We are not at all surprised to learn that Thomas Watson enjoyed the

repute, while at Cambridge, of being a most laborious student; the

great Puritanic authors must have been most industrious workers at the

university, or they never would have become such pre-eminent masters in

Israel. The conscientious student is the most likely man to become a

successful preacher. After completing his course with honour, Watson

became rector of St Stephen's, Walbrook, where in the very heart of

London he executed for nearly sixteen years the office of a faithful

pastor with great diligence and assiduity. Happy were the citizens who

regularly attended so instructive and spiritual a ministry. The church

was constantly filled, for the fame and popularity of the preacher were

deservedly great. Going in and out among his flock, fired with holy

zeal for their eternal welfare, his years rolled on pleasantly enough

amid the growing respect of all who knew him. Calamy, in his

Nonconformist Memorial, says of him: - He was so well known in the city

for his piety and usefulness, that though he was singled out by the

Friendly Debate, he yet carried a general respect from all sober

persons along with him to his grave. He was a man of considerable

reaming, a popular, but judicious preacher (if one may judge from his

writings), and eminent in the gift of prayer. Of this, the following

anecdote is a sufficient proof. Once on a lecture day, before the

Bartholomew Act took place, the learned Bishop Richardson came to hear

him at St Stephen's, who was much pleased with his sermon, but

especially with his prayer after it, so that he followed him home to

give him thanks, and earnestly desired a copy of his prayer. "Alas!"

(said Mr Watson) "that is what I cannot give, for I do not use to pen

my prayers; it was no studied thing, but uttered, pro re nata, as God

enabled me, from the abundance of my heart and affections." Upon which

the good Bishop went away wondering that any man could pray in that

manner extempore.

But the hand which of old had oppressed the church was again stretched

forth to vex certain of the saints. The most learned, holy, and zealous

of the clergy of the Church of England found that the Act of Uniformity

would not allow them to preserve a clean conscience and retain their

livings, and therefore they submitted to the loss of all things for

Christ's sake. Thomas Watson did not hesitate as to the course he

should pursue. He was not a factious hater of royalty, a red

republican, or fifth monarchy-man; in fact, he had in Cromwell's day

been all too loyal to the house of Stuart; he had protested against the

execution of the King, and had joined in Love's plot for the bringing

in of Charles II; yet all this availed nothing, he was a Puritan, and

therefore must not be tolerated by the bitter spirits then dominant in

the Establishment. What seeds of discord were sown on that black

Bartholomew history has not had space to record; yet the ultimate

results have been fraught with results scarcely then imaginable.

Comprehension might have hindered truth; the crown rights of King Jesus

might have lacked advocates had monarchs and priests been more

tolerant; as it was good men were forced into a truer position than

they would otherwise have occupied, and the beginning of a real

reformation was inaugurated. From that commencement in suffering what

progress has been made! Every day the cause of the ejected gathers

force and pushes on its adversary towards the brink of the precipice, a

down which all establishments must fall.

With many tears and lamentations the congregation of St Stephen's saw

their shepherd about to be removed from his flock, and with aching

hearts they listened to his parting words. He himself speaking as one

bereaved of his dearest delight, and yet suffering joyfully the loss of

all things, bade them adieu, and went forth not knowing whither he

went.'

In the collection of Farewell Sermons there are three by Mr Watson,

viz.: two delivered August 17th, and the third on the Tuesday

following. The first, preached in the forenoon, is on John 13:34. A new

commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another.' It discovers

much of the spirit of the gospel, particularly in recommending love to

enemies and persecutors. The second, preached in the afternoon, is on 2

Corinthians 7:7. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let

us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit,

perfecting holiness in the fear of God.' In the former part of it, he

insists largely on the ardent affections of a right gospel minister

towards his people.' This head he closes thus: I have now exercised my

ministry among you for almost sixteen years; and I rejoice and bless

God that I cannot say, the more I love you, the less I am loved: I have

received many signal demonstrations of love from you. Though other

parishes have exceeded you in number of houses, yet, I think, none for

strength of affection. I have with much comfort observed your reverent

attention to the word preached; you rejoice in this light, not for a

season, but to this day. I have observed your zeal against error in a

critical time, your unity and amity. This is your honour. If there

should be any interruption in my ministry among you, though I should

not be permitted to preach to you again, yet I shall not cease to love

you, and to pray for you. But why should there be any interruption

made? Where is the crime? Some, indeed, say that we are disloyal and

seditious. Beloved, what my actions and sufferings for his Majesty have

been is known to not a few of you. However, we must go to heaven

through good report and bad report; and it is well if we can get to

glory, though we press through the pikes. I shall endeavour that I may

still approve the sincerity of my love to you. I will not promise that

I shall still preach among you, nor will I say that I shall not. I

desire to be guided by the silver thread of God's word and providence.

My heart is towards you. There is, you know, an expression in the late

Act, "that we shall now shortly be as if we were naturally dead;'' and

if I must die, let me leave some legacy with you. Then follow twenty

admirable directions, well worthy the fervent perusal of every

Christian. He closes them thus: I beseech you treasure them up as so

many jewels in the cabinet of your breasts. Did you carry them about

you, they would be an antidote to keep you from sin, and a means to

preserve the zeal of piety flaming upon the altar of your hearts. I

have many things yet to say to you, but I know not whether God will

give another opportunity. My strength is now almost gone. I beseech

you, let these things make deep impressions on all your souls. Consider

what has been said, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.'

The last discourse, August 19th, is on Isaiah 3:30, 11. Say ye to the

righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit

of their doings. Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him, for the

reward of his hands shall be given him.'

After his ejectment, Watson preached occasionally whenever he could do

so with safety. Fines and imprisonments were insufficient to close the

mouths of the witnesses of Jesus. In barns, kitchens, outhouses, or

dells and woods, the faithful few gathered to hear the message of

eternal life. Those little secret assemblies were doubtless charming

occasions for devout minds: the word of the Lord was precious in those

days. Bread eaten in secret is proverbially sweet, and the word of God

in persecution is peculiarly delightful. Little can we realise the

joyful anticipation which preceded the appointed meetings, or the

lingering memories which clung to them long after they were over. After

the great fire in 1666, when the churches were burned, Mr Watson and

several other Nonconformists fitted up large rooms for those who had an

inclination to attend. Upon the Indulgence, in 1672, he licensed the

great hall in Crosby House, on the east side of Bishopsgatestreet, then

belonging to Sir John Langham (a Nonconformist). It was a happy

circumstance that the worthy baronet favoured the cause of

Nonconformity, and that so noble a chamber was at his disposal. Here

Watson preached for several years. Rev Stephen Charnock, B.D.' became

joint pastor with him at Crosby Hall in 1675, and continued so till his

death in 1680. What two shepherds for the flock! Men of such most

extraordinary gifts and graces were seldom if ever united in one

pastorate. They both attempted a Body of Divinity, and the goodly

volume on the Divine Attributes was Charnock's first stone of a

colossal structure which he was not spared to complete. Our author was

more modest in his attempt and the present volume shows how he

succeeded.

Mr Watson at length returned to Essex, where he died suddenly, in his

closet at prayer, as is supposed, about 1689 or 1690. The time either

of his birth or death is nowhere mentioned.

In the life of Colonel James Gardiner, there is this remarkable

account: In July, 1719, he had spent the evening, which was the

Sabbath, in some gay company, and had an unhappy assignation with a

married lady, whom he was to attend exactly at twelve. The company

broke up about eleven, and he went into his chamber to kill the tedious

hour. It happened that he took up a religious book, which his good

mother or aunt had, without his knowledge, slipped into his

portmanteau, called, "The Christian Soldier," written by Mr Watson.

Guessing by the title that he should find some phrases of his own

profession spiritualised in a manner which might afford him some

diversion, he resolved to dip into it: while this book was in his hand,

an impression was made upon his mind, which drew after it a train of

the most important consequences. Suddenly he thought he saw an unusual

blaze of light fall on the book while he was reading, and lifting up

his eyes, he apprehended, to his extreme amazement, that there was

before him, as it were suspended in the air, a visible representation

of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross, surrounded with a glory, and

was impressed as if a voice had come to him, to this effect: "O sinner,

did I suffer this for thee, and are these thy returns?" He sunk down in

his chair, and continued for some time insensible. He then arose in a

tumult of passions, and walked to and fro in his chamber, till he was

ready to drop, in unutterable astonishment and agony of heart, which

continued until the October following, when his terrors were turned

into unutterable joy.'

Mr Watson published a variety of books upon practical subjects, and of

a useful nature, for the titles of which, see foot-note.\* But his

principal work was a body of divinity, in one hundred and seventy-six

sermons, upon the Assembly's Catechism, which did not appear till after

his death. It was published in one volume folio, in 1692, and

accompanied with a portrait of the author, by Sturt; together with a

recommendatory preface by the Rev William Lorimer, and the attestation

of twenty-five other ministers of principal note in that day. For many

a year this volume continued to train the common people in theology,

and it may still tee found very commonly in the cottages of the

Scottish peasantry. Rev George Rogers, Principal of the Pastors,

College, has carefully superintended the issue of this present edition,

and in a note to us he writes: I know of no work with so much sermon

matter within the same compass. In Howe, and Charnock, and Owen, we

must often read much before we are tempted to close the book and think

out a whole sermon, but Watson teaches us to make short work of it. The

whole may be utilised. On this account it would be, I think, of great

value to all our students who have pastorates. It is for their benefit,

I suppose, you wished the reprint. As several select sermons, which are

usually bound up with this work, will appear with his whole works,

after a time, in Nichol's series, they are not included here. This is a

distinct work by itself and complete. All editions extant which we have

seen, abound in errors and imperfections. These have been rectified,

not entirely we fear, but in a degree as nearly approaching to accuracy

as in revision of another's composition could be expected. No

alteration of sentiment has been made, but every shade of the author's

meaning has been scrupulously retained. The style has been modernised,

so far as could be done without detracting from its own peculiar

characteristics. Long sentences have been divided into two or three,

where it could be done without injury to the clearness or force of the

signification. Modern words have been substituted for such as had

become obsolete; Latin quotations restored to their correct form, as

far as their sources could be ascertained; and divisions of subjects

more perspicuously arranged. The whole, in fact, has been rendered more

readable, and consequently more attractive and intelligible, which in

our estimation far outweighs all the supposed advantages that could

arise from perpetuating the crudities and vulgarities, as they now

appear to us, of former times. By popularising ancient works, their

readers are multiplied and their meaning may often be more readily

apprehended'.

\* The following are the tides of the principal works of Thomas Watson:

viz. Three treatises: 1. The Christian's Charter.' 2. The Art of Divine

Contentment.' 3. A Discourse of Meditation,' to which is added several

sermons, 1660. This volume contains, besides the three treatises, the

following, viz.: God's Anatomy upon Man's Heart,' The Saint's Delight,'

A Christian on Earth still in Heaven,' Christ's Loveliness,' The

Upright Man's Character and Crown,' The One Thing Necessary,' The Holy

Longing; or, the Saint's Desire to be with Christ,' Beatitudes; or, a

Discourse upon part of Christ's Famous Sermon upon the Mount,' 1660, A

Body of Practical Divinity,' etc.' with a supplement of some sermons, A

Divine Cordial," The Holy Eucharist,' Heaven taken by Storm,' etc.'

etc.

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1. A Preliminary Discourse To Catechising

'If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled.' - Col 1:23.

Intending next Lord's day to enter upon the work of catechising, it

will not be amiss to give you a preliminary discourse, to show you how

needful it is for Christians to be well instructed in the grounds of

religion. If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled.'

I. It is the duty of Christians to be settled in the doctrine of faith.

II. The best way for Christians to be settled is to be well grounded.

I. It is the duty of Christians to be settled in the doctrine of faith.

It is the apostle's prayer, I Pet 5:50, 'The God of all grace stablish,

strengthen, settle you.' That is, that they might not be meteors in the

air, but fixed stars. The apostle Jude speaks of wandering stars, in

verse 13. They are called wandering stars, because, as Aristotle says,

They do leap up and down, and wander into several parts of the heaven;

and being but dry exhalations, not made of that pure celestial matter

as the fixed stars are, they often fall to the earth.' Now, such as are

not settled in religion, will, at one time or other, prove wandering

stars; they will lose their former steadfastness, and wander from one

opinion to another. Such as are unsettled are of the tribe of Reuben,

unstable as water,' Gen 49:9; like a ship without ballast, overturned

with every wind of doctrine. Beza writes of one Belfectius, that his

religion changed as the moon. The Arians had every year a new faith.

These are not pillars in the temple of God, but reeds shaken every way.

The apostle calls them damnable heresies.' 2 Pet 2:2. A man may go to

hell as well for heresy as adultery. To be unsettled in religion,

argues want of judgement. If their heads were not giddy, men would not

reel so fast from one opinion to another. It argues lightness. As

feathers will be blown every way, so will feathery Christians. Triticum

non rapit ventus inanes palae jactantur. Cyprian. Therefore such are

compared to children. Eph 4:44. That we be no more children, tossed to

and fro.' Children are fickle sometimes of one mind sometimes of

another, nothing pleases them long; so unsettled Christians are

childish; the truths they embrace at one time, they reject at another;

sometimes they like the Protestant religion, and soon after they have a

good mind to turn Papists.

[1] It is the great end of the word preached, to bring us to a

settlement in religion. Eph 4:41, 12, 14. And he gave some,

evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the edifying of the

body of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children.' The word is

called a hammer. Jer 23:39. Every blow of the hammer is to fasten the

nails of the building; so the preacher's words are to fasten you the

more to Christ; they weaken themselves to strengthen and settle you.

This is the grand design of preaching, not only for the enlightening,

but for the establishing of souls; not only to guide them in the right

way, but to keep them in it. Now, if you be not settled, you do not

answer God's end in giving you the ministry.

[2] To be settled in religion is both a Christian's excellence and

honour. It is his excellence. When the milk is settled it turns to

cream; now he will be zealous for the truth, and walk in close

communion with God. And his honour. Prov 16:61. The hoary head is a

crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.' It is one

of the best sights to see an old disciple; to see silver hairs adorned

with golden virtues.

[3] Such as are not settled in the faith can never suffer for it.

Sceptics in religion hardly ever prove martyrs. They that are not

settled hang in suspense; when they think of the joys of heaven they

will espouse the gospel, but when they think of persecution they desert

it. Unsettled Christians do not consult what is best, but what is

safest. The apostate (says Tertullian) seems to put God and Satan in

balance, and having weighed both their services, prefers the devil's

service, and proclaims him to be the best master: and, in this sense,

may be said to put Christ to open shame.' Heb 6:6. He will never suffer

for the truth, but be as a soldier that leaves his colours, and runs

over to the enemy's side; he will fight on the devil's side for pay.

[4] Not to be settled in the faith is provoking to God. To espouse the

truth, and then to fall away, brings an ill report upon the gospel,

which will not go unpunished. Psa 78:87, 59. They turned back, and

dealt unfaithfully. When God heard this, he was wroth, and greatly

abhorred Israel.' The apostate drops as a wind-fall into the devil's

mouth.

[5] If ye are not settled in religion, you will never grow. We are

commanded to grow up into the head, even Christ.' Eph 4:15. But if we

are unsettled there is no growing: the plant which is continually

removing never thrives.' He can no more grow in godliness, who is

unsettled, than a bone can grow in the body that is out of joint.

[6] There is great need to be settled, because there are so many things

to unsettle us. Seducers are abroad, whose work is to draw away people

from the principles of religion. I John 2:26. These things have I

written unto you concerning them that seduce you.' Seducers are the

devil's factors; they are of all others the greatest felons that would

rob you of the truth. Seducers have silver tongues, that can put off

bad wares; they have a sleight to deceive. Eph 4:14. The Greek word

there is taken from those that can throw dice, and cast them for the

best advantage. So seducers are impostors, they can throw a dice; they

can so dissemble and sophisticate the truth, that they can deceive

others. Seducers deceive by wisdom of words. Rom 16:68. By good words

and fair speeches they deceive the hearts of the simple.' They have

fine elegant phrases, flattering language, whereby they work on the

weaker sort. Another sleight is a pretence of extraordinary piety, that

so people may admire them, and suck in their doctrine. They seem to be

men of zeal and sanctity, and to be divinely inspired, and pretend to

new revelations. A third cheat of seducers is, labouring to vilify and

nullify sound orthodox teachers. They would eclipse those that bring

the truth, like black vapours that darken the light of heaven; they

would defame others, that they themselves may be more admired. Thus the

false teachers cried down Paul, that they might be received, Gal 4:17.

The fourth cheat of seducers is, to preach the doctrine of liberty; as

though men are freed from the moral law, the rule as well as the curse,

and Christ has done all for them, and they need to do nothing. Thus

they make the doctrine of free grace a key to open the door to all

licentiousness. Another means is, to unsettle Christians by

persecution. 2 Tim 3:12. The gospel is a rose that cannot be plucked

without prickles. The legacy Christ has bequeathed is the CROSS. While

there is a devil and a wicked man in the world, never expect a charter

of exemption from trouble. How many fall away in an hour of

persecution! Rev 12:2. There appeared a great red dragon, having seven

heads and ten horns; and his tail drew the third part of the stars of

heaven.' The red dragon, by his power and subtilty, drew away stars, or

eminent professors, that seemed to shine as stars in the firmament of

the church.

To be unsettled in good is the sin of the devils. Jude 6. They are

called, morning stars,' Job 38:8, but falling stars;' they were holy,

but mutable. As the vessel is overturned with the sail, so their sails

being swelled with pride, they were overturned. I Tim 3:3. By

unsettledness, men imitate lapsed angels. The devil was the first

apostate. The sons of Sion should be like mount Sion, which cannot be

removed.

II. The second proposition is, that the way for Christians to be

settled is to be well grounded. If ye continue grounded and settled.'

The Greek word for grounded is a metaphor which alludes to a building

that has the foundation well laid. So Christians should be grounded in

the essential points of religion, and have their foundation well laid.

Here let me speak to two things:

[1] That we should be grounded in the knowledge of fundamentals. The

apostle speaks of the first principles of the oracles of God.' Heb

5:12. In all arts and sciences, logic, physic, mathematics, there are

some praecognita, some rules and principles that must necessarily be

known for the practice of those arts; so, in divinity, there must be

the first principles laid down. The knowledge of the grounds and

principles of religion is exceedingly useful.

(1.) Else we cannot serve God aright. We can never worship God

acceptably, unless we worship him regularly; and how can we do that, if

we are ignorant of the rules and elements of religion? We are to give

God a reasonable service.' Rom 12:2: If we understand not the grounds

of religion, how can it be a reasonable service?

(2.) Knowledge of the grounds of religion much enriches the mind. It is

a lamp to our feet; it directs us in the whole course of Christianity,

as the eye directs the body. Knowledge of fundamentals is the golden

key that opens the chief mysteries of religion; it gives us a whole

system and body of divinity, exactly drawn in all its lineaments and

lively colours; it helps us to understand many of those difficult

things which occur in the reading of the word; it helps to untie many

Scripture knots.

(3.) It furnishes us with armour of proof; weapons to fight against the

adversaries of the truth.

(4.) It is the holy seed of which grace is formed. It is semen fidei,

the seed of faith. Psa 9:10. It is radix amoris, the root of love. Eph

3:17. Being rooted and grounded in love.' The knowledge of principles

conduces to the making of a complete Christian.

[2] This grounding is the best way to being settled: grounded and

settled.' A tree, that it may be well settled, must be well rooted; so,

if you would be well settled in religion, you must be rooted in its

principles. We read in Plutarch of one who set up a dead man, and he

would not stand. Oh,' said he, there should be something within.' So,

that we may stand in shaking times, there must be a principle of

knowledge within; first grounded, and then settled. That the ship may

be kept from overturning, it must have its anchor fastened. Knowledge

of principles is to the soul as the anchor to the ship, that holds it

steady in the midst of the rolling waves of error, or the violent winds

of persecution. First grounded and then settled.

Use one: See the reason why so many people are unsettled, ready to

embrace every novel opinion, and dress themselves in as many religions

as fashions; it is because they are ungrounded. See how the apostle

joins these two together, 'unlearned and unstable.' 2 Pet 3:16. Such as

are unlearned in the main points of divinity are unstable. As the body

cannot be strong that has the sinews shrunk; so neither can that

Christian be strong in religion who wants the grounds of knowledge,

which are the sinews to strengthen and stablish him.

Use two: See what great necessity there is of laying down the main

grounds of religion in a way of catechising, that the weakest judgement

may be instructed in the knowledge of the truth, and strengthened in

the love of it. Catechising is the best expedient for the grounding and

settling of people. I fear one reason why there has been no more good

done by preaching, has been because the chief heads and articles in

religion have not been explained in a catechistical way. Catechising is

laying the foundation. Heb 6:6: To preach and not to catechise is to

build without foundation. This way of catechising is not novel, it is

apostolic. The primitive church had their forms of catechism, as those

phrases imply, a form of sound words,' 2 Tim 1:13, end the first

principles of the oracles of God,' Heb 5:52. The church had its

catechumenoi, as Grotius and Erasmus observe. Many of the ancient

fathers have written for it, as Fulgentius, Austin, Theodoret,

Lactantius, and others. God has given great success to it. By thus

laying down the grounds of religion catechistically, Christians have

been clearly instructed and wondrously built up in the Christian faith,

insomuch that Julian the apostate, seeing the great success of

catechising, put down all schools and places of public literature, and

instructing of youth. It is my design, therefore (with the blessing of

God); to begin this work of catechising the next Sabbath day; and I

intend every other Sabbath, in the afternoon, to make it my whole work

to lay down the grounds and fundamentals of religion in a catechistical

way. If I am hindered in this work by men, or taken away by death, I

hope God will raise up some other labourer in the vineyard among you,

that may perfect the work which I am now beginning.

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2. Introduction

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1. Man's Chief End

Q-I: WHAT IS THE CHIEF END OF MAN?

A: Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever.

Here are two ends of life specified. 1: The glorifying of God. 2: The

enjoying of God.

I. The glorifying of God, I Pet 4:4: That God in all things may be

glorified.' The glory of God is a silver thread which must run through

all our actions. I Cor 10:01. Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or

whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.' Everything works to some

end in things natural and artificial; now, man being a rational

creature, must propose some end to himself, and that should be, that he

may lift up God in the world. He had better lose his life than the end

of his living. The great truth is asserted, that the end of every man's

living should be to glorify God. Glorifying God has respect to all the

persons in the Trinity; it respects God the Father who gave us life;

God the Son, who lost his life for us; and God the Holy Ghost, who

produces a new life in us; we must bring glory to the whole Trinity.

When we speak of God's glory, the question will be moved, What are we

to understand by God's glory?

There is a twofold glory: [1] The glory that God has in himself, his

intrinsic glory. Glory is essential to the Godhead, as light is to the

sun: he is called the God of Glory.' Acts 7:7. Glory is the sparkling

of the Deity; it is so co-natural to the Godhead, that God cannot be

God without it. The creature's honour is not essential to his being. A

king is a man without his regal ornaments, when his crown and royal

robes are taken away; but God's glory is such an essential part of his

being, that he cannot be God without it. God's very life lies in his

glory. This glory can receive no addition, because it is infinite; it

is that which God is most tender of, and which he will not part with.

Isa 48:8: My glory I will not give to another.' God will give temporal

blessings to his children, such as wisdom, riches, honour; he will give

them spiritual blessings, he will give them grace, he will give them

his love, he will give them heaven; but his essential glory he will not

give to another. King Pharaoh parted with a ring off his finger to

Joseph, and a gold chain, but he would not part with his throne. Gen

41:10. Only in the throne will I be greater than thou.' So God will do

much for his people; he will give them the inheritance; he will put

some of Christ's glory, as mediator, upon them; but his essential glory

he will not part with; in the throne he will be greater.' [2] The glory

which is ascribed to God, or which his creatures labour to bring to

him. I Chron 16:69. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name.'

And, I Cor 6:60. Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit.' The

glory we give God is nothing else but our lifting up his name in the

world, and magnifying him in the eyes of others. Phil 1:10. Christ

shall be magnified in my body.'

What is it to glorify God?

Glorifying God consists in four things: 1: Appreciation, 2. Adoration,

3. Affection, 4. Subjection. This is the yearly rent we pay to the

crown of heaven.

[1] Appreciation. To glorify God is to set God highest in our thoughts,

and to have a venerable esteem of him. Psa 92:2. Thou, Lord, art most

high for evermore.' Psa 97:7. Thou art exalted far above all gods.'

There is in God all that may draw forth both wonder and delight; there

is a constellation of all beauties; he is prima causa, the original and

springhead of being, who sheds a glory upon the creature. We glorify

God, when we are God-admirers; admire his attributes, which are the

glistering beams by which the divine nature shines forth; his promises

which are the charter of free grace, and the spiritual cabinet where

the pearl of price is hid; the noble effects of his power and wisdom in

making the world, which is called the work of his fingers.' Psa 8:8. To

glorify God is to have God-admiring thoughts; to esteem him most

excellent, and search for diamonds in this rock only.

[2] Glorifying God consists in adoration, or worship. Psa 29:9. Give

unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the

beauty of holiness.' There is a twofold worship: (1.) A civil reverence

which we give to persons of honour. Gen 23:3. Abraham stood up and

bowed himself to the children of Heth.' Piety is no enemy to courtesy.

(2.) A divine worship which we give to God as his royal prerogative.

Neh 8:8. They bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their

faces towards the ground.' This divine worship God is very jealous of;

it is the apple of his eye, the pearl of his crown; which he guards, as

he did the tree of life, with cherubims and a flaming sword, that no

man may come near it to violate it. Divine worship must be such as God

himself has appointed, else it is offering strange fire. Lev 10:0: The

Lord would have Moses make the tabernacle, according to the pattern in

the mount.' Exod 25:50. He must not leave out anything in the pattern,

nor add to it. If God was so exact and curious about the place of

worship, how exact will he be about the matter of his worship! Surely

here everything must be according to the pattern prescribed in his

word.

[3] Affection. This is part of the glory we give to God, who counts

himself glorified when he is loved. Deut 6:6. Thou shalt love the Lord

thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.' There is a twofold

love: (1.) Amor concupiscentiae, a love of concupiscence, which is

self-love; as when we love another, because he does us a good turn. A

wicked man may be said to love God, because he has given him a good

harvest, or filled his cup with wine. This is rather to love God's

blessing than to love God. (2.) Amor amicitiae, a love of delight, as a

man takes delight in a friend. This is to love God indeed; the heart is

set upon God, as a man's heart is set upon his treasure. This love is

exuberant, not a few drops, but a stream. It is superlative; we give

God the best of our love, the cream of it. Cant 8:8. I would cause thee

to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate.' If the spouse

had a cup more juicy and spiced, Christ must drink of it. It is intense

and ardent. True saints are seraphims, burning in holy love to God. The

spouse was amore perculsa, in fainting fits, sick of love.' Cant 2:2.

Thus to love God is to glorify him. He who is the chief of our

happiness has the chief of our affections.

[4] Subjection. This is when we dedicate ourselves to God, and stand

ready dressed for his service. Thus the angels in heaven glorify him;

they wait on his throne, and are ready to take a commission from him;

therefore they are represented by the cherubims with wings displayed,

to show how swift they are in their obedience. We glorify God when we

are devoted to his service; our head studies for him, our tongue pleads

for him, and our hands relieve his members. The wise men that came to

Christ did not only bow the knee to him, but presented him with gold

and myrrh. Matt 2:2: So we must not only bow the knee, give God

worship, but bring presents of golden obedience. We glorify God when we

stick at no service, when we fight under the banner of his gospel

against an enemy, and say to him as David to King Saul, Thy servant

will go and fight with this Philistine.' I Sam 17:72.

A good Christian is like the sun, which not only sends forth heat, but

goes its circuit round the world. Thus, he who glorifies God, has not

only his affections heated with love to God, but he goes his circuit

too; he moves vigorously in the sphere of obedience.

Why must we glorify God?

[1] Because he gives us our being. Psa 100:0. It is he that made us.'

We think it a great kindness in a man to spare our life, but what

kindness is it in God to give us our life! We draw our breath from him;

and as life, so all the comforts of life are from him. He gives us

health, which is the sauce to sweeten our life; and food, which is the

oil that nourishes the lamp of life. If all we receive is from his

bounty, is it not reasonable we should glorify him? Should we not live

to him, seeing we live by him? Rom 11:16. For of him, and through him,

are all things.' All we have is of his fulness, all we have is through

his free grace; and therefore to him should be all. It follows,

therefore, To him be glory for ever.' God is not our benefactor only,

but our founder, as rivers that come from the sea empty their silver

streams into the sea again.

[2] Because God has made all things for his own glory. Prov 16:6. The

Lord has made all things for himself:' that is, for his glory.' As a

king has excise out of commodities, so God will have glory out of

everything. He will have glory out of the wicked. If they will not give

him glory, he will get glory upon them. Exod 14:17. I will get me

honour upon Pharaoh.' But especially has he made the godly for his

glory; they are the lively organs of his praise. Isa 43: 21. This

people have I formed for myself, and they shall shew forth my praise.'

It is true, they cannot add to his glory, but they may exalt it; they

cannot raise him in heaven, but they may raise him in the esteem of

others here. God has adopted the saints into his family, and made them

a royal priesthood, that they should show forth the praise of him who

has called them. I Pet 2:2.

[3] Because the glory of God has intrinsic value and excellence; it

transcends the thoughts of men, and the tongues of angels. His glory is

his treasure, all his riches lie here; as Micah said. Judges 18:84.

What have I more?' So, what has God more? God's glory is more worth

than heaven, and more worth than the salvation of all men's souls.

Better kingdoms be thrown down, better men and angels be annihilated,

than God should lose one jewel of his crown, one beam of his glory.

[4] Creatures below us, and above us, bring glory to God; and do we

think to sit rent free? Shall everything glorify God but man? It is a

pity then that man was ever made. (1.) Creatures below us glorify God,

the inanimate creatures and the heavens glorify God. The heavens

declare the glory of God.' Psa 19:9: The curious workmanship of heaven

sets forth the glory of its Maker; the firmament is beautified and

pencilled out in blue and azure colours, where the power and wisdom of

God may be clearly seen. The heavens declare his glory:, we may see the

glory of God blazing in the sun, and twinkling in the stars. Look into

the air, the birds, with their chirping music, sing hymns of praise to

God. Every beast in its kind glorifies God. Isa 43:30. The beast of the

field shall honour me.' (2.) Creatures above us glorify God: the angels

are ministering spirits.' Heb 1:14. They are still waiting on God's

throne, and bring some revenues of glory into the exchequer of heaven.

Surely man should be much more studious of God's glory than the angels;

for God has honoured him more than the angels, in that Christ took

man's nature upon him, and not the angels, Though, in regard of

creation, God made man a little lower than the angels,' Heb 2:2, yet in

regard of redemption, God has set him higher than the angels. He has

married mankind to himself; the angels are Christ's friends, not his

spouse. He has covered us with the purple robe of righteousness, which

is a better righteousness than the angels have. 2 Cor 5:5I. If then the

angels bring glory to God, much more should we, being dignified with

honour above angelic spirits.

[5] We must bring glory to God, because all our hopes hang upon him.

Psa 39:9. My hope is in thee.' And Psa 62:2. My expectation is from

him;' I expect a kingdom from him. A child that is good-natured will

honour his parent, by expecting all he needs from him. Psa 87:7. All my

springs are in thee.' The silver springs of grace, and the golden

springs of glory are in him.

In how many ways may we glorify God?

[1] It is glorifying God when we aim purely at his glory. It is one

thing to advance God's glory, another thing to aim at it. God must be

the Terminus ad quem, the ultimate end of all actions. Thus Christ,

John 8:80, 'I seek not mine own glory, but the glory of him that sent

me.' A hypocrite has a squint eye, for he looks more to his own glory

than God's. Our Saviour deciphers such, and gives a caveat against them

in Matthew 6: 2, When thou givest alms, do not sound a trumpet.' A

stranger would ask, What means the noise of this trumpet?' It was

answered, They are going to give to the poor.' And so they did not give

alms, but sell them for honour and applause, that they might have glory

of men; the breath of men was the wind that blew the sails of their

charity; verily they have their reward.' The hypocrite may make his

acquittance and write, received in full payment.' Chrysostom calls

vain-glory one of the devil's great nets to catch men. And Cyprian

says, Whom Satan cannot prevail against by intemperance, those he

prevails against by pride and vainglory.' Oh let us take heed of

self-worshipping! Aim purely at God's glory. We do this,

(1.) When we prefer God's glory above all other things; above credit,

estate, relations; when the glory of God coming in competition with

them, we prefer his glory before them. If relations lie in our way to

heaven, we must either leap over them, or tread upon them. A child must

unchild himself, and forget he is a child; he must know neither father

nor mother in God's cause. Deut 33:3. Who said unto his father and

mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren.'

This is to aim at God's glory.

(2.) We aim at God's glory, when we are content that God's will should

take place, though it may cross ours. Lord, I am content to be a loser,

if thou be a gainer; to have less health, if I have more grace, and

thou more glory. Let it be food or bitter physic if thou givest it me.

Lord, I desire that which may be most for thy glory. Our blessed

Saviour said, Not as I will, but as thou wilt.' Matt 26:69. If God

might have more glory by his sufferings, he was content to suffer. John

12:28. Father, glorify thy name.'

(3.) We aim at God's glory when we are content to be outshined by

others in gifts and esteem, so that his glory may be increased. A man

that has God in his heart, and God's glory in his eye, desires that God

should be exalted; and if this be effected, let who will be the

instrument, he rejoices. Phil 1:15. Some preach Christ of envy:

notwithstanding, Christ is preached, and I therein do rejoice, yea, and

will rejoice'; they preached Christ of envy, they envied Paul that

concourse of people, and they preached that they might outshine him in

gifts, and get away some of his hearers: well, says Paul, Christ is

preached, and God is like to have the glory, therefore I rejoice; let

my candle go out, if the Sun of Righteousness may but shine.

[2] We glorify God by an ingenuous confession of sin. The thief on the

cross had dishonoured God in his life, but at his death he brought

glory to God by confession of sin. Luke 23:3I. We indeed suffer

justly.' He acknowledged he deserved not only crucifixion, but

damnation. Josh 7:19. My son, give, I pray thee, glory to God, and make

confession unto him.' A humble confession exalts God. How is God's free

grace magnified in crowning those who deserve to be condemned! The

excusing and mincing of sin casts a reproach upon God. Adam denied not

that he tasted the forbidden fruit, but, instead of a full confession,

he taxed God. Gen 3:32. The woman whom thou gavest me, she gave me of

the tree, and I did eat;' if thou hadst not given me the woman to be a

tempter, I had not sinned. Confession glorifies God, because it clears

him; it acknowledges that he is holy and righteous, whatever he does.

Nehemiah vindicates God's righteousness; chap 9:93. Thou art just in

all that is brought upon us.' A confession is ingenuous when it is

free, not forced. Luke 15:58. I have sinned against heaven and before

thee.' The prodigal charged himself with sin before his father charged

him with it.

[3] We glorify God by believing. Rom 4:40. Abraham was strong in faith,

giving glory to God.' Unbelief affronts God, it gives him the lie; he

that believeth not, maketh God a liar.' I John 5:50. But faith brings

glory to God; it sets to its seal that God is true. John 3:33. He that

believes flies to God's mercy and truth, as to an altar of refuge; he

engarrisons himself in the promises, and trusts all he has with God.

Psa 31:1. Into thy hands I commit my spirit.' This is a great way of

bringing glory to God, and God honours faith, because faith honours

him. It is a great honour we do to a man when we trust him with all we

have, when we put our lives and estates into his hand; it is a sign we

have a good opinion of him. The three children glorified God by

believing. The God whom we serve is able to deliver us, and will

deliver us.' Dan 3:17. Faith knows there are no impossibilities with

God, and will trust him where it cannot trace him.

[4] We glorify God, by being tender of his glory. God's glory is dear

to him as the apple of his eye. An ingenuous child weeps to see a

disgrace done to his father. Psa 69:9. The reproaches of them that

reproached thee are fallen upon me.' When we hear God reproached, it is

as if we were reproached; when God's glory suffers, it is as if we

suffered. This is to be tender of God's glory.

[5] We glorify God by fruitfulness. John 15:5. Hereby is my Father

glorified, that ye bear much fruit.' As it is dishonouring God to be

barren, so fruitfulness honours him. Phil 1:1: Filled with the fruits

of righteousness, which are to the praise of his glory.' We must not be

like the fig tree in the gospel, which had nothing but leaves, but like

the pomecitron, that is continually either mellowing or blossoming, and

is never without fruit. It is not profession, but fruit that glorifies

God. God expects to have his glory from us in this way. I Cor 9: 7. Who

planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit of it?' Trees in the

forest may be barren, but trees in the garden are fruitful. We must

bring forth the fruits of love and good works. Matt 5:16. Let your

light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and

glorify your Father which is in heaven.' Faith sanctifies our works,

and works testify our faith; to be doing good to others, to be eyes to

the blind, feet to the lame, much glorifies God. Thus Christ glorified

his Father; he went about doing good.' Acts 10:08. By being fruitful,

we are fair in God's eyes. Jer 11:16. The Lord called thy name a green

olive-tree, fair and of goodly fruit.' And we must bear much fruit; it

is muchness of fruit that glorifies God: if ye bear much fruit.' The

spouse's breasts are compared to clusters of grapes, to show how

fertile she was. Cant 7:7. Though the lowest degree of grace may bring

salvation to you, yet it will not bring much glory to God. It was not a

spark of love Christ commended in Mary, but much love; she loved much.'

Luke 7:77.

[6] We glorify God, by being contented in that state in which

Providence has placed us. We give God the glory of his wisdom, when we

rest satisfied with what he carves out to us. Thus Paul glorified God.

The Lord cast him into as great variety of conditions as any man, in

prisons more frequent, in deaths oft,' 2 Cor 11:13, yet he had learned

to be content. Paul could sail either in a storm or a calm; he could be

anything that God would have him; he could either want or abound. Phil

4:13. A good Christian argues thus: It is God that has put me in this

condition; he could have raised me higher, if he pleased, but that

might have been a snare to me: he has done it in wisdom and love;

therefore I will sit down satisfied with my condition. Surely this

glorifies God much; God counts himself much honoured by such a

Christian. Here, says God, is one after mine own heart; let me do what

I will with him, I hear no murmuring, he is content. This shows

abundance of grace. When grace is crowning, it is not so much to be

content; but when grace is conflicting with inconveniences, then to be

content is a glorious thing indeed. For one to be content when he is in

heaven is no wonder; but to be content under the cross is like a

Christian. This man must needs bring glory to God; for he shows to all

the world, that though he has little meal in his barrel, yet he has

enough in God to make him content: he says, as David, Psa 16: 5,'The

Lord is the portion of mine inheritance; the lines are fallen to me in

pleasant places.'

[7] We glorify God by working out our own salvation. God has twisted

together his glory and our good. We glorify him by promoting our own

salvation. It is a glory to God to have multitudes of converts; now,

his design of free grace takes, and God has the glory of his mercy; so

that, while we are endeavouring our salvation, we are honouring God.

What an encouragement is this to the service of God, to think, while I

am hearing and praying, I am glorifying God; while I am furthering my

own glory in heaven, I am increasing God's glory. Would it not be an

encouragement to a subject, to hear his prince say to him, You will

honour and please me very much, if you will go to yonder mine of gold,

and dig as much gold for yourself as you can carry away? So, for God to

say, Go to the ordinances, get as much grace as you can, dig out as

much salvation as you can; and the more happiness you have, the more I

shall count myself glorified.

[8] We glorify God by living to God. 2 Cor 5:55. That they which live

should not live to themselves, but unto him who died for them.' Rom

14:4. Whether we live, we live unto the Lord.' The Mammonist lives to

his money, the Epicure lives to his belly; the design of a sinner's

life is to gratify lust, but we glorify God when we live to God. We

live to God when we live to his service, and lay ourselves out wholly

for God. The Lord has sent us into the world, as a merchant sends his

factor beyond the seas to trade for him. We live to God when we trade

for his interest, and propagate his gospel. God has given every man a

talent; and when a man does not hide it in a napkin, but improves it

for God, he lives to God. When a master in a family, by counsel and

good example, labours to bring his servants to Christ; when a minister

spends himself, and is spent, that he may win souls to Christ, and make

the crown flourish upon Christ's head; when the magistrate does not

wear the sword in vain, but labours to cut down sin, and to suppress

vice; this is to live to God, and this is glorifying God. Phil 1:10.

That Christ might be magnified, whether by life or by death.' Three

wishes Paul had, and they were all about Christ; that he might be found

in Christ, be with Christ, and magnify Christ.

[9] We glorify God by walking cheerfully. It brings glory to God, when

the world sees a Christian has that within him that can make him

cheerful in the worst times; that can enable him, with the nightingale,

to sing with a thorn at his breast. The people of God have ground for

cheerfulness. They are justified and adopted, and this creates inward

peace; it makes music within, whatever storms are without. 2 Cor 1:1. I

Thess 1:1. If we consider what Christ has wrought for us by his blood,

and wrought in us by his Spirit, it is a ground of great cheerfulness,

and this cheerfulness glorifies God. It reflects upon a master when the

servant is always drooping and sad; sure he is kept to hard commons,

his master does not give him what is fitting; so, when God's people

hang their heads, it looks as if they did not serve a good master, or

repented of their choice, which reflects dishonour on God. As the gross

sins of the wicked bring a scandal on the gospel, so do the uncheerful

lives of the godly. Ps 100:0. Serve the Lord with gladness.' Your

serving him does not glorify him, unless it be with gladness. A

Christian's cheerful looks glorify God; religion does not take away our

joy, but refines it; it does not break our viol, but tunes it, and

makes the music sweeter.

[10] We glorify God, by standing up for his truths. Much of God's glory

lies in his truth. God has intrusted us with his truth, as a master

intrusts his servant with his purse to keep. We have not a richer jewel

to trust God with than our souls, nor has God a richer jewel to trust

us with than his truth. Truth is a beam that shines from God. Much of

his glory lies in his truth. When we are advocates for truth we glorify

God. Jude 3. That ye should contend earnestly for the truth.' The Greek

word to contend signifies great contending, as one would contend for

his land, and not suffer his right to be taken from him; so we should

contend for the truth. Were there more of this holy contention God

would have more glory. Some contend earnestly for trifles and

ceremonies, but not for the truth. We should count him indiscreet that

would contend more for a picture than for his inheritance; for a box of

counters than for his box of title deeds.

[II] We glorify God, by praising him. Doxology, or praise, is a

God-exalting work. Psa 1:23. Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me.' The

Hebrew word Bara, to create, and Barak, to praise, are little

different, because the end of creation is to praise God. David was

called the sweet singer of Israel, and his praising God was called

glorifying God. Psa 86:12. I will praise thee, O Lord my God, and I

will glorify thy name.' Though nothing can add to God's essential

glory, yet praise exalts him in the eyes of others. When we praise God,

we spread his fame and renown, we display the trophies of his

excellency. In this manner the angels glorify him; they are the

choristers of heaven, and do trumpet forth his praise. Praising God is

one of the highest and purest acts of religion. In prayer we act like

men; in praise we act like angels. Believers are called temples of

God.' I Cor 3:16. When our tongues praise, then the organs in God's

spiritual temple are sounding. How sad is it that God has no more glory

from us in this way! Many are full of murmuring and discontent, but

seldom bring glory to God, by giving him the praise due to his name. We

read of the saints having harps in their hands, the emblems of praise.

Many have tears in their eyes, and complaints in their mouth, but few

have harps in their hand, blessing and glorifying God. Let us honour

God this way. Praise is the quit-rent we pay to God: while God renews

our lease, we must renew our rent.

[12] We glorify God, by being zealous for his name. Numb 25:5: Phinehas

has turned my wrath away, while he was zealous for my sake.' Zeal is a

mixed affection, a compound of love and anger; it carries forth our

love to God, and our anger against sin in an intense degree. Zeal is

impatient of God's dishonour; a Christian fired with zeal, takes a

dishonour done to God worse than an injury done to himself. Rev 2:2.

Thou canst not bear them that are evil.' Our Saviour Christ thus

glorified his Father; he, being baptized with a spirit of zeal, drove

the money-changers out of the temple. John 2:14-17. The zeal of thine

house has eaten me up.

[13] We glorify God, when we have an eye to God in our natural and in

our civil actions. In our natural actions; in eating and drinking. I

Cor 10:0I. Whether therefore ye eat or drink, do all to the glory of

God.' A gracious person holds the golden bridle of temperance; he takes

his meat as a medicine to heal the decays of nature, that he may be the

fitter, by the strength he receives, for the service of God; he makes

his food, not fuel for lust, but help to duty. In buying and selling,

we do all to the glory of God. The wicked live upon unjust gain, by

falsifying the balances, as in Hosea 12:2. The balances of deceit are

in his hands;' and thus while men make their weights lighter, they make

their sins heavier, when by exacting more than the commodity is worth,

they do not for fourscore write down fifty, but for fifty four-score;

when they exact double the price that a thing is worth. We buy and sell

to the glory of God, when we observe that golden maxim, To do to others

as we would have them do to us;' so that when we sell our commodities,

we do not sell our consciences also. Acts 24:16. Herein do I exercise

myself, to have always a conscience void of offence towards God, and

towards men.' We glorify God, when we have an eye to God in all our

civil and natural actions, and do nothing that may reflect any blemish

on religion.

[14] We glorify God by labouring to draw others to God; by seeking to

convert others, and so make them instruments of glorifying God. We

should be both diamonds and loadstones; diamonds for the lustre of

grace, and loadstones for attractive virtue in drawing others to

Christ. Gal 4:19. My little children, of whom I travail,' It is a great

way of glorifying God, when we break open the devil's prison, and turn

men from the power of Satan to God.

[15] We glorify God in a high degree when we suffer for God, and seal

the gospel with our blood. John 21:18, 19. When thou shalt be old,

another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not: this

spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God.' God's glory

shines in the ashes of his martyrs. Isa 24:15. Wherefore glorify the

Lord in the fires.' Micaiah was in the prison, Isaiah was sawn asunder,

Paul beheaded, Luke hanged on an olive tree; thus did they, by their

death, glorify God. The sufferings of the primitive saints did honour

to God, and made the gospel famous in the world. What would others say?

See what a good master they serve, and how they love him, that they

will venture the loss of all in his service. The glory of Christ's

kingdom does not stand in worldly pomp and grandeur, as other kings';

but it is seen in the cheerful sufferings of his people. The saints of

old loved not their lives to the death.' Rev 12:2: They embraced

torments as so many crowns. God grant we may thus glorify him, if he

calls us to it. Many pray, Let this cup pass away,' but few, Thy will

be done.'

[16] We glorify God, when we give God the glory of all that we do. When

Herod had made an oration, and the people gave a shout, saying, It is

the voice of a God, and not of a man,' he took the glory to himself;

the text says, Immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he

gave not God the glory, and he was eaten of worms.' Acts 12:23. We

glorify God, when we sacrifice the praise and glory of all to God. I

Cor 15:50. I laboured more abundantly than they all,' a speech, one

would think, savoured of pride; but the apostle pulls the crown from

his own head, and sets it upon the head of free grace: yet not I, but

the grace of God which was with me.' As Joab, when he fought against

Rabbah, sent for King David, that he might carry away the crown of the

victory, 2 Sam 12:28, so a Christian, when he has gotten power over any

corruption or temptation, sends for Christ, that he may carry away the

crown of the victory. As the silkworm, when she weaves her curious

work, hides herself under the silk, and is not seen; so when we have

done anything praiseworthy, we must hide ourselves under the veil of

humility, and transfer the glory of all we have done to God. As

Constantine used to write the name of Christ over his door, so should

we write the name of Christ over our duties. Let him wear the garland

of praise.

[17] We glorify God by a holy life. A bad life dishonours God. I Pet

2:2. Ye are an holy nation, that ye should shew forth the praises of

him that has called you.' Rom 2:24. The name of God is blasphemed among

the Gentiles through you.' Epiphanius says, That the looseness of some

Christians in his time made many of the heathens shun their company,

and would not be drawn to hear their sermons.' By our exact

Bible-conversation we glorify God. Though the main work of religion

lies in the heart, yet our light must so shine that others may behold

it. The safety of a building is the foundation, but the glory of it is

in the frontispiece; so the beauty of faith is in the conversation.

When the saints, who are called jewels, cast a sparkling lustre of

holiness in the eyes of the world, then they walk as Christ walked.' I

John 2:6. When they live as if they had seen the Lord with bodily eyes,

and been with him upon the mount, they adorn religion, and bring

revenues of glory to the crown of heaven.

Use one: This subject shows us that our chief end should not be to get

great estates, not to lay up treasures upon earth; which is the

degeneracy of mankind since the fall. Sometimes they never arrive at an

estate, they do not get the venison they hunt for; or if they do, what

have they? that which will not fill the heart any more than the

mariner's breath will fill the sails of the ship. They spend their

time, as Israel, in gathering straw, but remember not, that the end of

living is to glorify God. Eccles 5:16. What profit has he that

laboureth for the wind?' These things are soon gone.

Use two: It reproves such, (1.) As bring no glory to God; who do not

answer the end of their creation; whose time is not time lived, but

time lost; who are like the wood of the vine, Ezek 15:5; whose lives

are, as St Bernard speaks either sinfulness or barrenness. A useless

burden on the earth.' God will one day ask such a question as King

Ahasuerus did, Esth 6:6. What honour and dignity has been done to

Mordecai?' What honour has been done to me? what revenues of glory have

you brought into my exchequer? There is no one here present but God has

put in some capacity of glorifying him; the health he has given you,

the parts, estate, seasons of grace, all are opportunities put into

your hand to glorify him; and, be assured, he will call you to account,

to know what you have done with the mercies he has entrusted you with,

what glory you have brought to him. The parable of the talents, where

the men with the five talents and the two talents are brought to a

reckoning, evidently shows that God will call you to a strict account,

to know how you have traded with your talents, and what glory you have

brought to him. Now, how sad will it be with them who hide their

talents in a napkin, that bring God no glory at all! Matt 25:50. Cast

ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness.' It is not enough for

you to say, that you have not dishonoured God, you have not lived in

gross sin; but what good have you done? what glory have you brought to

God? It is not enough for the servant of the vineyard that he does no

hurt in the vineyard, that he does not break the trees, or destroy the

hedges; if he does not do service in the vineyard, he loses his pay;

so, if you do not good in your place, do not glorify God, you will lose

your pay, you will miss of salvation. Oh, think of this, all you that

live unserviceable! Christ cursed the barren fig tree.

(2.) It reproves such as are so far from bringing glory to God, that

they rob God of his glory. Mal 3:3. Will a man rob God? Yet ye have

robbed me.' They rob God, who take the glory due to God to themselves.

1: If they have gotten an estate, they ascribe all to their own wit and

industry, they set the crown upon their own head, not considering that,

Deut 8:18, Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is he that

giveth thee power to get wealth.' 2. If they do any duty of religion,

they look to their own glory. Matt 6:6. That they may be seen of men;'

that they may be set upon a theatre for others to admire and canonise

them. The oil of vainglory feeds their lamp. How many by the wind of

popular breath have been blown to hell! Whom the devil cannot destroy

by intemperance, he does by vainglory.

(3.) It reproves those who fight against God's glory. Acts 5:59. Lest

ye be found to fight against God.' Such as oppose that whereby God's

glory is promoted fight against God's glory. His glory is much promoted

by the preaching of the word, which is his engine whereby he converts

souls. Now, such as would hinder the preaching of the word fight

against God's glory. I Thess 3:16. Forbidding us to speak to the

Gentiles, that they might be saved.' Diocletian, who raised the tenth

persecution against the Christians, prohibited church meetings, and

would have the temples of the Christians to be razed down. Such as

hinder preaching, as the Philistines that stopped the wells, stop the

well of the water of life. They take away the physicians that should

heal sin-sick souls. Ministers are lights, Matt 5:14, and who but

thieves hate the light? They directly strike at God's glory; and what

an account will they have to give to God, when he shall charge the

blood of men's souls upon them! Luke 11:12. Ye have taken away the key

of knowledge; ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering

in ye hindered.' If there be either justice in heaven, or fire in hell,

they shall not go unpunished.

Use three: Exhortation. Let every one of us, in our place, make it our

chief end and design to glorify God. (1.) Let me speak to magistrates.

God has put much glory upon them. Psa 82:6. I have said, Ye are Gods;'

and will they not glorify him who has put so much glory upon them? (2.)

Ministers should study to promote God's glory. God has entrusted them

with two of the most precious things, his truth, and the souls of his

people. Ministers, by virtue of their office, are to glorify God. They

must glorify God, by labouring in the word and doctrine. 2 Tim 4:4: I

charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the

quick and the dead: preach the word, be instant in season, out of

season,' etc. It was Augustine's wish, that Christ, at his coming,

might find him either praying or preaching.' Ministers must glorify God

by their zeal and sanctity. The priests under the law, before they

served at the altar, washed in the laver; so, such as serve in the

Lord's house, must first be washed from gross sin in the laver of

repentance. It is matter of grief and shame to think how many, who call

themselves ministers, instead of bringing glory to God, dishonour him.

2 Chron 11:15. Their lives, as well as their doctrines, are heterodox;

they are not free from the sins which they reprove in others.

Plutarch's servant upbraided him, by saying, he has written a book

against anger, et ipse mihi irascitur, yet he falls into a passion of

anger with me.' So is a minister who preaches against drunkenness, yet

he himself is drunk; he preaches against swearing, yet he himself

swears! (3.) Masters of families must glorify God, must season their

children and servants with the knowledge of the Lord; their houses

should be little churches. Gen 18:19. I know that Abraham will command

his children, that they may keep the way of the Lord.' You that are

masters have a charge of souls. For want of the bridle of family

discipline youth runs wild.

It will be a great comfort in a dying hour, to think we have glorified

God in our lives. It was Christ's comfort before his death: John 17:4.

I have glorified thee on the earth.' At the hour of death, all your

earthly comforts will vanish: if you think how rich you have been, what

pleasures you have had on earth; this will be so far from comforting

you, that it will torment you the more. What is one the better for an

estate that is spent? But to have conscience telling you, that you have

glorified God on the earth, what sweet comfort and peace will this let

into your soul! how will it make you long for death! The servant that

has been all day working in the vineyard longs till evening comes, when

he shall receive his pay. How can they who have lived, and brought no

glory to God, think of dying with comfort? They cannot expect a harvest

where they sowed no seed. How can they expect glory from God, who never

brought any glory to him? Oh in what horror will they be at death! The

worm of conscience will gnaw their souls, before the worms can gnaw

their bodies.

If we glorify God, he will glorify our souls for ever. By raising God's

glory, we increase our own: by glorifying God, we come at last to the

blessed enjoyment of him.

11. Man's chief end is to enjoy God for ever. Psalm 73:35. Whom have I

in heaven but thee?' That is, What is there in heaven I desire to enjoy

but thee? There is a twofold fruition or enjoying of God; the one is in

this life, the other in the life to come.

[1] The enjoyment of God in this life. It is a great matter to enjoy

God's ordinances, but to enjoy God's presence in the ordinances is that

which a gracious heart aspires after. Psalm 63:3. To see thy glory so

as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.' This sweet enjoyment of God, is,

when we feel his Spirit co-operating with the ordinance, and distilling

grace upon our hearts, when in the Word the Spirit quickens and raises

the affections, Luke 24:42, Did not our hearts burn within us?', when

the Spirit transforms the heart, leaving an impress of holiness upon

it. 2 Cor 3:18. We are changed into the same image, from glory to

glory.' When the Spirit revives the heart with comfort, it comes not

only with its anointing, but with its seal; it sheds God's love abroad

in the heart. Rom 5:5. Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his

Son Jesus Christ.' I John 1: 3. In the Word we hear God's voice, in the

sacrament we have his kiss. The heart being warmed and inflamed in a

duty is God's answering by fire. The sweet communications of God's

Spirit are the first-fruits of glory. Now Christ has pulled off his

veil, and showed his smiling face; now he has led a believer into the

banqueting-house, and given him of the spiced wine of his love to

drink; he has put in his finger at the hole of the door; he has touched

the heart, and made it leap for joy. Oh how sweet is it thus to enjoy

God! The godly have, in ordinances, had such divine raptures of joy,

and soul transfigurations, that they have been carried above the world,

and have despised all things here below.

Use one: Is the enjoyment of God in this life so sweet? How wicked are

they who prefer the enjoyment of their lusts before the enjoyment of

God! 2 Pet 3:3. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, the pride

of life,' is the Trinity they worship. Lust is an inordinate desire or

impulse, provoking the soul to that which is evil. There is the

revengeful lust, and the wanton lust. Lust, like a feverish heat, puts

the soul into a flame. Aristotle calls sensual lusts brutish, because,

when any lust is violent, reason or conscience cannot be heard. These

lusts besot and brutalise the man. Hos 4:41. Whoredom and wine take

away the heart;' the heart for anything that is good. How many make it

their chief end, not to enjoy God, but to enjoy their lusts!; as that

cardinal who said, Let him but keep his cardinalship of Paris, and he

was content to lose his part in Paradise.' Lust first bewitches with

pleasure, and then comes the fatal dart. Prov 7:73. Till a dart strike

through his liver.' This should be as a flaming sword to stop men in

the way of their carnal delights. Who for a drop of pleasure would

drink a sea of wrath?

Use two: Let it be our great care to enjoy God's sweet presence in his

ordinances. Enjoying spiritual communion with God is a riddle and

mystery to most people. Every one that hangs about the court does not

speak with the king. We may approach God in ordinances, and hang about

the court of heaven, yet not enjoy communion with God. We may have the

letter without the Spirit, the visible sign without the invisible

grace. It is the enjoyment of God in a duty that we should chiefly look

at. Psa 13:3. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God.' Alas!

what are all our worldly enjoyments without the enjoyment of God! What

is it to enjoy good health, a brave estate, and not to enjoy God? Job

30:08. I went mourning without the sun.' So mayest thou say in the

enjoyment of all creatures without God, I went mourning without the

sun.' I have the starlight of outward enjoyments, but I want the Sun of

Righteousness. I went mourning without the sun.' It should be our great

design, not only to have the ordinances of God, but the God of the

ordinances. The enjoyment of God's sweet presence here is the most

contented life: he is a hive of sweetness, a magazine of riches, a

fountain of delight. Psalm 36:6, 9. The higher the lark flies the

sweeter it sings: and the higher we fly by the wings of faith, the more

we enjoy of God. How is the heart inflamed in prayer and meditation!

What joy and peace is there in believing! Is it not comfortable being

in heaven? He that enjoys much of God in this life carries heaven about

him. Oh let this be the thing we are chiefly ambitious of, the

enjoyment of God in his ordinances! The enjoyment of God's sweet

presence here is an earnest of our enjoying him in heaven.

This brings us to the second thing:

[2] The enjoyment of God in the life to come. Man's chief end is to

enjoy God for ever. Before the plenary fruition of God in heaven, there

must be something previous and antecedent; and that is, our being in a

state of grace. We must have conformity to him in grace, before we can

have communion with him in glory. Grace and glory are linked and

chained together. Grace precedes glory, as the morning star ushers in

the sun. God will have us qualified and fitted for a state of

blessedness. Drunkards and swearers are not fit to enjoy God in glory;

the Lord will not lay such vipers in his bosom. Only the pure in heart

shall see God.' We must first be, as the king's daughter, glorious

within, before we are clothed with the robes of glory. As King

Ahasuerus first caused the virgins to be purified and anointed, and

they had their sweet odours to perfume them, and then went to stand

before the king, Esth 2:22, so must we have the anointing of God, and

be perfumed with the graces of the Spirit, those sweet odours, and then

we shall stand before the king of heaven. Being thus divinely qualified

by grace, we shall be taken up to the mount of vision, and enjoy God

for ever; and what is enjoying God for ever but to be put in a state of

happiness? As the body cannot have life but by having communion with

the soul, so the soul cannot have blessedness but by having immediate

communion with God. God is the summum bonum, the chief good; therefore

the enjoyment of him is the highest felicity.

He is a universal good; bonum in quo omnia bona, a good, in which are

all goods.' The excellencies of the creature are limited. A man may

have health, not beauty, learning, not parentage, riches, not wisdom;

but in God are contained all excellencies. He is a good, commensurate

fully to the soul; a sun, a portion, a horn of salvation; in whom

dwells all fulness.' Col 1:19. God is an unmixed good. There is no

condition in this life but has its mixture; for every drop of honey

there is a drop of gall. Solomon, who gave himself to find out the

philosopher's stone, to search out for happiness here below, found

nothing but vanity and vexation. Eccl 1:1. God is perfect, the

quintessence of good. He is sweetness in the flower. God is a

satisfying good. The soul cries out, I have enough. Psalm 17:15. I

shall be satisfied with thy likeness.' Let a man who is thirsty be

brought to an ocean of pure water, and he has enough. If there be

enough in God to satisfy the angels, then sure there is enough to

satisfy us. The soul is but finite, but God is infinite. Though God be

a good that satisfies, yet he does not surfeit. Fresh joys spring

continually from his face; and he is as much to be desired after

millions of years by glorified souls as at the first moment. There is a

fulness in God that satisfies, and yet so much sweetness, that the soul

still desires. God is a delicious good. That which is the chief good

must ravish the soul with pleasure; there must be in it rapturous

delight and quintessence of joy. In Deo quadam dulcedine delectatur

anima immo rapitur [There is a certain sweetness about God's person

which delights, nay, rather, ravishes the soul]: The love of God drops

such infinite suavity into the soul as is unspeakable and full of

glory. If there be so much delight in God, when we see him only by

faith, I Pet 1:1, what will the joy of vision be, when we shall see him

face to face! If the saints have found so much delight in God while

they were suffering, oh what joy and delight will they have when they

are being crowned! If flames are beds of roses, what will it be to lean

on the bosom of Jesus! What a bed of roses that will be! God is a

superlative good. He is better than anything you can put in competition

with him: he is better than health, riches, honour. Other things

maintain life, he gives life. Who would put anything in balance with

the Deity? Who would weigh a feather against a mountain of gold? God

excels all other things more infinitely than the sun the light of a

taper. God is an eternal good. He is the Ancient of days, yet never

decays, nor waxes old. Dan 7:7. The joy he gives is eternal, the crown

fadeth not away. I Pet 5:5. The glorified soul shall be ever solacing

itself in God, feasting on his love, and sunning itself in the light of

his countenance. We read of the river of pleasure at God's right hand;

but will not this in time be dried up? No! There is a fountain at the

bottom which feeds it. Psa 36:6. With the Lord is the fountain of

life.' Thus God is the chief good, and the enjoyment of God for ever is

the highest felicity of which the soul is capable.

Use one: Let it be the chief end of our living to enjoy this chief good

hereafter. Augustine reckons up 288 opinions among philosophers about

happiness, but all were short of the mark. The highest elevation of a

reasonable soul is to enjoy God for ever. It is the enjoyment of God

that makes heaven. I Thess 4:17. Then shall we ever be with the Lord.'

The soul trembles as the needle in the compass, and is never at rest

till it comes to God. To set out this excellent state of a glorified

soul's enjoyment of God: (1.) It must not be understood in a sensual

manner: we must not conceive any carnal pleasures in heaven. The Turks,

in their Koran, speak of a paradise of pleasure, where they have riches

in abundance, and red wine served in golden chalices. The epicures of

this age would like such a heaven when they die. Though the state of

glory be compared to a feast, and is set out by pearls and precious

stones, yet these metaphors are only helps to our faith, and to show us

that there is superabundant joy and felicity in the highest heaven; but

they are not carnal but spiritual delights. Our enjoyment will be in

the perfection of holiness, in seeing the pure face of Christ, in

feeling the love of God, in conversing with heavenly spirits; which

will be proper for the soul, and infinitely exceed all carnal

voluptuous delights. (2.) We shall have a lively sense of this glorious

estate. A man in a lethargy, though alive, is as good as dead, because

he is not sensible, nor does he take any pleasure in his life; but we

shall have a quick and lively sense of the infinite pleasure which

arises from the enjoyment of God: we shall know ourselves to be happy;

we shall reflect with joy upon our dignity and felicity; we shall taste

every crumb of that sweetness, every drop of that pleasure which flows

from God. (3.) We shall be made able to bear a sight of that glory. We

could not now bear that glory, it would overwhelm us, as a weak eye

cannot behold the sun; but God will capacitate us for glory; our souls

shall be so heavenly, and perfected with holiness, that they may be

able to enjoy the blessed vision of God. Moses in a cleft of the rock

saw the glory of God passing by. Exod 33:32. From our blessed rock

Christ, we shall behold the beatific sight of God. (4.) This enjoyment

of God shall be more than a bare contemplation of him. Some of the

learned move the question, Whether the enjoyment of God shall be by way

of contemplation only. That is something, but it is one half of heaven

only; there shall be a loving of God, an acquiescence in him, a tasting

his sweetness; not only inspection but possession. John 17:74. That

they may behold my glory;' there is inspection: Verse 22. And the glory

thou hast given me, I have given them;' there is possession. Glory

shall be revealed in us,' Rom 8:18; not only revealed to us, but in us.

To behold God's glory, there is glory revealed to us; but, to partake

of his glory, there is glory revealed in us. As the sponge sucks in the

wine, so shall we suck in glory. (5.) There is no intermission in this

state of glory. We shall not only have God's glorious presence at

certain special seasons; but we shall be continually in his presence,

continually under divine raptures of joy. There shall not be one minute

in heaven, wherein a glorified soul may say, I do not enjoy happiness.

The streams of glory are not like the water of a conduit, often

stopped, so that we cannot have one drop of water; but those heavenly

streams of joy are continually running. Oh how should we despise this

valley of tears where we now are, for the mount of transfiguration! how

should we long for the full enjoyment of God in Paradise! Had we a

sight of that land of promise, we should need patience to be content to

live here any longer.

Use two: Let this be a spur to duty. How diligent and zealous should we

be in glorifying God, that we may come at last to enjoy him! If Tully,

Demosthenes, and Plato, who had but the dim watch-light of reason to

see by, fancied an elysium and happiness after this life, and took such

Herculean pains to enjoy it, oh how should Christians, who have the

light of Scripture to see by, bestir themselves that they may attain to

the eternal fruition of God and glory! If anything can make us rise off

our bed of sloth, and serve God with all our might, it should be this,

the hope of our near enjoyment of God for ever. What made Paul so

active in the sphere of religion? I Cor 15:50. I laboured more

abundantly than they all.' His obedience did not move slow, as the sun

on the dial; but swift, as light from the sun. Why was he so zealous in

glorifying God, but that he might at last centre and terminate in him?

I Thess 4:17. Then shall we ever be with the Lord.'

Use three: Let this comfort the godly in all the present miseries they

feel. Thou complainest, Christian, thou dost not enjoy thyself, fears

disquiet thee, wants perplex thee; in the day thou canst not enjoy

ease, in the night thou canst not enjoy sleep; thou cost not enjoy the

comforts of thy life. Let this revive thee, that shortly thou shalt

enjoy God, and then shalt have more than thou canst ask or think; thou

shalt have angels' joy, glory without intermission or expiration. We

shall never enjoy ourselves fully till we enjoy God eternally.

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2. The Scriptures

Q-II: WHAT RULE HAS GOD GIVEN TO DIRECT US HOW WE MAY GLORIFY AND ENJOY

HIM?

A: The Word of God, which is contained in the scriptures of the Old and

New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and

enjoy him.

2 Tim 3:16. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,' By Scripture

is understood the sacred Book of God. It is given by divine

inspiration; that is, the Scripture is not the contrivance of man's

brain, but is divine in its origin. The image of Diana was had in

veneration by the Ephesians, because they supposed it fell from

Jupiter. Acts 19:95. The holy Scripture is to be highly reverenced and

esteemed, because we are sure it came from heaven. 2 Pet 1:11. The two

Testaments are the two lips by which God has spoken to us.

How does it appear that the Scriptures have a Jus Divinum, a divine

authority stamped upon them?

Because the Old and New Testament are the foundation of all religion.

If their divinity cannot be proved, the foundation on which we build

our faith is gone. I shall therefore endeavour to prove this great

truth, that the Scriptures are the very word of God. I wonder whence

the Scriptures should come, if not from God. Bad men could not be the

authors of it. Would their minds be employed in inditing such holy

lines? Would they declare so fiercely against sin? Good men could not

be the authors of it. Could they write in such a strain? or could it

stand with their grace to counterfeit God's name, and put, Thus saith

the Lord, to a book of their own devising? Nor could any angel in

heaven be the author of it, because the angels pry and search into the

abyss of gospel mysteries, I Pet 1:12, which implies their nescience of

some parts of Scripture; and sure they cannot be the authors of that

book which they themselves do not fully understand. Besides, what angel

in heaven durst be so arrogant as to personate God and, say, I create,'

Isa 65:17, and, I the Lord have said it,? Numb 14:45. So that it is

evident, the pedigree of Scripture is sacred, and it could come from

none but God himself.

Not to speak of the harmonious consent of all the parts of Scripture,

there are seven cogent arguments which may evince it to be the Word of

God.

[1] Its antiquity. It is of ancient standing. The grey hairs of

Scripture make it venerable. No human histories extant reach further

than Noah's flood: but the holy Scripture relates matters of fact that

have been from the beginning of the world; it writes of things before

time. That is a sure rule of Tertullian, That which is of the greatest

antiquity, id verum quod primum, is to be received as most sacred and

authentic.'

[2] We may know the Scripture to be the Word of God by its miraculous

preservation in all ages. The holy Scriptures are the richest jewel

that Christ has left us; and the church of God has so kept these public

records of heaven, that they have not been lost. The Word of God has

never wanted enemies to oppose, and, if possible, to extirpate it. They

have given out a law concerning Scripture, as Pharaoh did the midwives,

concerning the Hebrew women's children, to strangle it in the birth;

but God has preserved this blessed Book inviolable to this day. The

devil and his agents have been blowing at Scripture light, but could

never blow it out; a clear sign that it was lighted from heaven. Nor

has the church of God, in all revolutions and changes, kept the

Scripture that it should not be lost only, but that it should not be

depraved. The letter of Scripture has been preserved, without any

corruption, in the original tongue. The Scriptures were not corrupted

before Christ's time, for then Christ would not have sent the Jews to

them. He said, Search the Scriptures.' He knew these sacred springs

were not muddied with human fancies.

[3] The Scripture appears to be the Word of God, by the matter

contained in it. The mystery of Scripture is so abstruse and profound

that no man or angel could have known it, had it not been divinely

revealed. That eternity should be born; that he who thunders in the

heavens should cry in the cradle; that he who rules the stars should

suck the breasts; that the Prince of Life should die; that the Lord of

Glory should be put to shame; that sin should be punished to the full,

yet pardoned to the full; who could ever have conceived of such a

mystery, had not the Scripture revealed it to us? So, for the doctrine

of the resurrection; that the same body which is crumbled into a

thousand pieces, should rise idem numero, the same individual body,

else it were a creation, not a resurrection. How could such a sacred

riddle, above all human disquisition, be known, had not the Scripture

made a discovery of it? As the matter of Scripture is so full of

goodness, justice and sanctity, that it could be breathed from none but

God; so the holiness of it shows it to be of God. Scripture is compared

to silver refined seven times. Psa 12:2. The Book of God has no errata

in it; it is a beam of the Sun of Righteousness, a crystal stream

flowing from the fountain of life. All laws and edicts of men have had

their corruptions, but the Word of God has not the least tincture, it

is of meridian splendour. Psa 119:940. Thy word is very pure,' like

wine that comes from the grape, which is not mixed nor adulterated. It

is so pure that it purifies everything else. John 17:17. Sanctify them

through thy truth.' The Scripture presses holiness, so as no other book

ever did: it bids us live soberly, righteously, and godly;' Titus 2:12;

soberly, in acts of temperance; righteously, in acts of justice; godly,

in acts of zeal and devotion. It commends to us, whatever is just,

lovely, and of good report.' Phil 4:4. This sword of the Spirit cuts

down vice. Eph 6:67. Out of this tower of Scripture is thrown a

millstone upon the head of sin. The Scripture is the royal law which

commands not only the actions, but affections; it binds the heart to

good behaviour. Where is there such holiness to be found, as is digged

out of this sacred mine? Who could be the author of such a book but God

himself?

[4] That the Scripture is the Word of God is evident by its

predictions. It prophesies of things to come, which shows the voice of

God speaking in it. It was foretold by the prophet, A virgin shall

conceive,' Isa 7:14, and, the Messiah shall be cut off.' Dan 9:96. The

Scripture foretells things that would fall out many ages and centuries

after; as how long Israel should serve in the iron furnace, and the

very day of their deliverance. Exod 12:2I. At the end of the four

hundred and thirty years, even the self-same day, it came to pass that

the host of the Lord went out of Egypt.' This prediction of future

things, merely contingent, and not depending upon natural causes, is a

clear demonstration of its divine origin.

[5] The impartiality of those men of God who wrote the Scriptures, who

do not spare to set down their own failings. What man that writes a

history would black his own face, by recording those things of himself

that might stain his reputation? Moses records his own impatience when

he struck the rock, and tells us, he could not on that account enter

into the land of promise. David relates his own adultery and bloodshed,

which stands as a blot in his escutcheon to succeeding ages. Peter

relates his own pusillanimity in denying Christ. Jonah sets down his

own passions, I do well to be angry to the death.' Surely had their pen

not been guided by God's own hand, they would never have written that

which reflects dishonour upon themselves. Men usually rather hide their

blemishes than publish them to the world; but the penmen of holy

Scripture eclipse their own name; they take away all glory from

themselves, and give the glory to God.

[6] The mighty power and efficacy that the Word has had upon the souls

and consciences of men. It has changed their hearts. Some by reading

Scripture have been turned into other men; they have been made holy and

gracious. By reading other books the heart may be warmed, but by

reading this book it is transformed. 2 Cor 3:3. Ye are manifestly

declared to be the epistle of Christ, written not with ink, but with

the Spirit of the living God.' The Word was copied out into their

hearts, and they were become Christ's epistle, so that others might

read Christ in them. If you should set a seal upon marble, and it

should make an impression upon the marble, and leave a print behind,

there would be a strange virtue in that seal; so when the seal of the

Word leaves a heavenly print of grace upon the heart, there must needs

be a power going along with that Word no less than divine. It has

comforted their hearts. When Christians have sat by the rivers weeping,

the Word has dropped as honey, and sweetly revived them. A Christian's

chief comfort is drawn out of these wells of salvation. Rom 15:5. That

we through comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.' When a poor soul

has been ready to faint, it has had nothing to comfort it but a

Scripture cordial. When it has been sick, the Word has revived it. 2

Cor 4:17. Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for

us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' When it has been

deserted, the Word has dropped in the golden oil of joy. Lam 3:3I. The

Lord will not cast off for ever.' He may change his providence, not his

purpose; he may have the look of an enemy, but he has the heart of a

father. Thus the Word has a power in it to comfort the heart. Psa

119:90. This is my comfort in mine affliction; for thy word has

quickened me.' As the spirits are conveyed through the arteries of the

body, so divine comforts are conveyed through the promises of the Word.

Now, the Scriptures having such an exhilarating, heart-comforting power

in them, shows clearly that they are of God, and it is he that has put

the milk of consolation into these breasts.

[7] The miracles by which Scripture is confirmed. Miracles were used by

Moses, Elijah, and Christ, and were continued, many years after, by the

apostles, to confirm the verity of the holy Scriptures. As props are

set under weak vines, so these miracles were set under the weak faith

of men, that if they would not believe the writings of the Word, they

might believe the miracles. We read of God's dividing the waters,

making a pathway in the sea for his people to go over, the iron

swimming, the oil increasing by pouring out, Christ's making wine of

water, his curing the blind, and raising the dead. Thus God has set a

seal to the truth and divinity of the Scriptures by miracles.

The Papists cannot deny that the Scripture is divine and sacred; but

they affirm quoad nos, with respect to us, it receives its divine

authority from the church; and in proof of it they bring that

Scripture, I Tim 3:15, where the church is said to be the ground and

pillar of truth.

It is true, the church is the pillar of truth; but it does not

therefore follow that the Scripture has its authority from the church.

The king's proclamation is fixed on the pillar, the pillar holds it

out, that all may read, but the proclamation does not receive its

authority from the pillar, but from the king; so the church holds forth

the Scriptures, but they do not receive their authority from the

church, but from God. If the Word of God be divine, merely because the

church holds it forth, then it will follow, that our faith is to be

built upon the church, and not upon the Word, contrary to Eph 2:20.

Built upon the foundation (that is the doctrine) of the apostles and

prophets.'

Are all the books in the Bible of the same divine authority?

Those which we call canonical.

Why are the Scriptures called canonical?

Because the Word is a rule of faith, a canon to direct our lives. The

Word is the judge of controversies, the rock of infallibility. That

only is to be received for truth which agrees with Scripture, as the

transcript with the original. All maxims in divinity are to be brought

to the touchstone of Scripture, as all measures are brought to the

standard.

Are the Scriptures a complete rule?

The Scripture is a full and perfect canon, containing in it all things

necessary to salvation. 2 Tim 3:15. From a child thou hast known the

holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation.' It

shows the Credenda, what we are to believe; and the Agenda, what we are

to practise. It gives us an exact model of religion, and perfectly

instincts us in the deep things of God. The Papists, therefore, make

themselves guilty, who eke out Scripture with their traditions, which

they consider equal to it. The Council of Trent says, that the

traditions of the church of Rome are to be received pari pietatis

affectu, with the same devotion that Scripture is to be received; so

bringing themselves under the curse. Rev 22:18. If any man shall add

unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written

in this book.'

What is the main scope and end of Scripture?

To reveal a way of salvation. It makes a clear discovery of Christ.

John 20:01: These things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus

is the Christ, and that believing ye might have life through his name.'

The design of the Word is to be a test whereby our grace is to be

tried; a sea-mark to show us what rocks are to be avoided. The Word is

to sublimate and quicken our affections; it is to be our directory and

consolatory; it is to waft us over to the land of promise.

Who should have the power of interpreting Scripture?

The Papists assert that it is in the power of the church. If you ask

whom they mean by the church, they say, The Pope, who is head of it,

and he is infallible; so Bellarmine. But that assertion is false,

because many of the Popes have been ignorant and vicious, as Platina

affirms, who writes the lives of Popes. Pope Liberius was an Arian, and

Pope John XII denied the immortality of the soul; therefore Popes are

not fit interpreters of Scripture; who then?

The Scripture is to be its own interpreter, or rather the Spirit

speaking in it. Nothing can cut the diamond but the diamond; nothing

can interpret Scripture but Scripture. The sun best discovers itself by

its own beams; the Scripture interprets itself to the understanding.

But the question is concerning hard places of Scripture, where the weak

Christian is ready to wade beyond his depth; who shall interpret here?

The church of God has appointed some to expound and interpret

Scripture; therefore he has given gifts to men. The several pastors of

churches, like bright constellations, give light to dark Scriptures.

Mal 2:2. The priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek

the law at his mouth.'

But this is to pin our faith upon men.

We are to receive nothing for truth but what is agreeable to the Word.

As God has given to his ministers gifts for interpreting obscure

places, so he has given to his people so much of the spirit of

discerning, that they can tell (at least in things necessary to

salvation) what is consonant to Scripture, and what is not. I Cor

12:20. To one is given a spirit of prophecy, to another discerning of

spirits.' God has endued his people with such a measure of wisdom and

discretion, that they can discern between truth and error, and judge

what is sound and what is spurious. Acts 17:7: The Bereans searched the

Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.' They weighed the

doctrine they heard, whether it was agreeable to Scripture, though Paul

and Silas were their teachers. 2 Tim 3:36.

Use one: See the wonderful goodness of God, who, besides the light of

nature, has committed to us the sacred Scriptures, The heathen are

enveloped in ignorance. Psa 147:70. As for his judgements they have not

known them.' They have the oracles of the Sibyls, but not the writings

of Moses and the apostles. How many live in the region of death, where

this bright star of Scripture never appeared! We have this blessed Book

of God to resolve all our doubts, to point out a way of life to us.

John 14:42. Lord, how is it thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not

unto the world?'

God having given us his written Word to be our directory takes away all

excuses from men. No man can say, I went wrong for want of light; God

has given thee his Word as a lamp to thy feet; therefore if thou goest

wrong, thou cost it wilfully. No man can say, If I had known the will

of God, I would have obeyed it; thou art inexcusable, O man, for God

has given thee a rule to go by, he has written his law with his own

finger; therefore, if thou obeyest not, thou hast no apology left. If a

master leave his mind in writing with his servant, and tells him what

work he will have done, and the servant neglects the work, that servant

is left without excuse, John 15:52. Now you have no cloak for your

sins.'

Use two: Is all Scripture of divine inspiration? Then it reproves, (1.)

The Papists, who take away part of Scripture, and so clip the King of

heaven's coin. They expunge the second commandment out of their

catechisms, because it makes against images; and it is usual with them,

if they meet with anything in Scripture which they dislike, either to

put a false gloss upon it, or, if that will not do, to pretend it is

corrupted. They are like Ananias, who kept back part of the money. Acts

5:5. They keep back part of the Scripture from the people. It is a high

affront to God to deface and obliterate any part of his Word, and

brings us under that premunire, Rev 22:19, If any man shall take away

from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his

part out of the book of life.' Is all Scripture of divine inspiration?

(2.) It condemns the Antinomians, who lay aside the Old Testament as

useless, and out of date; and call those who adhere to them Old

Testament Christians. God has stamped a divine majesty upon both

Testaments; and till they can show me where God has repealed the Old,

it stands in force. The two Testaments are the two wells of salvation;

the Antinomians would stop up one of these wells, they would dry up one

of the breasts of Scripture. There is much gospel in the Old Testament.

The comforts of the gospel in the New Testament have their rise from

the Old. The great promise of the Messiah is in the Old Testament, A

virgin shall conceive and bear a son.' Nay, I say more. The moral law,

in some parts of it, speaks gospel - I am the Lord thy God;' here is

the pure wine of the gospel. The saints' great charter, where God

promises to sprinkle clean water upon them, and put his Spirit within

them,' is to be found primarily in the Old Testament. Ezek 36:65, 26.

So that they who take away the Old Testament, as Samson pulled down the

pillars, would take away the pillars of a Christian's comfort. (3.) It

condemns the Enthusiasts, who, pretending to have the Spirit, lay aside

the whole Bible, and say the Scripture is a dead letter, and they live

above it. What impudence is this! Till we are above sin, we shall not

be above Scripture. Let not men so talk of a revelation from the

Spirit, but suspect it to be an imposture. The Spirit of God acts

regularly, it works in and by the Word; and he that pretends to a new

light, which is either above the Word, or contrary to it, abuses both

himself and the Spirit: his light is borrowed from him who transforms

himself into an angel of light. (4.) It condemns the slighters of

Scripture; such as those who can go whole weeks and months and never

read the Word. They lay it aside as rusty armour; they prefer a play or

romance before Scripture. The magnalia legis are to them minutula [The

weighty matters of the law are to them insignificant]. Oh how many can

be looking at their faces in a glass all the morning, but their eyes

begin to be sore when they look upon a Bible! Heathens die for want of

Scripture, and these in contempt of it. They surely must needs go wrong

who slight their guide. Such as lay the reins upon the neck of their

lusts, and never use the curbing bit of Scripture to check them, are

carried to hell, and never stop. (5.) It condemns the abusers of

Scripture. Those who mud and poison this pure crystal fountain with

their corrupt glosses, and who wrest Scripture. 2 Pet 3:16. The Greek

word is, they set it upon the rack; they give wrong interpretations of

it, not comparing Scripture with Scripture; as the Antinomians pervert

that Scripture, Numb 23:3I, He has not beheld iniquity in Jacob;' from

which they infer that God's people may take liberty in sin, because God

sees no sin in them. It is true, God sees no sin in his people with an

eye of revenge, but he sees it with an eye of observation. He sees not

sin in them, so as to damn them; but he sees it, so as to be angry, and

severely to punish them. Did not David find it so, when he cried out of

his broken bones? In like manner the Arminians wrest the Scripture in

John 5:50, 'Ye will not come to me;' where they bring in free will.

This text shows how willing God is that we should have life; and that

sinners may do more than they do, they may improve the talents God has

given them; but it does not prove the power of free will, for it is

contrary to that Scripture, John 6:64, 'No man can come to me, except

the Father which has sent me draw him.' These, therefore, wring the

text so hard, that they make the blood come out; they do not compare

Scripture with Scripture. Some jest with Scripture. When they are sad,

they take the Scripture as their lute or minstrel to play upon, and so

drive away the sad spirit; as a drunkard I have read of, who, having

drunk off his cups, called to some of his fellows, Give us of your oil,

for our lamps are gone out.' In the fear of God, take heed of this.

Eusebius tells us of one, who took a piece of Scripture to make a jest

of, but was presently struck with a frenzy and ran mad. It is a saying

of Luther, Quos Deus vult perdere, &c.' Whom God intends to destroy, he

gives them leave to play with Scripture.'

Use three: If the Scripture be of divine inspiration, then be exhorted,

(1.) To study the Scripture. It is a copy of God's will. Be

Scripture-men, Bible-Christians. I adore the fulness of Scripture,'

says Tertullian. In the Book of God are scattered many truths as so

many pearls. John 5:59. Search the Scriptures.' Search as for a vein of

silver. This blessed Book will fill your head with knowledge, and your

heart with grace. God wrote the two tables with his own fingers; and if

he took pains to write, well may we take pains to read. Apollos was

mighty in the Scriptures. Acts 18:84. The Word is our Magna Charta for

Heaven; shall we be ignorant of our charter? Col 3:16. Let the word of

God dwell in you richly.' The memory must be a tablebook where the Word

is written. There is majesty sparkling in every line of Scripture; take

but one instance, Isa 63:1: Who is this that cometh from Edom, with

dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel,

travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in

righteousness, mighty to save.' Here is a lofty, magnificent style.

What angel could speak after this manner? Junius was converted by

reading one verse of John; he beheld a majesty in it beyond all human

rhetoric. There is a melody in Scripture. This is that blessed harp

which drives away sadness of spirit. Hear the sounding of this harp a

little. I Tim 1:15. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all

acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;' he

took not only our flesh upon him but our sins. And 1. Come unto me, all

ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' How sweetly does

this harp of Scripture sound, what heavenly music does it make in the

ears of a distressed sinner, especially when the finger of God's Spirit

touches this instrument! There is divinity in Scripture. It contains

the marrow and quintessence of religion. It is a rock of diamonds, a

mystery of piety. The lips of Scripture have grace poured into them.

The Scripture speaks of faith, self-denial, and all the graces which,

as a chain of pearls, adorns a Christian. It excites to holiness; it

treats of another world, it gives a prospect of eternity! Oh, then,

search the Scripture! make the Word familiar to you. Had I the tongue

of angels, I could not sufficiently set forth the excellency of

Scripture. It is a spiritual optic-glass, in which we behold God's

glory; it is the tree of life, the oracle of wisdom, the rule of

manners, the heavenly seed of which the new creature is formed. James

1:18. The two Testaments,' says Austin, are the two breasts which every

Christian must suck, that he may get spiritual nourishment.' The leaves

of the tree of life were for healing. Rev 22:2. So these holy leaves of

Scripture are for the healing of our souls. The Scripture is profitable

for all things. If we are deserted, here is spiced wine that cheers the

heavy heart; if we are pursued by Satan, here is the sword of the

Spirit to resist him; if we are diseased with sin's leprosy, here are

the waters of the sanctuary, both to cleanse and cure. Oh, then, search

the Scriptures! There is no danger in tasting this tree of knowledge.

There was a penalty laid at first, that we might not taste of the tree

of knowledge. Gen 2:27. In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt

surely die.' There is no danger in plucking from this tree of holy

Scripture; if we do not eat of this tree of knowledge, we shall surely

die. Oh, then, read the Scriptures! Time may come when the Scriptures

may be kept from us.

Read the Bible with reverence. Think in every line you read that God is

speaking to you. The ark wherein the law was put was overlaid with pure

gold, and was carried on bars, that the Levites might not touch it.

Exod 25:14. Why was this, but to give reverence to the law? Read with

seriousness. It is matter of life and death; by this Word you must be

tried; conscience and Scripture are the jury God will proceed by, in

judging you. Read the Word with affection. Get your hearts quickened

with the Word; go to it to fetch fire. Luke 24:42. Did not our hearts

burn within us?' Labour that the Word may not only be a lamp to direct,

but a fire to warm. Read the Scripture, not only as a history, but as a

love letter sent you from God, which may affect your hearts. Pray that

the same Spirit that wrote the Word may assist you in reading it; that

God's Spirit would show you the wonderful things of his law. Go near,'

saith God to Philip, join thyself to this chariot.' Acts 8:89. So, when

God's Spirit joins himself with the chariot of his Word, it becomes

effectual.

(2.) Be exhorted to prize the written Word. Job 23:12. David valued the

Word more than gold. What would the martyrs have given for a leaf of

the Bible! The Word is the field where Christ the pearl of price is

hid. In this sacred mine we dig, not for a wedge of gold, but for a

weight of glory. The Scripture is a sacred collyrium, or eye-salve to

illuminate us. Prov 6:63. The commandment is a lamp, and the law is

light.' The Scripture is the chart and compass by which we sail to the

new Jerusalem. It is a sovereign cordial in all distresses. What are

the promises but the water of life to renew fainting spirits? Is it sin

that troubles? Here is a Scripture cordial. Psa 65:5. Iniquities

prevail against me; as for our transgressions thou shalt purge them

away;' or, as it is in the Hebrew, thou shalt cover them.' Do outward

afflictions disquiet thee? Here is a Scripture cordial. Psa 91:15. I

will be with him in trouble,' not only to behold, but to uphold. Thus,

as in the ark manna was laid up, so promises are laid up in the ark of

Scripture. The Scripture will make us wise. Wisdom is above rubies. Psa

119:904. By thy precepts I get understanding.' What made Eve desire the

tree of knowledge? Gen 3:3. It was a tree to make one wise.' The

Scriptures teach a man to know himself. They discover Satan's snares

and stratagems. 2 Cor 2:2: They make one wise to salvation.' 2 Tim

3:35. Oh, then, highly prize the Scriptures. I have read of Queen

Elizabeth, that at her coronation, she received the Bible presented to

her, with both her hands, and kissing it, laid it to her breast,

saying, that that book had ever been her chief delight.

(3.) If the Scripture is of divine inspiration, believe it. The Romans,

that they might gain credit to their laws, reported they were inspired

by the gods of Rome. Oh give credence to the Word! It is breathed from

God's own mouth. Hence arises the profaneness of men, that they do not

believe the Scripture. Isa 53:3: Who has believed our report?' Did you

believe the glorious rewards the Scripture speaks of, would you not

give diligence to make your election sure? Did you believe the infernal

torments the Scripture speaks of, would it not put you into a cold

sweat, and cause a trembling at heart for sin? But people are in part

atheists, they give but little credit to the Word, therefore they are

so impious, and draw such dark shadows in their lives. Learn to realise

Scripture, get your hearts wrought to a firm belief of it. Some think,

if God should send an angel from heaven, and declare his mind, they

would believe him; or, if he should send one from the damned, and

preach the torments of hell all in flames, they would believe. But, If

they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded

though one arose from the dead.' Luke 16:61. God is wise, and he thinks

the fittest way to make his mind known to us is by writing; and such as

shall not be convinced by the Word, shall be judged by the Word. The

belief of Scripture is of high importance. It will enable us to resist

temptation. I John 2:14. The Word of God abideth in you, and ye have

overcome the wicked one.' It conduceth much to our sanctification;

therefore sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, are

put together. 2 Thess 2:13. If the word written be not believed, it is

like writing on water, which makes no impression.

(4.) Love the Word written. Psa 119:97. Oh how love I thy law!' Lord,'

said Augustine, let the holy Scriptures be my chaste delight.'

Chrysostom compares the Scripture to a garden, every truth is a

fragrant flower, which we should wear, not on our bosom, but in our

heart. David counted the Word sweeter than honey and the honeycomb.'

Psa 19:10. There is that in Scripture which may breed delight. It shows

us the way to riches: Deut 28:8, Prov 3:30; to long life, Psa 34:42; to

a kingdom, Heb 12:28. Well then may we count those the sweetest hours

which are spent in reading the holy Scriptures; well may we say with

the prophet, Jer 15:16, Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and

they were the joy and rejoicing of my heart.'

(5.) Conform to Scripture. Let us lead Scripture lives. Oh that the

Bible might be seen printed in our lives! Do what the Word commands.

Obedience is an excellent way of commenting upon the Bible. Psa 86:6: I

will walk in thy truth.' Let the Word be the sun-dial by which you set

your life. What are we the better for having the Scripture, if we do

not direct all our speeches and actions according to it? What is a

carpenter the better for his rule about him, if he sticks it at his

back, and never makes use of it for measuring and squaring his work?

So, what are we the better for the rule of the Word, if we do not make

use of it, and regulate our lives by it? How many swerve and deviate

from the rule! The Word teaches to be sober and temperate, but they are

drunk; to be chaste and holy, but they are profane; they go quite from

the rule! What a dishonour is it to religion, for men to live in

contradiction to Scripture! The Word is called a light to our feet.'

Psa 119:105. It is not only a light to our eyes to mend our sight, but

to our feet to mend our walk. Oh let us lead Bible conversations!

(6.) Contend for Scripture. Though we should not be of contentious

spirits, yet we ought to contend for the Word of God. This jewel is too

precious to be parted with. Prov 4:13. Keep her, for she is thy life.'

The Scripture is beset with enemies; heretics fight against it, we must

therefore contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.' Jude 3.

The Scripture is our book of evidences for heaven; shall we part with

our evidences? The saints of old were both advocates and martyrs for

truth; they would hold fast Scripture, though it were with the loss of

their lives.

(7.) Be thankful to God for the Scriptures. What a mercy is it that God

has not only acquainted us what his will is, but that he has made it

known by writing! In the old times God revealed his mind by visions,

but the Word written is a surer way of knowing God's mind. 2 Pet 1:18.

This voice which came from heaven we heard, we have also a more sure

word of prophecy.' The devil is God's ape, and he can transform himself

into an angel of light; he can deceive with false revelations; as I

have heard of one who had, as he thought, a revelation from God to

sacrifice his child, as Abraham had; whereupon, following this impulse

of the devil, he killed his child. Thus Satan deceives people with

delusion, instead of divine revelations; therefore we are to be

thankful to God for revealing his mind to us by writing. We are not

left in doubtful suspense that we should not know what to believe, but

we have an infallible rule to go by. The Scripture is our pole-star to

direct us to heaven, it shows us every step we are to take; when we go

wrong, it instructs us; when we go right, it comforts us; and it is

matter of thankfulness, that the Scriptures are made intelligible, by

being translated.

(8.) Adore God's distinguishing grace, if you have felt the power and

authority of the Word upon your conscience; if you can say as David,

Psa 119:90, 'Thy word has quickened me.' Christian, bless God that he

has not only given thee his Word to be a rule of holiness, but his

grace to be a principle of holiness. Bless God that he has not only

written his Word, but sealed it upon thy heart, and made it effectual.

Canst thou say it is of divine inspiration, because thou hast felt it

to be of lively operation? Oh free grace! that God should send out his

Word, and heal thee; that he should heal thee, and not others! That the

same Scripture which to them is a dead letter, should be to thee a

savour of life!

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3. God and his creation

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1. The Being Of God

Q-III: WHAT DO THE SCRIPTURES PRINCIPALLY TEACH?

A: The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning

God, and what duty God requires of man.

Q-IV: WHAT IS GOD?

A: God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being,

wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.

Here is, 1: Something implied. That there is a God. 2: Expressed. That

he is a Spirit. 3: What kind of Spirit?

I. Implied. That there is a God. The question, What is God? takes for

granted that there is a God. The belief of God's essence is the

foundation of all religious worship. Heb 11:1. He that comes to God

must believe that he is.' There must be a first cause, which gives

being to all things besides. We know that there is a God.

[1] By the book of nature. The notion of a Deity is engraven on man's

heart; it is demonstrable by the light of nature. I think it hard for a

man to be a natural atheist; he may wish there were no God, he may

dispute against a Deity, but he cannot in his judgement believe there

is no God, unless by accumulated sin his conscience be seared, and he

has such a lethargy upon him, that he has sinned away his very sense

and reason.

[2] We know that there is a God by his works, and this is so evident a

demonstration of a Godhead, that the most atheistical spirits, when

they have considered these works, have been forced to acknowledge some

wise and supreme maker of these things; as is reported of Galen and

others. We will begin with the creation of the glorious fabric of

heaven and earth. Sure there must be some architect or first cause. The

world could not make itself. Who could hang the earth on nothing but

the great God? Who could provide such rich furniture for the heavens,

the glorious constellations, the firmament bespangled with such

glittering lights? We see God's glory blazing in the sun, twinkling in

the stars. Who could give the earth its clothing, cover it with grass

and corn, adorn it with flowers, enrich it with gold? God only. Job

38:8. Who but God could make the sweet music in the heavens, cause the

angels to join in concert, and sound forth the praises of their Maker?

Job 38:8. The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God

shouted for joy.' If a man should go into a far country, and see

stately edifices there, he would never imagine that these built

themselves, but that some greater power had built them. To imagine that

the work of the creation was not framed by God, is as if we should

conceive a curious landscape to be drawn by a pencil without the hand

of an artist. Acts 17: 24. God that made the world, and all things

therein.' To create is proper to the Deity. The wise government of all

things evinces there is a God. God is the great superintendent of the

world, he holds the golden reins of government in his hand, guiding all

things most regularly and harmoniously to their proper end. Who that

eyes Providence but must be forced to acknowledge there is a God?

Providence is the queen and governess of the world, it is the hand that

turns the wheel of the whole creation; it sets the sun its race, the

sea its bounds. If God did not guide the world, things would run into

disorder and confusion. When one looks on a clock, and sees the motion

of the wheels, the striking of the hammer, the hanging of the plummets,

he would say, some artificer made it; so, when we see the excellent

order and harmony in the universe, the sun, that great luminary,

dispensing its light and heat to the world, without which the world

were but a grave or a prison; the rivers sending forth their silver

streams to refresh the bodies of men, and prevent a drought; and every

creature acting within its sphere, and keeping its due bounds; we must

needs acknowledge there is a God, who wisely orders and governs all

these things. Who could set this great army of the creatures in their

several ranks and squadrons, and keep them in their constant march, but

HE, whose name is THE LORD OF HOSTS? And as God does wisely dispose all

things in the whole regiment of the creatures, so, by his power, he

supports them. Did God suspend and withdraw his influence ever so

little, the wheels of the creation would unpin, and the axletree break

asunder. All motion, the philosophers say, is from something that is

unmoveable. As for example, the elements are moved by the influence and

motion of the heavenly bodies; the sun and moon, and these planets, are

moved by the highest orb, called Primum Mobile; now, if one should ask,

Who moves that highest orb, or is the first mover of the planets? It

can be no other than God himself.

Man is a microcosm or lesser world. The excellent contexture and frame

of his body is wrought curiously as with needlework. Psa 139:15. I was

curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.' This body is

endowed with a noble soul. Who but God could make such a union of

different substances as flesh and spirit? In him we live, and move, and

have our being. The quick motion of every part of the body shows there

is a God. We may see something of him in the sparkling of the eye; and

if the cabinet of the body be so curiously wrought, what is the jewel?

The soul has a celestial brightness in it; as Damascene says, It is a

diamond set in a ring of clay.' What noble faculties is the soul

endowed with! Understanding, Will, Affections are a glass of the

Trinity, as Plato speaks. The matter of the soul is spiritual, it is a

divine spark lighted from heaven; and being spiritual, is immortal, as

Scaliger notes; anima non senescit; the soul does not wax old,' it

lives for ever. Who could create a soul ennobled with such rare angelic

properties but God? We must needs say as the Psalmist, It is he that

has made us, and not we ourselves.' Psa 100:0.

[3] We may prove a Deity by our conscience. Conscience is God's deputy

or vicegerent. Conscience is a witness of a Deity. If there were no

Bible to tell us there is a God, yet conscience might. Conscience, as

the apostle says, either accuseth' or excuseth.' Rom 2:15. It acts in

order to a higher judicatory. Natural conscience, being kept free from

gross sin, excuses. When a man does virtuous actions, lives soberly and

righteously, observes the golden maxim, doing to others as he would

have them do to him, then conscience approves, and says, Well done.

Like a bee it gives honey. Natural conscience in the wicked accuses.

When men go against its light they feel the worm of conscience. Eheu!

quis intus scorpio? [Alas! What scorpion lurks within?] Seneca.

Conscience, being sinned against, spits fire in men's faces, fills them

with shame and horror. When the sinner sees a handwriting on the wall

of conscience, his countenance is changed. Many have hanged themselves

to quiet their conscience. Tiberius the emperor, a bloody man, felt the

lashes of his conscience; he was so haunted with that fury, that he

told the senate, he suffered death daily. What could put a man's

conscience into such an agony but the impression of a Deity, and the

thoughts of coming before his tribunal? Those who are above human laws

are subject to the checks of their own conscience. And it is

observable, the nearer the wicked approach to death, the more they are

terrified. Whence is this but from the apprehension of judgement

approaching? The soul, being sensible of its immortal nature, trembles

at him who never ceases to live, and therefore will never cease to

punish.

[4] That there is a God, appears by the consent of nations, by the

universal vote and suffrage of all men. Nulla gens tam barbara cui non

insideat haec persuasio Deum esse. Tully. No nation so barbarous,' says

Tully, as not to believe there is a God.' Though the heathen did not

worship the true God, yet they worshipped a god. They set up an altar,

To the unknown God.' Acts 17:73. They knew a God should be worshipped,

though they knew not the God whom they ought to worship. Some

worshipped Jupiter, some Neptune, some Mars. Rather than not worship

something, they would worship anything.

[5] That there is a God, appears by his prediction of future things. He

who can foretell things which shall surely come to pass is the true

God. God foretold, that a virgin should conceive; he prefixed the time

when the Messias should be cut off. Dan 9:96. He foretold the captivity

of the Jews in Babylon, and who should be their deliverer. Isa 45:5:

God himself uses this argument to prove he is the true God, and that

all the gods of the heathens are fictions and nullities. Isa 41:13.

Testimonium divinitatis est veritas divinationis. Tertullian. To

foretell things contingent, which depend upon no natural causes, is

peculiar to Deity.

[6] That there is a God, appears by his unlimited power and

sovereignty. He who can work, and none can hinder, is the true God; but

God can do so. Isa 43:13. I will work, and who shall let it?' Nothing

can hinder action but some superior power; but there is no power above

God: all power that is, is by him, therefore all power is under him; he

has a mighty arm.' Psa 89:13. He sees the designs men drive at against

him, and plucks off their chariot wheels; he makes the diviners mad.

Isa 44:45. He cutteth off the spirit of princes; he bridleth the sea,

gives check to the leviathan, binds the devil in chains; he acts

according to his pleasure, he doth what he will. I will work, and who

shall let it?'

[7] There are devils, therefore there is a God. Atheists cannot deny

but there are devils, and then they must grant there is a God. We read

of many possessed of the devil. The devils are called in Scripture

hairy ones', because they often appeared in the form of goats or

satyrs. Gerson, in his book De probatione spiritnum, tells us how Satan

on a time appeared to a holy man in a most glorious manner, professing

himself to be Christ: the old man answered, I desire not to see my

Saviour here in this desert it shall suffice me to see him in heaven.'

Now, if there be a devil, there is a God. Socrates, a heathen, when

accused at his death, confessed, that, as he thought there was a malus

genius, an evil spirit, so he thought there was a good spirit.

Use one: Seeing there is a God, it reproves such atheistical fools as

deny it. Epicurus denied there was a Providence, saying that all things

fell out by chance. He that says there is no God is the wickedest

creature that is; he is worse than a thief, for he takes away our

goods, but the atheist would take away our God from us. John 20:13.

They have taken away my Lord.' So we may say of atheists, they would

take away our God from us, in whom all our hope and comfort is laid up.

Psa 14:1. The fool has said in his heart, There is no God.' He durst

not speak it with his tongue, but says it in his heart: he wishes it.

Sure none can be speculative atheists. The devils believe and tremble.'

James 2:19. I have read of one Arthur, a professed atheist, who, when

he came to die, cried out he was damned. Though there are few found who

say, There is no God, yet many deny him in their practices. Tit 1:16.

In works they deny him.' Cicero said of Epicurus, Verbis reliquit Deos

resustulit [In his words he both denies the existence of the gods, and

permits them to remain]. The world is full of practical atheism; most

people live as if they did not believe there was a God. Durst they lie,

defraud, be unclean, if they believed there were a God who would call

them to account? If an Indian who never heard of a God should come

among us, and have no other means to convince him of a Deity, but the

lives of men in our age, surely he would question whether there were a

God; utrum Dii sint non ausim affirmare [I would not venture to assert

that gods exist].

Use two: Seeing there is a God, he will deal righteously, and give just

rewards to men. Things seem to be carried in the world very unequally;

the wicked flourish. Psa 73:3. They who tempt God are delivered. Mal

3:15. The ripe cluster of grapes are squeezed into their cup, and, in

the meanwhile, the godly, who wept for sin, and served God, are

afflicted. Psa 102:2. I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my

drink with weeping.' Evil men enjoy all the good, and good men endure

all the evil. But seeing there is a God, he will deal righteously with

men. Gen 18:85. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?'

Offenders must come to punishment. The sinner's death-day, and

dooms-day is coming. Psa 37:13. The Lord seeth that his day is coming.'

While there is a hell, the wicked shall be scourged enough; and while

there is eternity, they shall lie there long enough; and God will

abundantly compensate the faithful service of his people. They shall

have their white robes and crowns. Psa 58:11: Verily there is a reward

for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.'

Because God is God, he will give glorious rewards to his people.

Use three: Seeing there is a God, woe to all such as have this God

against them. He lives for ever to be avenged upon them. Ezek 22:14.

Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong in the days that I

shall deal with thee?' Such as pollute God's Sabbath, oppose his

saints, trampling these jewels in the dust. Such as live in

contradiction to God's Word engage the Infinite Majesty of heaven

against them; and how dismal will their case be! Deut 32:2I. If I whet

my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold of judgement, I will

render vengeance to mine enemies; I will make mine arrows drunk with

blood,' &c. If it be so terrible to hear the lion roar, what must it be

when he begins to tear his prey? Psa 122. Consider this, ye that forget

God, lest I tear you in pieces.' Oh that men would think of this, who

go on in sin! Shall we engage the great God against us? God strikes

slow but heavy. Job 40:0. Hast thou an arm like God?' Canst thou strike

such a blow? God is the best friend, but the worst enemy. If he can

look men into their grave, how far can he throw them? Who knows the

power of his wrath?' Psa 90:01. What fools are they, who, for a drop of

pleasure, drink a sea of wrath! Paracelsus speaks of a frenzy some

have, which will make them die dancing; so sinners go dancing to hell.

Use four: Seeing there is a God, let us firmly believe this great

article of our Creed. What religion can there be in men, if they do not

believe a Deity? He that cometh to God must believe that he is.' To

worship God, and pray to him, and not believe there is a God, is to put

a high scorn and contempt upon him. Believe that God is the only true

God: such a God as he has revealed himself in his Word, A lover of

righteousness, and hater of wickedness.' Psa 45: 7. The real belief of

a Deity gives life to all religious worship; the more we believe the

truth and infiniteness of God the more holy and angelic we are in our

lives. Whether we are alone, or in company, God sees us; he is the

heart-searcher; the belief of this would make us live always under

God's eye. Psa 16:60: I have set the Lord always before me.' The belief

of a Deity would be a bridle to sin, and a spur to duty; it would add

wings to prayer, and oil to the lamp of our devotion. The belief of a

Deity would cause dependence upon God in all our straits and

exigencies. Gen 17:7: I am God all-sufficient;' a God that can supply

all your wants, scatter all your fears, resolve all your doubts,

conquer all your temptations; the arm of God's power can never be

shrunk; he can create mercy for us, and therefore can help, and not be

beholden to the creature. Did we believe there is a God, we should so

depend on his providence as not to use any indirect means; we should

not run ourselves into sin to rid ourselves out of trouble. 2 Kings

1:1. Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to

inquire of Baal-Zebub the god of Ekron?' When men run to sinful shifts,

is it not because they do not believe there is a God, or that he is

all-sufficient?

Use five: Seeing there is a God, let us labour to get an interest in

him. Psa 48:14. This God is our God.' Since the fall we have lost

likeness to God, and communion with God; let us labour to recover this

lost interest, and pronounce this Shibboleth, My God.' Psa 43:3. It is

little comfort to know there is a God, unless he be ours. God offers

himself to be our God. Jer 31:13. I will be their God.' And faith

catches hold of the offer, it appropriates God, and makes all that is

in him over to us to be ours; his wisdom to be ours, to teach us; his

holiness ours, to sanctify us; his Spirit ours, to comfort us; his

mercy ours, to save us. To be able to say, God is mine, is more than to

have all mines of gold and silver.

Use six: Seeing there is a God, let us serve and worship him as God. It

was an indictment brought against some in Rom 1:1I. They glorified him

not as God.' Let us pray to him as to God. Pray with fervency. James

5:16. An effectual fervent prayer availeth much.' This is both the fire

and the incense; without fervency it is no prayer. Let us love him as

God. Deut 6:6. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.' To

love him with all the heart, is to give him precedence in our love, to

let him have the cream of our affections; to love him not only

appreciatively, but intensively, as much as we can. As the sunbeams

united in a burning glass burn the hotter, so all our affections should

be united, that our love to God may be more ardent. Let us obey him as

God. All creatures obey him, the stars fight his battles, the wind and

sea obey him. Mark 4:4I. Much more should man, whom God has endued with

a principle of reason. He is God, and has a sovereignty over us;

therefore, as we received life from him, so we must receive a law from

him, and submit to his will in all things. This is to kiss him with a

kiss of loyalty, and it is to glorify him as God.

II. The thing expressed. John 4:34. God is a Spirit.' God is essentia

spiritualissima. Zanchius.

What do you mean when you say, God is a Spirit?

By a spirit I mean, God is an immaterial substance, of a pure, subtile,

unmixed essence, not compounded of body and soul, without all extension

of parts. The body is a dreggish thing. The more spiritual God's

essence, the more noble and excellent it is. The spirits are the more

refined part of the wine.

Wherein does God differ from other spirits?

[1] The angels are spirits. We must distinguish spirits. The angels are

created, God is a Spirit uncreated. The angels are finite, and capable

of being annihilated; the same power which made them is able to reduce

them to their first nothing; but God is an infinite Spirit. The angels

are confined spirits, they cannot be duobus locis simul, but are

confined to a place; but God is an immense Spirit, and in all places at

once. The angels, though spirits, are but ministering spirits. Heb

1:14. Though they are spirits, they are servants. God is a

super-excellent Spirit, the Father of spirits. Heb 12:2.

[2] The soul is a spirit. Eccles 12:2. The spirit shall return to God

that gave it.'

How does God, being a Spirit, differ from the soul?

Servetus and Osiander thought, that the soul being infused, conveyed

into man the very spirit and substance of God. This is an absurd

opinion, for the essence of God is incommunicable.

When it is said the soul is a spirit, it means that God has made it

intelligible, and stamped upon it his likeness, not his essence.

But is it not said, that we are made partakers of the divine nature?

By divine nature there, is meant divine qualities. 2 Pet 1:1. We are

made partakers of the divine nature, not by identity or union with the

divine essence, but by a transformation into the divine likeness. Thus

you see how God differs from other spirits, angels and souls of men. He

is a Spirit of transcendent excellence, the Father of spirits.'

Against this Vorstius and the Anthropomorphites object, that, in

Scripture, a human shape and figure is given to God; he is said to have

eyes and hands.

It is contrary to the nature of a spirit to have a corporeal substance.

Luke 24:49. Handle me, and see me: for a spirit has not flesh and

bones, as ye see me have.' Bodily members are ascribed to God, not

properly, but metaphorically, and in a borrowed sense. By the right

hand of the Lord is meant his power; by the eyes of the Lord is meant

his wisdom. Now that God is a Spirit, and is not capable of bodily

shape or substance, is clear, for a body is visible, but God is

invisible; therefore he is a Spirit. I Tim 6:16. Whom no man has seen,

nor can see;' not by an eye of sense. A body is terminated, can be but

in one place at once, but God is everywhere, in all places at once;

therefore he is a Spirit. Psa 139:9, 8. God's centre is everywhere, and

his circumference is nowhere. A body being compounded of integral parts

may be dissolved; quicquid divisibile est corruptibile: but the Godhead

is not capable of dissolution, he can have no end from whom all things

have their beginning. So that it clearly appears that God is a Spirit,

which adds to the perfection of his nature.

Use one: If God be a Spirit, then he is impassible; he is not capable

of being hurt. Wicked men set up their banners, and bend their forces

against God; they are said to fight against God. Acts 5:59. But what

will this fighting avail? What hurt can they do to the Deity? God is a

Spirit, and therefore cannot receive any hurtful impression. Wicked men

may imagine evil against the Lord. Nahum 1:1. What do ye imagine

against the Lord?' But God being a Spirit is impenetrable. The wicked

may eclipse his glory, but cannot touch his essence. God can hurt his

enemies, but they cannot hurt him. Julian might throw up his dagger

into the air against Heaven, but could not touch the Deity. God is a

Spirit, invisible. How can the wicked with all their forces hurt him,

when they cannot see him? Hence all the attempts of the wicked against

God are foolish, and prove abortive. Psa 2:2, 4. The kings of the earth

set themselves against the Lord and against his anointed. He that sits

in the heavens shall laugh.' He is a Spirit, he can wound them, but

they cannot touch him.

Use two: If God be a Spirit, it shows the folly of the Papists, who

worship him by pictures and images. As a spirit, we cannot make any

image to represent him. Deut 4:42. The Lord spake to you out of the

midst of the fire, ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no

similitude.'

God being a Spirit is imperceptible, cannot be discerned; how then can

there be any resemblance made of him? Isa 40:18. To whom then will ye

liken God, or what likeness will ye compare unto him?' How can you

paint the Deity? Can we make an image of that which we never saw? Ye

saw no similitude. God is a Spirit. It were folly to endeavour to make

a picture of the soul, because it is a spiritual thing, or to paint the

angels, because they are spirits.

Are not angels in Scripture represented by the cherubim?

There is Imago personae et officii; there is the image of the person,

and the image that represents the office.' The cherubims did not

represent the persons of the angels, but their office. The cherubims

were made with wings, to show the swiftness of the angels in discharge

of their office; and if we cannot picture the souls nor the persons of

angels, because they are spirits, much less can we make an image or

picture of God, who is infinite and the Father of spirits.

God is also an omnipresent Spirit; he is present in all places. Jer

23:34. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.' Therefore,

being everywhere present, it is absurd to worship him by an image. Were

it not a foolish thing to bow down to the king's picture, when the king

is present? So it is to worship God's image, when God himself is

present.

How then shall we conceive of God as a Spirit, if we may make no image

or resemblance of him?

We must conceive of him spiritually. In his attributes; his holiness,

justice, and goodness, which are the beams by which his divine nature

shines forth. We must conceive of him as he is in Christ. Christ is the

image of the invisible God.' Col 1:15. Set the eyes of your faith on

Christ as God-man. In Christ we see some sparklings of the divine

glory; in him there is the exact resemblance of all his Father's

excellencies. The wisdom, love, and holiness of God the Father, shine

forth in Christ. John 14:4. He that has seen me has seen the Father.'

Use three: If God be a Spirit, it shows us, that the more spiritual we

grow, the more we grow like to God. How do earth and spirit agree? Phil

3:19. Earthly ones may give for their crest, the mole or tortoise that

live in the earth. What resemblance is there between an earthly heart,

and him who is a Spirit? The more spiritual any one is, the more like

God.

What is it to be spiritual?

To be refined and sublimated, to have the heart still in heaven, to be

thinking of God and glory, and to be carried up in a fiery chariot of

love to God. Psa 73:25. Whom have I in heaven but thee?' which Beza

paraphrases thus, Apage terra, utinam tecum in coelo essem! Begone

earth! Oh that I were in heaven with thee!' A Christian, who is taken

off from these earthly things, as the spirits are taken off from the

lees, has a noble spiritual soul, and most resembles him who is a

Spirit.

Use four: It shows that the worship which God requires of us, and is

most acceptable to him, is spiritual worship. John 4:44. They which

worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.' Spiritual

worship is virgin worship. Though God will have the service of our

bodies, our eyes and hands lifted up, to testify to others that

reverence we have of his glory and majesty, yet he will have the

worship of the soul chiefly. I Cor 6: 20. Glorify God in your body, and

in your spirit.' Spirit-worship God prizes, because it comes near to

his own nature, which is a Spirit.

What is it to worship God in spirit 7

(1.) To worship him without ceremonies. The ceremonies of the law,

which God himself ordained, are now abrogated, and out of date. Christ

the substance being come, the shadows fly away; and therefore the

apostle calls the legal ceremonies carnal rites. Heb 9:90. If we may

not use those Jewish ceremonies which God once appointed, then not

those which he never appointed.

(2.) To worship God in spirit, is to worship him with faith in the

blood of the Messiah. Heb 10:19. To worship him with the utmost zeal

and intenseness of soul. Acts 26:6. Our twelve tribes instantly serving

God day and night,' with intenseness of spirit; not only constantly,

but instantly. This is to worship God in spirit. The more spiritual any

service is, the nearer it comes to God, who is a Spirit, and the more

excellent it is; the spiritual part of duty is the fat of the

sacrifice: it is the soul and quintessence of religion. The richest

cordials are made of spirits, and the best duties are such as are of a

spiritual nature. God is a Spirit, and will be worshipped in spirit; it

is not pomp of worship, but purity, which God accepts. Repentance is

not in the outward severities used to the body, as penance, fasting,

and chastising the body, but it consists in the sacrifice of a broken

heart. Thanksgiving does not stand in church-music, the melody of an

organ, but rather in making melody in the heart to the Lord. Eph 5:19.

Prayer is not the tuning the voice into a heartless confession, or

telling over a few beads, but it consists in sighs and groans. Rom

8:86. When the fire of fervency is put to the incense of prayer, than

it ascends as a sweet odour. The true holy water is not that which the

pope sprinkles, but is distilled from the penitent eye. Spirit-worship

best pleases that God who is a Spirit. John 4:43. The Father seeketh

such to worship him;' to show the great acceptance of such, and how God

is delighted with spiritual worship. This is the savoury meat that God

loves. How few mind this! They give him more dregs than spirits; they

think it enough to bring their duties, but not their hearts; which

makes God disclaim the very services he himself appointed. Isa 1:12.

Ezek 33:31. Let us then give God spirit-worship, which best suits his

nature. A sovereign elixir full of virtue may be given in a few drops;

so a little prayer, if it be with the heart and spirit, may have much

virtue and efficacy in it. The publican made but a short prayer, God be

merciful to me a sinner,' Luke 18:13, but it was full of life and

spirit; it came from the heart, therefore it was accepted.

Use five: Let us pray to God, that as he is a Spirit, so he will give

us of his Spirit. The essence of God is incommunicable; but not the

motions, the presence and influences of his Spirit. When the sun shines

in a room, not the body of the sun is there, but the light, heat, and

influence of the sun. God has made a promise of his Spirit. Ezek 36:67.

I will put my Spirit within you.' Turn promises into prayers. O Lord,

thou who art a Spirit, give me of thy Spirit; I, flesh, beg thy Spirit,

thy enlightening, sanctifying, quickening, Spirit.' Melanchthon prayed,

Lord, inflame my soul with thy Holy Spirit.' How needful is his Spirit!

We cannot do any duty without it, in a lively manner. When this wind

blows upon our sails, we move swiftly towards heaven. Let us pray,

therefore, that God would give us of the residue of his Spirit, Mal

2:15, that we may move more vigorously in the sphere of religion.

Use six: As God is a Spirit, so the rewards that he gives are

spiritual. As the chief blessings he gives us in this life are

spiritual blessings, Eph 1:1, not gold and silver; as he gives Christ,

his love; he fills us with grace; so the main rewards he gives us after

this life are spiritual, a crown of glory that fadeth not away.' I Pet

5:5. Earthly crowns fade, but the believer's crown being spiritual is

immortal, a never-fading crown. It is impossible,' says Joseph

Scaliger, for that which is spiritual to be subject to change or

corruption.' This may comfort a Christian in all his labours and

sufferings; he lays out himself for God, and has little or no reward

here; but remember, God, who is a Spirit, will give spiritual rewards,

a sight of his face in heaven, white robes, a weight of glory. Be not

then weary of God's service; think of the spiritual reward, a crown of

glory which fadeth not away.

III. What kind of Spirit is God?

He is infinite. All created beings are finite. Though infinite may be

applied to all God's attributes - he is infinitely merciful, infinitely

wise, infinitely holy - yet, if we take infinity it implies,

God's omnipresence. The Greek word for infinite' signifies without

bounds or limits.' God is not confined to any place, he is infinite,

and so is present in all places at once. His centre is everywhere,

Divina essentia nusquam inclusa aut exclusa [In no place is God's Being

either confined or excluded]. Augustine. I Kings 8:87. Behold, the

heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee.' The Turks build

their temples open at the top, to show that God cannot be confined to

them, but is in all places by his presence. God's essence is not

limited either to the regions above, or to the terrestrial globe, but

is everywhere. As philosophers say of the soul, it is, Tota in tota, et

tota in qualibet parse: the soul is in every part of the body,' in the

eye, heart, foot; so we may say of God, he is ubique, his essence is

everywhere; his circuit is in heaven, and in earth, and sea, and he is

in all places of his circuit at once. This is to be infinite.' God, who

bounds everything else, is himself without bounds. He sets bounds to

the sea; Huc usque; Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further;' he sets

bounds to the angels; they, like the cherubims, move and stand at his

appointment, Ezek 10:16, but he is infinite, without bounds. He who can

span the heavens, and weigh the earth in scales, must needs be

infinite. Isa 40:02.

Vorstius maintains that God is in all places at once, but not in regard

of his essence; but Virtute et potentia, by his virtue and influence:

as the body of the sun is in heaven, it only sends forth its beams and

influences to the earth; or as a king, who is in all places of his

kingdom authoritatively, by his power and authority, but he is

personally on his throne.

God, who is infinite, is in all places at once, not only by his

influence, but by his essence; for, if his essence fills all places,

then he must needs be there in person. Jer 23:34. Do not I fill heaven

and earth?'

But does not God say heaven is his throne? Isa 66:6.

It is also said, that a humble heart is his throne. Isa 57:75. The

humble heart is his throne, in regard to his gracious presence; and

heaven is his throne, in regard to his glorious presence; and yet

neither of these thrones will hold him, for the heaven of heavens

cannot contain him.

But if God be infinite in all places, he is in impure places, and

mingles with impurity.

Though God be in all places, in the heart of a sinner by his

inspection, and in hell by his justice, yet he does not mingle with the

impurity, or receive the least tincture of evil. Divina natura non est

immista rebus aut sordibus inquinata [The divine nature does not

intermix with created matter, nor is contaminated by its impurities].

Augustine. No more than the sun shining on a dunghill is defiled, or

its beauty spotted; or than Christ going among sinners was defiled,

whose Godhead was a sufficient antidote against infection.

God must needs be infinite in all places at once, not only in regard to

the simplicity and purity of his nature, but in regard to his power,

which being so glorious, who can set him bounds, or prescribe him a

circuit to walk in? It is as if the drop should limit the ocean, or a

star set bounds to the sun.

Use one: It condemns the Papists, who would make more things infinite

than the Godhead. They hold that Christ's body is in many places at

once, that it is in heaven, and in the bread and wine in the sacrament.

Though Christ as he is God is infinite, and in all places at once, yet

as man he is not. When he was on earth, his manhood was not in heaven,

though his Godhead was; and now he is in heaven, his manhood is not on

earth, though his Godhead be. Heb 10: 5,is spoken of Christ; A body

thou hast prepared me.' This body cannot be in all places at once; for

then it is no more a body, but a spirit. Christ's body in heaven,

though glorified, is not deified; it is not infinite, as it must be, if

it be both in heaven, and in the bread and wine by transubstantiation.

Use two: If God be infinite, present in all places at once, then it is

certain he governs all things in his own person, and needs no proxies

or deputies to help him to carry on his government. He is in all places

in an instant, and manages all affairs both in the earth and heaven. A

king cannot be in all places of his kingdom in his own person,

therefore he is fain to govern by deputies and vicegerents, and they

often pervert justice; but God, being infinite, needs no deputies, he

is present in all places, he sees all with his own eyes, and hears all

with his own ears; he is everywhere in his own person, therefore is fit

to be the judge of the world; he will do every one right.

Use three: If God be infinite by his omnipresence, then see the

greatness and immenseness of the divine majesty! What a great God do we

serve! I Chron 29:91. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the glory,

and the majesty, and thou art exalted as head above all.' Well may the

Scripture display the greatness of his glory, who is infinite in all

places. He transcends our weak conceptions; how can our finite

understanding comprehend him who is infinite? He is infinitely above

all our praises. Neh 9:9. Blessed be thy glorious name, which is

exalted above all blessing and praise.' Oh what a poor nothing is man,

when we think of God's infiniteness! As the stars disappear at the

rising of the sun, oh, how does a man shrink into nothing when infinite

majesty shines forth in its glory! Isa 40:15. The nations are as a drop

of the bucket, or the small dust of the balance!' On what a little of

that drop are we! The heathens thought they had sufficiently praised

Jupiter when they called him great Jupiter. Of what immense majesty is

God, who fills all places at once! Psa 150:0.

Use four: If God be infinite, filling heaven and earth, see what a full

portion the saints have; they have him for their portion who is

infinite. His fulness is an infinite fulness; and he is infinitely

sweet, as well as infinitely full. If a conduit be filled with wine,

there is a sweet fulness, but still it is finite; but God is a sweet

fulness, and it is infinite. He is infinitely full of beauty and of

love. His riches are called unsearchable, because they are infinite.

Eph 3:3. Stretch your thoughts as much as you can, there is that in God

which exceeds; it is an infinite fulness. He is said to do abundantly

for us, above all that we can ask. Eph 3:30. What can an ambitious

spirit ask? He can ask crowns and kingdoms, millions of worlds; but God

can give more than we can ask, nay, or think, because he is infinite.

We can think, what if all the dust were turned to silver, if every

flower were a ruby, every sand in the sea a diamond; yet God can give

more than we can think, because he is infinite. Oh how rich are they

who have the infinite God for their portion! Well might David say, The

Lord is the portion of mine inheritance. The lines are fallen unto me

in pleasant places, and I have a goodly heritage.' Psa 16:6, 6. We may

go with the bee from flower to flower, but we shall never have full

satisfaction till we come to the infinite God. Jacob said: I have

enough;' in the Hebrew, I have all,' because he had the infinite God

for his portion. Gen 33:31. God being an infinite fulness, there is no

fear of want for any of the heirs of heaven; though there be millions

of saints and angels, which have a share in God's riches, yet he has

enough for them all, because he is infinite. Though a thousand men

behold the sun, there is light enough for them all: put never so many

buckets into the sea, there is water enough to fill them. Though an

innumerable company of saints and angels are to be filled out of God's

fulness, yet God, being infinite, has enough to satisfy them. God has

land enough to give to all his heirs. There can be no want in that

which is infinite.

Use five: If God be infinite, he fills all places, is everywhere

present. This is sad to the wicked, God is their enemy, and they cannot

escape him, nor flee from him, for he is everywhere present; they are

never out of his eye nor out of his reach. Psa 21:1. Thine hand shall

find out all thine enemies.' What caves or thickets can men hide in,

that God cannot find them; go where they will, he is present. Psa

139:9. Whither shall I flee from thy presence?' If a man owes a debt to

another he may make his escape, and flee into another land, where the

creditor cannot find him. But whither shall I flee from thy presence?'

God is infinite, he is in all places; so that he will find out his

enemies and punish them.

But is it not said, Cain went out from the presence of the Lord? Gen

4:16.

The meaning is, he went out from the church of God, where were the

visible signs of God's presence, and where God in a special manner

manifested his sweet presence to his people; but Cain could not go out

of God's sight; for God being infinite is everywhere present. Sinners

can neither go from an accusing conscience, nor from a revenging God.

Use six: If God be everywhere present, then for a Christian to walk

with God is not impossible. God is not only in heaven, but he is in

earth too. Isa 66:6: Heaven is his throne, there he sits; the earth is

his footstool, there he stands. He is everywhere present, therefore we

may come to walk with God. Enoch walked with God.' Gen 5:52. If God was

confined to heaven, a trembling soul might think, How can I converse

with God, how can I walk with him who lives in excelsis; above the

upper region? but God is not confined to heaven; he is omnipresent; he

is above us, yet he is about us, he is near to us. Acts 17:77. Though

he be not far from the assembly of the saints, He stands in the

congregation of the mighty.' Psa 82:6. He is present with us, God is in

every one of us; so that here on earth we may walk with God. In heaven

the saints rest with him, on earth they walk with him. To walk with God

is to walk by faith. We are said to draw nigh to God, Heb 10:02, and to

see him. Heb 11:17. As seeing him who is invisible:, and to have

fellowship with him. I John 1:1. Our fellowship is with the Father.'

Thus we may take a turn with him every day by faith. It is slighting

God not to walk with him. If a king be in presence, it is slighting him

to neglect him, and walk with the page. There is no walk in the world

so sweet as to walk with God. Psa 89:15. They shall walk in the light

of thy countenance.' Psa 138:8. Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the

Lord.' It is like walking among beds of spices, which send forth a

fragrant perfume.

Use seven: If God be infinite in his glorious essence, learn to admire

where you cannot fathom. The angels wear a veil, they cover their

faces, as adoring this infinite majesty. Isa 6:6. Elias wrapped himself

in a mantle when God's glory passed by. Admire where you cannot fathom.

Job 11:1. Canst thou by searching find out God?' Here we see some beams

of his glory, we see him in the glass of the creation; we see him in

his picture, his image shines in the saints; but who can search out all

his essential glory? What angel can measure these pyramids? Canst thou

by searching find out God?' He is infinite. We can no more search out

his infinite perfections, than a man upon the top of the highest

mountain can reach the firmament, or take a star in his hand. Oh, have

God-admiring thoughts! Adore where you cannot fathom. There are many

mysteries in nature which we cannot fathom; why the sea should be

higher than the earth, yet not drown it; why the Nile should overflow

in summer, when, by the course of nature, the waters are lowest; how

the bones grow in the womb. Eccl 11:1. If these things pose us, how may

the infinite mystery of the Deity transcend our most raised

intellectuals! Ask the geometrician, if he can, with a pair of

compasses, measure the breadth of the earth. So unable are we to

measure the infinite perfections of God. In heaven we shall see God

clearly, but not fully, for he is infinite; he will communicate himself

to us, according to the bigness of our vessel, but not the immenseness

of his nature. Adore then where you cannot fathom.

If God be infinite in all places, let us not limit him. Psa lxxviii 4I.

They limited the Holy One of Israel.' It is limiting God to confine him

within the narrow compass of our reason. Reason thinks God must go such

a way to work, or the business will never be effected. This is to limit

God to our reason; whereas he is infinite, and his ways are past

finding out. Rom 11:13. In the deliverance of the church, it is

limiting God, either to set him a time, or prescribe him a method for

deliverance. God will deliver Sion, but he will be left to his own

liberty; he will not be tied to a place, to a time, or to an

instrument, which were to limit him, and then he should not be

infinite. God will go his own way, he will pose and nonplus reason, he

will work by improbabilities, he will save in such a way as we think

would destroy. Now he acts like himself, like an infinite

wonder-working God.

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2. The Knowledge Of God

'The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.' I Sam

2:2. Glorious things are spoken of God; he transcends our thoughts, and

the praises of angels. God's glory lies chiefly in his attributes,

which are the several beams by which the divine nature shines forth.

Among other of his orient excellencies, this is not the least, The Lord

is a God of knowledge; or as the Hebrew word is, A God of knowledges.'

Through the bright mirror of his own essence, he has a full idea and

cognisance of all things; the world is to him a transparent body. He

makes a heartanatomy. Rev 2:23. I am he which searcheth the reins and

the heart.' The clouds are no canopy, the night is no curtain to draw

between us and his sight. Psa 139:12. The darkness hideth not from

thee.' There is not a word we whisper but God hears it. Psa 139:9.

There is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it

altogether.' There is not the most subtle thought that comes into our

mind, but God perceives it. Isa 66:18. I know their thoughts.' Thoughts

speak as loud in God's ears as words do in ours. All our actions,

though never so subtly contrived, and secretly conveyed, are visible to

the eye of Omniscience. Isa 66:18. I know their works.' Achan hid the

Babylonish garment in the earth, but God brought it to light. Josh 7:

2I. Minerva was drawn in such curious colours, and so lively pencilled,

that which way soever one turned, Minerva's eyes were upon him; so,

which way soever we turn ourselves God's eye is upon us. Job 37:16.

Dost thou know the balancing of the clouds; the wondrous works of him

that is perfect in knowledge?' God knows whatever is knowable; he knows

future contingencies. He foretold Israel's coming out of Babylon, and

the virgin's conceiving. By this the Lord proves the truth of his

Godhead against idol gods. Isa 41:13. Shew the things that are to come

hereafter, that we may know ye are gods.' The perfection of God's

knowledge is primary. He is the original, the pattern, and prototype of

all knowledge; others borrow their knowledge of him; the angels light

their lamps at this glorious sun. God's knowledge is pure. It is not

contaminated with the object. Though God knows sin, yet it is to hate

and punish it. No evil can mix or incorporate with his knowledge, any

more than the sun can be defiled with the vapours which arise from the

earth. God's knowledge is facile; it is without any difficulty. We

study and search for knowledge. Prov 2:2. If thou seekest for her as

for silver.' The lamp of God's knowledge is so infinitely bright, that

all things are intelligible to him.

God's knowledge is infallible; there is no mistake in his knowledge.

Human knowledge is subject to error. A physician may mistake the cause

of a disease; but God's knowledge is unerring; he can neither deceive,

nor be deceived; he cannot deceive, because he is truth, nor be

deceived, because he is wisdom. God's knowledge is instantaneous. Our

knowledge is successive, one thing after another. We argue from the

effect to the cause. God knows things past, present, and to come, uno

intuito, at once; they are all before him in one entire prospect.

God's knowledge is retentive; he never loses any of his knowledge; he

has reminiscentia, as well as intelligentia; he remembers as well as

understands. Many things elapse out of our minds, but God's knowledge

is eternized. Things transacted a thousand years ago, are as fresh to

him as if they were done but the last minute. Thus he is perfect in

knowledge.

But is it not said, Gen 18:21, I will go down and see whether they have

done according to the cry which is come up unto me, and I will know?

It could not be that God was ignorant; because there is mention made of

a cry; but the Lord speaks there after the manner of a judge, who will

first examine the cause before he passes the sentence. When he is upon

a work of justice he is not in a riot, as if he did not care where he

hits; but he goes straight against offenders. He lays judgement to the

line, and righteousness to the plummet.' Isa 28:87.

Hos 13:12. The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up, his sin is hid.

Not that his sin is hid from God, but his sin is hid; that is, it is

recorded, it is laid up against a day of reckoning. That this is the

meaning, is clear by the foregoing words, his iniquity is bound up. As

the clerk of the assizes binds up the indictments of malefactors in a

bundle, and at the assizes brings out the indictments and reads them in

court; so God binds up men's sins in a bundle, and, at the day of

judgement, this bundle shall be opened, and all their sins brought to

light before men and angels. God is infinite in knowledge. He cannot

but be so; for he who gives being to things must needs have a clear

inspection of them. Psa 94:4. He that planted the ear, shall he not

hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?' He who makes a watch

or engine knows all the workmanship in it. God, that made the heart,

knows all its movements. He is full of eyes, like Ezekiel's wheels,

and, as Austin says, Totus oculus, All eye.' It ought to be so; for he

is to be Judge of all the world.' Gen 18:85. There are so many causes

to be brought before him, and so many persons to be tried, that he must

have a perfect knowledge, or he could not do justice. An ordinary judge

cannot proceed without a jury, the jury must search the cause, and give

in the verdict; but God can judge without a jury. He knows all things

in and of himself, and needs no witnesses to inform him. A judge judges

only matters of fact, but God judges the heart. He not only judges

wicked actions, but wicked designs. He sees the treason of the heart

and punishes it.

Use one: Is God infinite in knowledge? Is he light, and in him is there

no darkness? Then how unlike are they to God who are darkness, and in

whom is no light, who are destitute of knowledge, such as the Indians

who never heard of God! And are there not many among us, who are no

better than baptized heathens? who need to seek the first principles of

the oracles of God. It is sad, that after the sun of the gospel has

shined so long in our horizon, to this day the veil should be upon

their heart. Such as are enveloped in ignorance cannot give God a

reasonable service. Rom 12:2. Ignorance is the nurse of impiety. The

schoolmen say, Omne peccatum fundatur in ignorantia [Every sin is

founded upon ignorance]. Jer 9:9. They proceed from evil to evil, and

know not me, saith the Lord.' Where ignorance reigns in the

understanding, lust rages in the affections. Prov 19:9. That the mind

be without knowledge, it is not good;' such have neither faith nor

fear: no faith; for knowledge carries the torch before faith. Psa 9:90.

They that know thy name shall put their trust in thee.' A man can no

more believe without knowledge than the eye can see without light. He

can have no fear of God; for how can they fear him whom they do not

know? The covering of Haman's face was a sad presage of death. When

people's minds are covered with ignorance, it is a covering of the face

that is a fatal forerunner of destruction.

Use two: If God be a God of knowledge, then see the folly of hypocrisy.

Hypocrites do not virtute miacere, but fingere [Hypocrites do not

actually do good, they merely make a show of it]. Melanchthon. They

carry it fair with men, but care not how bad their hearts are; they

live in secret sin. Psa 73:31. They say, How doth God know?' Psa 10:0:

God has forgotten, he hideth his face, he will never see it.' But, Psa

147:7, His understanding is infinite:' He has a window to look into

men's breasts; he has a key for the heart; he beholds all the sinful

workings of men's spirits, as in a glass-hive we can see the bees

working in their combs. Matt 6:6. He sees in secret. As a merchant

enters debts in his book, so God has his day-book, in which he enters

every sin. Jeroboam's wife disguised herself that the prophet should

not know her; but he discerned her. I Kings 14:4. Why feignest thou

thyself to be another?' The hypocrite thinks to prevaricate and juggle

with God, but God will unmask him. Eccles 12:14. God shall bring every

work into judgement, with every secret thing.' Jer 29:93. They have

committed villany in Israel, even I know, and am a witness, saith the

Lord.' Ay, but the hypocrite hopes he shall colour over his sin, and

make it look very specious. Absalom masks over his treason with the

pretence of a religious vow. Judas dissembles his envy at Christ, and

his covetousness, with the pretence of charity to the poor.' John 12:2.

Jehu makes religion a stirrup to his ambitious design. 2 Kings 10:16.

But God sees through these fig-leaves. You may see a jade under his

gilt trappings. Jer 16:17. Their iniquities are not hid from mine

eyes.' He that has an eye to see will find a hand to punish.

Use three: Is God so infinite in knowledge? Then we should always feel

as under his omniscient eye. Sic vivendum est tanquam in conspectu

[Hence we ought to live as if always in full view]. Seneca. Let us set

David's prospect before our eye. Psa 16:6. I have set the Lord always

before me.' Seneca counselled Lucilius, that whatever he was doing, he

should imagine some of the Roman worthies stood before him, and then he

would do nothing dishonourable. The consideration of God's omniscience

would be preventive of much sin. The eye of man will restrain from sin;

and will not God's eyes much more? Esther 7:7. Then said the king, Will

he force the queen also before me?' Will we sin when our judge looks

on? Would men speak so vainly, if they considered God overheard them?

Latimer took heed to every word in his examination, when he heard the

pen go behind the hangings: so, what care would persons have of their

words, if they remembered God heard, and the pen is going on in heaven?

Would men go after strange flesh if they believed God was a spectator

of their wickedness, and would make them do penance in hell for it?

Would they defraud in their dealings, and use false weights, if they

thought God saw them, and for making their weights lighter would make

their damnation heavier. Viewing ourselves as under the eye of God's

omniscience, would cause reverence in the worship of God. God sees the

frame and carriage of our hearts when we come before him. How would

this call in our straggling thoughts? How would it animate and spirit

duty? It would make us put fire to the incense. Acts 26:6. The tribes

instantly served God day and night,' omnibus viribus, with the utmost

zeal and intenseness of spirit. To think God is in this place would add

wings to prayer, and oil to the flame of our devotion.

Use four: Is God's knowledge infinite? Study sincerity, be what you

seem. I Sam 16:6. The Lord looketh upon the heart.' Men judge the heart

by the actions, God judges the actions by the heart; if the heart be

sincere, God will see the faith and bear with the failing. Asa had his

blemishes, but his heart was right with God. 2 Chron 15:17. God saw his

sincerity, and pardoned his infirmity. Sincerity in a Christian is like

chastity in a wife, which excuses many failings. Sincerity makes our

duties acceptable, like musk among linen, that perfumes it. As Jehu

said to Jehonadab, 2 Kings 10:15. Is thy heart right with me? And he

said, It is. If it be, said he, give me thy hand; and he took him up

into the chariot:' so, if God sees our heart is right, that we love

him, and design his glory, now, says he, give me your prayers and

tears; now you shall come up with me into the chariot of glory.

Sincerity makes our services to be golden, and God will not cast away

the gold though it may want some weight. Is God omniscient, and his eye

chiefly upon the heart? Wear the girdle of truth about you, and never

leave it off.

Use five: Is God a God of infinite knowledge? Then there is comfort,

(1.) To the saints in particular. (2.) To the church in general.

(1.) To saints in particular. In case of private devotion. Christian,

thou settest hours apart for God, thy thoughts run upon him as thy

treasure; God takes notice of every good thought. Mal 3:16. He had a

book of remembrance written for them that thought upon his name.' Thou

enterest into thy closet, and prayest to thy Father in secret; he hears

every sigh and groan. Psa 38:8. My groaning is not hid from thee.' Thou

waterest the seed of thy prayer with tears, God bottles every tear. Psa

56:6. Put thou my tears into thy bottle.' When the secrets of all

hearts shall be opened, God will make an honourable mention of the zeal

and devotion of his people, and he himself will be the herald of their

praises. 1 Cor 4:4. Then shall every man have praise of God.'

The infiniteness of God's knowledge is a comfort, in case the saints

have not a clear knowledge of themselves. They find so much corruption,

that they judge they have no grace. Gen 25:52. If it be so, why am I

thus?' If I have grace, why is my heart in so dead and earthly a frame?

oh remember, God is of infinite knowledge, he can spy grace where thou

canst not; he can see grace hid under corruption, as the stars may be

hid under a cloud. God can see that holiness in thee which thou canst

not discern in thyself; he can spy the flower of grace in thee, though

overtopped with weeds. I Kings 14:13. Because there is in him some good

thing.' God sees some good thing in his people, when they can see no

good in themselves; and though they judge themselves, he will give them

an absolution.

It is comfort in respect of personal injuries. It is the saints' lot to

suffer. The head being crowned with thorns, the feet must not tread

upon roses. If saints find a real purgatory, it is in this life; but

this is their comfort, that God sees what wrong is done to them; the

apple of his eye is touched, and is he not sensible of it? Paul was

scourged by cruel hands. 2 Cor 11:15. Thrice was I beaten with rods;'

as if you should see a scullion whip the king's son. God beholds it.

Exod 3:3. I know their sorrows.' The wicked make wounds in the backs of

the saints, and then pour in vinegar; but God writes down their

cruelty. Believers are a part of Christ's mystical body; and for every

drop of a saint's blood spilt God puts a drop of wrath in his vial.

(2.) Comfort to the church of God in general. If God be a God of

knowledge, he sees all the plots of the enemies against Zion, and can

make them prove abortive. The wicked are subtile, having borrowed their

skill from the old serpent; they dig deep, to hide their counsels from

God, but he sees them, and can easily counterwork them. The dragon is

described with seven heads in Rev 12:2, to show how he plots against

the church; but God is described with seven eyes in Zech 3:3, to show

that he sees all the plots and stratagems of the enemies; and when they

deal proudly, he can be above them. Come, says Pharaoh, let us deal

wisely;' Exod 1:10; but he never played the fool more than when he

thought to deal wisely. Exod 14:44. In the morning watch the Lord

looked to the host of the Egyptians by the pillar of fire, and troubled

the host.' How may this, like sap in the vine, comfort the church of

God in her militant state! The Lord has an eye in all the councils and

combinations of the enemy; he sees them in their train, and can blow

them up in their own mine.

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3. The Eternity Of God

The next attribute is, God is eternal.' Psa 90:0. From everlasting to

everlasting thou art God.' The schoolmen distinguish between aevun et

aeternum, to explain the notion of eternity. There is a threefold

being.

I. Such as had a beginning; and shall have an end; as all sensitive

creatures, the beasts, fowls, fishes, which at death are destroyed and

return to dust; their being ends with their life. 2. Such as had a

beginning, but shall have no end, as angels and the souls of men, which

are eternal a parte post; they abide for ever. 3. Such as is without

beginning, and without ending, and that is proper only to God. He is

semper existens, from everlasting to everlasting. This is God's title,

a jewel of his crown. He is called the King eternal' I Tim 1:17.

Jehovah is a word that properly sets forth God's eternity; a word so

dreadful, that the Jews trembled to name or read it and used Adonai,

Lord, in its place. Jehovah contains in it time past, present, and to

come. Rev 1:1. Which is, and which was, and which is to come,'

interprets the word Jehovah; (which is) he subsists of himself, having

a pure and independent being; (which was) God only was before time;

there is no searching into the records of eternity; (which is to come)

his kingdom has no end; his crown has no successors. Heb 1:1. Thy

throne, O God, is for ever and ever.' The doubling of the word ratifies

the certainty of it, as the doubling of Pharaoh's dream. I shall prove

that God only could be eternal, without beginning. Angels could not;

they are but creatures, though spirits; they were made; and therefore

their beginning may be known; their antiquity may be searched into. If

you ask, when were they created? Some think before the world was; but

not so: for what was before time was eternal. The first origin of

angels reaches no higher than the beginning of the world. It is thought

by the learned, that the angels were made on the day on which the

heavens were made. Job 38:8. When the morning stars sang together, and

all the sons of God shouted for joy.' St Jerome, Gregory, and venerable

Bede understand it, that when God laid the foundation-stone of the

world, the angels being then created, sang anthems of joy and praise.

It is proper to God only to be eternal, without beginning. He is Alpha

and Omega, the first and the last. Rev 1:1. No creature can write

itself Alpha, that is only a flower of the crown of heaven. Exod 3:14.

I am that I am,' that is, He who exists from and to eternity.

Use one: Here is thunder and lightning to the wicked. God is eternal,

therefore the torments of the wicked are eternal. God lives for ever;

and as long as God lives he will be punishing the damned. This should

be as the handwriting upon the wall, it should make their joints to be

loosed,' &c. Dan 5:5. The sinner takes liberty to sin he breaks God's

laws, like a wild beast that breaks over the hedge, and leaps into

forbidden pasture; he sins with greediness, as if he thought he could

not sin fast enough. Eph 4:19. But remember, one of God's names is

Eternal, and as long as God is eternal he has time enough to reckon

with all his enemies. To make sinners tremble, let them think of these

three things: the torments of the damned are without intermission,

without mixture, and eternal.

(1.) Without intermission. Their pains shall be acute and sharp, and no

relaxation; the fire shall not be slackened or abated. Rev 14:41. They

have no rest day nor night;' like one that has his joints stretched

continually on the rack, and has no ease. The wrath of God is compared

to a stream of brimstone. Isa 30:03. Why to a stream? Because a stream

runs without intermission; so God's wrath runs like a stream, and pours

out without intermission. In the pains of this life, there is some

abatement and intermission; the fever abates; after a fit of the stone,

the patient has some ease; but the pains of hell are intense and

violent, in summo gradu. The damned soul never says, I am now more at

ease.

(2.) Without mixture. Hell is a place of pure justice. In this life,

God in anger remembers mercy, he mixes compassion with suffering. Deut

33:35. Asher's shoe was of iron, but his foot was dipt in oil.

Affliction is the iron shoe, but mercy is mixed with it; the foot is

dipt in oil. But the torments of the damned have no mixture. Rev 14:40.

They shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out

without mixture.' No mixture of mercy. How is the cup of wrath said to

be full of mixture! Psa 75:5. For in the hand of the Lord there is a

cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture: and he poureth out of

the same: but the dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth shall wring

them out and drink them.' Yet in the Revelation it is said to be

without mixture. It is full of mixture, that is, it is full of all the

ingredients that may make it bitter; the worm, the fire, the curse of

God, all these are bitter ingredients. It is a cup mixed, yet it is

without mixture; there shall be nothing to afford the least comfort, no

mixture of mercy, and so without mixture. In the sacrifice of jealousy,

Numb 5:55, no oil was put to it; so, in the torments of the damned,

there is no oil of mercy to abate their sufferings.

(3.) Without cessation, eternal. The pleasures of sin are but for a

season, but the torments of the wicked are for ever. Sinners have a

short feast, but a long reckoning. Origen erroneously thought, that

after a thousand years the damned should be released out of their

misery; but the worm, the fire, the prison, are all eternal. Rev 14:11.

The smoke of their torment ascendeth for ever and ever.' Poenae

gehennales puniunt, non finiunt [The torments of hell keep on

punishing, they never end]. Prosper. Eternity is a sea without bottom

and banks. After millions of years, there is not one minute in eternity

wasted; and the damned must be ever burning, but never consuming,

always dying, but never dead. Rev 9:6. They shall seek death, but shall

not find it.' The fire of hell is such, as multitudes of tears will not

quench it, length of time will not finish it; the vial of God's wrath

will be always dropping upon a sinner. As long as God is eternal, he

lives to be avenged upon the wicked. Oh eternity! eternity! who can

fathom it? Mariners have their plummets to measure the depths of the

sea; but what line or plummet shall we use to fathom the depth of

eternity? The breath of the Lord kindles the infernal lake, Isa 30:03,

and where shall we have engines or buckets to quench that fire? Oh

eternity! If all the body of the earth and sea were turned to sand, and

all the air up to the starry heaven were nothing but sand, and a little

bird should come every thousand years, and fetch away in her bill but

the tenth part of a grain of all that heap of sand, what numberless

years would be spent before that vast heap of sand would be fetched

away! Yet, if at the end of all that time, the sinner might come out of

hell, there would be some hope; but that word Ever' breaks the heart.

The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.' What a

terror is this to the wicked, enough to put them into a cold sweat, to

think, as long as God is eternal, he lives for ever to be avenged upon

them!

Here the question may be asked, Why should sin that is committed in a

short time be punished eternally?

We must hold with Augustine, that God's judgements on the wicked,

occultu esse possum, injusta esse non possum, may be secret, but never

unjust.' The reason why sin committed in a short time is eternally

punished, is, because every sin is committed against an infinite

essence, and no less than eternity of punishment can satisfy. Why is

treason punished with confiscation and death, but because it is against

the king's person, which is sacred; much more that offence which is

against God's crown and dignity is of a heinous and infinite nature,

and cannot be satisfied with less than eternal punishment.

Use two: Of comfort to the godly. God is eternal, therefore he lives

for ever to reward the godly. Rom 2:2. To them who seek for glory and

honour, eternal life'. The people of God here are in a suffering

condition. Acts 20:03. Bonds and afflictions abide me.' The wicked are

clad in purple, and fare deliciously, while the godly suffer. Goats

climb upon high mountains, while Christ's sheep are in the valley of

slaughter. But here is the comfort, God is eternal, and he has

appointed eternal recompenses for the saints. In heaven are fresh

delights, sweetness without surfeit; and that which is the crown and

zenith of heaven's happiness, is, that it is eternal.' I John 3:15.

Were there but the least suspicion that this glory must cease it would

much eclipse, yea, embitter it; but it is eternal. What angel can span

eternity? 2 Cor 4:47. An eternal weight of glory.' The saints shall

bathe themselves in the rivers of divine pleasure; and these rivers can

never be dried up. Psa 16:6: At thy right hand are pleasures for

evermore.' This is the Elah, the highest strain in the apostle's

rhetoric. I Thess 4:17. Ever with the Lord.' There is peace without

trouble, ease without pain, glory without end, ever with the Lord.' Let

this comfort the saints in all their troubles; their sufferings are but

short, but their reward is eternal. Eternity makes heaven to be heaven;

it is the diamond in the ring. Oh blessed day that shall have no night!

The sunlight of glory shall rise upon the soul and never set! Oh

blessed spring, that shall have no autumn, or fall of the leaf. The

Roman emperors have three crowns set upon their heads, the first of

iron, the second of silver, the third of gold; so the Lord sets three

crowns on his children, grace, comfort, and glory; and this crown is

eternal. I Pet 5:5. Ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not

away.' The wicked have a never-dying worm, and the godly a never-fading

crown. Oh how should this be a spur to virtue! How willing should we be

to work for God! Though we had nothing here, God has time enough to

reward his people. The crown of eternity shall be set upon their head.

Use three: Of exhortation. Study eternity. Our thoughts should chiefly

run upon eternity. We all wish for the present, something that may

delight the senses. If we could have lived, as Augustine says, a

cunabulis mundi, from the infancy of the world to the world's old age,

what were this? What is time, measured with eternity? As the earth is

but a small point to the heaven, so time is but, nay scarce a minute to

eternity! And then, what is this poor life which crumbles away so fast?

Oh, think of eternity! Annos aeternos in mente habe. Brethren, we are

every day travelling to eternity; and whether we wake or sleep, we are

going our journey. Some of us are upon the borders of eternity. Oh

study the shortness of life and length of eternity!

More particularly think of God's eternity and the soul's eternity.

Think of God's eternity. He is the Ancient of Days, who was before all

time. There is a figurative description of God in Dan 7:7. The Ancient

of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his

head like the pure wool.' His white garment, wherewith he was clothed,

signified his majesty; his hair, like the pure wool, his holiness; and

the Ancient of Days, his eternity. The thought of God's eternity should

make us have high adoring thoughts of God. We are apt to have mean,

irreverent thoughts of him. Psa 50:0I. Thou thoughtest I was such an

one as thyself,' weak and mortal, but if we would think of God's

eternity, when all our power ceases, he is King eternal, his crown

flourishes for ever, he can make us happy or miserable for ever, this

would make us have adoring thoughts of God. Rev 4:40. The four and

twenty elders fall down before him that sat upon the throne, and

worship him that liveth for ever and ever; and cast their crowns before

the throne.' The saints fall down, to signify by that humble posture

that they are not worthy to sit in God's presence. They fall down and

they worship him that liveth for ever and ever; they do as it were kiss

his feet. They cast their crowns before the throne, they lay all their

honour at his feet; thus they show humble adoration to the eternal

essence. Study God's eternity, it will make us adore where we cannot

fathom. Think of the soul's eternity. As God is eternal, so he has made

us eternal. We are never-dying creatures; we are shortly entering upon

an eternal state, either of happiness or misery. Have serious thoughts

of this. Say, O my soul, which of these two eternities is like to be

thy portion? I must shortly depart hence, and whither then shall I go,

to which of these eternities, either of glory or misery? The serious

meditation of the eternal state we are to pass into would work strongly

with us.

(1.) Thoughts of eternal torments are a good antidote against sin. Sin

tempts with its pleasure; but, when we think of eternity, it may cool

the intemperate heat of lust. Shall I, for the pleasure of sin for a

season, endure eternal pain? Sin, like those locusts, Rev 9:9, seems to

have on its head a crown like gold, but it has in it a tail like a

scorpion, verse 10, and a sting in its tail, and this sting can never

be plucked out. Shall I venture eternal wrath? Is sin committed so

sweet as lying in hell for ever is bitter? This thought would make us

flee from sin, as Moses from the serpent.

(2.) The serious thoughts of eternal happiness would very much take us

off from worldly things. What are these sublunary things to eternity!

They are quickly gone, they salute us, and take their farewell. But I

am to enter upon an everlasting estate; I hope to live with him who is

eternal; what is the world to me? To those who stand upon the top of

the Alps, the great cities of Campania are small things in their eyes;

so to him who has his thoughts fixed on his eternal state after this

life, all these things seem as nothing in his eye. What is the glory of

this world! how poor and contemptible, compared with an eternal weight

of glory!

(3.) The serious thoughts of an eternal state, either of happiness or

misery, should have a powerful influence upon whatsoever we take in

hand. Every work we do promotes either a blessed or cursed eternity;

every good action sets us a step nearer to an eternity of happiness;

every bad action sets us a step nearer to an eternity of misery. Oh

what influence should the thoughts of eternity have upon our religious

duties! It should make us do them with all our might. Duty well

performed lifts a Christian higher towards heaven, and sets a Christian

a step nearer to a blessed eternity.

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4. The Unchangeableness Of God

The next attribute is God's unchangeableness. I am Jehovah, I change

not.' Mal 3:3. I. God is unchangeable in his nature. II. In his decree.

I. Unchangeable in his nature. 1. There is no eclipse of his

brightness. 2. No period put to his being.

[1] No eclipse of his brightness. His essence shines with a fixed

lustre. With whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.' James

1:17. Thou art the same.' Psa 102:27. All created things are full of

vicissitudes. Princes and emperors are subject to mutation. Sesostris,

an Egyptian prince, having subdued divers kings in war, made them draw

his chariot, like horses, as if he intended them to eat grass, as God

did King Nebuchadnezzar. The crown has many successors. Kingdoms have

their eclipses and convulsions. What is become of the glory of Athens?

The pomp of Troy? Jam seges est ubi Troja fuit [Now corn grows where

Troy once stood]. Though kingdoms have a head of gold, they have feet

of clay. The heavens change. As a vesture shalt thou change them, and

they shall be changed.' Psa 102:26. The heavens are the most ancient

records, where God has written his glory with a sunbeam, yet these

shall change. Though I do not think they shall be destroyed as to their

substance, yet they shall be changed as to their qualities; they shall

melt with fervent heat, and so be more refined and purified. 2 Pet

3:12. Thus the heavens shall be changed, but not he who dwells in

heaven. With him there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning.' The

best saints have their eclipses and changes. Look upon a Christian in

his spiritual estate, and he is full of variation. Though the seed of

grace does not die, yet its beauty and activity often wither. A

Christian has his aguish fits in religion. Sometimes his faith is at a

high tide, sometimes low ebb; sometimes his love flames, and at another

time is like fire in the embers, and he has lost his first love. How

strong was David's grace at one time! The God of my rock, in him will I

trust.' 2 Sam 12:2. At another time he says, I shall one day perish by

the hand of Saul.' What Christian can say he does not find a change in

his graces; that the bow of his faith never unbends, the strings of his

viol never slacken? Surely we shall never meet with such Christians

till we meet them in heaven. But God is without any shadow of turning.

The angels were subject to change; they were created holy, but mutable.

The angels which kept not their first estate.' Jude 6. These morning

stars of heaven were falling stars. But God's glory shines with a fixed

brightness. In God there is nothing that looks like a change, for

better or worse; not better, because then he were not perfect; not

worse, for then he would cease to be perfect. He is immutably holy,

immutably good; there is no shadow of change in him.

But when Christ, who is God, assumed the human nature, there was a

change in God.

If the divine nature had been converted into the human, or the human

into the divine, there had been a change, but they were not so. The

human nature was distinct from the divine. Therefore there was no

change. A cloud over the sun makes no change in the body of the sun;

so, though the divine nature be covered with the human, it makes no

change in the divine nature.

[2] There is no period put to his being. Who only has immortality.' I

Tim 6:16. The Godhead cannot die. An infinite essence cannot be changed

into finite; but God is infinite. He is eternal, ergo, he is not

mortal. To be eternal and mortal is a contradiction.

Use one: See the excellence of the divine nature in its immutability.

This is the glory of the Godhead. Mutableness denotes weakness, and is

not in God, who is the same, yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.' Heb

13:3. Men are fickle and mutable, like Reuben, unstable as water.' Gen

49:9. They are changeable in their principles. If their faces altered

as fast as their opinions, we should not know them. Changeable in their

resolutions; as the wind that blows in the east, presently turns about

to the west. They resolve to be virtuous, but quickly repent of their

resolutions. Their minds are like a sick man's pulse, which alters

every half hour. An apostle compares them to waves of the sea, and

wandering stars. Jude 13. They are not pillars in God's temple, but

reeds. Others are changeable in their friendship. They quickly love and

quickly hate. Sometimes they will put you in their bosom, then

excommunicate you out of their favour. They change as the chameleon,

into several colours, but God is immutable.

Use two: See the vanity of the creature. There are changes in

everything but in God. Men of high degree are vanity, and men of low

degree are a lie.' Psa 62:2. We look for more from the creature than

God has put in it. It has two evils in it; it promises more than we

find, and it fails us when we most need it. There is failure in omni. A

man desires to have his corn ground, and the water fails; the mariner

is for a voyage, and the wind does not blow, or is contrary; one

depends upon another for the payment of a promise, and he fails, and is

like a foot out of joint. Who would look for a fixed stability in the

vain creature? It is as if one should build houses on the sand, where

the sea comes in and overflows. The creature is true to nothing but

deceit, and is constant only in its disappointments. It is no more

wonderful to see changes fall out here below, than to see the moon

dressing itself in a new shape and figure. Expect to meet with changes

in everything but God.

Use three: Comfort to the godly. (1.) In case of losses. If an estate

be almost boiled away to nothing, if you lose friends by death, there

is a double eclipse; but the comfort is, God is unchangeable; I may

lose these things, but I cannot lose my God; he never dies. When the

fig-tree and olive-tree failed, God did not fail. I will joy in the God

of my salvation.' Hab 3:38. Flowers in the garden die, but a man's

portion remains; so outward things die and change, but thou art the

strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.' Psa 73:36.

(2.) In case of sadness of spirit. God seems to cast off the soul in

desertion, as in Cant 5:5, 'My Beloved had withdrawn himself;' yet he

is unchangeable. He is immutable in his love; he may change his

countenance, but not his heart. I have loved thee with an everlasting

love.' Jer 31:1. Hebrew, Olam, a love of eternity. If once God's

electing love rises upon the soul, it never sets. The mountains shall

be removed, but my loving kindness shall not depart from thee, neither

the covenant of my peace be removed.' Isa 54:40. God's love stands

faster than the mountains. His love to Christ is unchangeable; and he

will no more cease loving believers than he will cease loving Christ.

Use four: Of exhortation. Get an interest in the unchangeable God, then

thou art as a rock in the sea, immoveable in the midst of all changes.

How shall I get a part in the unchangeable God?

By having a change wrought in thee. But ye are washed, but ye are

sanctified.' I Cor 6:6: Whence we are changed, a tenebris ad lucem

[from darkness to light], so changed, as if another soul did live in

the same body. By this change we are interested in the unchangeable

God.

Trust to that God only who is unchangeable. Cease ye from man,' Isa

2:22; leave trusting to the reed, but trust to the Rock of ages. He

that is by faith engarrisoned in God, is safe in all changes; he is

like a boat that is tied to an immoveable rock. He that trusts in God,

trusts in that which cannot fail him; he is unchangeable. I will never

leave thee, nor forsake thee.' Heb 13:3. Health may leave us, riches,

friends may leave us, but, says God, I will not leave thee; my power

shall support thee; my Spirit shall sanctify thee; my mercy shall save

thee; I will never leave thee. Oh trust in this unchangeable God! God

is jealous of two things; of our love, and of our trust. He is jealous

of our love, lest we love the creature more than him, therefore he

makes it prove bitter; and of our trust, lest we should place more

confidence in it than in him, therefore he makes it prove unfaithful.

Outward comforts are given us as food by the way to refresh us, not as

crutches to lean on. If we make the creature an idol, what we make our

trust God will make our shame. Oh trust in the immortal God! Like

Noah's dove, we have no footing for our souls, till we get into the ark

of God's unchangeableness. Psa 125:5. They that trust in the Lord shall

be like mount Sion, which cannot be removed.'

II. God is unchangeable in his decree. What he has decreed from

eternity is unalterable. My counsel shall stand.' Isa 46:60. God's

eternal counsel or decree is immutable. If he changed his decree, it

must be from some defect of wisdom or foresight, for that is the reason

why men change their purposes; they see something after, which they did

not see before; but this cannot be the cause why God should alter his

decree, because his knowledge is perfect, he sees all things in one

entire prospect before him.

But is not God said to repent? There seems to be a change in his

decree, in Jonah 3:30. The Lord repented of the evil that he said he

would do unto them.'

Repentance is attributed to God figuratively. Numb 23:19. He is not a

man that he should repent.' There may be a change in God's work, but

not in his will. He may will a change, but not change his will. God may

change his sentence, but not his decree.' A king may cause sentence to

be passed upon a malefactor whom he intends to save; so God threatened

destruction to Nineveh, but the people of Nineveh repenting, God spared

them. Jonah 3:30. Here God changed his sentence, but not his decree; it

was what had lain in the womb of his purpose from eternity.

But if God's decree be unchangeable, and cannot be reversed, to what

purpose should we use the means? Our endeavours towards salvation

cannot alter his decree.

The decree of God does not affect my endeavour; for he that decreed my

salvation decreed it in the use of means, and if I neglect the means I

reprobate myself. No man argues thus: God has decreed how long I shall

live, therefore I will not use means to preserve my life, I will not

eat and drink. God has decreed the time of my life in the use of means,

so God has decreed my salvation in the use of the Word and of prayer.

As a man who refuses food murders himself, so he that refuses to work

out his salvation destroys himself. The vessels of mercy are said to be

prepared unto glory. Rom 9:93. How are they prepared but by being

sanctified? and that cannot be but in the use of means; therefore let

not God's decree take thee off from holy endeavours. It is a good

saying of Dr Preston, Hast thou a heart to pray to God? it is a sign no

decree of wrath has passed against thee.'

Use one: If God's decree be eternal and unchangeable, then God does not

elect upon our faith foreseen, as the Arminians maintain. The children

being not yet born, that the purpose of God according to election might

stand, it was said, Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated.' Rom 9:11,

13. We are not elected for holiness, but to holiness. Eph 1:1. If we

are not justified for our faith, much less are we elected for our

faith; but we are not justified for it. We are said to be justified

through faith as an instrument in Eph 2:2, but not for faith as a

cause; and, if not justified for faith, then much less elected. God's

decree of election is eternal and unchangeable, and therefore depends

not upon faith foreseen. As many as were ordained to eternal life,

believed.' Acts 13:38. They were not elected because they believed, but

they believed because they were elected.

Use two: If God's decree be unchangeable, it gives comfort in two

cases. (1.) Concerning God's providence towards his church. We are

ready to quarrel with Providence, if everything does not accord with

our desire. Remember God's work goes on, and nothing falls out but what

he has decreed from eternity. (2.) God has decreed troubles for the

church's good. The troubles of God's church is like the angel's

troubling the water, which made way for healing his people. John 5: 4.

He has decreed troubles in the church. His fire is in Zion, and his

furnace in Jerusalem.' Isa 31:1. The wheels in a watch move cross one

to another, but they all carry on the motion of the watch; so the

wheels of Providence often move cross to our desires, but still they

carry on God's unchangeable decree. Many shall be made white.' Dan

12:20. God lets the waters of affliction be poured on his people to

make them white. Therefore murmur not at God's dealings; his work goes

on, nothing falls out but what he has wisely decreed from eternity;

everything shall promote God's design, and fulfil his decree.

Use three: Comfort to the godly in regard of their salvation. 2 Tim

2:19. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord

knoweth them that are his.' God's counsel of election is unchangeable.

Once elected for ever elected. I will not blot his name out of the book

of life.' Rev 3:3. The book of God's decree has no errata in it, no

blottings out. Once justified, never unjustified. Repentance shall be

hid from mine eyes.' Hos 13: 14. God never repents of his electing

love. He loved them to the end.' John 13:3. Therefore, if thou art a

believer, comfort thyself with this, the immutability of God's decree.

Use four: To conclude with a word to the wicked, who march furiously

against God and his people, let them know that God's decree is

unchangeable. God will not alter it, nor can they break it; and while

they resist God's will they fulfil it. There is a two-fold will of God,

Voluntas praecepti et decreti; the will of God's precept, and of his

decree.' While the wicked resist the will of God's precept, they fulfil

the will of his permissive decree. Judas betrays Christ, Pilate

condemns him, the soldiers crucify him; while they resist the will of

God's precepts, they fulfil the will of his permissive decree. Acts

4:48. God commands one thing, they do the contrary; to keep the

Sabbath, and they profane it. While they disobey his command, they

fulfil his permissive decree. If a man sets up two nets, one of silk,

the other of iron, the silken net may be broken, not the iron; so while

men break the silken net of God's command, they are taken in the iron

net of his decree; while they sit backward to God's precepts, they row

forward to his decrees; his decrees to permit their sin, and to punish

them for their sin permitted.

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5. The Wisdom Of God

The next attribute is God's wisdom, which is one of the brightest beams

of the Godhead. He is wise in heart.' Job 9:9. The heart is the seat of

wisdom. Cor in Hebraeo sumitur pro judicio. Pineda. Among the Hebrews,

the heart is put for wisdom.' Let men of understanding tell me:' Job

34:44: in the Hebrew, Let men of heart tell me.' God is wise in heart,

that is, he is most wise. God only is wise; he solely and wholly

possesses all wisdom; therefore he is called, the only wise God.' I Tim

1:17. All the treasures of wisdom are locked up in him, and no creature

can have any wisdom but as God is pleased to give it out of his

treasury. God is perfectly wise; there is no defect in his wisdom. Men

may be wise in some things, but in other things may betray imprudence

and weakness. But God is the exemplar and pattern of wisdom, and the

pattern must be perfect. Matt 5:58. God's wisdom appears in two things.

I. His infinite intelligence. II. His exact working.

I. His infinite intelligence. He knows the most profound secrets. Dan

2:28. He knows the thoughts, which are the most intricate subtle

things. Amos 4:43. He declareth to man what is his thought.' Let sin be

contrived ever so politically, God will pull off all masks and

disguises, and make a heartanatomy. He knows all future contingencies,

et ante intuita [and, already foreseen], all things are before him in

one clear prospect.

II. His exact curious working. He is wise in heart; his wisdom lies in

his works. These works of God are bound up in three great volumes,

where we may read his wisdom.

[1] The work of creation. The creation is both a monument of God's

power, and a looking-glass in which we may see his wisdom. None but a

wise God could so curiously contrive the world. Behold the earth decked

with variety of flowers, which are both for beauty and fragrance.

Behold the heaven bespangled with lights. We may see the glorious

wisdom of God blazing in the sun, twinkling in the stars. His wisdom is

seen in marshalling and ordering everything in its proper place and

sphere. If the sun had been set lower, it would have burnt us; if

higher, it would not have warmed us with its beams. God's wisdom is

seen in appointing the seasons of the year. Thou hast made summer and

winter.' Psa 74:17. If it had been all summer, the heat would have

scorched us; if all winter, the cold would have killed us. The wisdom

of God is seen in chequering the dark and the light. If it had been all

night, there had been no labour; if all day, there had been no rest.

Wisdom is seen in mixing the elements, as the earth with the sea. If it

had been all sea, we had wanted bread; if it had been all earth, we had

wanted water. The wisdom of God is seen in preparing and ripening the

fruits of the earth, in the wind and frost that prepare the fruits, and

in the sun and rain that ripen the fruits. God's wisdom is seen in

setting bounds to the sea, and so wisely contriving it, that though the

sea be higher than many parts of the earth, yet it should not overflow

the earth; so that we may cry out with the Psalmist, O Lord, how

manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all.' Psa 104:24.

There is nothing to be seen but miracles of wisdom. God's wisdom is

seen in ordering things in the body politic, that one shall have need

of another. The poor need the rich man's money, and the rich need the

poor man's labour. God makes one trade depend upon another, that one

may be helpful to another, and that mutual love may be preserved.

[2] The second work wherein God's wisdom shines forth is the work of

redemption. (1.) Here was the masterpiece of divine wisdom, to contrive

a way to happiness between the sin of man and the justice of God. We

may cry out with the apostle, O the depth of the riches both of the

wisdom and knowledge of God.' Rom 11:13. This astonished men and

angels. If God had put us to find out a way of salvation when we were

lost, we could neither have had a head to devise, nor a heart to

desire, what God's infinite wisdom had found out for us. Mercy had a

mind to save sinners, and was loath that the justice of God should be

wronged. It is a pity, says Mercy, that such a noble creature as man

should be made to be undone; and yet God's justice must not be a loser.

What way then shall be found out? Angels cannot satisfy for the wrong

done to God's justice, nor is it fit that one nature should sin, and

another nature suffer. What then? Shall man be for ever lost? Now,

while Mercy was thus debating with itself, what to do for the recovery

of fallen man, the Wisdom of God stepped in; and thus the oracle spake:

- Let God become man; let the Second Person in the Trinity be

incarnate, and suffer; and so for fitness he shall be man, and for

ability he shall be God; thus justice may be satisfied, and man saved.

O the depth of the riches of the wisdom of God, thus to make justice

and mercy to kiss each other! Great is this mystery, God manifest in

the flesh.' 1 Tim 3:36. What wisdom was this, that Christ should be

made sin, yet know no sin; that God should condemn the sin, yet save

the sinner! Here was wisdom, to find out the way of salvation. (2.) The

means by which salvation is applied sets forth God's wisdom; that

salvation should be by faith, not by works. Faith is a humble grace, it

gives all to Christ; it is an adorer of free grace; and free grace

being advanced here, God has his glory; and it is his highest wisdom to

exalt his own glory. (3.) The way of working faith declares God's

wisdom. It is wrought by the word preached. Faith comes by hearing.'

Rom 10:17. What is the weak breath of a man to convert a soul? It is

like whispering in the ears of a dead man. This is foolishness in the

eye of the world; but the Lord loves to show his wisdom by that which

seems folly. He has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound

the wise.' I Cor 1:17. Why so? verse 29. That no flesh should glory in

his presence.' Should God convert by the ministry of angels, then we

should be ready to glory in angels, and give that honour to them which

is due to God; but when God works by weak tools, makes use of men who

are of like passions with ourselves, and by them converts, then the

power is plainly seen to be of God. We have this treasure in earthen

vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.'

2 Cor 4:4. Herein is God's wisdom seen, that no flesh may glory in his

Presence.

[3] The wisdom of God wonderfully appears in the works of his

providence. Every providence has a mercy or a wonder wrapt up in it.

The wisdom of God, in his works of providence, appears. (1.) By

effecting great things by small contemptible means. He cured the stung

Israelites by a brazen serpent. If some sovereign antidote had been

used, if the balm of Gilead had been brought, there had been some

likelihood of a cure; but what was there in a brazen serpent? It was a

mere image, and not applied to him that was wounded, he was to look

upon it only; yet this wrought a cure. The less probability in the

instrument, the more is God's wisdom seen. (2.) The wisdom of God is

seen in doing his work by that which to the eye of flesh seems quite

contrary. God intended to advance Joseph, and to make all his

brethren's sheaves bow to his sheaf. Now, what way does he take? First

Joseph is thrown into the pit; then sold into Egypt; then after that

put in prison. Gen 39:90. By his imprisonment God made way for his

advancement. For God to save in an ordinary way would not so much

display his wisdom. But when he goes strangely to work, and saves in

that very way in which we think he will destroy, his wisdom shines

forth in a most conspicuous manner. God would make Israel victorious,

and what way does he take? He lessens Gideon's army. The people that

are with thee are too many.' Judg 7:7. He reduces the army of two and

thirty thousand to three hundred; and by taking away the means of

victory makes Israel victorious. God had a design to bring his people

out of Egypt, and a strange course he takes to effect it. He stirred up

the hearts of the Egyptians to hate them. He turned their heart to hate

his people.' Psa 105:55. The more they hated and oppressed Israel, the

more God plagued the Egyptians, and the more glad they were to let

Israel go. Exod 12:23. The Egyptians were urgent upon Israel, that they

might send them out of the land in haste. God had a mind to save Jonah

when he was cast into the sea, and he let the fish swallow him up, and

so brought him to the shore. God would save Paul, and all that were in

the ship with him, but the ship must break, and they all came safe to

land upon the broken pieces of the ship. Acts 27:74. In reference to

the church, God often goes by contrary means, and makes the enemy do

his work. He can make a straight stroke with a crooked stick. He has

often made his church grow and flourish by persecution. The showers of

blood have made her more fruitful,' says Julian. Exod 1:10. Come, let

us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply;' and the way they took to

suppress them, made them multiply. Verse 12. The more they afflicted

them, the more they multiplied;' like ground, the more it is harrowed,

the better crop it bears. The apostles were scattered by reason of

persecution, and their scattering was like the scattering of seed; they

went up and down, and preached the gospel, and brought daily converts.

Paul was put in prison, and his bonds were the means of spreading the

gospel. Phil 1:12.

(3.) The wisdom of God is seen in making the most desperate evils turn

to the good of his children. As several poisonable ingredients, wisely

tempered by the skill of the artist, make a sovereign medicine, so God

makes the most deadly afflictions co-operate for the good of his

children. He purifies them, and prepares them for heaven. 2 Cor 4:17.

These hard frosts hasten the spring flowers of glory. The wise God, by

a divine chemistry, turns afflictions into cordials. He makes his

people gainers by losses, and turns their crosses into blessings.

(4.) The wisdom of God is seen in this, that the sins of men shall

carry on God's work; yet he should have no hand in their sin. The Lord

permits sin, but does not approve it. He has a hand in the action in

which sin is, but not in the sin of the action. As in the crucifying of

Christ, so far as it was a natural action, God concurred; if he had not

given the Jews life and breath, they could not have done it; but as it

was a sinful action, so God abhorred it. A musician plays upon a viol

out of tune; the musician is the cause of the sound, but the jarring

and discord is from the viol itself; so men's natural motion is from

God, but their sinful motion is from themselves. When a man rides on a

lame horse, his riding is the cause why the horse goes, but the

lameness is from the horse itself. Herein is God's wisdom, that the

sins of men carry on his work, yet he has no hand in them.

(5.) The wisdom of God is seen in helping in desperate cases. God loves

to show his wisdom when human help and wisdom fail. Exquisite lawyers

love to wrestle with niceties and difficulties in the law, to show

their skill the more. God's wisdom is never at a loss; but when

providences are darkest, then the morning star of deliverance appears.

Who remembered us in our low estate.' Psa 136:63. Sometimes God melts

away the spirits of his enemies. Josh 2:24. Sometimes he finds them

other work to do, and sounds a retreat to them, as he did to Saul when

he was pursuing David. The Philistines are in the land.' In the mount

will God be seen.' When the church seems to be upon the altar, her

peace and liberty ready to be sacrificed, then the angel comes.

(6.) God's wisdom is seen in befooling wise men, and in making their

wisdom the means of their overthrow. Ahithophel had deep policy. 2 Sam

16:63. The counsel of Ahithophel, which he counselled, was as if a man

had enquired at the oracle of God;' but he consulted his own shame. The

Lord turned his counsel into foolishness.' 2 Sam 15:51. God taketh the

wise in their own craftiness;' Job 5:13; that is, when they think to

deal wisely, he not only disappoints them, but ensnares them. The

snares they lay for others catch themselves. In the net which they hid

is their own foot taken.' Psa 9:15. God loves to counterplot

politicians; he makes use of their own wit to undo them, and hangs

Haman upon his own gallows.

Use one: Adore the wisdom of God. It is an infinite deep; the angels

cannot search into it. His ways are past finding out.' Rom 11:13. As we

should adore, so we should rest in the wisdom of God. God sees what

condition is best for us. Did we believe the wisdom of God, it would

keep us from murmuring. Rest in God's wisdom. (1.) In want of spiritual

comfort. God is wise; he sees it good sometimes that we should be

without comfort. Perhaps we should be lifted up with spiritual

enlargements, as Paul, with his revelations. 2 Cor 12:2. It is hard to

have the heart low when comfort is high. God sees humility to be better

for us than joy. It is better to want comfort, and be humble, than to

have it, and be proud. (2.) In want of bodily strength, rest in God's

wisdom. He sees what is best. Perhaps the less health the more grace;

weaker in body, the stronger in faith. Though our outward man perish,

yet the inward man is renewed day by day.' 2 Cor 4:16. At Rome there

were two laurel trees; when the one withered, the other flourished. The

inward man is renewed. When God shakes the tree of the body, he is

gathering the fruits of righteousness. Heb 12:21. Sickness is God's

lance, to let out the imposthume of sin. Isa 27:7. (3.) In case of

God's providences to his church. When we wonder what God is doing with

us, and are ready to kill ourselves with care; let us rest in God's

wisdom. He knows best what he has to do. His footsteps are not known.'

Psa 77:19. Trust him where you cannot trace him. God is most in his

way, when we think he is most out of the way. When we think God's

church is, as it were, in the grave, and there is a tombstone laid upon

her, his wisdom can roll away the stone from the sepulchre. Christ

cometh leaping over mountains.' Cant 2:2. Either his power can remove

the mountain, or his wisdom knows how to leap over it. (4.) In case we

are low in the world, or have but little oil in our cruse, let us rest

in God's wisdom. He sees it best; it is to cure pride and wantonness.

God knew if thy estate had not been lost, thy soul had been lost. God

saw riches would be a snare unto thee. I Tim 6:6. Art thou troubled

that God has prevented a snare? God will make thee rich in faith. What

thou lackest in temporals shall be made up in spirituals. God will give

thee more of his love. Thou art weak in estate, but God will make thee

strong in assurance. Oh rest in God's wisdom! he will carve the best

piece for thee. (5.) In case of the loss of dear friends, a wife, or

child, or husband, let us rest satisfied in God's wisdom. God takes

away these, because he would have more of our love; he breaks these

crutches, that we may live more upon him by faith. God would have us

learn to go without crutches.

Use two: If God be infinitely wise, let us go to him for wisdom, as

Solomon did. Give thy servant an understanding heart; and the speech

pleased the Lord.' I Kings 3:3. Here is encouragement for us; If any

one lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally, and

upbraideth not.' James 1:1. Wisdom is in God, tanquam infonte, as in

the fountain'; his wisdom is imparted, not impaired; his stock is not

spent by giving. Go then to God. Lord, do thou light my lamp; in thy

light shall I see light; give me wisdom, to know the fallacy of my

heart, the subtleties of the old serpent; to walk jealously towards

myself, religiously towards thee, prudently towards others; guide me by

thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory.

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6. The Power Of God

The next attribute is God's power. Job 9:19. If I speak of strength,

lo, he is strong.' In this chapter is a magnificent description of

God's power. Lo, he is strong.' The Hebrew word for strong signifies a

conquering, prevailing strength. He is strong.' The superlative degree

is intended here; viz., He is most strong. He is called El-shaddai, God

almighty. Gen 17:7. His almightiness lies in this, that he can do

whatever is feasible. Divines distinguish between authority and power.

God has both.

I. He has a sovereign right arid authority over man. He can do with his

creatures as he pleases. Who shall dispute with God? who shall ask him

a reason of his doings? Dan 4:45. He does according to his will in the

army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can

stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?' God sits judge in the

highest court; he calls the monarchs of the earth to the bar, and is

not bound to give a reason of his proceedings. Psa 75:5. He putteth

down one, and raiseth up another.' He has salvation and damnation in

his power. He has the key of justice in his hand, to lock up whom he

will in the fiery prison of hell; and he has the key of mercy in his

hand, to open heaven's gate to whom he pleases. The name engraven upon

his vesture is, King of kings, and Lord of lords.' Rev 19:96. He sits

Lord paramount, and who can call him to account? Isa 46:60. I will do

all my pleasure.' The world is God's diocese, and shall not he do what

he will in his own diocese? He it was that turned King Nebuchadnezzar

to eat grass, and threw the angels to hell when they sinned; that broke

the head of the Babylonish empire. How art thou fallen from heaven, O

Lucifer! Thy pomp is brought down to the grave.' Isa 14:12. Who sets

bounds to the sea, and bridles the proud waves.' Job 38:11. God is the

supreme monarch, all power is seated originally in him. The powers that

be are ordained of God.' Rom 13:3. Kings hold their crowns of him. By

me kings reign.' Prov 8:15.

II. As God has authority, so he has infinite power. What is authority

without power? He is mighty in strength.' Job 9:9. This power of God is

seen.

[1] In the creation. To create requires infinite power. All the world

cannot make a fly. God's power in creating is evident; because he needs

no instruments to work with; he can work without tools; because he

needs no matter to work upon; he creates matter, and then works upon

it; and because he works without labour; He spake, and it was done.'

Psa 33:3.

[2] The power of God is seen in the conversion of souls. The same power

draws a sinner to God that drew Christ out of the grave to heaven. Eph

1:19. Greater power is put forth in conversion than in creation. When

God made the world, he met with no opposition; as he had nothing to

help him, so he had nothing to hinder him; but when he converts a

sinner, he meets with opposition. Satan opposes him, and the heart

opposes him; a sinner is angry with converting grace. The world was the

work of God's fingers.' Psa 8:8. Conversion is the work of God's arm.'

Luke 1:51I. In the creation, God wrought but one miracle, he spake the

word; but, in conversion, he works many miracles; the blind is made to

see, the dead is raised, the deaf hears the voice of the Son of God. Oh

the infinite power of Jehovah! Before his sceptre, angels veil and

prostrate themselves, and kings cast their crowns at his feet. He

toucheth the land, and it shall melt.' Amos 9:9. He removeth the earth

out of her place.' Job 9:9. An earthquake makes the earth tremble upon

her pillars, but God shakes it out of its place; he can remove the

earth from its centre. He can do what he will; his power is as large as

his will. Were men's power as large as their will, what work would they

make in the world! God's power is of equal extent with his will. He

with a word can unpin the wheels, and break the axletree of the

creation. He can do more than we can think.' Eph 3:30. He can suspend

natural agents. He sealed up the lions' mouths; he made the fire not to

burn; he made the waters to stand up on a heap; he caused the sun to go

ten degrees backward in the dial of Ahaz. Isa 38:8. What can pose

Omnipotence? The Lord cuts off the spirit of princes.' Psa 76:12. He

counterworks his enemies; he pulls down their flags and banners of

pride, infatuates their counsels, breaks their forces; and he does it

with ease, with the turning of his hand; with his breath,' Psa 33:3,

Isa 40:24; a look, a glance of his eye is all it needs cost God to

destroy his enemies, the Lord looked into the host of the Egyptians

through the pillar of fire, and troubled their host.' Exod 14:44. Who

shall stop him in his march? God commands, and all creatures in heaven

and earth obey him. Xerxes, the Persian monarch, threw fetters into the

sea, when its waves swelled, as if he would have chained the waters;

but when God speaks, the wind and sea obey him. If he say but the word,

the stars fight in their courses against Sisera; if he stamp with his

foot, an army of angels shall presently be in battalia. What cannot

omnipotent power do? The Lord is a man of war.' Exod 15:5. He has a

mighty arm.' Psa 89:13. God's power is a glorious power.' Col 1:11. It

is an irresistible power. Rom 9:19. Who has resisted his will?' To

contest with him, is as if the thorns should set themselves in battle

array against the fire; or, as if an infirm child should fight with an

archangel. If the sinner be once taken in God's iron net, there is no

escape. There is none that can deliver out of my hand.' Isa 43:13.

God's power is inexhaustible; it is never spent or wasted. Men, while

they exercise their strength, weaken it; but God has an everlasting

spring of strength in himself. Isa 26:6. Though he spends his arrows

upon his enemies, yet he does not spend his strength. Deut 32:23. He

fainteth not, neither is weary.' Isa 40:08.

God cannot do all things, because he cannot deny himself.

Though God can do all things, he cannot do that which stains the glory

of his Godhead. He cannot sin; he cannot do that which implies a

contradiction. To be a God of truth, and yet deny himself, is a

contradiction.

Use one: If God be infinite in power, let us fear him. We fear such as

are in power. Fear ye not me? saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my

presence?' Jer 5:52. He has power to cast our souls and bodies into

hell. Who knows the power of his wrath?' Psa 90:11. The same breath

that made us can dissolve us. His fury is poured out like fire; the

rocks are thrown down by him.' Nahum 1:1. Solomon says, Where the word

of a king is, there is power, much more where the word of a God is.

Eccles 8:8. Oh let us fear this mighty God! The fear of God will drive

out all other base fear.

Use two: See the deplorable condition of wicked men. (1.) This power of

God is not for them: (2.) It is against them.

(1.) This power of God is not for them. They have no union with God,

therefore they have no warrant to lay claim to his power. His power is

no relief to them. He has power to forgive sins, but he will not put

forth his power towards an impenitent sinner. God's power is an eagle's

wing, to carry the saints to heaven; but what privilege is that to the

wicked? Though a man will carry his child in his arms over a dangerous

stream, yet he will not carry an enemy. God's power is not engaged to

help those that fight against him. Let miseries come upon the wicked,

they have none to help them; they are like a ship in a storm without a

pilot, and driven upon the rocks.

(2.) This power of God is against the wicked. God's power will not be

the sinner's shield to defend him, but a sword to wound him. God's

power will bind the sinner in chains. His power serves to revenge the

wrong done to his mercy. He will be Almighty to damn the sinner. Now,

in what condition is every unbeliever? God's power is engaged against

him, and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living

God.' Heb 10:31.

Use three: It reproves such as do not believe the power of God. We say

we do not doubt of God's power, but his will. But indeed it is his

power that we question. Is anything too hard for God?' Jer 32:27. We

stagger through unbelief, as if the arm of God's power were shrunk, and

he could not help in desperate cases. Take away a king's power, and we

unking him; take away the Lord's power, and we ungod him. Yet how

guilty of this are we! Did not Israel question God's power? Can he

prepare a table in the wilderness?' Psa 78:19. They thought the

wilderness was a fitter place for making graves than spreading a table.

Did not Martha doubt Christ's power? He has been dead four days.' John

11:19. If Christ had been there while Lazarus was sick, or when he had

been newly dead, Martha did not question but he could have raised him;

but he had lain in the grave four days, and now she seemed to question

his power. Christ had as much ado to raise her faith as to raise her

dead brother. Moses, though a holy man, limited God's power through

unbelief. The people among whom I am, are six hundred thousand footmen;

and thou hast said, I will give them flesh for a whole month: shall the

flocks and the herds be slain for them to suffice them? or shall all

the fish of the sea be gathered for them to suffice? And the Lord said

unto Moses, Is the Lord's hand waxed short?' Numb 11:21I. This is a

great affront to God, to deny his power. That men doubt of God's power

appears by their taking indirect courses; for they would not defraud in

their dealings, and use false weights, if they believed the power of

God could provide for them; and by depending more upon second causes

than upon God. In his disease, he sought not to the Lord, but to the

physicians.' 2 Chron 16:12.

Use four: If God be infinite in power, let us take heed of hardening

our hearts against him. Who has hardened himself against him and

prospered?' Job 9:9. Job sends a challenge to all creatures in heaven

and earth. Who ever took up the buckler against God, and came off

conqueror? For a person to go on daringly in any sin is to harden his

heart against God, and to raise a war against heaven. Let him remember

God is El-Shaddai, almighty; he will be too hard for them that oppose

him. Hast thou an arm like God?' Job 40:9. Such as will not bow to his

golden sceptre shall be broken with his iron rod. Julian hardened his

heart against God, he opposed him to his face; but what got he at last?

Did he prosper? Being wounded in battle, he threw up his blood into the

air, and said to Christ, Vicisti Galilaee, O Galilean, thou hast

overcome!' I acknowledge thy power, whose name and truth I have

opposed. Will folly contend with wisdom; weakness with power; finite

with infinite? Oh take heed of hardening your heart against God! He can

send legions of angels to avenge his quarrel. It is better to meet God

with tears in your eyes than weapons in your hand. You may overcome him

sooner by repentance than by resistance.

Use five: Get an interest in God, and then this glorious power is

engaged for you. He gives it under his hand, that he will put forth the

whole power of his Godhead for the good of his people. The Lord of

hosts is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel.' I Chron 17:74. This

almightiness of God's power is a wonderful support and comfort to the

believer. It was Samson's riddle. Out of the strong came forth

sweetness;' Judges 14:14; so out of the attribute of God's power, out

of this strong comes forth sweetness. It is comfort in several cases.

(1.) In case of strong corruption. My sins, says a child of God, are

potent. I have no power against this army that comes against me; I

pray, and humble my soul by fasting; but my sins return upon me. Ay,

but dost thou believe the power of God? The strong God can conquer thy

strong corruption; though sin be too hard for thee, yet not for him; he

can soften hard hearts and quicken the dead. Is any thing too hard for

the Lord?' Gen 18:14. Set his power to work, by faith and prayer. Say,

Lord! it is not for thy honour that the devil should have so strong a

party within me; oh, break the head of this leviathan! Abba, Father,

all things are possible to thee.

(2.) In case of strong temptation. Satan is called the strong man; but

remember the power of God. Christ is called, The Lion of the tribe of

Judah,' he has broken the serpent's head upon the cross. Satan is a

chained enemy, and a conquered enemy. Michael is stronger than the

dragon.

(3.) Comfort in case of weakness of grace, and fear of falling away. I

pray, but I cannot send out strong cries. I believe, but the hand of my

faith shakes and trembles. Cannot God strengthen weak grace? My

strength is made perfect in weakness: most gladly therefore will I

rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon

me.' 2 Cor 12:2. I fear I shall not hold out. Christian, dost thou

believe the power of God? Has not God preserved thy grace thus far?

Mayest thou not set up thy Ebenezer? God has kept thy grace hitherto as

a spark in the main ocean; and is not he able still to keep it? We are

kept by the power of God,' &c. I Pet 1:1. God's mercy pardons us, but

his power preserves us. He who by his power keeps the stars that they

do not fall from their orbs, keeps our grace that it does not fail or

annihilate.

(4.) Comfort in case of deficiency in thy estate. God can multiply the

oil in the cruse; miraculously he can raise up supplies. Cannot he who

provides for the birds of the air provide for his children? Cannot he

that clothes the lilies clothe his lambs?

(5.) Comfort in regard of the resurrection. It seems difficult to

believe, that the bodies of men, when eaten up by worms, devoured by

beasts and fishes, or consumed to ashes, should be raised the same

numerical bodies; but if we believe the power of God, it is no great

wonder. Which is harder, to create, or raise the dead? He that can make

a body of nothing, can restore it to its parts when mingled and

confounded with other substances. With God all things are possible.'

Matt 19:96. If we believe the first article of the creed, That God is

almighty, we may quickly believe the other article, the resurrection of

the body. God can raise the dead because of his power, and he cannot

but raise them because of his truth.

(6.) It is comfort in reference to the church of God. He can save and

deliver it when it is brought low. The enemies have power in their

hand, but the remainder of wrath God will restrain. Psa 76:60. He can

either confine the enemy's power or confound it. If God be for us, who

can be against us?' God can create Jerusalem a rejoicing. Isa 65:18.

The church in Ezekiel is compared to dry bones, but God made breath to

enter into them, and they lived. Ezek 37:70. The ship of the church may

be tossed, because sin is in it, but it shall not be overwhelmed,

because Christ is in it. Psa 46:6. Deus in medio. All the church's

pangs shall help forward her deliverance.

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7. The Holiness Of God

The next attribute is God's holiness. Exod 15:51. Glorious in

holiness.' Holiness is the most sparkling jewel of his crown; it is the

name by which God is known. Psa 111:1. Holy and reverend is his name.'

He is the holy One.' Job 6:60. Seraphims cry, Holy, holy, holy is the

Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory.' Isa 6:6. His

power makes him mighty, his holiness makes him glorious. God's holiness

consists in his perfect love of righteousness, and abhorrence of evil.

Of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity.' Hab

1:13.

I. God is holy intrinsically. He is holy in his nature; his very being

is made up of holiness, as light is of the essence of the sun. He is

holy in his Word. The Word bears a stamp of his holiness upon it, as

the wax bears an impression of the seal. Thy Word is very pure.' Psa

119:940. It is compared to silver refined seven times. Psa 12:2. Every

line in the Word breathes sanctity, it encourages nothing but holiness.

God is holy in his operations. All he does is holy; he cannot act but

like himself; he can no more do an unrighteous action than the sun can

darken. The Lord is holy in all his works.' Psa 145:17.

II. God is holy primarily. He is the original and pattern of holiness.

Holiness began with him who is the Ancient of Days.

III. God is holy efficiently. He is the cause of all that is holiness

in others. Every good and perfect gift comes from above.' James 1:17.

He made the angels holy. He infused all holiness into Christ's human

nature. All the holiness we have is but a crystal stream from this

fountain. We borrow all our holiness from God. As the lights of the

sanctuary were lighted from the middle lamp, so all the holiness of

others is a lamp lighted from heaven. I am the Lord which sanctify

you.' Lev 20:0. God is not only a pattern of holiness, but he is a

principle of holiness: his spring feeds all our cisterns, he drops his

holy oil of grace upon us.

IV. God is holy transcendently. There is none holy as the Lord.' I Sam

2:2. No angel in heaven can take the just dimensions of God's holiness.

The highest seraphim is too low of stature to measure these pyramids;

holiness in God is far above holiness in saints or angels.

[1] It is above holiness in saints. It is a pure holiness. The saints,

holiness is like gold in the ore, imperfect; their humility is stained

with pride; he that has most faith needs pray, Lord, help my unbelief:'

but the holiness of God is pure, like wine from the grape; it has not

the least dash or tincture of impurity mixed with it. It is a more

unchangeable holiness. Though the saints cannot lose the habit of

holiness (for the seed of God remains), yet they may lose some degrees

of their holiness. Thou hast left thy first love.' Rev 2:2. Grace

cannot die, yet the flame of it may go out. Holiness in the saints is

subject to ebbing, but holiness in God is unchangeable; he never lost a

drop of his holiness; as he cannot have more holiness, because he is

perfectly holy; so he cannot have less holiness, because he is

unchangeably holy.

[2] The holiness of God is above the holiness of angels. Holiness in

the angels is only a quality, which may be lost, as we see in the

fallen angels; but holiness in God is his essence, he is all over holy,

and he can as well lose his Godhead as his holiness.

But is he not privy to all the sins of men? How can he behold their

impurities, and not be defiled?

God sees all the sins of men, but is no more defiled with them than the

sun is defiled with the vapours that rise from the earth. God sees sin,

not as a patron to approve it, but as a judge to punish it.

Use one: Is God so infinitely holy? Then see how unlike to God sin is.

Sin is an unclean thing, it is hyperbolically evil. Rom 1:13. It is

called an abomination. Deut 7:75. God has no mixture of evil in him;

sin has no mixture of good, it is the spirit and quintessence of evil,

it turns good into evil; it has deflowered the virgin soul, made it red

with guilt, and black with filth; it is called the accursed thing. Josh

7:71. No wonder, therefore, that God hates sin, being so unlike to him,

nay, so contrary to him: it strikes at his holiness; it does all it can

to spite God; if sin could help it, God should be God no longer.

Use two: Is God the Holy One, and is holiness his glory? How impious

are they that are haters of holiness! As the vulture hates perfumes, so

they hate the sweet perfume of holiness in the saints; their hearts

rise against holiness; as a man's stomach at a dish he has an antipathy

against. There is not a greater sign of a person devoted to hell, than

to hate one for the thing wherein he is most like God. Others are

despisers of holiness. They despise the glory of the Godhead. Glorious

in holiness.' The despising holiness is seen in deriding it; and is it

not sad that men should deride that which should save them? Sure that

patient will die who derides the physic. Deriding the grace of the

Spirit comes near to despising the Spirit of grace. Scoffing Ishmael

was cast out of Abraham's house. Gen 21:1. Such as scoff at holiness

shall be cast out of heaven.

Use three: Is God so infinitely holy? Then let us endeavour to imitate

God in holiness. Be ye holy, for I am holy.' I Pet 1:16. There is a

twofold holiness; a holiness of equality, and a holiness of similitude.

A holiness of equality no man or angel can reach to. Who can be equally

holy with God? Who can parallel him in sanctity? But there is a

holiness of similitude, and that we must aspire after, to have some

analogy and resemblance of God's holiness in us, to be as like him in

holiness as we can. Though a taper does not give so much light as the

sun, yet it resembles it. We must

imitate God in holiness.

If we must be like God in holiness, wherein does our holiness consist?

In two things. In our suitableness to God's nature, and in our

subjection to his will.

Our holiness consists in our suitableness to the nature of God. Hence

the saints are said to partake of the divine nature, which is not

partaking of his essence, but his image. 2 Pet 1:1. Herein is the

saints' holiness, when they are the lively pictures of God. They bear

the image of God's meekness, mercifulness, heavenliness; they are of

the same judgement with God, of the same disposition; they love what he

loves, and hate what he hates.

Our holiness consists also in our subjection to the will of God. As

God's nature is the pattern of holiness, so his will is the rule of

holiness. It is our holiness when we do his will, Acts 13:32; when we

bear his will, Micah 7:7; when what he inflicts wisely we suffer

willingly. Our great care should be, to be like God in holiness. Our

holiness should be qualified as God's; as his is a real holiness, ours

should be. Righteousness and true holiness.' Eph 4:44. It should not be

the paint of holiness, but the life; it should not be like the Egyptian

temples, beautified without merely, but like Solomon's temple, gold

within, Psa 45:13. The king's daughter is all glorious within.' That I

may press you to resemble God in holiness consider,

(1.) How illustrious every holy person is. He is a fair glass in which

some of the beams of God's holiness shine forth. We read that Aaron put

on his garments for glory and beauty. Exod 28:8. When we wear the

embroidered garment of holiness, it is for glory and beauty. A good

Christian is ruddy, being sprinkled with Christ's blood; and white,

being adorned with holiness. As the diamond to a ring, so is holiness

to the soul; that, as Chrysostom says, they that oppose it cannot but

admire it.

(2.) It is the great design God carries on in the world, to make a

people like himself in holiness. What are all the showers of ordinances

for, but to rain down righteousness upon us, and make us holy? What are

the promises for, but to encourage holiness? What is the sending of the

Spirit into the world for, but to anoint us with the holy unction? I

John 2:20. What are all afflictions for, but to make us partakers of

God's holiness? Heb 12:20. What are mercies for, but loadstones to draw

us to holiness? What is the end of Christ's dying, but that his blood

might wash away our unholiness? Who gave himself for us, to purify unto

himself a peculiar people.' Titus 2:14. So that if we are not holy, we

cross God's great design in the world.

(3.) Our holiness draws God's heart to us. Holiness is God's image; and

God cannot choose but love his image where he sees it. A king loves to

see his effigies upon a piece of coin. Thou lovest righteousness.' Psa

45:7. And where does righteousness grow, but in a holy heart? Isa 62:2.

Thou shalt be called Hephzibah, for the Lord delighteth in thee.' It

was her holiness that drew God's love to her. They shall call them the

holy people.' Verse 12. God values not any by their high birth, but

their holiness.

(4.) Holiness is the only thing that distinguishes us from the

reprobate part of the world. God's people have his seal upon them. The

foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth

them that are his. And let all that name the name of Christ depart from

iniquity. 2 Tim 2:19. The people of God are sealed with a double seal.

Election, The Lord knows who are his:' and Sanctification, Let every

one depart from iniquity.' As a nobleman is distinguished from another

by his silver star; as a virtuous woman is distinguished from a harlot

by her chastity; so holiness distinguishes between the two seeds. All

that are of God have Christ for their captain, and holiness is the

white colour they wear. Heb 2:20.

(5.) Holiness is our honour. Holiness and honour are put together. I

Thess 4:4. Dignity goes along with sanctification. He has washed us

from our sins in his blood, and has made us kings unto God.' Rev 1:1.

When we are washed and made holy, then we are kings and priests to God.

The saints are called vessels of honour; they are called jewels, for

the sparkling of their holiness, because filled with wine of the

Spirit. This makes them earthly angels.

(6.) Holiness gives us boldness with God. Thou shalt put away iniquity

far from thy tabernacles, and shalt lift up thy face unto God.' Job

22:23, 26. Lifting up the face is an emblem of boldness. Nothing can

make us so ashamed to go to God as sin. A wicked man in prayer may lift

up his hands, but he cannot lift up his face. When Adam had lost his

holiness, he lost his confidence; he hid himself. But the holy person

goes to God as a child to its father; his conscience does not upbraid

him with allowing any sin, therefore he can go boldly to the throne of

grace, and have mercy to help in time of need. Heb 4:16.

(7.) Holiness gives peace. Sin raises a storm in the conscience; ubi

peccatum ibi procella [where there is sin, there is tumult]. There is

no peace to the wicked.' Isa 57:7I. Righteousness and peace are put

together. Holiness is the root which bears this sweet fruit of peace;

righteousness and peace kiss each other.

(8.) Holiness leads to heaven. It is the King of heaven's highway. An

highway shall be there, and it shall be called the way of holiness.'

Isa 35:5. At Rome there were temples of virtue and honour, and all were

to go through the temple of virtue to the temple of honour; so we must

go through the temple of holiness to the temple of heaven. Glory begins

in virtue. Who has called us to glory and virtue.' 2 Pet 1:1. Happiness

is nothing else but the quintessence of holiness; holiness is glory

militant, and happiness holiness triumphant.

What shall we do to resemble God in holiness?

(1.) Have recourse to Christ's blood by faith. This is lavacrum animae

[the washing of the soul]. Legal purifications were types and emblems

of it. I John 1:1. The Word is a glass to show us our spots, and

Christ's blood is a fountain to wash them away.

(2.) Pray for a holy heart. Create in me a clean heart, O God.' Psa

51:10. Lay thy heart before the Lord, and say, Lord, my heart is full

of leprosy; it defiles all it touches; Lord, I am not fit to live with

such a heart, for I cannot honour thee; nor die with such a heart, for

I cannot see thee. Oh create in me a clean heart; send thy Spirit into

me, to refine and purify me, that I may be a temple fit for thee the

holy God to inhabit.

(3.) Walk with them that are holy. He that walketh with the wise shall

be wise.' Prov 13:30. Be among the spices and you will smell of them.

Association begets assimilation. Nothing has a greater power and energy

to effect holiness than the communion of saints.

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8. The Justice Of God

The next attribute is God's justice. All God's attributes are

identical, and are the same with his essence. Though he has several

attributes whereby he is made known to us, yet he has but one essence.

A cedar tree may have several branches, yet it is but one cedar. So

there are several attributes of God whereby we conceive of him, but

only one entire essence. Well, then, concerning God's justice. Deut

32:4. Just and right is he.' Job 37:23. Touching the Almighty, we

cannot find him out: he is excellent in plenty of justice.' God is said

to dwell in justice. Psa 89:14. Justice and judgement are the

habitation of thy throne.' In God, power and justice meet. Power holds

the sceptre, and justice holds the balance.

I. What is God's justice?

'Justice is to give every one his due.' God's justice is the rectitude

of his nature, whereby he is carried to the doing of that which is

righteous and equal. Prov 24:12. Shall not he render to every man

according to his works?' God is an impartial judge. He judgeth the

cause. Men often judge the person, but not the cause; which is not

justice, but malice. Gen 18:81. I will go down and see whether they

have done according to the cry which is come up unto me.' When the Lord

is upon a punitive act, he weighs things in the balance, he does not

punish rashly; he does not go in the way of a riot, but a circuit,

against offenders. Concerning God's justice, I shall lay down these six

positions: -

[1] God cannot but be just. His holiness is the cause of his justice.

Holiness will not suffer him to do anything but what is righteous. He

can no more be unjust than he can be unholy.

[2] God's will is the supreme rule of justice; it is the standard of

equity. His will is wise and good. God wills nothing but what is just;

and therefore it is just because he wills it.

[3] God does justice voluntarily. Justice flows from his nature. Men

may act unjustly, because they are bribed or forced: God will not be

bribed, because of his justice; he cannot be forced, because of his

power. He does justice out of love to justice. Psa 45:7. Thou lovest

righteousness.'

[4] Justice is the perfection of the divine nature. Aristotle says,

Justice comprehends in it all virtues.' To say God is just, is to say,

he is all that is excellent: perfections meet in him, as lines in a

centre. He is not only just, but justice itself.

[5] God never did nor can do the least wrong to his creatures. God's

justice has been wronged, but never did any wrong. God does not go

according to the summum jus, or rigour of the law; he abates something

of his severity. He might inflict heavier penalties than he does. Thou

hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve.' Ezra 9:13. Our

mercies are more than we deserve, and our punishments less.

[6] God's justice is such that it is not fit for any man or angel to

expostulate with him, or demand a reason of his actions. God has not

only authority on his side, but equity. He lays judgement to the line,

and righteousness to the plummet.' Isa 28:17. It is below him to give

an account to us of his proceedings. Which of these two is more fit to

take place, God's justice or man's reason? Rom 9:20. Who art thou, O

man, that replies against God?' The plumb line of our reason is too

short to fathom the depth of God's justice. Rom 11:33. How unsearchable

are his judgements!' We are to adore God's justice, where we cannot see

a reason of it.

II. God's justice runs in two channels. It is seen in two things, the

distribution of rewards and punishments.

[1] In rewarding the virtuous. Psa 58:11: Verily there is a reward for

the righteous.' The saints shall not serve him for nought, he will

reward praerces et lachrymas; though they may be losers for him, they

shall not be losers by him. God is not unrighteous to forget your work

and labour of love, which ye have shewed to his name.' Heb 6:10. He

gives a reward, not because we have deserved it, but because he has

promised it.

[2] He is just in punishing offenders. He is just. (1.) Because he

punishes sinners by a law. Where there is no law, there is no

transgression.' Rom 4:15. But God has given men a law, and they break

it, therefore he punishes them justly. (2.) God is just in punishing

the wicked, because he never punished them but upon full proof and

evidence. What greater evidence than for a man's own conscience to be

witness against him! There is nothing God charges upon a sinner but

conscience sets its seal to the truth of it.

Use one: See here another flower of God's crown, he is just and

righteous. He is the exemplar and pattern of justice.

But how does it seem to stand with God's justice, that the wicked

should prosper in the world? Wherefore doth the way of the wicked

prosper?' Jer 12:1. This has been a great stumbling, and has led many

to question God's justice. Such as are highest in sin are highest in

power. Diogenes seeing Harpalus a thief go on prosperously, said, Sure

God has cast off the government of the world, and mindeth not how

things go on here below.'

(1.) The wicked may be sometimes instruments to do God's work. Though

they do not design his glory, yet they may promote it. Cyrus (Ezra 1:1)

was instrumental in the building of God's temple in Jerusalem. There is

some kind of justice, that they should have a temporal reward. God lets

those prosper under whose wing his people are sheltered. God will not

be in any man's debt. Who has kindled a fire on my altar for nought?'

Mal 1:10.

(2.) God lets men go on in sin, and prosper, that he may leave them

more inexcusable. I gave her space to repent of her fornication.' Rev

2:21: God adjourns the sessions, spins out his mercies towards sinners;

and if they repent not, his patience will be a witness against them,

and his justice will be more cleared in their condemnation. That thou

mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou

judges".' Psa 51:1.

(3.) God does not always let the wicked prosper in their sin. Some he

punishes openly, that his justice may be taken notice of. The Lord is

known by the judgement which he executeth:' Psa 9:16: that is, his

justice is seen by striking men dead in the very act of sin. Thus he

struck Zimri and Cozbi in the act of uncleanness.

(4.) If God lets men prosper a while in their sin, his vial of wrath is

all this while filling; his sword is all this time whetting: and though

God may forbear men a while, yet long forbearance is no forgiveness.

The longer God is in taking his blow, the heavier it will be at last.

As long as there is eternity, God has time enough to reckon with his

enemies.

Justice may be as a lion asleep, but at last the lion will awake, and

roar upon the sinner. Do not Nero, and Julian, and Cain, now meet with

God's justice?

But God's own people suffer great afflictions; they are injured and

persecuted. All the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every

morning.' Psa 73:14. How does this stand with God's justice?

(1.) That is a true rule of Austin, Judicia Dei possum esse occulta,

non injusta; God's ways of judgement are sometimes secret, but never

unjust.' The Lord never afflicts his people without a cause; so that he

cannot be unjust. There is some good in the godly, therefore the wicked

afflict them; there is some evil in them, therefore God afflicts them.

God's own children have their blemishes. Are there not with you, even

with you, sins against the Lord?' 2 Chron 28:10. These spiritual

diamonds, have they no flaws? Do we not read of the spots of God's

children? Deut 32:5. Are not they guilty of much pride, censoriousness,

passion, worldliness? Though, by their profession, they seem to

resemble the birds of paradise, to fly above, and feed upon the dew of

heaven; yet, as the serpent, they lick the dust. And these sins of

God's people do more provoke God than others. Because of the provoking

of his sons and daughters.' Deut 32:19. The sins of others pierce

Christ's side, these wound his heart. Therefore is not God just in all

the evils that befall them? You only have I known of all the families

of the earth, therefore I will punish you for your iniquities.' Amos

3:2. I will punish you sooner, surer, sorer, than others.

(2.) The trials and sufferings of the godly are to refine and purify

them. God's furnace is in Sion. Isa 31:9. Is it any injustice in God to

put his gold into the furnace to purify it? Is it any injustice in God,

by afflicting his people, to make them partakers of his holiness? Heb

12:10. What more proclaims God's faithfulness, than to take such a

course with them as may make them better? In faithfulness thou hast

afflicted me.' Psa 119:75.

(3.) What injustice is it in God to inflict a less punishment; and

prevent a greater? The best of God's children have that in them which

is meritorious of hell. Does God do them any wrong, if he uses only the

rod, where they have deserved the scorpion? Is the father unjust, if he

only corrects his child, who has deserved to be disinherited? If God

deals so favourably with his children, he only puts wormwood in their

cup, whereas he might put fire and brimstone. They should rather admire

his mercy than complain of his injustice.

How can it stand with God's justice, that all men being equally guilty

by nature, he does pass by one and save another? Why does he not deal

with all alike?

'Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.' Rom 9:14. Does the

Almighty pervert justice?' Job 8:3.

(1.) God is not bound to give an account of his actions to his

creatures. If none may say to a king, What doest thou?' Eccles 8:4,

much less to God. It is sufficient, God is Lord paramount; he has a

sovereign power over his creatures, therefore can do no injustice. Has

not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel

to honour, and another to dishonour?' Rom 9:21I. God has liberty in his

own breast, to save one, and not another; and his justice is not at all

impeached or blemished. If two men owe you money, you may, without any

injustice, remit the debt to one, and exact it of the other. If two

malefactors be condemned to die, the king may pardon the one and not

the other: he is not unjust if he lets one suffer, because he offended

the law; nor if he save the other, because he will make use of his

prerogative as he is king.

(2.) Though some are saved and others perish, yet there is no

unrighteousness in God; because, whoever perishes, his destruction is

of himself. O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself.' Hos 13:9. God

offers grace, and the sinner refuses it. Is God bound to give grace? If

a surgeon comes to heal a man's wound, and he will not be healed, is

the surgeon bound to heal him? I have called, and ye refused.' Prov

1:24. Israel would none of me.' Psa 81:11: God is not bound to force

his mercies upon men. If they wilfully oppose the offer of grace, their

sin is to be regarded as the cause of their perishing, and not God's

justice.

Use two: See the difference between God and a great part of the world.

They are unjust. (1.) In their courts of judicature they pervert

justice. They decree unrighteous decrees.' Isa 10:1. The Hebrew word

for a judge's robe signifies prevarication, deceit, or injustice, which

is more often true of the judge than of the robe. What is a good law

without a good judge? Injustice lies in two things, either not to

punish where there is a fault, or, to punish where there is no fault.

Again (2.) Men are unjust in their dealings. This is, [1] In using

false weights. The balances of deceit are in his hand.' Hos 12:7. It is

sad to have the Bible in one hand, and false weights in the other. Or,

[2] In adulterating commodities. Thy wine is mixed with water,' Isa

1:22: when bad grain is mixed with good, and sold for pure grain. I can

never believe he is good in the first table who is not good in the

second. He cannot be godly who is not just. Though God does not bid you

be as omnipotent as he is, yet he bids you be as just.

Use three: Imitate God in justice. Let Christ's golden maxim be

observed, What you would have men to do to you, do ye even so to them.'

Matt 7:12. You would not have them wrong you, neither do you them;

rather suffer wrong than do wrong. Why do ye not rather take wrong?' 1

Cor 6:7. Oh be exemplary for justice! Let justice be your ornament. I

put on righteousness (viz. justice) as a robe and a diadem.' Job 29:14.

A robe for its graceful beauty; and I put it on, et induebam justitiam

[and I was clothed in righteousness]. A judge puts on his robe, and

puts it off again at night; but Job did so put on justice, as he did

not put it off till death; semper vestitus [forever clothed]. We must

not lay off this robe of justice till we lay down our tabernacle. If

you have anything of God in you, you will be like him. By every unjust

action you deny yourselves to be Christians, you stain the glory of

your profession. Heathens will rise up in judgement against you. The

sun might sooner alter his course than God could be turned from doing

justice.

Use four: If God be just, there will be a day of judgement. Now things

are out of course; sin is rampant, saints are wronged, they are often

cast in a righteous cause, they can meet with no justice here, justice

is turned into wormwood; but there is a day coming, when God will set

things right; he will do every man justice; he will crown the righteous

and condemn the wicked. He has appointed a day,' &c. Acts 17:31. If God

be a just God, he will take vengeance. God has given men a law to live

by, and they break it. There must be a day for the execution of

offenders. A law not executed is but like a wooden dagger, for a show.

At the last day, God's sword shall be drawn out against offenders; then

his justice shall be revealed before all the world. God will judge in

righteousness.' Acts 17:31: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do

right?' Gen 18:25. The wicked shall drink a sea of wrath, but not sip

one drop of injustice. At that day shall all mouths be stopped, and

God's justice shall be fully vindicated from all the cavils and

clamours of unjust men.

Use five: Comfort to the true penitent. As God is a just God, he will

pardon him. Homo agnoscit, Deus ignoscit [Man acknowledges his sin, God

spares him]. If we confess our sins (i.e. confess and forsake), he is

just to forgive us our sins.' I John 1:9. Not only merciful but just.

Why just? Because he has promised to forgive such. Prov 28:13. If thy

heart has been broken for and from sin, thou mayest not only plead

God's mercy, but his justice for the pardoning of thy sin. Show him his

hand and seal, and he cannot deny himself.

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9. The Mercy Of God

The next attribute is God's goodness or mercy. Mercy is the result and

effect of God's goodness. Psa 33:5. So then this is the next attribute,

God's goodness or mercy. The most learned of the heathens thought they

gave their god Jupiter two golden characters when they styled him good

and great. Both these meet in God, goodness and greatness, majesty and

mercy. God is essentially good in himself and relatively good to us.

They are both put together in Psa 119:98. Thou art good, and doest

good.' This relative goodness is nothing else but his mercy, which is

an innate propenseness in God to pity and succour such as are in

misery.

1. Concerning God's mercy I shall lay down these twelve positions.

[1] It is the great design of the Scripture to represent God as

merciful. This is a loadstone to draw sinners to him. The Lord,

merciful, gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness,' &c. Exod

34:6. Here are six expressions to set forth God's mercy, and but one to

set forth his justice: who will by no means clear the guilty.' Psa

57:70. God's mercy is far above the heavens.' Psa 108:8. God is

represented as a king, with a rainbow about his throne. Rev 4:3. The

rainbow was an emblem of mercy. The Scripture represents God in white

robes of mercy more often than with garments rolled in blood; with his

golden sceptre more often than his iron rod.

[2] God is more inclinable to mercy than wrath. Mercy is his darling

attribute, which he most delights in. Mic 7:18. Mercy pleases him. It

is delightful to the mother, says Chrysostom, to have her breasts

drawn; so it is to God to have the breasts of his mercy drawn. Fury is

not in me,' Isa 27:7; that is, I do not delight in it. Acts of severity

are rather forced from God; he does not afflict willingly. Lam 3:33.

The bee naturally gives honey, it stings only when it is provoked; so

God does not punish till he can bear no longer. So that the Lord could

bear no longer, because of the evil of your doings.' Jer 44:22. Mercy

is God's right hand that he is most used to; inflicting punishment is

called his strange work. Isa 28:21I. He is not used to it. When the

Lord would shave off the pride of a nation, he is said to hire a razor,

as if he had none of his own. He shall shave with a razor that is

hired.' Isa 7:70. He is slow to anger,' Psa 103:3, but ready to

forgive.' Psa 86:6.

[3] There is no condition, but we may spy mercy in it. When the church

was in captivity, she cried out, It is of the Lord's mercies that we

are not consumed.' Lam 3:32. Geographers write of Syracuse in Sicily,

that it is so situated that the sun is never out of sight. In all

afflictions we may see some sunshine of mercy. That outward and inward

troubles do not come together is mercy.

[4] Mercy sweetens all God's other attributes. God's holiness without

mercy, and his justice without mercy were terrible. When the water was

bitter, and Israel could not drink, Moses cast a tree into the waters,

and then they were made sweet. How bitter and dreadful were the other

attributes of God, did not mercy sweeten them! Mercy sets God's power

on work to help us; it makes his justice become our friend; it shall

avenge our quarrels.

[5] God's mercy is one of the most orient pearls of his crown; it makes

his Godhead appear amiable and lovely. When Moses said to God, I

beseech thee shew me thy glory;' the Lord answered him, I will make all

my goodness pass before thee, and I will shew thee mercy.' Exod 33:19.

God's mercy is his glory. His holiness makes him illustrious; his mercy

makes him propitious.

[6] Even the worst taste God's mercy; such as fight against God's

mercy, taste of it; the wicked have some crumbs from mercy's table. The

Lord is good to all.' Psa 145:5. Sweet dewdrops are on the thistle, as

well as on the rose. The diocese where mercy visits is very large.

Pharaoh's head was crowned though his heart was hardened.

[7] Mercy coming to us in a covenant is sweetest. It was mercy that God

would give Israel rain, and bread to the full, and peace, and victory

over their enemies, Lev 26:6 - 6, but it was a greater mercy that God

would be their God, verse 12. To have health is a mercy, but to have

Christ and salvation is a greater mercy; it is like the diamond in the

ring, which casts a more sparkling lustre.

[8] One act of mercy engages God to another. Men argue thus, I have

shown you kindness already, therefore trouble me no more; but, because

God has shown mercy, he is more ready still to show mercy; his mercy in

election makes him justify, adopt, glorify; one act of mercy engages

God to more. A parent's love to his child makes him always giving.

[9] All the mercy in the creature is derived from God, and is but a

drop of this ocean. The mercy and pity a mother has to her child is

from God; he that puts the milk in her breast puts the compassion in

her heart. God is called, The Father of mercies,' because he begets all

the mercies in the world. 2 Cor 1:1. If God has put any kindness into

the creature, how much kindness is in him who is the Father of mercy!

[10] As God's mercy makes the saints happy, so it should make them

humble. Mercy is not the fruit of our goodness, but the fruit of God's

goodness. Mercy is an alms that God bestows. They have no cause to be

proud that live upon the alms of God's mercy. If I be righteous, yet

will I not lift up my head,' Job 10:15: all my righteousness is the

effect of God's mercy, therefore I will be humble and will not lift up

my head.

[11] Mercy stays the speedy execution of God's justice. Sinners

continually provoke God, and make the fury come up in his face.' Ezek

38:18. Whence is it God does not presently arrest and condemn them? It

is not that God cannot do it, for he is armed with omnipotence, but it

is from his mercy. Mercy gets a reprieve for the sinner, and stops the

speedy process of justice. God would, by his goodness, lead sinners to

repentance.

[12] It is dreadful to have mercy as a witness against any one. It was

sad with Haman when the queen herself accused him. Esth 7:7. So will it

be when this queen of mercy shall stand up against a person and accuse

him. It is only mercy that saves a sinner; how sad then to have mercy

become an enemy! If mercy be an accuser, who shall be our advocate? The

sinner never escapes hell when mercy draws up the indictment.

I might show you several species or kinds of mercy; as preventing

mercy, sparing mercy, supplying mercy, guiding mercy, accepting mercy,

healing mercy, quickening mercy, supporting mercy, forgiving mercy,

correcting mercy, comforting mercy, delivering mercy, crowning mercy

but I shall speak of,

II. The qualifications or properties of God's mercy.

[1] God's mercy is free. To set up merit is to destroy mercy. Nothing

can deserve mercy, because we are polluted in our blood; nor force it.

We may force God to punish us, but not to love us. I will love them

freely.' Hos 14:4. Every link in the chain of salvation is wrought and

interwoven with free grace. Election is free. He has chosen us in him,

according to the good pleasure of his will.' Eph 1:1. Justification is

free. Being justified freely by his grace.' Rom 3:34. Salvation is

free. According to his mercy he saved us.' Titus 3:3. Say not then, I

am unworthy; for mercy is free. If God should show mercy to such only

as are worthy, he would show none at all.

[2] God's mercy is an overflowing mercy; it is infinite. Plenteous in

mercy.' Psa 86:6. Rich in mercy.' Eph 2:2. Multitude of mercies.' Psa

51:1: The vial of wrath drops, but the fountain of mercy runs. The sun

is not so full of light as God is of mercy. God has morning mercies.

His mercies are new every morning.' Lam 3:33. He has night mercies. In

the night his song shall be with me.' Psa 13:3. God has mercies under

heaven, which we taste; and in heaven, which we hope for.

[3] God's mercy is eternal. The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting

to everlasting.' Psa 103:37. His mercy endureth for ever,' is repeated

twenty-six times in one psalm. Psa 136. The souls of the blessed shall

be ever bathing themselves in this sweet and pleasant ocean of God's

mercy. God's anger to his children lasts but a while, but his mercy

lasts for ever.' Psa 103:3. As long as he is God he will be showing

mercy. As his mercy is overflowing, so it is everflowing.

Use one: We are to look upon God in prayer, not in his judgement robes,

but clothed with a rainbow full of mercy and clemency. Add wings to

prayer. When Jesus Christ ascended up to heaven, that which made him go

up thither with joy was, I go to my Father;' so that which should make

our hearts ascend with joy in prayer, is, We are going to the Father of

mercy, who sits upon the throne of grace.' Go with confidence in this

mercy; as when one goes to a fire, not doubtingly, saying, perhaps it

will warm me, perhaps not.

Use two: Believe in his mercy. I will trust in the mercy of God for

ever.' Psa 52:2. God's mercy is a fountain opened. Let down the bucket

of faith and you may drink of this fountain of salvation. What greater

encouragement to believe than God's mercy? God counts it his glory to

be scattering pardons; he is desirous that sinners should touch the

golden sceptre of his mercy and live. This willingness to show mercy

appears two ways: -

(1.) By entreating sinners to come and lay hold on his mercy. Whosoever

will, let him come, and take the water of life freely.' Rev 22:17.

Mercy woos sinners, it even kneels down to them. It were strange for a

prince to entreat a condemned man to accept of pardon. God says, Poor

sinner, suffer me to love thee, be willing to let me save thee.

(2.) By his joyfulness when sinners lay hold on his mercy. What is God

the better whether we receive his mercy or not? What is the fountain

profited that others drink of it? Yet such is God's goodness, that he

rejoices at the salvation of sinners, and is glad when his mercy is

accepted. When the prodigal son came home the father was glad, and made

a feast to express his joy; so, God rejoices when a poor sinner comes

in, and lays hold of his mercy. What an encouragement is here to

believe in God! He is a God of pardons. Neh 9:97. Mercy pleases him.

Mic 7:18. Nothing prejudices us but unbelief. Unbelief stops the

current of God's mercy from running. It shuts up God's bowels, closes

the orifice of Christ's wounds, so that no healing virtue will come

out.' He did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief,

Matt 13:38. Why dost thou not believe in God's mercy? Do thy sins

discourage thee? God's mercy can pardon great sins, nay, because they

are great. Psa 25:11. The sea covers the rocks as well as the sands.

Some that had a hand in crucifying Christ found mercy. As far as the

heavens are above the earth, so far is God's mercy above our sins. Isa

55:5. What will tempt us to believe, if not the mercy of God?

Use three: Take heed of abusing the mercy of God. Suck not poison out

of the sweet flower of God's mercy. Think not that because God is

merciful, you may go on in sin; this is to make mercy your enemy. None

might touch the ark but the priests, who by their office were more

holy; so none may touch the ark of God's mercy but such as are resolved

to be holy. To sin because mercy abounds is the devil's logic. He that

sins because of mercy, is like one that wounds his head because he has

a plaster. He that sins because of God's mercy, shall have judgement

without mercy. Mercy abused turns to fury. If he bless himself, saying,

I shall have peace though I walk after the imaginations of my heart, to

add drunkenness to thirst, the Lord will not spare him, but the anger

of the Lord, and his jealousy, shall smoke against that man.' Deut

29:19, 20. Nothing is sweeter than mercy, when it is improved; nothing

fiercer, when it is abused; as nothing is colder than lead when taken

out of the mine, and nothing more scalding when it is heated. Nothing

is blunter than iron, yet nothing is sharper when it is whetted. The

mercy of the Lord is upon them that fear him.' Psa 103:17. Mercy is not

for them that sin and fear not, but for them that fear and sin not.

God's mercy is a holy mercy; where it pardons it heals.

What shall we do to be interested in God's mercy?

(1.) Be sensible of your wants. See how much you stand in need of

pardoning, saving mercy. See yourselves orphans. In thee the fatherless

find mercy.' Hos 14:4. God bestows the alms of mercy only on such as

are indigent. Be emptied of all opinion of self-worthiness. God pours

the golden oil of mercy into empty vessels.

(2.) Go to God for mercy. Have mercy upon me, O God!' Psa 51:1. Put me

not off with common mercy that reprobates may have; give me not only

acorns but pearls; give me not only mercy to feed and clothe me, but

mercy to save me; give me the cream of thy mercies; Lord! let me have

mercy and lovingkindness. Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and

tender mercies.' Psa 103:3. Give me such mercy as speaks thy electing

love to my soul. Oh pray for mercy! God has treasures of mercy; prayer

is the key that opens these treasures; and in prayer, be sure to carry

Christ in your arms, for all the mercy comes through Christ. Samuel

took a sucking lamb,; I Sam 7:7; carry the lamb Christ in your arms, go

in his name, present his merits; say, Lord! here is Christ's blood,

which is the price of my pardon; Lord! show me mercy, because Christ

has purchased it. Though God may refuse us when we come for mercy in

our own name, yet he will not when we come in Christ's name. Plead

Christ's satisfaction, and this is an argument that God cannot deny.

Use four: Such as have found mercy are exhorted to three things. (1.)

To be upon Gerizim, the mount of blessing and praising. They have not

only heard the King of heaven is merciful, but they have found it so;

the honeycomb of God's mercy has dropped upon them; when in wants,

mercy supplied them; when they were nigh unto death, mercy raised them

from the sick-bed; when covered with guilt, mercy pardoned them. Bless

the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name.'

Psa 103:3. Oh how should the vessels of mercy run over with praise! Who

was before a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy.' I Tim

1:13. I was bemiracled with mercy; as the sea overflows and breaks down

the banks, so the mercy of God broke down the banks of my sin, and

mercy sweetly flowed into my soul. You that have been monuments of

God's mercy, should be trumpets of praise; you that have tasted the

Lord is gracious, tell others what experiences you have had of God's

mercy, that you may encourage them to seek to him for mercy. I will

tell you what God has done for my soul;' Psa 66:16; that when I found

my heart dead, God's Spirit came upon me mightily, and the blowing of

that wind made the withering flowers of my grace revive. Oh tell others

of God's goodness, that you may set others blessing him, and that you

may make God's praises live when you are dead.

(2.) To love God. Mercy should be the attraction of love. I will love

thee, O Lord, my strength.' Psa 18:8. The Hebrew word for love

signifies love out of the inward bowels. God's justice may make us fear

him, his mercy makes us love him. If mercy will not produce love, what

will? We are to love God for giving us our food, much more for giving

us grace; for sparing mercy, much more for saving mercy. Sure that

heart is made of marble, which the mercy of God will not dissolve in

love. I would hate my own soul,' says Augustine, if I did not find it

loving God.'

(3.) To imitate God in showing mercy. As God is the Father of mercy,

show yourselves to be his children, by being like him. Ambrose says,

The sum and definition of religion is, Be rich in works of mercy, be

helpful to the bodies and souls of others. Scatter your golden seeds;

let the lamp of your profession be filled with the oil of charity. Be

merciful in giving and forgiving. "Be ye merciful, as your heavenly

Father is merciful".

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10. The Truth Of God

The next attribute is God's truth. A God of truth and without iniquity;

just and right is he.' Deut 32:4. For thy mercy is great unto the

heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds.' Psa 57:10. Plenteous in

truth.' Psa 86:15.

I. God is the truth. He is true in a physical sense; true in his being:

he has a real subsistence, and gives a being to others. He is true in a

moral sense; he is true sine errore, without errors; et sine fallacia,

without deceit. God is prima veritas, the pattern and prototype of

truth. There is nothing true but what is in God or comes from God.

II. God's truth, as it is taken from his veracity in making good his

promises. There has not failed one word of all his good promise.' I

Kings 8:56. The promise is God's bond; God's truth is the seal set to

his bond.

There are two things to be observed in the promises of God to comfort

us. [1] The power of God, whereby he is able to fulfil the promise. God

has promised to subdue our corruption. He will subdue our iniquities.'

Micah 7:19. Oh, says a believer, my corruption is so strong, that I am

sure I shall never get the mastery of it. Abraham looked at God's

power. Being fully persuaded that what God had promised he was able to

perform.' Rom 4:21I. He believed that God, who could make a world,

could make dry breasts give suck. It is faith's support that there is

nothing too hard for God. He that could bring water out of a rock is

able to bring to pass his promises.

[2] The truth of God in the promises. God's truth is the seal set to

the promise. In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie has

promised.' Tit 1:2. Eternal life, there is the sweetness of the

promise: God which cannot lie, there is the certainty of it. Mercy

makes the promise, truth fulfils it. God's providences are uncertain,

but his promises are the sure mercies of David.' Acts 13:34. God is not

a man that he should repent.' I Sam 15:29: 29. The word of a prince

cannot always be taken, but God's promise is inviolable. God's truth is

one of the richest jewels of his crown, and he has pawned it in a

promise. Although my house be not so with God, yet he has made with me

an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.' 2 Sam 23:5.

Although my house be not so, that is, though I fail much of that exact

purity the Lord requires, yet he has made with me an everlasting

covenant, that he will pardon, adopt, and glorify me; and this covenant

is ordered in all things and sure. The elements shall melt with fervent

heat;' but this covenant abides firm and inviolable, being sealed with

the truth of God. Nay, God has added to his word his oath, wherein he

pawns his being, life, and righteousness to make good the promise. Heb

6:17. If as often as we break our vows with God, he should break

promise with us, it would be very sad; but his truth is engaged in his

promise, therefore it is like the law of the Medes and Persians, which

cannot be altered. We are not,' says Chrysostom, to believe our senses

so much as we are to believe the promises.' Our senses may fail us, but

the promise cannot, being built upon the truth of God. God will not

deceive the faith of his people, nay, he cannot. God, who cannot lie,

has promised;' he can as well part with his Deity as his verity. God is

said to be abundant in truth. Exod 34:4 What is that? If God has made a

promise of mercy to his people, he will be so far from coming short of

his word that he will be better than his word. He often does more than

he has said, never less. He is abundant in truth.

(1.) The Lord may sometimes delay a promise, but he will not deny. He

may delay a promise. God's promise may lie a good while as seed under

ground, but at last it will spring up into a crop. He promised to

deliver Israel from the iron furnace, but this promise was above four

hundred years in travail before it brought forth. Simeon had a promise

that he should not depart hence, till he had seen the Lord's Christ,'

Luke 2:26, but it was a long time first, but a little before his death,

that he did see Christ. But though God delay the promise, he will not

deny. Having given his bond, in due time the money will be paid.

(2.) God may change his promise, but he will not break it. Sometimes

God changes a temporal promise into a spiritual. The Lord shall give

that which is good,' Psa 85:12; which may not be fulfilled in a

temporal sense, but a spiritual. God may let a Christian be cut short

in temporals, but he makes it up in spirituals. If he does not increase

the basket and the store, he gives increase of faith, and inward peace.

Here he changes his promise, but he does not break it, he gives that

which is better. If a man promises to pay me in farthings, and he pays

me in a better coin, as in gold, he does not break his promise. I will

not suffer my faithfulness to fail.' Psa 89:93. In the Hebrew it is, to

lie.

How does it consist with the truth of God, that he will have all to be

saved, and yet some perish? I Tim 2:4.

Augustine understands it, not of every individual person, but some of

all sorts shall be saved. As in the ark, God saved all the living

creatures; not every bird or fish was saved, for many perished in the

flood; but all, that is, some of every kind were saved; so he will have

all to be saved, that is, some of all nations.

It is said, Christ died for all. He is the Lamb of God that takes away

the sins of the world.' John 1:29. How does this consist with God's

truth, when some are vessels of wrath? Rom 9:22.

(1.) We must qualify the term world. The world is taken either in a

limited sense, for the world of the elect; or in a larger sense, for

both elect and reprobates. Christ takes away the sins of the world,'

that is, the world of the elect.

(2.) We must qualify also Christ's dying for the world. Christ died

sufficiently for all, not effectually. There is the value of Christ's

blood, and the virtue. Christ's blood has value enough to redeem the

whole world, but the virtue of it is applied only to such as believe.

Christ's blood is meritorious for all, not efficacious. All are not

saved, because some put away salvation from them, as in Acts 13:46, and

vilify Christ's blood, counting it an unholy thing. Heb 10:29.

Use one: The truth of God is a great pillar for our faith. Were not he

a God of truth, how could we believe in him? Our faith were fancy; but

he is truth itself, and not a word which he has spoken shall fall to

the ground. Truth is the object of trust.' The truth of God is an

immovable rock, on which we may venture our salvation. Isa 59:15. Truth

faileth:' truth on earth does, but not truth in heaven. God can as well

cease to be God, as cease to be true. Has God said, he will do good to

the soul that seeks him,' Lam 3:25, and he will give rest to the

weary?' Matt 11:28. Here is a safe anchor-hold, he will not alter the

thing which is gone out of his lips. The public faith of heaven is

engaged for believers. Can we have better security? The whole earth

hangs upon the word of God's power, and shall not our faith hang upon

the word of God's truth? Where can we rest our faith but upon God's

faithfulness? There is nothing else we can believe in but the truth of

God. To trust in ourselves is to build upon quick sands; but the truth

of God is a golden pillar for faith to stay upon. God cannot deny

himself. If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny

himself.' 2 Tim 2:13. Not to believe God's veracity, is to affront God.

He that believeth not, has made God a liar.' I John 5:10. A person of

honour cannot be more affronted or provoked, than when he is not

believed. He that denies God's truth makes the promise no better than a

forged deed; and can there be a greater affront offered to God?

Use two: If God is a God of truth, he is true to his threatenings. The

threatenings are a flying roll against sinners. God has threatened to

wound the hairy scalp of every one that goes on still in his

trespasses.' Psa 68:21. He has threatened to judge adulterers. Heb

13:4. To be avenged upon the malicious. Psa 10:14. Thou beholdest

mischief and spite, to requite it with thine own hand;' and to rain

fire and brimstone upon the sinner.' Psa 11:6: 6. God is as true to his

threatenings as to his promises. To show his truth he has executed his

threatenings, and let his thunderbolts of judgement fall upon sinners

in this life. He struck Herod in the act of his pride. He has punished

blasphemers. Olympius, an Arian bishop, reproached and blasphemed the

blessed Trinity, and immediately lightning fell down from the heaven

upon him and consumed him. Let us fear the threatening that we may not

feel it.

Use three: Is God a God of truth? Let us be like God in truth. (1.) We

must be true in our words. Pythagoras being asked what made men like

God, answered, When they speak truth.' It is the note of a man that

shall go to heaven. He speaketh the truth in his heart.' Psa 15:5.

Truth in words is opposed (I.) To lying. Putting away lying, speak

every one truth to his neighbour.' Eph 4:25. Lying is when one speaks

that for truth which he knows to be false. A liar is most opposite to

the God of truth. There are, as Augustine says, two sorts of lies. An

officious lie, when a man tells a lie for his profit; as, when a

tradesman says his commodity cost him so much, when perhaps it did not

cost him half so much. He that will lie in his trade shall lie in hell.

A jesting lie, when a man tells a lie in sport, to make others merry,

and goes laughing to hell. He who tells a lie makes himself like the

devil. The devil is a liar, and the father of it.' John 8:44. He

deceived our first parents by a lie. Some are so wicked, that they will

not only speak an untruth, but will swear to it; nay, they will wish a

curse upon themselves, if that untruth be not true. I have read of a

woman, one Anne Avarie, who in 1575, being in a shop, wished that she

might sink if she had not paid for the wares she took, and fell down

speechless immediately and died. A liar is not fit to live in a

commonwealth. Lying takes away all society and converse with men. How

can you converse with a man when you cannot believe what he says? Lying

shuts men out of heaven. Without are dogs, and whosoever loveth and

maketh a lie.' Rev 22:15. As it is a great sin to tell a lie, so it is

a worse sin to teach a lie. The prophet that teacheth lies.' Isa 9:15.

He who broacheth error teacheth lies; he spreads the plague; he not

only damns himself, but helps to damn others. (II.) Truth in words is

opposed to dissembling. The heart and tongue should go together, as the

dial goes exactly with the sun. To speak fair to one's face, and not to

mean what one speaks, is no better than a lie. His words were smoother

than oil, but war was in his heart.' Psa 55:21. Some have an art to

flatter and hate. Jerome, speaking of the Arians, says, they pretended

friendship, they kissed my hands, but plotted mischief against me.' A

man that flattereth his neighbour, spreadeth a net for his feet.' Prov

29:5. Impia sub dulci melle venena latent [Cruel poison can be hidden

under sweet honey). Falsehood in friendship is a lie. Counterfeiting

friendship is worse than counterfeiting money.

(2.) We must be true in our profession of religion. Let practice go

along with profession. Righteousness and true holiness.' Eph 4:24.

Hypocrisy in religion is a lie. The hypocrite is like a face in a

glass, which is the show of a face, but no true face. He makes show of

holiness, but has no truth in it. Ephraim pretended to be that which he

was not; and what says God of him? Ephraim compasseth me about with

lies.' Hos 11:12. By a lie in our words we deny the truth; by a lie in

our profession we disgrace it. Not to be to God what we profess is

telling a lie; and the Scripture makes it little better than blasphemy.

I know the blasphemy of them that say they are Jews, and are not.' Rev

2:2. Oh! I beseech you, labour to be like God. He is a God of truth. He

can as well part with his Deity as his verity. Be like God, be true in

your words, be true in your profession. God's children are children

that will not lie.' Isa 63:8. When God sees truth in the inward parts,'

and lips in which is no guile,' he sees his own image, which draws his

heart towards us. Likeness produces love.

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11. The Unity Of God

Q-5: ARE THERE MORE GODS THAN ONE?

A: There is but one only, the living and true God.

That there is a God has been proved; and those that will not believe

the verity of his essence, shall feel the severity of his wrath. Hear,

O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.' Deut 6:4. He is the only God.'

Deut 4:39. Know therefore this day, and consider it in thy heart, that

the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath, there

is none else.' A just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.' Isa

45:21. There are many titular gods. Kings represent God; their regal

sceptre is an emblem of his power and authority. Judges are called

gods. I have said, Ye are gods,' Psa 82:2, viz.' set in God's place to

do justice; but dying gods. Ye shall die like men.' Verse 7. There be

that are called gods, but to us there is but one God.' I Cor 8:6.

I. There is but one First Cause that has its Being of itself, and on

which all other beings depend. As in the heavens, the primum mobile

moves all the other orbs, so God gives life and motion to everything

that exists. There can be but one God, because there is but one First

Cause.

II. There is but one infinite Being, therefore there is but one God.

There cannot be two infinites. Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith

the Lord?' Jer 23:24. If there be one infinite, filling all places at

once, how can there be any room for another infinite to subsist?

III. There is but one Omnipotent Power. If there be two Omnipotents,

then we must always suppose a contest between these two: that which one

would do, the other power, being equal, would oppose, and so all things

would be brought into confusion. If a ship should have two pilots of

equal power, one would be ever crossing the other; when one would sail,

the other would cast anchor; there would be confusion, and the ship

must perish. The order and harmony in the world, or the constant and

uniform government of all things, is a clear argument that there is but

one Omnipotent, one God that rules all. I am the first, and I am the

last, and beside me there is no God.' Isa 44:6.

Use one: Of information, (1.) If there be but one God, then it excludes

all other gods. Some have feigned that there were two gods; as the

Valentinians: others, that there were many gods; as the Polytheists.

The Persians worshipped the sun; the Egyptians the lion and elephant;

the Grecians worshipped Jupiter. These err, not knowing the

Scriptures.' Matt 22:29. Their faith is a fable. God has given them up

to strong delusions, to believe a lie, that they may be damned.' 2

Thess 2:11.

(2.) If there be but one God, then there can be but one true religion

in the world. One Lord, one faith.' Eph 4:4. If there were many gods,

then there might be many religions, every God would be worshipped in

his way; but if these be but one God, there is but one religion; one

Lord, one faith. Some say, we may be saved in any religion; but it is

absurd to imagine that God who is One in essence, should appoint

several religions in which he will be worshipped. It is as dangerous to

set up a false religion, as to set up a false god. There are many ways

to hell; men may go thither which way their fancy leads them; but there

is only one direct road to heaven, viz., faith and holiness. There is

no way to be saved but this. As there is but one God, so there is but

one true religion.

(3.) If there be but one God, then there is but One whom you need

chiefly to study to please, and that is God. If there were divers gods,

we should be hard put to it to please them all. One would command one

thing, another the contrary; and to please two contrary masters is

impossible: but there is only one God. Therefore you have but One to

please. As in a kingdom there is but one king, therefore every one

seeks to ingratiate himself into his favour, Prov 19: 6, so there is

but one true God; therefore our main work is to please him. Be sure to

please God, whoever else you displease. This was Enoch's wisdom. He had

this testimony before he died, that he pleased God.' Heb 11:1.

What doth this pleasing God imply?

(1.) We please God when we comply with his will. It was Christ's meat

and drink to do his Father's will, John 4:44, and so he pleased him,

Matt 3:17. A voice came from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in

whom I am well pleased.' It is the will of God that we should be holy.

I Thess 4:4. Now, when we are bespangled with holiness, our lives are

walking Bibles. This is according to God's will, and it pleases him.

(2.) We please God when we do the work that he sets us about. I have

finished the work which thou gavest me to do,' viz.' my mediatory work.

John 17:7. Many finish their lives, but do not finish their work. The

work God has cut out for us is, to observe the first and second tables.

In the first is set down our duty towards God; in the second our duty

towards man. Such as make morality the chief and sole part of religion,

set the second table above the first; nay, they take away the first

table; for, if prudence, justice, temperance, be enough to save, then

what needs the first table? Thus our worship towards God will be quite

left out; but those two tables which God has joined together, let no

man put asunder.

(3.) We please God when we dedicate our hearts to give him the best of

everything. Abel gave God the fat of the offering. Gen 4:4. Domitian

would not have his image carved in wood, or iron, but in gold. We

please God when we serve him with love, fervency, and alacrity. These

are golden services. There is but one God, therefore there is but One

whom we have chiefly to please, namely, God.

(4.) If there be but one God, then we must pray to none but God. The

Papists pray to saints and angels. (1.) To saints. A Popish writer

says, when we pray to the saints departed, they being touched with

compassion, say the like to God for us as the disciples did to Christ

for the Canaanitish woman. "Send her away, for she crieth after us."

Matt 15:23. The saints above know not our wants; if they did, we have

no warrant to pray to them. Abraham is ignorant of us.' Isa 63:16.

Prayer is a part of divine worship, which must be given to God only.

(2.) They pray to angels. Angel-worship is forbidden. Col 2:18, I9.

That we may not pray to angels is clear from Rom 10:14. How shall they

call on him in whom they have not believed?' We may not pray to any but

whom we may believe in; but we may not believe in any angel, therefore

we may not pray to him. There is but one God, and it is a sin to invoke

any but God.

(5.) If there be but one God, who is above all,' Eph 4:6, then he must

be loved above all. We must love him with a love of appreciation; set

the highest estimate on him, who is the only fountain of being and

bliss. We must love him with a love of complacency. Amor est

complacentia amantis amato [The lover's effort to please the beloved,

this is love]. Aquinas. Our love to other things must be more

indifferent. Some drops of love may run beside to the creature, but the

full stream must run towards God. The creature may have the milk of our

love, but we must keep the cream for God. He who is above all, must be

loved above all. There is none on earth whom I desire in comparison of

thee.' Psa 73:35.

Use two: Of caution. If there be but one God, then let us take heed of

setting up more gods than one. Their sorrows shall be multiplied, that

hasten after another god; their drink-offerings of blood will I not

offer, nor take up their names into my lips.' Psa 16:4. God is a

jealous God, and he will not endure that we should have other gods. It

is easy to commit idolatry with the creature. (1.) Some make a god of

pleasure. Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.' 2 Tim 3:4.

Whatever we love more than God we make a god. (2.) Others make money

their god. The covetous man worships the image of gold, therefore he is

called an idolater. Eph 5:5. That which a man trusts to he makes his

god; but he makes the wedge of gold his hope; he makes money his

creator, redeemer, and comforter. It is his creator; if he has money,

he thinks he is made: it is his redeemer; if he be in danger, he trusts

in his money to redeem him: it is his comforter; if at any time he be

sad, the golden harp drives away the evil spirit: so that money is his

god. God made man of the dust of the earth, and man makes a god of the

dust of the earth. (3.) Another makes a god of his child, sets his

child in God's room, and so provokes God to take it away. If you lean

too hard upon glass it will break, so many break their children by

leaning too hard upon them. (4.) Others make a god of their belly.

Whose god is their belly.' Phil 3:19. Clement of Alexandria writes of a

fish that has its heart in its belly; an emblem of epicures, their

heart is in their belly, they mind nothing but indulging the sensual

appetite; sacrificant lari [They worship home comforts]; their belly is

their god, and to this they pour drink-offerings. Thus men make many

gods. The apostle names the wicked man's trinity, The lust of the

flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life,' I John 2:16: the

lust of the flesh is pleasure; the lust of the eye, money; the pride of

life, honour. Oh take heed of this! Whatever you deify beside God will

prove a bramble, and fire will come out of it and devour you. Judg

9:15.

Use three: Of reproof. If the Lord Jehovah be the only true God, it

reproves those who renounce the true God, I mean such as seek to

familiar spirits, which is too much practised among them that call

themselves Christians. It is a sin condemned by the law of God. There

shall not be found among you any one that consults with familiar

spirits.' Deut 18:11. How common is this! If people have lost any of

their goods, they send to wizards to know how they may obtain them

again. What is this but consulting with the devil! and so renouncing

God and their baptism. What! because you have lost your goods, will you

lose your souls too? Thus saith the Lord, Is it not because there is

not a God in Israel, that thou sendest to enquire of Beelzebub?' 2

Kings 1:3. So, is it not because you think there is not a God in heaven

that you ask counsel of the devil? If any here be guilty, be deeply

humbled, ye have renounced the true God. Better be without the goods ye

have lost than have the devil help you to them again.

Use four: Of exhortation. (1.) If there be but one God, as God is one,

so let them that serve him be one. This is what Christ prayed so

heartily for. That they all may be one.' John 17:1I. Christians should

be one, (1.) In judgement. The apostle exhorts to be all of one mind. I

Cor 1:10. How sad is it to see religion wearing a coat of divers

colours; to see Christians of so many opinions, and going so many

different ways! It is Satan that has sown these tares of division. Matt

13:39. He first divided men from God, and then one man from another.

(2.) One in affection. They should have one heart. The multitude of

them that believed were of one heart, and of one soul.' Acts 4:32. As

in music, though there be several strings of a viol, yet all make one

sweet harmony; so, though there are several Christians, yet there

should be one sweet harmony of affection among them. There is but one

God, and they that serve him should be one. There is nothing that would

render the true religion more lovely, or make more proselytes to it,

than to see the professors of it tied together with the heart-strings

of love. Behold how good and how pleasant a thing it is, to see

brethren live together in unity!' Psa 133:3. It is as the sweet dew on

Hermon, and the fragrant ointment poured on Aaron's head. If God be

one, let all that profess him be of one mind, and one heart, and thus

fulfil Christ's prayer, that they all may be one.'

(2.) If there be but one God, let us labour to make clear the title

that this God is ours. This God is our God.' Psa 48:14. What comfort

can it be to hear that there is a God, and that he is the only God,

unless he be our God? What is Deity without property in him? Oh let us

labour to make clear the title! Beg the Holy Spirit. The Spirit works

by faith. By faith we are one with Christ, and through Christ we come

to have God for our God, and thus all his glorious fulness is made over

to us by a deed of gift.

Use five: Of gratitude. What cause have we to be thankful, that we have

the knowledge of the only true God! How many are brought up in

blindness! Some worship Mahomet. Many of the Indians worship the devil;

they light a candle to him, that he may not hurt them. Such as know not

the true God must needs stumble into hell in the dark. Oh let us be

thankful that we are born in such a land, where the light of the gospel

has shone. To have the knowledge of the true God is more than if we had

mines of gold, rocks of diamonds, islands of spices; especially if God

has savingly revealed himself to us; if he has given us eyes to see the

light; if we so know God as to be known of him, to love him, and

believe in him. Matt 11:15. We can never be thankful enough to God,

that he has hid the knowledge of himself from the wise and prudent of

the world, and has revealed it unto us.

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12. The Trinity

Q-6. HOW MANY PERSONS ARE THERE IN THE GODHEAD?

A: Three persons, yet but one God.

'There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and

the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.' I John 5:7.

God is but one, yet are there three distinct persons subsisting in one

Godhead. This is a sacred mystery, which the light within man could

never have discovered. As the two natures in Christ, yet but one

person, is a wonder; so three persons, yet but one Godhead. Here is a

great deep, the Father God, the Son God, the Holy Ghost God; yet not

three Gods, but one God. The three persons in the blessed Trinity are

distinguished, but not divided; three substances, but one essence. This

is a divine riddle where one makes three, and three make one. Our

narrow thoughts can no more comprehend the Trinity in Unity, than a

nut-shell will hold all the water in the sea. Let me shadow it out by a

similitude. In the body of the sun, there are the substance of the sun,

the beams, and the heat; the beams are begotten of the sun, the heat

proceeds both from the sun and the beams; but these three, though

different, are not divided; they all three make but one sun: so in the

blessed Trinity, the Son is begotten of the Father, the Holy Ghost

proceeds from both; yet though they are three distinct persons, they

are but one God. First, let me speak of the Unity in Trinity; then of

the Trinity in Unity.

I. Of the Unity in Trinity. The Unity of the persons in the Godhead

consists of two things.

[1] The identity of essence. In the Trinity there is a oneness in

essence. The three persons are of the same divine nature and substance;

so that in Deo nonest magis et minus, there are no degrees in the

Godhead'; one person is not God more than another.

[2] The Unity of the persons in the Godhead consists in the mutual

inbeing of them, or their being in one together. The three persons are

so united that one person is in another, and with another. Thou,

Father, art in me, and I in thee.' John 17:21I.

II. Let me speak of the Trinity in Unity.

[1] The first person in the Trinity is God the Father. He is called the

first person, in respect of order, not dignity: for God the Father has

no essential perfection which the other persons have not; he is not

more wise, more holy, more powerful than the other persons are. There

is a priority, not a superiority.

[2] The second person in the Trinity is Jesus Christ, who is begotten

of the Father before all time. I was set up from everlasting, from the

beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths I was

brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought

forth.' Prov 8:3-25 . This Scripture declares the eternal generation of

the Son of God. This second person in the Trinity, who is Jehovah, is

become our Jesus. The Scripture calls him the branch of David, Jer

23:5, and I may call him the flower of our nature. By him all that

believe are justified.' Acts 13:39.

[3] The third person in the Trinity is the Holy Ghost, who proceeds

from the Father and the Son, whose work is to illuminate the mind, and

enkindle sacred motions. The essence of the Spirit is in heaven, and

everywhere; but the influence of it is in the hearts of believers. This

is that blessed Spirit who gives us the holy unction. 1 John 2:20.

Though Christ merits grace for us, it is the Holy Ghost that works it

in us. Though Christ makes the purchase, it is the Holy Ghost that

makes the assurance, and seals us to the day of redemption. Thus I have

spoken of all the three persons. The Trinity of persons may be proved

out of Matt 3:16. Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out

of the water, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and

lighting upon him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my

beloved Son.' Here are three names given to the three persons. He who

spake with a voice from heaven was God the Father; he who was baptized

in Jordan was God the Son; he who descended in the likeness of a dove

was God the Holy Ghost. Thus I have shown you the Unity of essence, and

the Trinity of persons.

Use one: For confutation. (1.) This confutes the Jews and Turks, who

believe only the first person in the Godhead. Take away the distinction

of the persons in the Trinity, and you overthrow man's redemption; for

God the Father being offended with man for sin, how shall he be

pacified without a mediator? This mediator is Christ, who makes our

peace. Christ having died, and shed his blood, how shall this blood be

applied but by the Holy Ghost? Therefore, if there be not three persons

in the Godhead, man's salvation cannot be wrought out; if there be no

second person in the Trinity, there is no redeemer; if no third person,

there is no comforter. Thus the plank is taken away by which we get to

heaven.

(2.) It confutes the execrable opinion of the Socinians, who deny the

Divinity of the Lord Jesus, and make him to be a creature only, but of

a higher rank. As the Papists blot out the second commandment, so the

Socinians do the second person in the Trinity. If to oppose Christ's

members be a sin, what is it to oppose Christ himself? Jesus Christ is

co-equal with God the Father. He thought it no robbery to be equal with

God. Phil 2:6. He is co-eternal with God the Father: I was from the

beginning,' Prov 8:83: if not, there was a time when God was without a

Son, and so he would be no Father; nay, there was a time when God was

without his glory, for Christ is the brightness of his Father's glory.'

Heb 1:3. He is co-essential with God the Father. The Godhead subsists

in Christ. In whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.' Col

2:9. It is said, not only that Christ was with God before the

beginning, but that he was God. John 1:1, and 1 Tim 3:16. God manifest

in the flesh.' The title of Lord, so often given to Christ, in the New

Testament, answers to the title of Jehovah in the Old. Deut 6:5; Matt

22:37. Christ has a co-eternity, and co-substantiality with his Father.

I and my Father are one.' John 10:30. It were blasphemy for an angel to

speak thus. Yet further to prove Christ's Godhead, consider (i) The

glorious incommunicable attributes belonging to God the Father are

ascribed to Christ. Is God the Father omnipotent? So is Jesus Christ.

He is the almighty, Rev 1:8, and he creates, Col 1:16. Is God the

Father infinitely immense, filling all places? Jer 23:24. So is Jesus

Christ. While Christ was on the earth by his bodily presence, he was at

the same time in the bosom of the Father by his divine presence. John

3:18. (ii) The same jura regalia, or prerogatives royal, which belong

to God the Father, belong also to Christ. Does God the Father seal

pardons? This is a flower of Christ's crown. Thy sins be forgiven

thee.' Matt 9:5. Nor does Christ remit sin organice only, as ministers

do, by virtue of a power delegated to them from God; but he does it by

his own power and authority. Is God the Father the adequate object of

faith? Is he to be believed in? So is his Son. John 14:10-11. Does

adoration belong to God the Father? So it does to the Son. Let all the

angels of God worship him.' Heb 1:6. How sacrilegious therefore is the

Socinian, who would rob Christ of his Godhead, the best flower of his

crown. They that deny Christ to be God, must greatly wrest, or else

deny the Scripture to be the Word of God.

(3.) It confutes the Arians, who deny the Holy Ghost to be God. The

eternal Godhead subsists in the Holy Ghost. He shall guide you into all

truth.' John 16:13. Christ speaks not there of an attribute, but of a

person. That the Godhead subsists in the person of the Holy Ghost

appears in this; that the Spirit, who gives diversity of gifts, is said

to be the same Lord, and the same God. I Cor 12:5-6. The black and

unpardonable sin is said, in a special manner, to be committed against

the Godhead subsisting in the Holy Ghost. Matt 12:32. The mighty power

of God is made manifest by the Holy Ghost; for he changes the hearts of

men. The devil would have Christ prove himself to be God, by turning

stones into bread; but the Holy Ghost shows his Godhead by turning

stones into flesh. I will take away the stony heart; and give you a

heart of flesh.' Ezek 36:26. Yet further, the power and Godhead of the

Holy Ghost appeared in effecting the glorious conception of our Lord

Jesus Christ. The very shadow of the Holy Ghost made a virgin conceive.

Luke 1:35. The Holy Ghost works miracles, which transcend the sphere of

nature; as raising the dead. Rom 8:11. To him belongs divine worship;

our souls and bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, I Cor 6:19, in

which temples he is to be worshipped, verse 20. We are baptized in the

name of the Holy Ghost; therefore we must believe his Godhead, or

renounce our baptism in his name. Methinks it were better for such men

not to have so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost, Acts

19:2, than to deny his Deity. They who would wittingly and willingly

blot out the third person, shall have their names blotted out of the

book of life.

Use two: For exhortation. (1.) Believe this doctrine of the Trinity of

persons in the unity of essence. The Trinity is purely an object of

faith; the plumbline of reason is too short to fathom this mystery; but

where reason cannot wade, there faith may swim. There are some truths

in religion that may be demonstrated by reason; as that there is a God:

but the Trinity of persons in the Unity of essence is wholly

supernatural, and must be believed by faith. This sacred doctrine is

not against reason, but above it. Those illuminated philosophers, that

could find out the causes of things, and discourse of the magnitude and

influence of the stars, the nature of minerals, could never, by their

deepest search, find out the mystery of the Trinity. This is of divine

revelation, and must be adored with humble believing. We can be no good

Christians, without the firm belief of the Trinity. How can we pray to

God the Father but in the name of Christ, and through the help of the

Spirit? How believe the glorious Trinity? How are the Quakers to be

abhorred, who go under the name of Christians, and yet undervalue and

renounce Jesus Christ! I have read of some Quakers who speak thus: We

deny the person of him whom you call Christ, and affirm, That they who

expect to be saved by that Christ without works, will be damned in that

faith!' Could the devil himself speak worse blasphemy? They would pull

up all religion by the roots, and take away that corner stone, on which

the hope of our salvation is built.

(2.) If there be one God subsisting in three persons, then let us give

equal reverence to all the persons in the Trinity. There is not more or

less in the Trinity; the Father is not more God than the Son and Holy

Ghost. There is an order in the Godhead, but no degrees; one person has

not a majority or supereminence above another, therefore we must give

equal worship to all the persons. That all men should honour the Son

even as they honour the Father.' John 5: 23. Adore Unity in Trinity.

(3.) Obey all the persons in the blessed Trinity; for all of them are

God. Obey God the Father. Christ himself, as man, obeyed God the

Father, John 4:44, much more must we. Deut 27:10.

Obey God the Son. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry.' Psa 2:12. Kiss him

with a kiss of obedience. Christ's commands are not grievous. I John

5:3. Whatever he commands is for our interest and benefit. Oh then kiss

the Son! Why do the elders throw down their crowns at the feet of

Christ, and fall down before the Lamb? Rev 4:10, 11. To testify their

subjection, and to profess their readiness to serve and obey him.

Obey God the Holy Ghost. Our souls are breathed into us by the glorious

Spirit. The Spirit of God has made me.' Job 33:4. Our souls are adorned

by the blessed Spirit. Every grace is a divine spark lighted in the

soul by the Holy Ghost. Nay, more, the Spirit of God sanctified

Christ's human nature; he united it with the divine, and fitted the man

Christ to be our Mediator. Well then does this third person in the

Trinity, the Holy Ghost, deserve to be obeyed; for he is God, and this

tribute of homage and obedience is due to him from us.

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13. The Creation

Q-7: WHAT ARE THE DECREES OF GOD?

A: The decrees of God are his eternal purpose, according to the counsel

of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he has foreordained whatsoever

shall come to pass.

I have already spoken something concerning the decrees of God under the

attribute of his immutability. God is unchangeable in his essence, and

he-is unchangeable in his decrees; his counsel shall stand. He decrees

the issue of all things, and carries them on to their accomplishment by

his providence; I shall proceed therefore to the execution of his

decrees.

Q-9: The next question is, WHAT 1S THE WORK OF CREATION?

A: It is God's making all things from nothing by the word of his power.

Gen 1:1. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.'

The creation is glorious to behold, and it is a pleasant and profitable

study. Some think that when Isaac went abroad into the fields to

meditate, it was in the book of the creatures. The creation is the

heathen man's Bible, the ploughman's primer, and the traveller's

perspective glass, through which he receives a representation of the

infinite excellencies which are in God. The creation is a large volume,

in which God's works are bound up; and this volume has three great

leaves in it, heaven, earth, and sea.

The author of the creation is God, as it is in the text, God created.'

The world was created in time, and could not be from eternity, as

Aristotle thought. The world must have a maker, and could not make

itself. If one should go into a far country, and see stately edifices,

he would never imagine that they could build themselves, but that there

had been some artificer to raise such goodly structures; so this great

fabric of the world could not create itself, it must have some builder

or maker, and that is God. In the beginning God created.' To imagine

that the work of the creation was not framed by the Lord Jehovah, is as

if we should conceive a curious landscape to be drawn without the hand

of an artist. God that made the world and all things therein.' Acts

17:24.

In the work of creation there are two things to be considered: 1: The

making. 2: The adorning.

I. The making of the world. Here consider, [1] God made the world

without any pre-existent matter. This is the difference between

generation and creation. In generation there is materia habilis et

disposita [suitable material at hand], some matter to work upon; but in

creation there is no pre-existent matter. God brought all this glorious

fabric of the world out of the womb of nothing. Our beginning was of

nothing. Some brag of their birth and ancestry; but how little cause

have they to boast who came from nothing.

[2] God made the world with a word. When Solomon had to build a temple

he needed many workmen, and they all had tools to work with, but God

wrought without tools. By the word of the Lord were the heavens made.'

Psa 33:6. The disciples wondered that Christ could with a word calm the

sea; but it was more with a word to make the sea.

[3] God made all things at first very good, Gen 1:31I, without any

defect or deformity. The creation came out of God's hands a curious

piece; it was a fair copy, without any blot, written with God's own

fingers. Psa 8:3. His work was perfect.

II. The adorning of the world. God made this great lump and mass, Rudis

indigestaque moles [with neither shape nor order], and then beautified

it. He divided the sea and the earth, he decked the earth with flowers,

the trees with fruit; but what is beauty when it is masked over?

Therefore, that we might behold this glory, God made the light. The

heavens were bespangled with the sun, moon, and stars, that so the

world's beauty might be beheld and admired. God, in the creation, began

with things less noble and excellent, rocks and vegetables; and then

the rational creatures, angels and men. Man is the most exquisite piece

in the creation. He is a microcosm, or little world. Man was made with

deliberation and counsel. Let us make man.' Gen 1:26. It is the manner

of artificers to be more than ordinarily accurate when they are about

their masterpieces. Man was to be the masterpiece of this visible

world, therefore God consulted about making so rare a piece. A solemn

council of the sacred persons in the Trinity was called. Let us make

man, and let us make him in our own image.' On the king's coin his own

image or effigy is stamped; so God stamped his image on man, and made

him partaker of many divine qualities.

I shall speak, [1] Of the parts of man's body. (1.) The head, the most

excellent architectural part, is the fountain of spirits, and the seat

of reason. In nature the head is the best piece, but in grace the heart

excels. (2.) The eye is the beauty of the face; it shines and sparkles

like a lesser sun in the body. The eye occasions much sin, and

therefore may well have tears in it. (3.) The ear is the conduit-pipe

through which knowledge is conveyed. Better lose our seeing than our

hearing, for faith cometh by hearing.' Rom 10:17. To have an ear open

to God is the best jewel on the ear. (4.) The tongue. David calls the

tongue his glory, Psa 16:6, because it is an instrument to set forth

the glory of God. The soul at first was a viol in tune to praise God,

and the tongue made the music. God has given us two ears, but one

tongue, to show that we should be swift to hear, but slow to speak. God

has set a double fence before the tongue, the teeth, and the lips, to

teach us to be wary that we offend not with our tongue. (5.) The heart

is a noble part, and the seat of life.

[2] The soul of man. This is the man of the man. Man, in regard of his

soul, partakes with the angels; nay, as Plato says, the understanding,

will, and conscience, are a glass that resemble the Trinity. The soul

is the diamond in the ring, it is a vessel of honour; God himself is

served in this vessel. It is a spark of celestial brightness, says

Damascene. David admired the rare contexture and workmanship of his

body. I am wonderfully made, I was curiously wrought in the lowest

parts of the earth.' Psa 139:14, 15. If the cabinet be so curiously

wrought, what is the jewel? How richly is the soul embroidered' Thus

you see how glorious a work the creation is, and man especially, who is

the epitome of the world.

But why did God make the world?

(1.) Negatively. Not for himself; for he did not need it, being

infinite. He was happy in reflecting upon his own sublime excellencies

and perfections before the world was. God did not make the world to be

a mansion for us, since we are not to abide here for ever. Heaven is

the mansion house. John 14:4. The world is only a passage-room to

eternity; the world is to us as the wilderness was to Israel, not to

rest in, but to travel through to the glorious Canaan. The world is a

dressing-room to dress our souls in, not a place where we are to stay

for ever. The apostle tells us of the world's funeral. The elements

shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are

therein shall be burnt up.' 2 Pet 3:30.

(2.) Positively. God made the world to demonstrate his own glory. The

world is a looking glass, in which we may see the power and goodness of

God shine forth. The heavens declare the glory of God.' Psa 19:9. The

world is like a curious piece of tapestry, in which we may see the

skill and wisdom of him that made it.

Use one: Did God create this world? (1.) This convinces us of the truth

of his Godhead. To create is proper to a Deity. Acts 17:74. Plato was

convinced of a Deity when he saw that all the world could not make a

fly. Thus God proves himself to be the true God, and distinguishes

himself from idols. Jer 10:11. It is written in Chaldee, Thus shall ye

say to them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth,

even they shall perish.' Who but God can create? The creation is enough

to convince the heathen that there is a God. There are two books out of

which God will judge and condemn the heathen, viz., the book of

Conscience, Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts,'

Rom 2:25, and the book of the Creation, The invisible things of him are

clearly seen by the things that are made, even his eternal power and

Godhead.' Rom 1:10. The world is full of emblems and hieroglyphics.

Every star in the sky, every bird that flies in the air, is a witness

against the heathen. A creature could not make itself.

(2.) It is a mighty support of faith that God creates. He that made all

things with a word, what cannot he do? He can create strength in

weakness; he can create a supply of our wants. What a foolish question

was that, Can he prepare a table in the wilderness?' Psa [28:19. Cannot

he that made the world do much more? Our help is in the name of the

Lord, who made heaven and earth.' Psa 124:4. Rest on this God for help,

who made heaven and earth. As the work of creation is a monument of

God's power, so it is a stay to faith. Is thy heart hard? He can with a

word create softness. Is it unclean? He can create purity. Create in me

a clean heart, O God.' Psa 51:10. Is the church of God low? He can

create Jerusalem a praise. Isa 65:18. There is no such golden pillar

for faith to stay upon as a creating power.

(3.) Did God make this world full of beauty and glory, everything very

good? Then, what an evil thing is sin, that has put out of frame the

whole creation! Sin has much eclipsed the beauty, soured the sweetness,

and marred the harmony of the world. How bitter is that gall, a drop

whereof can embitter a whole sea! Sin has brought vanity and vexation

into the world, yea, a curse. God cursed the ground for man's sake. Gen

3. There were several fruits of the curse.

'In sorrow shalt thou eat of it.' Verse 17. By sorrow is to be

understood all the troubles and cares of this life. In the sweat of thy

face shalt thou eat bread.' Verse I9. In innocence Adam tilled the

ground, for he must not live idly; but it was rather a delight than a

labour. That tilling was without toiling. The eating in sorrow, and the

sweat of the brow, came in after sin. Thorns and thistles shall the

ground bring forth.' Verse 18. Did the earth in innocence bear thorns,

though they were afterwards threatened as a punishment? It is likely it

did bear thorns; for, when God had done creating, he made no new

species or kinds of things; but the meaning is, Now, after sin, the

earth should bring forth more plentifully of thorns, and now those

thorns should be hurtful, and choke the corn, which hurtful quality was

not in them before. Ever since the fall, all the comforts of this life

have a thorn and a thistle in them! The fourth fruit of the curse was

the driving of man out of paradise. So he drove out the man.' Verse 24.

God at first brought Adam into paradise as into a house ready

furnished, or as a king into his palace. Have dominion over every

living thing that moveth.' Gen 1:28. God's driving Adam out of paradise

signified his dethroning and banishing him, that he might look after a

heavenly and a better paradise. A fifth fruit of the curse was death.

To dust thou shalt return.' Verse I9. Death was not natural to Adam,

but came in after sin. Josephus is of opinion that man would have died,

though he would have had a longer term of years added to his life; but,

out of question, death grew out of the root of sin, as the apostle

says. By sin came death.' Rom 5:12. See then how cursed a thing sin is,

that has brought so many curses upon the creation. If we will not hate

sin for its deformity, let us hate it for the curse it brings.

(4.) Did God make this glorious world? Did he make everything good? Was

there in the creature so much beauty and sweetness? Oh! then what

sweetness is there in God? Quicquid efficit tale, illud est magis tale;

the cause is always more noble than the effect.' Think with yourselves,

is there so much excellence in house and lands? Then how much more is

there in God, that made them! Is there beauty in a rose? What beauty

then is there in Christ, the Rose of Sharon! Does oil make the face

shine? Psa 104:15. How will the light of God's countenance make it

shine! Does wine cheer the heart? Oh! what virtue is there in the true

vine! How does the blood of this grape cheer the heart! Is the fruit of

the garden sweet? How delicious are the fruits of the Spirit! Is a gold

mine so precious? How precious is he who founded this mine! What is

Christ, in whom are hid all treasures? Col 2:3. We should ascend from

the creature to the Creator. If there be any comfort below, how much

more is there in God, who made all these things! How unreasonable is it

that we should delight in the world, and not much more in him that made

it! How should our hearts be set on God, and how should we long to be

with God, who has infinitely more sweetness in him than any creature!

Use two: Of exhortation. (1.) Did God create the world? Let us wisely

observe the works of creation. God has given us not only the book of

the Scriptures to read in, but the book of the creation. Look up to the

heavens, for they show much of God's glory. The sun gilds the world

with its bright beams. Behold the stars, their regular motion in their

orbs, their magnitude, their light and their influence. We may see

God's glory blazing in the sun and twinkling in the stars. Look into

the sea, and see the wonders of God in the deep. Psa 107:24. Look into

the air, there the birds make melody, and sing forth the praises of

their Creator. Look into the earth, there we may wonder at the nature

of minerals, the power of the loadstone, the virtue of herbs. See the

earth decked as a bride with flowers. All these are the glorious

effects of God's power. God has wrought the creation as with curious

needlework, that we may observe his wisdom and goodness, and give him

the praise due to him. O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom

hast thou made them all.' Psa 104:44.

(2.) Did God create all things? Let us obey our Maker. We are his jure

creationis [By right of creation], we owe ourselves to him. If another

gives us our maintenance we think ourselves bound to serve him; much

more should we serve and obey God who gives us our life. In him we live

and move.' Acts 17:28. God has made everything for man's service; the

corn for nourishment, the beasts for usefulness, the birds for music,

that man should be for God's service. The rivers come from the sea, and

they run into the sea again. All we have is from God. Let us honour our

Creator, and live to him that made us.

(3.) Did God make our bodies out of the dust, and that dust out of

nothing? Let this keep down pride. When God would humble Adam he uses

this expression, Out of the dust wast thou taken.' Gen 3:19. Why art

thou proud, O dust and ashes? Thou art made but of coarse metal. Cum

sis humillimus, cur non humillimus? [Since you are humble, why do you

not walk humbly?] Bernard. David says, I was curiously wrought.' Psa

139:15. Thy being curiously wrought, may make thee thankful; but being

made of the dust, may keep thee humble. If thou hast beauty, it is but

well-coloured earth. Thy body is but air and dust mingled together, and

this dust will drop into the dust. When the Lord had said of the

judges, they were gods, Psa 82:2, lest they should grow proud he told

them they were dying gods. Ye shall die like men.' Verse 7.

(4.) Did God create our souls after his image, but we lost it? Let us

never rest till we are restored to God's image again. We have now got

the devil's image in pride, malice, and envy. Let us get God's image

restored, which consists in knowledge and righteousness. Col. 3:10. Eph

4:44. Grace is our best beauty, it makes us like God and angels. As the

sun is to the world, so is holiness to the soul. Let us go to God to

repair his image in us. Lord! thou hast once made me, make me anew; sin

has defaced thy image in me, oh draw it again by the pencil of the Holy

Ghost.

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14. The Providence Of God

Q-11: WHAT ARE GOD'S WORKS OF PROVIDENCE?

A: God's works of providence are the acts of his most holy, wise, and

powerful government of his creatures, and of their actions.

Of the work of God's providence Christ says, My Father worketh hitherto

and I work.' John 5:17. God has rested from the works of creation, he

does not create any new species of things. He rested from all his

works;' Gen 2:2; and therefore it must needs be meant of his works of

providence: My Father worketh and I work.' His kingdom ruleth over

all;' Psa 103:19; i.e., his providential kingdom. Now, for the clearing

of this point, I shall -

I. Show you that there is a providence. 2. What that providence is; and

3. Lay down some maxims or propositions concerning the providence of

God.

I. That there is a providence. There is no such thing as blind fate,

but there is a providence that guides and governs the world. The lot is

cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.'

Prov 16:63.

II. What this providence is. I answer, Providence is God's ordering all

issues and events of things, after the counsel of his will, to his own

glory.

[1] I call providence God's ordering things, to distinguish it from his

decrees. God's decree ordains things that shall fall out, God's

providence orders them.

[2] I call providence the ordering of things after the counsel of God's

will.

[3] God orders all events of things, after the counsel of his will, to

his own glory, his glory being the ultimate end of all his actings, and

the centre where all the lines of providence meet. The providence of

God is Regina mundi, the queen and governess of the world': it is the

eye that sees, and the hand that turns all the wheels in the universe.

God is not like an artificer that builds a house, and then leaves it,

but like a pilot he steers the ship of the whole creation.

III. Propositions about God's providence.

[1] God's providence reaches to all places, persons, and occurrences.

(1.) To all places. Am I a God at hand, and not a God afar off?' Jer

23:33. The diocese where Providence visits is very large; it reaches to

heaven, earth, and sea. They that go down to the sea, see the wonders

of God in the deep.' Psa 107:73, 24. Now, that the sea, which is higher

than the earth, should not drown the earth, is a wonder of Providence.

The prophet Jonah saw the wonders of God in the deep, when the very

fish which devoured him and swallowed him brought him safe to shore.

(2.) God's providence reaches to all persons, especially the persons of

the godly, who in a special manner are taken notice of. God takes care

of every saint in particular, as if he had none else to care for. He

careth for you,' I Pet 5:5, i.e., the elect in a special manner. The

eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him; to preserve them from

death, and to keep them alive in famine.' Psa 33:18, I9. God by his

providential care shields off dangers from his people, and sets a

life-guard of angels about them. Psa 34:4. God's providence keeps the

very bones of the saints. Psa 34:40. It bottles their tears. Psa 56:6.

It strengthens the saints in their weakness. Heb 11:14. It supplies all

their wants out of its alms basket. Psa 23:3. Thus Providence

wonderfully supplies the wants of the elect. When the Protestants in

Rochelle were besieged by the French king, God by his providence sent a

great number of small fishes to feed them, such as were never seen

before in that haven. So the raven, that unnatural creature (that will

hardly feed its own young), providentially brought sustenance to the

prophet Elijah. I Kings 17:7. The Virgin Mary, through bearing and

bringing forth the Messiah, helped to make the world rich, yet she

herself was very poor; and now, being warned of the angel to go into

Egypt, Matt 2:13, she had scarce enough to bear her charges thither;

but see how God provides for her beforehand. By his providence he sends

wise men from the east, who bring costly gifts, gold, myrrh, and

frankincense, and present them to Christ; and now she has enough to

defray her charges into Egypt. God's children sometimes scarce know how

they are fed, except that providence feeds them. Verily thou shalt be

fed.' Psa 37:7. If God will give his people a kingdom when they die, he

will not deny them daily bread while they live. (3.) God's providence

reaches to all affairs and occurrences in the world. There is nothing

that stirs in the world but God has, by his providence, the over-ruling

of it. Is it the raising of a man to honour? Psa 75:5. He puts down

one, and raises up another. Success and victory in battle is the result

of providence. Saul had the victory, but God wrought the salvation. I

Sam 11:13. That among all virgins brought before the king, Esther

should find favour in the eyes of the king, was not without God's

special providence; for, by this means, the Lord saved the Jews alive

that were destined to destruction. Providence reaches to the least of

things, to birds and ants. Providence feeds the young raven, when the

dam forsakes it, and will give it no food. Psa 147:7. Providence

reaches to the very hairs of our head. The hairs of your head are all

numbered.' Matt 10:00. Surely if providence reaches to our hairs, much

more to our souls. Thus you have seen that God's providence reaches to

all places, to all persons, to all occurrences and affairs. Now there

are two objections against this doctrine.

Some say, There are many things done in the world which are very

disorderly and irregular; and surely God's providence is not in these

things.

Yes, the things that seem to us irregular, God makes use of to his own

glory. Suppose you were in a smith's shop, and should see there several

sorts of tools, some crooked, some bowed, others hooked, would you

condemn all these things, because they do not look handsome? The smith

makes use of them all for doing his work. Thus it is with the

providences of God; they seem to us to be very crooked and strange, yet

they all carry on God's work. I shall make this clear to you in two

particular cases.

God's people are sometimes low. It seems to be out of order that they

who are best should be in the lowest condition; but there is much

wisdom in this providence, as appears thus: 1. Perhaps the hearts of

the godly were lifted up with riches, or with success; now God comes

with a humbling providence to afflict them and fleece them. Better is

the loss that makes them humble than the success that makes them proud.

Again. 2. If the godly were not sometimes afflicted, and suffered an

eclipse in their outward comforts, how could their graces be seen,

especially their faith and patience? If it were always sunshine we

should see no stars; so if we should have always prosperity, it would

be hard to see the acting of men's faith. Thus you see God's

providences are wise and regular, though to us they seem very strange

and crooked.

Here is another case. The wicked flourish. This seems to be very much

out of order; but God, in his providence, sees good sometimes that the

worst of men should be exalted; that they may do some work for God,

though it be against their will. Isa 10:0. God will be in no man's

debt. He makes use of the wicked sometimes to protect and shield his

church; and sometimes to refine and purify it. Thou hast ordained them

for correction.' Hab 1:12. As if the prophet had said, Thou hast

ordained the wicked to correct thy children. Indeed, as Augustine says

well, We are beholden to wicked men, who against their wills do us

good,' As the corn is beholden to the flail to thresh off its husks, or

as the iron is beholden to the file to brighten it, so the godly are

beholden to the wicked, though it be against their will, to brighten

and refine their graces. Now, then, if the wicked do God's own work,

though against their will, he will not let them be losers by it; he

will raise them in the world, and give them a full cup of earthly

comforts. Thus you see those providences are wise and regular, which to

us seem strange and crooked.

But, some may say, if God has a hand in ordering all things that fall

out, he has a hand in the sins of men.

I answer, No, by no means, he has no hand in any man's sin. God cannot

go contrary to his own nature, he cannot do any unholy action, any more

than the sun can be said to be darkened. Here you must take heed of two

things; as you must take heed of making God ignorant of men's sins, so

you must take heed of making God to have a hand in men's sins. Is it

likely that God is the author of sin, and the avenger of it? Is it a

likely thing that God should make a law against sin, and then have a

hand in breaking his own law? God in his providence permits men's sins.

He suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.' Acts 14:16. God

permitted their sin, which he never would, if he could not bring good

out of it. Had not sin been permitted, God's justice in punishing sin,

and his mercy in pardoning sin, had not been so well known. The Lord is

pleased to permit it, but he has no hand in sin.

But is it not said that God hardened Pharaoh's heart? Here is more than

barely permitting sin.

God does not infuse evil into men, he withdraws the influence of his

graces, and then the heart hardens of itself; even as the light being

withdrawn, darkness presently follows in the air; but it were absurd to

say, that therefore the light darkens the air; and therefore you will

observe, that Pharaoh is said to harden his own heart. Exod 8:85. God

is the cause of no man's sin. It is true God has a hand in the action

where sin is, but no hand in the sin of the action. A man may play upon

a jarring instrument, but the jarring is from itself; so here, the

actions of men, so far as they are natural, are from God; but so far as

they are sinful, they are from men themselves, and God has no hand at

all in them. So much for the first position, that God's providence

reaches to all places, to all persons, and to all occurrences.

[2] A second proposition is, that providences, which are casual and

accidental to us, are pre-determined by the Lord. The falling of a tile

upon one's head, the breaking out of a fire, is casual to us, but it is

ordered by a providence of God. You have a clear instance of this in I

Kings 22:24. A certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king

of Israel between the joints of the harness.' This accident was casual

as to the man that drew the bow; but it was divinely ordered by the

providence of God. God's providence directed the arrow to hit the mark.

Things that seem to fall out casual, and by chance, are the issues of

God's decrees, and the interpretation of his will.

[3] God's providence is greatly to be observed, but we are not to make

it the rule of our actions. Whoso is wise will observe these things.'

Psa 107:73. It is good to observe providence, but we must not make it

our rule to walk by. Providence is a Christian's diary, but not his

Bible. Sometimes a bad cause prevails and gets ground; but it is not to

be liked because it prevails. We must not think the better of what is

sinful, because it is successful. This is no rule for our actions to be

directed by.

[4] Divine providence is irresistible. There is no standing in the way

of God's providence to hinder it. When God's time was come for Joseph's

release, the prison could hold him no longer. The king sent and loosed

him.' Psa 105:50. When God would indulge the Jews with liberty in their

religion, Cyrus, by a providence, puts forth a proclamation to

encourage the Jews to go and build their temple at Jerusalem, and

worship God. Ezra 1:1, 3. If God will shield and protect Jeremiah's

person in captivity, the very king of Babylon shall nurse up the

prophet, and give charge concerning him that he wants nothing. Jer

39:11, 12.

[5] God is to be trusted when his providences seem to run contrary to

his promises. God promised to give David the crown, to make him king;

but providence ran contrary to his promise. David was pursued by Saul,

and was in danger of his life, but all this while it was David's duty

to trust God. Pray observe, that the Lord by cross providences often

brings to pass his promise. God promised Paul the lives of all that

were with him in the ship; but the providence of God seemed to run

quite contrary to his promise, for the winds blew, the ship split and

broke in pieces. Thus God fulfilled his promise; upon the broken pieces

of the ship they all came safe to shore. Trust God when providences

seem to run quite contrary to promises.

[6] The providences of God are chequer-work, they are intermingled. In

the life to come there shall be no more mixture; in hell there will be

nothing but bitter; in heaven nothing but sweet; but in this life the

providences of God are mixed, there is something of the sweet in them,

and something of the bitter. Providences are just like Israel's pillar

of cloud, that conducted them in their march, which was dark on one

side and light on the other. In the ark were laid up the rod and manna,

so are God's providences to his children; there is something of the rod

and something of the manna; so that we may say with David, I will sing

of mercy and judgement.' When Joseph was in prison there was the dark

side of the cloud; but God was with Joseph, there was the light side of

the cloud. Asher's shoes were of brass, but his feet were dipped in

oil. Deut 33:34. So affliction is the shoe of brass that pinches; but

there is mercy mingled with the affliction, for there is the foot

dipped in oil.

[7] The same action, as it comes from God's providence, may be good,

and as it comes from men may be evil. For instance, Joseph being sold

into Egypt by his brethren was evil, very wicked, for it was the fruit

of their envy; but as it was an act of God's providence it was good;

for by this means Jacob and all his family were preserved alive in

Egypt. Another instance is in Shimei's cursing David. Shimei cursed

David, it was wicked and sinful, for it was the fruit of his malice;

but as his cursing was ordered by God's providence, it was an act of

God's justice to punish David, and to humble him for his adultery and

murder. As the crucifying of Christ came from the Jews, it was an act

of hatred and malice to Christ; and Judas's betraying him was an act of

covetousness; but as each was an act of God's providence, so there was

good in it; for it was an act of God's love in giving Christ to die for

the world. Thus I have made clear to you the doctrine of God's

providence in these several positions. Let me now speak something by

way of application.

Use one: By way of exhortation in these particulars. (1.) Admire God's

providence. The providence of God keeps the whole creation upon the

wheels, or else it would soon be dissolved, and the very axletree would

break in pieces. If God's providence should be withdrawn but for a

while, creatures would be dissolved, and run into their first nothing.

Without this wise providence of God there would be anxiety and

confusion in the whole world, just like an army when it is routed and

scattered. The providence of God infuses comfort and virtue into

everything we enjoy. Our clothes would not warm us, our food would not

nourish us, without the special providence of God. And does not all

this deserve your admiration of providence?

(2.) Learn quietly to submit to divine providence. Do not murmur at

things that are ordered by divine wisdom. We may no more find fault

with the works of providence than we may with the works of creation. It

is a sin as much to quarrel with God's providence as to deny his

providence. If men do not act as we would have them, they shall act as

God would have them. His providence is his master-wheel that turns

these lesser wheels, and God will bring his glory out of all at last. I

was dumb and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it.' Psa 39:9. It

may be, we think sometimes we could order things better if we had the

government of the world in our hands; but alas! should we be left to

our own choice we should choose those things that are hurtful for us.

David earnestly desired the life of his child, which was the fruit of

his sin, but had the child lived it would have been a perpetual

monument of his shame. Let us be content that God should rule the

world; learn to acquiesce in his will, and submit to his providence.

Does any affliction befall you? Remember God sees it is that which is

fit for you, or it would not come. Your clothes cannot be so fit for

you as your crosses. God's providence may sometimes be secret, but it

is always wise; and though we may not be silent under God's dishonour,

yet we should learn to be silent under his displeasure.

(3.) You that are Christians, believe that all God's providence shall

conspire for your good at last. The providences of God are sometimes

dark, and our eyes dim, and we can hardly tell what to make of them;

but when we cannot unriddle providence, let us believe that it will

work together for the good of the elect. Rom 8:88. The wheels in a

clock seem to move contrary one to the other, but they help forward the

motion of the clock, and make the larum strike: so the providences of

God seem to be cross wheels; but for all that, they shall carry on the

good of the elect. The pricking of a vein is in itself evil and

hurtful; but as it prevents a fever, and tends to the health of the

patient, it is good; so affliction in itself is not joyous, but

grievous; but the Lord turns it to the good of his saints. Poverty

shall starve their sins, and afflictions shall prepare them for a

kingdom. Therefore, Christians, believe that God loves you, and that he

will make the most cross providences to promote his glory and your

good.

(4.) Let it be an antidote against immoderate fear, that nothing comes

to pass but what is ordained by God's decree, and ordered by his

providence. We sometimes fear what the issue of things will be, when

men grow high in their actings; but let us not make things worse by our

fear. Men are limited in their power, and cannot go one hair's breadth

further than God's providence permits. He might let Sennacherib's army

march towards Jerusalem, but he shall not shoot one arrow against it.

Then the angel of the Lord went forth and smote in the camp of the

Assyrians an hundred and fourscore and five thousand.' Isa 37:76. When

Israel was encompassed between Pharaoh and the Red Sea, no question,

some of their hearts began to tremble, and they looked upon themselves

as dead men; but Providence so ordered it, that the sea was a safe

passage to Israel, and a sepulchre to Pharaoh and all his host.

(5.) Let the merciful providence of God cause thankfulness. We are kept

alive by a wonderful-working Providence. Providence makes our clothes

to warm us, and our meat to nourish us. We are fed every day out of the

alms-basket of God's providence. That we are in health, that we have an

estate, is not our diligence, but God's providence. Thou shalt remember

the Lord thy God, for he it is that gives thee power to get wealth.'

Deut 8:18. Especially if we go a step higher, we may see cause for

thankfulness, that we were born and bred in a gospel land, and that we

live in such a place where the Sun of Righteousness shines, which is a

signal providence. Why might we not have been born in such places where

Paganism prevails? That Christ should make himself known to us, and

touch our hearts with his Spirit, when he passes by others; whence is

this but from the miraculous providence of God, which is the effect of

his free grace?

Use two: Comfort in respect of the church of God. God's providence

reaches in a more special manner to his church. Sing ye unto her, A

vineyard of red wine.' Isa 27:7. God waters this vineyard with his

blessings, and watches over it by his providence. I the Lord keep it

night and day.' Such as think totally to ruin the church, must do it in

a time when it is neither day nor night, for the Lord keeps it by his

providence night and day. What a miraculous conduct of Providence had

Israel! God led them by a pillar of fire, gave them manna from heaven,

and water from the rock. God by his providence preserves his church in

the midst of enemies; a spark kept alive in the ocean, or a flock of

sheep among wolves. God saves his church strangely. (1.) By giving

unexpected mercies to his church, when she looked for nothing but ruin.

When the Lord turned the captivity of Zion, we were like them that

dream.' Psa 126:6. How strangely did God raise up Queen Esther to

preserve alive the Jews, when Haman had got a bloody warrant signed for

their execution! (2.) Strangely, by saving in that very way in which we

think he will destroy. God works sometimes by contraries. He raises his

church by bringing it low. The blood of the martyrs has watered the

church, and made it more fruitful. Exod 1:12. The more they afflicted

them the more they multiplied.' The church is like that plant which

Gregory Nazianzen speaks of, it lives by dying, and grows by cutting.

(3.) Strangely, in that he makes the enemy to do his work. When the

people of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir came against Judah, God set the

enemy one against another. The children of Ammon and Moab stood up

against them of Mount Seir to slay them; and when they had made an end

of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another.' 2

Chron 20:03. In the powder treason he made the traitors to be their own

betrayers. God can do his work by the enemy's hand. God made the

Egyptians send away the people of Israel laden with jewels. Exod 12:26.

The church is the apple of God's eye, and the eyelid of his providence

daily covers and defends it.

Use three: See here, that which may make us long for the time when the

great mystery of God's providence shall be fully unfolded to us. Now we

scarce know what to make of God's providence, and are ready to censure

what we do not understand; but in heaven we shall see how all his

providences (sickness, losses, sufferings) contributed to our

salvation. Here we see but some dark pieces of God's providence, and it

is impossible to judge of his works by pieces; but when we come to

heaven, and see the full body and portrait of his providence drawn out

into its lively colours, it will be glorious to behold. Then we shall

see how all God's providences helped to fulfil his promises. There is

no providence but we shall see a wonder or a mercy in it.

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1. The Covenant Of Works

Q-12: I proceed to the next question, WHAT SPECIAL ACT OF PROVIDENCE

DID GOD EXERCISE TOWARDS MAN IN THE ESTATE WHEREIN HE WAS CREATED?

A: When God had created man, he entered into a covenant of life with

him upon condition of perfect obedience, forbidding him to eat of the

tree of knowledge upon pain of death.

For this, consult with Gen 2:16, 17: And the Lord commanded the man,

saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the

tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat; for in the

day thou eatest of it, thou shalt surely die.' The subject of our next

discourse is this covenant of works.

I. This covenant was made with Adam and all mankind; for Adam was a

public person, and the representative of the world.

For what reason did God make a covenant with Adam and his posterity in

innocence?

(1.) To show his sovereignty over us. We were his creatures, and as he

was the great Monarch of heaven and earth, he might impose upon us

terms of a covenant. (2.) God made a covenant with Adam to bind him

fast to him: as God bound himself to Adam, so Adam was bound to him by

the covenant.

What was the covenant?

God commanded Adam not to eat of the tree of knowledge; but gave him

leave to eat of all the other trees of the garden. God did not envy him

any happiness; but said, Meddle not with this tree of knowledge,'

because he would try Adam's obedience. As King Pharaoh made Joseph

chief ruler of his kingdom, and gave him a ring off his finger, and a

chain of gold, but said he must not touch his throne.' Gen 41:40. In

like manner God dealt with Adam. He gave him a sparkling jewel,

knowledge; and put upon him the garment of original righteousness;

only, said he, touch not the tree of knowledge, for that is aspiring

after omniscience. Adam had power to keep this law: he had the copy of

God's law written in his heart. This covenant of works had a promise

annexed to it, and a threatening. 1. The promise was, Do this and

live.' In case man had stood, it is probable he would not have died,

but would have been translated to a better paradise. 2. The

threatening, Thou shalt die the death;' Heb. In dying thou shalt die;'

that is, thou shalt die both a natural death and an eternal, unless

some expedient be found out for thy restoration.

Why did God give Adam this law, seeing he foresaw that Adam would

transgress it?

(1.) It was Adam's fault that he did not keep the law. God gave him a

stock of grace to trade with, but by his own neglect he failed. (2.)

Though God foresaw Adam would transgress, yet that was not a sufficient

reason that no law should be given him; for, by the same reason, God

should not have given his written Word to men, to be a rule of faith

and manners, because he foresaw that some would not believe, and others

would be profane. Shall laws not be made in the land, because some will

break them? (3.) Though God foresaw Adam would break the law, he knew

how to turn it to greater good in sending Christ. The first covenant

being broken, he knew how to establish a second, and a better.

II. Concerning the first covenant, consider these four things: -

[1] The form of the first covenant in innocence was working; Do this

and live.' Working was the ground and condition of man's justification.

Gal 3:12. Not but that working is required in the covenant of grace,

for we are bid to work out our salvation, and be rich in good works.

But works in the covenant of grace are not required under the same

notion as in the first covenant with Adam. Works are not required for

the justification of our persons, but as an attestation of our love to

God; not as the cause of our salvation, but as an evidence of our

adoption. Works are required in the covenant of grace, not so much in

our own strength as in the strength of another. It is God which worketh

in you.' Phil 2:13. As the teacher guides the child's hand, and helps

him to form his letters, so that it is not so much the child's writing

as the master's, so our obedience is not so much our working as the

Spirit's co-working.

[2] The covenant of works was very strict. God required of Adam and all

mankind, (1.) Perfect obedience. Adam must do all things written in the

book of the law,' and not fail, either in the matter or manner. Gal

3:10. Adam was to live up to the whole breadth of the moral law, and go

exactly according to it, as a well-made dial goes with the sun. One

sinful thought would have forfeited the covenant. (2.) Personal

obedience. Adam must not do his work by a proxy, or have any surety

bound for him; but it must be done in his own person. (3.) Perpetual

obedience. He must continue in all things written in the book of the

law.' Gal 3:10. Thus it was very strict. There was no mercy in case of

failure.

[3] The covenant of works was not built upon a very firm basis; and

therefore must needs leave men full of fears and doubts. The covenant

of works rested upon the strength of man's inherent righteousness;

which though in innocence was perfect, yet was subject to change. Adam

was created holy, but mutable; having a power to stand and a power to

fall. He had a stock of original righteousness to begin the world with,

but he was not sure he would not break. He was his own pilot, and could

steer right in the time of innocence; but he was not so secured but

that he might dash against the rock of temptation, and he and his

posterity be shipwrecked; so that the covenant of works must needs

leave jealousies and doubtings in Adam's heart, as he had no security

given him that he should not fall from that glorious state.

[4] The covenant of works being broken by sin, man's condition was very

deplorable and desperate. He was left in himself helpless; there was no

place for repentance; the justice of God being offended set all the

other attributes against him. When Adam lost his righteousness, he lost

his anchor of hope and his crown; there was no way for relief, unless

God would find out such a way as neither man nor angel could devise.

Use one: See (1.) The condescension of God, who was pleased to stoop so

low as to make a covenant with us. For the God of glory to make a

covenant with dust and ashes; for God to bind himself to us, to give us

life in case of obedience; for him to enter into covenant with us was a

sign of friendship, and a royal act of favour.

(2.) See what a glorious condition man was in, when God entered into

covenant with him. He was placed in the garden of God, which for the

pleasure of it was called paradise. Gen 2:8. He had his choice of all

the trees, one only excepted; he had all kinds of precious stones, pure

metals, rich cedars; he was a king upon the throne, and all the

creation did obeisance to him, as in Joseph's dream all his brethren's

sheaves bowed to his sheaf. Man, in innocence, had all kinds of

pleasure that might ravish his senses with delight, and be as baits to

allure him to serve and worship his Maker. He was full of holiness.

Paradise was not more adorned with fruit than Adam's soul was with

grace. He was the coin on which God had stamped his lively image. Light

sparkled in his understanding, so that he was like an earthly angel;

and his will and affections were full of order, tuning harmoniously to

the will of God. Adam was a perfect pattern of sanctity. Adam had

intimacy of communion with God and conversed with him, as a favourite

with his prince. He knew God's mind, and had his heart. He not only

enjoyed the light of the sun in paradise, but the light of God's

countenance. This was Adam's condition when God entered into a covenant

with him; but this did not long continue; for man being in honour

abideth not,' lodged not for a night. Psa 49:12. His teeth watered at

the apple, and ever since it has made our eyes water.

(3.) Learn from Adam's fall, how unable we are to stand in our own

strength. If Adam, in the state of integrity, did not stand, how unable

are we now, when the lock of our original righteousness is cut. If

purified nature did not stand, how then shall corrupt nature? We need

more strength to uphold us than our own.

(4.) See in what a sad condition all unbelievers and impenitent persons

are. As long as they continue in their sins they continue under the

curse, under the first covenant. Faith entitles us to the mercy of the

second covenant; but while men are under the power of their sins they

are under the curse of the first covenant; and if they die in that

condition, they are damned to eternity.

(5.) See the wonderful goodness of God, who was pleased when man had

forfeited the first covenant, to enter into a new covenant with him.

Well may it be called foedus gratiae, a covenant of grace; for it is

bespangled with promises as the heaven with stars. When the angels,

those glorious spirits, fell, God did not enter into a new covenant

with them to be their God, but he let those golden vessels lie broken;

yet has he entered into a second covenant with us, better than the

first. Heb 8:6. It is better, because it is surer; it is made in

Christ, and cannot be reversed. Christ has engaged his strength to keep

every believer. In the first covenant we had a posse stare, a power of

standing; in the second we had a non posse cadere, an impossibility of

falling finally. I Pet 1:5.

(6.) Whosoever they are that look for righteousness and salvation by

the power of their freewill, or the inherent goodness of their nature,

or by virtue of their merit, as the Socinians and Papists, they are all

under the covenant of works. They do not submit to the righteousness of

faith, therefore they are bound to keep the whole law, and in case of

failure they are condemned. The covenant of grace is like a court of

Chancery, to relieve the sinner, and help him who is cast by the first

covenant. It says, Believe in the Lord Jesus, and be saved'; but such

as will stand upon their own inherent righteousness, free-will and

merit, fall under the first covenant of works, and are in a perishing

estate.

Use two: Let us labour by faith to get into the second covenant of

grace, and then the curse of the first covenant will be taken away by

Christ. If we once get to be heirs of the covenant of grace, we are in

a better state than before. Adam stood on his own legs, and therefore

he fell; we stand in the strength of Christ. Under the first covenant,

the justice of God, as an avenger of blood, pursues us; but if we get

into the second covenant we are in the city of refuge, we are safe, and

the justice of God is pacified towards us.

Q-14: WHAT 1S SIN?

A: Sin is any want of conformity to the law of God, or transgression of

it.

[1] Sin is the transgression of the law.' I John 3:4. Of sin in

general:

|1] Sin is a violation or transgression. The Latin word, transgredior,

to transgress, signifies to go beyond one's bounds. The moral law is to

keep us within the bounds of duty. Sin is going beyond our bounds.

[2] The law of God is not the law of an inferior prince, but of

Jehovah, who gives laws as well to angels as men; it is a law that is

just, and holy, and good. Rom 7:12. It is just, there is nothing in it

unequal; holy, nothing in it impure; good, nothing in it prejudicial.

So that there is no reason to break this law, no more than for a beast,

that is in a fat pasture, to break over the hedge, or to leap into a

barren heath or quagmire.

I shall show what a heinous and execrable thing sin is. It is malorum

colluvies, the complication of all evil; it is the spirits of mischief

distilled. The Scripture calls it the 'accursed thing.' Josh 7:13. It

is compared to the venom of serpents, and the stench of sepulchres. The

apostle uses this expression of sin, Out of measure sinful,' Rom 7:13,

or, as it is in the Greek, Hyperbolically sinful.' The devil would

paint sin with the vermilion colour of pleasure and profit, that he may

make it look fair; but I shall pull off the paint that you may see its

ugly face. We are apt to have slight thoughts of sin, and say to it, as

Lot of Zoar, Is it not a little one?' Gen 19:20. But that you may see

how great an evil sin is, consider these four things:

I. The origin of sin, from whence it comes. It fetches its pedigree

from hell; sin is of the devil. He that committeth sin is of the

devil.' I John 3:8. Satan was the first actor of sin, and the first

tempter to sin. Sin is the devil's first-born.

II. Sin is evil in the nature of it.

[1] It is a defiling thing. Sin is not only a defection, but a

pollution. It is to the soul as rust is to gold, as a stain to beauty.

It makes the soul red with guilt, and black with filth. Sin in

Scripture is compared to a menstruous cloth,' Isa 30:22, and to a

plague-sore.' I Kings 8:38. Joshua's filthy garments, in which he stood

before the angel, were nothing but a type and hieroglyphic of sin. Zech

3:3. Sin has blotted God's image, and stained the orient brightness of

the soul. It makes God loathe a sinner, Zech 11:8; and when a sinner

sees his sin, he loathes himself. Ezek 20:42. Sin drops poison on our

holy things, it infects our prayers. The high priest was to make

atonement for sin on the altar, to typify that our holiest services

need Christ to make an atonement for them. Exod 29:36. Duties of

religion in themselves are good, but sin corrupts them, as the purest

water is polluted by running through muddy ground. If the leper, under

the law, had touched the altar, the altar would not have cleansed him,

but he would have defiled the altar. The apostle calls sin, Filthiness

of flesh and spirit.' 2 Cor 7:1. Sin stamps the devil's image on a man.

Malice is the devil's eye, hypocrisy his cloven foot. It turns a man

into a devil. Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?'

John 6:70.

[2] Sin is grieving God's Spirit. Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God.'

Eph 4:30. To grieve is more than to anger.

How can the Spirit be said to be grieved? For, seeing he is God, he

cannot be subject to any passion.

This is spoken metaphorically. Sin is said to grieve the Spirit;

because it is an injury offered to the Spirit, and he takes it

unkindly, and, as it were, lays it to heart. And is it not much thus to

grieve the Spirit? The Holy Ghost descended in the likeness of a dove;

and sin makes this blessed dove mourn. Were it only an angel, we should

not grieve him, much less the Spirit of God. Is it not sad to grieve

our Comforter?

[3] Sin is an act of contumacy against God; a walking antipodes to

heaven. If ye will walk contrary to me.' Lev 26:27. A sinner tramples

upon God's law, crosses his will, does all he can to affront, yea, to

spite God. The Hebrew word for sin, Pasha, signifies rebellion; there

is the heart of a rebel in every sin. We will do whatsoever proceedeth

out of our own mouth, to burn incense to the queen of heaven.' Jer

44:19. Sin strikes at the very Deity; Peccatum est Deicidium. [Sin is

God's would-be murderer]. Sin would not only unthrone God, but un-God

him. If the sinner could help it, God would no longer be God.

[4] Sin is an act of disingenuity and unkindness. God feeds the sinner,

keeps off evils from him, bemiracles him with mercy; but the sinner not

only forgets God's mercies, but abuses them. He is the worse for mercy;

like Absalom, who, as soon as David had kissed him, and taken him into

favour, plotted treason against him. 2 Sam 15:10. Like the mule, who

kicks the dam after she has given it milk. Is this thy kindness to thy

friend?' 2 Sam 16:17. God may upbraid the sinner. I have given thee,'

he may say, thy health, strength, and estate; but thou requitest me

evil for good, thou woundest me with my own mercies; is this thy

kindness to thy friend? Did I give thee life to sin? Did I give thee

wages to serve the devil?'

[5] Sin is a disease. The whole head is sick;' Isa 1:5. Some are sick

of pride, others of lust, others of envy. Sin has distempered the

intellectual part, it is a leprosy in the head, it has poisoned the

vitals. Their conscience is defiled.' Tit 1:15. It is with a sinner as

with a sick patient, his palate is distempered, the sweetest things

taste bitter to him. The word which is sweeter than the honey-comb,'

Psa 19:90, tastes bitter to him, he puts sweet for bitter.' Isa 5:20.

This is a disease, and nothing can cure this disease but the blood of

the Physician.

[6] Sin is an irrational thing. It makes a man act not only wickedly,

but foolishly. It is absurd and irrational to prefer the less before

the greater; the pleasures of life, before the rivers of pleasures at

God's right-hand for evermore. Is it not irrational to lose heaven for

the satisfying or indulging of lust? As Lysimachus, who, for a draught

of water, lost a kingdom. Is it not irrational to gratify an enemy? In

sin we do so. When lust or rash anger burns in the soul, Satan warms

himself at this fire. Men's sins feast the devil.

[7] Sin is a painful thing. It costs men much labour to pursue their

sins. How do they tire themselves in doing the devil's drudgery! They

weary themselves to commit iniquity.' Jer 9:5. What pains did Judas

take to bring about his treason! He goes to the high priest, and then

after to the band of soldiers, and then back again to the garden.

Chrysostom says, Virtue is easier than vice.' It is more pains to some

to follow their sins, than to others to worship their God. While the

sinner travails with his sin, in sorrow he brings forth; which is

called serving divers lusts.' Tit 3:3. Not enjoy, but serve. Why so?

Because not only of the slavery in sin, but the hard labour; it is

serving divers lusts.' Many a man goes to hell in the sweat of his

brow.

[8] Sin is the only thing God has an antipathy against. God does not

hate a man because he is poor, or despised in the world; as you do not

hate your friend because he is sick; but that which draws forth the

keenness of God's hatred, is sin. Oh, do not this abominable thing that

I hate.' Jer 44:4. And sure, if the sinner dies under God's hatred, he

cannot be admitted into the celestial mansions. Will God let the man

live with him whom he hates? God will never lay a viper in his bosom.

The feathers of the eagle will not mix with the feathers of other

fowls; so God will not mix and incorporate with a sinner. Till sin be

removed, there is no coming where God is.

III. See the evil of sin, in the price paid for it. It cost the blood

of God to expiate it. O man,' says Augustine, consider the greatness of

thy sin, by the greatness of the price paid for sin.' All the princes

on earth, or angels in heaven, could not satisfy for sin; only Christ.

Nay, Christ's active obedience was not enough to make atonement for

sin, but he must suffer upon the cross; for, without blood is no

remission. Heb 9:22. Oh what an accursed thing is sin, that Christ

should die for it! The evil of sin is not so much seen in that one

thousand are damned for it, as that Christ died for lt.

IV. Sin is evil in its effects.

[1] Sin has degraded us of our honour. Reuben by incest lost his

dignity; and though he was the first-born, he could not excel. Gen

49:4. God made us in his own image, a little lower than the angels; but

sin has debased us. Before Adam sinned, he was like a herald that has

his coat of arms upon him: all reverence him, because he carries the

king's coat of arms; but let this coat be pulled off, and he is

despised, no man regards him. Sin has done this, it has plucked off our

coat of innocence, and now it has debased us, and turned our glory into

shame. And there shall stand up a vile person.' Dan 11:21I. This was

spoken of Antiochus Epiphanes, who was a king, and his name signifies

illustrious; yet sin degraded him, he was a vile person.

[21 Sin disquiets the peace of the soul. Whatever defiles, disturbs. As

poison tortures the bowels, corrupts the blood, so sin does the soul.

Isa 57:21. Sin breeds a trembling at the heart; it creates fears, and

there is torment in fear.' I John 4:18. Sin makes sad convulsions in

the conscience. Judas was so terrified with guilt and horror, that he

hanged himself to quiet his conscience. And is not he like to be ill

cured, that throws himself into hell for ease?

[3] Sin produces all temporal evil. Jerusalem has grievously sinned,

therefore she is removed.' Lam 1:8. It is the Trojan horse, that has

sword and famine, and pestilence, in its belly. Sin is a coal, that not

only blacks, but burns. Sin creates all our troubles; it puts gravel

into our bread, wormwood in our cup. Sin rots the name, consumes the

estate, buries relations. Sin shoots the flying roll of God's curses

into a family and kingdom. Zech 5:4 It is reported of Phocas, that

having built a wall of mighty strength about his city, there was a

voice heard, Sin is within the city, and that will throw down the

wall.'

[4] Sin unrepented of brings final damnation. The canker that breeds in

the rose is the cause of its perishing; and corruptions that breed in

men's souls are the cause of their damning. Sin, without repentance,

brings the second death,' that is mors sine morte, Bernard a death

always dying,' Rev 20:14. Sin's pleasure will turn to sorrow at last;

like the book the prophet did eat, sweet in the mouth, but bitter in

the belly. Ezek 3:3.. Sin brings the wrath of God, and what bucket or

engines can quench that fire? Where the worm never dies, and the fire

is not quenched.' Mark 9:44.

Use one: See how deadly an evil sin is, and how strange is it that any

one should love it! How long will ye love vanity?' Psa 4:2. Who look to

other gods, and love flagons of wine.' Hos 3:1: Sin is a dish men

cannot forbear, though it makes them sick. Who would pour rose-water

into a kennel? What pity is it so sweet an affection as love should be

poured upon so filthy a thing as sin! Sin brings a sting in the

conscience, a curse in the estate; yet men love it. A sinner is the

greatest self-denier; for his sin he will deny himself a part in

heaven.

Use two: Do anything rather than sin. Oh, hate sin! There is more evil

in the least sin than in the greatest bodily evils that can befall us.

The ermine rather chooses to die than defile her beautiful skin. There

is more evil in a drop of sin than in a sea of affliction. Affliction

is but like a rent in a coat, sin a prick at the heart. In affliction

there is aliquid mellis, some good: in this lion there is some honey to

be found. It is good for me that I was afflicted.' Psa 119:71. Utile

est anima si in hac area mundi flagellis trituretur corpus. Augustine.

Affliction is God's flail to thresh off our husks; not to consume, but

to refine.' There is no good in sin; it is the spirit and quintessence

of evil. Sin is worse than hell; for the pains of hell are a burden to

the creature only; but sin is a burden to God. I am pressed under your

iniquities, as a cart is pressed under the sheaves.' Amos 2:13.

Use three: Is sin so great an evil? Then how thankful should you be to

God, if he has taken away your sin! I have caused thy iniquity to pass

from thee.' Zech 3:4. If you had a disease on your body, plague or

dropsy, how thankful would you be to have it taken away! Much more to

have sin taken away. God takes away the guilt of sin by pardoning

grace, and the power of sin by mortifying grace. Oh be thankful that

this sickness is not unto death;' that God has changed your nature,

and, by grafting you into Christ, made you partake of the sweetness of

that olive; that sin, though it live, does not reign, but the elder

serves the younger; sin the elder serves grace the younger.

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2. Adam's Sin

Q-15: WHAT WAS THE SIN WHEREBY OUR FIRST PARENTS FELL FROM THE ESTATE

WHEREIN THEY WERE CREATED?

A: That sin was eating the forbidden fruit.

'She took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also to her

husband.' Gen 3:6.

Here is implied, 1. That our first parents fell from their estate of

innocence. 2. The sin by which they fell, was eating the forbidden

fruit.

I. Our first parents fell from their glorious state of innocence. God

made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions.' Eccl 7:29.

Adam was perfectly holy, he had rectitude of mind, and liberty of will

to good; but his head ached till he had invented his own and our death;

he sought out many inventions. 1. His fall was voluntary. He had a

posse non peccare, a power not to fall. Free-will was a sufficient

shield to repel temptation. The devil could not have forced him unless

he had given his consent. Satan was only a suitor to woo, not a king to

compel; but Adam gave away his own power, and suffered himself to be

decoyed into sin; like a young gallant, who at one throw loses a fair

lordship. Adam had a fair lordship, he was lord of the world. Have

dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and

over every living thing that moveth.' Gen 1:28. But he lost all at one

throw. Soon as he sinned, he forfeited paradise. 2. Adam's fall was

sudden; he did not long continue in his royal majesty.

How long did Adam continue in paradise before he fell?

Tostatus says, he fell the next day. Pererius says, he fell the eighth

day after his creation. The most probable and received opinion is, that

he fell the very same day in which he was created. So Irenaeus, Cyril,

Epiphanius, and many others. The reasons which incline me to believe so

are,

(1.) It is said, Satan was a murderer, from the beginning.' John 8:44.

Now, whom did he murder? Not the blessed angels, he could not reach

them; nor the cursed angels, for they had before destroyed themselves.

How then was Satan a murderer from the beginning? As soon as Satan

fell, he began to tempt mankind to sin; this was a murdering

temptation. By which it appears Adam did not stay long in Paradise;

soon after his creation the devil set upon him, and murdered him by his

temptation.

(2.) Adam had not yet eaten of the tree of life. And now, lest he put

forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat; the Lord

sent him forth of the garden.' Gen 3:22, 23. This tree of life, being

one of the choicest fruits in the garden, and being placed in the midst

of Paradise, it is very likely Adam would have eaten of this tree of

life one of the first, had not the serpent beguiled him with the tree

of knowledge. So that I conclude, Adam fell the very day of his

creation, because he had not tasted the tree of life, that tree that

was most in his eye, and had such delicious fruit growing upon it.

(3.) Man being in honour, abideth not.' Psalm 49:12. The Rabbis read it

thus, Adam being in honour, lodged not one night.' The Hebrew word for

abide, signifies, To stay or lodge all night.' Adam then, it seems, did

not take up one night's lodging in Paradise.

Use one: From Adam's sudden fall learn the weakness of human nature.

Adam, in a state of integrity, quickly made a defection from God, he

soon lost the robe of innocence and the glory of Paradise. If our

nature was thus weak when it was at the best, what is it now when it is

at the worst? If Adam did not stand when he was perfectly righteous,

how unable are we to stand when sin has cut the lock of our original

righteousness! If purified nature did not stand, how shall corrupt

nature? If Adam, in a few hours, sinned himself out of Paradise, how

quickly would we sin ourselves into hell, if we were not kept by a

greater power than our own! But God puts underneath his everlasting

arms. Deut 33:27.

Use two: From Adam's sudden fall, learn how sad it is for a man to be

left to himself. Adam being left to himself, fell. Oh then, what will

become of us, how soon fall, if God should leave us to ourselves! A man

without God's grace, left to himself, is like a ship in a storm,

without pilot or anchor, and is ready to dash upon every rock. Make

this prayer to God, Lord, do not leave me to myself. If Adam fell so

soon who had strength, how soon shall I fall who have no strength!' Oh!

urge God with his hand and seal. My strength shall be made perfect in

weakness.' 2 Cor 12:9.

II. The sin by which our first parents fell was eating the forbidden

fruit; where, consider two things:

[1] The occasion of it was the serpent's temptation. The devil crept

into the serpent, and spake in the serpent, as the angel in Balaam's

ass; where, consider,

(1.) The subtlety of Satan's temptation. His wiles are worse than his

darts. Satan's subtlety in tempting; (1.) He dealt all along as an

impostor, he ushered in his temptation by lies. 1st Lie. Ye shall not

surely die.' Gen 3:3. 2nd Lie. That God did envy our first parents

their happiness. God knows, that in the day ye eat, your eyes shall be

opened;' verse 5. q. d. It is God's envying your felicity, that he

forbids you this tree. 3rd Lie. That they should be thereby made like

unto God. Ye shall be as gods.' Verse 5. Here was his subtlety in

tempting. The devil was first a liar, then a murderer.

(2.) In that he set upon our first parents so quickly, before they were

confirmed in their obedience. The angels in heaven are fully confirmed

in holiness; they are called stars of the morning, Job 38:7, and they

are fixed stars; but our first parents were not confirmed in their

obedience, they were not fixed in their orb of holiness. Though they

had a possibility of standing, they had not an impossibility of

falling; they were holy, but mutable. There was Satan's subtlety, in

tempting our first parents before they were confirmed in their

obedience.

(3.) His subtlety in tempting was, That he set upon Eve first because

he thought she was less able to resist. Satan broke over the hedge

where it was weakest; he knew he could more easily insinuate and wind

himself into her by a temptation. An expert soldier, when about to

storm or enter a castle, observes warily where there is a breach, or

how he may enter with more facility; so did Satan the weaker vessel. He

tempted Eve first, because he knew, if once he could prevail with her,

she would easily draw her husband. Thus the devil handed over a

temptation to Job by his wife. Curse God and die.' Job 2:9. Agrippina

poisoned the Emperor Commodus, with wine in a perfumed cup; the cup

being perfumed and given him by his wife it was the less suspected.

Satan knew a temptation coming to Adam from his wife would be more

prevailing, and would be less suspected. Oh bitter! sometimes relations

prove temptations. A wife may be a snare, when she dissuades her

husband from doing his duty, or entices him to evil. Ahab sold himself

to work wickedness, whom his wife Jezebel stirred up.' I Kings 21:15.

She blew the coals, and made his sin flame out the more. Satan's

subtlety was in tempting Adam by his wife; he thought she would draw

him to sin.

(4.) Satan's subtlety in tempting was in assaulting Eve's faith. He

would persuade her that God had not spoken truth: Ye shall not surely

die.' Gen 3:3. This was Satan's masterpiece, to weaken her faith. When

he had shaken that, and had brought her once to distrust: then she

yielded,' she presently put forth her hand to evil.

(2.) Satan's cruelty in tempting. Soon as Adam was invested in all his

glory, the devil cruelly, as it were on the day of Adam's coronation,

would dethrone him, and bring him and all his posterity under a curse.

See how little love Satan has to mankind; he has an implacable

antipathy against us, and antipathies can never be reconciled. So much

for the occasion of Adam's sin, or his being tempted by the serpent.

[2] The sin itself, Eating the forbidden fruit.' This was very heinous,

and that appears three ways. (1.) In respect of the person that

committed it. (2.) The aggravation of the sin. (3.) The dreadfulness of

the effect.

(1.) It was very heinous in respect of the person that committed it.

Adam had excellent and noble endowments; he was illumined with

knowledge, embellished with holiness; he knew his duty, and it was as

easy to him to obey God's command as to know it; he might have chosen

whether he would sin or no; yet he wilfully did eat of the forbidden

tree.

(2.) The aggravation of Adam's sin.

Wherein did it appear to be so great? It was but raptus pomi [the

seizing of an apple]. Was it such a great matter to pluck an apple?

It was against an infinite God. It was malum complexum, a voluminous

sin, there were many twisted together in it; as Cicero says of

parricide, He who is guilty of it, Plurima committit peccata in uno, he

commits many sins in one;' so there were many sins in this one sin of

Adam. It was a big-bellied sin, a chain with many links. Ten sins were

in it.

(1:) Incredulity. Our first parents did not believe what God had spoken

was truth. God said, They shall die the death in the day they eat of

that tree. They believed not that they should die; they could not be

persuaded that such fair fruit had death at the door. Thus, by unbelief

they made God a liar; nay, which was worse, they believed the devil

rather than God.

(2:) Unthankfulness, which is the epitome of all sin. Adam's sin was

committed in the midst of Paradise. God had enriched him with variety

of mercies; he had stamped his own image upon him; he had made him lord

of the world; gave him of all the trees of the garden to eat (one only

excepted), and now to take of that tree! This was high ingratitude; it

was like the dye to the wool, which makes it crimson. When Adam's eyes

were opened, and he saw what he had done, well might he be ashamed, and

hide himself. How could he who sinned in the midst of Paradise, look

God in the face without blushing!

(3:) In Adam's sin was discontent. Had he not been discontented, he

would never have sought to have altered his condition. Adam, one would

think, had enough, he differed but little from the angels, he had the

robe of innocence to clothe him, and the glory of Paradise to crown

him; yet he was not content, he would have more; he would be above the

ordinary rank of creatures. How wide was Adam's heart, that a whole

world could not fill it!

(4:) Pride, in that he would be like God. This worm, that was but newly

crept out of the dust, now aspired after Deity. Ye shall be as gods,'

said Satan, and Adam hoped to have been so indeed; he supposed the tree

of knowledge would have anointed his eyes, and made him omniscient.

But, by climbing too high, he got a fall.

(5:) Disobedience. God said, Thou shalt not eat of the tree;' but he

would eat of it, though it cost him his life. Disobedience is a sin

against equity. It is right we should serve him from whom we have our

subsistence. God gave Adam his allowance, therefore it was but right he

should give God his allegiance. How could God endure to see his laws

trampled on before his face? This made him place a flaming sword at the

end of the garden.

(6:) Curiosity. He meddled with that which was out of his sphere, and

did not belong to him. God smote the men of Bethshemesh for looking

into the ark. I Sam 6:19. Adam would be prying into God's secrets, and

tasting what was forbidden.

(7:) Wantonness. Though Adam had a choice of all the other trees, yet

his palate grew wanton, and he must have this tree. Like Israel, God

sent them manna, angels' food, ay, but they had a hankering after

quails. It was not enough that God supplied their wants, unless he

should satisfy their lusts. Adam had not only for necessity, but for

delight; yet his wanton palate lusted after forbidden fruit.

(8:) Sacrilege. The tree of knowledge was none of Adam's, yet he took

of it, and did sacrilegiously rob God of his due. It was counted a

great crime in Harpalus to rob the temple, and steal the silver

vessels; so it was in Adam to steal fruit from that tree which God had

peculiarly enclosed for himself. Sacrilege is double theft.

(9:) Murder. Adam was a public person, and all his posterity were

involved and wrapped up in him; and he, by sinning, at once destroyed

all his posterity, if free grace did not interpose. If Abel's blood

cried so loud in God's ears, The voice of thy brother's blood crieth

unto me from the ground,' Gen 4:10; how loud did the blood of all

Adam's posterity cry against him for vengeance!

(10:) Presumption. Adam presumed of God's mercy; he blessed himself,

saying he should have peace; he thought, though he did transgress, he

should not die; that God would sooner reverse his decree than punish

him. This was great presumption. What a heinous sin was Adam's breach

of covenant!

One sin may have many sins in it. We are apt to have slight thoughts of

sin, and say it is but a little one. How many sins were in Adam's sin!

Oh take heed of any sin! As in one volume there may be many works bound

up, so there may be many sins in one sin.

[3] The dreadfulness of the effect. It has corrupted man's nature. How

rank is that poison a drop whereof could poison a whole sea! And how

deadly is that sin of Adam, that could poison all mankind, and bring a

curse upon them, till it be taken away by him who was made a curse for

us.

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3. Original Sin

Q-16: DID ALL MANKIND FALL IN ADAM'S FIRST TRANSGRESSION?

A: The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his

posterity, all mankind descending from him, by ordinary generation,

sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression.

'By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin,' &c. Rom

5:12.

Adam being a representative person, while he stood, we stood; when he

fell, we fell, We sinned in Adam; so it is in the text, In whom all

have sinned.'

Adam was the head of mankind, and being guilty, we are guilty, as the

children of a traitor have their blood stained. Omnes unus ille Adam

fuerunt. All of us,' says Augustine, sinned in Adam, because we were

part of Adam.'

If when Adam fell, all mankind fell with him; why, when one angel fell,

did not all fall?

The case is not the same. The angels had no relation to one another.

They are called morning-stars; the stars have no dependence one upon

another; but it was otherwise with us, we were in Adam's loins; as a

child is a branch of the parent, we were part of Adam; therefore when

he sinned, we sinned.

How is Adam's sin made ours?

(1.) By imputation. The Pelagians of old held, that Adam's

transgression is hurtful to posterity by imitation only, not by

imputation. But the text, In whom all have sinned,' confutes that.

(2.) Adam's sin is ours by propagation. Not only is the guilt of Adam's

sin imputed to us, but the depravity and corruption of his nature is

transmitted to us, as poison is carried from the fountain to the

cistern. This is that which we call original sin. In sin did my mother

conceive me.' Psa 51:5. Adam's leprosy cleaves to us, as Naaman's

leprosy did to Gehazi. 2 Kings 5:27. This original concupiscence is

called,

(1.) The old man.' Eph 4:22. It is said to be the old man, not that it

is weak, as old men are, but for its long standing, and for its

deformity. In old age the fair blossoms of beauty fall; so original sin

is the old man, because it has withered our beauty, and made us

deformed in God's eye.

(2.) Original concupiscence is called the law of sin. Rom 7:25 Original

sin has vim coactivam, the power of a law which binds the subject to

allegiance. Men must needs do what sin will have them, when they have

both the love of sin to draw them, and the law of sin to force them.

I. In original sin there is something privative, and something

positive.

[1] Something privative. Carentia Justitiae debitae [The lack of that

righteousness which should be ours]. We have lost that excellent

quintessential frame of soul which once we had. Sin has cut the lock of

original purity, where our strength lay.

[2] Something positive. Original sin has contaminated and defiled our

virgin nature. It was death among the Romans to poison the springs.

Original sin has poisoned the spring of our nature, it has turned

beauty into leprosy; it has turned the azure brightness of our souls

into midnight darkness.

Original sin has become co-natural to us. A man by nature cannot but

sin; though there were no devil to tempt, no bad examples to imitate,

yet there is such an innate principle in him that he cannot forbear

sinning. 2 Pet 2:14. A peccato cessare nesciunt, who cannot cease to

sin, as a horse that is lame cannot go without halting. In original sin

there is,

(1.) An aversion from good. Man has a desire to be happy, yet opposes

that which should promote his happiness. He has a disgust of holiness,

he hates to be reformed. Since we fell from God, we have no mind to

return to him.

(2.) A propensity to evil. If, as the Pelagians say, there is so much

goodness in us since the fall, why is there not as much natural

proneness to good as there is to evil? Our experience tells us, that

the natural bias of the soul is to that which is bad. The very heathens

by the light of nature saw this. Hierocles the philosopher said, it is

grafted in us by nature to sin.' Men roll sin as honey under their

tongue. They drink iniquity as water,' Job 15:16. Like a hydropsical

person, that thirsts for drink, and is not satisfied; they have a kind

of drought on them, they thirst for sin. Though they are tired out in

committing sin, yet they sin. Eph 4:19. They weary themselves to commit

iniquity'; as a man that follows his game while he is weary, yet

delights in it, and cannot leave it off. Jer 9:5. Though God has set so

many flaming swords in the way to stop men in their sin, yet they go on

in it; which all shows what a strong appetite they have to the

forbidden fruit.

II. That we may further see the nature of original sin, consider,

[1] The universality of it. It has, as poison, diffused itself into all

the parts and powers of the soul. The whole head is sick, and the whole

heart is faint.' Isa 1:5. Like a sick patient, that has no part sound,

his liver is swelled, his feet are gangrened, his lungs are perished;

such infected, gangrened souls have we, till Christ, who has made a

medicine of his blood, cures us.

(1.) Original sin has depraved the intellectual part. As in the

creation darkness was upon the face of the deep,' Gen 1:2, so it is

with the understanding; darkness is upon the face of this deep. As

there is salt in every drop of the sea, bitterness in every branch of

wormwood, so there is sin in every faculty. The mind is darkened, we

know little of God. Ever since Adam did eat of the tree of knowledge,

and his eyes were opened, we lost our eye-sight. Besides ignorance in

the mind, there is error and mistake; we do not judge rightly of

things, we put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter. Isa 5:20.

Besides this, there is much pride, superciliousness and prejudice, and

many fleshly reasonings. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within

thee?' Jer 4:14.

(2.) Original sin has defiled the heart. The heart is deadly wicked.

Jer 17:9. It is a lesser hell. In the heart are legions of lusts,

obdurateness, infidelity, hypocrisy, sinful estuations; it boils as the

sea with passion and revenge. Madness is in their heart while they

live.' Eccl 9:3. The heart is, Officina diaboli, the devil's shop or

workhouse,' where all mischief is framed.

(3.) The will. Contumacy is the seat of rebellion. The sinner crosses

God's will, to fulfil his own. We will burn incense to the queen of

heaven.' Jer 44:17. There is a rooted enmity in the will against

holiness; it is like an iron sinew, it refuses to bend to God. Where is

then the freedom of the will, when it is so full not only of

indisposition, but opposition to what is spiritual?

(4.) The affections. These, as the strings of a viol, are out of tune.

They are the lesser wheels, which are strongly carried by the will, the

masterwheel. Our affections are set on wrong objects. Our love is set

on sin, our joy on the creature. Our affections are naturally as a sick

man's appetite, who desires things which are noxious and hurtful to

him; he calls for wine in a fever. So we have impure lustings instead

of holy longings.

[2] The adhesion of original sin. It cleaves to us, as blackness to the

skin of the Ethiopian, so that we cannot get rid of it. Paul shook off

the viper on his hand, but we cannot shake off this inbred corruption.

It may be compared to a wild fig-tree growing on a wall, the roots of

which are pulled up, and yet there are some fibres of it in the joints

of the stonework, which will not be eradicated, but will sprout forth

till the wall be pulled in pieces. Original concupiscence comes not, as

a lodger, for a night, but as an indweller. Sin which dwelleth in me.'

Rom 7:17.

It is a malus genius, an evil spirit' that haunts us wheresoever we go.

The Canaanite would dwell in that land.' Josh 17:12.

[3] Original sin retards and hinders us in the exercise of God's

worship. Whence is all that dullness and deadness in religion? It is

the fruit of original sin. This it is that rocks us asleep in duty. The

good that I would, I do not.' Rom 7:19. Sin is compared to a weight.

Heb 12:1. A man that has weights tied to his legs cannot run fast. It

is like that fish Pliny speaks of, a sea lamprey, that cleaves to the

keel of the ship, and hinders its progress when it is under sail.

[4] Original sin, though latent in the soul, and as a spring which runs

under ground, often breaks forth unexpectedly. Christian, thou canst

not believe that evil which is in thy heart, and which will break forth

suddenly, if God should leave thee. Is thy servant a dog that he should

do this great thing?' 2 Kings 8:13. Hazael could not believe he had

such a root of bitterness in his heart, that he should rip up the women

with child. Is thy servant a dog? Yes, and worse than a dog, when that

original corruption within is stirred up. If one had come to Peter and

said, Peter, within a few hours thou wilt deny Christ, he would have

said, Is thy servant a dog?' But alas! Peter did not know his own

heart, nor how far that corruption within would prevail upon him. The

sea may be calm, and look clear; but when the wind blows how it rages

and foams! so though now thy heart seems good, yet, when temptation

blows, how may original sin discover itself, making thee foam with lust

and passion. Who would have thought to have found adultery in David,

and drunkenness in Noah, and cursing in Job? If God leave a man to

himself, how suddenly and scandalously may original sin break forth in

the holiest men on the earth!

[5] Original sin mixes and incorporates itself with our duties and

graces. (1.) With our duties. As the hand which is paralytic or palsied

cannot move without shaking, as wanting some inward strength; so we

cannot do any holy action without sinning, as wanting a principle of

original righteousness. As whatever the leper touched became unclean;

such a leprosy is original sin; it defiles our prayers and tears. We

cannot write without blotting. Though I do not say that the holy duties

and good works of the regenerate are sins, for that were to reproach

the Spirit of Christ, by which they are wrought; yet this I say, that

the best works of the godly have sin cleaving to them. Christ's blood

alone makes atonement for our holy things.

(2.) With our graces. There is some unbelief mixed with faith,

lukewarmness with zeal, pride with humility. As bad lungs cause an

asthma or shortness of breath, so original corruption has infected our

hearts, so that our graces breathe very faintly.

[6] Original sin is a vigorous active principle within us. It does not

lie still, but is ever exciting and stirring us up to evil; it is an

inmate very unquiet. What I hate, that do I,' Rom 7:15. How came Paul

to do so? Original sin irritated and stirred him up to it. Original sin

is like quicksilver, always in motion. When we are asleep, sin is awake

in the fancy. Original sin sets the head plotting evil, and the hands

working it. It has in it principium motus, not quietis [a principle of

restlessness, not of tranquillity]; it is like the pulse, ever beating.

[7] Original sin is the cause of all actual sin. It is fomes peccati

[the kindlingwood of sin], it is the womb in which all actual sins are

conceived. Hence come murders, adulteries, rapines. Though actual sins

may be more scandalous, yet original sin is more heinous; the cause is

more than the effect.

[8] It is not perfectly cured in this life. Though grace does subdue

sin, yet it does not wholly remove it. Though we are like Christ,

having the first fruits of the Spirit, yet we are unlike him, having

the remainders of the flesh. There are two nations in the womb.

Original sin is like that tree, in Dan 4:23, though the branches of it

were hewn down, and the main body of it, yet the stumps and root of the

tree were left. Though the Spirit be still weakening and hewing down

sin in the godly, yet the stump of original sin is left. It is a sea

that will not, in this life, be dried up.

But why does God leave original corruption in us after regeneration? He

could free us from it if he pleased.

(1.) He does it to show the power of his grace in the weakest believer.

Grace shall prevail against a torrent of corruption. Whence is this?

The corruption is ours, but the grace is God's.

(2.) God leaves original corruption to make us long after heaven, where

there shall be no sin to defile, no devil to tempt. When Elias was

taken up to heaven his mantle dropped off; so, when the angels shall

carry us up to heaven, this mantle of sin shall drop off. We shall

never more complain of an aching head, or an unbelieving heart.

Use one: If original sin be propagated to us, and will be inherent in

us while we live here, it confutes the Libertines and Quakers, who say

they are without sin. They hold perfection; they show much pride and

ignorance; but we see the seeds of original sin remain in the best.

There is not a just man lives and sins not.' Eccl 7:20. And Paul

complained of a body of death.' Rom 7:24. Though grace purifies nature,

it does not perfect it.

But does not the apostle say of believers, that their old man is

crucified;' Rom 6:6, and they are dead to sin?' Rom 6:11.

They are dead. (1.) Spiritually. They are dead as to the reatus, the

guilt of it; and as to the regnum, the power of it; the love of sin is

crucified.

(2.) They are dead to sin legally. As a man that is sentenced to death

is dead in law, so they are legally dead to sin. There is a sentence of

death gone out against sin. It shall die, and drop into the grave; but

at the present, sin has its life lengthened out. Nothing but the death

of the body can quite free us from the body of this death.

Use two: Let us lay to heart original sin, and be deeply humbled for

it. It cleaves to us as a disease, it is an active principle in us,

stirring us up to evil. Original sin is worse than all actual sin; the

fountain is more than the stream. Some think, as long as they are

civil, they are well enough; ay, but the nature is poisoned. A river

may have fair streams, but vermin at the bottom. Thou carriest a hell

about thee, thou canst do nothing but thou defilest it; thy heart, like

muddy ground, defiles the purest water that runs through it. Nay,

though thou art regenerate, there is much of the old man in the new

man. Oh how should original sin humble us!

This is one reason God has left original sin in us, because he would

have it as a thorn in our side to humble us. As the bishop of

Alexandria, after the people had embraced Christianity, destroyed all

their idols but one, that the sight of that idol might make them loathe

themselves for their former idolatry; so God leaves original sin to

pull down the plumes of pride. Under our silver wings of grace are

black feet.

Use three: Let the sense of this make us daily look up to heaven for

help. Beg Christ's blood to wash away the guilt of sin, and his Spirit

to mortify the power of it; beg further degrees of grace; gratiam

Christi eo olonoxiam ambiamus. Though grace cannot make sin not to be,

yet it makes it not to reign; though grace cannot expel sin, it can

repel it. And for our comfort, where grace makes a combat with sin,

death shall make a conquest.

Use four: Let original sin make us walk with continual jealousy and

watchfulness over our hearts. The sin of our nature is like a sleeping

lion, the least thing that awakens it makes it rage. Though the sin of

our nature seems quiet, and lies as fire hid under the embers, yet if

it be a little stirred and blown up by a temptation, how quickly may it

flame forth into scandalous evils! therefore we need always to walk

watchfully. I say to you all, Watch.' Mark 13:37. A wandering heart

needs a watchful eye.

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4. Man's Misery By The Fall

Q-19: WHAT IS THE MISERY OF THAT ESTATE WHEREINTO MAN FELL?

A: All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under his

wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries in this life,

to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever.

'And were by nature children of wrath.' Eph 2:3. Adam left an unhappy

portion to his posterity, Sin and Misery. Having considered the first

of these, original sin, we shall now advert to the misery of that

state. In the first, we have seen mankind offending; in the second, we

shall see him suffering. The misery ensuing from original sin is

two-fold.

I. Privative. By this first hereditary sin we have lost communion with

God. Adam was God's familiar, his favourite; but sin has put us all out

of favour. When we lost God's image, we lost his acquaintance. God's

banishing Adam out of paradise hieroglyphically showed how sin has

banished us out of God's love and favour.

II. Positive. In four things. 1. Under the power of Satan. 2. Heirs of

God's wrath. 3. Subject to all the miseries of this life. 4. Exposed to

hell and damnation.

[1] The first misery is, that by nature we are under the power of

Satan,' who is called The prince of the power of the air.' Eph 2:2.

Before the fall man was a free denizen, now a slave; before, a king on

the throne, now in fetters. And whom is man enslaved to? To one that is

a hater of him. This was an aggravation of Israel's servitude. They

that hated them ruled over them.' Psa 106:41. By sin we are enslaved to

Satan, who is a hater of mankind, and writes all his laws in blood.

Sinners before conversion are under Satan's command; as the ass at the

command of the driver, so he does all the devil's drudgery. No sooner

Satan tempts but he obeys. As the ship is at the command of the pilot,

who steers it which way he will, so is the sinner at the command of

Satan; and he ever steers the ship into hell's mouth. The devil rules

all the powers and faculties of a sinner.

(1.) He rules the understanding. He blinds men with ignorance, and then

rules them; as the Philistines first put out Samson's eyes, and then

bound him. Satan can do what he will with an ignorant man; because he

does not see the error of his way, the devil can lead him into any sin.

You may lead a blind man any whither. Omne peccatum fundatur in

ignorantia [Every sin is founded upon ignorance].

(2.) Satan rules the will. Though he cannot force the will, yet he can,

by temptation, draw it. The lusts of your father ye will do.' John

8:44. He has got your hearts, and him ye will obey. We will burn

incense to the queen of heaven.' Jer 44:17. When the devil spurs a

sinner by a temptation, he will over hedge and ditch break all God's

laws, that he may obey Satan. Where then is free will, when Satan has

such power over the will? His lusts ye will do.' There's not any member

of the body but is at the devil's service: the head to plot sin, the

hands to work it, the feet to run the devil's errand. Grave jugum

servitutis. Cicero. Slavery is hateful to a noble spirit.' Satan is the

worst tyrant; the cruelty of a cannibal, or Nero, is nothing to his.

Other tyrants do but rule over the bodies, he over the conscience.

Other tyrants have some pity on their slaves; though they work in the

galley, they give them meat, let them have hours for rest; but Satan is

a merciless tyrant, he lets them have no rest. What pains did Judas

take! The devil would let him have no rest till he had betrayed Christ,

and afterwards imbrued his hands in his own blood.

Use one: See here our misery by original sin; enslaved to Satan. Eph

2:2. Satan is said to work effectually in the children of disobedience.

What a sad plague is it for a sinner to be at the will of the devil!

Just like a slave, if the Turks bid him dig in the mines, hew in the

quarries, tug at the oar, the slave must do it, he dares not refuse. If

the devil bids a man lie or steal, he does not refuse; and, what is

worse, he willingly obeys this tyrant. Other slaves are forced against

their will: Israel sighed by reason of their bondage,' Exod 2:23; but

sinners are willing to be slaves, they will not take their freedom;

they kiss their fetters.

Use two: Let us labour to get out of this deplorable condition into

which sin has plunged us, and get from under the power of Satan. If any

of your children were slaves, you would give great sums of money to

purchase their freedom; and when your souls are enslaved, will ye not

labour for their freedom? Improve the gospel. The gospel proclaims a

jubilee to captives. Sin binds men, but the gospel looses them. Paul's

preaching was to turn men from the power of Satan to God.' Acts 26:18.

The gospel star leads you to Christ; and if you get Christ, then you

are made free, though not from the being of sin, yet from Satan's

tyranny. If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed.' John 8:36.

You hope to be kings to reign in heaven, and will you let Satan reign

in you now? Never think to be kings when you die, and slaves while you

live. The crown of glory is for conquerors, not for captives. Oh get

out of Satan's jurisdiction; get your fetters of sin filed off by

repentance.

[2] And were by nature the children of wrath.' Tertullian's exposition

here is wrong, who by children of wrath, understands subjectively, that

is, subject to wrath and passion; offending often in the irascible

faculty of a wrathful spirit. By children of wrath, the apostle

passively means heirs of wrath, exposed to God's displeasure. God was

once a friend, but sin broke the knot of friendship; now God's smile is

turned into a frown; we are now bound over to the sessions, and become

children of wrath. And who knows the power of God's wrath?' Psa 90:11.

The wrath of a king is as the roaring of a lion.' Prov 19:12. How did

Haman's heart tremble, when the king rose up from the banquet in wrath!

Esth 7:7. But God's wrath is infinite, all other is but as a spark to a

flame: wrath in God is not a passion, as in us; but it is an act of

God's holy will, whereby he abhors sin, and decrees to punish it. This

wrath is very dismal; it is this wrath of God that embitters

afflictions in this life, for when sickness comes attended with God's

wrath, it puts conscience into an agony. The mingling of the fire with

the hail made it most terrible. Exod 9:24. So mingling God's wrath with

affliction, makes it torturing; it is the nail in the yoke. God's

wrath, when but in a threatening (as a shower hanging in the cloud),

made Eli's ears to tingle; what is it then, when this wrath is

executed? It is terrible when the king rates and chides a traitor; but

it is more dreadful when he causes him to be set upon the rack, or to

be broke upon the wheel. Who knows the power of God's wrath?' While we

are children of wrath we have nothing to do with any of the promises;

they are as the tree of life, bearing several sorts of fruit, but we

have no right to pluck one leaf. Children of wrath.' Eph 2:3.'

Strangers to the covenants of promise,' verse 12. The promises are as a

fountain sealed. While we are in the state of nature, we see nothing

but the flaming sword; and, as the apostle says, There remains nothing

but a fearful looking for of fiery indignation.' Heb 10:27. While

children of wrath we are heirs to all God's curses.' Gal 3:10. How can

the sinner eat and drink in that condition? Like Damocles, banquet, who

while he sat at meat with a sword hanging over his head by a small

thread could have little stomach to eat; so the sword of God's wrath

and curse hangs every moment over a sinner's head. We read of a flying

roll, written with curses. Zech 5:2. A roll written with curses goes

out against every person that lives and dies in sin. God's curse blasts

wherever it comes. There is a curse on the sinner's name, a curse on

his soul, a curse on his estate and posterity, a curse on the

ordinances. Sad, if all a man eats should turn to poison; yet the

sinner eats and drinks his own damnation at God's table. Thus it is

before conversion. As the love of God makes every bitter thing sweet,

so the curse of God makes every sweet thing bitter.

Use one: See our misery by the fall. Heirs of wrath. And is this estate

to be rested in? If a man be fallen under the king's displeasure, will

he not labour to re-ingratiate himself into his favour? Oh let us flee

from the wrath of God! And whither should we fly, but to Jesus Christ?

There is none else to shield off the wrath of God from us. Jesus has

delivered us from the wrath to come.' I Thess 1:10.

[3] Subject to all outward miseries. All the troubles incident to man's

life are the bitter fruits of original sin. The sin of Adam has

subjected the creature to vanity.' Rom 8:20. Is it not a part of the

creature's vanity, that all the comforts below will not fill the heart,

any more than the mariner's breath can fill the sails of a ship? In the

midst of his sufficiency he shall be in straits.' Job 20:22. There is

still something wanting, and a man would have more; the heart is always

hydropsical; it thirsts, and is not satisfied. Solomon put all the

creatures into a crucible; and when he came to extract the spirit and

quintessence, there was nothing but froth, all was vanity.' Eccl 1:2.

Nay, it is vexing vanity; not only emptiness, but bitterness, our life

is labour and sorrow: we come into the world with a cry, and go out

with a groan. Psa 90:10. Some have said, that they would not live the

life they have lived over again, because their life has had more water

in it than wine; more water of tears, than wine of joy. Quia est diu

vivere nisi diu torqueri [Long life is merely long torment]. Augustine.

Man is born to trouble.' Job 5:7. Every one is not born heir to land,

but he is born heir to trouble. As well separate weight from lead as

trouble from man. We do not finish our troubles in this life, but

change them. Trouble is the vermin bred out of the putrid matter of

sin. Whence all our fears but from sin? There is torment in fear.' I

John 4:18. Fear is the ague of the soul, sets it shaking; some fear

want, others alarms, others fear loss of relations; if we rejoice, it

is with trembling. Whence all our disappointments of hopes but from

sin? Where we look for comfort, there is a cross; where we expect

honey, there we taste wormwood. Whence is it that the earth is filled

with violence, that the wicked oppresses the man who is more righteous

than he? Hab 1:13. Whence so much fraudulence in dealing, so much

falseness in friendship, such crosses in relations? Whence is it

children prove undutiful, and they that should be as the staff of the

parents' age are a sword to pierce their hearts? Whence is it that

servants are unfaithful to their masters? The apostle speaks of some

who have entertained angels in their houses; Heb 13:2; but how oft,

instead of entertaining angels in their houses, do some entertain

devils! Whence all the mutinies and divisions in a kingdom? In those

days there was no peace to them that went out, nor to him that came

in.' 2 Chron 15:5. All this is but the sour core in the apple which our

first parents ate, the fruit of original sin. Besides, all the

deformities and diseases of the body, fevers, convulsions, catarrhs are

from sin, Macies et nova febrium ferris incubuit cohors [Famine and a

new crop of fevers oppressed the lands]. There had never been a stone

in the kidneys, if there had not been first a stone in the heart. Yea,

the death of the body is the fruit and result of original sin. Sin

entered into the world, and death by sin.' Rom 5:12. Adam was made

immortal, conditionally, if he had not sinned. Sin dug Adam's grave.

Death is terrible to nature. Louis, king of France, forbade all that

came into his court to mention the name of death in his ears. The

Socinians say, that death comes only from the infirmities of the

constitution. But the apostle says, Sin ushered in death into the

world: by sin came death. Certainly, had not Adam ate of the tree of

knowledge he had not died. In the day thou eatest, thou shalt surely

die,' Gen 2:17: implying, if Adam had not eaten, he should not have

died. Oh then see the misery ensuing upon original sin! Sin dissolves

the harmony and good temperature of the body, and pulls its frame in

pieces.

[4] Original sin without repentance exposes to hell and damnation. This

is the second death. Rev 20:14. Two things are in it:

(1.) Poena damni, Punishment of loss. The soul is banished from the

beatific presence of God, in whose presence is fulness of joy.

(2.) Poena sensus, Punishment of sense. The sinner feels scalding vials

of God's wrath. It is penetrating, abiding, John 3:36, and reserved, 2

Pet 2:17. If when God's anger be kindled but a little, and a spark or

two of it flies into a man's conscience in this life, it be so

terrible, what will it be when God stirs up all his anger? In hell

there is the worm and the fire. Mark 9:44. Hell is the very accent and

emphasis of misery; there is judgement without mercy. Oh what flames of

wrath, what seas of vengeance, what rivers of brimstone, are poured out

there upon the damned! Bellarmine is of opinion, That one glimpse of

hell-fire were enough to make the most flagitious sinner to turn

Christian; nay, live like a hermit, a most strict mortified life. What

is all other fire to this but painted fire? Ejus adesse intolerabile,

ejus abesse impossibile; to bear it will be intolerable, to avoid it

will be impossible.' And these hell torments are for ever, they have no

period put to them. They shall seek death, and shall not find it.' Rev

9:9. Origen fancied a fiery stream in which the souls of sinful men

were to be purged after this life, and then to pass into heaven; but it

is for ever. The breath of the Lord kindles that fire; and where shall

we find engines or buckets to quench it? And the smoke of their torment

ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night.'

Rev 14:11. Thank original sin for all.

Use one: What sad thoughts should we have of this primitive original

sin, that has created so many miseries! What honey can be got out of

this lion? What grapes can we gather off this thorn? It sets heaven and

earth against us. While we choose this bramble to rule, fire comes out

of the bramble to devour us.

Use two: How are all believers bound to Jesus Christ, who has freed

them from that misery to which sin has exposed them! In whom we have

redemption through his blood.' Eph 1:7. Sin has brought trouble and a

curse into the world: Christ has sanctified the trouble, and removed

the curse. Nay, he has not only freed believers from misery, but

purchased for them a crown of glory and immortality. When the chief

Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth

not away.' I Pet 5:4.

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5. The covenant of grace and its mediator

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1. The Covenant Of Grace

Q-20: DID GOD LEAVE ALL MANKIND TO PERISH 1N THE ESTATE OF SIN AND

MISERY?

A: No! He entered into a covenant of grace to deliver the elect out of

that state, and to bring them into a state of grace by a Redeemer.

'I will make an everlasting covenant with you.' Isa 55:3. Man being by

his fall plunged into a labyrinth of misery, and having no way left to

recover himself, God was pleased to enter into a new covenant with him,

and to restore him to life by a Redeemer.

The great proposition I shall go upon is, that there is a new covenant

ratified between God and the elect.

What is the new covenant?

It is a solemn compact and agreement made between God and fallen man,

wherein the Lord undertakes to be our God, and to make us his people.

What names are given to the covenant?

(1.) It is called the covenant of peace in Ezek 37:26, because it seals

up reconciliation between God and humble sinners. Before this covenant

there was nothing but enmity. God did not love us, for a creature that

offends cannot be loved by a holy God; and we did not love him, since a

God that condemns cannot be loved by a guilty creature; so that there

was war on both sides. But God has found out a way in the new covenant

to reconcile differing parties, so that it is fitly called the covenant

of peace.

(2.) It is called a covenant of grace, and well it may; for, (1) It was

of grace, that, when we had forfeited the first covenant, God should

enter into a new one, after we had cast away ourselves. The covenant of

grace is tabula post naufragium, as a plank after shipwreck.' Oh the

free grace of God, that he should parley with sinners, and set his

wisdom and mercy to work to bring rebels into the bond of the covenant!

(2) It is a covenant of grace, because it is a royal charter, all made

up of terms of grace; that God will cast our sins behind his back;'

that he will love us freely;' Hos 14:4; that he will give us a will to

accept of the mercy of the covenant, and strength to perform the

conditions of the covenant. Ezek 37:26. All this is pure grace.

Why should God make a covenant with us?

It is out of indulgence, favour, and regard to us. A tyrant will not

enter into a covenant with slaves, he will not show them such respect.

God's entering into a covenant with us, to be our God, is a dignity he

puts upon us. A covenant is insigne honouris, a note of distinction

between God's people and heathens. I will establish my covenant with

thee.' Ezek 16:62. When the Lord told Abraham that he would enter into

a covenant with him, Abraham fell upon his face, as being amazed that

the God of glory should bestow such a favour upon him. Gen 17:2.

God makes a covenant with us, to tie us fast to him; as it is called in

Ezekiel, the bond of the covenant.' God knows we have slippery hearts,

therefore he will have a covenant to bind us. It is horrid impiety to

go away from God after covenant. If one of the vestal nuns, who had

vowed herself to religion, was deflowered, the Romans caused her to be

burnt alive. It is perjury to depart from God after solemn covenant.

How does the covenant of grace differ from the first covenant made with

Adam?

(1.) The terms of the first covenant were more strict and severe. For,

(1) The least failing would have made the covenant with Adam null and

void, but many failings do not annul the covenant of grace. I grant,

the least sin is a trespass upon the covenant, but it does not make it

null and void. There may be many failings in the conjugal relation, but

every failing does not break the marriage bond. It would be sad, if, as

oft as we break covenant with God he should break covenant with us; but

God will not take advantage of every failing, but in anger remember

mercy.'

(2) The first covenant being broken, allowed the sinner no remedy, all

doors of hope were shut; but the new covenant allows the sinner a

remedy: it leaves room for repentance, and provides a mediator. Jesus

the mediator of the new covenant.' Heb 12:24.

(2.) The first covenant ran all upon working,' the second is upon

believing.' Rom 4:5.

But are not works required in the covenant of grace?

Yes. This is a faithful saying, that they which believe in God, be

careful to maintain good works.' Tit 3:8. But the covenant of grace

does not require works in the same manner as the covenant of works did.

In the first covenant, works were required as the condition of life; in

the second, they are required only as the signs of life. In the first

covenant, works were required as grounds of salvation; in the new

covenant, they are required as evidences of our love to God. In the

first, they were required to the justification of our persons; in the

new, to the manifestation of our grace.

What is the condition of the covenant of grace?

The main condition is faith.

Why is faith more the condition of the new covenant than any other

grace?

To exclude all glorying in the creature. Faith is a humble grace. If

repentance or works were the condition of the covenant, a man would

say, It is my righteousness that has saved me; but if it be of faith,

where is boasting? Faith fetches all from Christ, and gives all the

glory to Christ; it is a most humble grace. Hence it is that God has

singled out this grace to be the condition of the covenant.

If faith be the condition of the covenant of grace, it excludes

desperate presumptuous sinners from the covenant. They say there is a

covenant of grace, and they shall be saved: but did you ever know a

bond without a condition? The condition of the covenant is faith, and

if thou hast no faith, thou hast no more to do with the covenant, than

a foreigner or a country farmer with the city charter.

Use one: Of information. See the amazing goodness of God, to enter into

covenant with us. He never entered into covenant with angels when they

fell. It was much condescension in God to enter into covenant with us

in a state of innocence, but more so when we were in a state of enmity.

In this covenant of grace, we may see the cream of God's love, and the

working of his bowels to sinners. This is a marriage covenant. "I am

married to you, saith the Lord." Jer 3:14. In the new covenant, God

makes himself over to us, and what can he give more? He makes over his

promises to us, and what better bonds can we have?

Use two: Of trial. Whether we are in covenant with God. There are three

characters.

(1.) God's covenant-people are a humble people. "Be ye clothed with

humility;' I Pet 5:5. God's people esteem others better than

themselves; they shrink into nothing in their own thoughts. Phil 2:3.

David cries out, "I am a worm, and no man:" though a saint, though a

king, yet a worm. Ps. 22:6. When Moses' face shined, he covered it with

a veil. When God's people shine most in grace, they are covered with

the veil of humility. Pride excludes from the covenant, for "God

resisteth the proud," I Pet 5:5, and sure such are not in covenant with

God whom he resists.

(2.) A people in covenant with God are a willing people; though they

cannot serve God perfectly, they serve him willingly. They do not

grudge God a little time spent in his worship; they do not hesitate or

murmur at sufferings; they will go through a sea and a wilderness, if

God call. "Thy people shall be a willing people:' Ps 110:3: a people of

willingness.' Heb. This spontaneity and willingness is from the

attractive power of God's Spirit: the Spirit does not impellere, force,

but trahere, sweetly draws the will; and this willingness in religion

makes all our services accepted. God does sometimes accept of

willingness without the work, but never the work without willingness.

(3.) God's covenant people are a consecrated people, they have holiness

to the Lord written upon them. Thou art a holy people to the Lord thy

God.' Deut 7:6. God's covenant people are separated from the world, and

sanctified by the Spirit. The priests under the law were not only to

wash in the great laver, but were arrayed with glorious apparel. Exod

28:2. This was typical, to show God's people are not only washed from

gross sins, but adorned with holiness of heart: they bear not only

God's name, but image. Tamerlane refused a pot of gold, when he saw it

had not his father's stamp upon it, but the Roman stamp. Holiness is

God's stamp; if he does not see this stamp upon us, he will not own us

for his covenant people.

Use three: Of exhortation. To such as are out of covenant, labour to

get into covenant, and have God for your God. How glad would the old

world have been of an ark! How industrious should we be to get within

the ark of the covenant! Consider, (1.) The misery of such as live and

die out of covenant with God. Such have none to go to in an hour of

distress. When conscience accuses, when sickness approaches (which is

but a harbinger to bespeak a lodging for death), then what will you do?

Whither will you flee? Will you look to Christ for help? He is a

mediator only for such as are in covenant. Oh, how will you be filled

with horror and despair! and be as Saul, when he said, The Philistines

make war against me, and the Lord is departed.' I Sam 28:15. Till you

are in covenant with God, there is no mercy. The mercy-seat was placed

upon the ark, and the mercy-seat was no larger than the ark; to show,

that the mercy of God reaches no further than the covenant.

(2.) The excellency of the covenant of grace. It is a better covenant

than the covenant made with Adam, first because it is more friendly and

propitious. Those services which would have been rejected in the first

covenant are accepted in the second. Here God accepts of the will for

the deed, 2 Cor 8:12; here sincerity is crowned in the covenant of

grace; wherein we are weak, God will give strength; and wherein we come

short, God will accept of a surety. Secondly it is a better covenant,

because it is surer. Thou hast made with me an everlasting covenant,

ordered in all things, and sure.' 2 Sam 23:5. The first covenant was

not sure, it stood upon a tottering foundation of works. Adam had no

sooner a stock of righteousness to trade with, but he broke; but the

covenant of grace is sure; it is confirmed with God's decree, and it

rests upon two mighty pillars, the oath of God, and the blood of God.

Thirdly it has better privileges. The covenant of grace brings

preferment. Our nature now is more ennobled, we are raised to higher

glory than in innocence, we are advanced to sit upon Christ's throne.

Rev 3:21. We are, by virtue of the covenant of grace, nearer to Christ

than the angels: they are his friends, we his spouse. God is willing to

be in covenant with you. Why does God woo and beseech you by his

ambassadors to be reconciled, if he were not willing to be in covenant?

I would fain be in covenant with God, but I have been a great sinner,

and I fear God will not admit me into covenant.

If thou seest thy sins, and loathest thyself for them, God will take

thee into covenant. Thou hast wearied me with thy iniquities; I, even

I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions.' Isa 43:24, 25. As the

sea covers great rocks, so God's covenant mercy covers great sins. Some

of the Jews that crucified Christ had their sins washed away in his

blood.

But I am not worthy that God should admit me into covenant.

It never came into God's thoughts to make a new covenant upon terms of

worthiness. If God should show mercy to none but such as are worthy,

then must he show mercy to none. But it is God's design in the new

covenant to advance the riches of grace, to love us freely; and when we

have no worthiness of our own, to accept us through Christ's

worthiness. Therefore let not unworthiness discourage you; it is not

unworthiness that excludes any from the covenant, but unwillingness.

What shall we do that we may be in covenant with God?

(1.) Seek to God by prayer. Exige a Domino misericordiam [Demand

compassion from the Lord]. Augustine. Lord, be my God in covenant.' The

Lord has made an express promise, that, upon our prayer to him, the

covenant should be ratified, he will be our God, and we shall be his

people. They shall call upon my name, and I will hear them: I will say,

It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God.' Zech 13:9.

Only it must be an importunate prayer; come as earnest suitors, resolve

to take no denial.

(2.) If you would be in covenant with God, break off the covenant with

sin. Before the marriage-covenant there must be a divorce. If ye return

to the Lord with all your hearts, put away the strange gods; and they

put away Ashtaroth,' I Sam 7:3, viz. their female gods. Will any king

enter into covenant with that man who is in league with his enemies?

(3.) If you would enter into the bond of the covenant, get faith in the

blood of the covenant. Christ's blood is the blood of atonement;

believe in this blood, and you are safely arked in God's mercy. Ye are

made nigh by the blood of Christ.' Eph 2:13.

Use four: Of comfort to such as can make out their covenant interest in

God. (1.) You that are in covenant with God, all your sins are

pardoned. Pardon is the crowning mercy. Who forgiveth thy iniquity, who

crowneth thee,' &c. Psa 103:3. This is a branch of the covenant. I will

be their God, and I will forgive their iniquity,' Jer 31:33, 34. Sin

being pardoned, all wrath ceases. How terrible is it when but a spark

of God's wrath flies into a man's conscience! But sin being forgiven,

there is no more wrath. God does not appear now in the fire or

earthquake, but covered with a rainbow full of mercy.

(2.) All your temporal mercies are fruits of the covenant. Wicked men

have mercies by Providence, not by virtue of a covenant; with God's

leave, not with his love. But such as are in covenant have their

mercies sweetened with God's love, and they swim to them in the blood

of Christ. As Naaman said to Gehazi, Take two talents,' 2 Kings 5:23,

so says God to such as are in covenant, take two talents, take health,

and take Christ with it; take riches, and take my love with them; take

the venison, and take the blessing with it: take two talents.

(3.) You may upon all occasions plead the covenant. If you are haunted

with temptations, plead the covenant. Lord, thou hast promised to

bruise Satan under my feet shortly; wilt thou suffer thy child to be

thus worried? Take off the roaring lion. If in want, plead the

covenant: Lord, thou hast said, I shall want no good thing;' wilt thou

save me from hell, and not from want? wilt thou give me a kingdom, and

deny me daily bread?

(4.) If in covenant with God all things shall co-operate for your good.

Etiam mala cidunt in bonum. Psa 25:10. Not only golden paths, but his

bloody paths are for good. Every wind of Providence shall blow them

nearer heaven. Affliction shall humble and purify. Heb 12:13. Out of

the bitterest drug God distils your salvation. Afflictions add to the

saints, glory. The more the diamond is cut, the more it sparkles; the

heavier the saints' cross is, the heavier shall be their crown.

(5.) If thou art in covenant once, then for ever in covenant. The text

calls it an everlasting covenant.' Such as are in covenant are elected;

and God's electing love is unchangeable. I will make an everlasting

covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them; but I will put

my fear in their heart, that they shall not depart from me.' Jer 32:40.

God will so love the saints that he will not forsake them; and the

saints shall so fear God that they shall not forsake him. It is a

covenant of eternity. It must be so; for whom is this covenant made

with? Is it not with believers? and have not they coalition and union

with Christ? Christ is the head, they are the body. Eph 1:22, 23. This

is a near union, much like that union between God the Father and

Christ. As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may

be one in us.' John 17:21. Now, the union between Christ and the saints

being so inseparable, it can never be dissolved, or the covenant made

void; so that you may die with comfort.

(6.) Thou art in covenant with God, and thou art going to thy God.

Behold a death-bed cordial; death breaks the union between the body and

the soul, but perfects the union between Christ and the soul. This has

made the saints desire death as the bride the wedding-day. Phil 1:23.

Cupio dissolvi, Lead me, Lord, to that glory,' said one, a glimpse

whereof I have seen, as in a glass darkly.'

Use five: Of direction. To show you how you should walk who have tasted

of covenant-mercy, live as a people in covenant with God. As you differ

from others in respect of dignity, so you must in point of carriage.

(1.) You must love this God. God's love to you calls for love. It is

Amor gratiatus, a free love. Why should God pass by others, and take

you into a league of friendship with himself? In the law, God passed by

the lion and eagle, and chose the dove; so he passes by the noble and

mighty. It is Amor plenus, a full love. When God takes you into

covenant, you are his Hephzihah; Isa 62:5; his delight is in you; he

gives you the key of all his treasure, he heaps pearls upon you, he

settles heaven and earth upon you; he gives you a bunch of grapes by

the way, and says, Son, all I have is thine.' And does not all this

call for love? Who can tread upon these hot coals, and his heart not

burn in love to God?

(2.) Walk holily. The covenant has made you a royal nation, therefore

be a holy people. Shine as lights in the world; live as earthly angels.

God has taken you into covenant, that you and he may have communion

together; and what is it that keeps up your communion with God but

holiness?

(3.) Walk thankfully. Psa 103:1. God is your God in covenant; he has

done more for you than if he had made you ride upon the high places of

the earth, and given you crowns and sceptres. Oh take the cup of

salvation, and bless the Lord! Eternity will be little enough to praise

him. Musicians love to play on their music where there is the loudest

sound, and God loves to bestow his mercies where he may have the

loudest praises. You that have angels, reward, do angels, work. Begin

that work of praise here, which you hope to be always doing in heaven.

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2. Christ The Mediator Of The Covenant

'Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant,' &c. Heb 12:24.

Jesus Christ is the sum and quintessence of the gospel; the wonder of

angels; the joy and triumph of saints. The name of Christ is sweet, it

is as music in the ear, honey in the mouth, and a cordial at the heart.

I shall waive the context, and only speak of that which concerns our

present purpose. Having discoursed of the covenant of grace, I shall

speak now of the Mediator of the covenant, and the restorer of lapsed

sinners, Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant.'

There are several names and titles in Scripture given to Christ, as the

great restorer of mankind: [1] Sometimes he is called a Saviour. His

name shall be called Jesus.' Matt 1:21. The Hebrew word for JESUS

signifies a Saviour, and whom he saves from hell he saves from sin;

where Christ is a Saviour he is a sanctifier. He shall save his people

from their sins.' Matt 1:21. There is no other saviour. Neither is

there salvation in any other.' Acts 4:12. As there was but one ark to

save the world from drowning, so there is but one Jesus to save sinners

from damning. As Naomi said to her daughters-in-law, Are there yet any

more sons in my womb?' Ruth 1:11, so has God any other sons in the womb

of his eternal decree, to be saviours to us, besides Christ? Where

shall wisdom be found? The depth saith, It is not in me: and the sea

saith, It is not with me.' Job 28:12. Where shall salvation be found?

The angel says, It is not in me; mortality says, It is not in me; the

ordinance says, It is not in me. Christ alone is the well-spring of

life; the ordinance is the conduit-pipe that conveys salvation, but

Christ is the spring that feeds it. Neither is there salvation in any

other.'

[2] Sometimes Christ is called a Redeemer. The Redeemer shall come to

Sion.' Isa 59:20. Some understand it of Cyrus, others of an angel; but

the most ancient Jewish doctors understood it of Christ, the Redeemer

of the elect. My Redeemer liveth.' Job 19:23. The Hebrew word for

Redeemer signifies such a one as is near akin, and has right to redeem

a mortgage; so Christ is near of kin to us, being our elder brother,

therefore has the best right to redeem us.

[3] Christ is called a Mediator in the text. Jesus the Mediator of the

new covenant.' The Greek word for Mediator signifies a middle person,

one that makes up the breach between two disagreeing parties. God and

we were at variance by sin, now Christ mediates and becomes umpire

between us; he reconciles us to God through his blood, therefore he is

called the Mediator of the new covenant. There is no way of communion

and intercourse between God and man but in and through a Mediator.

Christ takes away the enmity in us, and the wrath of God, and so makes

peace. Nor is Christ a Mediator of reconciliation only, but

intercession. Christ is entered, not into the holy place made with

hands, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for

us.' Heb 9:24. When the priest had slain the sacrifice he was to go

with the blood before the altar and mercy-seat, and show it to the

Lord. Now, in Christ, our blessed Mediator, consider two things. 1: His

person. 2: His graces.

I. His person. His person is amiable; he is made up of all love and

beauty. He is the effigy of his Father. The express image of his

person.' Heb 1:1. Consider,

[1] Christ's person in two natures. (1.) Look upon his human nature as

incarnate. The Valentinians deny his human nature; but John 1:14 says

The Word was made flesh.' It is spoken of Christ the promised Messiah.

Christ took our flesh, that the same nature which sinned might suffer;

and The Word was made flesh,' that through the glass of his human

nature we might look upon God.

Why is Christ called the Word?

Because, as a word is the interpreter of the mind, and reveals what is

in a man's breast; so Jesus Christ reveals his Father's mind to us

concerning the great matters of our salvation. John 1:18. Were it not

for Christ's manhood, the sight of the Godhead would be formidable to

us; but through Christ's flesh we may look upon God without terror. And

Christ took our flesh, that he might know how to pity us; he knows what

it is to be faint, sorrowful, tempted. He knows our frame.' Psa 103:14.

And he took our flesh, that he might (as Augustine says) ennoble our

human nature with honour. Christ having married our flesh has exalted

it above the angelic nature.

(2.) Look upon Christ's divine nature. Christ may be fitly compared to

Jacob's ladder, which reacheth from earth to heaven. Gen 28:12.

Christ's human nature was the foot of the ladder, which stood upon

earth; his divine nature the top of the ladder, which reaches to

heaven. This being a grand article of our faith I shall amplify it. I

know the Arians, Socinians, and Ebionites would rob Christ of the best

jewel of his crown, his Godhead; but the Apostolical, Nicene,

Athanasian creeds, affirm Christ's Deity; and to this the churches of

Helvetia, Bohemia, Wittenberg, Transylvania, &c.' give their full

consent. The Scripture is clear for it. He is called the mighty God.'

Isa 9:6. And in him dwells the fulness of the Godhead.' Col 2:9. He is

of the same nature and essence with the Father. So Athanasius, Basil,

Chrysostom. Is God the Father called Almighty? So is Christ. The

Almighty.' Rev 1:8. Is God the Father the heart-searcher? So is Christ.

He knew their thoughts.' John 2:25. Is God the Father omnipresent? So

is Christ. The Son of Man which is in heaven.' John 3:13. Christ as God

was then in heaven, when as man he was upon the earth.

Is Christ eternal?

Christ is the everlasting Father, Isa 9:6, may be urged against the

Cerinthian heretics, who denied the pre-existence of Christ's Godhead,

and held that Christ had no being till he derived it from the Virgin

Mary.

Does divine worship belong to the first person in the Trinity? So it

does to Christ. John 5:23. Let all the angels of God worship him.' Heb

1:6. Is creation proper to the Deity? this is a flower of Christ's

crown. By him were all things created.' Col 1:16. Is invocation proper

to the Deity? this is given to Christ. Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.'

Acts 7:59. Is recumbency and trust peculiar to God the Father? this is

given to Christ. Ye believe in God, believe also in me.' John 14:1.

Christ must needs be God, not only that the divine nature might support

the human from sinking under God's wrath, but also to give value and

weight to his sufferings.

Christ being God, his death and passion are meritorious. Christ's blood

is called sanguis Dei, the blood of God, in Acts 20:28, because the

person who was offered in sacrifice was God as well as man. This is an

invincible support to believers; it was God who was offended, and it

was God who satisfied. Thus Christ's person is in two natures.

[2] Consider Christ's two natures in one person, God-man. God manifest

in the flesh.' I Tim 3:16. Christ had a twofold substance, divine and

human, yet not a twofold subsistence; both natures make but one Christ.

A scion may be grafted into another tree - a pear-tree into an apple;

which, though it bear different fruits, is but one tree; so Christ's

manhood is united to the Godhead in an ineffable manner; yet though

there are two natures, yet but one person. This union of the two

natures in Christ was not by transmutation, the divine nature changed

into the human, or the human into the divine; nor by mixture, the two

natures mingled together, as wine and water are mixed; but both the

natures of Christ remain distinct, and yet make not two distinct

persons, but one person; the human nature not God, yet one with God.

II. Consider Christ, our Mediator, in his graces. These are the sweet

savour of his ointments, that make the virgins love him. Christ, our

blessed Mediator, is said to be full of grace and truth.' John 1:14. He

had the anointing of the Spirit without measure. John 3:34. Grace in

Christ is after a more eminent and glorious manner than it is in any of

the saints.

[1] Jesus Christ, our Mediator, has perfection in every grace. Col

1:19. He is a panoply, magazine and storehouse of all heavenly

treasure, all fulness. This no saint on earth has; he may excel in one

grace, but not in all; as Abraham was eminent for faith, Moses for

meekness; but Christ excels in every grace.

[2] There is a never-failing fulness of grace in Christ. Grace in the

saints is ebbing and flowing, it is not always in the same degree and

proportion; at one time David's faith was strong, at another time so

faint and weak, that you could hardly feel any pulse. I said, I am cut

off from before thine eyes.' Psalm 31:22. But grace in Christ is a

never-failing fulness, it never abated in the least degree, he never

lost a drop of his holiness. What was said of Joseph in Gen 49:23, may

more truly be applied to Christ. The archers shot at him, but his bow

abode in strength.' Men and devils shot at him, but his grace remained

in its full vigour and strength; his bow abode in strength.'

[3] Grace in Christ is communicative. His grace is for us; the holy oil

of the Spirit was poured on the head of this blessed Aaron, that it

might run down upon us. The saints have not grace to bestow on others.

When the foolish virgins would have bought oil of their neighbour

virgins, saying, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out,' Matt

25:8, the wise virgins answered, Not so, lest there be not enough for

us and you.' The saints have no grace to spare for others; but Christ

diffuses his grace to others. Grace in the saints is as water in the

vessel, grace in Christ is as water in the spring. Of his fulness have

all we received and grace for grace.' John 1:16. Set a glass under a

still and it receives water from it, drop by drop; so the saints have

the drops and influences of Christ's grace distilling upon them. What a

rich consolation is this to those who either have no grace, or their

stock is low! They may go to Christ, the Mediator, as a treasury of

grace: Lord, I am indigent; but whither shall I carry my empty vessel,

but to a full fountain? All my springs are in thee.' Psa 87:7. I am

guilty, thou hast blood to pardon me; I am polluted, thou hast grace to

cleanse me; I am sick unto death, thou hast the balm of Gilead to heal

me. Joseph opened all the storehouses of corn: Christ is our Joseph,

that opens all the treasuries and storehouses of grace, and

communicates to us. He is not only sweet as the honey-comb, but drops

as the honey-comb. In Christ our Mediator there is a cornucopia, and

fulness of all grace; and Christ is desirous that we should come to him

for grace, like the full breast that aches till it be drawn.

Use one: Admire the glory of this Mediator; he is God-man, he is

co-essentially glorious with the Father. All the Jews that saw Christ

in the flesh, did not see his Godhead; all that saw the man did not see

the Messiah. The temple of Solomon within was embellished with gold;

travellers, as they passed along, might see the outside of the temple,

but only the priests saw the glory which sparkled within the temple; so

believers only, who are made priests unto God, see Christ's glorious

inside, the Godhead shining through the manhood. Rev 1:16.

Use two: If Christ be God-man in one person, then look unto Jesus

Christ alone for salvation. There must be something of the Godhead to

fasten our hope upon; in Christ there is Godhead and manhood

hypostatically united. If we could weep rivers of tears, out-fast Moses

on the mount, if we were exact moralists, touching the law blameless,

if we could arrive at the highest degree of sanctification in this

life, all this would not save us, without looking to the merits of him

who is God. Our perfect holiness in heaven is not the cause of our

salvation, but the righteousness of Jesus Christ. To this therefore did

Paul flee, as to the horns of the altar. That I may be found in him,

not having my own righteousness.' Phil 3:9. It is true, we may look to

our graces as evidences of salvation, but to Christ's blood only as the

cause. In time of Noah's flood, all that trusted to the high hills and

trees, and not to the ark, were drowned. Looking unto Jesus;' and so

look unto him, as to believe in him, that so Christ may not only be

united to our nature, but to our persons. Heb 12:2. That believing, you

may have life through his name.' John 20:31.

Use three: Is Jesus Christ God and man in one person? This, as it shows

the dignity of believers, that they are nearly related to one of the

greatest persons that is, In him dwells the fulness of the Godhead

bodily,' so it is of unspeakable comfort. Col 2:2. Christ's two natures

being married together, the divine and human, all that Christ in either

of his natures can do for believers, he will do. In his human nature he

prays for them, in his divine nature he merits for them.

Use four: Admire the love of Christ our Mediator; that he should humble

himself, and take our flesh, that he might redeem us. Believers should

put Christ in their bosom, as the spouse did. Lie betwixt my breasts.'

Cant 1:13. What was said of Ignatius, that the name of Jesus was found

written in his heart, should be verified of every saint; he should have

Jesus Christ written in his heart.

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3. Christ's Prophetic Office

'The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet,' &c. Deut 18:85.

Having spoken of the person of Christ, we are next to speak of the

offices of Christ. These are Prophetic, Priestly, and Regal.

'The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet.' Enunciatur hic

locus de Christo. It is spoken of Christ.' There are several names

given to Christ as a Prophet. He is called the Counsellor' in Isa 9:9.

In uno Christo Angelus foederis completur [The Messenger of the

Covenant appears in Christ alone]. Fagius. The Angel of the covenant.'

Mal 3:3. A Lamp.' 2 Sam 22:19. The Morning Star.' Rev 22:16. Jesus

Christ is the great Prophet of his church. The woman of Samaria gave a

shrewd guess. John 4:19. He is the best teacher; he makes all other

teaching effectual. Then opened he their understanding.' Luke 24:45 He

not only opened the Scriptures, but opened their understanding. He

teaches to profit. I am the Lord thy God, who teacheth thee to profit.'

Isa 48:17.

How does Christ teach?

(1.) Externally, by his Word. Thy word is a lamp to my feet.' Psa

119:905. Such as pretend to have a light or revelation above the Word,

or contrary to it, never had their teaching from Christ. Isa 8:80.

(2.) Christ teaches these sacred mysteries, inwardly, by the Spirit.

John 16:13. The world knows not what it is. The natural man receives

not the things of God, neither can he know them.' I Cor 2:14. He knows

not what it is to be transformed by the renewing of the mind, Rom 12:2,

or what the inward workings of the Spirit mean; these are riddles and

paradoxes to Him. He may have more insight into the things of the world

than a believer, but he does not see the deep things of God. A swine

may see an acorn under a tree, but he cannot see a star. He who is

taught of Christ sees the arcana imperii [state secrets], the secrets

of the kingdom of heaven.

What are the lessons which Christ teaches?

He teaches us to see into our own hearts. Take the most mercurial wits,

the greatest politicians, that understand the mysteries of state, they

know not the mysteries of their own hearts, they cannot believe the

evil that is in them. Is thy servant a dog?' 2 Kings 8:13. Grande

profundum est homo. Augustine. The heart is a great deep, which is not

easily fathomed. But when Christ teaches he removes the veil of

ignorance, and lights a man into his own heart; and now that he sees

swarms of vain thoughts, he blushes to see how sin mingles with his

duties, his stars are mixed with clouds; he prays, as Augustine, that

God would deliver him from himself.

The second lesson Christ teaches is the vanity of the creature. A

natural man sets up his happiness here, and worships the golden image;

but he that Christ has anointed with his eye-salve has a spirit of

discerning; he looks upon the creature in its night-dress, sees it to

be empty and unsatisfying, and not commensurate to a heaven-born soul.

Solomon had put all the creatures into a still, and when he came to

extract the spirit and quintessence, all was vanity. Eccles 2: I1. The

apostle calls it a show or apparition, having no intrinsic goodness. I

Cor 7:71.

The third lesson is the excellency of things unseen. Christ gives the

soul a sight of glory, a prospect of eternity. We look not at things

which are seen, but at things which are not seen.' 2 Cor 4:18. Moses

saw him who is invisible.' Heb 11:17. And the patriarchs saw a better

country, viz. an heavenly, where are delights of angels, rivers of

pleasure, the flower of joy, fully ripe and blown. Heb 11:16.

How does Christ's teaching differ from other teaching?

Several ways.

(1.) Christ teaches the heart. Others may teach the ear, Christ the

heart. Whose heart the Lord opened.' Acts 16:14. All that the

dispensers of the word can do is but to work knowledge, Christ works

grace: they can but give the light of the truth; Christ gives the love

of the truth; they can only teach what to believe, Christ teaches how

to believe.

(2.) Christ gives us a taste of the word. Ministers may set the food of

the word before you, and carve it out to you; but it is only Christ can

cause you to taste it. If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is

gracious.' I Pet 2:2. Taste and see that the Lord is good.' Psa 34:4.

It is one thing to hear a truth preached, another thing to taste it;

one thing to read a promise, another thing to taste it. David had got a

taste of the word. Thou hast taught me: How sweet are thy words unto my

taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth.' Psalm 119:902, 103. The

apostle calls it the savour of knowledge. 2 Cor 2:14. The light of

knowledge is one thing, the savour another. Christ makes us taste a

savouriness in the word.

(3.) When Christ teaches, he makes us obey. Others may instruct, but

cannot command obedience: they teach to be humble, but men remain

proud. The prophet had been denouncing judgements against the people of

Judah, but they would not hear. We will do whatsoever goeth out of our

own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven.' Jer 44:17. Men

come as it were, armed in a coat of mail that the sword of the word

will not enter; but when Christ comes to teach, he removes this

obstinacy; he not only informs the judgement, but inclines the will. He

does not only come with the light of his word, but the rod of his

strength, and makes the stubborn sinner yield to him. His grace is

irresistible.

(4.) Christ teaches easily. Others teach with difficulty. They have

difficulty in finding out a truth, and in inculcating it. Precept must

be upon precept, and line upon line.' Isa 28:80. Some may teach all

their lives, and the word take no impression. They complain, I have

spent my labour in vain;' Isa 49:9, plowed on rocks; but Christ the

great Prophet teaches with ease. He can with the least touch of his

Spirit convert: he can say, Let there be light;' with a word he can

convey grace.

(5.) When Christ teaches he makes men willing to learn. Men may teach

others, but they have no mind to learn. Fools despise instruction.'

Prov 1:1. They rage at the word, as if a patient should rage at the

physician when he brings him a cordial; thus backward are men to their

own salvation. But Christ makes his people a willing people.' Psa

110:0. They prize knowledge, and hang it as a jewel upon their ear.

Those that Christ teaches say, as Isa 2:2, Come let us go up to the

mountains of the Lord, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will

walk in them;' and as Acts 10:03; We are all here present before God,

to hear all things commanded.'

(6.) When Christ teaches, he not only illuminates but animates. He so

teaches, that he quickens. I am the light of the world: he that follows

me shall have lumen vitae, the light of life.' John 8:12. By nature we

are dead, therefore unfit for teaching. Who will make an oration to the

dead? But Christ teaches them that are dead! he gives the light of

life. As when Lazarus was dead, Christ said, Come forth,' and he made

the dead to hear, for Lazarus came forth: so when he says to the dead

soul, Come forth of the grave of unbelief, he hears Christ's voice, and

comes forth, it is the light of life. The philosophers say, calor et

lux concrescunt, heat and light increase together.' Where Christ comes

with his light, there is the heat of spiritual life going along with

it.

Use one: Of information. (1.) See here an argument of Christ's

Divinity. Had he not been God, he could never have known the mind of

God, or revealed to us those arcana caeli [the secrets of Heaven],

those deep mysteries, which no man or angel could find out. Who but God

can anoint the eyes of the blind, and give not only light, but sight?

Who but he, who has the key of David, can open the heart? Who but God

can bow the iron sinew of the will? He only who is God can enlighten

the conscience, and make the stony heart bleed.

(2.) See what a cornucopia, or plenty of wisdom is in Christ, who is

the great doctor of his church, and gives saving knowledge to all the

elect. The body of the sun must needs be full of clearness and

brightness, which enlightens the whole world. Christ is the great

luminary; in him are hid all treasures of knowledge. Col 2:2. The

middle lamp of the sanctuary gave light to all the other lamps; so

Christ diffuses his glorious light to others. We are apt to admire the

learning of Aristotle and Plato; alas! what is this poor spark of light

to that which is in Christ, from whose infinite wisdom both men and

angels light their lamps.

(3.) See the misery of man in the state of nature. Before Christ

becomes their prophet they are enveloped in ignorance and darkness. Men

know nothing in a sanctified manner, they know nothing as they ought to

know. I Cor 8:8. This is sad. Men in the dark cannot discern colours so

in the state of nature they cannot discern between morality and grace

they take one for the other, pro dea nubem [They mistake the cloud for

the goddess herself]. In the dark the greatest beauty is hid. Let there

be rare flowers in the garden, and pictures in the room, in the dark

their beauty is veiled over; so, though there be such transcendent

beauty in Christ as amazes the angels, man in the state of nature sees

none of this beauty. What is Christ to him? or heaven to him? The veil

is upon his heart. A man in the dark is in danger every step he takes;

so man in the state of nature is in danger, at every step, of falling

into hell. Thus it is before Christ teaches us; nay, the darkness in

which a sinner is, while in an unregenerate state, is worse than

natural darkness; for natural darkness affrights. An horror of great

darkness fell upon Abraham.' Gen 15:12. But the spiritual darkness is

not accompanied with horror, men tremble not at their condition; nay,

they like their condition well enough. Men loved darkness.' John 3:19.

This is their sad condition, till Jesus Christ comes as a prophet to

teach them, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power

of Satan to God.

(4.) See the happy condition of the children of God. They have Christ

to be their prophet. All thy children shall be taught of the Lord.' Isa

54:13. He is made to us wisdom.' I Cor 1:10. One man cannot see by

another's eyes; but believers see with Christ's eyes. In his light they

see light.' Christ gives them the light of grace and the light of

glory.

Use two: Labour to have Christ for your prophet. He teaches savingly:

he is an interpreter of a thousand, he can untie those knots which

puzzle angels. Till Christ teach, we never learn any lesson; till

Christ is made to us wisdom, we shall never be wise to salvation.

What shall we do to have Christ for our teacher?

(1.) See your need of Christ's teaching. You cannot sec your way

without this morning star. Some speak much of the light of reason

improved: alas! the plumb-line of reason is too short to fathom the

deep things of God; the light of reason will no more help a man to

believe, than the light of a candle will help him to understand. A man

can no more by the power of nature reach Christ, than an infant can

reach the top of the pyramids, or the ostrich fly up to the stars. See

your need of Christ's anointing and teaching in Rev 3:18.

(2.) Go to Christ to teach you. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me.'

Psa 25:5. As one of the disciples said, Lord, teach us to pray,' Luke

11: I, so say, Lord, teach me to profit. Do thou light my lamp, O thou

great prophet of thy church! Give me a spirit of wisdom and revelation,

that I may see things in another manner than I ever saw them before;

teach me in the word to hear thy voice, and in the sacrament to discern

thy body. Lighten mine eyes,' &c. Psa 13:3. Cathedram habet in coelo

qui corda docet in terra. Augustine. He has his pulpit in heaven who

converts souls.' That we may be encouraged to go to our great Prophet:

(1:) Jesus Christ is very willing to teach us. Why else did he enter

into the calling of the ministry, but to teach the mysteries of heaven?

Jesus went about teaching and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and

healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the

people.' Matt 4:43. Why did he take the prophetic office upon him? Why

was Christ so angry with them that kept away the key of knowledge? Luke

11:12. Why was Christ anointed with the Spirit without measure, but

that he might anoint us with knowledge? Knowledge is in Christ for us

as milk in the breast for the child. Oh then go to Christ for teaching.

None in the gospel came to Christ for sight, but he restored their

eyesight; and sure Christ is more willing to work a cure upon a blind

soul than ever he was to do so upon a blind body.

(2:) There are none so dull and ignorant but Christ can teach them.

Every one is not fit to make a scholar of; ex omni ligno non fit

Mercurius; but there is none so dull but Christ can make him a good

scholar. Even such as are ignorant, and of low parts, Christ teaches in

such a manner that they know more than the great sages and wise men of

the world. Hence that saying of Augustine, surgunt indocti, et rapiunt

coelum; the unlearned men rise up, and take heaven; they know the

truths of Christ more savingly than the great admired Rabbis. The

duller the scholar the more is his skill seen that teaches. Hence it

is, that Christ delights in teaching the ignorant, to get himself more

glory. The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf

shall be unstopped.' Isa 35:5. Who would go to teach a blind or a deaf

man? Yet such dull scholars Christ teaches. Such as are blinded with

ignorance shall see the mysteries of the gospel, and the deaf ears

shall be unstopped.

(3.) Wait upon the means of grace which Christ has appointed. Though

Christ teaches by his Spirit, yet he teaches in the use of ordinances.

Wait at the gates of wisdom's door. Ministers are teachers under

Christ. Pastors and teachers.' Eph 4:4: We read of pitchers, and lamps

within the pitchers. Judges 7:16. Ministers are earthen vessels, but

these pitchers have lamps within them to light souls to heaven. Christ

is said to speak to us from heaven now, by his ministers, as the king

speaks by his ambassador. Heb 12:25. Such as wean themselves from the

breast of ordinances seldom thrive; either they grow light in their

head, or lame in their feet. The word preached is Christ's voice in the

mouth of the minister; and those that refuse to hear Christ speaking in

the ministry, Christ will refuse to hear speaking on their death-bed.

(4.) If you would have the teachings of Christ, walk according to the

knowledge which you have already. Use your little knowledge well, and

Christ will teach you more. If any man will do his will, he shall know

of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.'

John 7:17. A master seeing his servant improve a little stock well

gives him more to trade with.

Use three: If you have been taught by Christ savingly, be thankful. It

is your honour to have God for your teacher, and that he should teach

you, and not others, is a matter of admiration and congratulation. Oh

how many knowing men are ignorant! They are not taught of God; they

have Christ's Word to enlighten them, but not his Spirit to sanctify

them. But that you should have the inward as well as the outward

teaching, that Christ should anoint you with the heavenly unction of

his Spirit, that you can say, as he in John 9:95, 'One thing I know,

that whereas I was blind, now I see.' Oh, how thankful should you be to

Christ, who has revealed his Father's bosom secrets unto you! No man

has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom

of the Father, he has declared him.' John 1:18. If Alexander thought

himself so much obliged to Aristotle for the philosophic instruction he

received from him, oh, how are we obliged to Jesus Christ, this great

Prophet, for opening to us the eternal purposes of his love, and

revealing to us the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven!

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4. Christ's Priestly Office

Q-35: HOW DOES CHRIST EXECUTE THE OFFICE OF A PRIEST?

A: In his once offering up of himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine

justice, and reconcile us to God, and in making continual intercession

for us.

'Now once in the end of the world has he appeared to put away sin by

the sacrifice of himself.' Heb 9:96.

What are the parts of Christ's priestly office?

Christ's priestly office has two parts - his satisfaction and

intercession.

I. His Satisfaction; and this consists of two branches. [1] His active

obedience. He fulfilled all righteousness.' Matt 3:35. Christ did

everything which the law required; his holy life was a perfect

commentary upon the law of God; and he obeyed the law for us.

[2] His passive obedience. Our guilt being transferred and imputed to

him, he suffered the penalty which was due to us; he appeared to put

away sin by the sacrifice of himself. The paschal lamb slain was a type

of Christ who was offered up in sacrifice for us. Sin could not be done

away without blood. Without blood is no remission.' Heb 9:92. Christ

was not only a lamb without spot, but a lamb slain.

Why was it requisite there should be a priest?

There needed a priest to be an umpire, to mediate between a guilty

creature and a holy God.

How could Christ suffer, being God?

Christ suffered only in the human nature.

But if only Christ's humanity suffered, how could this suffering

satisfy for sin?

The human nature being united to the divine, the human nature suffered,

the divine satisfied. Christ's Godhead supported the human nature that

it did not faint, and gave virtue to his sufferings. The altar

sanctifies the thing offered on it. Matt 23:19. The altar of Christ's

divine nature sanctified the sacrifice of his death, and made it of

infinite value.

Wherein does the greatness of Christ's sufferings appear?

(1.) In the sufferings of his body. He suffered truly, not in

appearance only. The apostle calls it mors crucis, the death of the

cross. Phil 2:2. Cicero, when speaking of this kind of death, says,

quid dicam in crucem tollere? [How can I describe being raised up on a

cross?] Though he was a great orator he wanted words to express it. The

thoughts of this made Christ sweat great drops of blood in the garden.

Luke 22:24. It was an ignominious, painful, cursed death. Christ

suffered in all his senses. His eyes beheld two sad objects, his

enemies insulting, and his mother weeping. His ears were filled with

the revilings of the people. He saved others, himself he cannot save.'

Matt 27:72. His smell was offended when their spittle fell upon his

face. His taste; when they gave him gall and vinegar to drink. His

feeling; when his head suffered with thorns, his hands and feet with

the nails. Totum pro vulnere corpus [His whole body one great wound];

now was this white lily dyed with purple colour.

(2.) In the sufferings of his soul. He was pressed in the wine-press of

his Father's wrath. This caused that vociferation and outcry on the

cross, My God, my God,' cur deseruisti? Christ suffered a double

eclipse upon the cross, an eclipse of the sun, and an eclipse of the

light of God's countenance. How bitter was this agony! The evangelists

use three words to express it. He began to be amazed.' He began to be

faint.' To be exceeding sorrowful' Mark 14:43; Matt 26: 38. Christ felt

the pains of hell in his soul, though not locally, yet equivalently.

Why did Christ suffer?

Surely not for any desert of his own. The Messiah shall be cut off, but

not for himself,' it was for us. Dan 9:96; Isa 53:3. Unus peccat, alius

plectitur [One man sins, another takes the punishment]; he suffered,

that he might satisfy God's justice for us. We, by our sins, had

infinitely wronged God; and, could we have shed rivers of tears,

offered up millions of holocausts and burnt-offerings, we could never

have pacified an angry Deity; therefore Christ must die, that God's

justice may be satisfied.

It is hotly debated among divines, whether God could have forgiven sin

freely without a sacrifice. Not to dispute what God could have done,

when he was resolved to have the law satisfied, and to have man saved

in a way of justice as well as mercy; it was necessary that Christ

should lay down his life as a sacrifice.

(1.) To fulfil the predictions of Scripture. Thus it behoved Christ to

suffer.' Luke 24:46.

(2.) To bring us into favour with God. It is one thing for a traitor to

be pardoned, and another thing to be made a favourite. Christ's blood

is not only called a sacrifice, whereby God is appeased, but a

propitiation, whereby God becomes gracious and friendly to us. Christ

is our mercyseat, from which God gives answers of peace to us.

(3.) Christ died, that he might make good his last will and testament

with his blood. There were many legacies which Christ bequeathed to

believers, which had been all null and void had he not died, and by his

death confirmed the will. Heb 9:16. A testament is in force after men

are dead; the mission of the Spirit, the promises, those legacies, were

not in force till Christ's death; but Christ by his blood has sealed

them, and believers may lay claim to them.

(4.) He died that he might purchase for us glorious mansions; therefore

heaven is called not only a promised, but a purchased possession.' Eph

1:14. Christ died for our preferment; he suffered that we might reign;

he hung upon the cross that we might sit upon the throne. Heaven was

shut, &c. crux Christi, clavis Paradisi: the cross of Christ is the

ladder by which we ascend to heaven. His crucifixion is our coronation.

Use one: In the bloody sacrifice of Christ, see the horrid nature of

sin. Sin, it is true, is odious as it banished Adam out of paradise,

and threw the angels into hell; but that which most of all makes it

appear horrid is this, that it made Christ veil his glory, and lose his

blood. We should look upon sin with indignation, and pursue it with a

holy malice, and shed the blood of those sins which shed Christ's

blood. The sight of Caesar's bloody robe incensed the Romans against

them that slew him. The sight of Christ's bleeding body should incense

us against sin. Let us not parley with it; let not that be our joy,

which made Christ a man of sorrow.

Use two: Is Christ our priest sacrificed? See God's mercy and justice

displayed. I may say as the apostle, Behold the goodness and severity

of God.' Rom 11:12.

(1.) The goodness of God in providing a sacrifice. Had not Christ

suffered upon the cross, we must have lain in hell for ever, satisfying

God's justice.

(2.) The severity of God. Though it were his own Son, the Son of his

love, and our sins were but imputed to him, yet God did not spare him,

but his wrath did flame against him. Rom 8:82. If God was thus severe

to his own Son, how dreadful will he be one day to his enemies! Such as

die in wilful impenitence, must feel the same wrath as Christ did; and

because they cannot bear it at once, therefore they must endure it for

ever.

Use three: Is Christ our priest, who was sacrificed for us? Then see

the endeared affection of Christ to us sinners. The cross,' says

Augustine, was a pulpit, in which Christ preached his love to the

world.' That Christ should die, was more than if all the angels had

been turned to dust; and especially that Christ should die as a

malefactor, having the weight of all men's sins laid upon him, and that

he should die for his enemies. Rom 5:50. The balm-tree weeps out its

precious balm, to heal those that cut and mangle it; so Christ shed his

blood, to heal those that crucified him. He died freely. It is called

the offering of the body of Jesus. Heb 10:00. Though his sufferings

were so great, that they made him sigh, and weep, and bleed; yet they

could not make him repent. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and

be satisfied.' Isa 53:3: Christ had hard travail upon the cross, yet he

does not repent of it, but thinks his sweat and blood well bestowed,

because he sees redemption brought forth to the world. Oh infinite,

amazing love of Christ! a love that passeth knowledge! that neither man

nor angel can parallel. Eph 3:19. How should we be affected with this

love! If Saul was so affected with David's kindness in sparing his

life, how should we be affected with Christ's kindness in parting with

his life for us! At Christ's death and passion, the very stones cleave

asunder, The rocks rent.' Matt 27:7I. Not to be affected with Christ's

love in dying, is to have hearts harder than rocks.

Use four: Is Christ our sacrifice? Then see the excellence of his

sacrifice. (1.) It is perfect. By one offering, he has perfected them

that are sanctified.' Heb 10:14. Therefore, how impious are the

Papists, in joining their merits and the prayers of saints with

Christ's sacrifice! They offer him up daily in the mass, as if Christ's

sacrifice on the cross were imperfect. This is a blasphemy against

Christ's priestly office.

(2.) Christ's sacrifice is meritorious. He not only died for our

example, but to merit salvation. The person who suffered being God as

well as man, put virtue into his sufferings; and our sins were

expiated, and God appeased. No sooner did the messengers say, Uriah is

dead,' but David's anger was pacified. 2 Sam 11:1I. No sooner did

Christ die, but God's anger was pacified.

(3.) This sacrifice is beneficial. Out of the dead lion Samson had

honey. It procures justification of our persons, acceptance of our

service, access to God with boldness, and entrance into the holy place

of heaven. Heb 10:19. Per latus Christi patescit nobis in coelum

[Through the side of Christ a way to Heaven lies open to us]. Israel

passed through the Red sea to Canaan; so through the red sea of

Christ's blood, we enter into the heavenly Canaan.

Use five: (1.) Let us apply this blood of Christ. All the virtue of a

medicine is in the application; though the medicine be made of the

blood of God, it will not heal, unless applied by faith. As fire is to

the chemist, so is faith to the Christian; the chemist can do nothing

without fire, so there is nothing done without faith. Faith makes

Christ's sacrifice ours. Christ Jesus my Lord.' Phil 3:3. It is not

gold in the mine that enriches, but gold in the hand. Faith is the hand

that receives Christ's golden merits. It is not a cordial in the glass

that refreshes the spirit, but a cordial drunk down. Per fidem Christi

sanguinem sugimus [By faith we drink the blood of Christ], Cyprian.

Faith opens the orifice of Christ's wounds, and drinks the precious

cordial of his blood. Without faith Christ himself will not avail us.

(2.) Let us love a bleeding Saviour, and let us show our love to

Christ, by being ready to suffer for him. Many rejoice at Christ's

suffering for them, but dream not of their suffering for him. Joseph

dreamed of his preferment, but not of his imprisonment. Was Christ a

sacrifice? Did he bear God's wrath for us? We should bear man's wrath

for him. Christ's death was voluntary. Lo, I come to do thy will, O

God.' Heb 10:0. I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I

straitened till it be accomplished!' Luke 12:20. Christ calls his

sufferings a baptism; he was to be (as it were) baptized in his own

blood, and how did he thirst for that time! How am I straitened!' Oh

then, let us be willing to suffer for Christ! Christ has taken away the

venom and sting of the saints, sufferings: there is no wrath in their

cup. Our sufferings Christ can make sweet. As there was oil mixed in

the peace-offering, so God can mix the oil of gladness with our

sufferings. The ringing of my chain is sweet music in my ears.'

Landgrave of Hesse. Life must be parted with shortly; what is it to

part with it a little sooner, as a sacrifice to Christ, as a seal of

sincerity, and a pledge of thankfulness!

Use six: This sacrifice of Christ's blood may infinitely comfort us.

This is the blood of atonement. Christ's cross is cardo salutis [the

hinge of our deliverance], Calvin; the hinge and fountain of our

comfort. (1.) This blood comforts in case of guilt! oh, says the soul,

my sins trouble me, but Christ's blood was shed for the remission of

sin. Matt 26:68. Let us see our sins laid on Christ, and then they are

no more ours but his.

(2.) In case of pollution. Christ's blood is a healing and cleansing

blood. It is healing. With his stripes we are healed.' Isa 53:3. It is

the best weapon-salve, it heals at a distance. Though Christ be in

heaven, we may feel the virtue of his blood healing our bloody issue.

And it is cleansing. It is therefore compared to fountain-water. Zech

13:3. The word is a glass to show us our spots, and Christ's blood is a

fountain to wash them away; it turns leprosy into purity. The blood of

Jesus cleanseth us from all our sin.' I John 1:1. There is indeed one

spot so black, that Christ's blood does not wash away, viz. the sin

against the Holy Ghost. Not but that there is virtue enough in Christ's

blood to wash it away; but he who has sinned that sin will not be

washed; he contemns Christ's blood, and tramples it under foot. Heb

10:09. Thus we see what a strong cordial Christ's blood is; it is the

anchor-hold of our faith, the spring of our joy, the crown of our

desires, and the only support both in life and death. In all our fears,

let us comfort ourselves with the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ's

blood. Christ died both as a purchaser and as a conqueror: as a

purchaser in regard of God, having by his blood obtained our salvation,

and as a conqueror in regard of Satan, the cross being his triumphant

chariot, wherein he has led hell and death captive.

Use seven: Bless God for this precious sacrifice of Christ's death.

Bless the Lord, O my soul.' Psa 103:3. And for what does David bless

him? Who redeemeth thy life from destruction!' Christ gave himself a

sin-offering for us; let us give ourselves a thank-offering to him. If

a man redeem another out of debt, will he not be grateful? How deeply

do we stand obliged to Christ, who has redeemed us from hell and

damnation! And they sung a new song, saying Thou art worthy to take the

book, and open the seals; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to

God by thy blood.' Rev 5:5. Let our hearts and tongues join in concert

to bless God, and let us show thankfulness to Christ by fruitfulness;

let us bring forth (as spice trees) the fruits of humility, zeal, and

good works. This is to live unto him who died for us. 2 Cor 5:15. The

wise men not only worshipped Christ, but presented him with gifts;

gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. Matt 2:11. Let us present Christ

with the fruits of righteousness, which are unto the glory and praise

of God.

II. His Intercession. Who also maketh intercession for us.' Rom 8:84.

When Aaron entered into the holy place, his bells gave a sound; so

Christ having entered into heaven, his intercession makes a melodious

sound in the ears of God. Though Christ be exalted to glory, he has not

laid aside his bowels of compassion, but is still mindful of his mystic

body, as Joseph was mindful of his father and brethren, when he was

exalted to the court. Who also maketh intercession for us.' To

intercede is to make request in behalf of another. Christ is the great

Master of requests in heaven. Christus est catholicos Patris Sacerdos

[Christ is the universal Priest of the Father]. Tertullian.

What are the qualifications of our intercessor?

(1.) He is holy. For such an high priest became us, who is holy,

undefiled, separated from sinners.' Heb 7:76. Christ knew no sin.' 2

Cor 5:5I. He knew sin in its weight, not in the act. It was requisite,

that he, who was to do away the sins of others, should himself be

without sin. Holiness is one of the precious stones which shine on the

breast-plate of our high priest.

(2.) He is faithful. It behoved him to be like unto his brethren, that

he might be a faithful high priest.' Heb 2:17. Moses was faithful as a

servant, Christ as a Son. Heb 3:3. He does not forget any cause he has

to plead, nor does he use any deceit in pleading. An ordinary attorney

may leave out some word which might make for the client, or put in a

word against him, having received a fee on both sides; but Christ is

true to the cause he pleads. We may leave our matters with him, we may

trust our lives and souls in his hand.

(3.) He never dies. While the office of the priests under the law

lived, they themselves died. They were not suffered to continue, by

reason of death.' Heb 7:73. But Christ ever lives to make

intercession.' Heb 7:75. He has no succession in his priesthood.

Whom does Christ intercede for?

Not for all promiscuously, but for the elect. John 17:7. The efficacy

of Christ's prayer reaches no further than the efficacy of his blood;

but his blood was shed only for the elect, therefore his prayers reach

them only. The high priest went into the sanctuary with the names of

the twelve tribes only upon his breast: so Christ goes into heaven with

the names of the elect only upon his breast. Christ intercedes for the

weakest believers, and for all the sins of believers. John 17:70. In

the law there were some sins for which the high priest was neither to

offer sacrifice, nor prayer. The soul that doeth ought presumptuously

shall be cut off.' Numb 15:50. The priest might offer up prayers for

sins of ignorance, but not of presumption; but Christ's intercession

extends to all the sins of the elect. Of what a bloody colour was

David's sin; yet it did not exclude him from Christ's intercession.

What does Christ in the work of intercession?

Three things.

(1.) He presents the merit of his blood to his Father, and, in the

virtue of that price paid, pleads for mercy. The high priest was herein

a lively type of Christ. Aaron was to do four things. Kill the beasts.

Enter with the blood into the holy of holiest. Sprinkle the mercy-seat

with the blood. Kindle the incense, and with the smoke of it cause a

cloud to arise over the mercy-seat; and thus atonement was made. Lev

16:11-16. Christ our high priest exactly answered to this type. He was

offered up in sacrifice, which answers to the priest's killing the

bullock; and he is gone up into heaven, which answers to the priest's

going into the holy of holies; and he spreads his blood before his

Father which answers to the priest's sprinkling the blood upon the

mercy-seat; and he prays to his Father, that for his blood's sake, he

would be propitious to sinners, which answers to the cloud of incense

going up; and through his intercessions God is pacified, which answers

to the priest's making atonement.

(2.) Christ by his intercession answers all bills of indictment brought

in against the elect. Do what they can, sin, and then Satan, accuses

believers to God, and conscience accuses them to themselves; but

Christ, by his intercession, answers all these accusations. Who shall

lay anything to the charge of God's elect? it is Christ that maketh

intercession for us.' Rom 8:83, 34. When Esculus was accused for some

impiety, his brother stood up for him, and showed the magistrates how

he had lost his hand in the service of the state, and so obtained his

pardon: thus, when Satan accuses the saints, or when the justice of God

lays anything to their charge, Christ shows his own wounds, and by

virtue of his bloody sufferings answers all the demands and challenges

of the law, and counterworks Satan's accusations.

(3.) Christ, by his intercession, calls for acquittance. Lord, he says,

let the sinner be absolved from guilt; and in this sense he is called

an advocate. I John 2:2. He requires that the sinner be set free in the

court. An advocate differs much from an orator; an orator uses rhetoric

to persuade and entreat the judge to show mercy to another; but an

advocate tells the judge what is law. Thus Christ appears in heaven as

an advocate, he represents what is law. When God's justice opens the

debt-book, Christ opens the law-book. Lord, says he, thou art a just

God, and wilt not be pacified without blood; lo, here the blood is

shed, therefore injustice give me a discharge for these distressed

creatures. The law being satisfied, the sinner should be acquitted.

Upon Christ's plea, God sets his hand to the sinner's pardon.

In what manner does Christ intercede?

(1.) Freely. He pleads our cause in heaven, and takes no fee. An

ordinary lawyer will have his fee, and sometimes a bribe too; but

Christ is not mercenary. How many causes does he plead every day in

heaven, and will take nothing! As Christ laid down his life freely, so

he intercedes freely. John 10:15, I8.

(2.) Feelingly. He is as sensible of our condition as his own. We have

not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our

infirmity.' Heb 4:15. As a tender-hearted mother would plead with a

judge for a child ready to be condemned. Oh, how would her bowels work!

how would her tears trickle down! what weeping rhetoric would she use

to the judge for mercy! So the Lord Jesus is full of sympathy and

tenderness, that he might be a merciful high priest. Heb 2: 17. Though

he has left his passion, yet not his compassion. An ordinary lawyer is

not affected with the cause he pleads, nor does he care which way it

goes; it is profit that makes him plead, not affection; but Christ

intercedes feelingly; and that which makes him intercede with affection

is, it is his own cause which he pleads. He has shed his blood to

purchase life and salvation for the elect; and if they should not be

saved, he would lose his purchase.

(3.) Efficaciously. It is a prevailing intercession. Christ never lost

any cause he pleaded, he was never non-suited. Christ's intercession

must needs be effectual, if we consider,

(1:) The excellency of his person. If the prayer of a saint be so

prevalent with God, as Moses' prayer bound God's hand, Let me alone,'

Exod 32:20; and Jacob, as a prince, prevailed with God, Gen 32:28; and

Elijah by prayer opened and shut heaven, James 5:17; then what is

Christ's prayer! He is the Son of God, the Son in whom he is well

pleased. Matt 3:17. What will not a father grant a son! "I know that

thou hearest me always.' John 11:12. If God could forget that Christ

were a Priest, he could not forget that he is a Son.

(2:) Christ prays for nothing but what his Father has a mind to grant.

There is but one will between Christ and his Father. Christ prays,

Sanctify them through thy truth;' and This is the will of God, even

your sanctification.' I Thess 4:4. So then, if Christ prays for nothing

but what God the Father has a mind to grant, then he is like to

succeed.

(3:) Christ prays for nothing but what he has power to give. What he

prays for as he is man, that he has power to give as he is God. Father,

I will.' John 17:74. Father, there he prays as a man; I will, there he

gives as God. It is a great comfort to a believer, when his prayer is

weak, and he can hardly pray for himself, that Christ's prayer in

heaven is mighty and powerful. Though God may refuse prayer as it comes

from us, yet he will not as it comes from Christ.

(4:) Christ's intercession is always ready at hand. The people of God

have sins of daily occurrence; and, besides these, they sometimes lapse

into great sins, and God is provoked, and his justice is ready to break

forth upon them: but Christ's intercession is ready at hand, he daily

makes up the breaches between God and them; he presents the merits of

his blood to his Father, to pacify him. When the wrath of God began to

break out upon Israel, Aaron presently stepped in with his censer, and

offered incense, and so the plague was stayed. Numb 16:67. So, no

sooner does a child of God offend, and God begin to be angry, but

immediately Christ steps in and intercedes. Father, he says, it is my

child that has offended; though he has forgotten his duty, thou hast

not lost thy bowels. Oh, pity him, and let thy anger be turned away

from him. Christ's intercession is ready at hand, and, upon the least

failings of the godly, he stands up and makes request for them in

heaven.

What are the fruits of Christ's intercession?

(1.) Justification. In justification there are two things. Guilt is

remitted and righteousness is imputed. The Lord our righteousness.' Jer

33:16. We are reputed not only righteous, as the angels, but as Christ,

having his robes put upon us. 2 Cor 5:5I. But whence is it that we are

justified? It is from Christ's intercession. Rom 8:83, 34. Lord, says

Christ, these are the persons I have died for; look upon them as if

they had not sinned, and repute them righteous.

(2.) The unction of the Spirit. Ye have an unction from the Holy One.'

I John 2:20. This unction or anointing is nothing else but the work of

sanctification in the heart, whereby the Spirit makes us partakers of

the divine nature. 2 Pet 1:1. Such as speak of the philosopher's stone

suppose it to have such a property, that when it touches the metal it

turns it into gold. Such a property has the Spirit of God upon the

soul; when it touches the soul, it puts into it a divine nature; it

makes it to be holy and to resemble God. The sanctifying work of the

Spirit is the fruit of Christ's intercession. The Holy Ghost was not

yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.' John 7:79. Christ

being glorified, and in heaven, he prays the Father, and the Father

sends the Spirit, who pours out the holy anointing upon the elect.

(3.) The purification of our holy things. It is Christ's work in

heaven, not only to present his own prayers to his Father, but he prays

our prayers over again. Another angel came, having a golden censer, and

there was given to him much incense, that he should offer it with the

prayers of all saints upon the golden altar.' Rev 8:8. This angel was

Christ; he takes the golden censer of his merits, and puts our prayers

into this censer, and with the incense of his intercession makes our

prayers go up as a sweet perfume in heaven. It is observable in Lev

16:16. Aaron shall make atonement for the holy place.' This was

typical, to show that our holy duties need to have atonement made for

them. Our best services, as they come from us, are mixed with

corruption, as wine that tastes of the cask. They are filthy rags.' Isa

64:4. But Christ purifies and sweetens these services, mixing the sweet

odours of his intercession with them; and then God accepts and crowns

them. What would become of our duties without a high priest? Christ's

intercession is to our prayers, as the fan to the chaff. It winnows it

from the corn; so Christ winnows out the chaff which intermixes with

our prayers.

(4.) Access with boldness unto the throne of grace. Heb 4:16. We have a

great high priest that is passed into the heavens, let us come boldly

to the throne of grace. We have a friend at court that speaks a good

word for us, and is following our cause in heaven; let this animate and

encourage us in prayer. Do we think it too much boldness for such

sinners as we to come for pardon, and that we shall be denied? Surely

this is a sinful modesty. Did we indeed come in our own name in prayer

it were presumption, but Christ intercedes for us in the force and

efficacy of his blood. To be afraid to come to God in prayer is a

dishonour to Christ's intercession.

(5.) Sending the Comforter. I will pray the Father, and he shall give

you another Comforter.' John 14:16. The comfort of the Spirit is

distinct from the anointing. Here is sweet comfort, sweeter than the

honey-drops from the comb; it is the manna in the golden pot, it is

vinum in pectore; a drop of this heavenly comfort is enough to sweeten

a sea of worldly sorrow. It is called the earnest of the Spirit.' An

earnest assures us of the whole sum. 2 Cor 1: 22. The Spirit gives us

an earnest of heaven in our hand. Whence is this comforting work of the

Spirit? Thank Christ's intercession for it. I will pray the Father, and

he shall give the Comforter.'

(6.) Perseverance in grace. Keep through thine own name those whom thou

hast given me.' John 17:11. It is not our prayer, or watchfulness, or

grace that keeps us, but it is God's care and maintenance; he holds us,

that we do not fall away. Whence is it that God preserves us? It is

from Christ's intercession. Father, keep them.' The prayer of Christ

for Peter, I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not,' Luke

22:22, is the copy of his prayer now in heaven. Peter's faith did fail

in some degree, when he denied Christ; but Christ prayed that it might

not totally fail. The saints persevere in believing, because Christ

perseveres in praying.

(7.) Absolution at the day of judgement. Christ shall judge the world.

God has committed all judgement to the Son.' John 5:52. Those for whom

Christ has so prayed he will absolve when he sits upon the bench of

judicature. Will Christ condemn those for whom he prays? Believers are

his spouse, and will he condemn his own spouse?

Use one: Of instruction. (1.) See here the constancy of Christ's love

to the elect. He not only died for them, but intercedes for them in

heaven. When Christ has done dying, he has not done loving. He is now

at work in heaven for the saints, he carries their names on his breast,

and will never leave praying till that prayer be granted. Father, I

will that those whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am.' John

17:74.

(2.) See whence it is that the prayers of the saints are so powerful

with God. Jacob, as an angel, prevailed with God. Moses, prayer tied

God's hands. Precibus suis tanquam inquam vinculis ligatum tenuit Deum

[By his prayers, I say, he held God bound as if by chains]; Let me

alone.' Exod 32:20. Whence is this? It is Christ's prayer in heaven

that makes the saints' prayers so available. Christ's divine nature is

the altar on which he offers up our prayers, and so they prevail.

Prayer, as it comes from the saints is but weak and languid; but when

the arrow of a saint's prayer is put into the bow of Christ's

intercession it pierces the throne of grace.

(3.) It shows that a Christian when he prays must chiefly fix his eye

on Christ's intercession. We are to look up to the mercy-seat, but to

hope for mercy through Christ's intercession. We read in Lev 16 that

Aaron made atonement by the incense as well as by the blood. So we must

look to the cloud of incense, viz., the intercession of Christ.

Christian, look up to thy Advocate, one to whom God can deny nothing. A

word from Christ's mouth is more than if all the angels in heaven were

pleading for thee. If a man had a suit depending in the Court of

Chancery, and had a skillful lawyer to plead, it would much encourage

him. Christ is at the court appearing for us, Heb 9:94, and he has

great power in heaven, which should much encourage us to look up to

him, and hope for audience in prayer. We might indeed be afraid to

offer our petitions, if we had not Christ to present them.

(4.) The sad condition of an unbeliever. He has none in heaven to speak

a word for him. I pray not for the world.' John 17:7. As good be shut

out of heaven as shut out of Christ's prayer. Christ pleads for the

saints, as Queen Esther did for the Jews, when they would have been

destroyed. Let my people be given at my request.' Esth 7:7. When the

devil shows the blackness of their sins, Christ shows the redness of

his wounds. How sad is the condition of that man for whom Christ will

not pray, nay, against whom he will pray! Then Queen Esther petitioned

against Haman, and then his face was covered, and he was led away to

execution. Esth 7:7. It is sad when the law shall be against the

sinner, and conscience, and judge, and no friend to speak a word for

him; there is no way, then, but for the jailer to take the prisoner.

(5.) If Christ makes intercession, then we have nothing to do with

other intercessors. The Church of Rome distinguishes between mediators

of redemption and intercession, and says, the angels do not redeem us,

but intercede for us, and then pray to them; but Christ only can

intercede for us ex officio. God has consecrated him as high priest.

Thou art a priest for ever.' Heb 5:5. Christ intercedes vi pretii [by

virtue of his merit], in the virtue of his blood; he pleads his merits

to his Father; but the angels have no merits to bring to God, and

therefore cannot be intercessors for us. Whoever is our advocate must

be our propitiation to pacify God. We have an advocate with the

Father.' I John 2:2: And he is our propitiation.' Verse 2. The angels

cannot be our propitiation, and not therefore our advocates.

Use two: Of trial. How shall we know that Christ intercedes for us?

They have little ground to think Christ prays for them who never pray

for themselves. Well, but how shall we know?

(1.) If Christ be praying for us, his Spirit is praying in us. He has

sent forth his Spirit into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Gal. 4:4.

The Spirit helps us with sighs and groans; not only with gifts but

groans. Rom 8:86. We need not climb up the firmament, to see if the sun

be there, we may see the beauty of it upon the earth: so we need not go

up into heaven to see if Christ be there interceding for us; but let us

look into our hearts, if they are quickened and inflamed in prayer, and

we can cry, Abba, Father. By this interceding of the Spirit within us

we may know Christ is interceding above for us.

(2.) If we are given to Christ, then he intercedes for us. I pray for

them whom thou hast given me.' John 17:7. It is one thing for Christ to

be given to us, another thing for us to be given to Christ.

How know you that?

If thou art a believer, then thou art one given to Christ, and he prays

for thee. Faith is an act of recumbency. We rest on Christ as the

stones in the building rest upon the corner-stone. Faith throws itself

into Christ's arms; it says, Christ is my priest, his blood is my

sacrifice, his divine nature is my altar, and here I rest. This faith

is seen by its effects; it is a refining work and a resigning work. It

purifies the heart, there is the refining work; it makes a deed of gift

to Christ, it gives up its use, its love to him, there is the resigning

work of faith. They who believe are given to Christ, and have a part in

his prayer. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which

shall believe on me through their word.' John 17:70.

Use three: Of exhortation. It stirs us up to several duties. (1.) If

Christ appears for us in heaven, then we must appear for him upon

earth. Christ is not ashamed to carry our names on his breast, and

shall we be ashamed of his truth? Does he plead our cause, and shall we

not stand up in his cause? What a mighty argument is this to stand up

for the honour of Christ in times of apostasy! Christ is interceding

for us. Does he present our names in heaven, and shall not we profess

his name on earth?

(2.) If Christ lays out all his interest for us at the throne of grace,

we must lay out all our interest for him. That Christ may be

magnified.' Phil 1:10. Trade your talents for Christ's glory; there is

no man but has some talent to trade, one learning, another estate. Oh,

trade for Christ's glory: spend and be spent for him. Let your heart

study for Christ, your hands work for him, your tongue speak for him.

If Christ be an advocate for us in heaven, we must be agents for him on

earth, every one in his sphere must act vigorously for him.

(3.) Believe in this glorious intercession of Christ; that he now

intercedes for us, and that for his sake God will accept us, as in the

text, Who maketh intercession for us.' If we believe not we dishonour

Christ's intercession. If a poor sinner may not go to Christ as his

high priest, believing in his intercession, then are we Christians in a

worse condition under the gospel than the Jews were under the law? When

they had sinned they had their high priest to make atonement; and shall

not we have our High Priest? Is not Christ our Aaron, who presents his

blood and incense before the mercy seat? Oh look up by faith to

Christ's intercession! Christ did not only pray for his disciples and

apostles, but for the weakest believer.

(4.) Love your Intercessor. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ,

let him be anathema.' I Cor 16:62. Kindness invites love. Had you a

friend at court, who, when you were questioned for delinquency or debt,

should plead with the judge for you, and bring you off your troubles,

would you not love that friend? How often does Satan put in his bills

against us in the court! Now Christ is at the judge's hand; he sits at

his Father's right hand, ever to plead for us, and to make our peace

with God. Oh, how should our hearts be fired with love to Christ! Love

him with a sincere and superlative love, above estate and relations.

Bernard. Plusquam tua, tuos [more than your possessions, and your

family]. Our fire of love should be as fire on the altar, never to go

out. Lev 6:13.

Use four: Of comfort to believers. Christ is at work for you in heaven;

he makes intercession for you.

Oh! But I am afraid Christ does not intercede for me. I am a sinner;

and for whom does Christ intercede?

'He made intercession for the transgressors.' Isa 53:12. Did Christ

open his sides for thee, and will he not open his mouth to plead for

thee?

But I have offended my High Priest, by distrusting his blood, abusing

his love, grieving his Spirit; and will he ever pray for me?

Which of us may not say so? But, Christian, dost thou mourn for

unbelief? Be not discouraged, thou mayest have a part in Christ's

prayer. The congregation murmured against Aaron;' but though they had

sinned against their high priest, Aaron ran in with his censer, and

stood between the dead and the living.' Numb 16:6I, 48. If so much

bowels in Aaron, who was but a type of Christ, how much more bowels are

in Christ, who will pray for them who have sinned against their High

Priest! Did he not pray for them that crucified him, Father, forgive

them'?

But I am unworthy; what am I, that Christ should intercede for me?

The work of Christ's intercession is a work of free grace. Christ's

praying for us is from his pitying us. He looks not at our worthiness,

but our wants.

But I am followed with sad temptations.

But though Satan tempts, Christ prays, and Satan shall be vanquished.

Thou mayest lose a single battle, but not the victory. Christ prays

that thy faith fail not; therefore, Christian, say, Why art thou cast

down, O my soul?' Christ intercedes. It is man that sins, it is God

that prays. The Greek word for advocate signifies comforter. It is a

sovereign comfort that Christ makes intercession.

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5. Christ's Kingly Office

Q-26: HOW DOES CHRIST EXECUTE THE OFFICE OF A KING?

A: In subduing us to himself, in ruling and defending us, and in

restraining and conquering all his and our enemies.

Let us consider now Christ's regal office. And he has on his vesture,

and on his thigh, a name written, "King of kings, and Lord of lords",

Rev 19:16.

Jesus Christ is of mighty renown, he is a king; (1.) he has a kingly

title. High and Lofty.' Isa 57:15. (2.) He has his insignia regalia,

his ensigns of royalty; corona est insigne regae potestatis [a crown is

the symbol of royal power]. He has his crown; Rev 6:6; his sword, Gird

thy sword upon thy thigh;' Psa 45:5; his sceptre, A sceptre of

righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.' Heb 1:1. (3.) He has his

escutcheon, or coat of armour; he inserts the lion in his coat of arms.

The lion of the tribe of Judah.' Rev 5:5. The text says he is King of

kings.' He has a pre-eminence of all other kings, and is called, The

Prince of the kings of the earth.' Rev 1:1. He must needs be so, for by

him kings reign.' Prov 8:15. They hold their crowns by immediate tenure

from this great King. Christ infinitely outvies all other princes; he

has the highest throne, the largest dominions, and the longest

possession. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.' Heb 1:1. He has

many heirs, but no successors. Well may he be called King of kings,'

for he has an unlimited power. The power of other kings is limited, but

Christ's power is unlimited. Whatsoever he pleased, that did he, in

heaven and earth, and in the seas.' Psa 135:5. Christ's power is as

large as his will. The angels take the oath of allegiance to him. Let

all the angels of God worship him.' Heb 1:1.

How came Christ to be king?

Not by usurpation, but legally. He holds his crown by immediate tenure

from heaven. God the Father has decreed him to be king. I have set my

king upon my holy hill: I will declare the decree.' Psa 2:2, 7. God has

anointed and sealed him to his regal office. Him has God the Father

sealed.' John 6:67. God has set the crown upon his head.

In what sense is Christ king?

Two ways. 1: In reference to his people. And, 2: In reference to his

enemies.

I. In reference to his people.

[I.] To govern them. It was prophesied of Christ before he was born,

And thou, Bethlehem, art not the least among the princes of Judah; for

out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people Israel.'

Matt 2:2. It is a vain thing for a king to have a crown on his head,

unless he have a sceptre in his hand to rule.

Where does Christ rule as king?

His kingdom is spiritual. He rules in the hearts of men. He sets up his

throne where no other king does; he rules the will and affections, his

power binds the conscience; he subdues men's lusts. He will subdue our

iniquities.' Mic 7:79.

What does Christ rule by?

By law, and by love. (1.) He rules by law. It is one of the jura

regalia, the flowers of the crown to enact laws. Christ as a king makes

laws, and by his laws he rules; as the law of faith; believe in the

Lord Jesus:' and the law of sanctity; Be ye holy in all manner of

conversation;' I Pet 1:15. Many would admit Christ to be their advocate

to plead for them, but not their king to rule over them.

(2.) He rules by love. He is a king full of mercy and clemency; as he

has a sceptre in his hand, so an olive branch of peace in his mouth.

Though he be the Lion of the tribe of Judah for majesty, yet he is the

Lamb of God for meekness. His regal rod has honey at the end of it. He

sheds abroad his love into the hearts of his subjects; he rules them

with promises as well as precepts. This makes all his subjects become

volunteers; they are willing to pay their allegiance to him. Thy people

shall be a willing people.' Psa 110:0.

[2.] Christ is a king to defend his people. As Christ has a sceptre to

rule them, so he has a shield to defend them. Thou, O Lord, art a

shield for me.' Psa 3:3. When Antiochus raged furiously against the

Jews, took away the vessels of the Lord's house, and set up an idol in

the temple, this great king, called Michael, stood up for them to

defend them. Dan 12:2. Christ preserves his church as a spark in the

ocean, as a flock of sheep among wolves. That the sea should be higher

than the earth, and yet not drown it, is a wonder; so, that the wicked

should be so much higher than the church in power, and not devour it,

is, because Christ has this inscription on his vesture and his thigh,

KING OF KINGS. If it had not been the Lord, who was on our side, they

had swallowed us up.' Psa 124:4, 3. They say, lions are insomnes, they

have little or no sleep; it is true of the Lion of the tribe of Judah,

he never slumbers or sleeps, but watches over his church to defend it.

Sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it: lest

any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.' Isa 27:7, 3. If the enemies

destroy the church, it must be at a time when it is neither night nor

day, for Christ keeps it day and night. Christ is said to carry his

church, as the eagle her young ones upon her wings. Exod 19:9. The

arrow must first hit the eagle before it can hurt the young ones, and

shoot through her wings: the enemies must first strike through Christ,

before they can destroy his church. Let the wind and storms be up, and

the church almost covered with waves, yet Christ is in the ship of the

church, and there is no danger of shipwreck. Nor will Christ defend his

church only, as he is king, but deliver it. He delivered me out of the

mouth of the lion,' viz. Nero. 2 Tim 4:17. The Lord saved them by a

great deliverance.' I Chron 11:14. Sometimes Christ is said to command

deliverance. Psa 44:4. Sometimes to create deliverance. Isa 45:5.

Christ as a king commands deliverance, and as a God creates it. And

deliverance shall come in his time. I the Lord will hasten it in his

time.' Isa 60:02.

When is the time that this king will deliver his people?

When the hearts of his people are most humble, when their prayers are

most fervent, when their faith is strongest, when their forces are

weakest, when their enemies are highest; then is the usual time that

Christ puts forth his kingly power for their deliverance. Isa 33:3, 8,

9.

[3.] Christ is a king to reward his people. There is nothing lost by

serving this king. He rewards his subjects in this life. He gives them

inward peace and joy; a bunch of grapes by the way; and oft-times

riches and honour. Godliness has the promise of this life.' I Tim 4:4.

These are, as it were, the saints' veils. But the great reward is to

come. An eternal weight of glory.' 2 Cor 4:17. Christ makes all his

subjects kings. I will give thee a crown of life.' Rev 2:20. This crown

will be full of jewels, and it will never fade.' I Pet 5:5.

II. Christ is a king in reference to his enemies, in subduing and

conquering them. He pulls down their pride, befools their policy,

restrains their malice. That stone cut out of the mountain without

hands, which smote the image, was an emblem, says Augustine, of

Christ's monarchical power, conquering and triumphing over his enemies.

Dan 2:24. Christ will make his enemies his footstool. Psa 110:0. He can

destroy them with ease. It is nothing for thee, Lord, to help.' 2 Chron

14:11. He can do it with weak means, and without means. He can make the

enemies destroy themselves. He set the Persians against the Grecians;

and the children of Ammon helped to destroy one another. 2 Chron 20:03.

Thus Christ is king in vanquishing the enemies of his church.

It is a great ground of comfort to the church of God in the midst of

all the combinations of the enemy, that Christ is king;' and he can not

only bound the enemies, power, but break it. The church has more with

her than against her; she has Emmanuel on her side, even that great

KING to whom all knees must bend.

Christ is called a man of war.' Exod 15:5. He understands all the

policy of chivalry; he is described with seven eyes and seven horns.

Rev 5:5. The seven eyes are to discern the conspiracies of his enemies,

and the seven horns are to push and vex his enemies.

Christ is described with a crown and a bow. He that sat upon the white

horse had a bow, and a crown was given unto him, and he went forth

conquering and to conquer.' Rev 6:6. The crown is an ensign of his

kingly office, and the bow is to shoot his enemies to death.

Christ is described with a vesture dipped in blood. Rev 19:93. He has a

golden sceptre to rule his people, but an iron rod to break his

enemies. The ten horns thou sawest are ten kings; these shall make war

with the Lamb, but the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is the King of

kings.' Rev 17:72, 14. The enemies may set up their standard, but

Christ will set up his trophies at last. And the angel gathered the

vine of the earth, and cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath

of God, and the wine-press was trodden, and blood came out of the

wine-press.' Rev 14:19, 20. The enemies of Christ shall be but as so

many clusters of ripe grapes, to be cast into the great wine-press of

the wrath of God, and to be trodden by Christ till their blood come

out. Christ will at last come off victor, and all his enemies shall be

put under his feet. Gaudeo quod Christus Dominus est, alioque

desperassem; I am glad Christ reigns, else I should have despaired,'

said Myconius in an epistle to Calvin.

Use one: (1.) It is no disparagement to serve Christ; he is a king, and

it is no dishonour to be employed in a king's service. Some are apt to

reproach the saints for their piety; but they serve the Lord Christ, he

who has this inscription upon his vesture, KING OF KINGS. Theodosius

thought it a greater honour to be a servant of Christ than the head of

an empire. Servire est regnare. Christ s servants are called vessels of

honour; 2 Tim 2:2I; and a royal nation, I Pet 2:2. Serving Christ

ennobles us with dignity; it is a greater honour to serve Christ than

to have kings serve us.

(2.) If Christ be king, it informs us, that all matters of fact must

one day be brought before him. Christ has Jus vitae et necis, the power

of life and death in his hand. The Father has committed all judgement

to the Son.' John 5:52. He who once hung upon the cross shall sit upon

the bench of judicature; kings must come before him to be judged; they

who once sat upon the throne must appear at the bar. God has committed

all judgement to the Son, and Christ's is the highest court of

judicature; if this king once condemns men, there is no appeal to any

other court.

(3.) When we are foiled by corruption we must go to Christ, for he is

king; desire him by his kingly power to subdue our corruptions, to bind

these kings with chains. Psa 149:9. We are apt to say of our sins,

These sons of Zeruiah will be too strong for us;' we shall never

overcome this pride and infidelity; ay, but go to Christ, he is king.

Though our lusts are too strong for us, they are not for Christ to

conquer; for by his Spirit he can break the power of sin. When Joshua

had conquered five kings, he caused his servants to set their feet on

the necks of those kings; so Christ can and will set his feet on the

necks of our lusts.

Use two: Is Christ King of kings? Let all these great ones take heed

how they employ their power against him. He gives them their power, and

if this power shall be made use of for suppressing his kingdom and

ordinances, their account will be heavy. God has laid the key of

government upon Christ's shoulders, Isa 9:9, and to oppose Christ in

his kingly office is as if the thorns should set themselves in battle

array against the fire, or a child fight with an archangel. Christ's

sword on his thigh is able to avenge all his quarrels. It is not good

to stir a lion: let no man provoke the Lion of the tribe of Judah,

whose eyes are a lamp of fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.'

Nah 1:1. He shall cut off the spirit of princes.' Psa 76:12.

Use three: If Christ be a great king, submit to him. Say not, as those

Jews, We have no king but Caesar,' no king but our lusts. This is to

choose the bramble to rule over you, and out of the bramble will come

forth a fire.' Judg 9:15. Submit to Christ willingly. All the devils in

hell submit to Christ; but it is against their will; they are his

slaves, not his subjects. Submit cheerfully to Christ's person and his

laws. Many would have Christ their saviour, but not their prince; such

as will not have Christ to be their king to rule over them, shall never

have his blood to save them. Obey all Christ's princely commands; if he

commands love, humility, good works, be as the needle that points which

way soever the loadstone draws.

Use four: Let those admire God's free grace who were once under the

power and tyranny of Satan, and now of slaves Christ has made them to

become the subjects of his kingdom. Christ did not need subjects, he

has legions of angels ministering to him; but in his love he has

honoured you to make you his subjects. Oh, how long was it ere Christ

could prevail with you to come under his banner! How much opposition

did he meet with ere you would wear this prince's colours! At last

omnipotent grace overcame you. When Peter was sleeping between two

soldiers, an angel came and beat off his chains, Acts 12:2; so, when

thou wast sleeping in the devil's arms, Christ by his Spirit smote thy

heart, and caused the chains of sin to fall off, and made thee a

subject of his kingdom. Oh admire free grace! thou who art a subject of

Christ, and art sure to reign with him for ever!

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6. Christ's Humiliation In His Incarnation

'Great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh.' I Tim

3:16.

Q-xxvii: WHEREIN DID CHRIST'S HUMILIATION CONSIST?

A: In his being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law,

undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed

death of the cross.

Christ's humiliation consisted in his incarnation, his taking flesh,

and being born. It was real flesh that Christ took; not the image of a

body (as the Manichees erroneously held), but a true body; therefore he

is said to be made of a woman.' Gal 4:4. As bread is made of wheat, and

wine is made of the grape; so Christ is made of a woman: his body was

part of the flesh and substance of the virgin. This is a glorious

mystery, God manifest in the flesh.' In the creation, man was made in

God's image; in the incarnation God was made in man's image.

How came Christ to be made flesh?

It was by his Father's special designation. God sent forth his Son,

made of a woman.' Gal 4:4. God the Father in a special manner appointed

Christ to be incarnate; which shows how needful a call is to any

business of weight and importance: to act without a call, is to act

without a blessing. Christ would not be incarnate, and take upon him

the work of a mediator till he had a call. God sent forth his Son, made

of a woman.'

But was there no other way for the restoring of fallen man but that God

should take flesh?

We must not ask a reason of God's will; it is dangerous to pry into

God's ark; we are not to dispute but adore. The wise God saw it to be

the best way for our redemption, that Christ should be incarnate. It

was not fit for any to satisfy God's justice but man; none could do it

but God; therefore, Christ being both God and man, is the fittest to

undertake this work of redemption.

Why was Christ born of a woman?

(1.) That God might fulfill that promise in Gen 3:15, The seed of the

woman shall break the serpent's head.' (2.) Christ was born of a woman,

that he might roll away that reproach from the woman, which she had

contracted by being seduced by the serpent. Christ, in taking his flesh

from the woman, has honoured her sex; that as, at the first, the woman

had made man a sinner; so now, to make him amends, she should bring him

a saviour.

Why was Christ born of a virgin?

(1.) For decency. It became not God to have any mother but a maid, and

it became not a maid to have any other son but a God.

(2.) For necessity. Christ was to be a high priest, most pure and holy.

Had he been born after the ordinary course of nature he had been

defiled, since all that spring out of Adam's loins have a tincture of

sin, but, that Christ's substance might remain pure and immaculate,' he

was born of a virgin.

(3.) To answer the type. Melchisedec was a type of Christ, who is said

to be without father and without mother.' Christ being born of a

virgin, answered the type; he was without father and without mother;

without mother as he was God, without father as he was man.

How could Christ be made of the flesh and blood of a virgin, and yet be

without sin? The purest virgin is stained with original sin.

This knot the Scripture unties. The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee,

and overshadow thee: therefore that holy thing, which shall be born of

thee, shall be called the Son of God.' Luke 1:15. The Holy Ghost shall

come upon thee,' that is, the Holy Ghost did consecrate and purify that

part of the virgin's flesh whereof Christ was made. As the alchemist

extracts and draws away the dross from the gold, so the Holy Ghost

refines and clarifies that part of the virgin's flesh, separating it

from sin. Though the Virgin Mary herself had sin, yet that part of her

flesh, whereof Christ was made, was without sin; otherwise it must have

been an impure conception.

What is meant by the power of the Holy Ghost overshadowing the virgin?

Basil says, It was the Holy Ghost's blessing that flesh of the virgin

whereof Christ was formed.' But there is a further mystery in it; the

Holy Ghost having framed Christ in the virgin's womb, did, in a

wonderful manner, unite Christ's human nature to his divine, and so of

both made one person. This is a mystery, which the angels pry into with

adoration.

When was Christ incarnate?

In the fulness of time. When the fulness of time was come, God sent

forth his Son, made of a woman.' Gal 4:4. By the fulness of time we

must understand, tempus a patre praefinitum; so Ambrose, Luther,

Cornelius a Lapide - the determinate time that God had set. More

particularly, this fulness of time was when all the prophecies of the

coming of the Messiah were accomplished; and all legal shadows and

figures, whereby he was typified, were abrogated. This may comfort us,

in regard to the church of God, that though at present we do not see

that peace and purity in the church which we could desire, yet in the

fulness of time, when God's time is come and mercy is ripe, then shall

deliverance spring up, and God will come riding upon the chariots of

salvation.

Why was Jesus Christ made flesh?

(1.) The causa prima, and impulsive cause, was free grace. It was love

in God the Father to send Christ, and love in Christ that he came to be

incarnate. Love was the intrinsic motive. Christ is God-man, because he

is a lover of man. Christ came out of pity and indulgence to us: non

merita nostra, sed misera nostra. Augustine. Not our deserts, but our

misery, made Christ take flesh. Christ's taking flesh was a plot of

free grace, and a pure design of love. God himself, though Almighty,

was overcome with love. Christ incarnate is nothing but love covered

with flesh. As Christ's assuming our human nature was a master-piece of

wisdom, so it was a monument of free grace.

(2.) Christ took our flesh upon him, that he might take our sins upon

him. He was, says Luther, maximus peccator, the greatest sinner, having

the weight of the sins of the whole world lying upon him. He took our

flesh that he might take our sins, and so appease God's wrath.

(3.) Christ took our flesh that he might make the human nature appear

lovely to God, and the divine nature appear lovely to man.

(1:) That he might make the human nature lovely to God. Upon our fall

from God, our nature became odious to him; no vermin is so odious to us

as the human nature was to God. When once our virgin nature was become

sinful, it was like flesh imposthumated, or running into sores,

loathsome to behold. It was so odious to God that he could not endure

to look upon us. Christ taking our flesh, makes this human nature

appear lovely to God. As when the sun shines on the glass it casts a

bright lustre, so Christ being clad with our flesh makes the human

nature shine, and appear amiable in God's eyes.

(2:) As Christ being clothed with our flesh makes the human nature

appear lovely to God, so he makes the divine nature appear lovely to

man. The pure Godhead is terrible to behold, we could not see it and

live; but Christ clothing himself with our flesh, makes the divine

nature more amiable and delightful to us. We need not be afraid to look

upon God through Christ's human nature. It was a custom of old among

shepherds to clothe themselves with sheepskins, to be more pleasing to

the sheep; so Christ clothed himself with our flesh, that the divine

nature may be more pleasing to us. The human nature is a glass, through

which we may see the love and wisdom and glory of God clearly

represented to us. Through the lantern of Christ's humanity we may

behold the light of the Deity. Christ being incarnate makes the sight

of the Deity not formidable, but delightful to us.

(4.) Jesus Christ united himself to man, that man might be drawn nearer

to God.' God before was an enemy to us by reason of sin; but Christ

having taken our flesh, mediates for us, and brings us into favour with

God. As when a king is angry with a subject, the king's son marries his

daughter, and so mediates for the subject, and brings him into favour

with the king again; so when God the Father was angry with us, Christ

married himself to our nature, and now mediates for us with his Father,

and brings us to be friends again, and God looks upon us with a

favourable aspect. As Joab pleaded for Absalom, and brought him to King

David, and David kissed him; so Jesus Christ ingratiates us into the

love and favour of God. Therefore he may well be called a peacemaker,

having taken our flesh upon him, and so made peace between us and his

Father.

Use one: Of instruction. (1.) See here, as in a glass, the infinite

love of God the Father; that when we had lost ourselves by sin, God, in

the riches of his grace, sent forth his Son, made of a woman, to redeem

us. And behold the infinite love of Christ, in that he was willing thus

to condescend to take our flesh. Surely the angels would have disdained

to have taken our flesh; it would have been a disparagement to them.

What king would be willing to wear sackcloth over his cloth of gold?

but Christ did not disdain to take our flesh. Oh the love of Christ!

Had not Christ been made flesh, we had been made a curse; had he not

been incarnate, we had been incarcerate, and had been for ever in

prison. Well might an angel be the herald to proclaim this joyful news

of Christ's incarnation: Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy;

for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is

Christ the Lord.' The love of Christ, in being incarcerated, will the

more appear if we consider

(1:) Whence Christ came. He came from heaven, and from the richest

place in heaven, his Father's bosom, that hive of sweetness.

(2:) To whom Christ came. Was it to his friends? No; he came to sinful

man. Man that had defaced his image, and abused his love; man who was

turned rebel; yet he came to man, resolving to conquer obstinacy with

kindness. If he would come to any, why not to the angels that fell? He

took not on him the nature of angels.' Heb 2:16. The angels are of a

more noble origin, more intelligent creatures, more able for service;

ay, but behold the love of Christ, he came not to the fallen angels,

but to mankind. Among the several wonders of the loadstone it is not

the least, that it will not draw gold or pearl, but despising these, it

draws the iron to it, one of the most inferior metals: thus Christ

leaves angels, those noble spirits, the gold and the pearl, and comes

to poor sinful man, and draws him into his embraces.

(3:) In what manner he came. He came not in the majesty of a king,

attended with his life-guard, but he came poor; not like the heir of

heaven, but like one of an inferior descent. The place he was born in

was poor; not the royal city Jerusalem, but Bethlehem, a poor obscure

place. He was born in an inn, and a manger was his cradle, the cobwebs

his curtains, the beasts his companions; he descended of poor parents.

One would have thought, if Christ would have come into the world, he

would have made choice of some queen or personage of honour to have

descended from; but he comes of mean obscure parents, for that they

were poor appears by their offering. A pair of turtledoves,' Luke 2:24,

which was the usual offering of the poor. Lev 12:2. Christ was so poor,

that when he wanted money he was fain to work a miracle for it. Matt

17:77. When he died he made no will. He came into the world poor.

(4:) Why he came. That he might take our flesh, and redeem us; that he

might instate us into a kingdom. He was poor, that he might make us

rich. 2 Cor 8:8. He was born of a virgin, that we might be born of God.

He took our flesh, that he might give us his Spirit. He lay in the

manger that we might lie in paradise. He came down from heaven, that he

might bring us to heaven. And what was all this but love? If our hearts

be not rocks, this love of Christ should affect us. Behold love that

passeth knowledge! Eph 3:19.

(2.) See here the wonderful humility of Christ. Christ was made flesh.

O sancta humilitas, tu filium Dei descendere fecisti in uterum, Mariae

Virginis [O holy humility, you made the Son of God descend into the

womb of the Virgin Mary]. Augustine. That Christ should clothe himself

with our flesh, a piece of that earth which we tread upon; oh infinite

humility! Christ's taking our flesh was one of the lowest steps of his

humiliation. He humbled himself more in lying in the virgin's womb than

in hanging upon the cross. It was not so much for man to die, but for

God to become man was the wonder of humility. He was made in the

likeness of men.' Phil 2:2. For Christ to be made flesh was more

humility than for the angels to be made worms. Christ's flesh is called

a veil in Heb 10:00. Through the veil,' that is, his flesh. Christ's

wearing our flesh veiled his glory. For him to be made flesh, who was

equal with God, oh what humility! Who being in the form of God thought

it not robbery to be equal with God.' Phil 2:2. He stood upon even

ground with God, he was co-essential and con-substantial with his

Father, as Augustine and Cyril, and the Council of Nice express it; yet

for all that he takes flesh. He stripped himself of the robes of his

glory, and covered himself with the rags of our humanity. If Solomon

wondered that God should dwell in the temple which was enriched and

hung with gold, how may we wonder that God should dwell in man's weak

and frail nature! Nay, which is yet more humility, Christ not only took

our flesh, but took it when it was at the worst, under disgrace; as if

a servant should wear a nobleman's livery when he is impeached of high

treason. Besides all this he took all the infirmities of our flesh.

There are two sorts of infirmities; such as are sinful without pain,

and such as are painful without sin. The first of these infirmities

Christ did not take upon him; as sinful infirmities, to be covetous or

ambitious. But he took upon him painful infirmities as (1:) Hunger. He

came to the fig-tree and would have eaten. Matt 21:18, I9. (2:)

Weariness, as when he sat on Jacob's well to rest him. John 4:4. (3:)

Sorrow. My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.' Matt 26:68.

It was a sorrow guided with reason not disturbed with passion. (4:)

Fear. He was heard in that he feared.' Heb 5:5. A further degree of

Christ's humility was, that he not only was made flesh, but in the

likeness of sinful flesh. He knew no sin, yet he was made sin.' 2 Cor

5:5I. He was like a sinner; he had all sin laid upon him, but no sin

lived in him. He was numbered among transgressors.' Isa 53:12. He who

was numbered among the persons of the Trinity is said to bear the sins

of many.' Heb 9:98. Now, this was the lowest degree of Christ's

humiliation; for Christ to be reputed as a sinner was the greatest

pattern of humility. That Christ, who would not endure sin in the

angels, should himself endure to have sin imputed to him is the most

amazing humility that ever was.

From all this learn to be humble. Dost thou see Christ humbling

himself, and art thou proud? It is the humble saint that is Christ's

picture. Christians, be not proud of fine feathers. Hast thou an

estate? Be not proud. The earth thou treadest on is richer than thou.

It has mines of gold and silver in its bowels. Hast thou beauty? Be not

proud. It is but air and dust mingled. Hast thou skill and parts? Be

humble. Lucifer has more knowledge than thou. Hast thou grace? Be

humble. Thou hast it not of thy own growth; it is borrowed. Were it not

folly to be proud of a ring that is lent? I Cor 4:4. Thou hast more sin

than grace, more spots than beauty. Oh look on Christ, this rare

pattern, and be humbled! It is an unseemly sight to see God humbling

himself and man exalting himself; to see a humble Saviour and a proud

sinner. God hates the very semblance of pride. He would have no honey

in the sacrifice. Lev 2:11. Indeed, leaven is sour; but why no honey?

Because, when honey is mingled with meal or flour, it makes the meal to

rise and swell; therefore no honey. God hates the resemblance of the

sin of pride; better want parts, and the comfort of the Spirit, than

humility. Si Deus superbientibus angelis non pepercit. If God,' says

Augustine, spared not the angels, when they grew proud, will he spare

thee, who art but dust and rottenness?'

(3.) Behold here a sacred riddle or paradox - God manifest in the

flesh.' That man should be made in God's image was a wonder, but that

God should be made in man's image is a greater wonder. That the Ancient

of Days should be born, that he who thunders in the heavens should cry

in the cradle; Qui tonitruat in caelis, clamat in cunabulis; qui regit

sidera, sugit ubera; that he who rules the stars should suck the

breast; that a virgin should conceive; that Christ should be made of a

woman, and of that woman which himself made; that the branch should

bear the vine; that the mother should be younger than the child she

bare, and the child in the womb bigger than the mother; that the human

nature should not be God, yet one with God; this was not only mirum but

miraculum. Christ taking flesh is a mystery we shall never fully

understand till we come to heaven, when our light shall be clear, as

well as our love perfect.

(4.) From hence, God manifest in the flesh,' Christ born of a virgin, a

thing not only strange in nature, but impossible, learn, That there are

no impossibilities with God. God can bring about things which are not

within the sphere of nature to produce; as that iron should swim, that

the rock should gush out water, and that the fire should lick up the

water in the trenches. I Kings 18:88. It is natural for water to quench

fire, but for fire to consume water is impossible in the course of

nature; but God can bring about all this. There is nothing too hard for

thee.' Jer 32:27. If it be marvellous in your eyes, should it be

marvellous in my eyes? saith the Lord.' Zech 8:8. How should God be

united to our flesh? It is impossible to us, but not with God; he can

do what transcends reason, and exceeds faith. He would not be our God

if he could not do more than we can think. Eph 3:30. He can reconcile

contraries. How apt are we to be discouraged with seeming

impossibilities! How do our hearts die within us when things go cross

to sense and reason! We are apt to say as that prince in 2 Kings 7:1,2,

If the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be!' It was

a time of famine, and now that a measure of wheat, which was a good

part of a bushel, should be sold for a shekel, half an ounce of silver,

how can this be? So, when things are cross, or strange, God's own

people are apt to question, how they should be brought about with

success? Moses, who was a man of God, and one of the brightest stars

that ever shone in the firmament of God's church, was apt to be

discouraged with seeming impossibilities. And Moses said, The people

among whom I am are six hundred thousand footmen; and thou hast said, I

will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month. Shall the flocks

and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them? or shall all the fish

of the sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them?' Num. 11:11,

22. As if he had said, in plain language, he did not see how the people

of Israel, being so numerous, could be fed for a month. And the Lord

said, Is the Lord's hand waxed short?' Verse 23. That God who brought

Isaac out of a dead womb, and the Messiah out of a virgin's womb, what

cannot he do? Oh let us rest upon the arm of God's power, and believe

in him, in the midst of seeming impossibilities! Remember, there are no

impossibilities with God.' He can subdue a proud heart. He can raise a

dying church. Christ born of a virgin! The wonder-working God that

wrought this can bring to pass the greatest seeming impossibility.

Use two: Of exhortation. (1.) Seeing Christ took our flesh, and was

born of a virgin, let us labour that he may be spiritually born in our

hearts. What will it profit us, that Christ was born into the world,

unless he be born in our hearts, that he was united to our persons?

Marvel not that I say unto you, Christ must be born in your hearts.

Till Christ be formed in you.' Gal 4:19. Now, then, try if Christ be

born in your hearts.

How shall we know that?

Are there pangs before the birth? So before Christ is born in the

heart, there are spiritual pangs; pangs of conscience, and deep

convictions. They were pricked at their heart.' Acts 2:27. I grant in

the new birth - recipere magis et minus [Some receive more, some less]

- all have not the same pangs of sorrow and humiliation, yet all have

pangs. If Christ be born in thy heart, thou hast been deeply afflicted

for sin. Christ is never born in the heart without pangs. Many thank

God they never had any trouble of spirit, they were always quiet; a

sign Christ is not yet formed in them.

When Christ was born into the world, he was made flesh; so, if he be

born in thy heart, he makes thy heart a heart of flesh. Ezek 36:66. Is

thy heart flesh? Before, it was a rocky heart, and would not yield to

God, or take the impressions of the word; durum est quod non cedit

tactui [It is hard substances that do not yield to the touch]; now it

is fleshy and tender like melted wax, to take any stamp of the Spirit.

It is a sign Christ is born in our hearts, when they are hearts of

flesh, when they melt in tears and in love. What is it the better that

Christ was made flesh, unless he has given thee a heart of flesh?

As Christ was conceived in the womb of a virgin; so, if he be born in

thee, thy heart is a virgin-heart, in respect of sincerity and

sanctity. Art thou purified from the love of sin? If Christ be born in

thy heart, it is a Sanctum Sanctorum, a holy of holiest. If thy heart

be polluted with the predominant love of sin, never think Christ is

born there, Christ will never lie any more in a stable. If he be born

in thy heart, it is consecrated by the Holy Ghost.

If Christ be born in thy heart, then it is with thee as in a birth.

There is life. Faith is principum vivens, it is the vital organ of the

soul. The life that I live in the flesh is by the faith of the Son of

God.' Gal 2:20. There is appetite. As new-born babes, desire the

sincere milk of the word.' I Peter 2:2. The word is like breast-milk,

pure, sweet, nourishing; and the soul in which Christ is formed desires

this breast-milk. Bernard, in one of his soliloquies, comforts himself

with this, that he surely had the new birth in him, because he found in

his heart such strong breathings and thirstings after God. After Christ

is born in the heart, there is a violent motion: there is a striving to

enter in at the strait gate, and offering violence to the kingdom of

heaven. Matt 11:12. By this we may know Christ is formed in us. This is

the only comfort, that as Christ was born into the world, so he is born

in our hearts; as he was united to our flesh, so he is united to our

person.

(2.) As Christ was made in our image, let us labour to be made in his

image. Christ being incarnate was made like us, let us labour to be

made like him. There are five things in which we should labour to be

like Christ. (1:) In disposition. He was of a most sweet disposition,

deliciae humani generis [the delight of human kind]. Titus Vespasian.

He invites sinners to come to him. He has bowels to pity us, breasts to

feed us, wings to cover us. He would not break our heart but with

mercy. Was Christ made in our likeness? Let us be like him in sweetness

of disposition; be not of a morose spirit. It was said of Nabal, he is

such a son of Belial, that a man cannot speak to him.' I Sam 25:17.

Some are so barbarous, as if they were akin to the ostrich, they are

fired with rage, and breathe forth nothing but revenge, or like those

two men in the gospel, possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs,

exceeding fierce.' Matt 8:88. Let us be like Christ in mildness and

sweetness. Let us pray for our enemies, and conquer them by love.

David's kindness melted Saul's heart. I Sam 24:16. A frozen heart will

be thawed with the fire of love.

(2:) Be like Christ in grace. He was like us in having our flesh, let

us be like him in having his grace. We should labour to be like Christ,

in humility. He humbled himself, Phil 2:2. He left the bright robes of

his glory to be clothed with the rags of our humanity: a wonder to

humility! Let us be like Christ in this grace. Humility, says Bernard,

is contemptus propriae extellentiae, a contempt of self-excellence,' a

kind of a self-annihilation. This is the glory of a Christian. We are

never so comely in God's eyes as when we are black in our own. In this

let us be like Christ. True religion is to imitate Christ. And indeed,

what cause have we to be humble, if we look within us, below us, above

us!

If we look intra nos, within us, here we see our sins represented to us

in the glass of conscience; lust, envy, passion. Our sins are like

vermin crawling in our souls. How many are my iniquities?' Job 13:33.

Our sins are as the sands of the sea for number, as the rocks of the

sea for weight. Augustine cries out, Vae mihi faecibus peccatorum

polluitur templum Domini. My heart, which is God's temple, is polluted

with sin.'

If we look juxta nos, about us, there is that may humble us. We may see

other Christians outshining us in gifts and graces, as the sun

outshines the lesser planets. Others are laden with fruit, perhaps we

have but here and there an olive-berry growing, to show that we are of

the right kind. Isa 17:7.

If we look infra nos, below us; there is that may humble us. We may see

the mother earth, out of which we came. The earth is the most ignoble

element: They were viler than the earth.' Job 30:0. Thou that dost set

up thy escutcheon, and blaze thy coat of arms, behold thy pedigree;

thou art but pulvis animalus, walking ashes: and wilt thou be proud?

What is Adam? The son of dust. And what is dust? The son of nothing.

If we look supra nos, above us; there is that may humble us. If we look

up to heaven, there we may see God resisting the proud. Superbos

sequitur ultor a tergo Deus. [God pursues the proud in vengeance.] The

proud man is the mark which God shoots at, and he never misses the

mark. He threw proud Lucifer out of heaven; he thrust proud

Nebuchadnezzar out of his throne, and turned him to eat grass. Dan

4:45. Oh then be like Christ in humility!

(3:) Did Christ take our flesh? Was he made like to us? Let us be made

like him in zeal. The zeal of thy house has eaten me up.' John 2:17. He

was zealous when his Father was dishonoured. In this let us be like

Christ, zealous for God's truth and glory, which are the two orient

pearls of the crown of heaven. Zeal is as needful for a Christian as

salt for the sacrifice, or fire on the altar. Zeal without prudence is

rashness; prudence without zeal is cowardliness. Without zeal, our

duties are not acceptable to God. Zeal is like rosin to the

bow-strings, without which the lute makes no music.

(4:) Be like Christ, in the contempt of the world. When Christ took our

flesh, he came not in the pride of flesh, he did not descend

immediately from kings and nobles, but was of mean parentage. Christ

was not ambitious of titles or of honour. He declined worldly dignity

and greatness as much as others seek it. When they would have made him

a king, he refused it; he chose rather to ride upon the foal of an ass,

than be drawn in a chariot; and to hang upon a wooden cross, than to

wear a golden crown. He scorned the pomp and glory of the world. He

waived secular affairs. Who made me a judge?' Luke 12:14. His work was

not to arbitrate matters of law; he came not into the world to be a

magistrate, but a Redeemer. He was like a star in a higher orb, he

minded nothing but heaven. Was Christ made like us? Let us be made like

him, in heavenliness and contempt of the world. Let us not be ambitious

of the honours and preferments of the world. Let us not purchase the

world with the loss of a good conscience. What wise man would damn

himself to grow rich? or pull down his soul, to build up an estate? Be

like Christ in a holy contempt of the world.

(5:) Be like Christ in conversation. Was Christ incarnate? Was he made

like us? Let us be made like him in holiness of life. No temptation

could fasten upon him. The prince of this world cometh, and has nothing

in me.' John 14:40. Temptation to Christ was like a spark of fire upon

a marble pillar, which glides off. Christ's life, says Chrysostom, was

brighter than the sunbeams. Let us be like him in this. Be ye holy in

all manner of conversation.' I Pet 1:15. We are not, says Augustine, to

be like Christ in working miracles, but in a holy life. A Christian

should be both a loadstone and a diamond; a loadstone, in drawing

others to Christ; a diamond, in casting a sparkling lustre of holiness

in his life. Oh let us be so just in our dealings, so true in our

promises, so devout in our worship, so unblameable in our lives, that

we may be the walking pictures of Christ. Thus as Christ was made in

our likeness, let us labour to be made in his.

(3.) If Jesus Christ was so abased for us; took our flesh, which was a

disparagement to him, mingling dust with gold; if he abased himself so

for us, let us be willing to be abased for him. If the world reproach

us for Christ's sake, and cast dust on our name, let us bear it with

patience. The apostles departed from the council, rejoicing that they

were counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ's name,' Acts 5:5I: that

they were graced to be disgraced for Christ. That is a good saying of

Augustine, Quid sui detrahit famae, addet mercedi sua; they who take

away from a saint's name, shall add to his reward'; and while they make

his credit weigh lighter, will make his crown weigh heavier. Oh, was

Christ content to be humbled and abased for us, to take our flesh, and

to take it when it was in disgrace? Let us not think much to be abased

for Christ. Say as David, If this be to be vile, I will yet be more

vile.' 2 Sam 6: 22. If to serve my Lord Christ, if to keep my

conscience pure, if this be to be vile, I will yet be more vile.

Use three: Of comfort. Jesus Christ, having taken our flesh, has

ennobled our nature, naturam nostram nobilitavit. Our nature is now

invested with greater royalties and privileges than in time of

innocence. Before, in innocence, we were made in the image of God; but

now, Christ having assumed our nature, we are made one with God; our

nature is ennobled above the angelic nature. Christ taking our flesh,

has made us nearer to himself than the angels. The angels are his

friends, believers are flesh of his flesh, his members. Eph 5:50 and

chap 1:13. The same glory which is put upon Christ's human nature,

shall be put upon believers.

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7. Christ's Exaltation

'Wherefore God also has highly exalted him, and given him a name above

every name, &c.' Phil 2:2.

We have before spoken of Christ's humiliation; we shall now speak of

his exaltation. Before you saw the Sun of Righteousness in the eclipse;

now you shall see it coming out of the eclipse, and shining in its full

glory. Wherefore God has highly exalted him;' super exaltavit, Ambrose.

Above all exaltation.'

Q-28: WHEREIN CONSISTS CHRIST'S EXALTATION?

A: In his rising from the dead, his ascending into heaven, and his

sitting at the right hand of God the Father, &c.

In what sense has God exalted Christ?

Not in respect of his Godhead, for that cannot be exalted higher than

it is: as in his humiliation, the Godhead was not lower; so in his

exaltation, the Godhead is not higher: but Christ is exalted as

Mediator, his human nature is exalted.

How many ways is Christ exalted?

Five ways. God has exalted Christ, 1: In his titles. 2. In his office.

3: In his ascension. 4: In his session at God's right-hand. 5: In

constituting him judge of the world.

I. God has exalted Christ in his titles.

[1] He is exalted to be a Lord. Acts 19:17. The name of the Lord Jesus

was magnified.' He is a Lord in respect of his sovereignty; he is Lord

over angels and men. All power is given to him.' Matt 28:18. Christ has

three keys in his hand, the key of the grave, to open the graves of men

at the resurrection; the key of heaven, to open the kingdom of heaven

to whom he will; the key of hell, to lock up the damned in that fiery

prison. Rev 1:18.

To this Lord all knees must bow. That at the name of Jesus every knee

should bow.' Phil 2:20. Name is here put for person; to that holy thing

Jesus, to the sceptre of that divine person, every knee shall bow.

Bowing is put for subjection. All must be subdued to him as sons or

captives, submit to him as to the Lord or Judge. Kiss the Son' with a

kiss of love and loyalty. Psa 2:12. We must not only cast ourselves

into Christ's arms to be saved by him, but we must cast ourselves at

his feet to serve him.

[2] Christ is exalted to be a prince. There shall stand up Michael the

great prince.' Dan 12:2: Some think it was a created angel, but it was

Angelus Foederis, Christ the angel of the covenant. He is a great

prince. The prince of the kings of the earth.' Rev 1:1. They hold their

crowns by immediate tenure from him; his throne is above the stars, he

has angels and arch angels for his attendants. Thus he is exalted in

his titles of honour.

II. God has exalted Christ in his office. He has honoured him to be

Salvator mundi, the Saviour of the world. Him has God exalted with his

right hand, to be a prince and a Saviour.' Acts 5:51. It was a great

honour to Moses to be a temporal saviour; but what is it to be the

Saviour of souls? Christ is called the horn of salvation. Luke 1:19. He

saves from sin, Matt 1:1I; from wrath, I Thess 1:10. To save is a

flower belonging only to his crown. Neither is there salvation in any

other.' Acts 4:12. What an honour is this to Christ! How did it make

heaven ring with the praises of the saints! They sing hallelujahs to

Christ their Saviour. They sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to

take the book and open the seals; for thou wast slain, and hast

redeemed us to God by thy blood.' Rev 5:5.

III. God has exalted Christ in his ascension; for if he be ascended,

then he is exalted. Augustine says, Some, as the Hermians, were of

opinion that Christ's body ascended into the orb and circle of the

sun.' But the Scripture plainly says he ascended into heaven. Luke

24:4I and Eph 4:40. Far above all heavens;' therefore above the

firmament. He is ascended into the highest part of the empyrean heaven,

which Paul calls the third heaven. Concerning Christ's ascension, two

things may be observed:

[1] The manner of his ascension. When Christ ascended he blessed his

disciples. He lifted up his hands, and blessed them, and while he

blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.'

Luke 24:40, 51. He did not leave them houses and lands, but he left

them his blessing.

He ascended as a conqueror, in a way of triumph. Thou hast led

captivity captive,' &c. Psa 68:18. He triumphed over sin, hell, and

death; and his triumph is a believer's triumph. He has conquered sin

and hell for every believer.

[2] The fruit of Christ's ascension. His ascension to heaven causes the

descension of the Holy Spirit into our hearts. When he ascended up on

high, he gave gifts to men.' Eph 4:4. Having ascended up in the clouds,

as his triumphant chariot, he gives the gift of his Spirit to us; as a

king at his coronation bestows gifts liberally on his favourites.

IV. God has exalted Christ in his session at God's right hand. After

the Lord had spoken to them, he was received up into heaven, and sat

upon the right hand of God.' Mark 16:19. He raised him from the dead,

and set him at his own right hand, far above all principality and

power, and every name that is named.' Eph 1:10.

What is meant by Christ sitting at God's right hand?

God really has no right-hand or left; for being a Spirit, he is void of

all bodily parts; but it is a metaphor taken from the manner of kings,

who were wont to advance their favourites next to their own persons,

and set them at their right hand. Solomon caused a seat to be set for

the queen his mother, and placed her at his right hand. I Kings 2:19.

So for Christ to sit at the right hand of God, is to be in the next

place to God the Father in dignity and honour. The human nature of

Christ, being personally united to the divine, is now set down on a

royal throne in heaven, and adored even by angels.

By virtue of the personal union of Christ's human nature with the

divine, there is a communication of all that glory from the Deity of

Christ of which his human nature is capable. Not that the manhood of

Christ is advanced to an equality with the Godhead, but the divine

nature being joined with the human, the human nature is wonderfully

glorified, though not deified. Christ as mediator is filled with all

majesty and honour, beyond the comprehension of the highest order of

angels. In his humiliation he descended so low, that it was not fit to

go lower; and in his exaltation he ascended so high that it is not

possible to go higher. In his resurrection he was exalted above the

grave, in his ascension he was exalted above the airy and starry

heavens, in his sitting at God's right hand he was exalted far above

the highest heavens, Far above all heavens.' Eph 4:10.

V. God has exalted Christ in constituting him judge of the whole world.

The Father has committed all judgement to the Son.' John 5:52. At the

day of judgement Christ shall be exalted supereminently. He shall come

in the glory of his Father.' Mark 8:88. He shall wear the same

embroidered robes of majesty as the Father; and he shall come with all

his holy angels. Matt 25:51. He who was led to the bar with a band of

soldiers, shall be attended to the bench with a guard of angels. Christ

shall judge his judges, he shall judge Pilate that condemned him; kings

must leave their thrones and come to his bar. And this is the highest

court of judicature, from whence is no appeal.

Use one: Of information. (1.) See the different state of Christ on

earth and in heaven. Oh how is the scene altered! When he was on earth,

he lay in a manger; now he sits on a throne. Then he was hated and

scorned of men; now he is adored by angels. Then his name was

reproached; now, God has given him a name above every name.' Phil 2:2.

Then he came in the form of a servant, and as a servant, stood with his

bason and towel, and washed his disciples' feet; John 13:3, 5; now he

is clad in his princes' robes, and the kings of the earth cast their

crowns before him. On earth he was a man of sorrows; now he is anointed

with the oil of gladness. On earth was his crucifixion; now his

coronation. Then his Father frowned upon him in desertion; now he has

set him at his right hand. Before, he seemed to have no form or beauty

in him; Isa 53:3; now he is in the brightness of his Father's glory.

Heb 1:1. Oh what a change is here! Him has God highly exalted.'

(2.) Was Christ first humbled and then exalted? Hence learn the way to

true honour is humility.' He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.'

Luke 14:11: The world looks upon humility as that which will make

contemptible, but it is the ready way to honour; the way to rise is to

fall; the way to ascend is to descend. Humility exalts us in the esteem

of men, and it exalts us to a higher throne in heaven. Whosoever shall

humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the

kingdom of heaven.' Matt 18:8. He shall have a greater degree of glory

in it.

(3.) Christ first suffered, and then was exalted. See here, that

sufferings must go before glory. Many desire to be glorified with

Christ, but they are not content to suffer for him. If we suffer with

him, we shall reign with him.' 2 Tim 2:12. The wicked first reign and

then suffer; the godly first suffer, and then reign. There is no way to

Constantinople, but through the strait; no way to heaven, but through

sufferings; no way to the crown, but by the cross. Jerusalem above is a

pleasant city, streets of gold, gates of pearl; but we must travel

through a dirty road to it, through many reproaches and sufferings.

Acts 14:42. We must enter into glory as Christ did; who first suffered

shame and death, and then was exalted to sit at God's right hand.

Use two: Of comfort. (1.) Christ, being so highly exalted, has ennobled

our nature, crowned it with glory, and lifted it above angels and

archangels. Though, as man, he was made a little lower than the angels,

Heb 2:2, yet as the human nature is united to the divine, and is at

God's right hand, so the human nature is above the angels. If God has

so dignified our nature, what a shame is it that we should debase it!

God has exalted the human nature above the angels, and the drunkard

debases the human nature below the beasts.

(2.) Christ being exalted at God's right hand, the key of government is

laid upon his shoulders; he governs all the affairs of the world for

his own glory. Do you think that when Christ is so highly advanced, and

has all power in heaven and earth in his hand, he will not take care of

his elect, and turn the most astonishing providences to the good of his

church? In a clock, the wheels move cross one to another, but all make

the clock strike; so Christ being at his Father's right hand, will make

the most cross providences tend to the salvation of his church.

(3.) Christ being at God's right hand, we may be assured he has now

finished the work of man's redemption. This man, after he had offered

one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God.'

Heb 10:12. If Christ had not fully expiated sin, and satisfied God's

law, he had not sat down at God's right hand, but had still lain in the

grave; but now he is exalted to glory; which is an evident token that

he has done and suffered all that was required of him, for working out

our redemption.

(4.) Though Jesus Christ is so highly exalted in glory, yet he is not

forgetful of us on earth. Some, when raised to places of honour, forget

their friends; as the chief butler, when restored to his place at

court, forgot poor Joseph in prison; but it is not so with Christ;

though exalted to such glory in heaven, he is not unmindful of his

saints on earth. Our high priest has all the names and wants of his

people written upon his breast-plate. Art thou tempted? Though Christ

be in glory, he knows how to pity and succour thee. We have not an high

priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.' Heb

4:45. Dost thou mourn for sin? Christ, though in a glorified state,

hears thy sighs, and bottles thy tears.

(5.) Christ being exalted at God's right hand is for the comfort of

believers, that they may one day be exalted to that place of glory

where he is. Christ's exaltation is our exaltation. He has prayed for

this. Father, I will that all those, whom thou hast given me, be with

me where I am.' John 17:74. And he is said to go before to prepare a

place, for believers. John 14:4. Christ is called the head, and the

church is called the body. Eph 1:12, 23. The head being exalted to

honour, the body mystic shall be exalted too. As sure as Christ is

exalted far above all heavens, so sure will he instate believers in all

that glory with which his human nature is adorned. John 17:72. As he

here puts his grace upon the saints, so shortly will he put his glory

upon them. This is comfort for the poorest Christian. Perhaps thou hast

scarce a house to put thy head in, yet thou mayest look up to heaven,

and say, There is my house, there is my country; I have already taken

possession of heaven in my head, Christ; he sits there, and it will not

be long before I shall sit there with him; he is upon the throne of

glory, and I have his word for it, I shall sit upon the throne with

him. Rev 3:3I.

Use three: Of exhortation. Has God highly exalted Christ? Let us labour

to exalt him. Let us exalt, (1.) His person. (2.) His truths.

(1.) Let us exalt Christ in our hearts; believe, adore and love him. We

cannot lift him up higher in heaven, but we may in our hearts. Let us

exalt him in our lips; let us praise him. Our bodies are the temples of

the Holy Ghost, our tongues must be the organs in these temples. By

praising and commending Christ, we exalt him in the esteem of others.

Let us exalt him in our lives, by living holy lives: vera religio haec,

sine macula vivere luctant [This is true religion, when men strive to

live blameless lives]. Not all the doxologies and prayers in the world

so exalt Christ as a holy life. It makes Christ renowned, and lifts him

up indeed, when his followers walk worthy of him.

(2.) Let us exalt Christ's truths. Bucholcerus, in his Chronology,

reports of the nobles of Polonia, that whenever the gospel is read,

they lay their hands upon their swords, intimating by that, they are

ready to maintain the gospel with the hazard of their lives. Let us

exalt Christ's truths; maintain the truths of Christ against error;

maintain the doctrine of free grace against merit; the Deity of Christ

against Socinianism.

Truth is the most orient pearl in Christ's crown. Let us contend for

the truth, as one would for a large sum of money, that it should not be

wrested out of his hand. Christ takes it to be exalting him when we

exalt his truths, wherein his glory is concerned.

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8. Christ The Redeemer

Q-xxx: HOW DOES THE SPIRIT APPLY TO US THE REDEMPTION PURCHASED BY

CHRIST?

A: The Spirit applies to us the redemption purchased by Christ by

working faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual

calling.

In this answer there are two things. It is implied that Christ is the

glorious purchaser of our redemption, in the words, The redemption

purchased by Christ,' and it is declared that the Spirit applies to us

this purchased redemption, by working in us faith, &c.

The thing implied is, that Jesus Christ is the glorious purchaser of

our redemption. The doctrine of redemption by Jesus Christ is a

glorious doctrine; it is the marrow and quintessence of the gospel, in

which all a Christian's comfort lies. Great was the work of creation,

but greater the work of redemption; it cost more to redeem us than to

make us; in the one there was but the speaking of a word, in the other

the shedding of blood. The creation was but the work of God's fingers.

Psa 8:8. Redemption is the work of his arm. Luke 1:11. Having obtained

eternal redemption for us.' Heb 9:12. Christ's purchasing redemption

for us implies that our sins mortgaged and sold us. Had there not been

some kind of mortgaging there had been no need of redemption: redimere

rursus emere. Jerome. When we were thus mortgaged, and sold by sin,

Christ purchased our redemption. He had the best right to redeem us,

for he is our kinsman. The Hebrew word for Redeemer, Goel, signifies a

kinsman, one that is near in blood. In the old law the nearest kinsman

was to redeem his brother's land. Ruth 4:4. Thus Christ being near akin

to us, Flesh of our flesh.' is the fittest to redeem us.

How does Christ redeem us?

By his own precious blood. In whom we have redemption through his

blood.' Eph 1:1. Among the Romans, he was said to redeem another who

laid down a price equivalent for the ransom of the prisoner. In this

sense Christ is a Redeemer; he has paid a price. Never was such a price

paid to ransom prisoners. Ye are pretio empti, bought with a price; and

this price was his own blood.' I Cor 6:60. So, in the text, by his own

blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal

redemption for us.' This blood being the blood of that person who was

God as well as man is a price sufficient for the ransom of millions.

From what does Christ redeem us?

From sin. To be redeemed from Turkish slavery is a great mercy, but it

is infinitely more to be redeemed from sin. There is nothing that can

hurt the soul but sin; it is not affliction that hurts it, it often

makes it better, as the furnace makes gold the purer; but it is sin

that damnifies. Now, Christ redeems us from sin. Now, once in the end

of the world has he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of

himself.' Heb 9:96.

But how are we redeemed from sin? Do we not see corruption stirring in

the regenerate; much pride and unmortified passion?

Redemption is either incohata or plena; i.e. begun redemption or

perfect redemption. Sin cannot stand with a perfect redemption; but

here it is begun only, and sin may stand with an imperfect redemption.

There may be some darkness in the air at the sun's first rising, but

not when the sun is at the full meridian. While our redemption is but

begun, there may be sin; but not when it is perfect in glory.

In what sense has Christ redeemed justified persons from sin?

(1.) A reatu, from the guilt of sin, though not the stain. Guilt is the

binding a person over to punishment. Now, Christ has redeemed a

justified person from the guilt of sin; he has discharged his debts.

Christ says to God's justice, as Paul to Philemon, If he has wronged

thee anything, or owes thee ought, put that on my account.' Verse I8.

(2.) A justified person is redeemed a dominio, from the power and

regency of sin, though not from the presence. Sin may furere, but not

regnare; it may rage in a child of God, but not reign. Lust raged in

David, and fear in Peter, but it did not reign; they recovered

themselves by repentance. Sin shall not have dominion over you.' Rom

6:14. Sin lives in a child of God, but is deposed from the throne; it

lives not as a king, but a captive.

(3.) A believer is redeemed a maledictione, from the curse due to sin.

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse

for us.' Gal 3:13. Christ said to his Father, as Rebecca to Jacob, Upon

me, upon me be the curse; let the blessing be upon them, but upon me be

the curse.' And now, there is no condemnation to believers. Rom 8:8. An

unbeliever has a double condemnation; one from the law which he has

transgressed, and the other from the gospel which he has despised. But

Christ has redeemed the believer from this malediction, he has set him

out of the power of hell and damnation.

To what has Christ redeemed us?

He has redeemed us to a glorious inheritance. To an inheritance

incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in

heaven for you.' I Pet 1:1.

(1.) To an inheritance. Christ has not only redeemed us out of prison,

but he has redeemed us to a state of happiness, to an inheritance;

heaven is not a lease which soon expires, but an inheritance; and a

glorious inheritance; called an inheritance in light. Col 1:12. Lumen

producit colores; light adorns and gilds the world. What were the world

without light but a prison? The heavenly inheritance is irradiated with

light. Christ, as a continual sun, enlightens it with his beams. Rev

21:13.

(2.) To an inheritance incorruptible. It does not moulder away or

suffer dissolution. Earthly comforts are shadowed out by the tabernacle

which was transient; but heaven is set out by the temple, which was

fixed and permanent, built with stone, overlaid with gold. This is the

glory of the celestial inheritance; it is incorruptible. Eternity is

written upon the frontispiece of it.

(3.) Undefiled. The Greek word for undefiled alludes to a precious

stone called Amiantus, which cannot be blemished. Such a place is

heaven, undefiled, nothing can stain it; there is no sin there to

eclipse its purity. For holiness and undefiledness it is compared to

pure gold, and to the sapphire and emerald. Rev 21:19. The sapphire has

a virtue,' says Pliny, to preserve chasteness, the emerald to expel

poison.' These are the lively emblems of heaven, to show the sanctity

of it; no fever of lust; no venom of malice; none but pure virgin

spirits inhabit it.

(4.) It fadeth not away. The Greek word is the name of a flower,

Amarantus, which keeps a long time fresh and green, as Clement of

Alexandria writes. Such is the heavenly inheritance, it does not lose

its orient colour, but keeps its freshness and greenness to eternity;

the beauty of it fadeth not away. To this glorious inheritance has

Christ redeemed the saints; an inheritance which cannot be fully

described or set forth by all the lights of heaven, though every star

were a sun. And that which is the diamond in the ring, the glory of

this inheritance, is the eternal sight and fruition of the blessed God.

The sight of God will be a most alluring, heart-ravishing object; the

king's presence makes the court. We shall see him as he is.' I John

3:3. It is comfortable to see God showing himself through the lattice

of an ordinance, to see him in the Word and sacrament. The martyrs

thought it comfortable to see him in a prison. Oh then, what will it be

to see him in glory, shining ten thousand times brighter than the sun!

and not only see him, but enjoy him for ever! Praemium quodfide non

attingitur. Augustine. Faith itself is not able fully to comprehend

this reward. All this blessedness has Christ purchased through the

redemption of his blood.

Use one: Of instruction. (1.) See into what a wretched deplorable

condition we had brought ourselves by sin; we had sinned ourselves into

slavery, so that we needed Christ to purchase our redemption. Nihil

durius servitute, says Cicero, Slavery is the worst condition.' Such as

are now prisoners in Algiers think it so. But by sin we are in a worse

slavery, slaves to Satan, a merciless tyrant, who sports in the

damnation of souls. In this condition we were when Christ came to

redeem us.

(2.) See in this, as in a transparent glass, the love of Christ to the

elect. He came to redeem them; and died intentionally for them. Were it

not great love for a king's son to pay a great sum of money to redeem a

captive? But that he should be content to be a prisoner in his stead,

and die for his ransom; this were matter of wonder. Jesus Christ has

done all this, he has written his love in characters of blood. It had

been much for Christ to speak a good word to his Father for us, but he

knew that was not enough to redeem us. Though a word speaking made a

world, yet it would not redeem a sinner. Without shedding of blood

there is no remission.' Heb 9:92.

Use two: Of trial. If Christ came to purchase our redemption, then let

us try whether we are the persons whom Christ has redeemed from the

guilt and curse due to sin. This is a needful trial; for let me tell

you, there is but a certain number whom Christ has redeemed. Oh, say

sinners, Christ is a redeemer, and we shall be saved by him! Beloved,

Christ came not to redeem all, for that would overthrow the decrees of

God. Redemption is not as large as creation. I grant there is a

sufficiency of merit in Christ's blood to save all; but there is a

difference between sufficiency and efficiency. Christ's blood is a

sufficient price for all, but it is effectual only to them that

believe. A plaster may have a sovereign virtue in it to heal any wound,

but it does not heal unless applied to the wound. And if it be so, that

all have not the benefit of Christ's redemption, but some only, then it

is a necessary question to ask our own souls, Are we in the number of

those that are redeemed by Christ or not?

How shall we know that?

(1.) Such as are redeemed are reconciled to God. The enmity is taken

away. Their judgements approve, their wills incline ad bonum. Col 1:1I.

Are they redeemed that are unreconciled to God, who hate God and his

people (as the vine and laurel have an antipathy), who do all they can

to disparage holiness? Are they redeemed who are unreconciled? Christ

has purchased a reprieve for these; but a sinner may have a reprieve,

and yet go to hell. John 5:5.

(2.) Such as are redeemed by Christ are redeemed from the world. Who

gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver (or redeem) us from

this present evil world.' Gal 1:1. Such as are redeemed by Christ are

risen with Christ, Col 3:3: As birds that light upon the ground to pick

up a little seed, immediately fly up to heaven again; so the redeemed

of the Lord use the world, and take the lawful comforts of it, but

their hearts are presently off these things, and they ascend to heaven.

They live here, and trade above. Such as Christ has died for are dead

to the world;' to its honours, profits, and preferments. What shall we

think of those who say they are redeemed of the Lord, and yet are

lovers of the world? They are like the tribes who desired to have their

portion on this side Canaan. Who mind earthly things.' Phil 3:19. They

pull down their souls to build up an estate. They are not redeemed by

Christ, who are not redeemed from the world.

Use three: Of comfort to such as are redeemed. You are happy, the lot

of free grace has fallen upon you; you were once in the devil's prison,

but have broken from that prison; you were once bound in the chains of

sin, but God has begun to beat off your chains, and has freed you from

the power of sin, and the curse due to it. What a comfort is this! Is

there any consolation in Christ? It is shine. Is there any sweet fruit

growing upon the promise? Thou mayest gather it. Are there any glorious

privileges in the gospel? They are thy jointure, justification,

adoption, coronation. Is there any glory in heaven? Thou shalt shortly

drink of that river of pleasure. Hast thou any temporal comforts? These

are but a pledge and earnest of more. Thy meal in the barrel is but a

meal by the way, and an earnest of that angels, food which God has

prepared for thee. How mayest thou be comforted in all worldly

afflictions, though the fig-tree flourish not! Nay, in case of death,

it has lost its sting. Mors abiit morte Christi [Death takes its leave,

through the death of Christ]. Death shall carry thee to thy Redeemer:

fear not dying since you cannot be perfectly happy but by dying.

Use four: Of exhortation. Long for the time when you shall have a full

and perfect redemption in heaven, an eternal jubilee; when you shall be

freed not only from the power but from the presence of sin. Here a

believer is as a prisoner that has broken prison, but walks with a

fetter on his leg. When the banner of glory shall be displayed over

you, you shall be as the angels of God, you shall never have a sinful

thought more; no pain or grief, no aching head or unbelieving heart.

You shall see Christ's face, and lie for ever in his arms; you shall be

as Joseph. Gen 41:14. They brought him hastily out of the dungeon, and

he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh.

Long for that time, when you shall put off your prison garments, and

change your raiment, and put on the embroidered garment of glory. Oh

long for it! Yet be content to wait for this full and glorious

redemption, when you shall be more happy than you can desire, when you

shall have that which eye has not seen. nor ear heard. nor can it enter

into man's heart to conceive.'

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6. The application of redemption

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1. Faith

'The life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son

of God.'

Gal 2:20.

The Spirit applies to us the redemption purchased by Christ, by working

faith in us.

Christ is the glory, and faith in Christ the comfort, of the gospel.

What are the kinds of faith?

Fourfold: (1.) An historical or dogmatic faith, which is believing the

truths revealed in the Word, because of divine authority.

(2.) There is a temporary faith, which lasts for a time, and then

vanishes. Yet has he no root in himself, but dureth for a while.' Matt

13:31. A temporary faith is like Jonah's gourd, which came up in a

night and withered. Chap 4:40.

(3.) A miraculous faith, which was granted to the apostles, to work

miracles for the confirmation of the gospel. This Judas had; he cast

out devils, yet was cast out to the devil.

(4.) A true justifying faith, which is called A faith of the operation

of God,' and is a jewel hung only upon the elect. Col 2:22.

What is justifying faith?

I shall show, (1.) What it is not. It is not a bare acknowledgment that

Christ is a Saviour. There must be an acknowledgment, but that is not

sufficient to justify. The devils acknowledged Christ's Godhead. Jesus

the Son of God.' Matt 8:89. There may be an assent to divine truth, and

yet no work of grace on the heart. Many assent in their judgements,

that sin is an evil thing, but they go on in sin, whose corruptions are

stronger than their convictions; and that Christ is excellent; they

cheapen the pearl, but do not buy.

(2.) What justifying faith is. True justifying faith consists in three

things:

(1:) Self-renunciation. Faith is going out of one's self, being taken

off from our own merits, and seeing we have no righteousness of our

own. Not having mine own righteousness.' Phil 3:3. Self-righteousness

is a broken reed, which the soul dares not lean on. Repentance and

faith are both humbling graces; by repentance a man abhors himself; by

faith he goes out of himself. As Israel in their wilderness march,

behind them saw Pharaoh and his chariots pursuing, before them the Red

Sea ready to devour; so the sinner behind sees God's justice pursuing

him for sin, before, hell ready to devour him; and in this forlorn

condition, he sees nothing in himself to help, but he must perish

unless he can find help in another.

(2:) Reliance. The soul casts itself upon Jesus Christ; faith rests on

Christ's person. Faith believes the promise; but that which faith rests

upon in the promise is the person of Christ: therefore the spouse is

said to lean upon her Beloved.' Cant 8:8. Faith is described to be

believing on the name of the Son of God,' I John 3:33, viz., on his

person. The promise is but the cabinet, Christ is the jewel in it which

faith embraces; the promise is but the dish, Christ is the food in it

which faith feeds on. Faith rests on Christ's person, as he was

crucified.' It glories in the cross of Christ. Gal 6:14. To consider

Christ crowned with all manner of excellencies, stirs up admiration and

wonder; but Christ looked upon as bleeding and dying, is the proper

object of our faith; it is called therefore faith in his blood.' Rom

3:35.

(3:) Appropriation, or applying Christ to ourselves. A medicine, though

it be ever so sovereign, if not applied, will do no good; though the

plaster be made of Christ's own blood, it will not heal, unless applied

by faith; the blood of God, without faith in God, will not save. This

applying of Christ is called receiving him. John 1:12. The hand

receiving gold, enriches; so the hand of faith, receiving Christ's

golden merits with salvation, enriches us.

How is faith wrought?

By the blessed Spirit; who is called the Spirit of grace,' because he

is the spring of all grace. Zech 12:20. Faith is the chief work which

the Spirit of God works in a man's heart. In making the world God did

but speak a word, but in working faith he puts forth his arm. Luke

1:11. The Spirit's working faith is called, The exceeding greatness of

God's power.' Eph 1:19. What a power was put forth in raising Christ

from the grave when such a tombstone lay upon him as the sins of all

the world,! yet he was raised up by the Spirit. The same power is put

forth by the Spirit of God in working faith. The Spirit irradiates the

mind, and subdues the will. The will is like a garrison, which holds

out against God: the Spirit with sweet violence conquers, or rather

changes it; making the sinner willing to have Christ upon any terms; to

be ruled by him as well as saved by him.

Wherein lies the preciousness of faith?

(1.) In its being the chief gospel-grace, the head of the graces. As

gold among the metals, so is faith among the graces. Clement of

Alexandria calls the other graces the daughters of faith. In heaven,

love will be the chief grace; but, while we are here, love must give

place to faith. Love takes possession of glory, but faith gives a title

to it. Love is the crowning grace in heaven, but faith is the

conquering grace upon earth. This is the victory that overcometh the

world, even our faith.' I John 5:5.

(2.) In its having influence upon all the graces, and setting them to

work: not a grace stirs till faith set it to work. As the clothier sets

the poor to work, sets their wheel going; so faith sets hope to work.

The heir must believe his title to an estate in reversion before he can

hope for it; faith believes its title to glory, and then hope waits for

it. If faith did not feed the lamp of hope with oil, it would soon die.

Faith sets love to work. Faith which worketh by love.' Gal 5:5.

Believing the mercy and merit of Christ causes a flame of love to

ascend. Faith sets patience to work. Be followers of them who through

faith and patience inherit the promises.' Heb 6:12. Faith believes the

glorious rewards given to suffering. This makes the soul patient in

suffering. Thus faith is the master-wheel, it sets all the other graces

running.

(3.) In its being the grace which God honours to justify and save. Thus

indeed it is precious faith,' as the apostle calls it. 2 Pet 1:1: The

other graces help to sanctify, but it is faith that justifies. Being

justified by faith.' Rom V 1: Repentance or love do not justify, but

faith does.

How does faith justify?

(1.) Faith does not justify as it is a work, which would make a Christ

of our faith; but faith justifies, as it lays hold of the object, viz.

Christ's merits. If a man had a precious stone in a ring that could

heal, we should say the ring heals; but properly it is not the ring,

but the precious stone in the ring that heals. Thus faith saves and

justifies, but it is not any inherent virtue in faith, but as it lays

hold on Christ it justifies.

(2.) Faith does not justify as it exercises grace. It cannot be denied,

that faith invigorates all the graces, puts strength and liveliness

into them, but it does not justify under this notion. Faith works by

love, but it does not justify as it works by love, but as it applies

Christ's merits.

Why should faith save and justify more than any other grace?

(1.) Because of God's purpose. He has appointed this grace to be

justifying; and he does it, because faith is a grace that takes a man

off himself, and gives all the honour to Christ and free grace. Strong

in faith, giving glory to God.' Rom 4:40. Therefore God has put this

honour on faith, to make it saving and justifying. The king's stamp

makes the coin pass for current; if he would put his stamp upon

leather, as well as silver, it would make it current: so God having put

his sanction, the stamp of his authority and institution upon faith,

makes it to be justifying and saving.

(2.) Because faith makes us one with Christ. Eph 3:17. It is the

espousing, incorporating grace, it gives us coalition and union with

Christ's person. Other graces make us like Christ, faith makes us

members of Christ.

Use one: Of exhortation. Let us above all things labour for faith.

Fides est sanctissimum humani pectoris bonum. Above all, taking the

shield of faith.' Eph 6:16. Faith will be of more use to us than any

grace; as an eye, though dim, was of more use to an Israelite than all

the other members of his body, a strong arm, or a nimble foot. It was

his eye looking on the brazen serpent that cured him. It is not

knowledge, though angelic, not repentance, though we could shed rivers

of tears, could justify us; only faith, whereby we look on Christ.

Without faith it is impossible to please God.' Heb 11:1. If we do not

please him by believing, he will not please us in saving. Faith is the

condition of the covenant of grace; without faith, without covenant;

and without covenant, without hope. Eph 2:12.

Use two: Of trial. Let us try whether we have faith. There is something

that looks like faith, and is not, as a Bristol-stone looks like a

diamond. Some plants have the same leaf with others, but the herbalist

can distinguish them by the root and taste. Some faith may look like

true faith, but it may be distinguished by the fruits. Let us be

serious in the trial of our faith. Much depends upon our faith; for if

our faith be not good, nothing good comes from us, even our duties and

graces are adulterated.

How then shall we know a true faith?

By the noble effects. (1.) Faith is a Christ-prizing grace, it puts a

high valuation upon Christ. To you that believe he is precious.' I Pet

2:2. Paul best knew Christ. Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?' I

Cor 9:9: He saw Christ with his bodily eyes in a vision, when he was

caught up into the third heaven; and with the eye of his faith in the

Holy Supper; therefore he best knew Christ. And see how he styles all

things in comparison of him. I count all things but dung, that I may

win Christ.' Phil 3:3. Do we set a high estimate upon Christ? Could we

be willing to part with the wedge of gold for the pearl of price?

Gregory Nazianzen blessed God he had anything to lose for Christ's

sake.

(2.) Faith is a refining grace. Mystery of faith in a pure conscience.'

I Tim 3:3. Faith is in the soul as fire among metals; it refines and

purifies. Morality may wash the outside, faith washes the inside.

Having purified their hearts by faith.' Acts 15:5. Faith makes the

heart a sacristy or holy of holiest. Faith is a virgin-grace: though it

does not take away the life of sin, yet it takes away the love of sin.

Examine if your hearts be an unclean fountain, sending out the mud and

dirt of pride and envy. If there be legions of lusts in thy soul, there

is no faith. Faith is a heavenly plant, which will not grow in an

impure soil.

(3.) Faith is an obediential grace. The obedience of faith.' Rom 16:66.

Faith melts our will into God's. It runs at God's call. If God commands

duty (though cross to flesh and blood) faith obeys. By faith Abraham

obeyed.' Heb 11:1. Faith is not an idle grace; as it has an eye to see

Christ, so it has a hand to work for him. It not only believes God's

promise, but obeys his command. It is not having knowledge that will

evidence you to be believers; the devil has knowledge, but wants

obedience, and that makes him a devil. The true obedience of faith is a

cheerful obedience. God's commands do not seem grievous. Have you

obedience, and obey cheerfully? Do you look upon God's command as your

burden, or privilege; as an iron fetter about your leg, or as a gold

chain about your neck.

(4.) Faith is an assimilating grace. It changes the soul into the image

of the object; it makes it like Christ. Never did any look upon Christ

with a believing eye, but he was made like Christ. A deformed person

may look on a beautiful object, and not be made beautiful; but faith

looking on Christ transforms a man, and turns him into his similitude.

Looking on a bleeding Christ causes a soft bleeding heart; looking on a

holy Christ causes sanctity of heart; looking on a humble Christ makes

the soul humble. As the chameleon is changed into the colour of that

which it looks upon, so faith, looking on Christ, changes the Christian

into the similitude of Christ.

(5.) True faith grows. All living things grow. From faith to faith.'

Rom 1:17.

How may we judge of the growth of faith?

Growth of faith is judged by strength. We can do that now, which we

could not do before. When one is man-grown, he can do that which he

could not do when he was a child; he can carry a heavier burden; so

thou canst bear crosses with more patience.

Growth of faith is seen by doing duties in a more spiritual manner,

with more fervency; we put coals to the incense, from a principle of

love to God. When an apple has done growing in bigness, it grows in

sweetness; so thou performest duties in love and art sweeter, and come

off with a better relish.

But I fear I have no faith.

We must distinguish between weakness of faith and no faith. A weak

faith is true. The bruised reed is but weak, yet it is such as Christ

will not break. Though thy faith be weak, be not discouraged.

(1.) A weak faith may receive a strong Christ. A weak hand can tie the

knot in marriage as well as a strong one; and a weak eye might have

seen the brazen serpent. The woman in the gospel did but touch Christ's

garment, and received virtue from him. It was the touch of faith.

(2.) The promise is not made to strong faith, but to true. The promise

says not whosoever has a giant-faith, that can remove mountains, that

can stop the mouths of lions, shall be saved; but whosoever believes,

be his faith ever so small. Though Christ sometimes chides a weak

faith, yet that it may not be discouraged, he makes it a promise. Beati

qui esuriunt. Matt 5:5.

(3.) A weak faith may be fruitful. Weakest things multiply most; the

vine is a weak plant, but it is fruitful. Weak Christians may have

strong affections. How strong is the first love, which is after the

first planting of faith!

(4.) Weak faith may be growing. Seeds spring up by degrees; first the

blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. Therefore, be not

discouraged. God who would have us receive them that are weak in faith,

will not himself refuse them. Rom 14:4: A weak believer is a member of

Christ; and though Christ will cut off rotten members from his body, he

will not cut off weak members.

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2. Effectual Calling

'Them he also called.' Rom 8:80.

Q-xxxi: WHAT IS EFFECTUAL CALLING?

A: It is a gracious work of the Spirit, whereby he causes us to embrace

Christ freely, as he is offered to us in the gospel.

In this verse is the golden chain of salvation, made up of four links,

of which one is vocation. Them he also called.' Calling is nova

creatio, a new creation,' the first resurrection. There is a two-fold

call: (1.) An outward call: (2.) An inward call.

(1.) An outward call, which is God's offer of grace to sinners,

inviting them to come and accept of Christ and salvation. Many are

called, but few chosen.' Matt 20:16. This call shows men what they

ought to do in order to salvation, and renders them inexcusable in case

of disobedience.

(2.) There is an inward call, when God with the offer of grace works

grace. By this call the heart is renewed, and the will is effectually

drawn to embrace Christ. The outward call brings men to a profession of

Christ, the inward to a possession of Christ.

What are the means of this effectual call?

Every creature has a voice to call us. The heavens call to us to behold

God's glory. Psalm 19:9: Conscience calls to us. God's judgements call

us to repent. Hear ye the rod.' Mic 6:6. But every voice does not

convert. There are two means of our effectual call:

(1.) The preaching of the word,' which is the sounding of God's silver

trumpet in men's ears. God speaks not by an oracle, he calls by his

ministers. Samuel thought it had been the voice of Eli only that called

him; but it was God's voice. I Sam 3:3. So, perhaps, you think it is

only the minister that speaks to you in the word, but it is God himself

who speaks. Therefore Christ is said to speak to us from heaven. Heb

12:25. How does he speak but by his ministers? as a king speaks by his

ambassadors. Know, that in every sermon preached, God calls to you; and

to refuse the message we bring, is to refuse God himself.

(2.) The other means of our effectual call is the Holy Spirit. The

ministry of the word is the pipe or organ; the Spirit of God blowing in

it, effectually changes men's hearts. While Peter spake, the Holy Ghost

fell on all them that heard the word of God.' Acts 10:04. Ministers

knock at the door of men's hearts, the Spirit comes with a key and

opens the door. A certain woman named Lydia, whose heart the Lord

opened.' Acts 16:14.

From what does God call men?

(1.) From sin. He calls them from their ignorance and unbelief. I Pet

1:14. By nature the understanding is enveloped with darkness. God calls

men from darkness to light,' as if one should be called out of a

dungeon to behold the light of the sun. Eph 5:5.

(2.) From danger. As the angels called Lot out of Sodom, when it was

ready to rain fire; so God calls his people from the fire and brimstone

of hell, and from all those curses to which they were exposed.

(3.) He calls them out of the world; as Christ called Matthew from the

receipt of custom. They are not of the world.' John 17:76. Such as are

divinely called, are not natives here, but pilgrims; they do not

conform to the world, or follow its sinful fashions; they are not of

the world; though they live here, yet they trade in the heavenly

country. The world is a place where Satan's throne is. Rev 2:13. It is

a stage on which sin every day acts its part. Now such as are called

are in the world but not of it.

To what does God call men?

(1.) He calls them to holiness. God has not called us to uncleanness,

but unto holiness.' I Thess 4:4. Holiness is the livery, or silver star

which the godly wear. Knam kodsheca, The people of thy holiness.' Isa

63:38. The called of God are anointed with the consecrating oil of the

Spirit. Ye have an unction from the Holy One.' I John 2:20.

(2.) God calls them to glory, as if a man were called out of a prison

to sit upon a throne. Who has called you to his kingdom and glory.' I

Thess 2:12. Whom God calls he crowns with a weight of glory. 2 Cor

4:17. The Hebrew word for glory (Kabod) signifies pondus, a weight. The

weight of glory adds to the worth, the weightier gold is the more it is

worth. This glory is not transient, but permanent, an eternal weight;

it is better felt than expressed.

What is the cause of the effectual call?

God's electing love. Whom he predestinated, them he also called.' Rom

8:80. Election is the fountain-cause of our vocation. It is not because

some are more worthy to partake of the heavenly calling than others,

for we were all in our blood.' Ezek 16:6. What worthiness is in us?

What worthiness was there in Mary Magdalene, out of whom seven devils

were cast? What worthiness in the Corinthians, when God began to call

them by his gospel? They were fornicators, effeminate, idolaters. Such

were some of you, but ye are washed,' &c. I Cor 6:6: Before effectual

calling, we are not only without strength,' Rom 5:5, but enemies,' Col

1:1I. So that the foundation of vocation is election.

What are the qualifications of this call?

(1.) It is a powerful call. Verba Dei sunt opera [The words of God are

works]. Luther. God puts forth infinite power in calling home a sinner

to himself; he not only puts forth his voice but his arm. The apostle

speaks of the exceeding greatness of his power, which he exercises

towards them that believe. Eph 1:19. God rides forth conquering in the

chariot of his gospel; he conquers the pride of the heart, and makes

the will, which stood out as a fort-royal, to yield and stoop to his

grace; he makes the stony heart bleed. Oh, it is a mighty call! Why

then do the Arminians seem to talk of a moral persuasion, that God in

the conversion of a sinner only morally persuades and no more; sets his

promises before men to allure them to good, and his threatenings to

deter them from evil; and that is all he does? But surely moral

persuasions alone are insufficient to the effectual call. How can the

bare proposal of promises and threatenings convert a soul? This amounts

not to a new creation, or that power which raised Christ from the dead.

God not only persuades, but enables. Ezek 36:67. If God, in conversion,

should only morally persuade, that is, set good and evil before men,

then he does not put forth so much power in saving men as the devil

does in destroying them. Satan not only propounds tempting objects to

men, but concurs with his temptations: therefore he is said to work in

the children of disobedience.' Eph 2:2. The Greek word, to work,

signifies imperil vim, Camerarius, the power Satan has in carrying men

to sin. And shall not God's power in converting be greater than Satan's

power in seducing? The effectual call is mighty and powerful. God puts

forth a divine energy, nay, a kind of omnipotence; it is such a

powerful call, that the will of man has no power effectually to resist.

(2.) It is a high calling. I press toward the mark for the prize of the

high calling of God.' Phil 3:14. It is a high calling, (1:) Because we

are called to high exercises of religion; to be crucified to the world,

to live by faith, to do angels, work, to love God, to be living organs

of his praise, to hold communion with the Father and the Son. I John

1:1.

(2:) It is a high calling, because we are called to high privileges; to

justification and adoption, to be kings and priests unto God. We are

called to the fellowship of angels, to be co-heirs with Christ. Heb

12:22. Rom 8:17. They who are effectually called are candidates for

heaven, they are princes in all lands, though princes in disguise. Psa

45:16.

(3.) It is an immutable call. The gifts and calling of God are without

repentance;' Rom 11:19; that is, those gifts that flow from election

(as vocation and justification) are without repentance. God repented he

called Saul to be a king; but he never repents of calling a sinner to

be a saint.

Use one: See the necessity of the effectual call. A man cannot go to

heaven without it. First, we must be called before we are glorified.

Rom 8:80. A man uncalled can lay claim to nothing in the Bible but

threatenings: a man in the state of nature is not fit for heaven, no

more than a man in his filth and his rags is fit to come into a king's

presence. A man in his natural state is a God-hater, and is he fit for

heaven? Rom 1:10. Will God lay his enemy in his bosom?

Use two: Of trial whether we are effectually called. This we may know

by its antecedent and consequent.

(1.) By the antecedent. Before this effectual call, a humbling work

passes upon the soul. A man is convinced of sin, he sees he is a sinner

and nothing but a sinner; the fallow ground of his heart is broken up.

Jer 4:4. As the husbandman breaks the clods, then casts in the seed; so

God, by the convincing work of the law, breaks a sinner's heart, and

makes it fit to receive the seeds of grace. Such as were never

convinced are never called. He shall convince the world of sin.' John

16:6. Conviction is the first step in conversion.

(2.) By the consequents, which are two. (1:) He who is savingly called

answers to God's call. When God called Samuel, he answered, Speak,

Lord, thy servant heareth.' I Sam 3:30. When God calls thee to an act

of religion, dost thou run at God's call? I was not disobedient to the

heavenly vision.' Acts 26:19. If God calls to duties contrary to flesh

and blood, we obey his voice in everything; true obedience is like the

needle, which points that way which the loadstone draws. Such as are

deaf to God's call show they are not called by grace. (2) He who is

effectually called stops his ears to all other calls which would call

him off from God. As God has his call, so there are other contrary

calls. Satan calls by a temptation, lust calls, evil company calls; but

as the adder stops its ear against the voice of the charmer, so he who

is effectually called stops his ear against all the charms of the flesh

and the devil.

Use three: Of comfort to those who are the called of God. This call

evidences election. Whom he predestinated, them he also called.' Rom

8:80. Election is the cause of our vocation, and vocation is the sign

of our election. Election is the first link of the golden chain of

salvation, vocation is the second. He who has the second link of the

chain is sure of the first. As by the stream we are led to the

fountain, so by vocation we ascend to election. Calling is an earnest

and pledge of glory. God has chosen you to salvation, through

sanctification.' 2 Thess 2:13. We may read God's predestinating love in

the work of grace in our heart.

Use four: Let such as are called be thankful to God for that

unspeakable blessing. Be thankful to all the persons in the Trinity, to

the Father's mercy, to the Son's merit, to the Spirit's efficacy. To

make you thankful, consider, when you had offended God, he called you;

when God needed you not, but had millions of glorified saints and

angels to praise him, he called you. Consider what you were before God

called you. You were in your sins. When God called Paul, he found hum

persecuting; when he called Matthew, he found him at the receipt of

custom; when he called Zacchaeus, he found him using extortion. When

God calls a man by his grace, he finds him seeking after his lusts; as

when Saul was called to the kingdom, he was seeking the asses. That God

should call thee when thou west in the hot pursuit of sin, admire his

love, exalt his praise. Again, that God should call you, and pass by

others, what mercy is this! Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in

thy sight.' Matt 11:16. That God should pass by wise and noble persons,

of sweeter disposition, acuter parts, guilty of less vice, and that the

lot of free grace should fall upon you - oh astonishing love of God! It

was a great favour to Samuel that God called to him, and revealed his

mind to him, and passed by Eli, though a priest and a judge in Israel;

I Sam 3:3; so, that God should call to thee, a flagitious sinner, and

pass by others of higher birth and better morals, calls aloud for

praise. As God so governs the clouds, that he makes them rain upon one

place, and not upon another; so at a sermon the Lord opens the heart of

one, and another is no more affected with it than a deaf man with the

sound of music. Here is the banner of free grace displayed, and here

should the trophies of praise be erected. Elijah and Elisha were

walking together; on a sudden there came a chariot of fire, and carried

Elijah up to heaven, but left Elisha behind; so, when two are walking

together, husband and wife, father and child, that God should call one

by his grace, but leave the other, carry up one in a triumphant chariot

to heaven, but let the other perish eternally-oh infinite rich grace!

How should they that are called be affected with God's discriminating

love! How should the vessels of mercy run over with thankfulness! How

should they stand upon Mount Gerizim, blessing and praising God! Oh

begin the work of heaven here! Such as are patterns of mercy should be

trumpeters of praise. Thus Paul being called of God, and seeing what a

debtor he was to free grace, breaks forth into admiration and

gratitude. I Tim 1:12.

Use five: To the called. Walk worthy of your high calling. I beseech

you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called;' Eph

4:1; in two things.

(1.) Walk compassionately. Pity such as are yet uncalled. Hast thou a

child that God has not yet called, a wife, a servant? Weep over their

dying souls; they are in their blood, under the power of Satan.' Oh

pity them! Let their sins more trouble you than your own sufferings. If

you pity an ox or ass going astray, will you not pity a soul going

astray? Show your piety by your pity.

(2.) Walk holily. Yours is a holy calling. 2 Tim 1:1. You are called to

be saints, Rom 1:1. Show your vocation by a Bible conversation. Shall

not flowers smell sweeter than weeds? Shall not they who are ennobled

with grace have more fragrance in their lives than sinners? As he who

has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.' I

Pet 1:15. Oh dishonour not your high calling by any sordid carriage!

When Antigonus was going to defile himself with women, one told him, he

was a king's son.' Oh remember your dignity; called of God!' of the

blood-royal of heaven. Do nothing unworthy of your honourable calling.

Scipio refused the embraces of an harlot, because he was general of an

army. Abhor all motions to sin, because of your high calling. It is not

fit for those who are the called of God, to do as others; though others

of the Jews did drink wine, it was not fit for the Nazarite, because he

had a vow of separation upon him, and had promised abstinence. Though

Pagans and nominal Christians take liberty to sin, yet it is not fit

for those who are called out of the world, and have the mark of

election upon them, to do so. Ye are consecrated persons, your bodies

are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and your bodies must be a sacristy,

or holy of holies.

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3. Justification

'Being justified freely by his grace.' Rom 3:34.

Q-xxxiii: WHAT IS JUSTIFICATION?

A: It is an act of God's free grace, whereby he pardons all our sins,

and accepts us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of

Christ, imputed to us, and received by faith alone.

Justification is the very hinge and pillar of Christianity. An error

about justification is dangerous, like a defect in a foundation.

Justification by Christ is a spring of the water of life. To have the

poison of corrupt doctrine cast into this spring is damnable. It was a

saying of Luther, that after his death the doctrine of justification

would be corrupted.' In these latter times, the Arminians and Socinians

have cast a dead fly into this box of precious ointment.

I shall endeavour to follow the star of Scripture to light me through

this mysterious point.

What is meant by justification?

It is verbum forense, a word borrowed from law-courts, wherein a person

arraigned is pronounced righteous, and is openly absolved. God, in

justifying a person, pronounces him to be righteous, and looks upon him

as if he had not sinned.

What is the source of justification?

The causa, the inward impellant motive or ground of justification, is

the free grace of God: being justified freely by his grace.' Ambrose

expounds this, as not of the grace wrought within us, but the free

grace of God.' The first wheel that sets all the rest running is the

love and favour of God; as a king freely pardons a delinquent.

Justification is a mercy spun out of the bowels of free grace. God does

not justify us because we are worthy, but by justifying us makes us

worthy.

What is the ground, or that by which a sinner is justified?

The ground of our justification is Christ's satisfaction made to his

Father. If it be asked, how can it stand with God's justice and

holiness to pronounce us innocent when we are guilty? the answer is,

that Christ having made satisfaction for our fault, God may, in equity

and justice, pronounce us righteous. It is a just thing for a creditor

to discharge a debtor of the debt, when a satisfaction is made by the

surety.

But how was Christ's satisfaction meritorious, and so sufficient to

justify?

In respect of the divine nature. As he was man he suffered, as God he

satisfied. By Christ's death and merits, God's justice is more

abundantly satisfied than if we had suffered the pains of hell for

ever.

Wherein lies the method of our justification?

In the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us. This is the name

whereby he shall be called,' Jehovah Tzidkennu, THE LORD OUR

RIGHTEOUSNESS.' Jer 23:3. He is made to us righteousness.' I Cor 1:10.

This righteousness of Christ, which justifies us, is a better

righteousness than the angels; for theirs is the righteousness of

creatures, this of God.

What is the means or instrument of our justification?

Faith. Being justified by faith.' Rom 5:5: The dignity is not in faith

as a grace, but relatively, as it lays hold on Christ's merits.

What is the efficient cause of our justification?

The whole Trinity. All the persons in the blessed Trinity have a hand

in the justification of a sinner: opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt

indivisa. God the Father is said to justify. It is God that

justifieth.' Rom 8:83. God the Son is said to justify. By him all that

believe are justified.' Acts 13:39. God the Holy Ghost is said to

justify. But ye are justified by the Spirit of our God.' I Cor 6:61.

God the Father justifies, as he pronounces us righteous; God the Son

justifies, as he imputes his righteousness to us; and God the Holy

Ghost justifies, as he clears up our justification, and seals us up to

the day of redemption.

What is the end of our justification?

The end is, (1.) That God may inherit praise. To the praise of the

glory of his grace.' Eph 1:1. Hereby God raises the everlasting

trophies of his own honour. How will the justified sinner proclaim the

love of God, and make heaven ring with his praises!

(2.) That the justified person may inherit glory. Whom he justified,

them he also glorified.' Rom 8:80. God in justifying, not only absolves

a soul from guilt, but advances him to dignity: as Joseph was not only

loosed from prison, but made lord of the kingdom. Justification is

crowned with glorification.

Are we justified from eternity?

No: for, (1.) By nature we are under a sentence of condemnation. John

3:18. We could never have been condemned, if we were justified from

eternity.

(2.) The Scripture confines justification to those who believe and

repent. Repent, that your sins may be blotted out.' Acts 3:19.

Therefore their sins were uncancelled, and their persons unjustified,

till they did repent. Though God does not justify us for our

repentance, yet not without it. The Antinomians erroneously hold, that

we are justified from eternity. This doctrine is a key which opens the

door to all licentiousness; for what sins do they care not to commit,

so long as they hold they are ab aeterno justified whether they repent

or not?

II. Before I come to the uses, I shall lay down four maxims or

positions about justification.

[1] That justification confers a real benefit upon the person

justified. The acquitting and discharging of the debtor, by virtue of

the satisfaction made by the surety, is a real benefit to the debtor. A

robe of righteousness, and a crown of righteousness, are real benefits.

[2] All believers are alike justified: justificatio non recipit magis

et minus. [Justification does not apply to some more than to others.!

Though there are degrees in grace, yet not in justification; one is not

justified more than another; the weakest believer is as perfectly

justified as the strongest; Mary Magdalene is as much justified as the

Virgin Mary. This may be a cordial to a weak believer. Though thou hast

but a drachm of faith, thou art as truly justified as he who is of the

highest stature in Christ.

[3] Whomsoever God justifies, he sanctifies. But ye are sanctified, but

ye are justified.' I Cor 6:6: The Papists calumniate Protestants; they

report them to hold that men continuing in sin are justified; whereas

all our Protestant writers affirm, that righteousness imputed, for

justification, and righteousness inherent, for sanctification, must be

inseparably united. Holiness indeed is not the cause of our

justification, but it is the attendant; as the heat in the sun is not

the cause of its light, but it is the attendant. It is absurd to

imagine that God should justify a people, and they should still go on

in sin. If God should justify a people and not sanctify them, he would

justify a people whom he could not glorify. A holy God cannot lay a

sinner in his bosom. The metal is first refined, before the king's

stamp is put upon it; so the soul is first refined with holiness,

before God puts the royal stamp of justification upon it.

[4] Justification is inamissibilis; it is a fixed permanent thing, it

can never be lost. The Arminians hold an apostasy from justification;

to-day justified, tomorrow unjustified; to-day a Peter, to-morrow a

Judas; today a member of Christ, to-morrow a limb of Satan. This is a

most uncomfortable doctrine. Justified persons may fall from degrees of

grace, they may leave their first love, they may lose God's favour for

a time, but not lose their justification. If they are justified they

are elected; and they can no more fall from their justification than

from their election. If they are justified they have union with Christ,

and can a member of Christ be broken off? If one justified person may

fall away from Christ, all may; and so Christ would be a head without a

body.

Use one: See from hence, that there is nothing within us that could

justify, but something without us; not any righteousness inherent, but

imputed. We may as well look for a star in the earth as for

justification in our own righteousness. The Papists say we are

justified by works; but the apostle confutes it, for he says, not of

works, lest any man should boast.' Eph 2:2. The Papists say, the works

done by an unregenerate man indeed cannot justify him, but works done

by a regenerate man may justify.' This is most false, as may be proved

both by example and reason.

(1.) By example. Abraham was a regenerate man; but Abraham was not

justified by works, but by faith. Abraham believed God, and it was

counted to him for righteousness.' Rom 4:4. (2.) By reason. How can

those works justify us which defile us? Our righteousnesses are as

filthy rags.' Isa 64:4. Bona opera non praecedunt justificationem, sed

sequuntur justificatum: good works are not an usher to go before

justification, but a handmaid to follow it.

But does not the apostle James say that Abraham was justified by works?

The answer is easy. Works declare us to be righteous before men, but

they do not make us righteous before God. Works are evidences of our

justification, not causes. The only name graven upon the golden plate

of Christ our High Priest must be, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Use two: Of exhortation. (1.) Adore the infinite wisdom and goodness of

God that found out a way to justify us by rich grace and precious

blood.' We were all involved in guilt; none of us could plead

not-guilty; and being guilty, we lay under a sentence of death. Now

that the judge himself should find out a way to justify us, and the

creditor himself contrive a way to have the debt paid, and not distress

the debtor, should fill us with wonder and love. The angels admire the

mystery of free grace in this new way of justifying and saving lost

man, I Pet 1:12, and should not we, who are nearly concerned in it, and

on whom the benefit is devolved, cry out with the apostle, O the depth

of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!' &c.

(2.) Labour for this high privilege of justification. There is balm in

Gilead; Christ has laid down his blood as the price of our

justification; and he offers himself and all his merits to us, to

justify; he invites us to come to him; he has promised to give his

Spirit, to enable us to do what is required. Why then, sinners, will ye

not look after this great privilege of justification? Why starve in the

midst of plenty? Why perish when there is a remedy to save you? Would

not he be thought to be distracted, who having a pardon offered him,

only upon the acknowledgment of his fault, and promising amendment,

should bid the prince keep his pardon to himself; for his part, he was

in love with his chains and fetters, and would die? Thou who neglectest

justification offered thee freely by Christ in the gospel art this

infatuated person. Is the love of Christ to be slighted? Is thy soul,

is heaven worth nothing? Oh then look after justification through

Christ's blood!

Consider (1:) The necessity of being justified. If we are not

justified, we cannot be glorified. Whom he justified, them he also

glorified.' Rom 8:80. He who is outlawed, and all his goods

confiscated, must be brought into favour with his prince before he can

be restored to his former rights and liberties; so, we must have our

sins forgiven, and be brought into God's favour by justification,

before we can be restored to the liberty of the sons of God, and have a

right to that happiness we forfeited in Adam.

(2:) The utility and benefit. By justification we enjoy peace in our

conscience; a richer jewel than any prince wears in his crown. Being

justified by faith, we have peace with God.' Rom 5:5: Peace can sweeten

all our afflictions, it turns our water into wine. How happy is a

justified person who has the power of God to guard him, and the peace

of God to comfort him! Peace flowing from justification is an antidote

against the fear of death and hell. It is God that justifieth, who is

he that condemneth?' Rom 8:83, 34. Therefore labour for this

justification by Christ. This privilege is obtained by believing in

Christ. By him all that believe are justified.' Acts 13:39. Whom God

has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.' Rom

3:35. Faith unites us to Christ; and having union with his person we

partake of his merits, and the glorious salvation which comes by him.

Use three: Comfort to the justified. (1.) It is comfort in case of

failings. Alas! how defective are the godly! they come short in every

duty; but though believers should be humbled under their defects, they

should not despond. They are not to be justified by their duties or

graces, but by the righteousness of Christ. Their duties are mixed with

sin, but that righteousness which justifies them is a perfect

righteousness.

(2.) Comfort in case of hard censures. The world censures the people of

God as proud and hypocritical, and the troublers of Israel; but though

men censure and condemn the godly, yet God has justified them, and as

he has now justified them, so at the day of judgement he will openly

justify them, and pronounce them righteous before men and angels. God

is so just and holy a judge, that having once justified his people he

will never condemn them. Pilate justified Christ, saying, I find no

fault in him;' yet after this he condemned him; but God having publicly

justified his saints, he will never condemn them; for whom he

justified, them he also glorified.'

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4. Adoption

'As many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of

God, even to them that believe on his name.' John 1:12.

Having spoken of the great points of faith and justification, we come

next to adoption.

The qualification of the persons is, As many as received him.'

Receiving is put for believing, as is clear by the last words, to them

that believe in his name.' The specification of the privilege is, to

them gave he power to become the sons of God.' The Greek word for

power, exousia, signifies dignity and prerogative: he dignified them to

become the sons of God.

Our sonship differs from Christ's. He was the Son of God by eternal

generation, a son before time; but our sonship is, (1.) By creation. We

are his offspring.' Acts 17:78. This is no privilege; for men may have

God for their Father by creation, and yet have the devil for their

father. (2.) Our sonship is by adoption. He gave them power to become

the sons of God.'

Adoption is twofold. External and federal: as those who live in a

visible church, and make a profession of God, are sons. The children of

the kingdom shall be cast out.' Matt 8:12. Real and gracious: as they

are sons who are God's favourites, and are heirs of glory. Before I

proceed to the questions, I shall lay down three positions.

L Adoption takes in all nations. A first adoption was confined to the

people of the Jews, who alone were grafted into the true olive, and

were dignified with glorious privileges. Who are Israelites, to whom

pertaineth the adoption and the glory.' Rom 9:9. But now, in the time

of the gospel, the charter is enlarged, and the believing Gentiles are

within the line of communication, and have a right to the privileges of

adoption as well as the Jews. In every nation he that feareth God and

worketh righteousness is accepted with him.' Acts 10:05.

II. Adoption takes in both sexes, females as well as males. I will be a

father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters.' 2 Cor 6:18. I

have read, that in some countries, females are excluded from the

supreme dignity, as by the Salique law in France, no woman can inherit

a crown; but of spiritual privileges, females are as capable as males.

Every gracious soul (of whatever sex) lays claim to adoption, and has

an interest in God as a father. Ye shall be my sons and daughters,

saith the Lord Almighty.'

III. Adoption is an act of pure grace. Having predestinated us to the

adoption of children, according to the good pleasure of his will.' Eph

1:1. Adoption is a mercy spun out of the bowels of free grace. All by

nature are strangers, therefore have no right to sonship. God is

pleased to adopt one, and not another; to make one a vessel of glory,

another a vessel of wrath. The adopted heir may cry out, Lord, how is

it, that thou wilt show thyself to me, and not unto the world?'

What is this filiation or adoption?

It is taking a stranger into the relation of a son and heir; as Moses

was the adopted son of King Pharaoh's daughter, Exod 2:20, and Esther

was the adopted child of her cousin Mordecai. Esth 2:2. Thus God adopts

us into the family of heaven, and God in adopting us does two things:

(1.) He ennobles us with his name. He who is adopted bears the name of

him who adopts him. I will write on him the name of my God.' Rev 3:12.

(2.) God consecrates us with his Spirit. Whom he adopts, he anoints;

whom he makes sons, he makes saints. When a man adopts another for his

son and heir, he may put his name upon him, but he cannot put his

disposition into him; if he be of a morose rugged nature, he cannot

alter it; but whom God adopts he sanctifies; he not only gives a new

name but a new nature. 2 Pet 1:1. He turns the wolf into a lamb; he

makes the heart humble and gracious; he works such a change as if

another soul dwelt in the same body.

From what state does God take us when he adopts us?

From a state of sin and misery. Pharaoh's daughter took Moses out of

the ark of bulrushes in the water, and adopted him for her son. God did

not take us out of the water, but out of our blood, and adopted us.

Ezek 16:6. He adopted us from slavery: it is a mercy to redeem a slave,

but it is more to adopt him.

To what does God adopt us?

(1.) He adopts us to a state of excellence. It were much for God to

take a clod of dust, and make it a star; it is more for him to take a

piece of clay and sin, and adopt it for his heir.

(2.) God adopts us to a state of liberty. Adoption is a state of

freedom; a slave being adopted is made a free man. Thou art no more a

servant but a son.' Gal 4:4. How is an adopted son free? Not to do what

he lists; but he is free from the dominion of sin, the tyranny of

Satan, and the curse of the law. He is free in the manner of worship.

He has God's free Spirit, which makes him free and cheerful in the

service of God; he is joyful in the house of prayer.' Isa 56:6.

(3.) God adopts us to a state of dignity. He makes us heirs of promise,

he installs us into honour. Since thou west precious in my sight, thou

hast been honourable.' Isa 43:3. The adopted are God's treasure; Exod

19:9; his jewels; Mal 3:17; his first-born; Heb 12:23. They have angels

for their life-guards. Heb 1:14. They are of the blood royal of heaven.

I John 3:3. The Scripture has set forth their spiritual heraldry; they

have their escutcheon or coat-armour; sometimes the lion for courage;

Prov 28:1; sometimes the dove for meekness; Cant 2:14; sometimes the

eagle for flight; Isa 40:01: Thus you see their coat of arms displayed.

(4.) What is honour without inheritance? God adopts all his sons to an

inheritance. It is your father's good pleasure to give you the

kingdom.' Luke 12:22. It is no disparagement to be the sons of God. To

reproach the saints, is as if Shimei had reproached David when he was

going to be made king. Adoption ends in coronation. The kingdom God

gives his adopted sons and heirs excels all earthly monarchies.

(1:) In riches. The gates are of pearl, and the streets of pure gold,

as it were transparent glass.' Rev 21:1I.

(2:) In tranquillity. It is peaceable, and the white lily of peace is

the best flower in a prince's crown. Pax una triumphis innumeris melior

[One peace is better than innumerable triumphs]. No divisions at home,

or invasions abroad; no more the noise of the drum or cannon; but the

voice of harpers harping is the hieroglyphic of peace. Rev 14:4.

(3:) In stability. Other kingdoms are corruptible; though they have

heads of gold they have feet of clay; but the kingdom into which the

saints are adopted runs parallel with eternity, it is a kingdom that

cannot be shaken. Heb 12:28. The heirs of heaven reign for ever and

ever. Rev 22:5.

What is the organic or instrumental cause of adoption?

Faith interests us in the privilege of adoption. Ye are all the

children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.' Gal 3:36. Before faith is

wrought, we are spiritually illegitimate, we have no relation to God as

a father. An unbeliever may call God judge, but not father. Faith is

the affiliating grace; it confers upon us the title of sonship, and

gives us right to inherit.

Why is faith the instrument of adoption more than any other grace?

Faith is a quickening grace, the vital artery of the soul. The just

shall live by faith.' Hab 2:2. Life makes us capable of adoption, dead

children are never adopted. It makes us Christ's brethren, and so God

comes to be our Father.

Use one: (1.) See the amazing love of God, in making us his sons. Plato

gave God thanks that he had made him a man, and not only a man but a

philosopher; but it is infinitely more, that he should invest us with

the prerogative of sons. It is love in God to feed us, but more to

adopt us. Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us,

that we should be called the sons of God!' I John 3:3. It is an ecce

admirantis, a behold of wonder.

The wonder of God's love in adopting us will appear the more if we

consider these six things:

(1:) That God should adopt us when he had a Son of his own. Men adopt

because they want children, and desire to have some to bear their name;

but that God should adopt us when he had a Son of his own, the Lord

Jesus, is a wonder of love. Christ is called God's dear Son.' Col 1:13.

A Son more worthy than the angels. Being made so much better than the

angels.' Heb 1:1. Now, since God had a Son of his own, and such a Son

how wonderful God's love in adopting us! We needed a Father, but he did

not need sons.

(2:) Consider what we were before God adopted us. We were very

deformed; and a man will scarce adopt him for his heir that is crooked

and ill-favoured, but rather him that has some beauty. Mordecai adopted

Esther, because she was fair. When we were in our blood God adopted us.

When I saw thee polluted in thy blood, it was the time of love.' Ezek

16:6, 8. God did not adopt us when we were bespangled with the jewels

of holiness, and had the angels, glory upon us; but when we were black

as Ethiopians, diseased as lepers, was the time of his love.

(3:) That God should be at so great expense in adopting us. When men

adopt, they have only some deed sealed, and the thing is effected; but

when God adopts, it puts him to a far greater expense; it sets his

wisdom to work to find out a way to adopt us. It was no easy thing to

make heirs of wrath, heirs of the promise. When God had found out a way

to adopt, it was no easy way. Our adoption was purchased at a dear

rate; for when God was about to make us sons and heirs, he could not

seal the deed but by the blood of his own Son. Here is the wonder of

God's love in adopting us, that he should be at all this expense to

accomplish it.

(4:) That God should adopt his enemies. If a man adopts another for his

heir, he will not adopt his mortal enemy; but that God should adopt us,

when we were not only strangers, but enemies, is the wonder of his

love. For God to have pardoned his enemies had been much; but to adopt

them for his heirs, sets the angels in heaven wondering.

(5:) That God should take great numbers out of the devil's family, and

adopt them into the family of heaven. Christ is said to bring many sons

to glory. Heb 2:20. Men adopt usually but one heir, but God is resolved

to increase his family, he brings many sons to glory. God's adopting

millions is the wonder of love. Had but one been adopted, all of us

might have despaired; but he brings many sons to glory, which opens a

door of hope to us.

(6:) That God should confer so great honour upon us, in adopting us.

David thought it no small honour that he should be a king's son-in-law.

I Sam 18:18. But what honour to be the sons of the high God! The more

honour God has put upon us in adopting us, the more he has magnified

his love towards us. What honour that God has made us so near in

alliance to him, sons of God the Father, members of God the Son,

temples of God the Holy Ghost! that he has made us as the angels, Matt

22:20; nay, in some sense, superior to the angels! All this proclaims

the wonder of God's love in adopting us.

(2.) See the sad condition of such as live and die in unbelief They are

not the sons of God. To as many as received him, he gave power to

become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.' No

faith, no sonship. Unbelievers have no sign of sonship, they know not

God. All God's children know their Father, but the wicked do not know

him. They proceed from evil to evil, and know not me, saith the Lord.'

Jer 9:9. Unbelievers are dead in trespasses.' Eph 2:2. God has no dead

children; and not being children, they have no right to inherit.

Use two: Try whether you are adopted. All the world is divided into two

ranks, the sons of God, and the heirs of hell. To them he gave power to

become the sons of God.' John 1:12. Let us put ourselves on a trial. It

is no sign we are adopted sons, because we are sons of godly parents.

The Jews boasted that they were of Abraham's seed, and thought they

must needs be good, because they came of such a holy line. But adoption

does not come by blood. Many godly parents have wicked sons; Abraham

had an Ishmael; Isaac an Esau. The corn that is sown pure brings forth

grain with a husk; so from him who is holy the child springs that is

unholy. So that, as Jerome says, non nascimur filii [We are not born

sons]; we are not God's sons as we are born of godly parents, but by

adoption and grace. Well, then, let us try if we are the adopted sons

and daughters of God.

The first sign of adoption is obedience. A son obeys his father. I set

before the sons of the house of the Rechabites pots full of wine, and

cups, and said unto them, Drink ye wine. But they said, We will drink

no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying,

Ye shall drink no wine.' Jer 35:5. So, when God says drink not in sin's

enchanted cup, an adopted child says, my heavenly Father has commanded

me, and I dare not drink. A gracious soul not only believes God's

promise, but obeys his command. True child-like obedience must be

regular, which implies five things:

(1.) It must be done by a right rule. Obedience must have the word for

its rule. Lydius lapis [This is the touchstone]. To the law and to the

testimony.' Isa 8:8o. If our obedience be not according to the word, it

is offering up strange fire; it is will worship; and God will say, Who

has required this at your hand? The apostle condemns worshipping of

angels, which had a show of humility. Col 2:18. The Jews might say that

they were loath to be so bold as to go to God in their own persons;

they would be more humble, and prostrate themselves before the angels,

desiring them to be their mediators to God. Here was a show of humility

in their angel worship; but it was abominable, because they had no word

of God to warrant it; it was not obedience, but idolatry. Child-like

obedience is that which is consonant to our Father's revealed will.

(2.) It must be done from a right principle, from the noble principle

of faith. The obedience of faith.' Rom 16:66. Quicquid decorum est ex

fide proficiscitur [All acceptable works proceed from faith].

Augustine. A crab-tree may bear fruit fair to the eye, but it is sour

because it does not come from a good root. A moral person may give God

outward obedience, which to the eyes of others may seem glorious; but

his obedience is sour because it comes not from the sweet and pleasant

root of faith. A child of God gives him the obedience of faith, and

that meliorates and sweetens his services, and makes them come off with

a better relish. By faith Abel offered a better sacrifice than Cain.'

Heb 11:1.

(3.) It must be done to a right end. Finis specificat actionem [The end

determines the value of the deed]; the end of obedience is glorifying

God. That which has spoiled many glorious services, is, that the end

has been wrong. When thou doest shine alms, do not sound a trumpet, as

the hypocrites do, that they may have glory of men.' Matt 6:6. Good

works should shine, but not blaze. If I give my body to be burnt, and

have not charity, it profits me nothing.' I Cor 13:3. The same I must

say of a sincere aim; if I obey never so much, and have not a sincere

aim, it profits me nothing. True obedience looks at God in all things.

That Christ may be magnified.' Phil 1:10. Though a child of God shoots

short, yet he takes a right aim.

(4.) True child-like obedience must be uniform. A child of God makes

conscience of one command as well as another. Quicquid propter Deum fit

aequaliter fit [All things done for God are done with equal zeal]. All

God's commands have the same stamp of divine authority upon them; and

if I obey one precept because my heavenly Father commands me, by the

same rule I must obey all. As the blood runs through all the veins of

the body, and the sun in the firmament runs through all the signs of

the zodiac; so true child-like obedience runs through the first and

second table. When I have respect unto all thy commandments.' Psalm

119:9. To obey God in some things of religion and not in others, shows

an unsound heart; like Esau, who obeyed his father in bringing him

venison, but not in a greater matter, as the choice of his wife.

Child-like obedience moves towards every command of God, as the needle

points that way which the loadstone draws. If God call to duties which

are cross to flesh and blood, if we are children, we shall still obey

our Father.

But who can obey God in all things?

Though an adopted heir of heaven cannot obey every precept perfectly,

yet he does evangelically. He approves of every command. I consent to

the law, that it is good.' Rom 7:16. He delights in every command. O

how love I thy law!' Psalm 119:97. His desire is to obey every command.

O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!' Psalm 119:9.

Wherein he comes short, he looks up to Christ's blood to supply his

defects. This is evangelical obedience; which, though it be not to

satisfaction, it is to acceptation.

(5.) True childlike obedience is constant. Blessed is he that doeth

righteousness at all times.' Psalm 106:6. Child-like obedience is not

like a high colour in a fit, which is soon over; but like a right

sanguine complexion, which abides; and like the fire on the altar,

which was kept always burning. Lev 6:13.

The second sign of adoption is to love to be in our Father's presence.

The child who loves his father is never so well as when he is near him.

Are we children? We love the presence of God in his ordinances. In

prayer we speak to God, in the preaching of his word he speaks to us;

and how does every child of God delight to hear his Father's voice! My

soul thirsteth for thee, to see thy glory so as I have seen thee in the

sanctuary.' Psalm 63:3, 2. Such as disregard ordinances are not God's

children, because they care not to be in God's presence. Cain went out

from the presence of the Lord.' Gen 4:16. Not that he could go out of

God's sight, but the meaning is, Cain went out from the church and

people of God, where the Lord gave visible tokens of his presence.'

The third sign of adoption is to have the guidance of God's Spirit. As

many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.' Rom

8:14. It is not enough that the child have life, but it must be led

every step by the nurse; so the adopted child must not only be born of

God, but have the manuduction of the Spirit to lead him in a course of

holiness. I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms.' Hos

11:1. As Israel was led by the pillar of fire, so God's children are

led by the Spirit. The adopted ones need God's Spirit to lead them,

since they are apt to go wrong. The fleshy part inclines to sin; the

understanding and conscience are to guide the will, but the will is

imperious and rebels; therefore, God's children need the Spirit to

check corruption and lead them in the right way. As wicked men are led

by the evil spirit - the spirit of Satan led Herod to incest, Ahab to

murder, Judas to treason - so the good Spirit leads God's children into

virtuous actions.

But enthusiasts pretend to be led by the Spirit, when it is an ignis

fatuus, a delusion.

The Spirit's guidance is agreeable to the Word; enthusiasts leave the

Word. Thy Word is truth.' John 17:17. The Spirit guides into all

truth.' John 16:13. The Word's teaching and the Spirit's leading agree

together.

The fourth sign is, that if we are adopted we have an entire love to

all God's children. Love the brotherhood.' I Pet 2:17. We bear

affection to God's children, though they have some infirmities. There

are spots in God's children; Deut 32:2; but we must love the beautiful

face of holiness though it has a scar in it. If we are adopted, we love

the good we see in God's children: we admire their graces, we pass by

their imprudencies. If we cannot love them because they have some

failings, how do we think God can love us? Can we plead exemption? By

these signs we know our adoption.

Use three: Rejoice in the benefits of adoption.

What are the benefits which accrue to God's children?

(1.) They have great privileges. King's children have great privileges

and freedoms. They do not pay custom. Matt 17:75. God's children are

privileged persons, they are privileged from the hurt of everything.

Nothing shall by any means hurt you.' Luke 10:19. Hit you it may, but

not hurt you. There shall no evil befall thee.' Psa 91:10. God says

not, No affliction shall befall his children, but, No evil; the hurt

and poison of it is taken away. Affliction to a wicked man has evil in

it, it makes him worse; it makes him curse and blaspheme. Men were

scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God.' Rev 16:6.

But no evil befalls a child of God; he is bettered by affliction. Heb

12:20. The furnace makes gold purer. Again, no evil befalls the

adopted, because no condemnation. It is God that justifieth; who is he

that condemneth?' Rom 8:83. What a blessed privilege is this, to be

freed from the sting of affliction, and the curse of the law! to be in

such a condition that nothing can hurt us! When the dragon has poisoned

the water, the unicorn with his horn extracts and draws out the poison;

so Jesus Christ has drawn out the poison of every affliction, that it

cannot injure the saints.

(2.) The second benefit, if we are adopted, is that we have an interest

in all the promises. The promises are children's bread. Believers are

heirs of the promises.' Heb 6:17. The promises are sure. God's truth,

which is the brightest pearl in his crown, is pawned in a promise. The

promises are suitable, like a medical garden, in which there is no

disease but there is some herb to cure it. In the dark night of

desertion God has promised to be a sun; in temptation, to tread down

Satan. Rom 16:60. Does sin prevail? He has promised to take away its

kingly power. Rom 6:14. Oh the heavenly comforts which are distilled

from the promises! But who has a right to these? Believers only are

heirs of the promise. There is not a promise in the Bible but a

believer may say, This is mine.

Use four: Extol and magnify God's mercy, who has adopted you into his

family; who, of slaves, has made you sons; of heirs of hell, heirs of

the promise. Adoption is a free gift. He gave them power, or dignity,

to become the sons of God. As a thread of silver runs through a whole

piece of work, so free grace runs through the whole privilege of

adoption. Adoption is a greater mercy than Adam had in paradise; he was

a son by creation, but here is a further sonship by adoption. To make

us thankful consider, in civil adoption there is some worth and

excellence in the person to be adopted; but there was no worth in us,

neither beauty, nor parentage, nor virtue; nothing in us to move God to

bestow the prerogative of sonship upon us. We have enough in us to move

God to correct us, but nothing to move him to adopt us, therefore exalt

free grace; begin the work of angels here; bless him with your praises

who has blessed you in making you his sons and daughters.

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5. Sanctification

'For this is the will of God, even your sanctification.' I Thess 4:4.

The word sanctification signifies to consecrate and set apart to a holy

use: thus they are sanctified persons who are separated from the world,

and set apart for God's service. Sanctification has a privative and a

positive part.

I. A privative part, which lies in the purging out of sin. Sin is

compared to leaven, which sours; and to leprosy, which defiles.

Sanctification purges out the old leaven.' I Cor 5:5. Though it takes

not away the life, yet it takes away the love of sin.

II. A positive part, which is the spiritual refining of the soul; which

in Scripture is called a renewing of our mind,' Rom 12:2, and a

partaking of the divine nature.' 2 Pet 1:1. The priests in the law were

not only washed in the great laver, but adorned with glorious apparel.

Exod 28:8; so sanctification not only washes from sin, but adorns with

purity.

What is sanctification?

It is a principle of grace savingly wrought, whereby the heart becomes

holy, and is made after God's own heart. A sanctified person bears not

only God's name, but his image. In opening the nature of

sanctification, I shall lay down these seven positions: -

(1.) Sanctification is a supernatural thing; it is divinely infused. We

are naturally polluted, and to cleanse, God takes to be his

prerogative. I am the Lord which sanctify you.' Lev 21:1. Weeds grow of

themselves. Flowers are planted. Sanctification is a flower of the

Spirit's planting, therefore it is called, The sanctification of the

Spirit.' I Pet 1:1.

(2.) Sanctification is an intrinsic thing; it lies chiefly in the

heart. It is called the adorning the hidden man of the heart.' I Pet

3:3. The dew wets the leaf, the sap is hid in the root; so the religion

of some consists only in externals, but sanctification is deeply rooted

in the soul. In the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.'

Psalm 51:1.

(3.) Sanctification is an extensive thing: it spreads into the whole

man. The God of peace sanctify you wholly.' I Thess 5:53. As original

corruption has depraved all the faculties - the whole head is sick, the

whole heart faint,' no part sound, as if the whole mass of blood were

corrupted - so sanctification goes over the whole soul. After the fall,

there was ignorance in the mind; but in sanctification, we are light in

the Lord.' Eph 5:5. After the fall, the will was depraved; there was

not only impotence to good, but obstinacy. In sanctification, there is

a blessed pliableness in the will; it symbolizes and comports with the

will of God. After the fall, the affections were misplaced on wrong

objects; in sanctification, they are turned into a sweet order and

harmony, the grief placed on sin, the love on God, the joy on heaven.

Thus sanctification spreads itself as far as original corruption; it

goes over the whole soul: the God of peace sanctify you wholly.' He is

not a sanctified person who is good only in some part, but who is all

over sanctified; therefore, in Scripture, grace is called a new man,'

not a new eye or a new tongue, but a new man.' Col 3:30. A good

Christian, though he be sanctified but in part, yet in every part.

(4.) Sanctification is an intense and ardent thing. Qualitates sunt in

subjecto intensive [Its properties burn within the believer]. Fervent

in spirit.' Rom 12:2: Sanctification is not a dead form, but it is

inflamed into zeal. We call water hot, when it is so in the third or

fourth degree; so he is holy whose religion is heated to some degree,

and his heart boils over in love to God.

(5.) Sanctification is a beautiful thing. It makes God and angels fall

in love with us. The beauties of holiness.' Psa 110:0. As the sun is to

the world, so is sanctification to the soul, beautifying and

bespangling it in God's eyes. That which makes God glorious must needs

make us so. Holiness is the most sparkling jewel in the Godhead.

Glorious in holiness.' Exod 15:11: Sanctification is the first fruit of

the Spirit; it is heaven begun in the soul. Sanctification and glory

differ only in degree: sanctification is glory in the seed, and glory

is sanctification in the flower. Holiness is the quintessence of

happiness.

(6.) Sanctification is an abiding thing. His seed remaineth in him.' I

John 3:3. He who is truly sanctified, cannot fall from that state.

Indeed, seeming holiness may be lost, colours may wash off,

sanctification may suffer an eclipse. Thou hast left thy first love.'

Rev 2:2. True sanctification is a blossom of eternity. The anointing

which ye have received abideth in you.' I John 2:27. He who is truly

sanctified can no more fall away than the angels which are fixed in

their heavenly orbs.

(7.) Sanctification is a progressive thing. It is growing; it is

compared to seed which grows: first the blade springs up, then the ear,

then the ripe corn in the ear; such as are already sanctified may be

more sanctified. 2 Cor 7:7: Justification does not admit of degrees; a

believer cannot be more elected or justified than he is, but he may be

more sanctified than he is. Sanctification is still increasing, like

the morning sun, which grows brighter to the full meridian. Knowledge

is said to increase, and faith to increase. Col 1:10; 2 Cor 10:05. A

Christian is continually adding a cubit to his spiritual stature. It is

not with us as it was with Christ, who received the Spirit without

measure; for Christ could not be more holy than he was. We have the

Spirit only in measure, and may be still augmenting our grace; as

Apelles, when he had drawn a picture, would be still mending it with

his pencil. The image of God is drawn but imperfectly in us, therefore

we must be still mending it, and drawing it in more lively colours.

Sanctification is progressive; if it does not grow, it is because it

does not live. Thus you see the nature of sanctification.

What are the counterfeits of sanctification?

There are things which look like sanctification, but are not.

(1.) The first counterfeit of sanctification is moral virtue. To be

just, to be temperate, to be of a fair deportment, not to have one's

escutcheon blotted with ignominious scandal is good, but not enough: it

is not sanctification. A field-flower differs from a garden-flower.

Heathens have attained to morality; as Cato, Socrates, and Aristides.

Civility is but nature refined; there is nothing of Christ there, and

the heart may be foul and impure. Under these fair leaves of civility

the worm of unbelief may be hid. A moral person has a secret antipathy

against grace: he hates vice, and he hates grace as much as vice. The

snake has a fine colour, but a sting. A person adorned and cultivated

with moral virtue, has a secret spleen against sanctity. The Stoics who

were the chief of the moralized heathens, were the bitterest enemies

Paul had. Acts 17:18.

(2.) The second counterfeit of sanctification is superstitious

devotion. This abounds in Popery; adorations, images, altars,

vestments, and holy water, which I look upon as a religious frenzy, and

is far from sanctification. It does not put any intrinsic goodness into

a man, it does not make a man better. If the legal purifications and

washings, which were of God's own appointing, did not make those who

used them more holy; and the priests, who wore holy garments, and had

holy oil poured on them, were not more holy without the anointing of

the Spirit; then surely those superstitious innovations in religion,

which God never appointed, cannot contribute any holiness to men. A

superstitious holiness costs no great labour; there is nothing of the

heart in it. If to tell over a few beads, or bow to an image, or

sprinkle themselves with holy water were sanctification, and all that

is required of them that should be saved, then hell would be empty,

none would come there.

(3.) The third counterfeit of sanctification is hypocrisy; when men

make a pretence of that holiness which they have not. As a comet may

shine like a star, a lustre may shine from their profession that

dazzles the eyes of the beholders. Having a form of godliness, but

denying the power.' 2 Tim 3:3. These are lamps without oil; whited

sepulchres, like the Egyptian temples, which had fair outsides, but

within spiders and apes. The apostle speaks of true holiness. Eph 4:44,

implying that there is holiness which is spurious and feigned. Thou

hast a name to live, but art dead;' Rev 3:1; like pictures and statues

which are destitute of a vital principle. Clouds without water.' Jude

12. They pretend to be full of the Spirit, but are empty clouds. This

show of sanctification is a self-delusion. He who takes copper instead

of gold, wrongs himself; the most counterfeit saint deceives others

while he lives, but deceives himself when he dies. To pretend to

holiness when there is none is a vain thing. What were the foolish

virgins better for their blazing lamps, when they wanted oil? What is

the lamp of profession without the oil of saving grace? What comfort

will a show of holiness yield at last? Will painted gold enrich?

painted wine refresh him that is thirsty? or painted holiness be a

cordial at the hour of death? A pretence of sanctification is not to be

rested in. Many ships, that have had the name of the Hope, the

Safeguard, the Triumph, have been cast away upon rocks; so, many who

have had the name of saints, have been cast into hell.

(4.) The fourth counterfeit of sanctification is restraining grace,

when men forbear vice, though they do not hate it. This may be the

sinner's motto, Fain I would, but I dare not.' The dog has a mind to

the bone, but is afraid of the cudgel; so men have a mind to lust, but

conscience stands as the angel, with a flaming sword, and affrights:

they have a mind to revenge, but the fear of hell is a curb-bit to

check them. There is no change of heart; sin is curbed, but not cured.

A lion may be in chains, but is a lion still.

(5.) The fifth counterfeit of sanctification is common grace, which is

a slight, transient work of the Spirit, but does not amount to

conversion. There is some light in the judgement, but it is not

humbling; some checks in the conscience, but they are not awakening.

This looks like sanctification, but is not. Men have convictions

wrought in them, but they break loose from them again, like the deer,

which, being shot, shakes out the arrow. After conviction, men go into

the house of mirth, take the harp to drive away the spirit of sadness,

and so all dies and comes to nothing.

Wherein appears the necessity of sanctification?

In six things: (1.) God has called us to it. Who has called us to glory

and virtue; 2 Pet 1:1; to virtue, as well as glory. God has not called

us to uncleanness, but unto holiness.' I Thess 4:4. We have no call to

sin, we may have a temptation, but no call; no call to be proud, or

unclean; but we have a call to be holy.

(2.) Without sanctification there is no evidencing our justification.

Justification and sanctification go together. But ye are sanctified,

but ye are justified.' I Cor 6:11. Pardoning iniquity,' Mic 7:18; there

is justification. He will subdue our iniquities,' 5:19; there is

sanctification. Out of Christ's side came blood and water,' John 19:94;

blood for justification; water for sanctification. Such as have not the

water out of Christ's side to cleanse them, shall never have the blood

out of his side to save them.

(3.) Without sanctification we have no title to the new covenant. The

covenant of grace is our charter for heaven. The tenure of the covenant

is, That God will be our God. But who are interested in the covenant,

and may plead the benefit of it? Sanctified persons only. A new heart

will I give you, and I will put my Spirit within you, and I will be

your God.' Ezek 36:66. If a man makes a will, none but such persons as

are named in the will can lay claim to the will; so God makes a will

and testament, but it is restrained and limited to such as are

sanctified; and it is high presumption for any one else to lay claim to

the will.

(4.) There is no going to heaven without sanctification. Without

holiness no man shall see the Lord.' Heb 12:14. God is a holy God, and

he will suffer no unholy creature to come near him. A king will not

suffer a man with plague-sores to approach into his presence. Heaven is

not like Noah's ark, where the clean beasts and the unclean entered. No

unclean beasts come into the heavenly ark; for though God suffer the

wicked to live awhile on the earth, he will never suffer heaven to be

pestered with such vermin. Are they fit to see God who wallow in

wickedness? Will God ever lay such vipers in his bosom? Without

holiness no man shall see the Lord.' It must be a clear eye that sees a

bright object: only a holy heart can see God in his glory. Sinners may

see God as an enemy, but not as a friend; may have an affrighting

vision of him, but not a beatific vision; they may see the flaming

sword, but not the mercy-seat. Oh then, what need is there of

sanctification!

(s.) Without sanctification all our holy things are defiled. Unto them

that are defiled is nothing pure.' Tit 1:1. Under the law, if a man who

was unclean by a dead body carried a piece of holy flesh in his skirt,

the holy flesh would not cleanse him, but it would be polluted by him.

Hag 2:12, 13. This is an emblem of a sinner's polluting his holy

offering. A foul stomach turns the best food into ill humours; so an

unsanctified heart pollutes prayers, alms, sacraments. This evinces the

necessity of sanctification. Sanctification makes our holy things

accepted. A holy heart is the altar which sanctifies the offering; if

not to satisfaction, to acceptation.

(6.) Without sanctification we can show no sign of our election. 2

Thess 2:13. Election is the cause of our salvation, sanctification is

our evidence. Sanctification is the ear-mark of Christ's elect sheep.

What are the signs of sanctification?

First, such as are sanctified can remember a time when they were

unsanctified. Tit 3:3. We were in our blood, and then God washed us

with water, and anointed us with oil. Ezek 16:6. Those trees of

righteousness that blossom and bear almonds, can remember when they

were like Aaron's dry rod, not one blossom of holiness growing. A

sanctified soul can remember when it was estranged from God through

ignorance and vanity, and when free grace planted this flower of

holiness in it.

A second sign of sanctification is the indwelling of the Spirit. The

Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.' 2 Tim 1:14. As the unclean spirit

dwells in the wicked and carries them to pride, lust, revenge - the

devil enters into these swine, Acts 5:5- so the Spirit of God dwells in

the elect, as their guide and comforter. The Spirit possesses the

saints. God's Spirit sanctifies the fancy, causing it to mint holy

thoughts; and sanctifies the will by putting a new bias upon it,

whereby it is inclined to good. He who is sanctified has the influence

of the Spirit, though not the essence.

A third sign of sanctification is an antipathy against sin. Psa

119:904. A hypocrite may leave sin, yet love it; as a serpent casts its

coat, but keeps its sting; but a sanctified person can say he not only

leaves sin, but loathes it. As there are antipathies in nature between

the vine and laurel, so in a sanctified soul there is a holy antipathy

against sin; and antipathies can never be reconciled. Because a man has

an antipathy against sin, he cannot but oppose it, and seek the

destruction of it.

A fourth sign of sanctification is the spiritual performance of duties,

with the heart, and from a principle of love. The sanctified soul prays

out of a love to prayer, and calls the Sabbath a delight.' Isa 58:13. A

man may have gifts to admiration; he may speak as an angel dropped out

of heaven, yet he may be carnal in spiritual things; his services may

not come from a renewed principle, nor be carried upon the wings of

delight in duty. A sanctified soul worships God in the Spirit. I Pet

2:2. God judges not of our duties by their length, but by the love from

which they spring.

A fifth sign is a well-ordered life. Be ye holy in all manner of

conversation.' I Pet 1:15. Where the heart is sanctified the life will

be so too. The temple had gold without as well as within. As in a piece

of coin there is not only the king's image within the ring, but his

superscription without; so where there is sanctification, there is not

only God's image in the heart, but a superscription of holiness written

in the life. Some say they have good hearts, but their lives are

vicious. There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet

is not washed from their filthiness.' Prov 30:12. If the water be foul

in the bucket, it cannot be clean in the well. The king's daughter is

all glorious within.' Psa 45:13. There is holiness of heart. Her

clothing is of wrought gold.' There is holiness of life. Grace is most

beautiful when its light so shines that others may see it; this adorns

religion, and makes proselytes to the faith.

A sixth sign is steadfast resolution. He is resolved never to part with

his holiness. Let others reproach it, he loves it the more. Let water

be sprinkled on the fire, it burns the more. He says, as David, when

Michal reproached him for dancing before the ark, If this be to be

vile, I will yet be more vile.' 2 Sam 6:62. Let others persecute him

for his holiness, he says as Paul, None of these things move me.' Acts

20:04. He prefers sanctity before safety, and had rather keep his

conscience pure than his skin whole. He says as Job, My integrity I

will hold fast, and not let it go,' 27:7. He will rather part with his

life than his conscience.

Use one: The main thing a Christian should look after is

sanctification. This is the unum necessarium, the one thing needful.'

Sanctification is our purest complexion, it makes us as the heaven,

bespangled with stars; it is our nobility, by it we are born of God,

and partake of the divine nature; it is our riches, therefore compared

to rows of jewels, and chains of gold. Cant 1:10. It is our best

certificate for heaven. What evidence have we else to show? Have we

knowledge? So has the devil. Do we profess religion? Satan often

appears in Samuel's mantle, and transforms himself into an angel of

light. But our certificate for heaven is sanctification. Sanctification

is the firstfruits of the Spirit; the only coin that will pass current

in the other world. Sanctification is the evidence of God's love. We

cannot know God's love by giving us health, riches, success; but by

drawing his image of sanctification on us by the pencil of the Holy

Ghost it is known.

Oh the misery of such as are destitute of a principle of

sanctification! They are spiritually dead. Eph 2:2: Though they

breathe, yet they do not live. The greatest part of the world remains

unsanctified. The world lies in wickedness.' I John 5:19. That is, the

major par of the world. Many call themselves Christians, but blot out

the word saints. You may as well call him a man who wants reason, as

him a Christian who wants grace. Nay which is worse, some are buoyed up

to such a height of wickedness, that they hate and deride

sanctification. They hate it. It is bad to want it, it is worse to hate

it. They embrace the form of religion, but hate the power. The vulture

hates sweet smells, so do they the perfumes of holiness. They say in

derision, These are your holy ones! To deride sanctification argues a

high degree of atheism, and is a black brand of reprobation. Scoffing

Ishmael was cast out of Abraham's family, Gen 21:1; and such as scoff

at holiness shall be cast out of heaven.

Use two: Above all things pursue after sanctification. Seek grace more

than gold. Keep her, for she is thy life.' Prov 4:13.

What are the chief inducements to sanctification?

(1.) It is the will of God that we should be holy, as saith the text,

This is the will of God, your sanctification.' As God's word must be

the rule, so his will, the reason of our actions. This is the will of

God, our sanctification. Perhaps it is not the will of God we should be

rich, but it is his will that we should be holy. God's will is our

warrant.

(2.) Jesus Christ has died for our sanctification. Christ shed his

blood to wash off our impurity. The cross was both an altar and a

laver. Who gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity.' Tit

2:14. If we could be saved without holiness, Christ needed not have

died. Christ died, not only to save us from wrath, but from sin.

(3.) Sanctification makes us resemble God. It was Adam's sin that he

aspired to be like God in omniscience, but we must endeavour to be like

him in sanctity. It is a clear glass in which we can see a face; it is

a holy heart in which something of God can be seen. Nothing of God can

be seen in an unsanctified man, but you may see Satan's picture in him.

Envy is the devil's eye, hypocrisy his cloven foot; but nothing of

God's image can be seen in him.

(4.) Sanctification is that which God bears a great love to. Not any

outward ornaments, high blood, or worldly grandeur, draws God's love,

but a heart embellished with holiness does. Christ never admired

anything but the beauty of holiness: he slighted the glorious buildings

of the temple, but admired the woman's faith, and said, O woman, great

is thy faith.' Amor fundatur similitudine. As a king delights to see

his image upon a piece of coin, so where God sees his likeness he gives

his love. The Lord has two heavens to dwell in, and the holy heart is

one of them.

(5.) Sanctification is the only thing that makes us differ from the

wicked. God's people have his seal upon them. The foundation of God

standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.

And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from

iniquity.' 2 Tim 2:19. The godly are scaled with a double seal, a seal

of election, The Lord knoweth who are his,' and a seal of

sanctification, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart

from iniquity.' This is the name by which God's people are known, The

people of thy holiness.' Isa 63:18. As chastity distinguishes a

virtuous woman from a harlot, so sanctification distinguishes God's

people from others. Ye have received an unction from the Holy One.' I

John 2:20.

(6.) It is as great a shame to have the name of a Christian, yet want

sanctity, as to have the name of a steward and want fidelity; or the

name of a virgin, and want chastity. It exposes religion to reproach,

to be baptized into the name of Christ while unholy, and to have eyes

full of tears on a sabbath, and on a week-day eyes full of adultery: 2

Pet 2:24; to be so devout at the Lord's table, as if men were stepping

into heaven, and so profane the week after, as if they came out of

hell; to have the name of Christians while unholy is a scandal to

religion, and makes the ways of God evil spoken of.

(7.) Sanctification fits for heaven: Who has called us to glory and

virtue.' 2 Pet 1:1. Glory is the throne, and sanctification is the step

by which we ascend to it. As you first cleanse the vessel, and then

pour in the wine; so God first cleanses us by sanctification, and then

pours in the wine of glory. Solomon was first anointed with oil, and

then was a king. I Kings 1:19. First God anoints us with the holy oil

of his Spirit, and then sets the crown of happiness upon our head.

Pureness of heart and seeing God are linked together. Matt 5:5.

How may sanctification be attained?

(1.) Be conversant in the word of God. Sanctify them through thy

truth.' John 17:17. The word is both a glass to show us the spots of

our soul, and a laver to wash them away. The word has a transforming

virtue in it; it irradiates the mind, and consecrates the heart.

(2.) Get faith in Christ's blood. Having purified their hearts by

faith.' Acts 15:5. She in the gospel who touched the hem of Christ's

garment was healed. A touch of faith purifies. Nothing can have a

greater force upon the heart, to sanctify it, than faith. If I believe

Christ and his merits are mine, how can I sin against him? Justifying

faith does that in a spiritual sense which miraculous faith does, it

removes mountains, the mountains of pride, lust, envy. Faith and the

love of sin are inconsistent.

(3.) Breathe after the Spirit. It is called the sanctification of the

Spirit.' 2 Thess 2:13. The Spirit sanctifies the heart, as lightning

purifies the air, and as fire refines metals. Omne agens generat sibi

simile. [The Spirit at work generates its own likeness everywhere.] The

Spirit stamps the impression of its own sanctity upon the heart, as the

seal prints its likeness upon the wax. The Spirit of God in a man

perfumes him with holiness, and makes his heart a map of heaven.

(4.) Associate with sanctified persons. They may, by their counsel,

prayers, and holy example, be a means to make you holy. As the

communion of saints is in our creed, so it should be in our company. He

that walketh with the wise shall be wise.' Prov 13:30. Association

begets assimilation.

(5.) Pray for sanctification. Job propounds a question. Who can bring a

clean thing out of an unclean?' Job 14:4. God can do it. Out of an

unholy heart he can produce grace. Oh! make David's prayer your own,

Create in me a clean heart, O God.' Psa 51:10. Lay thy heart before the

Lord, and say, Lord, my unsanctified heart pollutes all it touches. I

am not fit to live with such a heart, for I cannot honour thee; nor die

with such a heart, for I cannot see thee. Oh create in me a new heart!

Lord, consecrate my heart, and make it thy temple, and thy praises

shall be sung there for ever. Use three: Has God brought a clean thing

out of an unclean? has he sanctified you? Wear this jewel of

sanctification with thankfulness. Giving thanks to the Father, who has

made us meet for the inheritance,' &c. Col 1:12. Christian, thou

couldst defile thyself, but not sanctify thyself; but God has done it,

he has not only chained up sin, but changed thy nature, and made thee

as a king's daughter, all glorious within. He has put upon thee the

breastplate of holiness, which, though it may be shot at, can never be

shot through. Are there any here that are sanctified? God has done more

for you than millions, who may be illumined, but are not sanctified. He

has done more for you than if he had made you the sons of princes, and

caused you to ride upon the high places of the earth. Are you

sanctified? Heaven is begun in you; for happiness is nothing but the

quintessence of holiness. Oh, how thankful should you be to God! Do as

that blind man in the gospel did after he had received his sight, who

followed Christ, glorifying God.' Luke 18:83. Make heaven ring with

God's praises.

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6. Assurance

Q-xxxvi: WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS WHICH FLOW FROM SANCTIFICATION?

A: Assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost,

increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end.

The first benefit flowing from sanctification is assurance of God's

love.

'Give diligence to make your calling and election sure.' 2 Pet 1:10.

Sanctification is the seed, assurance is the flower which grows out of

it: assurance is a consequent of sanctification. The saints of old had

it. We know that we know him.' I John 2:2. I know whom I have

believed.' 2 Tim 1:12. Here was sensus fidei, the reflex act of faith,:

and Christ has loved me.' Gal 2:20. Here is faith flourishing into

assurance. Aecolampadius, when sick, pointed to his heart, saying, Hic

sat lucis, Here I have light enough, meaning comfort and assurance.

Have all sanctified persons assurance?

They have a right to it, and I incline to believe that all have it in

some degree before their last expiring; though their comfort may be so

feeble, and their vital spirits so weak, that they cannot express what

they feel. But I dare not positively affirm that all have assurance in

the first moment of their sanctification. A letter may be written, when

it is not sealed; so grace may be written in the heart, and the Spirit

may not set the seal of assurance to it. God is a free agent, and may

give or suspend assurance pro licito, as he pleases. Where there is the

sanctifying work of the Spirit, he may withhold the sealing work,

partly to keep the soul humble; partly to punish our careless walking -

as when we neglect our spiritual watch, grow remiss in duty, and walk

under a cloud, we quench the graces of the Spirit, and God withholds

the comforts; and partly to put a difference between earth and heaven.

This I the rather speak to bear up the hearts of God's people, who are

dejected because they have no assurance. You may have the water of the

Spirit poured on you in sanctification, though not the oil of gladness

in assurance. There may be faith of adherence, and not of evidence;

there may be life in the root, when there is no fruit in the branches

to be seen; so faith in the heart, when no fruit of assurance.

What is assurance?

It is not any vocal or audible voice, or brought to us by the help of

an angel or revelation. Assurance consists of a practical syllogism, in

which the word of God makes the major, conscience the minor, and the

Spirit of God, the conclusion. The Word says, He that fears and loves

God is loved of God;' there is the major proposition; then conscience

makes the minor, But I fear and love God;' then the Spirit makes the

conclusion, Therefore thou art loved of God;' and this is what the

apostle calls The witnessing of the Spirit with our spirits, that we

are his children.' Rom 8:16.

Has a sanctified soul such an assurance as excludes all doubting?

He has that which bears up his heart from sinking, he has such an

earnest of the Spirit, that he would not part with it for the richest

prize; but his assurance, though infallible, is not perfect. There will

be sometimes a trepidation, but he is safe amidst fears and doubts; as

a ship lies safe at anchor, though shaken by the wind. If a Christian

had no doubts there would be no unbelief in him; had he no doubts there

would be no difference between grace militant and grace triumphant. Had

not David sometimes his ebbings as well as flowings? Like the mariner,

who sometimes cries out, stellam video, I see a star,' and then cries

the star is out of sight. Sometimes we hear David say, Thy

lovingkindness is before mine eyes.' Psa 26:6. At another time he is at

a loss: Lord, where are thy former lovingkindnesses?' Psa 89:99. There

may fall out an eclipse in a Christian's assurance, to put him upon

longing after heaven, where there shall not be the least doubting;

where the banner of God's love shall be always displayed upon the soul;

where the light of God's face shall be without clouds, and have no

sun-setting; and where the saints shall have an uninterrupted

assurance, and be ever with the Lord.

What are the differences between true assurance and presumption?

(1.) They differ in the method or manner of working. Divine assurance

flows from humiliation for sin; I speak not of the measure of

humiliation, but the truth. There are in Palermo reeds growing, in

which there is a sugared juice; a soul humbled for sin is the bruised

reed, in which grows this sweet assurance. God's Spirit is a spirit of

bondage before it is a spirit of adoption; but presumption arises

without any humbling word of the Spirit. How camest thou by the venison

so soon?' The plough goes before the seed be sown; the heart must be

ploughed up by humiliation and repentance, before God sows the seed of

assurance.

(2.) He who has a real assurance will take heed of that which will

weaken and darken his assurance; he is fearful of the forbidden fruit;

he knows, though he cannot sin away his soul, yet he may sin away his

assurance; but he who has the ignis fatuus of presumption does not fear

defiling his garments, he is bold in sin. Wilt thou not cry unto me, My

Father? Behold, thou hast done evil things as thou couldest.' Jer 3:3,

5. Balaam said, My God,' yet was a sorcerer. It is a sign he has no

money about him, who fears not to travel all hours in the night. It is

a sign he has not the jewel of assurance, who fears not the works of

darkness.

(3.) True assurance is built upon a Scripture basis. The word says, The

effect of righteousness shall be quietness and assurance for ever.' Isa

32:17. A Christian's assurance is built upon this Scripture. God has

sown the seed of righteousness in his soul, and this seed has brought

forth the harvest of assurance; but presumption is a spurious thing; it

has not Scripture to show for its warrant; it is like a will without

seal and witnesses, which is null and void in law. Presumption wants

both the witness of the word, and the seal of the Spirit.

(4.) Assurance flowing from sanctification always keeps the heart in a

lowly posture. Lord, says the soul, what am I, that, passing by so

many, the golden beams of thy love should shine upon me? Paul had

assurance. Is he proud of this jewel? No. To me who am less than the

least of all saints.' Eph 3:3. The more love a Christian receives from

God, the more he sees himself a debtor to free grace, and the sense of

his debt keeps his heart humble; but presumption is bred of pride. He

who presumes disdains; he thinks himself better than others. God, I

thank thee that I am not as other men are... or even as this publican.'

Luke 18:8: Feathers fly up, but gold descends; so the heart of him who

has this golden assurance descends in humility.

What may excite us to look after assurance?

To consider how sweet it is, and the noble and excellent effects it

produces.

(1.) How sweet it is. This is the manna in the golden pot; the white

stone, the wine of paradise which cheers the heart. How comfortable is

God's smile! The sun is more refreshing when it shines out than when it

is hid in a cloud; it is a prelibation and a foretaste of glory, it

puts a man in heaven before his time. None can know how delicious and

ravishing it is, but such as have felt it; as none can know how sweet

honey is, but they who have tasted it.

(2.) The noble and excellent effects it produces.

(1:) Assurance will make us love God, and praise him. Love is the soul

of religion, the fat of the sacrifice; and who can love God as he who

has assurance? The sun reflecting its beams on a burning-glass makes

the glass burn that which is near it; so assurance (which is the

reflection of God's love upon the soul) makes it burn in love to God.

Paul was assured of Christ's love to him - Who has loved me:' and how

was his heart fired with love! He valued and admired nothing but

Christ. Phil 3:3. As Christ was fastened to the cross, so he was

fastened to Paul's heart. Praise is the quit-rent we pay to the crown

of heaven. Who but he who has assurance of his justification can bless

God, and give him the glory of what he has done for him? Can a man in a

swoon or apoplexy praise God that he is alive? Can a Christian,

staggering with fears about his spiritual condition, praise God that he

is elected and justified? No! The living, the living, he shall praise

thee.' Isa 38:19. Such as are enlivened with assurance are the fittest

persons to sound forth God's praise.

(2:) Assurance will drop sweetness into all our creature enjoyments; it

will be as sugar to wine, an earnest of more; it will give a blessing

with the venison. Guilt embitters our comforts; it is like drinking out

of a wormwood cup; but assurance sweetens all health. The assurances of

God's love are sweet riches, and with the assurance of a kingdom are

delectable. A dinner of green herbs, with the assurance of God's love,

is princely fare.

(3:) Assurance will make us active and lively in God's service; it will

excite prayer, and quicken obedience. As diligence begets assurance, so

assurance begets diligence. Assurance will not (as the Papists say)

breed self-security in the soul, but industry. Doubting discourages us

in God's service, but the assurance of his favour breeds joy. The joy

of the Lord is our strength.' Neh 8:80. Assurance makes us mount up to

heaven, as eagles, in holy duties; it is like the Spirit in Ezekiel's

wheels, that moved them, and lifted them up. Faith will make us walk,

but assurance will make us run: we shall never think we can do enough

for God. Assurance will be as wings to the bird, as weights to the

clock, to set all the wheels of obedience running.

(4:) Assurance will be a golden shield to beat back temptation, and

will triumph over it. There are two sorts of temptations that Satan

uses. (1.) He tempts to draw us to sin; but being assured of our

justification will make this temptation vanish. What, Satan! shall I

sin against him who has loved me, and washed me in his blood? Shall I

return to folly after God has spoken peace? Shall I weaken my

assurance, wound my conscience, grieve my Comforter? Avaunt, Satan!

Tempt no more. (2.) Satan would make us question our interest in God,

by telling us we are hypocrites, and God does not love us. Now there is

no such shield against this temptation as assurance. What, Satan! have

I a real work of grace in my heart, and the seal of the Spirit to

witness it, and dost thou tell me God does not love me? Now I know thou

art an impostor, who goest about to disprove what I sensibly feel. If

faith resists the devil, assurance will put him to flight.

(5:) Assurance will make us contented though we have but little in the

world. He who has enough is content. He who has sunlight is content,

though he is without torchlight. A man that has assurance has enough:

in uno salvatore omnes florent gemmae ad salutem. He has the riches of

Christ's merit, a pledge of his love, an earnest of his glory; he is

filled with the fulness of God; here is enough, and having enough he is

content. The Lord is the portion of my inheritance... the lines are

fallen to me in pleasant places, and I have a goodly heritage.' Psa

16:6, 6. Assurance will rock the heart quiet. The reason of discontent

is either because men have no interest in God, or do not know their

interest. Paul says, I know whom I have believed.' 2 Tim 1:12. There

was the assurance of his interest. And, As sorrowful, yet alway

rejoicing,' &c.' 2 Cor 6:60. There was his contentment. Get but

assurance, and you will be out of the weekly bill of murmurers; you

will be discontented no more. Nothing can come amiss to him that has

assurance. God is his. Has he lost a friend? - His Father lives. Has he

lost his only child?- God has given him his only Son. Has he scarcity

of bread? - God has given him the finest of the wheat, the bread of

life. Are his comforts gone? - He has the Comforter. Does he meet with

storms on the sea? - He knows where to put in for harbour; God is his

portion, and heaven is his haven. This assurance gives sweet

contentment in every condition.

(6:) Assurance will bear up the heart in sufferings, it will make a

Christian endure troubles with patience and cheerfulness. With

patience, I say. Ye have need of patience.' Heb 10:06. There are some

meats which are hard of digestion, and only a good stomach will concoct

them; so affliction is a meat hard of digestion, but patience, like a

good stomach, will be able to digest it; and whence comes patience but

from assurance? Tribulation worketh patience, because the love of God

is shed abroad in our hearts' with cheerfulness. Rom 5:5, 5. Assurance

is like the mariner's lantern on the deck, which gives light in a dark

night. Assurance gives the light of comfort in affliction. Ye took

joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves,' &c.' there

was assurance. Heb 10:04. He that has assurance, can rejoice in

tribulation; he can gather grapes of thorns, and honey out of the

lion's carcase. Latimer said, When I sit alone, and can have a settled

assurance of the state of my soul, and know that God is mine, I can

laugh at all troubles, and nothing can daunt me.'

(7:) Assurance will pacify a troubled conscience. He who has a

disturbed vexatious conscience, carries a hell about him, Eheu quis

intus scorpia! but assurance cures the agony, and allays the fury of

conscience. Conscience, which before was turned into a serpent, is now

like a bee that has honey in its mouth, it speaks peace; tranquillus

Deus, tranquillat omnia. Tertullian. When God is pacified towards us,

then conscience is pacified. If the heavens are quiet, and there are no

winds stirring, the sea is quiet and calm; so if there be no anger in

God's heart, if the tempest of his wrath does not blow, conscience is

quiet and serene.

(8:) Assurance will strengthen us against the fears of death. Such as

want it, cannot die with comfort; they are in aequilibrio, they hang in

a doubtful suspense as to what shall become of them after death; but he

who has assurance, has a happy and joyful passage out of the world; he

knows he is passed from death to life; he is carried full sail to

heaven! Though he cannot resist death, he overcomes it.

What shall they do who have not assurance?

(1.) Let such labour to find grace. When the sun denies light to the

earth, it may give forth its influence; so when God denies the light of

his countenance, he may give the influence of his grace.

How shall we know we have a real work of grace, and have a right to

assurance?

If we can resolve two queries: (1:) Have we high appreciations of Jesus

Christ? To you that believe he is precious.' I Pet 2:2. Christ is all

made up of beauties and delights; our praises fall short of his worth,

and is like spreading canvas upon a cloth of gold. How precious is his

blood and incense! The one pacifies our conscience, the other perfumes

our prayers. Can we say we have endearing thoughts of Christ? Do we

esteem him our pearl of price, our bright morning-star? Do we count all

our earthly enjoyments but as dung in comparison of Christ? Phil 3:3.

Do we prefer the worst things of Christ, before the best things of the

world; the reproaches of Christ before the world's embraces? Heb 11:16.

(2:) Have we the indwelling of the Spirit? The Holy Ghost which

dwelleth in us.' 2 Tim 1:14.

How may we know that we have the indwelling presence of the Spirit?

Not by having sometimes good motions stirred up in us by the Spirit;

for he may work in us but not dwell; but by the sanctifying power of

the Spirit in our heart the Spirit infuses, divinam indolem, a divine

nature; it stamps its own impress and effigy on the soul, making the

complexion of it holy. The Spirit ennobles and raises the heart above

the world. When Nebuchadnezzar had his understanding given him, he

grazed no longer among the beasts, but returned to his throne, and

minded the affairs of his kingdom; so when the Spirit of God dwells in

a man, it carries his heart above the visible orbs; it makes him,

superna anhelare [pant after heavenly things], thirst after Christ and

glory. If we can find this, then we have grace, and so have a right to

assurance.

(2.) If you want assurance, wait for it. If the figures are graven on

the dial, it is but waiting a while, and the sun shines; so when grace

is engraven in the heart, it is but waiting a while, and we shall have

the sunshine of assurance. He that believes makes not haste.' Isa

28:16. He will stay God's leisure. Say not, God has forsaken you, he

will never lift up the light of his countenance; but rather say, as the

church, I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house

of Jacob,' Isa 8:17. (1:) Has God waited for your conversion and will

you not wait for his consolation? How long did he come wooing you by

his Spirit? He waited till his head was filled with dew; he cried, Wilt

thou not be made clean? When shall it once be?' Jer 13:37. Christian,

did God wait for thy love, and canst thou not wait for his? (2:)

Assurance is so sweet and precious, that it is worth waiting for; the

price of it is above rubies, it cannot be valued with the gold of

Ophir. Assurance of God's love is a pledge of election, it is the

angels, banquet: what other joy have they? As Micah said, What have I

more?' Judy 18:84; so, when God assures the soul of his eternal

purposes of love, what has he more to give? Whom God kisses he crowns.

Assurance is the firstfruits of paradise. One smile of God's face, one

glance of his eye, one crumb of the hidden manna is so sweet and

delicious, that it deserves our waiting. (3:) God has given a promise

that we should not wait in vain. They shall not be ashamed that wait

for me.' Isa 49:93. Perhaps God reserves this cordial of assurance for

a fainting time; he keeps sometimes his best wine till last. Assurance

shall be reserved as an ingredient to sweeten the bitter cup of death.

How may deserted souls be comforted who are cast down for want of

assurance? (1.) Want of assurance shall not hinder the success of the

saint's prayers. Sin lived in puts a bar to our prayer; but want of

assurance does not hinder prayer; we may go to God still in an humble,

fiducial manner. A Christian perhaps may think, because he does not see

God's smiling face God will not hear him. This is a mistake. I said in

my haste, I am cut off from before shine eyes: nevertheless thou

heardest the voice of my supplications.' Psa 31:12. If we pour out

sighs to heaven, God will hear every groan; and though he does not show

us his face, he will lend us his ear.

(2.) Faith may be strongest when assurance is weakest. The woman of

Canaan had no assurance, but a glorious faith.' O woman, great is thy

faith.' Matt 15:58. Rachel was more fair, but Leah was more fruitful.

Assurance is more fair and lovely to look upon, but a fruitful faith

God sees to be better for us. Blessed are they that have not seen, and

yet have believed.' John 20:09.

(3.) When God is out of sight, he is not out of covenant. My covenant

shall stand fast.' Psa 89:98. Though a wife does not see her husband's

face for many years, yet the marriage-relation holds, and he will come

again to her after a long voyage. God may be gone from the soul in

desertion, but the covenant stands fast. The covenant of my peace shall

not be removed.' Isa 54:40. But this promise was made to the Jews, and

does not belong to us! Yes it does, for says ver 17, This is the

heritage of the servants of the Lord.' This is true of all the servants

of God, those who are now living, as well as those who lived in the

time of the Jews.

What shall we do to get assurance?

(1.) Keep a pure conscience. Let no guilt lie upon the conscience

unrepented of. God seals no pardon before repentance. He will not pour

the wine of assurance into a foul vessel. Let us draw near in full

assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil

conscience!' Heb 10:02. Guilt clips the wings of comfort. He who is

conscious to himself of secret sins, cannot draw near to God in full

assurance; he cannot call God father, but judge. Keep conscience as

clear as your eye, that no dust of sin can fall into it.

(2.) If you would have assurance, be much in the exercise of grace.

Exercise thyself unto godliness.' I Tim 4:4. Men grow rich by trading;

so by trading in grace we grow rich in assurance. Make your election

sure.' How? Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge.' 2 Pet

1:1. Keep grace upon the wing; it is lively faith that flourishes into

assurance. No man will set up a great sail in a small boat, but in a

large vessel; so God sets up the sail of assurance in a heart enlarged

with grace.

(3.) If you would have assurance, cherish the Holy Spirit of God. When

David would have assurance, he prayed, Take not away thy Spirit from

me.' Psa 51:11. He knew that it was the Spirit only that could make him

hear the voice of joy. The Spirit is the Comforter, that seals up

assurance. 2 Cor 1:12. Therefore make much of the Spirit, do not grieve

it. As Noah opened the ark to receive the dove, so should we open our

hearts to receive the Spirit, which is the blessed dove that brings an

olive branch of assurance in its mouth.

(4.) Let us lie at the pool of the ordinances, and frequent the word

and sacrament. He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner

over me was love.' Cant 2:2. The blessed ordinances are the

banqueting-house, where God displays the banner of assurance. The

sacrament is a sealing ordinance. Christ made himself known to his

disciples in the breaking of bread; so, in the holy supper, in the

breaking of bread God makes himself known to us, to be our God and

portion.

How should they conduct themselves who have assurance?

(1.) If you have assurance of your justification, do not abuse it. It

is abusing assurance when we grow more remiss in duty; as the musician,

having money thrown him, leaves off playing. By remissness, or

intermitting the exercises of religion, we grieve the Spirit, and that

is the way to have an embargo laid upon our spiritual comforts. We

abuse assurance when we grow presumptuous and less fearful of sin.

What! because a father gives his son an assurance of his love, and

tells him he will entail his land upon him, shall the son be wanton and

dissolute? This were the way to lose his father's affection, and make

him cut off the entail. It was an aggravation of Solomon's sin that his

heart was turned away from the Lord, after he had appeared to him

twice. I Kings 11:1. It is bad to sin when one wants assurance, but it

is worse to sin when one has it. Has the Lord sealed his love with a

kiss? Has he left a pledge of heaven in your hand, and do you thus

requite the Lord? Will you sin with manna in your mouth? Does God give

you the sweet clusters of assurance to feed on, and will you return him

wild grapes? It much pleases Satan, either to see us want assurance, or

abuse it. We abuse assurance when the pulse of our souls beats faster

in sin, and slower in duty.

(2.) If you have assurance, admire his stupendous mercy. You deserved

that God should give you gall and vinegar to drink, and has he made the

honeycomb of his love to drop upon you? Oh, fall down and adore his

goodness! Say, Lord, how is it that thou shouldst manifest thyself to

me, and not to other believers! for many whom thou lovest as the apple

of thine eye thou holdest in suspense, and givest them no assurance of

thy love; though thou hast given them the new name, yet not the white

stone; though they have the seed of grace, yet not the oil of gladness;

though they have the Holy Ghost, the Sanctifier, yet not the Holy

Ghost, the Comforter. Lord, whence is it that thou shouldst manifest

thyself to me, and make thy golden beams of assurance to shine upon my

soul? Oh, adore God on this account! such will be the work of heaven.

(3.) Let your hearts be endeared in love to God. If God gives his

people correction, they must love him: much more when he gives them

assurance. O love the Lord, all ye his saints.' Ps 31:13. Has God

brought you to the borders of Canaan, given you a bunch of grapes,

crowned you with lovingkindness, confirmed your pardon under the broad

seal of heaven? How can you be frozen at such a fire? How can you be

fumed into seraphims burning in divine love! Say as Augustine, animam

meam in odio haberem, I would hate my own soul, if I did not find it

loving God. Give God the cream and quintessence of your love, and show

your love by being willing to lose all for his sake.

(4.) If you have assurance, improve it for God's glory. (1:) By

encouraging such as are yet unconverted. Tell them how sweet this

hidden manna is; tell them what a good master you serve; what gales you

have had; tell them God has carried you to the hill of myrrh, to the

mountains of spices; he has given you not only a prospect of heaven,

but an earnest. Oh, persuade sinners, by all the love and mercy of God,

that they would enroll their names in his family, and cast themselves

upon him for salvation. Tell them God has met with you and unlocked the

secrets of free grace, and assured you of a land flowing with those

infinite delights which eye has not seen. Thus, by telling others what

God has done for your soul, you may make them in love with the ways of

God, and cause them to turn proselytes to religion. (2) Improve

assurance, by comforting such as want it. Be as the good Samaritan to

pour wine and oil into their wounds. You who have assurance, are

arrived as it were at the haven, you are sure of your happiness; but do

you not see others who are struggling with the waves of temptation and

desertion, and are ready to sink? Oh, now sympathize with them, and do

what you can to comfort them while they are in this deep ocean. Whether

we be comforted is it, for your consolation.' 2 Cor 1:1. The

comfortable experience of one Christian being communicated to another

much revives and bears up his fainting heart. Our comfort,' says the

apostle, is for your consolation.' (3:) Improve assurance, by walking

more heavenly. You should scorn the things below; you who have an

earnest of heaven, should not be too earnest for the earth. You have

angels' food; and it becomes not you, with the serpent, to lick the

dust. The wicked are all for corn, wine and oil; but you have that

which is better. God has lifted up the light of his countenance; and

will you hanker after the world, when you have been feeding upon the

grapes and pomegranates of the holy land? Do you now lust after the

garlics and onions of Egypt? When you are clothed with the sun, will

you set the moon and the stars above you? Oh let them scramble for the

world, who have nothing else but husks to feed on. Have you assurance

of heaven, and is not that enough? Will not a kingdom satisfy you? Such

as are high in assurance, should live above the world. (4:) Improve

assurance by a cheerful walking. It is for condemned persons to go

hanging down their heads. But hast thou thy absolution? Does thy God

smile on thee? Cheer up. Why art thou, being the king's son, lean?' 2

Sam 13:3. Art thou the king's son? Has God assured thee of thy

adoption, and art thou sad? Assurance should be an antidote against all

trouble. What though the world hate thee? Thou art assured that thou

art one of God's favourites. What though there is but little oil in the

cruse, and thou art low in the world? Thou art high in assurance. Oh,

then rejoice! How musical is the bird! How does it chirp and sing,

though it knows not where to pick up the next crumb! and shall they be

sad and discontented who have God's bond to assure them of their daily

bread, and his love to assure them of heaven? Certainly those who have

assurance, cannot but be of a sanguine complexion.

(5.) If you have an assurance of salvation, let it make you long after

a glorified state. He who has an earnest in his hand, desires the whole

sum to be paid. The soul that has tasted how sweet the Lord is, should

long for a fuller enjoyment of him in heaven. Has Christ put the ring

of assurance on thy hand, and so espoused thee to himself? how shouldst

thou long for the marriage-supper of the Lamb! Rev 19:9. O Christian,

think with thyself, if a glimpse of heaven, a smile of God's face be so

sweet, what will it be, to be ever sunning thyself in the light of

God's countenance! Certainly, you who have an assurance of your title

to heaven, cannot but desire possession. Be content to live, but

willing to die.

(6.) If you have assurance, be careful you do not lose it. Keep it, for

it is your life, your benc esse, the comfort of your life. Keep

assurance. 1st. By prayer. O continue thy lovingkindness.' Psa 36:60.

Lord, continue assurance; do not take away this privy seal from me.

2ndly. Keep assurance by humility. Pride estranges God from the soul.

When you are nigh in assurance, be low in humility. Paul had assurance,

and he baptized himself with the name, Chief of sinners.' I Tim 1:15.

The jewel of assurance is best kept in the cabinet of an humble heart.

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7. Peace

Grace unto you and peace be multiplied. I Pet 1:1.

Having spoken of the first fruit of sanctification, assurance, I

proceed to the second, viz., Peace, Peace be multiplied:'

What are the several species or kinds of Peace?

Peace, in Scripture, is compared to a river which parts itself into two

silver streams. Isa 66:12.

I. There is an external peace, and that is, (1.) (Economical, or peace

in a family. (2.) Political, or peace in the state. Peace is the nurse

of plenty. He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the

finest of the wheat.' Psa 147:14. How pleasant it is when the waters of

blood begin to assuage, and we can see the windows of our ark open, and

the dove returning with an olive branch of peace! (3.) Ecclesiastical,

or peace in the church. As unity in Trinity is the greatest mystery in

heaven, unity in verity is the greatest mercy on earth. Peace

ecclesiastical stands in opposition to schism and persecution.

II. A spiritual peace, which is twofold; peace above us, or peace with

God; and peace within us, or peace with conscience, which is

superlative: other peace may be lasting, but this is everlasting.

Whence comes this Peace?

It has the whole Trinity for its author. God the Father is the God of

peace.' I Thess 5:53. God the Son is the Prince of peace.' Isa 9:9.

Peace is said to be the fruit of the Spirit.' Gal 5:52.

(1.) God the Father is the God of peace. As he is the God of order, so

he is the God of peace. I Cor 14:43, and Phil 4:4. This was the form of

the priest's blessing upon the people. The Lord give thee peace.' Numb

6:66.

(2.) God the Son is the purchaser of peace. He made peace by his blood.

Having made peace by the blood of his cross.' Col 1:10. The atonement

Aaron made for the people, when he entered into the holy of holies,

with blood, was a type of Christ our high priest, who by his sacrifice

pacified his angry Father, and made atonement for us. Christ purchased

our peace upon hard terms; for his soul was in an agony, while he was

travailing to bring forth peace to the world.

(3.) Peace is a fruit of the Spirit. He seals up peace to the

conscience. The Spirit clears up the work of grace in the heart, from

whence arises peace. There was a well of water near Hagar, but she did

not see it, therefore she wept. A Christian has grace, but does not see

it, therefore he weeps. Now the Spirit discovers this well of water, it

enables conscience to witness to a man that has the real work of grace,

and so peace flows into the soul. Thus you see whence this peace comes

- the Father decrees it, the Son purchases it, the Holy Ghost applies

it.

Whether such as are destitute of grace may have peace?

No! Peace flows from sanctification, but they being unregenerate, have

nothing to do with peace. There is no peace, saith my God to the

wicked.' Isa 57:7I. They may have a truce, but no peace. God may

forbear the wicked a while, and stop the roaring of his cannon; but

though there be a truce, yet there is no peace. The wicked may have

something which looks like peace, but it is not. They may be fearless

and stupid; but there is a great difference between a stupified

conscience, and a pacified conscience. When a strong man armed keepeth

his palace, his goods are in peace.' Luke 11:1I. This is the devil's

peace; he rocks men in the cradle of security; he cries, Peace, peace,

when men are on the precipice of hell. The seeming peace a sinner has,

is not from the knowledge of his happiness, but the ignorance of his

danger.

What are the signs of a false peace?

(1.) A false peace has much confidence in it, but this confidence is

conceit. The sinner does not doubt of God's mercy; and from this

presumptuous confidence arises some kind of quiet in the mind. The same

word in the Hebrew, cassal, signifies both confidence and folly. Indeed

a sinner's confidence is folly. How confident were the foolish virgins!

(2.) False peace separates those things which God has joined together.

God joins holiness and peace, but he who has a false peace, separates

the two. He lays claim to peace, but banishes holiness. I shall have

peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add

drunkenness to thirst.' Deut 29:19. The wicked are loose and vain, and

yet thank God that they have peace, what a delusion! You may as well

suck health out of poison, as peace out of sin.

(3.) False peace is not willing to be tried. It is a sign they are bad

wares which will not endure the light; a sign a man has stolen goods,

when he will not have his house searched. A false peace cannot endure

to be tried by the word. The word speaks of a humbling and refining

work upon the soul before peace; but false peace cannot endure to hear

of this. The least trouble will shake this peace; it will end in

despair. In a false peace, conscience is asleep; but when this lion of

conscience shall be awakened at death, it will roar upon a man; he will

be a terror to himself, and be ready to lay violent hands upon himself.

How shall we know that ours is a true peace?

(1.) True peace flows from union with Christ. Communio fundatur in

unione. The graft or scion must first be inoculated into the tree

before it can receive sap or nourishment from it; so we must first be

ingrafted into Christ, before we can receive peace from him. Have we

faith? By holiness we are made like Christ; by believing we are made

one with Christ, and being in Christ we have peace. John 16:63.

(2.) True peace flows from subjection to Christ. Where Christ gives

peace, there he sets up his government in the heart. Of his government

and peace there shall be no end.' Isa 9:9. Christ is called a priest

upon his throne.' Zech 6:13. Christ as a priest makes peace; but he

will be a priest upon his throne - he brings the heart in subjection to

him. If Christ be our peace, he is our prince. Isa 9:9. Whenever Christ

pacifies the conscience, he subdues the lust.

(3.) True peace is after trouble. First, God lets loose a spirit of

bondage, he convinces and humbles the soul; then he speaks peace. Many

say they have peace, but is this peace before a storm, or after it?

True peace is after trouble. First there was the earthquake, and then

the fire, and then the still small voice. I Kings 19:12. Thou who never

hadst any legal bruisings, mayest suspect thy peace. God pours the

golden oil of peace into broken hearts.

Have all sanctified persons this peace?

They have a title to it; they have the ground of it; grace is the seed

of peace, and it will in time turn to peace; as the blossoms of a tree

to fruit, milk to cream. They have a promise of it. The Lord will bless

his people with peace.' Psalm 29:11: They may have peace with God,

though not peace in their own conscience; they have the initials and

beginnings of peace. There is a secret peace which the heart has in

serving God; such meltings and enlargements in duty as revive the soul,

and bear it up from sinking.

But why have not all believers the full enjoyment and possession of

peace? Why is not this flower of peacefully ripe and blown?

Some of the godly may not have so full a degree of peace. (1.) Through

the fury of temptation, though the devil cannot destroy us, he will

disturb us. He disputes against our adoption; he would make us question

the work of grace in our hearts, and so disturb the waters of our

peace. He is like a subtle cheater, who, if he cannot make a man's

title to his land void, yet will put him to many troublesome suits in

law. If Satan cannot make us ungodly, he will make us unquiet. Violent

winds make the sea rough and stormy; so the winds of temptation

blowing, disturb peace of spirit, and put the soul into a commotion.

(2.) The godly may not enjoy peace, through mistake and misapprehension

about sin. They find so much corruption, that they think sure, if there

were grace, there would not be such strong working of corruption;

whereas this should be so far from discouraging Christians, and

hindering their peace, that it is an argument for them. Let me ask,

Whence is it that you feel sin? No man can feel sin, but by grace. A

wicked man is insensible. Lay a hundredweight upon a dead man, he does

not complain; but being sensible of corruption, argues a gracious

principle. Rom 7:71. Again, Whence is it that there is a combat with

sin, but from the life of grace? Gal 5:17. Dead things cannot combat.

Whence is it that the saints weep for sin? What are these tears but

seeds of faith? The not understanding of this hinders a Christian's

peace.

(3.) The godly may not enjoy peace, through remissness in duty: they

may leave their first love. When Christians abate their fervency, God

abates their peace. If you slacken the strings of a viol, the music is

spoiled; so, if Christians slack in duty, they spoil the sweet music of

peace in their souls. As the fire decays, the cold increases; so, as

fervency in duty abates, our peace cools.

Use one: Labour for this blessed peace - peace with God and conscience.

Peace with neighbour-nations is sweet. Pax una triurmphis innumeris

melior [One peace is better than innumerable triumphs]. The Hebrew word

shalom, peace, comprehends all blessings; it is the glory of a kingdom.

A prince's crown is more beautiful, when it is hung with the white lily

of peace, than when it is set with the red roses of a bloody war. Oh,

then, how sweet is peace of conscience! It is a bulwark against the

enemy. Phil 4:4. It shall keep you as in a garrison; you may throw down

the gauntlet, and bid defiance to enemies. It is the golden pot and the

manna. It is the first fruits of paradise. It is still music, for want

of which a Christian is in continual fear, and does not take comfort in

ordinances. Hannah went up to the feast at Jerusalem, but she wept and

did not eat. I Sam 1:1; so, a poor dejected soul goes to an ordinance,

but does not eat of the feast; he weeps and does not eat. He cannot

take comfort in worldly blessings, health, estate, relations; he wants

that inward peace, which should be a sauce to sweeten his comforts. Oh,

therefore, labour for this blessed peace. Consider its noble and

excellent effects. (1.) It gives boldness at the throne of grace. Guilt

of conscience clips the wings of prayer, it makes the face blush, and

the heart faint; but when a Christian has some lively apprehensions of

God's love, and the Spirit whispers peace, he goes to God with

boldness, as a child to his father. Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my

soul.' Psa 25:5: Time was when David's soul was bowed down. I am bowed

down greatly.' Psa 38:8. Now the case is altered he will lift up his

soul to God in a way of triumph. Whence was this? God has spoken peace

to his soul. Thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes.' Psa 26:6. (2.)

This divine peace fires the heart with love to Christ. Peace is the

result of pardon. He who has a pardon sealed, cannot choose but love

his prince. How endeared is Christ to the soul! Now Christ is precious

indeed. Oh,' says the soul, how sweet is this rose of Sharon! Has

Christ waded through a sea of blood and wrath, to purchase my peace?

Has he not only made peace, but spoken peace to me? How should my heart

ascend in a fiery chariot of love! How willing should I be to do and

suffer for Christ!' (3.) This peace quiets the heart in trouble. This

man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land, and

when he shall tread in our palaces.' Mic 5: s. The enemy may invade our

palaces, but not our peace: this man Christ shall be the peace. When

the head aches, the heart may be well; and when worldly troubles

assault a Christian, his mind may be in peace and quiet. I will lay me

down in peace, and sleep.' Psa 4:4. It was a sad time with David, he

was fleeing for his life from Absalom; it was no small affliction to

think that his own son should seek to take away his father's life and

crown. David wept and covered his head. 2 Sam 15:50. Yet at this time

he says, I will lay me down in peace, and sleep.' He had trouble from

his son, but peace from his conscience. David could sleep upon the soft

pillow of a good conscience. This is a peace worth getting.

What shall we do to attain this blessed peace?

(1.) Let us ask it of God. He is the God of peace; he beats back the

roaring lion; he stills the raging of conscience: if we could call all

the angels out of heaven, they could not speak peace without God. The

stars cannot make day without the sun; none can make day in a dark

deserted soul, but the Sun of Righteousness. As the wilderness cannot

water itself, but remains dry and parched till the clouds drop their

moisture, so our hearts cannot have peace till he infuse it, and drop

it upon us by his Spirit. Therefore pray, Lord, thou who art the God of

peace, create peace; thou who art the Prince of peace, command it. Give

me that peace which may sweeten trouble, yea, even the bitter cup of

death.'

(2.) If you would have peace, make war with sin. Sin is the Achan that

troubles us, the Trojan horse. When Joram sew Jehu, he said, Is it

peace, Jehu? And he answered, What peace, so long as the whoredoms of

thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?' 2 Kings 9:92. What

peace, so long as sin remains unmortified? If you would have peace with

God, break the league with sin; give battle to sin, for it is a most

just war. God has proclaimed it: nay, he has promised us victory. Sin

shall not have dominion.' Rom 6:14. No way to peace, but by maintaining

a war with sin. Pax nostra bellum contra daemonem [Our peace is a war

against the Devil]. Tertullian. When Samson had slain the lion, there

came honey out of the lion; so by slaying sin, we get the honey of

peace.

(3.) Go to Christ's blood for peace. Some go to fetch their peace from

their own righteousness, not Christ's: they go for peace to their holy

life, not Christ's death. If conscience be troubled, they strive to

quiet it with their duties. This is not the right way to peace. Duties

must not be neglected, nor yet idolized. Look to the blood of

sprinkling. Heb 12:24. That blood of Christ which pacified God, must

pacify conscience. Christ's blood being sucked in by faith, gives

peace. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.' Rom 5:5: No

balm to cure a wounded conscience, but the blood of Christ.

(4.) Walk closely with God. Peace flows from purity. As many as walk

according to this rule, peace be on them.' Gal 6:16. In the text, grace

and peace are put together; grace is the root, and peace is the flower.

As balmwater drops in distillation, so divine peace comes out of a

gracious heart. Walk very holily. God's Spirit is a refiner before a

comforter.

Use two: You who have this peace, peace above, peace within, labour to

keep it: it is a precious jewel, do not lose it. It is sad to have the

league of national peace broken, but it is worse to have the peace of

conscience broken. Oh, preserve this peace! First, take heed of

relapses. Has God spoken peace? Do not turn again to folly. Psa 85:5.

Besides ingratitude, there is folly in relapses. It was long ere God

was reconciled and the breach made up, and will you again eclipse and

forfeit your peace? Has God healed the wound of conscience, and will

you tear it open again? Will you break another vein? Will you cut a new

artery? This is returning indeed to folly. What madness is it to meddle

again with that sin, which will breed the worm of conscience! Secondly,

make up your spiritual accounts daily; see how matters stand between

God and your souls. I commune with my own heart.' Psa 77:7. Often

reckonings keep God and conscience friends. Do with your hearts as you

do with your watches, wind them up every morning by prayer, and at

night examine whether your hearts have gone true all that day, whether

the wheels of your affections have moved swiftly towards heaven. Oh,

call yourselves often to account! Keep your reckonings even, for that

is the way to keep your peace.

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8. Joy

'The fruit of the Spirit is joy.' Gal 5:52.

The third fruit of justification, adoption, and sanctification, is joy

in the Holy Ghost. Joy is setting the soul upon the top of a pinnacle -

it is the cream of the sincere milk of the word. Spiritual joy is a

sweet and delightful passion, arising from the apprehension and feeling

of some good, whereby the soul is supported under present troubles, and

fenced against future fear.

I. It is a delightful passion. It is contrary to sorrow, which is a

perturbation of mind, whereby the heart is perplexed and cast down. Joy

is a sweet and pleasant affection which eases the mind, exhilarates and

comforts the spirits.

II. It arises from the feeling of some good. Joy is not a fancy, or

conceit; but is rational, and arises from the feeling of some good, as

the sense of God's love and favour. Joy is so real a thing that it

makes a sudden change in a person; and turns mourning into melody. As

in the spring-time, when the sun comes to our horizon, it makes a

sudden alteration in the face of the universe: the birds sing, the

flowers appear, the fig-tree puts forth her green figs; every thing

seems to rejoice and put off its mourning, as being revived with the

sweet influence of the sun; so when the Sun of Righteousness arises on

the soul, it makes a sudden alteration, and the soul is infinitely

rejoiced with the golden beams of God's love.

III. By it the soul is supported under present troubles. Joy stupifies

and swallows up troubles; it carries the heart above them, as the oil

swims above the water.

IV. The heart is fenced against future fear. Joy is both a cordial and

an antidote: it is a cordial which gives present relief to the spirits

when they are sad; and an antidote, which fences off the fear of

approaching danger. I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod

and thy staff they comfort me.' Psa 23:3.

How is this joy wrought?

(1.) It arises partly from the promise. As the bee lies at the breast

of the flower, and sucks out its sweetness, so faith lies at the breast

of a promise, and sucks out the quintessence of joy. Thy comforts

delight my soul;' that is, the comforts which distill from the

promises. Psa 94:19.

(2.) The Spirit of God who is called the Comforter,' John 14:46,

sometimes drops this golden oil of joy into the soul; the Spirit

whispers to a believer the remission of his sin, and sheds God's love

abroad in the heart, whence flows infinite joy and delight. Rom 5:5.

What are the Seasons in which God usually gives his people divine joys?

There are five Seasons. (1.) Sometimes at the blessed Supper. The soul

comes weeping after Christ in the Sacrament, and God sends it away

weeping for joy. The Jews had a custom at their feasts of pouring

ointment on their guests and kissing them; in the Eucharist, God often

pours the oil of gladness on the saints, and kisses them with the

kisses of his lips. There are two grand ends of the Sacrament, the

strengthening of faith, and the flourishing of joy. Here, in this

ordinance, God displays the banner of his love; here believers taste

not only sacramental bread, but hidden manna. Not that God always meets

the soul with joy. He may give increase of grace, when not increase of

joy; but oftentimes he pours in the oil of gladness, and gives the soul

a privy seal of his love; as Christ made himself known in the breaking

of bread.

(2.) Before God calls his people to suffering. Be of good cheer, Paul.'

Acts 23:11. When God was about to give Paul a cup of blood to drink, he

spiced it with joy. As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our

consolation also aboundeth.' 2 Cor 1:1. This made the martyrs' flames

beds of roses. When Stephen was being stoned he saw heaven open, and

the Sun of Righteousness shone upon his face. God candies our wormwood

with sugar.

(3.) After sore conflicts with Satan. He is the red dragon who troubles

the waters; he puts the soul into frights, makes it believe that it has

no grace, and that God does not love it. Though he cannot blot out a

Christian's evidence, yet he may cast such a mist before his eyes, that

he cannot read it. When the soul has been bruised with temptations, God

will comfort the bruised reed by giving joy, ad corroborandum titulum,

to confirm a Christian's title to heaven. After Satan's fiery darts

comes the white stone. No better balm to heal a tempted soul than the

oil of gladness! After Christ was tempted, an angel came to comfort

him.

(4.) After desertion. Desertion is a poisoned arrow which shoots to the

heart. Job 6:6. God is called a fire and a light: the deserted soul

feels the fire, but does not see the light; it cries out, as Asaph, Is

his mercy clean gone?' Psa 77:7. When the soul is in this case, and

ready to faint away in despair, God shines upon it, and gives it some

apprehension of his favour, and turns the shadow of death into the

light of the morning. God keeps his cordials for a time of fainting.

Joy after desertion is like a resurrection from the dead.

(5.) At the hour of death. Of those even who have had no joy in their

lifetime. God puts this sugar in the bottom of the cup, to make their

death sweet. At the last hour, when all other comforts are gone, God

sends the Comforter; and when their appetite to meat fails, he feeds

them with hidden manna. As the wicked before they die, have some

apprehensions of hell and wrath in their conscience, so the godly have

some foretastes of God's everlasting favour, though sometimes their

diseases may be such, and their animal spirits so oppressed, that they

cannot express what they feel. Jacob laid himself to sleep on a stone

and saw a vision of a ladder, and the angels ascending and descending

upon it; so, when saints lay themselves down to sleep the sleep of

death, they have often a vision: they see the light of God's face, and

have the evidences of his love sealed up to them for ever.

What are the differences between worldly joys and spiritual?

The gleanings of the one are better than the vintage of the other.

(1.) Spiritual joys help to make us better, worldly joys often make us

worse. I spake unto thee in thy prosperity, but thou saidst, I will not

hear.' Jer 22:2I. Pride and luxury are the two worms that are bred of

worldly pleasures. Wine takes away the heart;' it is fomentum

libidinis, Augustine, the inflamer of lust.' Hos 4:4: As Satan entered

in the sop, so often in the cup; but spiritual joy makes one better; it

is like cordial water, which, as physicians say, not only cheers the

heart, but purges out the noxious humours; so divine joy is cordial

water, which not only comforts but cleanses; it makes a Christian more

holy; it causes an antipathy against sin; it infuses strength to do and

suffer. The joy of the Lord is your strength.' Neh 8:80. As some

colours not only delight the eye, but strengthen the sight; so the joys

of God not only refresh the soul, but strengthen it.

(2.) Spiritual joys are inward, they are heart joys. Your heart shall

rejoice.' John 16:62. Seneca says true joy latet in profundo, it is

hidden within, worldly joy is in superficie, it lies on the outside,

like the dew that wets the leaf. We read of those who rejoice in

appearance,' in the Greek, in the face. 2 Cor 5:12. It goes no farther

than the face, it is not within; in laughter the heart is sad.' Like a

house which has a gilded frontispiece, but all the rooms within are

hung in mourning. But spiritual joy lies most within. Your heart shall

rejoice.' Divine joy is like a spring of water which runs underground!

Others can see the sufferings of a Christian, but they see not his joy.

A stranger intermeddleth not with his joy.' Prov 14:40. His joy is

hidden manna, hid from the eye of the world; he has still music which

others hear not; the marrow lies within, the best joy is within the

heart.

(3.) Spiritual joys are sweeter than others, they are better than wine.

Cant 1:1. They are a Christian's festival; they are the golden pot and

the manna, they are so sweet, that they make everything else sweet:

sweeten health and estate, as sweet water poured on flowers makes them

more fragrant and aromatic. Divine joys are so delicious and ravishing,

that they put our mouth out of taste for earthly delights; as he who

has been drinking cordials tastes little sweetness in water. Paul had

so tasted these divine joys, that his mouth was out of taste for

worldly things; the world was crucified to him, it was like a dead

thing, he could find no sweetness in it. Gal 6:14.

(4.) Spiritual joys are more pure, they are not tempered with any

bitter ingredients. A sinner's joy is mixed with dregs, it is

imbittered with fear and guilt: the wolf feeds in the breasts of his

joy; he drinks wormwood wine; but spiritual joy is not muddled with

guilt, but like a crystal stream, runs pure; it is all spirits and

quintessence; it is joy and nothing but joy; it is a rose without

prickles; it is honey without wax.

(5.) They are satisfying joys: Ask, that your joy may be full.' John

16:64. Worldly joys can no more fill the heart than a drop can fill a

cistern; they may please the palate or fancy, as Plato calls them

pictures of joy, but cannot satisfy the soul. The eye is not satisfied

with seeing, nor the ear with hearing;' Eccl 1:1; but the joys of God

satisfy. Thy comforts delight my soul.' Psa 94:19. There is as much

difference between spiritual joys and earthly, as between a banquet

that is eaten and one that is painted on the wall.

(6.) They are stronger joys than worldly. Strong consolation.' Heb

6:18. They are strong indeed that can bear up a Christian's heart in

trials and afflictions. Having received the word in much affliction,

with joy.' I Thess 1:1. These are roses that grow in winter, these joys

can sweeten the waters of Marah; he that has these can gather grapes of

thorns, and fetch honey out of the carcase of a lion. As sorrowing, yet

always rejoicing.' 2 Cor 6: 10. At the end of the rod a Christian

tastes honey.

(7.) They are unwearied joys. Other joys, when in excess, often cause

loathing, we are apt to surfeit on them; too much honey nauseates; one

may be tired with pleasure as well as labour. Xerxes offered a reward

to him that could find out a new pleasure; but the joys of God, though

they satisfy, yet they never surfeit. A drop of joy is sweet, but the

more of this wine the better. Such as drink of the joys of heaven are

never cloyed; the satiety is without loathing, because they still

desire the joy wherewith they are satiated.

(8.) They are abiding joys. Worldly joys are soon gone. Such as crown

themselves with rosebuds, and bathe in the perfumed waters of pleasure,

may have joys which seem to be sweet but they are swift: they are like

meteors, which give a bright and sudden flash, and then disappear. The

joys which believers have are abiding; they are a blossom of eternity,

a pledge and earnest of those rivers of pleasure which run at God's

right hand for evermore.

Why is this joy to be labored for?

(1.) Because it is self-existent, it can subsist in the absence of all

other carnal joy. This joy depends not upon outward things. As the

philosophers said, when the musicians came to them, Philosophers can be

merry without music;' so he that has this joy can be cheerful in the

deficiency of carnal joys; he can rejoice in God, in sure hope of

glory, although the fig-tree shall not blossom.' Hab 3:17. Spiritual

joy can go without silver crutches to support it. Spiritual joy is

higher built than upon creatures, for it is built on the love of God,

on the promises, and on the blood of Christ.

(2.) Because spiritual joy carries the soul through duty cheerfully;

the Sabbath becomes a delight, and religion is a recreation. Fear and

sorrow hinder us in the discharge of duty; but a Christian serves God

with activity, when he serves him with joy. The oil of joy makes the

wheels of obedience move faster. How fervently did they pray, whom God

made joyful in the house of prayer! Isa 56:6.

(3.) It is called the kingdom of God in Rom 14:17, because it is a

taste of that which the saints have in the kingdom of God. What is the

heaven of the angels, but the smiles of God's face, the sensible

perception and feeling of those joys which are infinitely ravishing and

full of glory! To encourage and quicken us in seeking after them,

consider, that Christ died to purchase this joy for his saints. He was

a man of sorrows, that we might be full of joy; he prayed that the

saints might have this divine joy. And now I come to thee, that they

may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.' John 17:13. This prayer he

now prays in heaven; he knows we never love him so much as when we feel

his love; which may encourage us to seek after this joy. We pray for

that which Christ himself is praying for, when we pray that his joy may

be fulfilled in us.

What shall we do to obtain this spiritual joy?

Walk consistently and spiritually. God gives joy after long and close

walking with him. (1.) Observe your hours. Set time every day apart for

God. (2.) Mourn for sin. Mourning is the seed, as Basil says, out of

which the flower of spiritual joy grows. I will restore comforts to his

mourners.' Isa 57:18. (3.) Keep the book of conscience fair written. Do

not by presumptuous sins blur your evidences. A good conscience is the

ark in which God puts the hidden manna. (4.) Be often upon your knees,

pray with life and fervency. The same Spirit that fills the heart with

sighs fills it with joys. The same Spirit that indites the prayer,

seals it. When Hannah had prayed, her countenance was no more sad. I

Sam 1:18. Praying Christians have much intercourse with God; and none

are so like to have the secrets of his love imparted, as those who hold

correspondence with him. By close walking with God we get bunches of

grapes by the way, which are an earnest of future happiness.

How shall we comfort those that want joy?

Such as walk in close communion with God have more than others.

(1.) Initial joy, joy in semine, in the seed. Light (a metaphor for

joy) is sown for the righteous.' Psa 97:71. Grace in the heart is a

seed of joy. Though a Christian wants the sun, he has a day-star in his

heart.

(2.) A believer has real, though not royal comforts; he has, as Aquinas

says, gaudium in Deo, though not a Deo; joy in God, though not from

God. Joy in God is the delight and complacency the soul takes in God.

My soul shall be glad in the Lord.' Psa 104:44. He that is truly

gracious, is so far joyful as to take comfort in God: though he cannot

say, God rejoices in him, he can say, he rejoices in God.

(3.) He has supporting, though not transporting comforts. He has as

much as keeps him from sinking. Thou strengthenedst me with strength in

my soul.' Psa 138:8. If a Christian has not God's arm to embrace him,

yet he has it to uphold him. Thus a Christian who walks with God has

something that bears up his heart from sinking; and it-is but waiting

awhile, and he is sure of those joys which are unspeakable and full of

glory.

Use one: Then see that religion is no melancholy thing; it brings joy;

the fruit of the Spirit is joy. Mutatur non tollitur [It varies, but it

is not destroyed]. A poor Christian that feeds on bread and water, may

have purer joy than the greatest monarch; though he fares hard, he

feeds high; he has a table spread from heaven; angels' food, hidden

manna; he has sometimes sweet raptures of joy, that cause jubilation of

spirit; he has that which is better felt than can be expressed. 2 Cor

12:2.

Use two: If God gives his people such joy in this life, oh! then, what

glorious joy will he give them in heaven! Enter thou into the joy of

thy Lord.' Matt 25:5I. Here joy begins to enter into us, there we shall

enter into joy. God keeps his best wine till last. Heliogabalus bathed

himself in sweet perfumed waters. What joy when the soul shall for ever

bathe itself in the pure and pleasant fountain of God's love! What joy

to see the orient brightness of Christ's face, and have the kisses of

those lips which drop sweet-smelling myrrh! Laetabitur sponsa in

amplexilous Domini [The Bride will rejoice in the embrace of her Lord].

Augustine. Oh! if a cluster of grapes here be so sweet, what will the

full vintage be! How may this set us all longing for that place where

sorrow cannot live, and where joy cannot die!

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9. Growth In Grace

'But grow in grace.' 2 Pet 3:38.

True grace is progressive, of a spreading and growing nature. It is

with grace as with light; first, there is the crepusculum, or daybreak;

then it shines brighter to the full meridian. A good Christian is like

the crocodile. Quamdiu vivet crescit; he has never done growing. The

saints are not only compared to stars for their light, but to trees for

their growth. Isa 61:1, and Hos 14:4. A good Christian is not like

Hezekiah's sun that went backwards, nor Joshua's sun that stood still,

but is always advancing in holiness, and increasing with the increase

of God. I Cor 3:3.

In how many ways may a Christian be said to grow in grace?

(1.) He grows vigore, in the exercise of grace. His lamp is burning and

shining: therefore we read of a lively hope. I Pet 1:1. Here is the

activity of grace. The church prays for the blowing of the Spirit, that

her spices might flow forth. Cant 4:16.

(2.) A Christian grows gradu, in the degree of grace. He goes from

strength to strength, from one degree of grace to another. Psa 84:4. A

saint goes from faith to faith. Rom 1:17. His love abounds more and

more. Phil 1:1.

What is the right manner of a Christian's growth?

(1.) It is to grow less in one's own eyes. I am a worm, and no man.'

Psa 22:2. The sight of corruption and ignorance makes a Christian grow

into a dislike of himself; he vanishes in his own eyes. Job abhorred

himself in the dust. Ch 42:2. It is good to grow out of conceit with

one's self.

(2.) The right manner of growth is to grow proportionately, to grow in

one grace as well as another. 2 Pet 1:1. To grow in knowledge, but not

meekness, brotherly love, or good works, is not the right growth. A

thing may swell and not grow; a man may be swelled with knowledge, yet

may have no spiritual growth. The right manner of growth is uniform,

growing in one grace as well as another. As the beauty of the body

consists in a symmetry of parts, in which not only the head grows, but

the arms and breast; so spiritual growth is most beautiful, when there

is symmetry and proportion, and every grace thrives.

(3.) The right manner of growth is, when a Christian has grace suitable

to his several employments and occasions; when corruptions are strong,

and he has grace able to give check to them; burdens are heavy, and he

has patience able to bear them; temptations fierce, and he has faith

able to resist them. Then grace grows in the right manner.

Whence is it that true grace cannot but grow?

(1.) It is proper for grace to grow; it is semen manens [an enduring

seed], the seed of God. I John 3:3. It is the nature of seed to grow:

grace does not lie in the heart, as a stone in the earth, but as seed

in the earth, which will spring up, first the blade, then the ear, and

then the full corn in the ear.

(2.) Grace cannot but grow, from its sweetness and excellence. He that

has grace is never weary of it, but would have more. The delight he has

in it causes thirst. Grace is the image of God, and a Christian thinks

he can never be enough like God. Grace instills peace; a Christian,

therefore, strives to grow in grace that he may grow in peace.

(3.) Grace cannot but grow, from a believer's ingrafting into Christ.

He who is a scion, ingrafted into this noble, generous stock, cannot

but grow. Christ is so full of sap, and vivifying influence, that he

makes all who are grafted into him, grow fruitful. From me is thy fruit

found.' Hos 14:4.

What motives or incentives are there to make us grow in grace?

(1.) Growth is the end of the ordinances. Why does a man lay out cost

on ground, manure and water it, but that it may grow? The sincere milk

of the word is given, that we may grow thereby. I Pet 2:2. The table of

the Lord is on purpose for our spiritual nourishment and increase of

grace.

(2.) The growth of grace is the best evidence of the truth of it.

Things that have no life will not grow: a picture will not grow, a

stake in the hedge will not grow; but a plant that has a vegetative

life grows. The growing of grace shows it to be alive in the soul.

(3.) Growth in grace is the beauty of a Christian. The more a child

grows, the more it comes to its favour and complexion, and looks more

ruddy; so, the more a Christian grows in grace, the more he comes to

his spiritual complexion, and looks fairer. Abraham's faith was

beautiful when in its infancy, but at last it grew so vigorous and

eminent, that God himself was in love with it, and crowned Abraham with

this honour, to be the father of the faithful.'

(4.) The more we grow in grace, the more glory we bring to God. God's

glory is more worth than the salvation of all men's souls. This should

be our design, to raise the trophies of God's glory; and how can we do

it more, than by growing in grace? Hereby is my Father glorified, if ye

bring forth much fruit.' John 15:5. Though the least drachm of grace

will bring salvation to us, yet it will not bring so much glory to God.

Filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are to the praise of his

glory.' Phil 1:11: It commends the skill of the husbandman when his

plants grow and thrive; it is a praise and honour to God when we thrive

in grace.

(5.) The more we grow in grace, the more will God love us. Is it not

that which we pray for? The more growth, the more God will love us. The

husbandman loves his thriving plants; the thriving Christian is God's

Hephzibah, or chief delight. Christ loves to see the vine flourishing,

and the pomegranates budding. Cant 6:11: He accepts the truth of grace,

but commends the growth of grace. I have not found so great faith, no,

not in Israel.' Matt 8: 10. Would you be as the beloved disciple that

lay in Christ's bosom? Would you have much love from Christ? Labour for

much growth, let faith flourish with good works, and love increase into

zeal.

(6.) We need to grow in grace. There is still something lacking in our

faith. I Thess 3:30. Grace is but in its infancy and minority, and we

must still be adding a cubit to our spiritual stature. The apostles

said, Lord, increase our faith.' Luke 17:7. Grace is but weak. I am

this day weak, though anointed king.' 2 Sam 3:39. So, though we are

anointed with grace, yet we are but weak, and had need arrive at

further degrees of sanctity.

(7.) The growth of grace will hinder the growth of corruption. The more

health grows, the more the distempers of the body abate; so in

spirituals, the more humility grows, the more the swelling of pride is

assuaged, the more purity of heart grows, the more the fire of lust is

abated. The growth of flowers in the garden does not hinder the growing

of weeds, but the growing of the flower of grace hinders the sprouting

of corruption. As some plants have an antipathy, and will not thrive if

they grow near together, as the vine and the bay tree, so, where grace

grows, sin will not thrive so fast.

(8.) We cannot grow too much in grace; there is no nimium, no excess

there. The body may grow too great, as in the dropsy; but faith cannot

grow too great. Your faith groweth exceedingly.' 2 Thess 1:1. Here was

exceeding, yet not excess. As a man cannot have too much health, so not

too much grace. Grace is the beauty of holiness. Ps 110:0. We cannot

have too much spiritual beauty; it will be the only trouble at death,

that we have grown no more in grace.

(g.) Such as do not grow in grace, decay in grace. Non progredi in via

est regredi [Not to go forward in the Christian life is to turn back].

Bernard. There is no standing in religion, either we go forward or

backward. If faith does not grow, unbelief will; if heavenly-mindedness

does not grow, covetousness will. A man that does not increase his

stock, diminishes it: so if you do not improve your stock of grace,

your stock will decay. The angels on Jacob's ladder were either

ascending or descending: if you do not ascend in religion, you descend.

(10.) The more we grow in grace, the more we shall flourish in glory.

Though every vessel of glory shall be full, yet some vessels hold more

than others. He whose pound gained ten, was made ruler over ten cities.

Luke 19:17. Such as do not grow much, though they lose not their glory,

they lessen it. If any shall follow the Lamb in whiter and larger robes

of glory than others, they shall be such as have shone most in grace

here.

Use: Lament the want of growth. Religion in many is grown into a form

and profession only: this is to grow in leaves, not in fruit. Many

Christians are like a body in an atrophy, which does not thrive. They

are not nourished by the sermons they hear. Like the angels who assumed

bodies, they ate, but did not grow. It is to be suspected where there

is no growth, there wants a vital principle. Some instead of growing

better, grow worse; they grow more earthly, more profane. 2 Tim 3:13.

Evil men proficient in pejus, shall wax worse and worse. Many grow

hell-ward - they grow past shame. Zeph 3:3. They are like some watered

stuffs, which grow more rotten.

How shall we know whether we grow in grace?

For deciding this question, I shall show 1: The signs of our not

growing; 2: of our growing.

I. The signs of our not growing in grace, but rather falling into a

spiritual consumption.

[1] When we have lost our spiritual appetite. A consumptive person has

not that stomach to his meat as formerly. Perhaps, Christian, thou

canst remember the time when thou didst hunger and thirst after

righteousness, thou didst come to the ordinances with such a stomach as

to a feast; but now it is otherwise, Christ is not so prized, nor his

ordinances so loved. This is a sad presage that grace is on the

declining hand; and thou art in a deep consumption. It was a sign that

David was near his grave when they covered him with clothes, and he got

no heat, I Kings 1:1; so, when a person is covered with the warm

clothes of ordinances, and yet has no heat of affection to spiritual

things, it is a sign that he is declining in grace.

[2] When we grow more worldly. Perhaps we once mounted into higher

orbs, we set our hearts on things above, and spake the language of

Canaan; but now our minds are taken off from heaven, we dig our comfort

out of the lower mines, and with Satan compass the earth. This is a

sign we are going down the hill apace, and our grace is in a

consumption. It is observable when nature decays, and people are near

dying, they grow more stooping; and truly, when men's hearts grow more

stooping to the earth, and they can hardly lift up themselves to a

heavenly thought, if grace be not dead, yet it is ready to die. Rev

3:3.

[3] When we are less troubled about sin. Time was when the least sin

grieved us, as the least hair makes the eye weep; but now we can digest

sin without remorse. Time was when we were troubled if we neglected

closet prayer; now we can omit family-prayer. Time was when vain

thoughts troubled us; now we are not troubled for loose practices. Here

is a sad declension in religion; and truly grace is so far from growing

that we can hardly perceive its pulse to beat.

II. The signs of our growing in grace.

[1] The first sign of our growing, is, when we have got beyond our

former measures of grace. It is a sign a child thrives when he has

outgrown his clothes. That knowledge which would serve us before will

not serve us now; we have a deeper insight into religion, our light is

clearer, our spark of love is increased into a flame; there is a sign

of growth. That competency of grace we once had is too scanty for us

now; we have outgrown ourselves.

[2] When we are more firmly rooted in religion. Rooted in him, and

established:' the spreading of the root shows the growth of the tree.

Col 2:2. When we are so strongly fastened on Christ, that we cannot be

blown down with the breath of heretics, it is a blessed sign of growth.

Athanasius was called Adamas ecclesiae [the Adamant of the Church, an

adamant that could not be removed from the love of the truth.

[3] When we have a more spiritual frame of heart. (1.) When we are more

spiritual in our principles; when we oppose sin out of love to God, and

because it strikes at his holiness. (2.) When we are more spiritual in

our affections. We grieve for the first rising of corruption, for the

bubbling up of vain thoughts, and for the spring that runs underground.

We mourn not only for the penalty of sin, but for its pollution. It is

not a coal only that burns, but blacks. (3.) When we arc spiritual in

the performance of duty. We are more serious, reverent, fervent; we

have more life in prayer, we put fire to the sacrifice. Fervent in

spirit.' Rom 12:2: We serve God with more love, which ripens and

mellows our duty, and makes it come off with a better relish.

[4] When grace gets ground by opposition. The fire, by an

antiperistasis, burns hottest in the coldest season. Peter's courage

increased by the opposition of the high priest and the rulers. Acts

4:4, 11. The martyr's zeal was increased by persecution. Here was grace

of the first magnitude.

What shall we do to grow in grace?

(1.) Take heed of that which will hinder growth, as the love of any

sin. The body may as well thrive in a fever, as grace can where any sin

is cherished.

(2.) Use all means for growth in grace. 1st. Exercise yourselves unto

godliness.' I Tim 4:4. The body grows stronger by exercise. Trading of

money makes men grow rich; so the more we trade our faith in the

promises, the richer in faith we grow. 2ndly. If you would be growing

Christians, be humble Christians. It is observed in some countries, as

in France, the best and largest grapes, which make wine, grow on the

lower sort of vines; so the humble saints grow most in grace. God

giveth grace to the humble.' I Pet 5:5. 3rdly. Pray to God for

spiritual growth. Some pray that they may grow in gifts. It is better

to grow in grace than gifts. Gifts are for ornament, grace is for

nourishment. Gifts edify others; grace saves ourselves. Some pray that

they may grow rich; but a fruitful heart is better than a full purse.

Pray that God would make you grow in grace, though it be by affliction.

Heb 12:20. The vine grows by pruning. God's pruning-knife is to make us

grow more in grace.

How may we comfort such as complain they do not grow in grace?

They make mistake; for they may grow, when they think they do not,

There is that maketh himself poor, yet has great riches.' Prov 13:3.

The sight Christians have of their defects in grace, and their thirst

after greater measures of grace, make them think they do not grow when

they do. He who covets a great estate, because he has not so much as he

desires, thinks himself to be poor. Indeed Christians should seek after

the grace they want, but they must not therefore overlook the grace

they have. Let Christians be thankful for the least growth. If you do

not grow so much in assurance, bless God if you grow in sincerity; if

you do not grow so much in knowledge, bless God if you grow in

humility. If a tree grows in the root, it is a true growth; so if you

grow in the root-grace of humility, it is as needful for you as any

other growth.

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10. Perseverance

'Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.' I Pet

1:1.

The fifth and last fruit of sanctification, is perseverance in grace.

The heavenly inheritance is kept for the saints, and they are kept to

the inheritance. I Pet 1:1. The apostle asserts a saint's stability and

permanence in grace. The saint's perseverance is much opposed by

Papists and Arminians; but it is not the less true because it is

opposed. A Christian's main comfort depends upon this doctrine of

perseverance. Take this away, and you prejudice religion, and cut the

sinews of all cheerful endeavours. Before I come to the full handling

and discussing of this great point, let me first clear the sense of it.

I. When I say, Believers persevere:

[1] I grant, that such as are so only in profession, may fall away.

Demas has forsaken me.' 2 Tim 4:40. Blazing comets soon evaporate. A

building on sand will fall. Matt 7:76. Seeming grace may be lost. No

wonder to see a bough fall from a tree that is only tied on. Hypocrites

are only tied on Christ by an external profession, they are not

ingrafted. Who ever thought artificial motions would hold long? The

hypocrite's motion is only artificial, not vital. All blossoms do not

ripen into fruit.

[2] I grant that if believers were left to stand on their own legs,

they might fall finally. Some of the angels, who were stars full of

light and glory, actually lost their grace; and if those pure angels

fell from grace, much more would the godly, who have so much sin to

betray them, if they were not upheld by a superior power.

L3] I grant that, although true believers do not fall away actually,

and lose all their grace, yet their grace may fail in degree, and they

may make a great breach upon their sanctification. Grace may be

moritura, non mortua; dying, but not dead. Strengthen the things which

are ready to die.' Rev 3:3. Grace may be like fire in the embers;

though not quenched, yet the flame is gone out. This decay of grace I

shall show in two particulars.

(1.) The lively actings of grace may be suspended. Thou hast left thy

first love.' Rev 2:2. Grace may be like a sleepy habit; the godly may

act faintly in religion, the pulse of their affections may beat low.

The wise virgins slumbered. Matt 25:5. The exercise of grace may be

hindered; as when the course of water is stopped. (2.) Instead of grace

working in the godly, corruption may work; instead of patience,

murmuring; instead of heavenliness, earthliness. How did pride put

forth itself in the disciples, when they strove who should be the

greatest! How did lust put forth itself in David! Thus lively and

vigorous may corruption be in the regenerate; they may fall into

enormous sins. But though all this be granted, yet they do not, penitus

exeidere, fall away finally from grace. David did not quite lose his

grace: for then, why did he pray, Take not away thy holy spirit from

me,? He had not quite lost the Spirit. As Eutychus, when he fell from a

window (Acts 20:) and all thought he was dead - No, saith Paul, there

is life in him;' so David fell foully, but there was the life of grace

in him. Though the saints may come to that pass that they have but

little faith, yet not to have no faith. Though their grace may be drawn

low, yet it is not drawn dry; though grace may be abated, it is not

abolished; though the wise virgins slumbered, yet their lamps were not

quite gone out. Grace, when at the lowest, shall revive and flourish;

as when Samson had lost his strength, his hair grew again, and his

strength was renewed. Having thus explained the proposition, I come now

to amplify this great doctrine of the saint's perseverance.

II. By what means do Christians come to persevere?

[1] By the help of ordinances, as of prayer, the word, and the

sacraments. Christians do not arrive at perseverance when they sit

still and do nothing. It is not with us as with passengers in a ship,

who are carried to the end of their voyage while they sit still in the

ship; or, as it is with noblemen, who have their rents brought in

without their toil or labour; but we arrive at salvation in the use of

means; as a man comes to the end of a race by running, to a victory by

fighting. Watch and pray.' Matt 26:6I. As Paul said, Except ye abide in

the ship, ye cannot be saved.' Acts 27:7 1: Believers shall come to

shore at last, arrive at heaven; but except they abide in the ship,'

viz.' in the use of ordinances, they cannot be saved.' The ordinances

cherish grace; as they beget grace, so they are the breastmilk by which

it is nourished and preserved to eternity.

[2] Auxilio Spiritus, by the sacred influence and concurrence of the

Spirit. The Spirit of God is continually at work in the heart of a

believer, to carry on grace to perfection. It drops in fresh oil, to

keep the lamp of grace burning. The Spirit excites, strengthens,

increases grace, and makes a Christian go from one step of faith to

another, till he comes to the end of his faith, which is salvation. I

Pet 1:1. It is a fine expression of the apostle, The Holy Ghost which

dwelleth in us.' 2 Tim 1:14. He who dwells in a house, keeps the house

in repair; so the Spirit dwelling in a believer, keeps grace in repair.

Grace is compared to a river of the water of life. John 7:78. This

river can never be dried up, because God's Spirit is the spring that

continually feeds it.

[3] Grace is carried on to perfection by Christ's daily intercession.

As the Spirit is at work in the heart, so is Christ at work in heaven.

Christ is ever praying that the saint's grace may hold out. Conserva

illos; "Father, keep those whom thou hast given me:" keep them as the

stars in their orbs: keep them as jewels, that they may not be lost.

"Father keep them.", John 17:7: That prayer which Christ made for

Peter, was the copy of the prayer he now makes for believers. I have

prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not,' that it be not totally

eclipsed. Luke 22:22. How can the children of such prayers perish?

III. Arguments to prove the saint's perseverance.

[1] A veritate Dei, from the truth of God.' God has both asserted it,

and promised it. (1.) God has asserted it. His seed remaineth in him.'

I John 3:3. The anointing ye have received of him abideth in you.' I

John 2:27. (2.) As God has asserted it, so he has promised it. The

truth of God, the most orient pearl of his crown, is laid as a pawn in

the promise. I will give unto them eternal life, and they shall never

perish.' John 10:08. I will make an everlasting covenant with them,

that I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my

fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.' Jer 32:20.

God will so love his people, that he will not forsake them; and they

shall so fear him, that they shall not forsake him. If a believer

should not persevere, God would break his promise. I will betroth thee

unto me for ever, in righteousness and lovingkindness.' Hos 2:19. God

does not marry his people unto himself, and then divorce them; he hates

putting away. Mal 2:16. God's love ties the marriage-knot so fast, that

neither death nor hell can break it asunder.

[2] The second argument is, a potentia Dei, from the power of God.' The

text says, we are kept by the power of God unto salvation.' Each Person

in the Trinity has a hand in making a believer persevere. God the

Father establishes. 2 Cor 1:1I. God the Son confirms, I Cor 1:1. God

the Holy Ghost seals. Eph 1:13. So that it is the power of God that

keeps us. We are not kept by our own power. The Pelagians held that man

by his own power might overcome temptation and persevere. Augustine

confutes them. Man,' says he, prays unto God for perseverance, which

would be absurd, if he had power of himself to persevere.' And,' says

Augustine, if all the power be inherent in a man's self, then why

should not one persevere as well as another? Why not Judas as well as

Peter?' So that it is not by any other than the power of God that we

are kept. The Lord preserved Israel from perishing in the wilderness,

till he brought them to Canaan; and the same care will he take, if not

in a miraculous manner, yet in a spiritual invisible manner, in

preserving his people in a state of grace, till he bring them to the

celestial Canaan. As the heathens feigned of Atlas, that he bears up

the heavens from falling: the power of God is that Atlas which bears up

the saints from falling. It is disputed, whether grace of itself may

not perish, as Adam's; yet sure I am, grace kept by the power of God

cannot perish.

[3] The third argument is taken, ab electione, from God's electing

love.' Such as God has from all eternity elected to glory, cannot fall

away finally; but every true believer is elected to glory, therefore he

cannot fall away. What can frustrate election, or make God's decree

void? This argument stands like Mount Sion, which cannot be moved;

insomuch that some of the Papists hold, that those who have absolute

election cannot fall away. The foundation of God standeth sure, having

this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his.' 2 Tim 2:19. The

foundation of God is nothing else but God's decree in election; and

this stands sure; God will not alter it, and others cannot.

[4] The fourth argument is taken, ab unione cum Christo, from

believers' union with Christ.' They are knit to Christ as the members

to the head, by the nerves and ligaments of faith, so that they cannot

be broken off. Eph 5:53. What was once said of Christ's natural body is

true of his mystical. A bone of it shall not be broken.' As it is not

possible to sever the leaven and the dough when they are once mingled

and kneaded together, so it is impossible for Christ and believers,

when once united, ever to be separated. Christ and his members make one

body. Now, is it possible that any part of Christ should perish? How

can Christ lose any member of his mystic body, and be perfect? In

short, si unus excidat, quare non et alter? If one believer may be

broken off from Christ, then, by the same rule, why not another. Why

not all? And so Christ would be a head without a body.

[5] The fifth argument is taken, ab emptione, from the nature of a

purchase.' A man will not lay down his money for a purchase which may

be lost, and the fee-simple alienated. Christ died that he might

purchase us as a people to himself for ever. Having obtained eternal

redemption for us.' Heb 9:12. Would Christ, think ye, have shed his

blood that we might believe in him for a while, and then fall away? Do

we think Christ will lose his purchase?

[6] The sixth argument is, a victoria supra mundum, from a believer's

victory over the world.' The argument stands thus: He who overcomes the

world perseveres in grace; but a believer overcomes the world;

therefore a believer perseveres in grace. This is the victory that

overcometh the world, even our faith.' I John 5:5. A man may lose a

single battle in the field, yet win the victory at last. A child of God

may be foiled in a single battle against temptation, as Peter was, but

he is victorious at last. Now, if a saint be crowned victor, if the

world be conquered by him, he must needs persevere.

IV. I come next to answer some objections of the Arminians.

[1] The first objection of Arminians is, If a believer shall persevere

in grace, to what purpose are admonitions in Scripture, such as Let him

take heed lest he fall;' I Cor 10:02; and, Let us fear, lest any of you

seem to come short.' Heb 4:1? Such admonitions seem to be superfluous,

if a saint shall certainly persevere.

These admonitions are necessary to caution believers against

carelessness; they are as goads and spurs to quicken them to greater

diligence in working out their salvation. They do not imply the saints

can fall away, but are preservatives to keep them from falling away.

Christ told some of his disciples they should abide in him, yet he

exhorts them to abide in him. John 15:5. His exhorting them was not in

the least to question their abiding in him, but to awaken their

diligence, and make them pray the harder, that they might abide in him.

[2] The second objection is, It is impossible for those who were once

enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made

partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have felt the powers of the world to

come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance. Heb

6:6.

This place of Scripture has no force in it, for the apostle here speaks

of hypocrites; he shows how far they may go, and yet fall away. (1.)

They who were once enlightened. Men may have great illuminations, yet

fall away. Was not Judas enlightened? (2.) They have been made

partakers of the Holy Ghost; the common gifts of the Spirit, not the

special grace. (3.) They have tasted the good word of God. Tasting here

is opposed to eating: the hypocrite may have a kind of taste of the

sweetness of religion, but his taste does not nourish. There is a great

deal of difference between one Perseverance that takes a gargle and a

cordial: the gargle only washes his mouth - he tastes it, and puts it

out again; but a cordial is drunk down, which nourishes and cherishes

the spirits. The hypocrite, who has only some smack or taste of

religion, as one tastes a gargle, may fall away. (4.) And have felt the

powers of the world to come; that is, they may have such apprehensions

of the glory of heaven as to be affected with it, and seem to have some

joy in the thoughts of it, yet fall away; as in the parable of the

stony ground. Matt 13:3o. All this is spoken of the hypocrite; but it

does not therefore prove that the true believer, who is effectually

wrought upon, can fall away. Though comets fall, it does not follow

that true stars fall. That this Scripture speaks not of sound

believers, is clear from ver 9: But we are persuaded better things of

you, and things that accompany salvation.'

Use one: For instruction. (1.) See the excellence of grace. It

perseveres. Other things are but for a season; health and riches are

sweet, but they are but for a season; but grace is the blossom of

eternity. The seed of God remains. I John 3:3. Grace may suffer an

eclipse, not a dissolution. It is called substance, for its solidity,

Prov 8:8I; and durable riches, for its permanence. Prov 8:18. It lasts

as long as the soul, as heaven lasts. Grace is not like a lease which

soon expires, but it runs parallel with eternity.

(2.) See here that which may excite in the saints everlasting love and

gratitude to God. What can make us love God more than the fixedness of

his love to us? He is not only the author of grace, but finisher; his

love is perpetual and carried on to our salvation. My sheep hear my

voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them

eternal life.' John 10:07, 28. My sheep, there is election; hear my

voice, there is vocation; and I know them, there is justification; and

they follow me, there is sanctification; and I give unto them eternal

life, there is glorification. How may this make us love God, and set up

the monuments and trophies of his praise! How much have we done to

cause God to withdraw his Spirit, and suffer us to fall finally! yet

that he should keep us, let his name be blessed, and his memorial

eternalised, who keepeth the feet of his saints. I Sam 2:2.

(3.) See whence it is that saints persevere in holiness. It is to be

ascribed solely to the power of God; we are kept by his power, kept as

in a garrison. It is a wonder that any Christian perseveres, if you

consider: (1:) Corruption within. The tares are mingled with the wheat;

there is more sin than grace, yet grace be habitually predominant.

Grace is like a spark in the sea, a wonder that it is not quenched. It

is a wonder that sin does not destroy grace; that it does not do, as

sometimes the nurse to the infant, overlay it, and so this infant of

grace be smothered and die. (2:) Temptations without. Satan envies us

happiness, and he raises his militia, and stirs up persecution. He

shoots his fiery darts of temptations, which are called darts for their

swiftness, fiery for their terribleness. We are every day beset with

devils. As it was a wonder that Daniel was kept alive in the midst of

the roaring lions, so there are many roaring devils about us, and yet

we are not torn in pieces. Now, whence is it that we stand against

these powerful temptations? We are kept by the power of God. (3:) The

world's "olden snares, riches and pleasure. How hardly shall they that

have riches enter into the kingdom of God?' Luke 18:84. How many have

been cast away upon these golden sands, as Demas! 2 Tim 4:40. What a

wonder any soul perseveres in religion, that the earth does not choke

the fire of all good affections? Whence is this, but from the power of

God? We are kept by his power.

Use two: For consolation. This doctrine of perseverance is as a bezoar

stone; it is a sovereign cordial to keep up the spirits of the godly

from fainting. (1.) There is nothing that more troubles a child of God

than that he fears he shall never hold out. These weak legs of mine,'

he says, will never carry me to heaven.' But perseverance is an

inseparable fruit of sanctification. Once in Christ, for ever in

Christ. A believer may fall from some degrees of grace, but not from

the state of grace. An Israelite could never wholly sell or alienate

his inheritance. Lev 25:53. So our heavenly inheritance cannot be

wholly alienated from us. How despairing is the Arminian doctrine of

falling from grace! To-day a saint, tomorrow a reprobate; to-day a

Peter, to-morrow a Judas. This must needs cut the sinews of a

Christian's endeavour, and be like boring a hole in a vessel: to make

all the wine of his joy run out. Were the Arminian doctrine true, how

could the apostle say, the seed of God remains in him, and the

anointing of God abides? I John 3:3; I John 2:27. What comfort were it

to have one's name written in the book of life, if it might be blotted

out again? But be assured, for your comfort, grace, if true, though

never so weak, shall persevere. Though a Christian has but little grace

to trade with, yet he need not fear breaking, because God not only

gives him a stock of grace, but will keep his stock for him. Gratia

concutitur, non excutitur. Augustine. Grace may be shaken with fears

and doubts, but it cannot be plucked up by the roots.' Fear not falling

away. If anything should hinder the saints, perseverance, it must be

either sin or temptation: but neither of these can. (1:) Not the sin of

believers. That which humbles them shall not damn them; but their sins

humble them. They gather grapes off thorns; from the thorn of sin they

gather the grape of humility. (2:) Not temptation. The devil lays the

train of his temptation to blow up the fort of a saint's grace; but he

cannot do it. Temptation is a medicine for security; the more Satan

tempts, the more the saints pray. When Paul had the messenger of Satan

to buffet him, he said, For this I besought the Lord thrice, that it

might depart from me.' 2 Cor 12:2. Thus nothing can break off a

believer from Christ, or hinder his perseverance. Let this wine be

given to such as are of a heavy heart. (2.) This perseverance is

comfort. (1:) In the loss of worldly comforts. When our goods may be

taken away, our grace cannot. Mary has chosen the better part, which

cannot be taken from her.' Luke 10:02. (2:) In the hour of death. When

all things fail, friends take their farewell of us, yet still grace

remains. Death may separate all things else from us but grace. A

Christian may say on his death-bed, as Olevianus, Sight is gone, speech

and hearing are departing, but the lovingkindness of God will never

depart.'

Use three: For exhortation. What motives and incentives are there to

make Christians persevere?

(1.) It is the crown and glory of a Christian to persevere. In

Christianis non initia sed fines laudantur [It is not the beginning of

the Christian life that gets glory but the end of it]. The hoary head

is a crown of glory, if found in the way of righteousness.' Prov 16:6

1: When grey hairs shine with golden virtues, it is a crown of glory.

The church of Thyatira was best at last. I know thy patience and thy

works, and the last to be more than the first.' Rev 2:19. The

excellence of a building is not in having the first stone laid, but

when it is finished: the glory and excellence of a Christian is when he

has finished the work of faith.

(2.) You are within a few days' march of heaven. Salvation is near to

you. Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.' Rom 13:3:

Christians, it is but a while and you will have done weeping and

praying, and be triumphing; you shall put off your mourning, and put on

white robes; you shall put off your armour, and put on a victorious

crown. You who have made a good progress in religion, you are almost

ready to commence and take your degree of glory; now is your salvation

nearer than when you began to believe. When a man is almost at the end

of a race, will he tire, or faint away? O labour to persevere, your

salvation is now nearer; you have but a little way to go, and you will

set your foot in heaven! Though the way be up-hill and full of thorns,

yet you have gone the greatest part of your way, and shortly shall rest

from your labours.

(3.) How sad is it not to persevere in holiness! You expose yourself to

the reproaches of men, and the rebukes of God. First, to the reproaches

of men. They will deride both you and your profession. This man began

to build, and was not able to finish.' Luke 14:40. Such is he who

begins in religion, and does not persevere: he is the ludibrium and

derision of all. Secondly, to the rebukes of God. God is most severe

against such as fall off, because they bring an evil report upon

religion. Apostasy breeds a bitter worm in the conscience; (what a worm

did Spira feel!); and it brings swift damnation; it is a drawing back

to perdition. Heb 10:09. God will make his sword drunk with the blood

of apostates.

(4.) The promises of mercy are annexed only to perseverance. He that

overcometh shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out

his name out of the book of life.' Rev 3:3. Non pugnanti sed vincenti

dabitur corona. Augustine. The promise is not to him that fights, but

that overcomes. Ye are they which have continued with me, and I appoint

unto you a kingdom.' Luke 22:28, 29. The promise of a kingdom, says

Chrysostom, is not made to them that heard Christ or followed him, but

that continued with him. Perseverance carries away the garland; no man

has the crown set upon his head, but he who holds out to the end of the

race. O therefore, be persuaded by all this to persevere. God makes no

account of such as do not persevere. Who esteems corn that sheds before

harvest, or fruit that falls from the tree before it be ripe?

What expedients or means may be used for a Christian's perseverance?

(1.) Take heed of those things which will make you desist and fall

away. 1st. Take heed of presumption. Do not presume upon your own

strength; exercise a holy fear and jealousy over your own hearts. Be

not high-minded, but fear.' Rom 11:1o. Let him that thinketh he

standeth take heed lest he fall.' I Cor 10:12. It was Peter's sin that

he leaned more upon his grace than upon Christ, and then he fell. A

Christian has cause to fear lest the lust and deceit of his heart

betray him. Take heed of presuming. Fear begets prayer, prayer begets

strength, and strength begets steadfastness. 2ndly. Take heed of

hypocrisy. Judas was first a sly hypocrite, and then a traitor. Their

heart was not right with God, neither were they steadfast in his

covenant.' Psa [28:87. If there be any venom or malignity in the blood,

it will break forth into a plague-sore. The venom of hypocrisy is in

danger of breaking out into the plague-sore of scandal. 3rdly. Beware

of a vile heart of unbelief. Take heed lest there be in any of you an

evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.' Heb 3:12.

Whence is apostasy but from incredulity? Men do not believe the truth,

and therefore they fall from the truth. Unbelieving and unstable go

together. They believed not in God.' They turned back.' Psa 78:82, 4I

(2.) If you would be pillars in the temple of God, and persevere in

sanctity;

(1:) Look that you enter into religion upon a right ground; be well

grounded in the distinct knowledge of God. You must know the love of

the Father, the merit of the Son, and the efficacy of the Holy Ghost.

Such as know not God aright will by degrees fall off. The Samaritans

sided with the dews when they were in favour, but disclaimed all

kindred with them when Antiochus persecuted the Jews. No wonder they

were no more fixed in religion, if you consider what Christ says of

them: Ye worship ye know not what.' John 4:42. They were ignorant of

the true God. Let your knowledge of God be clear, and serve him purely

out of choice, and then you will persevere. I have chosen the way of

truth. I have stuck unto thy testimonies.' Psa 119:90, 3I.

(2:) Get a real work of grace in your heart. It is a good thing that

the heart be established with grace.' Heb 13:3. Nothing will hold out

but grace; it is only this anointing abides; paint will fall off. Get a

heartchanging work. But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified.' I Cor

6:6: Be not content with baptism of water, without baptism of the

Spirit. The reason men persevere not in religion, is for want of a

vital principle; a branch must needs wither that has no root to grow

upon.

(3:) If you would persevere, be very sincere. Perseverance grows only

upon the root of sincerity. Let integrity and uprightness preserve me.'

Psa 25:5I. The breastplate of sincerity can never be shot through. How

many storms was Job in! The devil set against him; his wife tempted him

to curse God; his friends accused him of being a hypocrite: here was

enough, one would think, to have made him desist from religion; but for

all this, he perseveres. What preserved him? It was his sincerity. My

righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go; my heart shall not

reproach me so long as I live.' Job 27:7.

(4:) If you would persevere, be humble. Chrysostom calls humility the

mother of all the graces. God lets a poor, humble Christian stand, when

others of higher parts, and who have higher thoughts of themselves,

fall off by apostasy. They are most likely to persevere, to whom God

gives most grace. But he gives grace to the humble.' I Pet 5:5. They

are most likely to persevere, who have God dwelling in them. But God

dwells in the humble soul.' Isa 57:15. Non requiescet Spiritus Sanctus

nisi super humilem [The Holy Spirit will only come to rest over a

humble soul]. Bernard. The lower the tree roots in the earth, the

firmer it is; so the more the soul is rooted in humility, the more

established it is, and is in less danger of falling away.

(5:) Would you persevere? Cherish the grace of faith. Faith is able

stabilere animum [to support the spirit]. By faith ye stand.' 2 Cor

1:14. Faith knits us to Christ, as the members are knit to the head by

nerves and sinews. Faith fills us with love to God. It works by love.'

Gal 5:5. He who loves God will rather die than desert him; as the

soldier who loves his general will die in his service. Faith gives us a

prospect of heaven; it shows us an invisible glory; and he who has

Christ in his heart, and a crown in his eye, will not faint away. O

cherish faith! Keep your faith, and your faith will keep you. While the

pilot keeps his ship, his ship keeps him.

(6:) Would we persevere? Let us seek God's power to help us. We are

kept by the power of God. The child is safest when it is held in the

nurse's arms; so are we, when we are held in the arms of free grace. It

is not our holding God, but his holding us, that preserves us. When a

boat is tied to a rock, it is secure; so, when we are fast tied to the

Rock of Ages, we are impregnable. O engage God's power to help you to

persevere. We engage his power by prayer. Let us pray to him to keep

us. Hold up my goings in thy path, that my footsteps slip not.' Psa

17:7. It was a good prayer of Beza, Domine quod cepisti perfici, ne in

portu naufragium accidat: Lord, perfect what thou hast begun in me,

that I may not suffer shipwreck when I am almost at the haven.'

(7.) If you would persevere, set before your eyes the noble examples of

those who have persevered in religion: Quot martyres, quot fideles in

caelis, jam triumphant! [How many martyrs, how many faithful souls are

even now rejoicing in Heaven!]. What a glorious army of saints and

martyrs have gone before us! How constant to the death was Paul! Acts

21:13. How persevering in the faith were Ignatius, Polycarp, and

Athanasius! They were stars in their orbs, pillars in the temple of

God. Let us look on their zeal and courage, and be animated. Seeing we

are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us run with

patience the race that is set before us.' Heb 12:2. The crown is set at

the end of the race; and if we win the race, we shall wear the crown.

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7. Death and the last day

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1. The Death Of The Righteous

'For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.' Phil 1:1I.

Paul was a great admirer of Christ. He desired to know nothing but

Christ, and him crucified. I Cor 2:2. No medicine like the blood of

Christ; and in the text, For to me to live is Christ, and to die is

gain.'

I. For to me to live is Christ. We must understand Paul of a spiritual

life. For to me to live is Christ, i.e.' Christ is my life; so Gregory

of Nyssa; or thus, my life is made up of Christ. As a wicked man's life

is made up of sin, so Paul's life was made up of Christ: he was full of

Christ. That I may give you the sense of the text more fully, take it

in these three particulars: -

[1] For to me to live is Christ, i.e.' Christ is the principle of my

life. I fetch my spiritual life from Christ, as the branch fetches its

sap from the root. Christ liveth in me.' Gal 2:20. Jesus Christ is a

head of influence; he sends forth life and spirits into me, to quicken

me to every holy action. Thus, for to me to live is Christ: Christ is

the principle of my life; from his fulness I live, as the vine branch

lives from the root.

[2] For to me to live is Christ, i.e.' Christ is the end of my life; I

live not to myself but to Christ. So Grotius and Casaubon, Christo

servio, For me to live is Christ;' all my living is to do service to

Christ. Whether we live, we live unto the Lord.' Rom 14:4. When we lay

out ourselves wholly for Christ: as the factor trades for the merchant,

so we trade for Christ's interest: we propagate his gospel; the design

of our life is to exalt Christ, and make the crown upon his head

flourish. It may then be said, for to us to live is Christ; our whole

life is a living to Christ.

[3] For to me to live is Christ, i.e.' Christ is the joy of my life.

God my exceeding joy,' or the cream of my joy. Psa 43:3. A Christian

rejoices in Christ's righteousness. He can rejoice in Christ when

worldly joys are gone. When the tulip in a garden withers, a man

rejoices in his jewels; when relations die, a saint can rejoice in

Christ, the pearl of price. In this sense, For to me to live is Christ;

he is the joy of my life; if Christ were gone, my life would be a death

to me.

It should exhort us all to labour to say as the apostle, For to me to

live is Christ: Christ is the principle of my life, the end of my life,

the joy of my life. If we can say, For to me to live is Christ, we may

comfortably conclude, that to die shall be gain.

II. And to die is gain. To a believer death is great gain. A saint can

tell what his losses for Christ are here, but he cannot tell how great

his gains are at death. To me to die is gain.' Death to a believer is

crepusculum gloriae, the daybreak of eternal brightness. To show fully

what a believer's gains are at death were a task too great for an

angel; all hyperboles fall short of it; the reward of glory exceeds our

very faith. Let me give you some dark views and imperfect lineaments

only of that infinite glory the saints shall gain at the hour of death.

To me to die is gain.'

[1] Believers at death shall gain a writ of ease from all sins and

troubles; they shall be in a state of impeccability: sin expires with

their life. I think sometimes what a happy state that will be, never to

have another sinful thought, and to have a quietus from all troubles.

Here David cried out, My life is spent with griefs, and my years with

sighing.' Psa 31:10. Quid est diu vivere, nisi diu torqueri [Long life

is merely long torment]. Augustine. Life begins with a cry, and ends

with a groan; but at death all troubles die.

[2] Believers at death shall gain the glorious sight of God. They shall

see him; (1.) Intellectually with the eyes of their mind, which divines

call the beatific vision. If there were not such an intellectual sight

of God, how do the spirits of just men, made perfect, see him?

(2.) They shall behold the glorified body of Jesus Christ; and if it be

pleasant to behold the sun, how blessed a sight will it be to see

Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, clothed with our human nature,

shining in glory above the angels! Through Christ's flesh, as through a

transparent glass, some bright rays and beams of the Godhead shall

display themselves to glorified eyes. The sight of God through Christ

will be very delightful; for the terror of God's essence will be taken

away; his majesty will be mixed with beauty, and sweetened with

clemency. It will be infinitely delightful to the saints to see the

amiable aspects and smiles of God's face.

[3] The saints at death shall not only have a sight of God, but shall

enjoy his love. There shall be no more a vail on God's face, nor shall

his smiles be chequered with frowns, but his love shall discover itself

in all its orient beauty and fragrant sweetness. Here the saints pray

for his love, and they have a few drops; but there they shall have as

much as their vessels can receive. To know the love that passeth

knowledge will cause a jubilation of spirit, and create such holy

raptures of joy in the saints, as are superlative, and would soon

overwhelm them, if God did not make them able to bear it.

[4] Believers at death shall gain a celestial palace, a house not made

with hands. 2 Cor 5:5: Here the saints are straitened for room; they

have but mean cottages to live in; but they shall have a royal palace

to live in hereafter. Here is their sojourning house, there in heaven

is their mansionhouse, a house built high above all the visible orbs,

bespangled with light, and enriched with pearls and precious stones.

Col 1:12, and Rev 21:19. It is not their landlord's house, but their

Father's house, and stands upon consecrated ground. John 14:4. It is

represented by transparent glass, to show its holiness. Rev 21:1I.

[5] Believers at death shall gain the sweet society of glorified saints

and angels; which will add to the felicity of heaven, as every star

adds some lustre to the firmament. (1.) The society of the glorified

saints. We shall see them in their souls, as well as in their bodies.

Their bodies will be so clear and bright, that we shall see their souls

shining through them, as wine through the glass. Believers at death

will have close converse with glorified saints. How delightful will it

be, to be freed from all the sinful corruptions, pride, envy, passion

and censoriousness, which as scars disfigured them here! In heaven

there will be perfect love among the saints; as the olive and myrtle,

they will sweetly embrace each other. If in the transfiguration Peter

knew Moses and Elias, whom he never saw before, Matt 17:7, much more,

in the glorified state, will saints perfectly know one another, though

they never saw each other before. (2.) The saints at death will behold

the angels with the glorified eye of their understandings. The wings of

the cherubims (representing the angels) were made of fine gold, to

denote both their sanctity and splendour. Angels are compared to

lightning, Matt 28:8, because of those sparkling beams of majesty,

which as lightning shoot from them. When saints and angels meet and

sing together in concert in the heavenly choir, what divine harmony,

what joyful triumphs will there be!

[6] Believers at death shall gain perfection of holiness. Here grace is

but in cunabulis, in its cradle,' very imperfect; so that we cannot

write a copy of holiness without blotting: here believers receive but

primitias Spiritus, the first fruits of the Spirit.' Rom 8:83. At death

the saints will arrive at perfection; their knowledge will be clear;

their sanctity perfect; their sun will be in its full meridian

splendour. They need not then pray for increase of grace; for they

shall love God as much as they would love him, and as much as he

desires to have them love him. They shall be in respect of holiness as

the angels of God.

[7] At death, the saints will gain a royal magnificent feast. I told

you before what a glorious palace they shall have; but a man may starve

in a house, if there be no cheer. The royal banquet which saints have

at death is shadowed out in Scripture by a marriage-supper. Rev 19:9.

Bullinger and Gregory the Great understand by the marriage-supper of

the Lamb, the stately, magnificent festival the saints will have in

heaven, when they shall feed on the tree of life. Rev 22:2. They shall

have the heavenly nectar and ambrosia, the spiced wine, and the juice

of the pomegranate.' Cant 8:8. This royal supper of the Lamb will not

only satisfy hunger, but prevent it. They shall hunger no more.' Rev

7:16. Nor can there be any surfeit at this feast, because a fresh

course will be continually served. New and fresh delights will spring

from God; therefore the tree of life in paradise is said to bear twelve

sorts of fruit. Rev 22:2.

[8] Believers at death shall gain honour and dignity; they shall reign

as kings. We read therefore of the ensigns of their royalty, their

white robes and crowns celestial. Rev 4:4. We read that the doors of

the holy of holies were made of palm-trees and open flowers, covered

with gold. I Kings 6:6 s. An emblem this of the victory and triumph,

and the golden garland of honour wherewith God invests the saints

glorified. When all worldly honour shall lie in the dust, the mace, the

star, the robe of ermine, the imperial diadem, then shall the saints,

honour remain; not one jewel shall be plucked out of their crown. At

death they shall gain a blessed eternity. If the saints could have the

least suspicion or fear of losing their glory, it would much cool and

imbitter their joy; but their crown fadeth not away. I Pet 5:5. As the

wicked have a worm that never dies, so the elect have a crown that

never fades. Ever, is a short word, but it has no end. In fine erit

gaudium sine fine [At the last our joy shall be never-ending]. Bernard.

The things which are not seen are eternal.' 2 Cor 4:18. At thy right

hand are pleasures for evermore.' Psa 16:6: Who can span eternity?

Millions of ages stand but for ciphers in eternity. Ever in Christ's

bosom is the elah, or highest strain of the saint's glory.

How come the saints to have all this gain?

They have a right to all this gain at death upon several accounts, as

by virtue of the Father's donation, the Son's purchase, the Holy

Ghost's earnest, and faith's acceptance. Therefore the state of future

glory is called the saint's proper inheritance. Col 1:12. They are

heirs of God and have a right to inherit.

Use one: See the great difference between the death of the godly and

the wicked. The godly are great gainers, but the wicked are great

losers at death. They lose four things: -

(1.) They lose the world; and that is a great loss to the wicked. They

laid up their treasure upon earth, and to be turned out of it all at

once is a great loss.

(2.) They lose their souls. Matt 16:66, 27. The soul was at first a

noble piece of coin, upon which God stamped his own image. This

celestial spark is more precious than the whole globe of the world; but

the sinner's soul is lost: not that the souls of the wicked are

annihilated at death, but tormented.

(3.) They lose heaven. Heaven is sedes beatorum, the royal seat of the

blessed; it is the region of happiness, the map of perfection. There is

the manna which is angels' food; there is the garden of spices, the bed

of perfumes, the river of pleasure. Sinners at death, lose all these.

(4.) They lose all hope. Though they lived wickedly, they hoped God

would be merciful, and they hoped they should go to heaven. Their hope

was not an anchor, but a spider's web. At death they lose their hopes,

and see they did but flatter themselves into hell. Whose hope shall be

cut off.' Job 8:14. It is sad to have life and hope cut off together.

Use two: If saints gain such glorious things at death, well may they

desire it. Does not every one desire preferment? Nemo ante funera felix

[No-one is content before his death]. Faith gives a title to heaven:

death gives the possession. Though we should be desirous of doing

service here, yet we should be ambitious of being with Christ. Phil

1:13. We should be content to live, but willing to die. Is it not a

blessed thing to be freed from sin, and to lie for ever in the bosom of

divine love? Is it not a blessed thing to meet our godly relations in

heaven, and to be singing divine anthems of praise among the angels?

Does not the bride desire the marriage day especially if she has the

prospect of a crown? What is the place we now live in, but a place of

banishment from God? We are in a wilderness, while angels live at

court. Here we are combating with Satan, and should we not desire to be

out of the bloody field, where the bullets of temptation fly fast, and

receive a victorious crown? Think what it will be to have always a

smiling look from Christ's face! to be brought into the

banqueting-house, and have the banner of his love displayed over us! O

ye saints, desire death; it is your ascension-day to heaven. Egredere,

anima, egredere! said Hilarion on his death-bed, Go forth, my soul, Go

forth!' Another holy man said, Lord, lead me to that glory which I have

seen as through a glass; haste, Lord, and do not tarry.' Some plants

thrive best when they are transplanted; so believers, when transplanted

by death, cannot but thrive, because they have Christ's sunbeams

shining upon them. What though the passage through the valley of the

shadow of death be troublesome! who would not be willing to pass a

tempestuous sea, if he were sure to be crowned so soon as he came to

shore?

Use three: We may here find comfort in the loss of dear and pious

relations. They are not only taken away from the evil to come, but are

great gainers by death. They leave a wilderness, and go to a paradise;

they change their complaints into thanksgivings; they leave their

sorrows behind, and enter into the joy of their Lord. Why should we

weep for their preferment? Believers have not their portion paid till

the day of their death. God's promise is his bond to make over heaven

in reversion to them; but though they have his bond, they do not

receive their portion till the day of death. Oh! rejoice to think of

their happiness who die in the Lord: to them to die is gain.' They are

as rich as heaven can make them.

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2. A Believer's Privilege At Death

'For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.' Phil 1:1I.

Hope is a Christian's anchor, which he casts within the veil. Rejoicing

in hope.' Rom 12:12. A Christian's hope is not in this life, but he

hash hope in his death.' Prov 14:42. The best of a saint's comfort

begins when his life ends; but the wicked have all their heaven here.

Woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.'

Luke 6:64. You may make your acquittance, and write Received in full

payment.' Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good

things.' Luke 16:65. But a saint's happiness is in reversion. The

righteous has hope in his death.' God keeps the best wine till last. If

Cato, the heathen, said, To me to die is gain:' he saw mortality to be

a mercy: what, then, may a believer say! The day of death is better

than the day of one's birth.' Eccl 7:7: A queen of this land said she

preferred her coffin before her cradle.

What benefits do believers receive at death?

I. The saints, at death, have great immunities and freedoms. An

apprentice, when out of his time, is made free: so, when the saints are

out of their time of living, they are made free! they are not made free

till death. [1] At death they are freed from a body of sin. There are

in the best reliquiae peccati [the remnants of sin], some remainders

and relics of corruption. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver

me from this body of death?' Rom 7: 24. By the body of death is meant

the congeries, the mass and lump of sin. It may well be called a body

for its weightiness, and a body of death for its noisomeness. (1.) It

weighs us down. Sin hinders us from doing good. A Christian - like a

bird that would be flying up, but has a string tied to its legs to

hinder it - would be flying up to heaven with the wings of desire, but

sin hinders him. The good that I would, I do not.' Rom 7:19. He is like

a ship under sail, and at anchor! grace would sail forward, but sin is

the anchor that holds it back. (2.) Sin is more active in its sphere

than grace. How stirring was lust in David, when his grace lay dormant!

(3). Sin sometimes gets the mastery, and leads a saint captive. The

evil that I would not, that I do.' Rom 7:19. Paul was like a man

carried down the stream, and could not bear up against it. How often is

a child of God overpowered with pride and passion! Therefore Paul calls

sin a law in his members. Rom 7: 23. It binds as a law; it has a kind

of jurisdiction over the soul, as Caesar had over the senate. (4.) Sin

defiles the soul; like a stain to beauty, it turns the soul's azure

brightness into sable. (5.) Sin debilitates us, disarms us of our

strength. I am this day weak, though anointed king.' 2 Sam 3:39. Though

a saint be crowned with grace, and anointed a spiritual king, he is

weak. (6.) Sin is ever restless. The flesh lusts against the spirit.'

Gal 5:17. It is an inmate that is always quarrelling; like Marcellus,

that Roman captain, of whom Hannibal said, whether he beat or was

beaten, he would never be quiet. (7.) Sin adheres to us, we cannot get

rid of it. It may be compared to a wild fig-tree growing on a wall, the

roots of which are pulled up, but some fibres of it are left in the

joints of the stone-work, which cannot be got out. (8.) Sin mingles

with our duties and graces. It makes a child of God weary of his life,

and makes him water his couch with his tears, to think that sin is so

strong a party, and he often offends the God he loves. This made Paul

cry out, Miser ego homo! O wretched man that I am!' He did not cry out

for his affliction, or his prison-chain, but for the body of sin. Now a

believer at death is freed from sin, he is not taken away in, but from

his sins; he shall never have a vain, proud thought more; he shall

never grieve the Spirit of God any more. Sin brought death into the

world, and death shall carry sin out of the world. The Persians had a

certain day in the year in which they killed all serpents and venomous

creatures; such a day will the day of death be to a believer; it will

destroy all his sins, which, like so many serpents, have stung him.

Death smites a believer as the angel did Peter, and made his chains

fall off. Acts 12:2. Believers at death are made perfect in holiness.

The spirits of just men made perfect.' Heb 12:23. At death the souls of

believers recover their virgin purity. Oh! what a blessed privilege is

this, to be sine macula et ruga, without spot or wrinkle; to be purer

than the sunbeams; to be as free from sin as the angels! Eph 5:57. This

makes a believer desirous to have his passport and to be gone; he would

fain live in that pure air where no black vapours of sin arise.

[2] At death the saints shall be freed from all the troubles and

incumbrances to which this life is subject. Sin is the seed sown, and

trouble is the harvest reaped.' Euripides. Life and trouble are married

together. There is more in life to wean us than to tempt us. Parents

divide a portion of sorrow to their children, and yet leave enough for

themselves. Man is born to trouble;' he is heir to it, it is his

birth-right; you may as well separate weight from lead, as trouble from

the life of man. Job 5:5. King Henry's emblem was a crown hung in a

bush of thorns. There is a far greater proportion of bitterness than

pleasure in this life. I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and

cinnamon.' Prov 7:77. For one sweet ingredient there were two bitter;

for the cinnamon, there were myrrh and aloes. A man's grace will not

exempt him from troubles. Few and evil have the days of the years of my

life been.' Gen 47:7. Thus said a godly patriarch, though he had met

with God. He named the name of the place Peniel; for I have seen God

face to face:' Gen 32:20; and yet he had his troubles. There are many

things to imbitter life and cause trouble, but death frees us from all.

(1.) Care. The mind is full of perplexed thoughts, how to bring about

such a design; how to prevent such an evil. The Greek word for care

comes from a primitive in the Greek, that signifies, To cut the heart

in pieces. Care excruciates the mind; wastes the spirits. No such

bitter bread as the bread of carefulness. Ezek 12:19. Care is a

spiritual canker, which eats out the comfort of life: death | is its

only cure. (2.) Fear. Fear is the ague of the soul, which sets it

shaking. There is torment in fear.' I John 4:18. Fear is like

Prometheus's vulture gnawing the heart. There is a mistrustful fear, a

fear of want; and a distracting fear, a fear of danger; and a

discouraging fear, a fear God does not love us. These fears leave sad

impressions upon the mind. At death a believer is freed from these

torturing fears; he is as far from fear as the damned are from hope.

The grave buries a Christian's fear. (3.) Labour. All things are full

of labour.' Eccl 1:1. Some labour in the mine, others among the Muses.

God has made a law, In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread;' but

death gives a believer a quietus; it takes him off from his day-labour.

Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord: they rest from their

labours.' Rev 14:43. What needs working, when they have their reward?

What needs fighting, when the crown is set on their head? They rest

from their labours.' (4.) Suffering. Believers are as a lily among

thorns; as the dove among birds of prey. The wicked have an antipathy

against them; and secret hatred will break forth into open violence. He

that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the

Spirit.' Gal 4:49. The dragon is described with seven heads and ten

horns. Rev 12:2. He plotteth with the one, and pusheth with the other.

But at death the godly shall be freed from the molestations of the

wicked, they shall never more be pestered with these vermin. There

(viz. in the grave) the wicked cease from troubling.' Job 3:17. Death

does to a believer, as Joseph of Arimathaea did to Christ, it takes him

down from the cross, and gives him a writ of ease. The eagle that flies

high, cannot be stung with the serpent. Death gives the soul the wings

of an eagle, to fly above all the venomous serpents here below. (5.)

Temptation. Though Satan be a conquered enemy, yet he is a restless

enemy. I Pet 5:5. He walketh about; he is always going about his

diocese; he has his snares and his darts; one he tempts with riches,

another with beauty. It is no small trouble to be continually followed

with temptations; it is as bad as for a virgin to have her chastity

daily assaulted; but death will free a child of God from temptation, so

that he shall never be vexed more with the old serpent. After death has

shot its dart, the devil will have done shooting his. Grace puts a

believer out of the devil's possession, but death only frees him from

the devil's temptation. (6.) Sorrow. A cloud of sorrow often gathers in

the heart, and drops into tears. My life is spent with grief, and my

years with sighing.' Psa 31:10. It was part of the curse, In sorrow

thou shalt bring forth.' Gen 3:16. Many things occasion sorrow:

sickness, law-suits, treachery of friends, disappointment of hopes, and

loss of estate. Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: I went out full, and

the Lord has brought me home again empty.' Ruth 1:10, 2I. Sorrow is the

evil spirit that haunts us. The world is a Bochim. Judges 2:2. Rachel

wept for her children: some grieve that they have no children, and

others grieve that their children are undutiful. Thus we spend our

years with sighing: it is a valley of tears; but death is the funeral

of all our sorrows. And God shall wipe away all tears.' Rev 7:17. Then

Christ's spouse puts off her mourning; for how can the children of the

bridechamber mourn, when the bridegroom is with them? Matt 9:15. Thus

death gives a believer his quietus; it frees him from sin and trouble.

Though the apostle calls death the last enemy, I Cor 15:56, yet it is

the best friend. To me to die is gain.'

See here that which may make a true saint willing to die. Death will

set him out of gunshot, and free him from sin and trouble. There is no

cause for weeping to leave a valley of tears - a stage on which sin and

misery are acted. Believers are here in a strange country, why then

should they not be willing to go out of it? Death beats off their

fetters of sin, and sets them free. Who goes weeping from a gaol?

Besides our own sins, there are the sins of others. The world is a

place where Satan's seat is; a place where we see God daily

dishonoured. Lot, who was a bright star in a dark night, felt his

righteous soul vexed with the unclean conversation of the wicked. 2 Pet

2:2. To see God's Sabbaths broken, his truths adulterated, his glory

eclipsed, wounds a godly heart. It made David cry out, Woe is me, that

I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar.' Psa 120:0.

Kedar was Arabia, where were Ishmael's posterity. It was a cut to

David's heart to dwell there. O then be willing to depart out of the

tents of Kedar.

II. The bodies of believers are united to Christ in the grave, and

shall rest there till the resurrection. They are said to sleep in

Jesus. I Thess 4:14. The dust of believers is part of Christ's mystic

body. The grave is a dormitory or place of rest to the saints, where

their bodies quietly sleep in Christ, till they are awakened out of

their sleep by the trumpet of the archangel.

How shall we know that at death we shall be freed from sin and trouble,

and have our bodies united to Christ in the grave?

'To me,' says Paul, to die is gain;' to me, quatenus a believer

[insofar as I am a believer]. Are we such? Have we this blessed faith?

Faith, wherever it is, is operative. Lapidaries say there is no

precious stone but has virtutem insitam, some hidden virtue in it: so I

may say of faith, it has some secret virtue in it; it anchors the soul

on Christ; it has both a justifying and sanctifying virtue; it fetches

blood out of Christ's side to pardon, and water out of his side to

purge; it works by love; it constrains to duty; it makes the head study

for Christ, the tongue confess him, and the hands work for him. I have

read of a father who had three sons, and left in his will all his

estate to that son who could find his ring with the jewel which had a

healing virtue. The case was brought before the judges; the two elder

sons counterfeited a ring, but the younger son brought the true ring,

which was proved by the virtue of it, whereupon his father's estate

went to him. To this ring I may compare faith. There is a counterfeit

faith in the world: but if we can find this ring of faith which has the

healing virtue in it to purify the heart, it is the true faith which

gives us an interest in Christ, and entitles us to all these privileges

at death, to be freed from sin and sorrow, and to have our bodies

united to Christ, while they are in the grave.

III. At death the souls of believers pass into glory. Death brings

malorum omnium ademptionem; omnium adeptionem [Death brings the removal

of all evils, and the attainment of all things]; it is the daybreak of

eternal brightness. Here I shall lead you to the top of Mount Pisgah

and give you a glimpse of the Holy Land.

What is comprehended in glory?

Glory is status omnium bonorum aggregatione perfectus [a state made

perfect by the gathering together of everything good]. Boethius. It is

a perfect state of bliss, which consists in the accumulation and

heaping together all the good things of which immortal souls are

capable. And truly here I am at a loss; for all I can say falls short

of the celestial glory. Appelles' pencil cannot delineate it; angels'

tongues cannot express it. We shall never understand glory fully till

we are in heaven. Let me give you some dark views only, and some

imperfect lineaments of that state of glory at which saints shall

arrive after death.

[1] The first and most sublime part of the glory of heaven is the full

and sweet fruition of God. Ipse Deus sufficit adpraemium. Augustine. We

are apt to think the happiness of heaven is in being free from pain and

misery; but the very essence of happiness is the enjoyment and fruition

of God. God is an infinite inexhaustible fountain of joy; and to have

him, is to have all. The enjoyment of God implies three things.

The enjoyment of God implies our seeing him. We shall see him as he

is.' I John 3:3. Here we see him as he is not; mutable, mortal: there

as he is.

How shall we see God?

(1.) We shall see him intellectually, with the eyes of the mind. This

divines call the beatific vision. We shall have a full knowledge of

God, though not know him fully. If there were not such an intellectual

sight of God, how could the spirits of just men made perfect see God?

This sight of God will be very glorious; as when a king, on his

coronation-day, shows himself in all his royalty and magnificence.

(2.) We shall corporally behold the glorified body of Jesus Christ. And

if it be a pleasant thing to behold the sun, how blessed a sight will

it be to behold the Sun of Righteousness! to see Christ clothed in our

human nature, sitting in glory above the angels! Solomon says, The eye

is not satisfied with seeing.' Eccl 1:1. But surely the eyes of saints

will be satisfied with seeing that orient brightness which shall shine

from the beautiful body of Christ! It must needs be satisfying, because

through Christ's flesh some rays and beams of the Godhead will

gloriously display themselves. God's excellent majesty would overwhelm

us; but through the vail of Christ's flesh we shall behold the divine

glory.

(3.) Our seeing God will be transforming. We shall so see him, as to be

in some measure assimilated and changed into his image. We shall be

like him.' I John 3:3. If, when Moses was with God on the Mount, and

had but some imperfect sight of his glory, Moses' face shined,' Exod

34:45, how shall the saints glorified shine, being always in God's

presence, and having some beams of his glory put upon them! We shall be

like him.' One that is deformed may look on beauty, and not be made

beautiful; but the saints shall so see God, as that sight shall

transform them into his likeness. When I awake, I shall be satisfied

with thy likeness.' Psa 17:15. Not that the saints shall partake of

God's essence; for as the iron in the fire is made fiery, yet remains

iron still, so the saints, by beholding God's majesty, shall be made

glorious creatures, but are creatures still.

(4.) Our seeing God in heaven will be without weariness. Let a man see

the rarest sight that is, he will soon be cloyed; as when he comes into

a garden, and sees delicious walks, fair arbours, pleasant flowers,

within a little while he grows weary; but it is not so in heaven; there

is no surfeit there; ibi nec fames nec fastidium. Bernard. The saints

will never be weary of seeing God; for, God being infinite, there shall

be every moment new and fresh delight springing from him into their

souls.

The second thing implied in enjoying God, is loving him. It is a

saint's grief that his heart is like the frozen ocean, and he can melt

no more in love to God; but in heaven he shall be like the seraphims,

burning with divine love. Love is a pleasant affection; fear has

torment.' I John 4:18. Love has joy in it. To love beauty is

delightful. God's amazing beauty will attract the saints, love, and it

will be their heaven to love him.

The third thing implied in enjoying God is God's loving us. Were there

glory in God, yet, if there were not love, it would much eclipse the

joys of heaven; but God is love.' I John 4:16. The saints glorified

cannot love so much as they are loved. What is their love to God's?

What is their star to this Sun? God loves his people on earth, when

they are black as well as comely. If now they have their imperfections,

oh, how entirely will he love them when they are without spot or

wrinkle'! Eph 5:57.

This is the felicity of heaven, to be in the sweet embraces of God's

love; to be the Hephzibah, the delight of the King of Glory; to be

sunning ourselves in the light of God's countenance. Then the saints

shall know that love of Christ which passeth knowledge. Eph 3:19. From

this glorious manifestation of God's love will flow infinite joy into

the souls of the blessed; therefore heaven is called entering into the

joy of our Lord,' Matt 25:51. The seeing God, loving God, and being

beloved of God will cause a jubilation of spirit, and create such holy

raptures of joy in the saints, that are unspeakable and full of glory.

I Pet 1:1. In Deo quodam dulcidene delectatur anima, imo rapitur [There

is a certain sweetness about God's person which delights, nay, rather,

ravishes the soul]. Augustine. Now the saints spend their years with

sighing; they weep over their sins and afflictions: then their water

shall be turned into wine - the vessels of mercy shall be filled and

run over with joy; they shall have their palmbranches and harps in

their hand, in token of their triumphs and rejoicing. Rev 14:4.

[2] The second thing comprehended in glory is the good society there.

There are the angels. Every star adds to the light. Those blessed

cherubims will welcome us to paradise. If the angels rejoiced at the

conversion of the elect, how will they rejoice at their coronation!

There is the company of the saints. The spirits of just men made

perfect.' Heb 12:23.

Will the saints in glory know each other?

Certainly they shall; for our knowledge in heaven shall not be

diminished, but increased. We shall not only know our friends and godly

relations, but those glorified saints whom we never saw before. It must

be so; for society without acquaintance is not comfortable. Of this

opinion were Augustine, Anselm, and Luther. Indeed, the Scripture seems

to hint as much to us; for, if Peter in the transfiguration knew Moses

and Elias, whom he never saw before, Matt 17: 3, then surely in heaven

the saints shall know one another, and be infinitely delighted in each

other's company.

[3] The third thing comprehended in glory is perfection in holiness.

Holiness is the beauty of God and angels; it makes heaven. What is

happiness but the essence of holiness? Here a Christian's grace is

imperfect. At death believers shall arrive at perfection of grace. Then

this sun shall be in its meridian splendour; then shall they not need

to pray for increase of grace, for they shall be as the angels; their

light shall be clear, and their joy shall be full.

[4] The fourth thing in glory is dignity and honour. They shall reign

as kings. Therefore glorified saints are said to have their insignia

regalia, their ensigns of royalty, their white robes and their crown.

Rev 7:7. Caesar, after his victories, in token of honour, had a chair

of ivory set for him in the senate, and a throne in the theatre; so the

saints, having obtained their victories over sin and Satan, will be

enthroned with Christ in the empyrean heaven. To sit with Christ

denotes safety; to sit on the throne; dignity. This honour have all the

saints.' Psa 149:9.

[5] The fifth thing in glory is the harmony and union among the

heavenly inhabitants. The devil cannot get his cloven foot into heaven;

he cannot conjure up any storms of contention there. There shall be

perfect union; there Calvin and Luther are agreed; there is no jarring

string in the heavenly music; there is nothing to make any difference -

no pride or envy there. Though one star may differ from another, one

may have a greater degree of glory, yet every vessel shall be full.

There shall the saints and angels sit as olive-plants round about their

Father's table in love and unity. Then shall they join together in

concert, then shall the loud anthems of praise be sung in the heavenly

choir.

[6] The sixth thing in glory is a blessed rest. There remains a rest.'

Heb 4:4. Felix transitus a labore ad requiem [A happy transition from

toil to rest]. Here we can have no rest, tossed and turned as a ball on

racket. We are troubled on every side.' 2 Cor 4:4. How can a ship rest

in a storm? But after death the saints get into their haven. Everything

is quiet in the centre. God is centrum quietativum animae, as the

schoolmen say, the centre where the soul cloth sweetly acquiesce.' A

Christian, after his weary marches and battles, shall put off his

bloody armour, and rest himself upon the bosom of Jesus, that bed of

perfume. When death has given the saints the wings of a dove, then they

shall fly away to paradise and be at rest.

[7] The seventh thing in glory is eternity. An eternal weight of

glory.' 2 Cor 4:47. Glory is a weight. The Hebrew word for glory is a

weight. God must make us able to bear it. An eternal weight. Glory is

such a manna as does not breed worms. If the saints, glory in heaven

were but for a time, and they were in fear of losing it, it would

eclipse and imbitter the joys of heaven; but eternity is written upon

their joys. The garland made of flowers of paradise fades not. I Pet

5:5. I have read of a river called the Day-river, at which time it runs

with a full torrent, but at night is dried up. Such are all earthly

comforts; they run with a full stream all the daytime of life, but at

the night of death they are dried up. The glorified saints shall drink

of the rivers of pleasure for evermore. Psa 16:6: Eternity is the

heaven of heavens; infine gaudium erit sine fine [At the last our joy

shall be never-ending]. Bernard. The joys of heaven are overflowing and

everlasting.

When do believers enter upon possession of glory?

They pass immediately after death into glory. Some hold, with the

Platonists and Lucianists, that the soul dies; but many of the sober

heathens believed the soul's immortality. The Romans, when their great

men died, caused an eagle to be let loose, and fly about in the air,

signifying hereby that the soul was immortal, and did not die with the

body. Christ tells us the soul is not capable of being killed,

therefore not of dying. Matt 10:08. And as the soul does not die, so

neither does it sleep in the body for a time. If the soul at death be

absent from the body, it cannot sleep in the body. 2 Cor 5:5. There is

an immediate passage from death to glory; it is but the twinkling of an

eye, and we shall see God. This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.'

Luke 23:33. By paradise is meant heaven: the third heaven, into which

Paul was taken. 2 Cor 12:2. Christ said to the thief on the cross, This

day shalt thou be with me in paradise.' His body could not be there,

for it was laid in the grave; but it was spoken of his soul, that it

should be, immediately after death, in heaven. Let none be so vain as

to talk of purgatory: a soul purged by Christ's blood needs no fire of

purgatory, but goes immediately from a deathbed into a glorified state.

Use one: See what little cause believers have to fear death, when it

brings such glorious benefits. Why should the saints fear their

preferment? Is it not a blessed thing to see God, to love God, and to

lie for ever in the bosom of divine love? Is it not a blessed thing to

meet our godly relations in heaven? Why should the saints be afraid of

their blessings? Is a virgin afraid to be matched unto the crown? Now

is but the contract: at death is the marriage-supper of the Lamb. Rev

19:9. What hurt does death, but take us from among fiery serpents, and

place us among angels? What hurt does it do, but to clothe us with a

robe of immortality? Has he any wrong done him that has his sackcloth

pulled off, and has cloth of gold put upon him? Fear not dying, ye who

cannot live but by dying.

Use two: You who are real saints, whose hearts are purified by faith,

spend much time in musing upon those glorious benefits which you shall

have by Christ at death. Thus might you, by a contemplative life, begin

the life of angels here, and be in heaven before your time. Eudoxius

was so affected with the glory of the sun, that he thought he was born

only to behold it. What should we contemplate but celestial glory, when

we shall see God face to face! David was got above the ordinary sort of

men; he was in the altitudes when he said, I am ever with thee.' Psalm

139:18. A true saint every day takes a turn in heaven; his thoughts and

desires are, like cherubims, flying up to paradise. Can men of the

world delight in looking upon their bags of gold, and fields of corn,

and shall not the heirs of heaven take more delight in contemplating

their glory in reversion? Could we send forth faith as a spy, and every

day view the glory of the Jerusalem above, how would it rejoice us, as

it does the heir to think of the inheritance which is to come into his

hand shortly?

Use three: This may comfort the saints in two cases.

(1.) Under their wants. They abound only in wants: the meal is almost

spent in the barrel; but be patient till death, and you shall have a

supply of all your wants; you shall have a kingdom, and be as rich as

heaven can make you. He who has the promise of an estate, after a few

years have expired, though at present he has nothing to help himself,

comforts himself with this, that shortly he shall have an estate come

into his hand. It cloth not yet appear what we shall be;' but we shall

be enamelled with glory, and be as rich as the angels. I John 3:3.

(2.) A true saint is, as Luther says, Haeres crucis [an heir of the

Cross]. It may make us go cheerfully through our sufferings, that there

are great things laid up in store; there is glory coming, which eye has

not seen; we shall drink of the fruit of the vine in the kingdom of

heaven. Though now we drink in a wormwood cup, yet there is sugar to

sweeten it. We shall taste of those joys of paradise, which exceed our

faith, and may be better felt than they can be expressed.

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3. The Resurrection

'Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are

in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that

have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done

evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.' John 5:58, 29.

Q-38: WHAT BENEFITS DO BELIEVERS RECEIVE FROM CHRIST AT THE

RESURRECTION?

A: At the resurrection, believers being raised up in glory, shall be

openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgement, and made

perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity.

I. The bodies of believers shall be raised up to glory. The doctrine of

the resurrection is a fundamental article of our faith. The apostle

puts it among the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. Heb 6:6.

The body shall rise again; we are not so sure to rise out of our beds

as we are to rise out of our graves. The saved body shall rise again.

Some hold that the soul shall be clothed with a new body; but then it

were improper to call it a resurrection, it would be rather a creation.

Though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.' Job

19:96. Not in another flesh, but my flesh. This corruptible must put on

incorruption.' I Cor 15:53.

By what arguments may the resurrection be proved?

(1.) By Scripture. I will raise him up at the last day.' John 6:64. He

will swallow up death in victory.' Isa 25:5. That is, by delivering our

bodies from the captivity of the grave, wherein death for a time had

power over them. Them which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.' I

Thess 4:14.

(2.) Christ is risen; therefore the bodies of the saints must rise.

Christ did not rise from the dead as a private person, but as the

public head of the church; and the head being raised, the rest of the

body shall not always lie in the grave. Christ's rising is a pledge of

our resurrection. Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall

raise up us also by Jesus.' 2 Cor 4:14. Christ is called the

first-fruits of them that sleep. I Cor 15: 20. As the first-fruits is a

sure evidence that the harvest is coming, so the resurrection of Christ

is a sure evidence of the rising of our bodies from the grave. Christ

cannot be perfect as he is Christ mystical, unless his members be

raised with him.

(3.) In respect of God's justice. If God be a just God, he will reward

the bodies of the saints as well as their souls. It cannot be imagined

that the souls of believers should be glorified, and not their bodies.

They have served God with their bodies; their bodies have been members

of holiness; their eyes have dropped tears for sin; their hands have

relieved the poor; their tongues have set forth God's praise; therefore

justice and equity require that their bodies should be crowned as well

as their souls: and how can that be unless they are raised from the

dead?

(4.) If the body did not rise again, a believer would not be completely

happy; for, though the soul can subsist without the body, yet it has

appetitus unionis; a desire of reunion' with the body; and it is not

fully happy till it be clothed with the body. Therefore, undoubtedly,

the body shall rise again. If the soul should go to heaven, and not the

body, then a believer would be only half saved.

But some say, as the Virgin Mary to the angel, How can this be?' How

can it be, that the body, which is consumed to ashes, should rise

again?

It does not oppose reason, but transcends it. There are some

resemblances of the resurrection in nature. The corn, which is sown in

the ground, dies before it springs up. That which thou sowest is not

quickened, except it die.' I Cor 15:56. In winter the fruits of the

Barth die: in spring there is a resurrection of them. Noah's olive-tree

springing after the flood, was a lively emblem of the resurrection.

After the passion of our Lord, many of the saints which slept in the

grave arose. Matt 27:72. God can more easily raise the body out of the

grave, than we can wake a man out of sleep.

But when the dust of many are mingled together; how is it possible that

a separation should be made and the same numerical body arise?

If we believe God can create, why not distinguish the dust of one body

from another? Do we not see that the chemist, out of several metals

mingled together, as gold, silver, alchemy, can extract one from the

other, the silver from the gold, the alchemy from silver, and can

reduce every metal to its own kind? And shall we not much more believe,

that when our bodies are mingled and confounded with other substances,

the wise God is able to reinvest every soul with its own body?

Shall none but the bodies of the righteous be raised?

All that are in the grave shall hear Christ's voice, and shall come

forth. There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and

unjust.' Acts 24:15. I saw the dead, small and great, stand before

God.' Rev 20:12. But though all shall be raised out of their graves,

yet all shall not be raised alike.

(1.) The bodies of the wicked shall be raised with ignominy. Those

bodies which on the earth tempted and allured others with their beauty,

shall at the resurrection be loathsome to behold; they shall be ghastly

spectacles. They shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.' Isa 66:64. But

the bodies of the saints shall be raised with honour. It is sown in

dishonour, it is raised in glory.' I Cor 15:53. The saints, bodies then

shall shine as sparkling diamonds. Then shall the righteous shine forth

as the sun.' Matt 13:33.

(2.) The bodies of the saints shall rise out of their graves with

triumph; but the bodies of the wicked with trembling. The one, as about

to receive their fatal doom; the other, awake from the dust too, shall

sing for joy. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust.' Isa 26:19.

When the archangel's trumpet sounds, the bodies of believers shall come

out of the grave to be made happy, as the chief butler came out of the

prison, and was restored to all his dignity at the court; but the

bodies of the wicked shall come out of the grave, as the chief baker

out of prison, to be executed. Gen 40:0I, 22.

Use one: Believe this doctrine of the resurrection; that the same body

that dies shall rise again, and with the soul be crowned. Without the

belief of this, tota corruit religio, all religion falls to the

ground.' If the dead rise not, then Christ is not risen, and then our

faith is vain. I Cor 15:14.

Use two: The body shall rise again. This was Job's comfort. Though

worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.' Job 19:96.

The body is sensible of joy, as well as the soul; and indeed, we shall

not be in all our glory, till our bodies are reunited to our souls. Oh

consider what joy there will be at the reuniting of the body and the

soul at the resurrection! Look what sweet embraces of joy were between

old Jacob and Joseph, when they first saw one another; such, and

infinitely more, will there be when the body and soul of a saint shall

meet together at the resurrection. Gen 46:69. How will the body and

soul greet one another! What a welcome will the soul give to the body!

Oh, blessed body! When I prayed, thou didst attend my prayers with

hands lifted up, and knees bowed down; thou wert willing to suffer with

me, and now thou shalt reign with me; thou wert sown in dishonour, but

now art raised in glory. Oh, my dear body! I will enter into thee

again, and be eternally married to thee.

Use three: The resurrection of the body is a cordial when a Christian

is dying. Thy body, though it drop into the sepulchre, shall revive and

flourish as a herb in the resurrection. The grave is a bed of dust,

where the bodies of saints sleep; but they shall be awakened by the

trump of the archangel. The grave is your long home, but not your last

home. Though death strips you of your beauty, at the resurrection you

shall have it restored again. As when David found Saul asleep, he took

away his spear and cruse of water, but when Saul awoke he restored them

again, I Sam 26:62; so, though at death all our strength and beauty be

taken away, at the resurrection God will restore all again in a more

glorious manner.

But how shall we know that our bodies will be raised to a glorious

resurrection?

If we have a part in the first resurrection. Blessed is he that has a

part in the first resurrection. Rev 20:0. What is meant loy this? It is

rising by repentance out of the grave of sin. He who lies buried in

sin, can have little hope of a joyful resurrection; his body shall be

raised, but not in glory. O then, ask conscience, have you a part in

the first resurrection? Has the Spirit entered into you, and lifted you

up? Has he raised you out of your unbelief? Has he raised your hearts

above the earth? This is the first resurrection; and if your souls are

thus spiritually raised, your bodies shall be gloriously raised; and

shall shine as stars in the kingdom of heaven. Regeneration makes way

for a glorious resurrection.

Use four: Seeing you expect your bodies shall rise to glory, keep them

unspotted from sin. Shall a drunken body rise to glory? Shall an

unclean body rise to glory? Shall a thievish body steal into heaven? O

keep your bodies pure! Keep your eyes from unchaste glances, your hands

from bribes, your tongues from slander. Defile not your bodies, which

you hope shall rise one day to glory. Your bodies are the members of

Christ. Hear what the apostle says: Shall I take the members of Christ,

and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.' I Cor 6:15. keep

your bodies unspotted; let them be instruments of righteousness.

Glorify God in your body.' I Cor 6:6o. If your bodies glorify God, God

will glorify your bodies.

But seeing our bodies must be laid in the grave, and may lie many years

rotting there before the resurrection, what support and comfort have we

in this case?

(1.) That God will not leave his people in the grave. Our friends bring

us to the grave and leave us there, but God will not. He will go to the

grave with us, and watch over our dead bodies, and take care of our

ashes. Rizpah watched over the dead bodies of the sons of Saul, and

guarded them against the ravenous fowls of the air. 2 Sam 21:10. Thus

the Lord watches over the dead bodies of the saints, and looks to it

that none of their dust be missing. Christian, thou hast a God to watch

over thy body when thou art dead.

(2.) The bodies of the saints in the grave, though separated from their

souls, are united to Christ. The dust of a believer is part of Christ's

mystic body.

(3.) When the bodies of the saints are in the sepulchre, their souls

are in paradise; the soul does not sleep in the body, but returns to

God who gave it.' Eccl 12:2. The soul immediately partakes of those

joys the blessed angels do. When the body returns to dust, the soul

returns to rest; when the body is sleeping, the soul is triumphing;

when the body is buried, the soul is crowned. As the spies were sent

before to taste of the fruits of the land, so at death the soul is sent

before into heaven, to taste of the fruit of the holy land. Numb 13:30.

(4.) When God's time is come, the graves shall deliver up their dead.'

Rev 20:13. When the judge sends, the jailor must deliver up his

prisoners. As God said to Jacob, I will go down with thee into Egypt,

and I will surely bring thee up again;' Gen 46:6, so the Lord will go

down with us into the grave, and will surely bring us out again.

(5.) Though the bodies of the saints shall rot and be loathsome in the

grave, yet afterwards they shall be made illustrious and glorious. The

bodies of the saints, when they arise, shall be comely and beautiful.

The body of a saint in this life may be deformed; those even whose

minds are adorned with virtue, may have misshapen bodies - as the

finest cloth may have the coarsest list; but those deformed bodies

shall be amiable and beautiful. This beauty consists in two things,

(1:) Perfection of parts. There shall be a full proportion of all the

members. In this life there is often a defect of members: the eye is

lost, the arm is cut off; but in the resurrection all parts of the body

will be restored again; therefore the resurrection is called the time

of restoring all things. Acts 3:3I. Malchus, ear cut, restituit [He

restored]. (2:) Splendour. The bodies of the saints shall have a

graceful majesty in them; they shall be like Stephen, whose face shone

as if it had been the face of an angel. Acts 6:15. Nay, they will be

made like Christ's glorious body. Phil 3:3I.

The bodies of the saints, when they arise, shall be free from the

necessities of nature, as hunger and thirst. They shall hunger no

more.' Rev 7:16. Moses on the mount was so filled with the glory of

God, that he needed not the recruits of nature. Much more in heaven

shall the bodies of the saints be so filled with God's glory, as to be

upheld without food.

The bodies of the saints, when they arise, shall be swift and nimble.

Our bodies on earth are dull and heavy in their motion; then they shall

be swift, and made fit to ascend, as the body of Elias, in the air. Now

the body is a clog: in heaven it shall be a wing. We shall be as the

angels. Matt 22:20. And how nimble are they? The angel Gabriel in a

short time came from heaven to the earth. Dan 9:9I. As the helm turns

the ship instantly whither the steersman wills, so the body in an

instant will move which way the soul wills.

The bodies of the saints, at the resurrection, shall be firm and

strong. It is raised in power.' I Cor 15:53. Through frequent labour

and sickness, the strongest body begins to languish: but at the

resurrection we shall be of a strong constitution; there will be no

weariness in the body, nor faintness in the spirits. This may comfort

you who now conflict with many bodily weaknesses. This weak body shall

be raised in power; the body, which is now a weak reed, shall be like a

rock.

The bodies of the saints, at the resurrection, will be immortal. This

mortal shall put on immortality.' I Cor 15:53. Our bodies shall run

parallel with eternity. Neither can they die any more.' Luke 20:06.

Heaven is a healthful climate, there is no bill of mortality there. If

a physician could give you a recipe to keep you from dying, what sums

of money would you give! At the resurrection Christ shall give the

saints such a recipe. There shall be no more death.' Rev 21:1.

II. They shall be openly acquitted at the day of judgement.

[1] This is to be laid down for a proposition, that there shall be a

day of judgement. For we must all appear before the judgement-seat of

Christ.' 2 Cor 5:50. This is the grand assize; the greatest appearance

that ever was. Adam shall then see all his posterity at once. We must

all appear; the greatness of men's persons does not exempt them from

Christ's tribunal; kings and captains are brought in trembling before

the Lamb's throne. Rev 6:65. We must all appear, and appear in our own

persons; not by proxy.

How does it appear that there shall be a day of judgement?

Two ways. (1.) By the testimony of Scripture. For God shall bring every

work into judgement, with every secret thing.' Eccl 12:14. For he

cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth.' Psa 96:13. The reduplication

denotes the certainty. I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and

the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow.... The

judgement was set, and the books were opened.' Dan 7:7, 10.

(2.) It appears from the petty sessions kept in a man's own conscience.

When a man does virtuously, conscience excuses him; when evil,

conscience arraigns and condemns him. Now, what is this private session

kept in the court of conscience, but a certain forerunner of that

general day of judgement, when all the world shall be summoned to God's

tribunal?

Why must there be a day of judgement?

That there may be a day of retribution, in which God may render to

every one according to his work. Things seem to be carried very

unequally in the world: the wicked to prosper, as if they were rewarded

for doing evil; and the godly to suffer, as if they were punished for

being good. Therefore, for vindicating the justice of God, there must

be a day wherein there shall be a righteous distribution of punishments

and rewards to men, according to their actions.

Who shall be judge?

The Lord Jesus Christ. The Father has committed all judgement to the

Son.' John 5:52. It is an article of our creed, that Christ shall come

to judge the quick and the dead.' It is a great honour put upon Christ;

he who was himself judged, shall be judge: he who once hung upon the

cross, shall sit upon the throne of judgement. He is fit to be judge,

as he partakes of both the manhood and Godhead.

(1.) Of the manhood. Being clothed with the human nature, he may be

visibly seen of all. It is requisite the judge should be seen. Behold,

he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him.' Rev 1:1.

(2.) As he partakes of the Godhead. He is of infinite knowledge to

understand all causes brought before him; and of infinite power to

execute offenders. He is described with seven eyes. Zech 3:3, to denote

his wisdom; and a rod of iron, Psa 2:2, to denote his power. He is so

wise that he cannot be deluded, and so strong that he cannot be

resisted.

When will the time of judgement be?

The quando, or time of the general judgement, is a secret kept from the

angels. Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of

heaven.' Matt 24:46. But it cannot be far off. One great sign of the

approach of the day of judgement, is, That iniquity shall abound,' Matt

24:12. Sure then that day is near at hand, for iniquity never more

abounded than in this age, in which lust grows hot, and love grows

cold. When the elect are all converted, then Christ will come to

judgement. As he that rows a ferry-boat, stays till all the passengers

are taken in, and then rows away, so Christ stays till all the elect

are gathered in, and then he will hasten away to judgement.

What shall be the modus, or manner of trial?

(1.) The citing of men to the court. The dead are cited as well as the

living. Men, when they die, avoid the censure of our law-courts; but at

the last day, they are cited to God's tribunal. I saw the dead, small

and great, stand before God.' Rev 20:12. This citing of men will be by

the sound of a trumpet. I Thess 4:16. This trumpet will sound so loud,

that it will raise men from their graves. Matt 24:4 1: Such as will not

hear the trumpet of the gospel sound repent, and believe,' shall hear

the trumpet of the archangel sounding, arise, and be judged.'

(2.) The approach of the judge to the tribunal.

(1:) This will be terrible to the wicked. How can a guilty prisoner

endure the sight of the judge? If Felix trembled when Paul preached of

judgement, Acts 24:45, how will sinners tremble when they shall see

Christ come to judgement! Christ is described, sitting in judgement,

with a fiery stream issuing from him. Dan 7:70. The Lamb of God will

then be turned into a lion, the sight of whom will strike terror into

sinners. When Joseph said to his brethren, I am Joseph, your brother,

whom ye sold into Egypt,' they were troubled at his presence.' Gen

45:5. How did their hearts smite them for their sin! So, when Christ

shall come to judgement, and say, I em Jesus, whom ye sinned against; I

em Jesus, whose laws ye have broken, whose blood ye despised. I am now

come to judge you.' Oh, what horror and amazement will take hold of

sinners! How they will be troubled at the presence of their judge!

(2:) The approach of Christ to the bench of judicature will be

comfortable to the righteous. Christ will come in splendour and great

glory. His first coming in the flesh was obscure. Isa 53:3. He was like

a prince in disguise; but his second coming will be illustrious - he

shall come in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels. Mark 8:8

8. Oh, what a bright day will that be, when a vast number of angels,

those morning stars, shall appear in the air, and Christ the Sun of

Righteousness shall shine in splendour above the brightest cherub! He

will come as a friend. Indeed, if the saints, judge were their enemy,

they might fear to be condemned; but he who loves them, and prayed for

them, is their judge; he who is their husband is their judge, therefore

they need not fear but all things shall go well on their side.

(3.) The trial itself, which has a dark and a light side. A dark side.

It will fall heavy on the wicked, when the judge being set, the books

shall be opened, the book of conscience, and the book of God's

remembrance. Rev 20:12. The sinners, charge being read, all their sins

laid open, their murder, drunkenness, and uncleanness, Christ will say,

What can you plead for yourselves, that the sentence of death should

not pass?' Then, being convicted, they will be speechless. Then follows

the dismal sentence: Ite maledicti, depart from me, ye cursed, into

everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.' Matt 25:5I.

He that said to God, Depart from me,' Job 21:14, and to religion,

Depart from me,' must now hear that word pronounced from his judge,

Depart from me, - a dreadful, but a righteous sentence. Psa 51:1. The

sinner himself shall cry: Guilty!' Though he has a sea of wrath, he has

not one drop of injustice. When once the sentence is passed, it is

irreversible; there is no appealing to a higher court. The trial has

also a light side. It will increase the joy and happiness of the

righteous. The day of judgement will be a day of jubilee to them.

[2] At that day Christ their judge will own them by name. Those whom

the world scorned, and looked upon as madmen and fools, Christ will

take by the hand, and openly acknowledge to be his favourites. What is

his confessing of men,' but his openly acknowledging them to be

precious in his eyes? Luke 12:2.

Christ as judge will plead for them. It is not usual to be both judge

and advocate, to sit on the bench and plead; but it shall be so at the

day of judgement.

(1.) Christ will plead his own blood for the saints. These persons I

have purchased; they are the travail of my soul; they have sinned, but

my soul was made an offering for their sin.'

(2.) Christ will vindicate them from all unjust censures. They were

strangely misrepresented in the world, as proud, hypocritical,

factious; as Paul was called a seditious man, the head of a faction.

Acts 24:4. But at the day of judgement Christ will clear their

innocence; he will bring forth their righteousness as the light.' Ps

37:7. He will wipe off tears from their eyes, and dust from their

names. When Moses was charged with taking too much upon him, he

comforted himself with this, Tomorrow will the Lord show who are his.'

Numb 16:6. So the saints, when reproached, may comfort themselves with

the day of judgement, in which Christ will say who are his, and they

shall come forth as the wings of a dove covered with silver.

(3.) Christ as judge will absolve his people before men and angels. As

Pilate said of Christ, I find no fault in this man', John 18:88; so

will Christ say of the elect, I find no fault in them, I pronounce them

righteous.' Then follows, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the

kingdom.' Matt 25:54. As if Christ should say, O ye happy ones, the

delight of my soul, the fruit of my sufferings, stand no longer at the

bar. Ye are heirs apparent to the crown of heaven, enter and take

possession.' At the hearing of this sentence, with what ravishing joy

will the saints be filled! This word, Come, ye blessed,' will be music

to their ear, and a cordial to their heart.

(4.) Christ will mention before men and angels all the good deeds the

saints have done. I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty,

and ye gave me drink.' Matt 25:5 5. You that have wept in secret for

sin, that have shown any love for Christ's name, that have been rich in

good works, Christ will take notice of it at the last day, and say,

Well done, good and faithful servant.' He himself will be the herald to

proclaim your praises; thus it shall be done to the man whom Christ

delights to honour.

(5.) Christ will call his saints from the bar, to sit upon the bench

with him to judge the world. Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands

of his saints, to execute judgement upon all.' Jude 14. Know ye not

that the saints shall judge the world?' I Cor 6:6. The saints shall sit

with Christ in judgement as justices of peace with the judge; they

shall applaud Christ's righteous sentence on the wicked, and, as it

were, vote with Christ. As it is a great honour to the saints, so it

must needs add to the sorrows of the wicked, to see those whom they

once hated and derided, sit as judges upon them.

(6.) The saints shall be fully crowned with the enjoyment of God for

ever. They shall be in his sweet presence, in whose presence is fulness

of joy,' Psa 16:11, and this shall be for ever. The banner of God's

love shall be eternally displayed. The joys of heaven shall be without

intermission and expiration, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.' I

Thess 4:17.

Use one: It is sad news to the wicked, that they shall not stand in

judgement,' Psa 1:1; that they shall come to judgement, but shall not

stand in judgement; they shall not stand acquitted, they shall not

stand with boldness, but sneak and hang down their heads, and not be

able to look their judge in the face; but it is great consolation to

the godly. When the apostle had said, The Lord shall descend from

heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of

God,' he presently adds, Wherefore comfort one another with these

words.' I Thess 4:16, I8.

(1.) The day of judgement is comfort in respect of weakness of grace. A

Christian is ready to be troubled to see his grace so minute and

imperfect; but, at the last day, if Christ find but a drachm of true

grace, it shall be accepted. If shine be true gold, though it be many

grains too light, Christ will put his merits into the scales, and make

it pass current.

(2.) What a comfort is it to such of the saints who have met with

unrighteous judgement in the world, who have been wronged of their

estates in lawsuits, or had their lives taken away by an unrighteous

sentence: Christ will judge things over again, and will give a

righteous sentence. If your estates have been taken away wrongfully,

you shall be restored a thousandfold at the day of judgement. If you

have lost your lives for Christ, you shall not lose your crown; you

shall wear a garland made of the flowers of paradise, which fade not

away.

Use two: Meditate much upon the day of judgement. Feathers swim upon

the water, but gold sinks into it; so, light, feathery Christians float

in vanity; they mind not the day of judgement; but serious spirits sink

deep into the thoughts of it.

(1.) The meditation of this last day should make us very sincere. We

should labour to approve our hearts to God, the great judge and umpire

of the world. It is easy to carry it fair before men, but there is no

dissembling or prevaricating with God. He sees what the heart is, and

will accordingly pass his verdict.

(2.) The meditation of Christ's coming to judge us, should keep us from

judging our brethren. We are apt to judge the final state of others;

which is for men to step into Christ's place, and take his work out of

his hand. Who art thou that judgest another?' James 4:12. Thou that

passest a rash sentence upon another, thou must come thyself shortly to

be judged, and then, perhaps, he may be acquitted, and thou condemned.

Use three: So demean and carry yourselves that, at the last day of

judgement, you may be sure to be acquitted, and have the glorious

privileges with which the saints shall be crowned.

How is that?

(1.) If you would stand acquitted at the day of judgement, then (1:)

Labour to get into Christ. That I may be found in him.' Phil 3:3. Faith

implants us into Christ, it engarrisons us in him, and then there is no

condemnation.' Rom 8:8: There is no standing before Christ, but by

being in Christ. (2:) Labour for humility, which is a kind of

selfannihilation. Though I be nothing.' 2 Cor 12:2: Christian, hast

thou parts and abilities, and cost thou cover them with the veil of

humility, as Moses, when his face shone, put a veil over it? If thou

art humble, thou shalt be acquitted at the day of judgement. He shall

save the humble person.' Job 22:29. An humble man judgeth himself for

his sins, and Christ will acquit those who judge themselves.

(2.) If you would stand acquitted at the last day, keep a clear

conscience. Do not load yourself with guilt, and furnish your judge

with matter against you. The Lord,' says Paul, hash appointed a day in

which he will judge the world.' Acts 17:7 1: How would Paul fit himself

for that day? Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience

void of offence toward God and toward men.' Acts 24:16. Be careful of

the first and second table; be holy and just. Have hearts without false

aims, and hands without false weights. Keep conscience as clear as your

eye, that no dust of sin fall into it. They that sin against

conscience, will be shy of their judge; as such as take in prohibited

goods cannot endure to see the searchers that are appointed to open

their packs. Christian, thy pack will be opened at the last day, I

mean, thy conscience (and Christ is the searcher), to see what sins,

what prohibited goods thou hast taken in; and then he proceeds to

judgement. Oh! be sure to keep a good conscience; which is the best way

to stand with boldness at the day of judgement. The voice of conscience

is the voice of God. If conscience, upon just grounds, acquits us, God

will acquit us. If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence

toward God.' I John 3:3I.

(3.) If you would stand acquitted at the last day, trade with your

talents for God's glory; lay out yourselves for him; honour him with

your substance; relieve Christ's members, that you may be acquitted. He

that had five talents traded with them, and made them five talents

more; His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant.'

Matt 25:5I.

(4.) If you would stand acquitted at the day of judgement, get a

sincere love to the saints. Love is the truest touchstone of sincerity.

To love grace for grace, shows the spirit of God to be in a man. Does

conscience witness for you? Are you perfumed with this sweet spice of

love? Do you delight most in those in whom the image of God shines? Do

you reverence their graces? Do you bear with their infirmities? A

blessed evidence that you shall be acquitted in the day of judgement.

We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the

brethren.' I John 3:14.

End.

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152. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iii-p5.1

153. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.v-p9.2

154. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p1.7

155. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p28.1

156. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p25.2

157. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p10.3

158. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iii-p26.1

159. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p5.16

160. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.v-p6.2

161. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p29.2

162. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p29.1

163. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xi-p16.6

164. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p14.2

165. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p17.1

166. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p5.15

167. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p5.15

168. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p4.4

169. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.viii-p4.4

170. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p28.2

171. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.viii-p31.2

172. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p1.1

173. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p5.1

174. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p25.2

175. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ii-p9.1

176. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ii-p30.2

177. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ii-p28.1

178. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.ii-p30.1

179. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p38.1

180. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p27.3

181. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p11.14

182. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p5.3

183. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p11.1

184. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p12.2

185. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p34.1

186. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p43.3

187. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p43.1

188. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p20.1

189. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p30.1

190. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p20.3

191. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p4.5

192. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p52.2

193. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p34.1

194. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p30.1

195. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p3.5

196. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p39.3

197. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p47.2

198. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p36.1

199. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p28.8

200. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.v-p10.2

201. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p36.2

202. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.v-p10.1

203. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p25.1

204. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p3.3

205. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p5.4

206. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p31.2

207. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p29.1

208. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p45.2

209. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p20.1

210. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.v-p12.1

211. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.i-p17.2

212. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p31.2

213. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p3.1

214. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p53.1

215. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p44.1

216. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p9.5

217. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p14.2

218. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p11.10

219. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p36.1

220. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p21.1

221. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.ii-p17.2

222. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p20.1

223. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p18.4

224. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xi-p17.2

225. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p41.1

226. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iii-p10.2

227. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p36.5

228. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p36.5

229. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iii-p28.1

230. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p8.1

231. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p31.1

232. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p11.3

233. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p9.9

234. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p16.7

235. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p6.4

236. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p14.1

237. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p63.1

238. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p45.3

239. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p20.3

240. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iv-p13.9

241. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p11.2

242. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p12.5

243. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p31.4

244. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p20.4

245. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p21.1

246. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p15.1

247. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p22.2

248. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p22.2

249. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p8.1

250. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p10.3

251. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p22.1

252. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.viii-p18.3

253. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p63.2

254. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p23.1

255. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p10.2

256. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p53.1

257. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p42.2

258. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p10.2

259. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p14.1

260. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iv-p11.3

261. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p69.2

262. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p69.3

263. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.ii-p17.1

264. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p5.11

265. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p5.1

266. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iv-p13.5

267. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.v-p10.3

268. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.viii-p14.1

269. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p1.3

270. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p25.2

271. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.i-p24.1

272. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p13.1

273. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.v-p1.1

274. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p3.1

275. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p5.5

276. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p1.1

277. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p12.1

278. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p69.2

279. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p45.1

280. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p51.1

281. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iii-p18.1

282. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p5.2

283. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p4.2

284. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p19.1

285. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iv-p13.2

286. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p52.3

287. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p23.1

288. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p23.1

289. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p69.4

290. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p35.1

291. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p38.2

292. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p4.5

293. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p29.3

294. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p47.1

295. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p51.2

296. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xii-p19.1

297. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.v-p1.2

298. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p1.8

299. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p1.2

300. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.ii-p16.1

301. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#iv-p12.2

302. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p8.1

303. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p8.2

304. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iii-p2.4

305. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p2.6

306. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p13.2

307. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p17.4

308. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p61.1

309. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p34.1

310. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p34.3

311. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p6.1

312. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p44.2

313. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p34.3

314. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p6.1

315. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xii-p18.1

316. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p11.2

317. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p16.1

318. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p47.1

319. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p28.7

320. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiii-p11.2

321. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p9.3

322. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p5.2

323. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.viii-p4.1

324. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#iv-p19.1

325. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.v-p10.4

326. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p17.1

327. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p8.4

328. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p9.2

329. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p14.3

330. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p14.4

331. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p2.2

332. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p9.1

333. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p51.1

334. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p18.5

335. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p26.3

336. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p15.2

337. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p15.1

338. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xi-p16.1

339. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p29.3

340. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iii-p9.5

341. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p64.3

342. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p64.3

343. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p10.1

344. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiii-p13.2

345. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p24.1

346. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p24.1

347. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.i-p17.5

348. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p30.3

349. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p60.1

350. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p18.2

351. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p41.1

352. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p54.3

353. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p18.3

354. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p29.1

355. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p18.1

356. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiii-p17.1

357. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ii-p8.1

358. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p37.2

359. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p37.3

360. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p65.1

361. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p7.1

362. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p27.3

363. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p11.9

364. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.viii-p6.1

365. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p26.1

366. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p28.3

367. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p38.1

368. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p43.1

369. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p23.4

370. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p10.1

371. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p28.5

372. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p10.1

373. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p23.1

374. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p26.4

375. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.i-p9.1

376. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p5.13

377. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p35.1

378. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p46.1

379. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p19.1

380. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p4.1

381. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p5.9

382. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p1.1

383. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiii-p10.1

384. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p11.4

385. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p11.5

386. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p14.2

387. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p11.6

388. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p37.5

389. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p51.3

390. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p54.7

391. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p51.3

392. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p49.1

393. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p11.12

394. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p56.2

395. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p16.5

396. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p13.2

397. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p28.4

398. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p19.1

399. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p27.1

400. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p19.2

401. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.i-p6.1

402. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p16.8

403. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p20.1

404. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p6.1

405. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p4.3

406. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p18.1

407. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p17.4

408. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p33.3

409. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ii-p23.3

410. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p20.4

411. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p19.1

412. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xi-p19.1

413. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.ii-p10.1

414. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p17.2

415. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iii-p11.2

416. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p16.2

417. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p18.3

418. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p27.1

419. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p52.4

420. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p8.2

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422. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p28.1

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426. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p21.1

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428. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p13.3

429. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p11.7

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433. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p16.6

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437. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p49.1

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439. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p35.3

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444. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p16.1

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449. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xi-p15.2

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453. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p2.2

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456. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p28.3

457. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p20.1

458. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p34.2

459. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.viii-p14.2

460. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.v-p11.6

461. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p34.4

462. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p12.2

463. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#iv-p9.1

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465. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#iv-p9.1

466. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p27.3

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469. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p68.4

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495. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p9.1

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507. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p3.2

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528. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiii-p23.1

529. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p11.2

530. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p21.1

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533. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p15.1

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535. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p11.1

536. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p22.2

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539. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p36.2

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557. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p9.2

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561. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiii-p19.1

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576. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiii-p14.1

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592. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p27.2

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603. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p4.7

604. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p24.3

605. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xii-p13.2

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608. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p50.1

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611. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p16.1

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613. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#iv-p7.1

614. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p5.1

615. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xi-p9.1

616. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p8.3

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625. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p17.1

626. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iv-p13.3

627. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.viii-p22.2

628. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p9.1

629. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p41.1

630. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p2.5

631. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iii-p37.1

632. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.ii-p5.1

633. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p8.4

634. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p26.1

635. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iii-p22.2

636. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p69.3

637. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p26.1

638. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p27.1

639. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p9.6

640. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p37.1

641. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.viii-p20.1

642. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p35.1

643. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p24.1

644. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p11.3

645. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.v-p11.7

646. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p42.1

647. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p18.8

648. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p4.2

649. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p10.1

650. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p19.1

651. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p28.7

652. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p11.2

653. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.i-p14.1

654. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.i-p16.3

655. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iii-p20.1

656. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p37.1

657. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p48.6

658. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p28.3

659. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p17.3

660. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p14.1

661. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#iii-p7.1

662. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#iii-p7.1

663. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p37.4

664. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iii-p21.2

665. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p1.4

666. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p69.1

667. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p10.1

668. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p4.6

669. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p38.1

670. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p34.2

671. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p5.2

672. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p11.2

673. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p13.1

674. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p3.1

675. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p28.1

676. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p8.2

677. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p20.1

678. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p20.3

679. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p15.5

680. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p28.1

681. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p15.1

682. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p2.5

683. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p46.1

684. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p38.2

685. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p6.2

686. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p5.17

687. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p17.1

688. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p16.4

689. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.v-p11.5

690. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p4.2

691. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p31.1

692. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p16.4

693. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p4.5

694. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p34.1

695. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p9.1

696. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p16.1

697. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p5.1

698. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iii-p4.2

699. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iii-p6.3

700. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p31.1

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702. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p22.1

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704. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p18.1

705. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p18.1

706. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p18.1

707. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p25.1

708. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p28.1

709. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p29.1

710. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p5.7

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713. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p53.3

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717. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p36.1

718. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p12.3

719. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p1.9

720. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p18.1

721. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p13.1

722. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p5.16

723. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p16.3

724. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p33.1

725. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p33.1

726. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p18.2

727. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xi-p6.1

728. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p13.3

729. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p12.2

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731. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xi-p3.3

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733. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p15.1

734. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p6.2

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736. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p16.2

737. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p34.4

738. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p36.1

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741. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p28.3

742. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p35.1

743. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p23.3

744. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p82.1

745. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p33.9

746. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p22.1

747. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p10.3

748. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p37.2

749. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p3.1

750. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p23.5

751. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p17.2

752. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.viii-p28.1

753. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p24.1

754. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p13.1

755. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p4.1

756. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p39.2

757. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.viii-p31.1

758. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p44.1

759. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p57.1

760. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p32.1

761. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p13.1

762. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p5.1

763. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p16.10

764. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p2.1

765. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p20.2

766. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p47.1

767. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p33.4

768. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p16.4

769. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xi-p14.2

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772. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p61.3

773. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iii-p32.2

774. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p5.2

775. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiii-p19.3

776. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p20.2

777. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p56.1

778. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p68.1

779. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p4.1

780. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p1.5

781. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p1.6

782. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p16.1

783. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p13.1

784. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p13.1

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786. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ii-p27.1

787. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iii-p21.3

788. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p8.1

789. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p39.1

790. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iii-p18.3

791. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p8.2

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793. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiii-p18.2

794. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p28.6

795. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p14.1

796. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p34.3

797. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p37.7

798. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p9.10

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802. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xii-p10.2

803. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xi-p5.1

804. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xii-p13.12

805. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p11.1

806. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p39.1

807. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p55.1

808. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#iv-p6.2

809. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p9.7

810. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p10.2

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813. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p40.2

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815. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p12.1

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819. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p37.1

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821. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p22.3

822. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p40.1

823. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iii-p23.1

824. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p15.1

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826. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p35.2

827. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p4.4

828. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p45.1

829. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p12.4

830. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p5.1

831. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p4.3

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833. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p13.2

834. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p46.2

835. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p53.2

836. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p5.5

837. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p42.1

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839. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p14.1

840. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p30.1

841. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p29.2

842. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p30.1

843. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p12.1

844. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p31.5

845. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p17.1

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847. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xii-p14.4

848. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p32.3

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851. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p24.1

852. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p49.1

853. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ii-p21.2

854. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p8.1

855. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p10.2

856. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p20.3

857. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p13.1

858. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p20.1

859. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.v-p2.1

860. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p26.5

861. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iii-p33.1

862. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p2.1

863. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p48.1

864. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iii-p3.1

865. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iii-p11.1

866. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p54.5

867. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p37.3

868. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p37.3

869. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p50.2

870. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p31.2

871. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p10.2

872. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p12.1

873. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p18.1

874. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p43.2

875. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p16.2

876. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p12.1

877. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p21.3

878. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p13.5

879. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p47.2

880. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.viii-p18.2

881. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p50.2

882. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p46.2

883. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p16.2

884. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p36.2

885. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p28.2

886. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p22.3

887. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p27.1

888. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p6.1

889. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p10.1

890. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p17.1

891. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p26.1

892. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p2.2

893. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p13.1

894. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p48.2

895. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p21.4

896. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.v-p2.2

897. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p5.4

898. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p16.1

899. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p17.2

900. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p28.6

901. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ii-p8.2

902. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p17.2

903. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p4.1

904. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p23.2

905. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p23.2

906. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p4.1

907. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p12.1

908. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p34.2

909. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p8.3

910. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p28.2

911. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p15.2

912. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p1.5

913. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iv-p13.7

914. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p26.1

915. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.viii-p27.1

916. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p9.1

917. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p25.2

918. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p26.2

919. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p26.2

920. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p16.2

921. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p31.3

922. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p44.1

923. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p49.1

924. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iv-p11.8

925. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p45.2

926. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p20.2

927. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p36.3

928. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p31.4

929. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.i-p17.1

930. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p35.2

931. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p37.1

932. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p15.2

933. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p27.1

934. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p49.2

935. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p13.6

936. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p43.1

937. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p1.1

938. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p3.2

939. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p16.2

940. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p13.1

941. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p18.3

942. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p48.3

943. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p13.3

944. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p4.2

945. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p4.1

946. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p12.1

947. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p10.1

948. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p36.4

949. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p11.11

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951. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p54.4

952. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p6.1

953. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xi-p11.2

954. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p27.1

955. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p58.1

956. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.i-p42.1

957. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p45.3

958. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p44.3

959. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p28.4

960. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.v-p1.4

961. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p21.2

962. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p43.3

963. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p9.4

964. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p40.1

965. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p29.1

966. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p4.2

967. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p19.2

968. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p5.1

969. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p43.2

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973. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p11.16

974. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p32.1

975. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p42.3

976. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xi-p20.1

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978. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p13.3

979. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xii-p14.3

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982. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p16.3

983. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p23.3

984. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xi-p18.3

985. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xi-p14.1

986. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p36.1

987. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.i-p22.1

988. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.i-p22.1

989. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p25.1

990. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.i-p14.1

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992. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p31.3

993. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p24.2

994. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p19.1

995. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ii-p5.1

996. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p33.4

997. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p34.2

998. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p31.1

999. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xi-p7.1

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1002. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p48.3

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1004. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p46.1

1005. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p52.2

1006. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p58.1

1007. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p71.1

1008. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.viii-p38.1

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1011. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p42.3

1012. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p22.3

1013. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p22.2

1014. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p57.2

1015. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p16.2

1016. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p9.1

1017. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p34.1

1018. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p33.6

1019. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p23.1

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1027. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p22.2

1028. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p46.4

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1032. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p18.1

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1035. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.i-p17.2

1036. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p16.1

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1047. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p44.4

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1051. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p33.2

1052. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p19.1

1053. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p24.1

1054. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p31.1

1055. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p25.5

1056. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p36.2

1057. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p2.4

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1059. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p15.2

1060. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p48.8

1061. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p51.4

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1071. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p32.3

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1073. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p15.1

1074. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p49.2

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1077. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p20.1

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1083. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p36.1

1084. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p8.1

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1086. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p20.2

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1091. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p49.1

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1093. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p11.6

1094. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iii-p24.1

1095. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p21.3

1096. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p26.3

1097. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p17.2

1098. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iv-p16.1

1099. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p33.5

1100. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p3.5

1101. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p36.1

1102. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p48.5

1103. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p21.1

1104. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p45.1

1105. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xi-p11.1

1106. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xii-p17.1

1107. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p21.1

1108. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.viii-p25.2

1109. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p3.1

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1113. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p32.6

1114. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p65.1

1115. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p26.1

1116. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p22.1

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1118. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p1.1

1119. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p33.1

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1122. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p6.2

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1131. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p21.1

1132. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p15.3

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1135. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p25.1

1136. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p13.3

1137. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p51.1

1138. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p25.1

1139. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p54.5

1140. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p12.3

1141. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p9.8

1142. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p23.2

1143. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p22.4

1144. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p23.2

1145. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p23.2

1146. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#iii-p6.1

1147. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p14.5

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1151. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xii-p13.15

1152. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p30.2

1153. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.i-p13.4

1154. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p63.1

1155. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p51.1

1156. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p30.2

1157. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.viii-p9.1

1158. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p28.1

1159. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p18.1

1160. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p21.1

1161. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p31.1

1162. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ii-p27.2

1163. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xii-p14.1

1164. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p6.1

1165. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p48.2

1166. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.viii-p19.1

1167. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p19.1

1168. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.viii-p22.1

1169. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xi-p18.1

1170. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p46.1

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1188. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p66.1

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1192. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p23.3

1193. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p23.1

1194. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p36.2

1195. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p15.1

1196. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p22.3

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1204. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p36.1

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1214. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p34.1

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1306. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.viii-p13.1

1307. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p53.3

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1309. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iii-p38.2

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1318. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p4.4

1319. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p4.1

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1555. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p28.4

1556. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p32.2

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1564. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p17.1

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1566. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p21.1

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1572. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iii-p18.2

1573. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p32.1

1574. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p14.2

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1779. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#iv-p22.1

1780. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p22.1

1781. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p4.1

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1783. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p5.5

1784. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p53.1

1785. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.viii-p23.1

1786. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p11.2

1787. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p42.1

1788. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p42.2

1789. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p40.1

1790. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p20.1

1791. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.viii-p4.3

1792. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p17.1

1793. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p22.1

1794. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p41.1

1795. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p6.1

1796. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p47.1

1797. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p7.1

1798. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.viii-p22.1

1799. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p68.2

1800. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p3.1

1801. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.viii-p8.1

1802. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p33.10

1803. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p28.2

1804. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p33.1

1805. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p33.2

1806. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p11.1

1807. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p68.5

1808. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p39.1

1809. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p25.3

1810. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p61.1

1811. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p25.1

1812. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p12.2

1813. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p35.4

1814. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p31.2

1815. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p28.1

1816. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p29.1

1817. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p48.1

1818. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p31.1

1819. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iv-p11.6

1820. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p6.1

1821. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xi-p9.2

1822. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.i-p28.2

1823. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.i-p33.2

1824. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p39.2

1825. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p11.8

1826. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p10.3

1827. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p31.3

1828. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p68.6

1829. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p10.2

1830. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iii-p27.2

1831. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p25.2

1832. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p22.2

1833. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p42.2

1834. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p22.2

1835. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p43.2

1836. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p25.1

1837. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p19.2

1838. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p52.5

1839. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p39.3

1840. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.v-p11.4

1841. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ii-p23.1

1842. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p18.4

1843. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p4.8

1844. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p23.1

1845. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p16.1

1846. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p1.1

1847. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p32.1

1848. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p29.3

1849. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ii-p9.2

1850. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p37.6

1851. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p22.1

1852. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iv-p13.8

1853. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p14.2

1854. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p7.1

1855. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p14.2

1856. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p37.1

1857. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.v-p12.2

1858. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p3.1

1859. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p4.1

1860. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p33.6

1861. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p15.3

1862. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p66.1

1863. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p20.2

1864. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p54.3

1865. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p17.2

1866. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p54.4

1867. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.viii-p16.1

1868. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p7.2

1869. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vii-p1.1

1870. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p4.1

1871. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p1.1

1872. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p2.1

1873. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p10.1

1874. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p22.3

1875. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p20.2

1876. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p5.1

1877. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iii-p35.1

1878. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ii-p12.1

1879. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p14.1

1880. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p51.2

1881. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ii-p33.3

1882. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p33.1

1883. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p12.1

1884. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p16.4

1885. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p40.1

1886. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p14.1

1887. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p25.2

1888. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vi-p42.2

1889. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.i-p31.1

1890. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p32.2

1891. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p31.1

1892. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p15.1

1893. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p49.1

1894. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p8.1

1895. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p4.1

1896. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iv-p18.2

1897. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iii-p9.7

1898. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p54.6

1899. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p50.2

1900. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p27.1

1901. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p27.4

1902. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiv-p11.3

1903. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p19.4

1904. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p39.2

1905. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p39.1

1906. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.i-p17.3

1907. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p5.12

1908. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p30.2

1909. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#iv-p5.1

1910. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p31.1

1911. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p16.1

1912. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p25.2

1913. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p60.2

1914. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.i-p21.1

1915. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p12.1

1916. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p4.2

1917. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p22.1

1918. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p45.1

1919. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p40.2

1920. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p8.1

1921. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p4.1

1922. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p3.3

1923. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p40.1

1924. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#iv-p5.3

1925. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p6.1

1926. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iii-p16.1

1927. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iv-p16.2

1928. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p44.1

1929. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p50.1

1930. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p3.4

1931. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#iv-p21.1

1932. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p32.4

1933. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xiii-p16.2

1934. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p1.1

1935. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p49.5

1936. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.i-p68.7

1937. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p27.1

1938. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p35.3

1939. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ii-p22.2

1940. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p31.1

1941. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p49.1

1942. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p70.2

1943. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p4.2

1944. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p40.3

1945. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p36.3

1946. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xi-p16.5

1947. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p19.1

1948. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xii-p11.1

1949. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p60.1

1950. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ii-p16.3

1951. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p43.3

1952. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#iv-p11.1

1953. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p12.3

1954. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p13.2

1955. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p27.3

1956. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p70.3

1957. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.viii-p20.1

1958. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p18.6

1959. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p27.1

1960. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p12.1

1961. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p11.1

1962. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p13.1

1963. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p24.1

1964. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p27.2

1965. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p14.1

1966. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p18.1

1967. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p36.1

1968. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p25.1

1969. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p29.1

1970. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p72.1

1971. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iii-p9.3

1972. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.i-p14.2

1973. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p21.1

1974. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p44.2

1975. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iv-p13.6

1976. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p5.6

1977. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p20.1

1978. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xii-p18.2

1979. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.i-p19.1

1980. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p18.1

1981. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xii-p3.1

1982. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p36.2

1983. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p26.2

1984. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p13.5

1985. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p33.1

1986. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p39.2

1987. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#iv-p12.1

1988. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p3.6

1989. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p18.4

1990. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p7.3

1991. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p59.1

1992. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iii-p2.2

1993. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iii-p2.5

1994. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p22.2

1995. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p4.6

1996. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p12.2

1997. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p43.1

1998. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xii-p13.10

1999. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p11.4

2000. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.ii-p21.1

2001. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p10.3

2002. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p35.2

2003. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vii-p6.1

2004. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p16.3

2005. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p12.2

2006. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p7.1

2007. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ii-p14.2

2008. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p29.2

2009. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p19.3

2010. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.viii-p16.1

2011. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p1.2

2012. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.v-p18.3

2013. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iv-p22.2

2014. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p30.5

2015. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.ix-p30.1

2016. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p6.1

2017. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.x-p32.1

2018. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p11.1

2019. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p25.1

2020. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.i-p31.3

2021. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p3.4

2022. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.i-p17.1

2023. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xii-p18.3

2024. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.xii-p18.3

2025. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iii-p11.3

2026. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p36.2

2027. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p4.5

2028. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p22.2

2029. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.vii-p13.6

2030. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p4.2

2031. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p23.1

2032. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p35.2

2033. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p27.1

2034. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.i-p16.4

2035. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p30.1

2036. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p5.17

2037. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iv-p61.1

2038. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iii-p6.2

2039. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iii-p12.1

2040. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iv-p16.4

2041. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#iv-p11.6

2042. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.i-p38.3

2043. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ii-p16.1

2044. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p5.10

2045. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p21.1

2046. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p22.4

2047. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iii-p6.1

2048. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iv-p16.5

2049. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p24.3

2050. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p24.3

2051. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iii-p5.2

2052. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.iii-p4.1

2053. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p5.8

2054. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p52.4

2055. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p24.2

2056. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p24.2

2057. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.vi-p48.1

2058. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.i-p16.1

2059. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.ii-p33.1

2060. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p3.1

2061. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.v-p24.1

2062. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.vi-p2.3

2063. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p22.1

2064. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p48.1

2065. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p52.1

2066. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p15.2

2067. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p28.1

2068. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.i-p46.1

2069. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vii.iv-p14.1

2070. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p20.1

2071. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.i-p13.5

2072. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.iii-p33.3

2073. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.viii-p17.2

2074. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.viii-p19.1

2075. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.i-p13.3

2076. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p33.7

2077. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.i-p16.2

2078. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#x.i-p16.5

2079. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#ix.iv-p22.2

2080. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#viii.iii-p3.4

2081. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.ix-p22.1

2082. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p21.2

2083. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#v.ii-p32.2

2084. file://localhost/ccel/w/watson/divinity/cache/divinity.html3#vi.x-p15.4