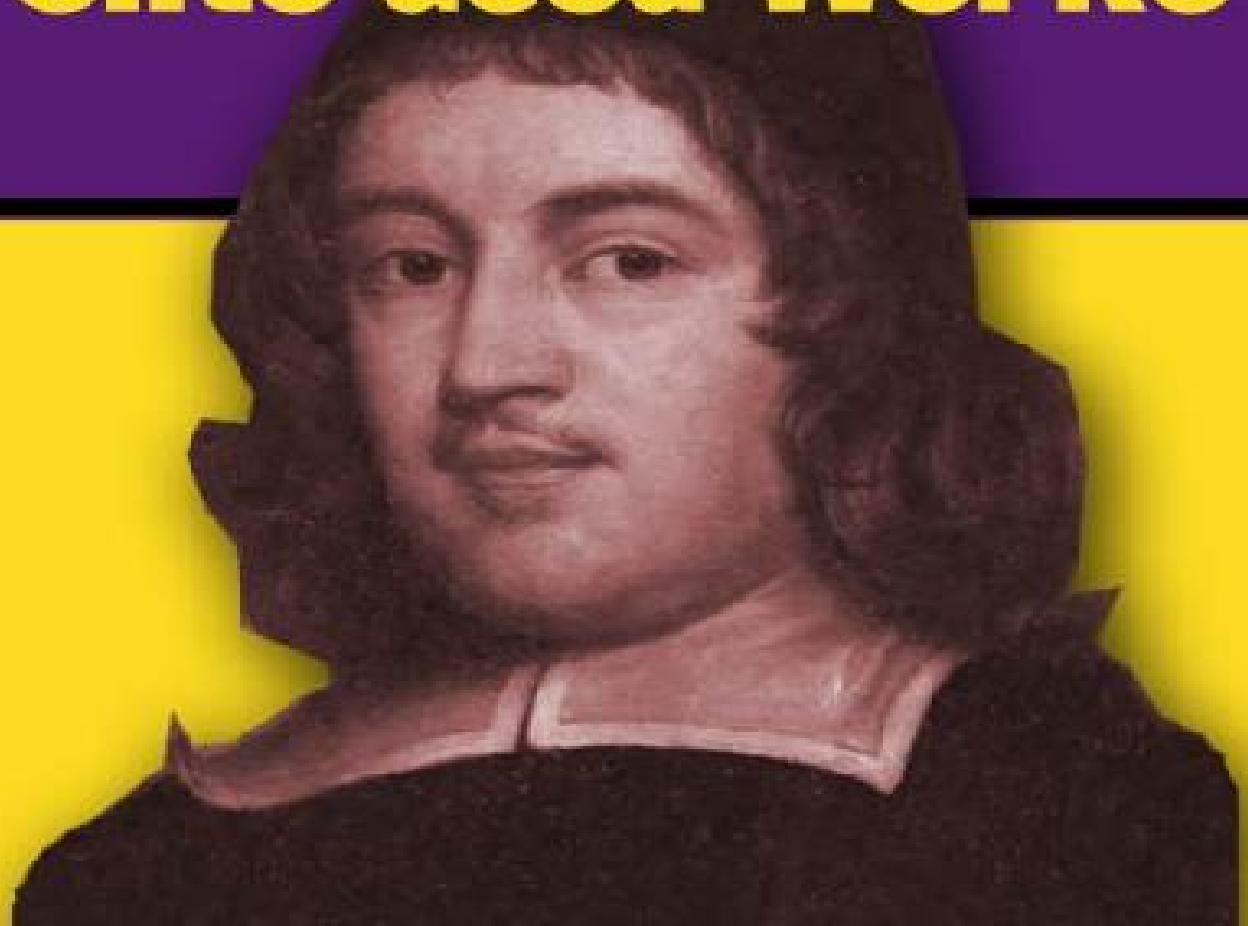


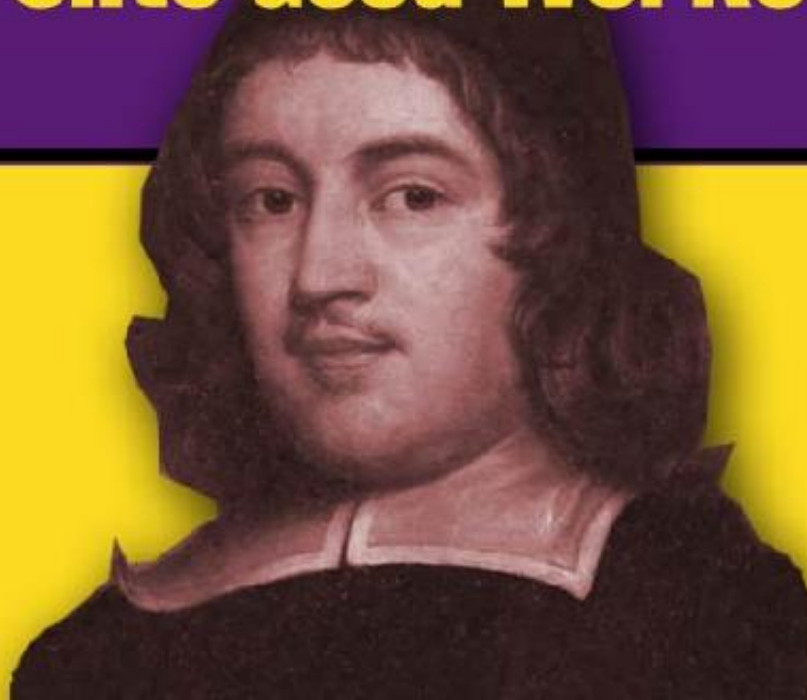
**THOMAS
MANTON**

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Christ Jesus
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by Thomas Manton

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Sermon I: Created in Christ Jesus Unto Good Works

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.—EPH. 2:10.

THE apostle in the context asserteth that our whole salvation is of grace, not of works; he now proveth it. That which is the effect of salvation cannot be the cause of it. But our well-doing is the effect of salvation, if you take it for our first recovery to God; but if you take it for full salvation, or our final deliverance from all evil, works go before it indeed, but in a way of order, not meritorious influence. To think them altogether unnecessary, would too much depreciate and lessen their presence or concurrence; to think they deserve it would as much exalt them, and advance them beyond the line of their due worth and value. The apostle steereth a middle course between both extremes. They are necessary, not meritorious. They

go before eternal life, not as a cause but a way; for they are wrought in us by God, and are effects of the begun salvation; so that the good that we do is a part of the grace that we have received, a fruit of regeneration: 'For we are his workmanship,' &c.

In the words are two things:—

I. The state of believers: for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus.

II. The end why we are brought into this estate: unto good works, which, &c.

I begin with the former, and there note:—

1. God's efficiency: ποιῆμα αὐτοῦ, his workmanship.
2. The manner of his efficiency: κτισθεντες, created; all proceedeth from the infinite creating power of God.
3. The meritorious cause: ἐν Χριστῷ, created in Christ Jesus.

From the whole observe:—

Doct. That those that are renewed and recovered out of the apostasy of mankind, are, as it were, created anew through the power of God and grace of the Redeemer.

I. Let us explain the words of the text

II. Prove it.

I. For explication of what is here asserted, three things must be explained:—

1. Our relation to God.
2. His way of concurrence to establish this relation.

3. How far the mediation of Christ is concerned in this effect.

First, Our relation to God: 'We are his workmanship.' We are so two ways:—(1.) By natural creation; (2.) By supernatural renovation.

1. By natural creation, which giveth us some kind of interest in him, and hope of grace from him. As Ps. 119:73, 'Thy hands have made me and fashioned me; give me understanding that I may learn thy commandments.' God is our Creator, and the end of our creation is to serve God; therefore he gives some kind of encouragement to ask the grace whereby we may serve him. But the apostle speaketh here not of the first creation, but—

2. Of regeneration or renovation, which is called a second or new creation. As 2 Cor. 5:17, 'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature,' *καὶνὴ κτίσις*; a new creation hath passed upon him. By the first creation we are made men; by the second, holy men. Holiness is a thing of God's making; we are regenerated and sanctified by his grace, and made capable of doing good by his Spirit. Now this new workmanship bestowed on us implieth:—

[1.] A change wrought in us, so that we are other persons than we were before, as if another kind of soul came to dwell in our bodies. This change is represented in scripture in such terms as do imply a broad and sensible difference between the two states—that wherein we were before, and that into which we are translated; such a difference as is between light and darkness, Eph. 5:8; life and death, 1 John 3:14; the new man and the old, Eph. 4:22, 24. We seem to be, as it were, creatures transformed out of beasts into men. Instead of being governed by sense and appetite, we are led by reason; and reason is not only put into dominion, but grace, which is reason sanctified, directing and inclining us to live unto God.

[2.] This change is such as must amount to a new creation. There are some changes which go not so far, as—

(1.) A moral change, from profaneness and gross sins to a more sober course of life; for there are some sins which nature discovereth, and may be prevented by such reasons and arguments as nature suggested, Rom. 2:14. This may be done by ordinary discretion and advisement. But the new creature signifies such a change, whereby not only of vicious we become virtuous, but of carnal we become spiritual, John 3:6. Man naturally inclineth to things pleasing to the flesh, and only seeketh, savoureth, and affecteth these things; but in this change the Spirit interposeth and maketh him spirit. Before, man only lived as a nobler and better-natured animal or living creature, and pleased himself, that is, his flesh, either in a grosser or more cleanly manner, being ignorant, mindless of God and another world; but new creatures become spirit, have a spiritual inclination, cannot content themselves with a happiness on this side God and heaven. Mere human nature can never bring men to this, but only the power of God.

(2.) A temporary change, as to fall into a sudden religious frame, which is soon worn off; as Ahab's humiliation, 1 Kings 21:27; or those that howled on their beds, &c., Hosea 7:14, frighted into a little religiousness in their straits and deep necessities, like ice in thawing weather, soft at top and hard at bottom; or those the prophet speaketh of, Jer. 34:15, 'Ye were turned to-day and had done right, but ye returned again and polluted my name.' They seemed to be changed awhile from evil to good, and then they change again from good to evil. This will not amount to the new creature, for that is a durable thing: 1 John 3:9, Σπέρμα μένει, 'His seed remains.'

(3.) A change of outward form, without a change of heart; as when a man changeth parties in religion, and from an oppressor becomes a professor of a stricter way. No; the scripture opposeth this to the new creature, Gal. 6:15. The new creature lieth more in a new mind, new will and affection, than in a new form of religion. Lead is lead still, whatever stamp it beareth.

(4.) A partial change. Men are altered in some things, but the old nature still remaineth; their religion is but like a new piece in an old garment; the heart is not new moulded, so as to leave an impression upon all our actions. The renewed are 'holy in all manner of conversation,' ἐν πάσῃ ἀναστροφῇ, 1 Peter 1:15; 2 Peter 3:11; 2 Cor. 5:17. They drive a new trade for another world, and set upon another work to which they were strangers before; must have new solaces, new comforts, new motives. The new creature is entire, not half new half old; but with many the heart is like 'a cake not turned.'

[3.] When thus new framed and fashioned, it belongeth to God, it hath special relation to him, James 1:18. It must needs be so; they have God's nature and life. (1.) Nature, 2 Peter 1:4. They are made like God, bear his image and superscription; it is a curious piece of workmanship, in which God hath showed his wisdom, goodness, and power; and so they are sealed and marked out for his peculiar ones. (2.) The life of God, that came' from him, and tendeth to him. Others are 'alienated from the life of God,' Eph. 4:18. They recover it, 1 Pet. 4:6. His spirit is a principle of life in them, so that they are really alive to God, and dead to sin and the world.

[4.] This workmanship on us as new creatures far surpasseth that which maketh us creatures only. That came from his general goodness, this from his peculiar love; there it is goodness, here it is grace: 2 Tim. 1:9, 'He hath called us with an holy calling, according to his own purpose and grace.' Creatures are sustained by his common providence, but new creatures by his special care and covenant: 'He openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing,' Ps. 145:16. But he especially preserveth and supplieth believers, 1 Tim. 4:10. He giveth others bodily comforts; but these, soul-refreshings and spiritual graces, Eph. 1:3. There is vestigium, a tract or footprint of God in all the creation; these have his image restored in them: Eph. 4:24, 'The new man is created after God.' Well, then, this is that we should look after, that we may be his workmanship made again. It is a woful thing to be God's workmanship by creation and not by renovation. It is better never to

have been God's creature in the first making, if not his creature in the second making. Better thou hadst been a beast, yea, a toad or serpent, than a man; for when the beasts die, death puts an end to their pains and pleasures at once, but all thy comforts end with death, and then thy pains begin: the beasts have no remorse to sour their pleasures, but man hath conscience, and therefore can have no rest till he return to God.

Secondly, God's way of concurrence to establish this relation. It is a creation. The phrase is often used: Eph. 4:24, 'The new man is created after God.' No other hand could finish this piece of workmanship. God often sets it forth by this term: Isa. 43:7, 'I have created him for my glory, I have formed him, yea, I have made him.' So ver. 21, 'This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise.' So in other places. Now, creation is a work of omnipotency, and proper to God. There is a twofold creation. In the beginning God made some things out of nothing, and some things *ex inhabili materia*, out of foregoing matter, but such as was wholly unfit for such things as were made of it; as when God made Adam out of the dust of the ground, and Eve out of the rib of man. Take the notion in the former or latter sense, and it will suit with the matter in hand. (1.) We are formed anew of God, as it were out of a state of nothing, and get a new being and a new life. To this there are frequent allusions in scripture; as Rom. 4:17, 'He calleth the things that are not as though they were;' 2 Cor. 4:6, 'Who speaketh (Ὁ εἶπὼν) light out of darkness,' he bringeth life out of death, something out of nothing. Now there is such a distance between these two terms that the work can only be accomplished by a divine power. (2.) Creation out of unfit matter. We were wholly indisposed, averse from good, perverse resisters of it. Now, to bring us to love God and holiness, to restore God's lost image to us, it is a new forming or making of us, and must be looked upon, not as a low, natural, or common thing, but as the work of him who gave us his image at first: Col. 3:10, 'The new man is renewed after the image of him that created him.' To turn a heart of stone into a heart of flesh,

God challengeth it to himself, Ezek. 36:26. This creation showeth two things:—

1. The greatness of the disease; that is clearly seen in the difficulty of the remedy. Nothing doth make a man so sensible of the corrupness of his nature, as when we hear by what terms our recovery or restitution by grace is set forth. It is a second creation, a new birth, a resurrection, a raising up of stones to be children to Abraham; yea, in a sort, beasts are turned into angels. From these things we may a little conceive of the greatness of that disease which all mankind were sick of. Every faculty of our souls was both weakened and corrupted, and God only by his divine power can restore us; for to be cured we must be wholly new made, and who can make or create but God? Surely we contributed nothing to it. What enemies were we to our own mercies! It is no small matter for darkness to become light in the Lord; for a rugged, stubborn creature to be mollified, and submissive to the Spirit's discipline; for a slave of the devil to become the subject of Christ; that a heap of rubbish should be erected into a temple of God, and a dunghill turned into a bed of spices.

2. It teaches us to magnify this renewing work. If you think the cure is no great matter, it will necessarily follow that it deserveth no great praise, and so God will be robbed of the honour of our recovery. But why then is this work so magnified in the scriptures, and such high expressions used about it? Why is it called an opening of our blind eyes; a turning us from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God; a 'quickenning them that were dead,' and making us 'new creatures'? Why must the Holy Ghost be shed so abundantly upon us for our renovation? Surely it is some great thing which all these expressions do intend, and should be more magnified in our thoughts, that we may give God his due praise and honour. And they sin greatly that have contemptuous thoughts or a low esteem of it, or see not the absolute necessity of it; and by extenuating this great change, gave shrewd suspicion they were never acquainted with it. Surely all that have felt what God

hath done for their souls, they know how little they have contributed to it, they dare not make light of it, and ascribe it to their own wit or will, or entertain undervaluing thoughts of this grace. Alas! there is an enmity in every carnal heart against holiness, till God remove it and subdue it, Rom. 8:7; Col. 1:21. And what shall conquer this enmity but his invincible power? Surely this is the gracious and powerful work of the ever-blessed God, and to be ascribed to him alone. Can a stony heart of itself become tender? or a dead heart quicken itself? or a creature wholly led by sense, and addicted to the pleasures of sin, be brought of itself to seek its happiness in an unseen world, and of its own accord deny present things, and lay up all its hopes in heaven? No; it is God must take away the heart of stone, quicken those that are dead in trespasses and sins.

Thirdly, How far the mediation of Christ is concerned in this effect. We are renewed by God's creating power, but through the intervening mediation of Christ.

1. This creating power is set forth with respect to his merit. The life of grace is purchased by his death: 1 John 4:9, 'God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live by him;' here spiritually, hereafter eternally; life opposite to the death incurred by sin. And how by him? By his being a propitiation; that he speaks of there, ver. 10. We were in a state of death when the doors of mercy were first opened to us, under the guilt and power of sin; for while the guilt and tyranny of sin remaineth, we are said to be dead, and strangers to the life of God; and we begin to live when first regenerated by the Spirit of Christ. Now this we have not without Christ being a propitiation for our sins, that is, without doing something whereby God, without any impeachment of his honour, might show himself placable and propitious to mankind; his justice, holiness; and hatred of sin being sufficiently demonstrated in the sufferings of Christ. Now the honour of his governing justice being kept up, his pardoning mercy is the more freely exercised. God may

be propitious to mankind, and yet still be acknowledged as a sin-hating God.

2. In regard of efficacy. Christ is a quickening head, or a life-making Spirit, 1 Cor. 15:45. Whatever grace we have comes from God, through Christ as Mediator; and from him we have it by virtue of our union with him: 2 Cor. 5:17; 'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.' As soon as joined to him as our head, his grace is applied to us by his Spirit. It is first applied by converting grace, and then continually supplied by the confirming grace of the Spirit; and so we are fitted to every good work. Christ first applieth it in conversion, when he giveth us repentance and a new nature, Acts 5:31; and supplieth it by continual influence, John 15:5. We live on him as the branch doth on the root. Now from hence we learn what a great benefit renewing grace is; it is a fruit of reconciling grace: 2 Cor. 5:18, 'All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Christ.' God giveth grace only as the God of peace, that is, as pacified by Christ's death. The Holy Spirit is the gift of his love, and the fruit of this peace and reconciliation which Christ made for us. First, our Lord Jesus Christ merited this grace by the value of this sacrifice and bloody sufferings, and then doth apply it by the almighty power of his Spirit; and Christ is first our ransom, and then the fountain of life unto our souls; and so the honour of our whole and entire recovery is to be ascribed to our Redeemer. When he satisfied God's justice for our sins, he purchased a power to change the heart of man; and he purchased this power into his own hands, not into another's, and therefore doth accomplish it by his Spirit, 2 Cor. 3:18. We should often think what a foundation God hath laid for the dispensation of his grace, and how he would demonstrate his infinite love in giving his Son to be a propitiation for us. When he would show forth his infinite power in determining and changing the heart of man, all the persons concurred: the Father purposing, the Son by way of redemption and purchase, the Holy Ghost by effective power; and all to bring back our souls to God, and to make us capable of serving and pleasing him. It is surely a workmanship of much cost.

Two reasons why they are as it were created anew:—

1. Because of the badness of our former estate. Ruinous and decayed buildings are only to be thrown down, to make way for a new structure and house to stand in the same place. Man naturally is a creature in a state of apostasy and defection, under a loss of original righteousness, averse from God, yea, an enemy to him, prone to all evil, weak, yea, dead to all spiritual good. And what must be done with such a creature to bring him out of his misery, but wholly to new mould him and make him, that he may have a new being and life? The scripture represents man as blind in his mind, 2 Peter 1:9; perverse in his will, Zech. 7:12; rebellious in his affections, Eph. 2:3, 'fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.' What sound part is there left in us to mend the rest? If we will be brought home to God, we must of sinful and polluted become clean and holy; and 'Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one,' Job 14:4. We must of carnal become spiritual, and therefore we must be new born, new made, John 3:6. That instead of minding the things of the flesh we may mind the things of the Spirit, we must of worldly become heavenly. 'Now, he that formeth us for this very thing is God,' 2 Cor. 5:5. Ὁ καταργαζόμενος, he that frameth and createth us for this heavenly state, is God. He that is the framer and maker of all things, of infinite wisdom, power, and love, he createth us anew in Christ, that we may look after eternal life. The heavenly disposition wrought in us is a pledge of it.

2. From the nature of God's work, which is not merely by helping the will, but by giving us the will itself, or the act of volition of it; not by curing the weakness of it, but by sanctifying it, and taking away the sinfulness of it, and inclining it to himself. If the will were only in a swoon and languishment, a little moral persuasion and excitation, outward or inward, by the word and Spirit, would serve the turn; but we cannot say of it, as Christ of the damsel, 'She is not dead, but sleepeth.' No; the scripture saith, We are 'dead in trespasses and sins,' Eph. 2:1. God's grace is not only necessary for facilitation, that we may more easily pursue and choose that which

is good; as a horse is necessary that a man may pass on his journey more easily, which otherwise he might perform on foot with difficulties. No; it is impossible as well as difficult to escape the carnal life without God, Mat. 19:26. He doth work such a change on a carnal man's heart that he contemns the world and seeks after heavenly things. Nay, he doth not only give us a remote power to will if we please, or a remote power to do if we please, but he giveth 'to will and to do,' Phil. 2:13; the will itself and the deed itself. Thus is God's operation set forth; he reneweth the faculties and exciteth the act of willing and doing by his powerful and victorious influence, Ezek. 36:26, 27. Otherwise, if grace did only give us an indifferency, so that a man may or may not, then man would be the principal cause of his own conversion, and God lose the glory of his grace, and the honour of it be ascribed to the liberty of man's own will. God doth not give a power to repent and believe, and leave it to the determination of man's will to make it effectual; but he giveth faith itself, and repentance itself. Faith is his gift: Eph. 2:8, 'To you it is given to believe;' Phil. 1:29. The Redeemer was raised 'to give repentance,' Acts 5:31. This is the grace which the saints pray for, faith itself, repentance itself: Ps. 51:10, 'Create in me a clean heart;' Heb. 13:21, 'The Lord make you perfect to do his will, working in you that which is pleasing in his sight.' We pray not only for a grace that gives the possibility, but the effect; not only for such as doth invite and solicit us to good, but such as doth incline and determine us to good. And this is the grace we give thanks for; not a power to repent and believe if we please, but for, repentance and faith wrought in us. If God did only give a power to will if we please, to do if we please, man would difference himself, 1 Cor. 4:7.

3. With respect to Christ: 'We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus,' who is the head of the new world, or renewed estate. All things are new in the kingdom of Christ; there is a change of everything from what it was before. There is a new Adam, which is Jesus Christ; a new covenant, which is the gospel; a new paradise, not that where Adam enjoyed God among the beasts, but where the blessed enjoy God among the angels; a new ministry, not the

posterity of Aaron or tribe of Levi, but a ministry of reconciliation, put into their hands whom God hath qualified and fitted to be dispensers of these holy mysteries; new ordinances, 'We serve God not in the oldness of the letter, but the newness of the spirit;' therefore, if we be in Christ, we must be new creatures. We are both obliged and fitted by this new estate to be so. Some are in Christ externally by baptism and profession; they are visibly in covenant with him, and de jure, of right, are bound to be new creatures. Others are in Christ by real internal union. These not only ought to be, but de facto are, new creatures; they are made partakers of his Spirit, Rom. 8:9, and by that Spirit they are renewed and sanctified. Well, then, since there is a new Lord and a new law, all is new; there must be a new creation; for as the general state of the church is renewed by Christ, so is every particular believer.

4. With respect to the use for which this new creation serveth. One is mentioned in the text: 'Created unto good works;' but other things must be taken in.

[1.] In order to our present communion with God. Till we are created anew, we are not fit to converse with a holy and invisible God earnestly, frequently, reverently, and delightfully, which is our daily, work and business. The effects of the new creature are life and likeness; those that do not live the life of God are estranged from him,' Eph. 4:18. Trees cannot converse with beasts, because they do not live their life; nor beasts with men, for they have sense only, but no reason; nor men with God, till they have somewhat of the same nature and life. If one had power to put the spirit of man into a brute beast, that beast would discourse reasonably. God hath power to put a divine Spirit into his people, to sanctify their souls, that fits them for converse with God. Look, as in innocency Adam was alone, though compassed about with a multitude of creatures, beasts, birds, and plants, yet there was none, till Eve was made, fit to converse with him, because they did not live his life; therefore the Lord God said, Gen. 2:18, 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.' The man was alone, because

he had none like himself that he might converse withal as a man in the exercise of speech and reason; the beasts of the field and fowls of the air were no fit companions for him; they wanted the means of converse, reason and speech: so without grace we are not meet for communion with God, till we have faith and love to admire, reverence, and delight in him. 'So for likeness. Conformity is the ground of communion: Amos 3:3, 'How can two walk together except they be agreed?' Our state of sin is a state of enmity, and our state of holiness a state of love. Our old course made the breach between us and God, Isa. 59:2; but the new life and likeness qualifies us for communion with him: 1 John 1:6, 7, 'An holy creature may sweetly come and converse with the holy God.'

[2.] In order to our service and obedience to God. Man is unfit for God's use till he be new moulded and framed again: In the text, we must be 'created in Christ Jesus to good works.' Every creature hath faculties suitable to the operations that belong to that creature; so man must be new created, new formed, that he may be prepared and made ready for the Lord. You cannot expect new operations till there be a new nature and life. When a man is turned from sin, he is 'made meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work,' 2 Tim. 2:21. Our first care must be to get the heart renewed. Many are troubled about this or that duty, or particular branches of the spiritual life; first get life itself. There must be principles before there can be operations. In vain do we expect strengthening grace before we have received renewing grace. This is like little children, who attempt to run before they can go or stand. Many complain of this or that corruption, but they do not groan under the burden of a corrupt nature; as suppose wandering thoughts in prayer, when at the same time the heart is habitually averse and estranged from God: as if a man should complain of an aching tooth when a mortal disease hath seized upon his vitals, or of a cut finger when at the same time he is wounded at the heart,—of deadness in duty and want of quickening grace when they want converting grace. This is like blowing to a dead coal, to complain of infirmities and incident weakness when our habitual aversion from and enmity to God is

not yet cured, and of unfitness for service, when we are not come out of the carnal state.

[3.] In order to our future enjoyment of God, and that glory and blessedness which we expect in his heavenly kingdom; none but new creatures can enter into the new Jerusalem. It is said, John 3:3, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' Seeing is put for enjoying; yet the expression is emphatical, as if he should not be suffered so much as to peep or look within the veil; therefore the mere carnal man neither knoweth his true happiness, nor careth for it, but followeth after his own lusts, till he be new moulded and framed. By nature men are opposite to the kingdom of God, it being invisible, future, spiritual, mostly for the soul; and by nature men are for things seen, present, and bodily. The interest of the flesh governeth all their choices and inclinations; and how unmeet are these for heaven! In short, our frail bodies must be changed before they can be brought to heaven: 'We shall not all die, but we shall all be changed,' saith the apostle. If the body must be changed, how much more the soul? if that which is frail, much more that which is filthy; if flesh and blood cannot enter into heaven till it be freed from its corruptible qualities, certainly a guilty, corrupted soul cannot enter into heaven till it be freed from its sinful qualities.

APPLICATION

Use 1. Of information.

1. That there is such a thing as the new nature, regeneration, or the new birth, and the new creature. It is one thing to make us men, another to make us saints or Christians. We have understanding, and will, and affections, and sense as men, but we have these sanctified as Christians. The carnal world thinks Christianity puts strange names upon ordinary things; but is it an ordinary thing to row against the stream of flesh and blood, and to raise men above those inclinations and affections by which the generality of the

world are mastered and captivated? For a man to be another kind of creature than the rest of men are, surely proceeds from a new nature put into him, 1 Peter 4:4. The world wondereth at believers in their contemning the pleasant, powerful attractives of sensible things.

2. That by this new nature a man is distinguished from himself as carnal; he hath somewhat which he had not before, something that may be called a new life and nature; a new heart that is created, Ps. 51:10; and may be increased, 2 Peter 3:18. In the first conversion we are mere objects of grace, but afterwards instruments of grace. First God worketh upon us, then by us. On the unregenerate the Spirit worketh while they do nothing that is good, sometimes the contrary; the regenerate he helpeth whilst they are working, striving, labouring; he quickeneth and exciteth their inclination to God. They have some principles of operation, there is life in them; and where there is life there is some power to act, or else God's most precious gifts would be in vain; therefore it is their duty to bestir themselves, 2 Peter 1:3–5. We have understanding and memory sanctified and planted with a stock of divine knowledge, and can retain things on the conscience, which if we do not, we are highly culpable before God: Mat. 25:25, 26, 'Thou wicked and slothful servant,' &c. We have an inclination to God and heavenly things, and we must blow it up: Isa. 64:7, 'There is none that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee;' 2 Tim. 1:6, 'Stir up the gift of God that is in thee.'

3. How little they can make out their recovery to God, and interest in Christ, who are not sensible of any change wrought in them. They have their old thoughts, their old discourses, their old passions, and their old affections, and their old conversations still; the old darkness and blindness which was upon their minds, the old stupidity, dullness; deadness, carelessness that was upon their hearts, knowing little or nothing, or regarding nothing of God; the old end and scope governeth them, to which they formerly referred all things. If there were a change, there would be some hope the

Redeemer had been at work in their hearts. You can remember how little savour you had once of the things of the Spirit, how little mind to Christ or holiness, how wholly you were given up to the pleasures of the flesh, or the profits of the world; what a mastery your lusts had then over you, and a hard servitude you were in. Is the case altered with you now? Is your taste of fleshly delights deadened, your souls taken up more with the affairs of another world? Is the drift, aim, and bent of your lives now for God and your salvation, and the great business you attend upon the pleasing of God and the saving of your souls? Are ye not servants to your senses and fleshly appetites, and things here below, but can ye govern yourselves, and master these desires? This is a change indeed, but in many that profess Christ, and pretend to an interest in him, there is no such change to be sensibly seen; their old sins, and their old lusts, and the old things of ungodliness are not yet cast off. Surely so much old rubbish and rotten building should not be left standing with the new. Old leaves in autumn fall off in the spring, if they continue so long; so old things should pass away, and all become new.

4. It informeth us in what manner we should check sin, by remembering it is an old thing to be done away, and ill becoming our new estate by Christ: 2 Peter 1:9, 'But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see far off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.' Former sins ought to be esteemed as old rags that are cast off, and as vomit never to be licked up again. If we are, and do esteem ourselves to be pardoned, we should never build again what we have destroyed, nor tear open old wounds—so 1 Peter 1:14, 'Not fashioning yourselves to the former lusts of your ignorance'—nor cast ourselves into the old mould and shape, and return to our old bondage and slavery. So 1 Cor. 5:7, 'Purge out the old leaven, that you may be wholly a new lump;' So ver. 8, 'Therefore keep the feast not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.' The unsuitableness of sin to our present state should stir up our indignation: Hosea 14:8, 'What have I to do any more with idols?' Worldly things are pleasing to the old man,

therefore we should not over-much esteem them; they are not new creatures that have not put off the lusts of the old man.

Use 2. To put us upon self-reflection; are we the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus? that is, are we made new creatures? It will be known by these things,—a new mind, a new heart, and a new life.

1. Have we a new mind? A new creature hath a new sight of things, looketh upon all things with a new eye. He seeth more odiousness in sin, more excellency in Christ, more beauty in holiness, more vanity in the world, than ever he saw before. Before they did φρονεῖν κατὰ σῶμα—they knew all things after the flesh. A new value and esteem of things doth much discover the temper of the heart: Heb. 11:26, 'Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.' They esteem the decay of the outward man to be abundantly recompensed with the increase of the inward, 2 Cor. 4:16. A new creature is not only changed himself, but all things seem to be changed with him. Heaven is another thing, and earth is another thing than it was before, so is sin and righteousness; yea, he looketh on his body and soul with another eye.

2. As he hath a new mind and judgment, so the heart is new moulded. The great blessing of the new covenant is a new heart. Now the heart is new when we are inclined to the ways of God, and enabled to walk in them.

[1.] There is a new inclination, poise, and weight upon the soul, bending it to holy and heavenly things. The inclination to holiness David prayeth for: Ps. 119:36, 'Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.' To heavenly things: Paul asserteth, 2 Cor. 4:18, 'We look not to the things which are seen, but to the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal;' when we

always live in delightful foresight and expectation of blessedness to come.

[2.] The heart is enabled also: Ezek. 36:27, 'I will put a new spirit into you, and cause you to walk in my ways.' Where there is a new heart, there is new strength or grace given to 'serve God acceptably, and with reverence and godly fear,' Heb. 12:28. Indeed God assists this power, or else we fail and wax faint; but a power there is in some measure to will and do; for 'the kingdom of God stands not in word, but in power.' There is a power to overcome fleshly lusts; the heavenly mind is not given us in vain: 1 Peter 2:11, 'Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.' A power to overcome worldly lusts, Phil. 4:13. When we seek no great things for ourselves here in this world, we can the better bear all conditions. I do confess (as I said before), God must assist this power both in willing and doing, purposing and performing. We may have assistance in one kind and not in another. Paul saith, τὸ θελεῖν, &c., Rom. 7:18. 'To will is present with me, but how to perform that which I would, I have no power.' To will is more than to think, to exert our will into action is more than both. In all we need God's help. Some may have the power to will, when no power to do; so Peter se posse putabat quod se velle sentiebat. But yet I describe a Christian, or a new creature, by his power; because God's children are never so deserted but that there is some help from God. There are auxilia necessaria, helps of grace simply and absolutely necessary, which are not denied, when liberal and plentiful aids of grace are suspended; and therefore a Christian is to be described by his power, though still in a dependence upon God.

3. A new life, or a new conversation, called walking 'in newness of life,' Rom. 6:4. Surely he that hath a new principle, the Spirit, and not the flesh; a new rule, the law of God, and not the course of this world; a new scope, the pleasing, glorifying, and enjoying of God, and not the pleasing of men and his own fleshly mind, must needs walk in a different course both from other carnal men, and from

what he himself carried on before. But all these are true of the new creature; he is influenced by another principle, Rom. 8:12, Gal. 5:16; looketh upon himself as having another rule, Gal. 6:16, Ps. 1:2; and propoundeth to himself another design and scope, Phil. 3:20, 2 Cor. 5:9; and therefore must needs live another life. Well, then, by these things you may judge of your estate.

Use 3. To exhort you to look after this, that you be the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus. You will say, What can we do? This is God's work, in which we are merely passive.

I answer—It is certainly an abuse of this doctrine if it lull us asleep in the lap of idleness; and we think that because God doth all in framing us for the new life, we must do nothing. The Spirit of God reasoneth otherwise: Phil. 2:12, 13, 'Work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.' This principle can neither be a ground of looseness nor laziness. You are under an obligation both to return to God, and to use the means whereby you may return. Your impotency doth not dissolve your obligation. A drunken servant is a servant, and bound to do his work; his master loseth not his right by his default. An insolvent debtor is a debtor, and if he cannot pay all, he is bound to pay as much as he can. Besides, you are creatures in misery; if you be sensible of it, your interest will teach you to do what you can to come out of it; and God's doing all is an engagement to wait upon him in the use of means, that we may meet with God in his way, and he may meet with us in our way. I say, in his way; for God hath appointed certain duties to convey and apply this grace. Now we are to lie at the pool till the waters be stirred, to continue our attendance till God giveth grace, Mark 4:24. And I say, that God may meet with us in our way; for God influenceth all things according to their natural inclination. God, that enlighteneth the world by and with the sun, burneth with fire, reasoneth with man, acteth necessarily with necessary causes, and freely with free causes,—he doth not oppress the liberty of the new creature, but preserveth the nature and interest of his own

workmanship; draweth men 'with the cords of a man,' Hosea 11:4. He propoundeth reasons and motives, which we must consider, and so betake ourselves to a godly course. The object of regeneration is a reasonable creature, upon whom God worketh, not as on a stock or stone, but maketh use of the faculties which we have, showing us our lost estate, and the possibility of salvation by Christ, sweetly inviting us to accept of this grace, that he may pardon our sins, sanctify and heal our natures, and lead us in a way of holiness unto eternal life. Now these means we are to attend upon; and it is some advantage when you own your duty, and are sensible of a necessity of changing your estate, who would otherwise be altogether careless and mindless of such a thing. But when you look on it as a duty, that must be speedily and earnestly gone about if you mean to be saved, you are in a fair way of cure. By exhortation we demand God's right, and make the creature sensible of his own obligation, that he may go about this work as well as he can, at least that he may acknowledge the debt, confess his impotency, and beg grace. Besides, there are some things to be done before this renovation in order thereunto, as wood is dried before it is kindled. There are some preparations before conversion, and we are to be active about them. As, for instance, that we should rouse up ourselves, and consider our case: Ps. 22:27, 'All the ends of the earth shall remember, and turn unto the Lord;' Ps. 119:59, 'I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.' Man is very inconsiderate; his soul is asleep till consideration awaken it again. We are to search and try our estate whether it be good or bad, Lam. 3:40. Let us 'search and try our ways, and turn unto the Lord.' We are to observe God's rebukes: Prov. 1:23, 'Turn ye at my reproof;' to set ourselves to seek after God in the best fashion we can: Hosea 5:4, 'They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God,' that is, think of recovering themselves and bending their course to him. Chiefly we are to take heed that we do not hinder God's work, and obstruct our own mercies: Prov. 1:25, 'They set at nought my counsel, and would none of my reproof.' Sometimes conscience is startled, either as being excited by the word, Acts 24:25, or some notable affliction and strait, Gen. 42:21; by one means or another

the waters are stirred, great helps are vouchsafed to us; observe these seasons. However, check despair. He that did turn water into wine, can turn sinners into saints, lions into lambs; he hath not excluded you from his grace, therefore do not exclude yourselves. When did he ever forsake the anxious and waiting souls that would not give over seeking till they did obtain the sanctifying Spirit?

SERMON II: Created in Christ Jesus Unto Good Works

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.—EPH. 2:10.

WE come now to the end why we are brought into this estate, created unto good works, &c. The end is not to live idly or walk loosely, but holily, according to the will of God.

In this latter clause, 'Created unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them,' observe:—

1. The object: good works; that is, works becoming the new creature: in short, we should live Christianly.

2. God's act about it: οἷς προητοίμασεν ὁ Θεὸς, which God hath before ordained. The word signifies both prepared and ordained. (1.) God hath prepared these works for us. (2.) God hath prepared us for them. He hath prepared them for us either by his decree or precept. If you understand it in the first sense, God, that hath ordained the end, hath also appointed means, as Acts 27:31, compared with 24; or else appointed by his precept and express will, Micah 6:8; and he hath prepared us for them by his Spirit, making our hearts fit for our work, Heb. 8:10, enlightening the mind, inclining the will. The

first showeth the necessity of them, the second the easiness of them. God hath accommodated all things to that end, enabling us to know our duty and to do it.

3. Our duty: that we should walk in them. Walking noteth both a way and an action.

[1.] It implieth a way, that good works are the way to obtain salvation, purchased and granted to us by Jesus Christ. Unless we walk in the path of good works we cannot come to eternal life.

[2.] An action. Walking notes:—

(1.) Spontaneity in the principle: not drawn or driven, but walk, set ourselves a-going.

(2.) Progress in the motion. He that walketh sets himself forward and gets ground; he doth not stand still or lie down, but goeth on still.

Doct. That new creatures are both obliged and fitted, or prepared for good works.

I. What is meant by good works?

II. What obligation lieth on the new creature to make conscience of them?

III. How they are fitted and prepared by that new nature which is bestowed upon them by and through Christ?

I. What is meant by good works?

1. The kinds.

2. The requisites.

First, The kinds—all acts of obedience: more particularly they are divided and distributed into five sorts or ranks.

1. *Opera cultus*: acts of God's immediate worship, both internal and external. The internal acts are faith and love, trust, delight, reverence. The children of God are often described by these—by believing in his name, John 1:12; love to God and delight in him; Ps. 97:10, 'Ye that love the Lord, hate evil;' Ps. 37:4, 'Delight thyself also in the Lord;' trust: Ps. 62:8, 'Trust in him at all times, ye people;' fear or reverence: Ps. 130:4, 'There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayst be feared.' External, as to pray, read, hear, to be much in communion with God in all the parts of his worship. Without works of piety we are practical atheists, Ps. 36:1, and Ps. 14:1, 2, 4. God's people do certainly make conscience of these: the internal acts are the life of their souls; the external are their solace, strength, and support, their songs in the house of their pilgrimage, their refreshing by the way. Cornelius, Acts 10:2, feared and prayed to God alway; Daniel would not omit prayer one day though in danger of death, Dan. 6:10, 11. There is little zeal in them that are not frequent with God, but forget him days without number, Jer. 2:32.

2. *Opera vocationis*: every man must labour in the work to which he is called. God is pleased to appoint and accept the duties of our callings as a good work. Are they never so mean, yet servants may honour God by diligence in their duties: Titus 2:9, 10, 'Exhort servants to be obedient to their masters, &c., that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.' To be profitable to human society in your place is good; the new nature helpeth us so to be: Philem. 11, Onesimus 'in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and me.' All have their work, from the Mediator to the poorest creature in the world: John 17:4, 'I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.' So Titus 3:14, 'Let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.' When John's hearers came to know what they should do, he referreth every one to their callings, Luke 3:10–12; walk conscionably therein, glorify

God, soldiers, publicans, &c. Without these good works we are drones in the common hive, yea, burdens upon the earth.

3. *Opera justitiæ*: works of righteousness and justice, to hurt none, to give every one his due, to use fidelity in our relations, Acts 24:16. The credit of religion is much concerned in the just dealing of them that profess it. God will have the world to know that religion is a good friend to human society: Neh. 5:9, 'Ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God, because of the reproach of the heathen, our enemies?' This was the primitive glory of Christianity, *Dent exercitum talem, tales exactores fisci*, &c. Some carry it so that they deal with God's commandments as Hanun with David's messengers, as if they had cut off the whole second table, and so prove a stain and blot to religion. In short, they that do not make conscience of paying their debts, and using justice, equity, and honesty in all their dealings, are robbers, thieves, and enemies to human society.

4. *Opera charitatis et misericordiæ*: as to relieve the poor, to be good to all, to help others by our counsel or admonition. We are often called upon for these; thus, Acts 9:36, Dorcas is said to be 'full of good works and alms-deeds which she did.' So 1 Tim. 6:18, 'Charge them to be rich in good works.' It is not left arbitrary to you, but laid upon you as part of your charge and duty, a debt we owe to God. Now, if you do not mind this kind of good works, you are unfaithful stewards in the good things committed to your trust. You must not deny God his own when he or any of his have need of it.

5. I think there is another sort of good works which concern ourselves, and that is, sobriety, watchfulness, mortification, self-denial. A man oweth duty to himself: Titus 2:12, 'Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly,' &c. These conduce to our safety: 1 Peter 5:8, 'Be sober, be vigilant; for your adversary the devil, like a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour;' and belong to our fidelity to Christ: Gal. 5:24, 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof.' Therefore take in these also, and call

them *opera militiæ Christianæ*, the works of our spiritual warfare, by which we guard ourselves from the enemies of our salvation, that our hands be not weakened and enfeebled in God's work, that we may carry it on without unevenness and interruption.

Secondly, The requisites to a good work are:—

1. That the person be in a good state: Mat. 7:17, 'A good tree bringeth forth good fruit.' Married to Christ: Rom. 7:4, 'Wherefore ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.' A believer: Titus 3:8, 'Let them which believe in God be careful to maintain good works,' A carnal, unregenerate man may do that which is for the matter good; but till he be changed in his heart and state, his works are not acceptable to God.

2. The principles of operation must be faith, love, and obedience. Faith, owning God's authority: Ps. 119:66, 'Teach me good judgment and knowledge, for I have believed thy commandment.' Love, inclining the heart: 2 Cor. 5:14, 'The love of Christ constraineth me.' Obedience, swaying the conscience: 1 Thes. 4:3, 'This is the will of God, your sanctification;' 1 Tim. 1:5, 'The end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart and good conscience, and faith unfeigned.' There we have the pedigree of good works; faith unfeigned begets a good conscience, and that a pure heart, and that love to God, and then all particular duties succeed.

3. A due regard of circumstances, that it may be not only good, but done well, Luke 8:15,—with that diligence, reverence, seriousness, alacrity, which the nature of the work doth require.

4. The end, that it be for God's glory: Phil. 1:11, 'Filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Christ Jesus to the praise and glory of God.'

II. How new creatures are obliged to these good works.

1. With respect to God, he hath ordained that we should walk in them. If you refer to his decree, he will have his elect people distinguished from others by the good they do in the world, that they may be known to be followers of a good God, as the children of the devil are by their mischief. His eternal decree is made evident to us by our making conscience of good works, and so we 'make our calling and election sure,' 2 Peter 1:10. If you take it for his precept and command, surely we should make conscience of what our father giveth us in charge. He hath appointed us to do so, sent us into the vineyard to work, and shall we say, I will not? Mat. 21:29, 30; or loiter and neglect when we have given our consent? or pretend to go, and never set about it? To a gracious heart the signification of God's will is instead-of all reasons: 1 Thes. 5:18, 'In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God concerning you;' 1 Peter 2:15, 'For this is the will of God, that with well-doing you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.'

2. With respect to Christ, who died to restore us to a capacity and ability to perform these good works: Titus 2:14, 'Who gave himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works;' not only to do them, but do them with alacrity and zeal. As Christ came to raise the comfort of the creature to the highest, so also the duty of the creature to the highest, that his people might be eminent in holiness, justice, goodness, and truth, above all others.

3. With respect to the Spirit, who reneweth us for this end; we are new made, that we may look upon doing good as our calling and only business. All other things are valuable according to the use for which they serve; the sun was made to give light and heat to inferior creatures, and we are enlightened by grace, and inclined by grace, that our light may shine before men, Mat. 5:16.

4. With respect to heaven and eternal happiness, they are the way to heaven. We discontinue or break off our walk when we cease to do good; but the more we mind good works the more we proceed in our

way: Phil. 3:14, 'Pressing onward' to our final reward, and at length our entrance is more full, and with greater peace, 2 Peter 1:11.

III. How are they fitted and prepared by this new nature that is put into them for good works?

Ans. There is a remote preparation, and a near preparation.

1. The remote preparation is an inclination and propensity to all the acts of the holy and heavenly life. All creatures have an inclination to their proper operations, so the new creature. As the sparks fly up and the stones downward by an inclination of nature, so are their hearts bent to please and serve God. The inclination is natural, the acts are voluntary, because it is an inclination of a free agent: 'The law of God is in their hearts,' Ps. 40:8; Ps. 37:31. Others force themselves, but here there is an affinity between the work and the vital principle which is in us, so that we need not much enforcement: 1 Thes. 4:9, 'As touching brotherly love, I need not write unto you, for you are taught of God to love one another.' Now, God's teaching is not by expression, but by impression; he hath inclined, suited our hearts to it: as there need not many arguments to move the mother to give suck to her tender infant; nature hath taught her, left such an instinct and inclination upon her, which doth sufficiently excite her to do it.

2. The near preparation is called promptitude and readiness for every good work, or a 'ready obedience to every good work,' Titus 3:1. So 1 Tim. 6:18, 'Ready to distribute;' Heb. 13:16, 'Ready to communicate.' So Paul, ἐτόμως ἔχω, Acts 21:13. This is beyond inclination. The fire hath an inclination to ascend upwards, yet something may violently keep it down; so a Christian may have a will to good, a strong, not a remiss will, but yet there are some impediments, Rom. 7:18. Inclination implieth a remote power, but readiness the next and immediate power; therefore a Christian ought to keep himself in a readiness or fitness of disposition for his duty, whether it concerneth God, ourselves, or others. This is seen

in zeal, that beareth down all impediments. All graces are operative, and zeal is that earnest impulsion and activity of every grace where it is in strength and vigour. Faith worketh, Gal. 5:6. Love constraineth, 2 Cor. 5:14. Hope quickeneth, 1 Peter 1:3, 'a lively hope.' This proceedeth from the new nature when it is in right frame and strength. We need not only make conscience of our duty, or have some mind to it, but our hearts will not let us have any quiet and rest without it: 2 Peter 1:8, 'They make you that you shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.' Christians must be 'zealous of good works,' Titus 2:14. Paul was 'pressed in spirit,' Acts 17:16; Acts 18:5.

The benefits that come by it are:—

1. We do good works more easily, as being inclined thereunto: Exod. 35:29, 'The children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the Lord;' Ps. 110:3, 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.' There is a great deal of difference between doing things by compulsion and doing things from an inclination; between Israel's making brick in Egypt and building the wall in Nehemiah's time, Neh. 4:6.

2. With more delight and alacrity: 1 John 5:3, 'His commandments are not grievous;' Ps. 112:1, 'Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his commandments.' It is a pleasure to them to do a good work; to others, a toil.

3. With constancy. That which is forced lasts not long; upon the first occasion we break out, cast off the burden which pincheth and galleth us. A man is never constant to his duty till he be held to it by his heart; and the bias of the heart is not fear, but love. You cannot easily persuade him against his love and inclination, though you may overcome his fears: Cant. 8:6, 7, 'Set me as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man

would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.'

The uses are:—

1. For reproof of many professing Christians, who are not more prepared for the Lord, and made ready for every good work. Alas! some are 'to every good work reprobate,' Titus 1:16, unfit for any Christian practice. In others, all their holiness standeth in being less vicious or wicked than others. If they avoid the greater crimes, though they freely practise the less, they are accounted good men. Some talk, but do nothing, like cypress trees, tall and beautiful, but unfruitful; or the carbuncle, afar off seeming all on fire, but the touch discovers it to be key-cold: their zeal is more in their tongues than their actions. Others are very unready, arguing for a mediocrity, disputing every inch with God, beating down the price of religion as low as they can, as little worship and charity as may be, and will do no more than needeth, and it is well if they do that. True goodness, like live honey, droppeth of its own accord, 2 Cor. 8:2; and is always desirous to do more for God: Ps. 71:14, 'I will praise thee more and more;' Phil. 1:9, 'I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;' 1 Thes. 4:1, 'Furthermore, we exhort you, brethren, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk, and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.' But little of this temper is to be found.

The second use, of information.

First, Observe the deduction of good works from their proper causes, viz., the will of God requiring, our regeneration fitting: the one determineth our duty, the other maketh us ready to perform it. While carnal, that which we do is but the image of a good work, not really and spiritually good.

Secondly, The necessity of good works.

1. *Necessitate consequentis*, as the fruit and end of regeneration. All things are valued by their use. What doth the new creature serve for but that we may walk in newness of life? otherwise it is but a notion. It is not given us to lie hid in the heart, as a sluggish, idle quality, but that we may act by it, and improve it for God. The Lord made no creature in vain. Indeed, all that we have from God, both in nature and grace, was that we might be fruitful in holiness. In nature we have life, health, and parts for nothing else, but that by our present duty we may prepare ourselves for everlasting joys. All God's mercies bind us to diligence, all his ordinances are means to help us, all his graces are power to enable us; and there is, over and above, the Holy Spirit to excite and quicken-that power, John 4:10; Ezek. 36:27.

2. *Necessitate præcepti*. God hath required them at our hands. Now we must make conscience of what God hath required, especially when all 'his commandments are holy, just, and good.' If some greater thing were required, ought we not to have done it? 2 Kings 5:13. But when he hath required such noble work, shall we refuse? There is nothing in his law but what becometh his nature, preserveth and makes happy ours.

3. *Necessitate medii*, as the way to heaven. Good works are indispensably required of grown persons if they mean to be saved: Heb. 12:14, 'Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see God.' A Christian shall be judged at the last day by what he hath done: Rev. 20:12, 'I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened, and another book was opened, which was the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things that were written in the books, according to their works;' 1 Peter 1:17, 'If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth every man according to his work.' Profession will not carry it, but our works come into the judgment. So Rev. 14:13, 'Their works follow them;' that is, they have the fruit and comfort of them in another world, and without them we cannot be saved.

4. Necessitate signi, as evidences of our right to salvation, both to others and ourselves. Works or external acts are more sensible and visible, and also liable to the notice of our own consciences; and it is more hard to judge of the internal grace than the external fruits.

[1.] As to others. God seeth what is in our hearts, but men see it not until the effects manifest it. When John suspected the pharisees, he said to them, Mat. 3:8, 'Bring ye forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.' The fear of God is more known by the external act than by the internal habit; therefore that description is given, Prov. 8:13, 'The fear of the Lord, is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate;' and Job 28:28, 'The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.' The current of a man's life and actions doth best expound and interpret his heart. Thus the psalmist discovered the wicked: Ps. 36:1, 'The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes.'

[2.] To ourselves, holy conversation and godliness is the surest note of our regeneration. We judge others by external works alone, 'For the tree is known by its fruit,' Mat. 7:16. Charity forbids us to pry any further; but we judge ourselves by internal and external works together. If within we have faith in Christ, a love to God, and hatred of evil, a delight in holiness, a deep sense of the world to come, all which graces make up the new nature, then these things issue out into a holy conversation. This breedeth joy and, peace of conscience: 2 Cor. 1:12, 'This is our rejoicing, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world;' 1 John 3:18, 19, 'Let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.'

[3.] That good works must not be opposed to God's mercy and free grace, or Christ's satisfaction, merit, and righteousness, either in the matter of justification or salvation, but kept in a due subordination

to God's grace and Christ's merits. This is the business of this context, to reconcile the grace of God with the necessity of good works, et e contra; and very well it may be, for they are part of the grace obtained. He is most beholden to God, and indebted to grace, who is enabled to do most good, for all is from him: Phil. 2:13, 'He worketh in us both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure;' so that our very doing is receiving. But because there are a sort of men that may be called justiciaries, who trust, and teach others to trust, to their own virtues and works, without a Saviour, or ascribe the part of a Saviour to them; and on the other side, the libertines, who teach men not to look at anything in themselves at all, not as an evidence, condition, or means, but to trust to Christ's blood to be instead of faith, repentance, and obedience, which is their duty to be performed by them, therefore it will be necessary to be well acquainted with what is truly the part and office of Christ, what is truly the office of faith and repentance, what of works, that you may be sure to give everything its due, and may wholly trust Christ for his part, and not join faith, or any of your works and duties, in the least degree, of that trust and honour which belongeth to our Saviour, but regard them according to that use for which they are commanded in the gospel.

First, Our works, whatever they are, either duties to God or man, are not the first moving cause or inducement to incline God to show us favour, or to bring about our salvation. No; this honour must be reserved for the grace of God, which moveth and stirreth all in the business of our salvation. It was his grace to provide us a Saviour: John 3:16, 'God so loveth the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.' And the giving of faith or converting grace to some before others, is the mere effect of his mercy and good pleasure: Eph. 2:4, 5, 'God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he hath loved us, when we were dead in trespasses and sins, hath quickened us together with Christ: by grace ye are saved.' Then the benefits consequent upon conversion are from God's love and mercy. As justification: Rom. 3:24, 'Justified freely by his grace;' not

only by his grace, but freely; that is, not excited by our works, but acting freely of its own accord. Then for eternal life, we have it from the grace of God and the mercy of our Redeemer: Jude 21, 'Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.' So that grace is the first mover and principle in the whole business of our salvation; it is originally from grace, and all along by grace.

Secondly, Our works before or after conversion are not that righteousness, not any part of that meritorious righteousness, by virtue of which sins are expiated, the wrath of God appeased, all blessings of heaven purchased, and we reconciled to God. For this is only to be ascribed to the merit and satisfaction of our Lord Jesus Christ. 'When we were enemies, we were reconciled by his death, and are saved by his life,' Rom. 5:10. He is our propitiation; we live by him: 1 John 4:9, 10, 'In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' It is Christ's office and honour to be a sacrifice for sin and a propitiation for us, and a perfect Saviour and intercessor; to obtain the Spirit, to fit us for our present duty and future happiness. We are his workmanship in Christ.

Thirdly, Our works or duties which we perform in obedience to God, are not the first means to apply the grace of the Redeemer, or the condition of our first entrance into the evangelical estate. No; that is proper to repentance and faith: Rom. 3:22, 'The righteousness of God is by faith unto all and upon all them that believe.' And repentance is frequently required also to receive pardon and the gift of the Holy Ghost: Acts 2:38, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost;' Acts 3:19, 'Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.' It is the penitent believing sinner that is qualified for these privileges; or he that thankfully and humbly accepts of the offered Saviour, and consents to the covenant made with God the Father, Son, and Holy

Spirit; he is washed from his sins in the blood of Christ, reconciled, adopted into God's family, and made 'an heir according to the hope of eternal life,' Titus 3:7. This first faith, by which we believe and consent to the covenant, implieth both a dependence on God's mercy and Christ's merits, and also a consent of obedience or hearty subjection to God.

Fourthly, When we have consented to accept Christ and his benefits, and do give ourselves to him, then works or new obedience follow, as necessary to continue our right to pardon and life. For none have benefit by God's covenant but those that keep his covenant as well as make it; and without this we cannot have communion with God: 1 John 1:7, 'If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another;'—nor evidence the reality of our faith and repentance. St Paul was sent to preach to the Gentiles, 'That they should repent, and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance,' Acts 26:20. Besides, we cannot preserve our claim and right, if we do not still go on to do good: 1 Tim. 6:18; Ezek. 18:24, 'When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, shall he live? all his righteousness shall not be mentioned; in his trespasses that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.' It is true of the hypocrite without scruple, and of the real righteous man; if you suppose the one you may suppose the other. Well, these things must not be confounded or opposed: not confounded, but we must distinctly consider what is proper to the grace of God, proper to the merit of Christ, proper to faith, proper to works; not opposed, so as to make the one exclude the other: as the grace of God to exclude the merit of Christ, or serve instead of it; nor the merit of Christ, his blood and righteousness, to exclude faith and repentance, or be instead of them; nor faith to exclude good works.

Fifthly, All the applying grace is from first to last wrought in us by the Spirit. He doth renew and heal our natures, as coming to us from the grace of God and merits of Christ: Titus 3:5, 6, 'According to his mercy he saveth us, by the washing of regeneration, and

renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.' By the Holy Spirit working in us habitual grace and exciting it, we believe, repent, obey, do whatever is necessary to be done to obtain eternal life; therefore this must not be omitted, but acknowledged as a great part of this grace.

Third use. To exhort us, if we would show ourselves to be new creatures indeed, to be full of good works. The arguments to move us are:—

1. It is a necessary fruit of inward grace, and so doth plainly show that you are partakers of heavenly wisdoms: James 3:17, 'The wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits.' The carnal worldling, all his wisdom is to grow rich to himself, which indeed is but folly, Luke 12:21. His business is to live to the flesh, Gal. 6:8. He layeth out all his strength, time, and care, and wealth for the feeding his own carnal desires; but the other soweth to the Spirit, layeth out himself in works of piety and charity.

2. External acts, which flow from an internal principle, increase the habit; the more you do good, the more you are enabled to do good, as bodily strength is increased by exercise. Why is the right hand more agile, stronger, and bigger than the left? It is oftener exercised, and so fuller of blood and spirits. So in grace, the more you act faith, the more is faith increased. Love groweth more fervent, being kept in a constant exercise, and hope more lively and effective. Always actions increase the principles which did produce them: partly of their own nature: 1 John 2:5, 'Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected.' The more acts of love he puts forth towards God, the more doth his love increase in him: partly by divine reward: Heb. 6:10, 'He is not unrighteous to forget your labour of love, which ye have showed towards his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.' God rewards them temporally: 2 Cor. 9:8, 'God is able to make all grace abound towards you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things,

may abound to every good work;' that is, to give you to be liberal at all times. And when he saith God is able, it not only implieth that God is the fountain of all plenty, and sovereign disposer of it, and so hath power to make you the richer rather than the poorer by your liberality, to make every alms you give like the oil in the cruse, to multiply as you pour it out, that there shall be enough for every object and every occasion, but also he is sure to make it good, for he quotes it again in the next verse, 'As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness remaineth for ever.' It is taken out of Psalm 112, where there are signal promises of wealth and riches in the house of the liberal almsgiver. God rewards them eternally: 2 Cor. 9:6, 'He which soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully.' Now is the seed-time, hereafter is our harvest and crop; we shall have a liberal reward from God in the general resurrection. God also rewards his obedient servants spiritually, internally; and that not only with more comfort and peace, but by increasing the grace itself; for God, that punishes sin with sin, doth reward grace with grace. Wells are sweeter for draining; on the other side, a key that is seldom turned rusts in the lock. An intermission of good works makes us more unable and unready for them.

3. It is a greater honour to God: John 15:8, 'Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit;' Phil. 1:11, 'Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God;' 2 Thes. 1:11, 12, 'Wherefore we pray for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in him.' Christ's religion is not a barren religion, but full of good works. It is a mighty credit to religion in you that profess it, when goodness is the constitution of your hearts, to do good the business of your lives.

4. It edifieth others, and provoketh an holy emulation: Heb. 10:24, 'Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good

works.' We provoke them most by our example when they are cold, negligent, and backward to works of piety and mercy. In all things we should be an instance of divine virtues.

5. This is the fruit which God expecteth from us, that the trees of righteousness should bear the fruits of righteousness. If we frustrate his expectation, he will hew us down and cast us into the fire, Mat. 3:10. Therefore good works are not needless things.

The means to enable us are:—

1. Be sure that you are renewed. The dead cannot do the works of the living, 'Neither do men gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles,' Mat. 7:16. Our first business is to look to our conversion to God. All outward duties begin in the heart; they are valued no farther than they come from it sanctified.

2. Keep your hearts under a sense of God's authority, that you may feel something in your own bosoms that may tell you you are bound to obey him, and may plead God's right with you. This is, done by a frequent meditation upon your creation and redemption: your creation giveth God a full right to you, and redemption maketh it comfortable; by both you see you are his: Acts 27:23, 'There stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve.'

3. You are intrusted with his talents, and of their improvement you must give an account: Mat. 25:14, A lord called his servants, and delivered to them his goods, in order to improvement.

4. What encouragement we have from a gracious God and covenant, which takes not advantage of involuntary weaknesses, but accepteth their endeavours who sincerely do their best: Mal. 3:17, 'I will spare him, as a man spareth his son that serveth him.'

5. Remember often your great obligation to God; you can never do so much for him as he deserveth of you: Ps. 116:12, 'What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me?'

6. Do all as in God's eye, and with a constant dependence upon him: Ps. 16:8, 'I have set the Lord always before me.' Make him your paymaster, governor, and judge, and it will not only keep you sincere, but diligent in good works. The work is not sincerely done when you look to man, nor thoroughly done. Such have their reward only here, Mat. 6.

7. Love your work. A little thing will stop him that doth it unwillingly: Ps. 119:47, 48, 'I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved;' and 'I will lift up my hands unto thy commandments, which I have loved.'

8. Account yourselves much beholden to God, that he will employ you in any service for his glory.

END

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