

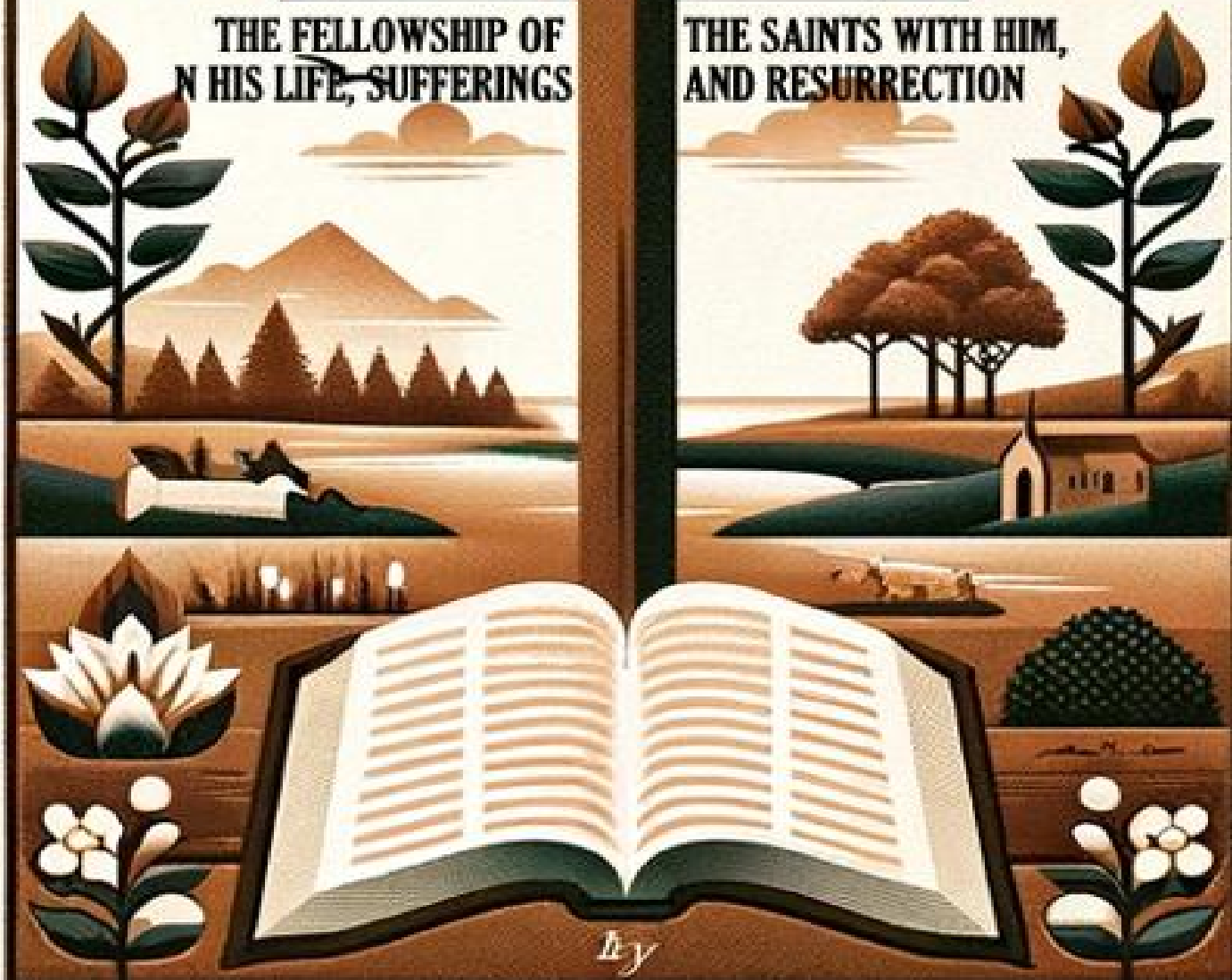
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JOHN 5:12.

That I may
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THE FELLOWSHIP OF
IN HIS LIFE, SUFFERINGS

THE SAINTS WITH HIM,
AND RESURRECTION



By
EDWARD REYNOLDS

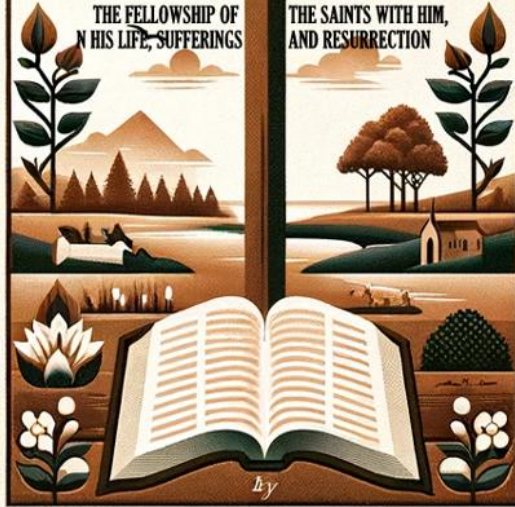
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THE LIFE OF CHRIST:

OR, THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE SAINTS WITH HIM, IN HIS LIFE,
Sufferings, and Resurrection.

By EDWARD REYNOLDS Preacher to the Honourable Society of
Lincoln's Inn.

PEACE BRINGS ABUNDANCE. WISDOM BRINGS PEACE.

LONDON, Printed by Felix Kingston for Robert Bostock. 1631.

PART I

He who has the Son has Life. - JOHN 5:12.

Having shown the Insufficiency of the Creature to make man happy, as being full of vanity, and the Insufficiency of Man to make himself Happy, as being full of sin; we now proceed in the last place to discover first the Fountain of Life and Happiness, Christ; and secondly the Channel by which it is from him unto us conveyed, the Instrument whereby we draw it from him, namely the knowledge of him, and fellowship with him in his resurrection and sufferings.

These words we see contain a Doctrine of the greatest consequence to the Soul of Man in the whole Scriptures, and that which is indeed the sum of them all. They contain the sum of man's desires, Life, and the sum of God's mercies, Christ, and the sum of man's duty, Faith; Christ the Fountain, Life the Derivation, and Faith the Conveyance.

Whatever things are excellent and desirable, are in the Scripture comprised under the name of Life, as the lesser under the greater; for Life is better than meat, and the body than mere sustenance. And whatever Excellencies can be named, we have them all from Christ. In Him, says the Apostle, are hidden the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Hidden, not to the purpose that they may not be found, but to the purpose that they may be sought. And we may note from the expression, that Christ is a Treasurer of his Father's Wisdom; He has Wisdom, as the King's treasurer has wealth, as an Officer, a Depository, a Dispenser of it to the friends and servants of his father. He is made unto us Wisdom. The Apostle says that in him there are unsearchable riches, an inexhaustible treasury of Grace and Wisdom. And there needs to be a treasure of riches in him, for there is a treasure of sin in us: so our Saviour calls it, the treasure of an evil heart. He was full of Grace and Truth. Not as a vessel, but as a Fountain, and as a Sun; to note that He was not only full of Grace, but that the fullness of Grace was in Him. It pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. God gave not the Spirit in measure unto Him. And as there is a fullness in Him, so there is a Communion in us, Of his fullness we receive Grace for Grace, that is, as a Child in generation receives from his Parents member for member, or the paper from the Press letter for letter, or the glass from the face image for image; so in regeneration Christ is fully formed in a man, and he receives in some measure and proportion Grace for Grace: there is no Grace in Christ appertaining to general sanctification which is not in some weak degree fashioned in Him. Thus there is to Christ a fullness of Grace answerable to a fullness of sin which is in us. The Prophet calls him a Prince of Peace, not as Moses only was a man of peace, but a Prince of peace. If Moses had been a Prince of peace, how easily might he have instilled peaceable and calm affections into the mutinous and murmuring people? But though he had it in himself, yet he had it not to distribute. But Christ

has Peace, as a King has Honours, to dispense and dispose of it to whom he will. Peace I leave with you, my Peace I give unto you. If I should run over all the particulars of Grace or Mercy, we should find them all proceed from him; He is our Passover, says the Apostle. As in Egypt wherever there was the blood of the Passover there was life, and where it was not, there was death; so where this our Passover is, there is life; and where he is not, there is death: To me to live is Christ, says the Apostle; and again, now I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me, and the life that I live, I live by the Faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

To consider more particularly this Life which we have from Christ. First, It is a Life of Righteousness: for Life and Righteousness are in the Scripture taken for the same, (because sin does immediately make a man dead in law, He that believes not is condemned already, and in the day that you eat thereof, you shall die the death.) And this Life (being a Resurrection from a preceding death) has two things belonging unto it. First, there is a Liberty and Deliverance wrought for us from that under which we were before held. Secondly, there is an Inheritance purchased for us, the Privilege and Honor of being called the Sons of God conferred upon us. There are three Offices or Parts of the Mediation of Christ. First, his Satisfaction as he is our Surety, whereby he paid our debt, underwent the curse of our sins, bore them all in his body upon the Tree, became subject to the Law for us, in our nature, and representatively in our stead, fulfilled all righteousness in the Law required, both Active and Passive for us. For we must note that there are two things in the Law intended; One principal, obedience, and another secondary, malediction, upon supposition of disobedience; so that sin being once committed, there must be a double act to justification, the suffering of the curse, and the fulfilling of righteousness anew. Unto a double apprehension of Justice in God there must answer a double act of righteousness in

man, or in his surety for him; To God's punishing Justice a righteousness Passive, whereby a man is right in court again; and to God's commanding Justice a righteousness Active, whereby he is reconciled and made acceptable to God again. The one a satisfaction for the injury we have done unto God as our Judge; the other the performance of a service which we owe unto him as our Maker. Secondly, In Christ as a Mediator, there is a merit likewise belonging unto both these acts of obedience in Him, by virtue of his infinite person which was the Priest, and of his Divine nature which was the Altar, that offered up and sanctified all his Obedience. By the redundancy of which Merit (after satisfaction thereby made unto His Father's Justice for our debt) there is further, a purchase made of Grace, and Glory, and of all good things in our behalf. He was made of a woman, made under the law; First, to redeem those that were under the Law, which is the satisfaction and payment He has wrought. Secondly, That we might receive the Adoption or the inheritance of Sons, which is the Purchase He has made for us. Thirdly, there is the Intercession of Christ as our Advocate, which is the presenting of these his Merits unto his Father for us, whereby He applies, and perpetuates unto us the effects of them, namely our deliverance, and our Adoption or Inheritance. So then the life of righteousness consists in two things. First, The remission of sin, and thereupon deliverance from the Guilt of it, and curse of the Law against it; which is an effect of the satisfaction of Christ's Merit. Secondly, Adoption, or the acceptance of our persons and admittance into so high favor as to be heirs of Salvation and Happiness, which is the effect of the Redundancy of Christ's Merit; there being a greater excess and proportion of virtue in his obedience, than of malignity or unpleasingness in our disobedience.

To consider both these together; we are delivered, First, from Sin and the Guilt or Damnation thereof: There is no condemnation to

them that are in Christ Jesus; their sins are blotted out, and forgotten, and cast into the depth of the Sea, and done away as a cloud or mist by the heat of the Sun, they are forgiven and covered, and not imputed unto us, they are finished and made an end of, they were all laid upon Christ, and He has been a propitiation for them, and his flesh a veil between them and his Father's wrath; and in opposition hereunto, His obedience and righteousness are made ours. He is made unto us righteousness, and we are the righteousness of God in Him, we are clothed with Him, and appear in the sight of God as parts and portions of Christ himself; for the Church is the fullness of Him that fills all in all.

Secondly, we are consequently delivered from the Law, so far forth as it is the strength of sin; and are constituted under another and better regimen, which the Apostle calls Grace, or the Law of Faith. First, we are delivered from the Law as a Covenant of righteousness; and expect Justification and Salvation only by faith in Him who is The Lord our Righteousness. Christ is the End of the Law for Righteousness. We are righteous by the righteousness of God without the Law; that is, not that righteousness by which God as God is righteous, but by a righteousness which we have, not by nature, or in ourselves, or from any principles of our creation, (which Saint Paul calls Man's own righteousness) but from the mere grace & gift of God.

Secondly, hereupon consequently, we are delivered from the rigour of the Law, which consists in two things: first, it requires perfect obedience; secondly, perpetual obedience. We must do all things that are written in the Book of the Law, and we must continue to do them. Now from this, we are delivered, though not as a Duty, yet as such a necessity as brings death upon the failure in it. When a man's conscience summons him before God's tribunal to be justified or

condemned; he dares not trust his own performances, because no flesh can be righteous in God's sight. Though the Gospel both commands, and promises, and works holiness in us; yet when we go to find out that to which we must stand for our last trial, by which we resolve to expect remission of sins, and inheritance with the Saints, there is so much pollution and fleshly ingredients in our best works, that we dare trust none but Christ's own adequate performance of the Law, whereby we are delivered from the rigour and inexorableness thereof. That inherent and habitual exactness which the Law requires in our persons is supplied by the merit of Christ: that actual perfection which it requires in our services is supplied by the incense, and intercession of Christ. And though we are full of weakness, all our righteousness is as a menstruous cloth, many rags and remnants of the old Adam cleave still unto us, and we are kept under that captivity and unavoidable service of sin to which he sold us: yet this Privilege and Immunity we have by Christ, that our desires are accepted, that God spares us as Sons, that Christ takes away all the iniquity of our Holy things; that when we faint he leads us, when we fall he pities us, and heals us, when we turn and repent he forgives, accepts, welcomes, and feasts us with his compassions.

Thirdly, we are delivered from the curse of the Law, Christ being made a curse for us, and the chastisement of our peace being laid on him. From punishments eternal, He has delivered us from the wrath to come, and from temporal punishments, as formal punishments. When we are judged of the Lord, we are chastened, but we are not condemned; they are for the declaration of God's displeasure, but not of his fury or vengeance; they are to amend us, and not to consume us; blows that polish us for the Temple and conform us unto our Head, and wean us from the world, not tastes and forerunners of further wrath. They are like Job's dunghill set up to see a Redeemer upon. And besides this, as Sons of promise, we are blessed with

faithful Abraham, have an interest in that precious virtue of the Gospel which makes all things work together for the best for those who love God.

Lastly, we are hereupon consequently delivered from those effects of the spirit of bondage which come along with the Law. And they are principally three. First, To manifest to the Conscience that a man is in a desperate and damnable condition, instead whereof there comes along with Christ to the Soul a Spirit of Adoption, and of a sound mind, which says unto the Soul that God is our Salvation, settles the heart to rest and cleave unto God's Promises; testifies, seals, secures, certifies our inheritance unto us. Secondly, to stop the mouth, and drive out of God's presence, and leave utterly inexcusable, that a man shall have nothing to allege why the curse should not be pronounced against him, but shall in his conscience subscribe to the righteousness of God's severity. Instead whereof we have in Christ a free approach into God's presence; words put into our mouths by the spirit of supplication to reveal our requests, to debate, and plead in God's Court of mercy; to clear ourselves from the accusations of Satan; to appeal from them to Christ, and in him to make this just apology for ourselves. I confess I am a grievous sinner, (and there is not a Soul in Heaven Christ only excepted which hath not been so, though I the chief of all) In Law then I am gone, and have nothing to answer there, but only to appeal to a more merciful Court. But this I can in truth of heart say, that I deny my own works, that I bewail my corruptions, that the things which I do I allow not, that it is no more I that do them, but sin that dwelleth in me; that I am truly willing to part from any lust, that I can heartily pray against my closest corruptions, that I delight in the Law of God in mine inner man, that I am an unwilling captive to the Law in my members, that I feel, and cry out of my wretchedness in this so unavoidable subjection, that I desire to fear God's Name, that I love the Communion of his Spirit

and Saints; and I know I have none of these affections from nature (in that I agree with Satan:) these are spiritual and heavenly impressions, and where there is a piece of the spirit, where there is a little of heaven, that will undoubtedly carry the soul in which it is to the place where all the Spirit is. If God would destroy me, he would not have done so much for my Soul; he would never have given me any dram of Christ's Spirit to carry to hell, or to be burnt with me. No man will throw his jewels into a sink, or cast his pearls under the feet of swine: certainly God will send none of his own graces into Hell, nor suffer any sparkle of his own holiness and divine nature to be cast away in that lake of forgetfulness. If He have begun these good works in me, He will finish them in his own time; and I will wait upon him and expect the Salvation of the Lord. Thirdly, to terrify and torment the Soul, with a fearful expectation of fiery punishment and execution of the curse. Instead whereof the soul is calmed with a spiritual serenity and peace, which is the beginning of God's Kingdom, armed with a sweet security, and Lion-like boldness, against all the powers and assaults of Men or Angels; crowned and refreshed with the joy of Faith, with the first fruits of the Spirit, with the clusters of the Heavenly Canaan, with the earnest of its inheritance, with the prefruition and preapprehension of God's presence and Glory. This is the Life of Righteousness which we have from Christ; a Redemption and deliverance from sin and the Law; and a Privilege, right and interest in the purchased possession.

Secondly, He that has the Son has Life, in regard of Holiness, as he has received Christ Jesus the Lord, so he walks in Him: we are in Him created or raised up from the first death, unto good works, that we should walk in them. Of ourselves we are without strength, without love, without life; no power, no liking, no possibility to do good; not any principle of Holiness or Obedience in us. It is He that strengthens, that wins, that quickens us by His Spirit to His Service.

We should here consider Holiness something more largely, and show when good works are Vital, and so from Christ; and when only mortal, earthly, and upon false principles, and so from ourselves. But having done this before in the doctrine of the reign of sin; I will only name some other discourses of a Vital Operation, and so proceed.

First, Life has always an internal principle, a seed within itself, a natural heat, with the fountain thereof, by which the body is made operative and vigorous: and therefore in living creatures the heart first lives, because it is the forge of spirits, and the fountain of heat. So Holiness which comes from Christ begins within, proceeds from an engrafted and implanted seed, from the fear of God in the heart, and the Law put into the inner man. The Conscience is cleansed, the spirit of the mind is renewed, the delights and desires of the heart are changed, the bent and bias of the thoughts are reset, Christ is formed, and dwells within, the whole man is baptized with the Holy Ghost as with fire, which from the Altar of the heart, where it is first kindled, breaks out, and quickens every faculty and member. Fire when it prevails will not be hidden nor kept in.

Secondly, Life has always a nutritive appetite joined with it, and that is most set upon such things as are of the same matter and principles with the nature nourished: so where a man is by the spirit of Christ quickened unto a Life of Holiness, he will have a hungering, thirsting, and most ardent affection to all those sincere, uncorrupted, and Heavenly Truths, which are proportionable to that Spirit of Christ, which is in him.

Thirdly, Life is Generative and Communicative of itself, all living creatures have some seminary of generation for propagating their own kind; so that spirit of Holiness which we have from Christ, is a fruitful spirit, that endeavours to shed, multiply, and derive himself

from one unto another. Therefore he descended in fiery tongues, to note this multiplying and communicating property which he hath. The tongue is a member made for Communion, and nothing so generative of itself as fire. They that feared the Lord spoke often to one another, says the Prophet. Many people shall gather together, and say come ye, and let us go to the Mountain of the Lord, etc.

Lastly, where there is perfect life, there is sense too of any violence offered to it: so where the Spirit of God is, will be a tenderness, and grief from the sins, or temptations which do assault him. As that great sin, which the Scripture calls blaspheming of the Holy Ghost, and despising of the Spirit of Grace, is after a more especial manner called the sin against the Holy Ghost; as being a sin which bids open defiance to the Truth, Grace, Life and Promises, which that Spirit reveals and confirms unto us; so every smaller sin does in its manner and measure grieve this spirit, even as every distemper in the body does bring pain in some measure unto the natural soul. A living member is sensible of the smallest prick, whereas a body in the Grave is not pained, nor disaffected with the weight and darkness of the earth, the gnawing of worms, the stench of rottenness, nor any violences of dissolution, because the principle of sense is departed: so though wicked men lie in rotten and noisome lusts, have the guilt of many millions of sins like so many rocks and mountains of Lead on their souls, do daily cut and tear themselves like the Lunatic in the Gospel, yet they feel nothing of all this, because they have no spirit of life in them: whereas another, in whom Christ is formed, would be constrained with tears of blood, and most bitter repentance to wash the wound of spirit, which but one of those fearful oaths, or unclean actions, (which the others multiply and wallow in with delight) would make within them.

Now, He who has the Son, has holiness upon two grounds, according to that double relation which Holiness has unto Christ. For it respects Him as the Principle and Fountain from whence it comes, and as the rule or pattern unto which it answers. Holiness is called the Image of God; now as the face is both the Fountain of that Image or species which is shed upon the glass, and likewise the exact pattern and example of it too: so Christ is both the Principle of Holiness, by whom it is wrought, and the Rule unto which it is proportioned.

First, Christ is the Principle and Fountain of Holiness, as the head is of sense or motion; from him the whole body is joined together and compacted, and so makes increase and edification of itself in Love. The ointment ran down from Aaron's head unto the skirts of his garment, to note the effusion of the spirit of Holiness from Christ unto his lowest members. You have received an unction from the holy One, says the Apostle. What this influence of Christ into his members is we shall more particularly open in the consequent parts of this discourse.

Secondly, Christ is the Rule and Pattern of holiness to his Church. Our Sanctification consists only in a conformity unto his ways. For more distinct understanding of which point we must note, first, that Christ had several ways and works to walk through. Sometimes we find him walking to Golgotha and the Garden, which was the work of his merit and passion. Sometimes to the Mount with Peter, James and John, which was the work of his glory and trans-figuration. Sometimes upon the sea and through the midst of Enemies, which was his work of power and miracles. Sometimes in the midst of the seven golden Candlesticks, which was his work of government, guidance, and influence on the Church. Lastly, we find him going about, and doing good, submitting himself unto his parents, going

apart by himself to pray, and in other the like works of his ordinary obedience.

Secondly, of these works of Christ we must note, that some are uncommunicable, others communicable. Uncommunicable are, first, his works of Merit and Mediation. There is but one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ. There is no other name under heaven by which a man may be saved, but the name of Christ. There is no Redemption nor intercession to be wrought by any man but by Christ. None have to do with the Censer to offer incense, who have not to do with the Altar to offer Sacrifice. Secondly, his work of Government and Influence into the Church, his dispensing of the spirit, his quickening of his Word, his subduing of his enemies, his collecting of his members, are all personal Honours which belong unto Him as Head of the Church. Those which are Communicable, and wherein we may be by his Grace made partakers, are such as either belong to the other life, or to this. In the other life our Bodies shall be made Conformed to the transfigured and Glorious body of Christ; when He appears we shall be made like unto Him, by the power whereby He subdues all things unto Himself. Here, some are again extraordinarily Communicable, being for ministry and service, not for sanctity or Salvation. Such were the miraculous works of the Apostles, which were unto them by way of privilege and temporary dispensation granted. Others ordinarily, and universally to all his members. So then it remains that our formal and complete Sanctification consists in a Conformity to the ways of Christ's ordinary Obedience. The whole Life of Christ was a Discipline, a Living, Shining, and exemplary Precept unto men, a Visible Commentary on God's Law. Therefore we find such names given unto Him in the Scriptures, as signify not only Preeminence, but exemplariness; A Prince, a Leader, a Governor, a Captain, an Apostle and high Priest, a chief Shepherd and Bishop, a Forerunner,

or Conduct into Glory, a Light to the Jews, a Light to the Gentiles, a Light to every man that enters into the World. All which titles as they declare his Dignity, that He was the first born of every Creature, so they intimate likewise that He was proposed to be the Author and Pattern of Holiness to his people. All other Saints are to be imitated only with limitation unto Him, and so far as they in their conversation express his Life and Spirit; Be ye followers of me even as I am of Christ. But we must not pin our obedience to the example of any Saint, lest we happen to stumble and break our bones, as they did. Wherefore are the falls and apostacies, the errors and infirmities of holy men in Scripture registered? Certainly, the Lord delights not to keep those sins upon record for men to gaze on, which himself has put behind his own back, and wiped out of the book of his own remembrance. He delights not in the dishonour and deformities of his worthies. But they are recorded for our sakes, set up for landmarks to warn every man to take heed of adventuring (on any man's authority) upon those rocks where such renowned and noble Saints have before miscarried. Children of light indeed they are, but their light is like the light of the Moon subject to mixtures, wainings, decays, eclipses. Christ only is the Sun of righteousness, that has a plenitude, indeficiency, unerring holiness, which neither is deceived, nor can deceive.

Now, further, this conformity unto Christ must be in all his obedience. First, in his active obedience unto the Law. "Learn of me," says he, "for I am meek and lowly." "I have given you an Example that you should do as I have done unto you." The action was but temporary and according to the custom of the place and age, but the affection was universal, the humility of his heart. "Let the same mind," says the Apostle, "be in you which was in Christ," that is, have the same judgment, opinions, affections, compassions, as Christ had.

"As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation."

Secondly, in his passive obedience, though not in the end or purposes, yet in the manner of it. "Run with patience," says the Apostle, "the race which is set before you, looking unto Jesus, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despised the shame, etc." If the head gets through a strait place, all the members will venture after. Therefore, since Christ has gone through shame, contradiction, death, to his glory, let us not be wearied, nor faint, or despair in our minds. The head does not think all its work ended when it gets through itself but takes care and is mindful of the members that follow. Therefore, the Apostle calls our sufferings "a fulfilling or making up of the sufferings of Christ." The Resolution of all is briefly this, "We must follow Christ in those things which he both did and commanded; not in those things which he did, but not commanded."

But here it may be objected, "Christ was Himself voluntarily poor; He became poor for our sakes, and he commanded poverty to the young man, go sell all that thou hast, and give it to the poor. Is every man to be herein a follower of Christ?" To this I answer in general, that poverty was not in Christ any act of Moral Obedience, nor to the young man any command of Moral Obedience. First, for Christ's poverty, we may conceive that it was a requisite preparatory act to the work of redemption, and to the magnifying of his spiritual power in the subduing of his enemies, and saving of his people; when it appeared that thereunto no external accessions nor contribution of temporal greatness did concur. And secondly, for the command to the young man, it was merely personal, and indeed not so much intending obedience to the letter of the precept, as a trial of the sincerity of the man's former profession, and conviction of him

concerning those mispersuasions and self-deceits which made him trust in himself for righteousness, like that of God to Abraham to offer up his Son, which was not intended for death to Isaac, but for trial to Abraham, and for manifestation of his faith.

It may be further objected, "How can we be Holy, as Christ is Holy? First, the thing is impossible, and secondly, if we could, there would be no need of Christ; if we were bound to be so Holy, righteousness would come by a Law of works." To this I answer; the Law is not nullified, nor curtailed by the mercy of Christ: we are as fully bound to the obedience of it as Adam was, though not upon such bad terms, and evil consequences as he; under danger of contracting sin, though not under danger of incurring death. So much as any justified person comes short of complete and universal obedience to the Law, so much he sinneth, as Adam did, though God be pleased to pardon that sin by the merit of Christ. Christ came to deliver from sin, but not to privilege any man to commit it: though he came to be a curse for sin, yet He came not to be a Cloak for sin. Secondly, Christ is needed in two respects: First, because we cannot come to full and perfect obedience, and so His Grace is requisite to pardon and cover our failings: Secondly, because that which we do attain unto, is not of or from ourselves, and so his spirit is requisite to strengthen us unto his service. Thirdly, when the Scripture requires us to be Holy and perfect as Christ and God, by "as," we understand not equality in the compass, but quality in the Truth of our Holiness: As when the Apostle says, "That we must love our neighbor as ourselves," the meaning is not that our love to our neighbor should be mathematically equal to the love of ourselves; for the Law allows of degrees in Love according to the degrees of relation and nearness in the thing loved: "Do good unto all men, especially to those of the household of Faith." Love to a friend may safely be greater than to a stranger; and to a wife or child, than to a friend: yet in all, our love to

others must be of the self-same nature, as true, real, cordial, sincere, solid as that to ourselves. "We must love our neighbor as we do ourselves," that is, unfeignedly, and without dissimulation.

Let us further consider the grounds of this point concerning the conformity between the nature and spiritual life of Christians and of Christ (because it is a doctrine of principal consequence). First, this was one of the ends of Christ's coming. He came for two purposes: a restitution of us to our interest in salvation and a restoring of our original qualities of holiness unto us. He came to sanctify and cleanse the Church, that it should be holy and without blemish, unblamable and unreprouvable in his sight. To redeem and to purify his people. The one is the work of his merit which goes upward to the satisfaction of his Father; the other the work of his Spirit and grace, which goes downward to the sanctification of his Church. In the one, He bestows his righteousness upon us by imputation; in the other, He fashions his image in us by renovation. That man then has no claim to the payment Christ has made, nor to the inheritance He has purchased, who has not the life of Christ fashioned in his nature and conversation.

But if Christ be not only a Saviour to redeem but a rule to sanctify, what use or service is left unto the Law? I answer that the Law is still a rule, but not a comfortable, effectual, delightful rule without Christ applying and sweetening it unto us. The Law only comes with commands, but Christ with strength, love, willingness, and life to obey them. The Law alone comes like a Schoolmaster with a scourge, a curse along with it; but when Christ comes with the Law, He comes as a Father, with precepts to teach, and with compassions to spare. The Law is a Lion, and Christ our Samson that slew the Lion; as long as the Law is alone, so long it is alive, and comes with terror and fury upon every soul it meets: but when Christ has slain the Law, taken

away that which was the strength of it, namely, the guilt of sin, then there is honey in the Law, sweetness in the duties required by the Law. It is then an easy yoke and a law of liberty; the Commandments are not then grievous, but the heart delights in them and loves them, even as the honey and the honeycomb. Of itself it is the cord of a Judge which binds hand and foot and shackles unto condemnation; but by Christ, it is made the cord of a man and the band of love, by which He teaches us to go, even as a nurse her infant.

Secondly, holiness must needs consist in a conformity unto Christ, if we consider the nature of it. We are then sanctified when we are renewed with that image of God after which we were at first created. Some have conceived that we are therefore said to be created after God's image because we were made after the image of Christ, who was to come; but this is contradicted by the Apostle, who says that Adam was the figure of Christ, and not Christ the pattern of Adam; yet that created holiness is renewed in us after the image of Christ. As we have borne the image of the earthly Adam, who was taken out of the Earth, an image of sin and guilt: So we must bear the image of the Heavenly Adam, who is the Lord from Heaven, an image of life and holiness. We were predestinated, says the Apostle, to be conformed unto the image of the Son; Conformed in His Nature, Holiness; in His End, Happiness; and in the way thereunto, Sufferings. We all, says he, beholding with open face as in a glass, that is in Christ, or in the face of Christ, the Glory of God, are changed into the same image with Christ, (He the Image of his Father, and we of Him) from glory to glory, that is, either from glory inchoate in obedience and grace here (for the Saints in their very sufferings are glorious and conformable to the Glory of Christ. The Spirit of Glory is upon you in your reproaches for Christ) unto Glory consummate in Heaven, and Salvation hereafter: or from glory to glory, that is, Grace for Grace, the Glorious Image of God's Holiness

in Christ fashioning, and producing itself in the hearts of the faithful, as an Image or species of light shining on a glass, does from thence fashion itself on the wall, or in another glass. Holiness is the Image of God; now in an Image, there are two things required. First, a similitude of one thing unto another. Secondly, A Deduction, derivation, impression of that similitude upon the one from the other, and with relation thereto. For though there be the similitude of snow in milk, yet the one is not the image of the other. Now then when an image is universally lost, that no man living can furnish his neighbour with it to draw from thence another for himself, there must be recourse to the prototype and original, or else it cannot be had. Now in Adam there was a universal obliteration of God's Holy Image out of himself, and all his posterity. Unto God, therefore, Himself we must have recourse to repair this Image again. But how can this be? The Apostle tells us that He is an Inaccessible, an unapproachable God, no man can draw near Him, but he will be licked up and devoured like the stubble by the fire; and yet, if a man could come near Him (as in some sense he is not far from everyone of us), yet He is an Invisible God, no man can see Him, and live; no man can have a view of His face to newly draw it again. We are all by sin come short of His Glory; as impossible it is for any man to become holy again as it is to see that which is invisible, or to approach unto that which is inaccessible; except the Lord be pleased through some veil or other to exhibit His Image again unto us, and through some glass to let it shine upon us, we shall be everlastingly destitute of it. And this He has been pleased to do through the veil of Christ's flesh, God was manifested in the flesh; in that flesh He was made visible, and we have an access into the Holiest of all through the veil, that is to say, Christ's flesh; in that flesh He was made accessible. By Him says the Apostle we have an access unto the Father. He was the Image of the Invisible God. He that hath seen Him hath seen the Father. For as God was in him reconciling the

World unto Himself, so was He in Him revealing Himself unto the World. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father He hath revealed Him.

Thirdly, consider the quality of the mystical body. It is a true rule, that which is first and best in any kind is the rule and measure of all the rest. And therefore, Christ being the first and chiefest member in the Church, He is to be the ground of conformity to the rest. And there is indeed a mutual suitableness between the Head and the Members. Christ, by compassion, Conformable to His Members in their infirmity, (We have not a high Priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities). And the members, by communion, conformable to Christ in His Sanctity; Both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified are of one.

Fourthly, Holiness in the Scripture is called an Unction. All the vessels of the Tabernacle were sanctified by that Holy Unction which was prescribed by Moses. Ye have received an ointment, says S. John, which teacheth you all things. It is an ointment that healeth our wounds, and cleanseth our nature, mollifieth our Consciences, and openeth our eyes, and consecrateth our persons unto royal, sacred, and peculiar services. Now though Christ were anointed with this Holy Oil above his fellows, yet not without his fellows; but all they are by his unction sanctified. Light is principally in the Sun, and sap in the root, and water in the Fountain; yet there is a derivation, a conformity in the beam, branches, and streams to their originals: Only here is the difference; in Christ there is a fullness, in us only a measure; and in Christ there is a pureness, but in us a mixture.

Fifthly and lastly, Christ is the Sum of the whole Scriptures, and therefore necessarily the Rule of Holiness. For the Scripture is profitable to make a man perfect, and to furnish him unto all good

works. Saint Paul professeth that he withheld nothing which was profitable, but delivered the whole Counsel of God; and yet elsewhere we find the Sum of his preaching was Christ crucified: and therefore that which the Scripture calls the writing of the Law in our hearts, it calls the forming of Christ in us; to note that Christ is the sum and substance of the whole Law. He came to men first in his Word, and after in his Body; fulfilling the types, accomplishing the predictions, performing the commands, removing the burdens ▪ exhibiting the precepts of the whole Law in a most exemplary and perfect conversation.

Now for our further application of this Doctrine unto use and practice: we may hence first receive a twofold Instruction. First, touching the proportions wherein our holiness must bear conformity to Christ; for conformity cannot be without proportion. Here then we may observe four particulars wherein our holiness is to be proportionable unto Christ's. First, it must have the same principle and seed with Christ's, namely, his Spirit. As in Christ there were two natures, so in either nature, there was holiness after a several manner. In his Divine nature, he was holy by essence and underivatively, in His human by consecration, and unction with the Spirit; and in this, we are to bear proportion unto him. Our holiness must proceed from the same Spirit whereby he was sanctified; only with this difference. The Spirit of Holiness was Christ's, In proprio, by virtue of the hypostatic union of the human nature with the divine in the unity of his person. By means whereof, it was impossible for the human nature in him not to be sanctified and filled with Grace. But to us, the Spirit belongs by an inferior union unto Christ as our Head, from whom it is unto us derived and dispensed in such proportions as He is in mercy pleased to observe towards his members. But yet though we have not as He a plenitude of the Spirit, yet we have the same in Truth and substance with Him. As it is the

same light that breaks forth in the dawning of the day, and inheres in the Glorious body of the Sun, though here in fullness, and there but in measure: So the Apostle says we are all changed into the same Image with Christ by the Spirit of our God. And he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit, and that there is but one Body and one Spirit between Christ and his members.

Secondly, our Holiness must be conformable to Christ's in the Ends of it. First, the Glory of God: Father, says he, I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. Wherein there are three notable things for our imitation. First, that God must first give us our works, before we must do them. We must have his warrant and authority for all we do. If a man could be so full of self-zeal (if I may so call it) of irregular and unprescribed devotion, as to offer rivers of oil, or mountains of cattle, or the firstborn of his body for the sin of his soul, should neglect and macerate his body and dishonour his flesh into ghastliness, and the image of a dead carcass; yet if the Lord have not first shown it, nor required it of him, it will all prove but the vanity, and pride of a fleshly mind. Secondly, as we must do nothing but that which God requires, and gives us to do, so we must therein aim at his Glory; as his Authority must be the ground, so his Honour must be the End of all our works: and thirdly, God is never glorified, but by finishing His works. To begin, and then fall back, is to put Christ to shame.

Secondly, all Christ's works were done for the good of the Church. He was given and born for us. He was made sin and curse for us. For our righteousness and redemption, he came, and for our expediency, he returned again. When the Apostle urges the Philippians not to look to their own things, but every man also on the things of others, he presses them with this argument, Let the same mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus. He thought it no robbery to be equal with God,

and therefore to him there could be no accession; all that he did was for his Church; and this Saint Paul seals with his own example: If I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all. And elsewhere, I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved. Only here is the difference, Christ's obedience was meritorious for the redemption of His Church, ours only ministerial for the edification of the Church: we do all things, says the Apostle, for your edification. When the Apostle says, I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for his Body's sake, which is the Church: We are not to conceive it in our adversaries gloss, that it was to merit, expiate, satisfy for the Church; but only to benefit and edify it. Let him expound himself. The things which happened unto me, namely my bonds in Christ, have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel: and again, I endure all things for the Elect's sake, that they may also obtain the Salvation, not which my sufferings merit, but which is in Christ Jesus. To note that the sufferings of the Saints are ministerially serviceable to that Salvation of the Church, unto which the sufferings of Christ are alone meritorious and available.

Thirdly, our holiness must be Proportionable to Christ's in the parts of it. It must be universal: the whole man must be spiritually formed and organized unto the measure of Christ. Every part must have its measure, and every joint its supply. Holiness is a resurrection; all that which fell must be restored; and it is a generation, all the parts of him that begetteth must be fashioned. The God of peace sanctify you throughout, and I pray God that your whole spirit, soul, and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Lastly, our Holiness must be proportioned unto Christ in the manner of working: I shall observe but three particulars of many. First, it

must be done with self-denial; He that will follow Christ must deny himself: Christ for us denied himself, and his own will; His natural love towards his own life yielded to his merciful love towards his members; not as I will in my natural desire to decline dissolution, but as thou wilt in thy merciful purpose to save thy Church. Many men will be content to serve God as long as they may with all advantage themselves: but to serve him and deny themselves is a work which they have not learned. Ephraim loves to tread out the corn, says the Prophet. You know the mouth of the Ox was not to be muzzled that trod out the corn, he had his work and reward together. But plowing is only in hope: for the present it is a hungry and a hard work. So, says he, while Ephraim may serve me and himself, make religion serve his other secular purposes, he will be very forward: but when he must plow, that is, serve in hope of a Harvest, but in pain for the present, he hath an easier plow going of his own, as it follows, ye have plowed wickedness.

Secondly, it must be done in obedience unto God. Christ emptied himself, and became obedient; It was his meat and drink to do the Will of his Father: even unto that bitter work of his Passion he was anointed with the oil of gladness; to note that though as made of a woman, partaker of the same passions and natural affections with us, he did decline it, and shrink from it; yet, as made under the Law, he did most voluntarily and obediently undertake it. Thou hast prepared me a body. In the volume of thy book it is written of me, Lo I come to do thy Will O God.

Lastly, our holiness must have growth and proficiency with it; grow in grace. Let these things be in you and abound; as it is said of Christ, that He increased in wisdom and favour with God and men, and that He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. If it be here objected, that Christ was ever full, and had the Spirit without

measure even from the womb; For in as much as his Divine nature was in his infancy as fully united to his human as ever after, therefore the fullness of grace, which was a consequent thereupon, was as much as ever after: To this I answer, that certain it is Christ was ever full of Grace and Spirit; but that excludes not his growth in them, proportionably to the ripeness, and by consequence capacity of his human nature. Suppose we the Sun were vegetable and a subject of augmentation, though it would be never true to say that it is fuller of light then it was, yet it would be true to say that it hath more light now, then it had when it was of a lesser capacity: Even so Christ being in all things save sin like unto us, and therefore like us in the degrees and progresses of natural maturity, though he were ever full of Grace, may yet be said to grow in it, and to learn, because as the capacity of his nature was enlarged, the spring of Grace within him did rise up and proportionably fill it.

Secondly, from this Doctrine of our conformity in Holiness to the life of Christ we may be instructed touching the vigour of the Law, and the consonance and concurrence thereof with the Gospel. True it is that Christ is the End of the Law, and that we are not under the Law, but under Grace: Yet it is as true that Christ came not to destroy the Law, and that no jot nor tittle thereof shall fall to the ground. We are not under the Law for Justification of our persons, as Adam; nor for satisfaction of Divine Justice, as those that perish; but we are under it as a document of obedience, and a rule of living. It is now published from mount Zion, as a Law of liberty, and a new Law; not as a Law of condemnation and bondage. The obedience thereof is not removed, but the disobedience thereof is both pardoned and cured. Necessary is the observation of it as a fruit of Faith, not as a condition of Life or Righteousness, Necessary, necessitate praecepti, as a thing commanded, the transgressing whereof is an incurring of sin; not necessitate medii, as a strict and undispensable means of

Salvation, the transgression whereof is a peremptory obligation unto death. Three things Christ hath done to the Law for us. First, He hath mitigated the rigour and removed the curse from it, as it is a killing letter, and ministry of death. Secondly, He hath by his Spirit conferred all the principles of obedience upon us; wisdom to contrive, will to desire, strength to execute, love to delight in the services of it. The Law only commands, but Christ enables. Thirdly, He hath by his exemplary holiness chalked out unto us, and conducted us in the way of obedience: for all our obedience comes from Christ, and that either as unto members from his Spirit, or as unto Disciples from his Doctrine and Example. We see then the necessity of our being in Christ, not only for righteousness, but for obedience: for we must have Life, before we can have Operation. If we live in the spirit, let us walk also in the spirit. Whereas out of Christ a man is under the whole Law, as an insupportable yoke, as an impossible and yet inexorable rule; as a Covenant of Righteousness, and condition by which he must be tried, by which he must everlastingly stand or fall before the tribunal of Christ, when he shall come in flaming fire to take vengeance on those who, though convinced of their insufficiency to observe the Law, have yet disobeyed the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thirdly, we may hence learn the necessity of diligent attendance on the holy Scriptures and places where they are explained: there is no abiding in Christ but by walking as he walked: there is no walking as he walked, but by knowing how he walked: and this is only by the Scriptures, in which He is yet amongst us, walking in the midst of his Church, Crucified before our eyes, set forth and declared unto us: many other signs Jesus did which are not written, saith the Apostle, but these are written that you might believe, and that believing you might have life. We know not any of Christ's ways or works but by the Word; and therefore they who give no attendance unto that,

declare that they regard not the ways of Christ, nor have any care to follow the Lamb wheresoever he goeth.

Secondly, we must, from hence, be exhorted to take heed of usurping Christ's honour to ourselves, of being our own rule or way. The Lord is a jealous God, and will not suffer anyone to be a self-mover or a god unto himself. It is one of God's extremest judgments to give men over to themselves and leave them to follow their own rules. When he has first wooed men by his Spirit, and that is resisted; enticed them by his mercies, and they are abused; threatened them with his judgments, and they are misattributed to second causes; cried unto them by his prophets, and they are reviled; sent his own Son to persuade them, and he is trampled on and despised; when he offers to teach them, and they stop their ears; to lead them, and they pull away their shoulder; to convert them, and they harden their heart; when they set up mounds against the Gospel, as it were, to non-plus and pose the mercies of God, that there may be no remedy left; then, after all these indignities to the Spirit of Grace, this is the judgment with which God uses to revenge the quarrel of his Grace and Covenant, to leave them to the hardness and impenitence of their own hearts, to be a rule and way unto themselves. "My people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust; and they walked in their own counsels." Let us therefore take heed of a self-made holiness. We are the servants of Christ, and our members are to be the instruments of righteousness; and servants are to be governed by the will of their masters, and members to be guided by the influence of the head, and instruments to be applied to all their services by the superior cause. Everything which Moses did about the Tabernacle was to be done after the pattern which he had seen in the mount; and everything which we do in these spiritual Tabernacles, we are to do after the pattern of him who is set before us. The services of Israel, after their

revolt from the house of David, when they built altars and multiplied sacrifices, were as chargeable, as specious, and in human discourse every whit as rational as those at Jerusalem; yet we find when they would be wiser than God and prescribe the way wherein they meant to worship him, all ended in shame and dishonour; Bethel, which was God's house before, is turned into Bethaven, a house of vanity: Israel hath forgotten his Maker and buildeth Temples, saith the Prophet. One would think that he who builds temples had God, who was in them to be worshipped, often in his mind; but to remember God otherwise than he hath required, to build many temples, when he had appointed but one temple and one altar for all that people to resort unto, this was by forgetting God's Will and Word to forget likewise his service and worship because to serve him otherwise than he requireth is not to worship but to rob and mock him. In God's service, it is a greater sin to do that which we are not to do than not to do that which we are commanded. This is but a sin of omission; but that a sin of sacrilege and high contempt: in this, we charge the law only with difficulty, but in that with folly; in this, we discover our weakness to do the will, but in that, we declare our impudence and arrogancy to control the wisdom of God: In this, we acknowledge our own insufficiency, in that, we deny the all-sufficiency and plenitude of God's own Law. But whatever opinion men have of their own wisdom and contributions in God's service, yet he esteems them all but as ludicrous things, as games, and plays, and acting of mimical dancings: "The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play."

Whatever action, therefore, you go about, do it by rule, inquire from the scriptures whether Christ would have done it or not, or at least whether he allows it or not. It is true that some things are lawful and expedient for us, which were not suitable to the person of Christ. Marriage is honourable for all other men, but it did not befit his

person, who came into the world for spiritual purposes only, to beget sons and daughters unto God and to be mystically married unto his Church. Writing books is commendable for men because, like Abel, even when dead, they may still speak and teach those who never saw them. But it would have been derogatory to the person and unbecoming the office of Christ. For it is his prerogative to be in the midst of the seven candlesticks, to be present to all his members, to teach by power and not by ministry, to teach by his Spirit and not by his pen, to teach the hearts of men and not their eyes or ears. He has no mortality, distance, or absence to be supplied by such means. It became him to commit these ministerial actions to his servants and to reserve to himself the great honour of writing his Law in the hearts of his people and making them to be his epistle. But yet I say, as in these things we must respect his allowance, so in others let us reflect on his example. When you are tempted to looseness and immoderate living, ask your conscience just this question: would Christ have drunk to excess or eaten to excess? Would he have wasted his precious time at shows, stages, or taverns or taken delight in sinful and desperate companionships? Did Christ frequently pray both with his Disciples and alone by himself, and shall I never either in my family or in my closet think upon God? Did Christ open his wounds, and shall not I open my mouth? Was not his blood too precious to redeem, and is my breath too good to instruct his Church? Was Christ merciful to his enemies, and shall I be cruel to his members? Again, consider the manner of Christ's obedience; did Christ serve God without any self-ends, purely in obedience and to glorify him? Shall I make God's worship subordinate to my aims and use his religion for my own purposes? Shall I do what I do without any love or joy, merely out of slavish fear and compulsion of conscience? Thus, if we resolve our services into their true origins and measure them by the Holiness of Christ, and keep him ever before our eyes, it

would be a great means of living in comfort and spiritual conformity to God's Law.

And there are, among diverse others, two great encouragements to this. Firstly, while we follow Christ, we are out of all danger; his Angels have us in their arms, and we are under the protection of his promises, just as every good subject in the king's way is under the king's protection. Peter never denied Christ nor was assaulted by the servants of the high priest until he gave up following him. Secondly, the more we follow Christ, the nearer we come to him. Because Christ has entered into his rest, he is now at home, he is not now in motion, but he sits still at his Father's right hand, and has no higher or further to go. Therefore, as long as I hasten and press forward in his way, I must necessarily come nearer to him. "Your salvation is nearer," says the Apostle, "than when you first believed."

But someone will ask, "How can I follow Christ?" I answer in one word: deny yourself, and then you follow him. Get out of your own way, and you cannot miss him. The world never rules us except through our own lusts. Satan never overcomes us except through our own wills and with our own weapons. When he is resisted, he flees. As Hannibal used to say that the only way to fight against Rome was in Italy, so the other enemies of our salvation know that there is no conquering the soul except in its own way. As soon as any man forsakes his own way, Christ is at hand to lead him into his. He will be wisdom to those who deny their own reason; he will be Redemption to those who despise their own merits; he will be sanctification to those who cast off their own lusts; he will be salvation to those who relinquish their own ends; he will be all things to those who are nothing to themselves. Now we have, so to speak, two selves: a self of nature and a self of sin, and both must be denied for Christ. We must cast away the self of sin as a snare and be ready

to lay down the self of nature as a sacrifice when he is pleased to set himself in competition with it. And so much for the Life of Holiness which we have in Christ.

Lastly, he who has the Son has the life of glory assured to him. For He has made us sit together with him in heavenly places: and when He appears we shall be like him. He shall change our vile bodies into the likeness of his glorious body. When He comes, we shall meet him and be ever with him. He has ascended to his Father and our Father, to his God and our God, and therefore to his Kingdom and our Kingdom: His by personal propriety and hypostatical union; ours by his purchase and merit, and by our mystical union and fellowship with him. He has gone to prepare a place for us. On Earth, He was our surety to answer the penalty of our sins; and in Heaven, He is our Advocate, to take possession of that Kingdom for us; Our Captain, and Forerunner, and high Priest, who has not only carried our names but has broken off the veil of the Sanctuary and given us access to the Holiest of all. And he who has the Son has this life already in three regards. Firstly, in potential, he has the price that procured it esteemed his. It was bought with the precious blood of Christ in his Name, and to his use, and it was so bought for him that he has a present right and claim to it. It is not his in Reversion after an expiration of any other's right (there are no leases nor reversions in Heaven) but it is his as an inheritance is to the heirs after the death of the Ancestor, who yet by minority of years or distance of place may occupy and possess it through some other person. Secondly, He has it in promise; He has God's Charter, his Assurance sealed with an oath, and a double Sacrament, to establish his heart in the expectation of it. By two immutable things, says the Apostle, namely the Word and the Oath of God, wherein it was impossible for him to lie, we have strong consolation and great grounds for hope; which hope is sure and steadfast and leads us to that place which is

within the veil, where Christ our Forerunner has gone before us. Thirdly, He has it in the earnest, and first fruits and pledge of it; in those few clusters of grapes, and bunches of figs, those Graces of Christ's Spirit, that peace, comfort, serenity, which is shed forth into the heart already from that Heavenly Canaan. The Holy Spirit of Promise is the earnest of our inheritance, until the Redemption or full fruition and Revelation of our purchased possession to the praise of his Glory. The Graces of the Spirit in the soul are as certain and infallible evidences of Salvation as the day star or the morning aurora is of the ensuing day or sunrise. For all spiritual things in the soul are the beginnings of Heaven, parcels of that Spirit, the fullness and residue of which is in Christ's keeping to adorn us with when he shall present us to his Father.

But this Doctrine of the Life of Glory is in this life more to be made use of, than curiously to be inquired into. O then where the Treasure is, let the heart be; where the body is, let the Eagles resort; if we are already free men of heaven, let our thoughts, our language, our conversation, our Trading be for Heaven. Let us set our faces towards our home. Let us awake out of sleep, considering that now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. If we have a hope to be like him at his coming, let us purify ourselves even as he is pure; since there is a price, a high calling, a crown before us, let us press forward with all violence of devotion, never think ourselves far enough, but prepare our hearts still, and lay hold on every advantage to further our progress: Since there is a rest remaining for the people of God, let us labour to enter into it, and to hold fast our profession, that as well absent as present we may be accepted of him.

Secondly, since we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; Let us feel the burden of our fleshly

corruptions, and groan after our redemption. Let us long for the revelation of the Sons of God, and for his appearing, as the Saints under the Altar, "How long Lord Jesus, Holy and Just."

Thirdly, let us with enlarged and enraptured affections, with all the vigour and activity of inflamed hearts, recount the great love of God, who has not only delivered us from his wrath, but made us sons, married his own infinite Majesty to our nature in the unity of his Son's person, and made us in him Kings, Priests, and Heirs unto God. Beloved, what manner of Love, How unsearchable, How bottomless, how surpassing the apprehensions of Men or Angels is the Love of God to us, says the Apostle, that we should be called the Sons of God.

Lastly, if God will glorify us with his Life hereafter, let us labour as much as we can to glorify Him in our lives here. It was our Saviour's argument (who might have entered into Glory as his own without any such way of procurement if his own voluntary undertaking the office of Mediator had not concluded him.) Glorify me with thyself, with the glory which I had with thee before the World was; for I have glorified thee on Earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. If we are indeed persuaded that there is laid up for us a Crown of righteousness, we cannot but with Saint Paul resolve to fight a good fight, to finish our course, to keep the faith, to bring forth much fruit that our Father may be glorified in us.

And now, having unfolded this threefold Life which the faithful have in Christ, we may further take notice of three attributes or properties of this life, both to humble and to secure us; and they are all couched in one word of the Apostle, your life is hid with Christ in God. It is in Christ's keeping, as in the hands of a faithful depository, and it is a Life in God, a full Life, a derivation from the Fountain of Life, where

it is surer and sweeter than in any Cistern. Here then are three properties of a Christian's Life in Christ; firstly, Obscurity; secondly, Plenty; thirdly, safety or Eternity. Firstly, it is an obscure life, a secret and mysterious life; so the Apostle calls Godliness a Mystery. As there is a mystery of iniquity, and the hidden things of uncleanness: so there is a Mystery of Godliness, and the hidden man of the heart. The Life of Grace first is hidden totally from the wicked. A stranger does not intermeddle with a righteous man's joy; The natural man knows not any things of God's spirit; Saint Peter gives the reason, because he is blind and cannot see afar off. Now the things of God are deep things, and high things, upward they have too much brightness, and downward they have too much darkness for purblind eyes to apprehend. Secondly, It is hid in some sort from the faithful themselves. Firstly, under the prevalence of their corruptions, and adherence of concupiscence, as Corn under a heap of chaff, or a wall under the Ivy, or metal under the rust which overgrows it. Secondly, under the winnowings and temptations of Satan. As in sifting of Corn the bran being lightest gets uppermost, so when Satan disquiets the heart, that which is finest, and should most comfort, will sink and be out of sight. Thirdly, under spiritual desertions, and trials; as in an Eclipse, when the face of the Sun is intercepted, the Moon loses her light: so when God, who is our light, hides his Countenance from us, no marvel if we can discover no good nor comfort in ourselves.

Secondly, the life of glory is much more obscure and secret; for notwithstanding the first fruits and inchoations thereof be in this life begun in the peace of Conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost (as in an Eclipse of the Sun some dim glimpses do glance from the edges of the interposed body) yet in regard of the plenary infusion of glorious endowments, and those prerogatives of the flesh which belong unto it at the redemption of the body, it is a hidden mystery; It is a light which is only sown for the righteous; though we expect a revelation

of it, yet now it is but as corn in the ground, covered over with much darkness. Now we are Sons, says Saint John, we have Ius ad rem, right unto our Life and Crown already; but we are in a far country like the prodigal, absent from the Lord; and therefore It does not yet appear what we shall be: we can no more distinctly understand the excellency of our inheritance by these seals and assurances which ratify our right thereunto, than one who never saw the Sun could conjecture the light and lustre thereof by the twinkling of a little star, or the picture thereof in a table; Only this we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like unto him; not only in true holiness, for so we are like him now (we are already created after him in righteousness and true holiness) but in full holiness too; we shall be filled with all the fullness of God, as the same Apostle speaks: Such a fullness as shall satisfy us: when I awake I shall be satisfied with thy likeness. Therefore the last day is by an emphasis called a Day of redemption. First, in regard of the manifestation and Revelation thereof. The Lord shall then appear and be revealed from Heaven, all those curtains shall be drawn, those veils between us and our Glory, those skins with which the Ark is overlaid, shall be torn and removed: our sins, our earthly condition, our manifold afflictions, the seeming poverty and foolishness of the ordinances, shall be all laid aside, and then we shall see our Redeemer, not as Job did from a dunghill, nor as Moses through a Cloud, but we shall know even as we are known.

Here then we see one of the main reasons why wicked men despise religion, and abominate the righteous, as signs and wonders to be spoken against. They judge of Spiritual things as blind men do of colours. These are hidden mysteries to them, no marvel if they count it a strange thing, and a very madness that others run not to their excess. But our comfort is that our hope is German, a growing thing, a stone full of eyes, a hidden Manna, (sweet though secret) a new

name, which though no other man can know, yet he that receiveth it is able to read.

And this is the reason too why the Saints themselves are not enough affected with the beauty of Holiness, because it is in great part hidden even from them by corruptions, and admixture of earthly lusts. Lift up your heads, says our Saviour, for your redemption draweth nigh: noting unto us, that so long as the thoughts and affections of men are downward, their redemption is out of their sight. Open thou mine eyes, says David, that I may behold the wondrous things out of thy Law: I am a stranger on earth, O hide not thy Commandments from me. When a man makes himself a stranger unto earthly things, and setteth not any of his choicest affections and desires on them, he is then qualified to see those mysteries and wonders which are in the Law. If there were no earth, there would be no darkness (for the shadow of the earth is that which makes the night, and the body of the earth which absenteth the Sun from our view) It is much more certain in spiritual things, the light of God's Word and Graces would not be eclipsed, if earthly affections did not interpose themselves. This is the reason why men go on in their sins and believe not the Word, because they have a veil over their eyes, which hides the beauty of it from them. Who hath believed our report, or to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? says the Prophet: intimating unto us, that the Word will not be believed, till it be revealed. The Lord opened the heart of Lydia to attend unto Paul's preaching. As soon as the veil is taken away by Christ, and the Truth, Goodness, and beauty of the Gospel discovered, there is immediately wrought a clear assent and subscription in the mind, an earnest longing and desire in the heart, a constant purpose and resolution in the will to forsake all things as dung in comparison of that excellent knowledge. As in the discovery of mathematical conclusions there is such demonstrative and invincible evidence as would make a man

wonder he had not understood them before: so in the discoveries of Grace unto the Soul, the Spirit doth so thoroughly convince a man, that he wonders at his former stupidity, which never admired such things before.

Again the faithful are here to be directed in this state of obscurity how to carry themselves under those corruptions, temptations, desertions, which here hide the brightness and beauty of their life from them. First, above all preserve sincerity in the heart. There is nothing in us so perfect, so contrary to our corruptions as sincerity; that will ever be to the soul in the midst of darkness as a chink in a Dungeon, through which it may discern some glimmerings of light; whereas without it all other shows and pretences are but like windows fastened upon a thick wall only for uniformity in the building; though they seem specious to the beholder without, yet inward they transmit no light at all, because they are laid over an opaque body. Secondly, foster not temptations, do not plead nor promote the Devil's cause, set not forward thine enemies' suggestions. Though it be our duty to have our sins always before us, so it be upon the suggestion and proposal of God's Spirit; yet we must turn our eyes from our very sins when Satan displays them. Christ will be confessed, but he forbids the Devil's to confess him; and God will have sin to be felt and seen, but as a duty, not as a temptation; in his own Word, not in Satan's false glasses; to draw us unto him, not to drive or deter us from him. When the spirit convinces of sin, it is to amend us; but when Satan doth it, it is only to affright and confound us. And commonly he drives to one sin, to cover another. Again the spirit opens sin in the soul as a Chirurgicalian doth a wound, in a close room, with fire, friends, and remedies about him: but the devil first draw's a man from the Word, from Christ, from the promises, and then strips the soul, and opens the wounds thereof in the cold air only to kill and torment, not to cure or relieve.

In such a case therefore the Soul should lay the faster hold upon Christ, and when there is no light should trust upon the name of the Lord and stay upon his God. Thirdly, In spiritual desertions exercise faith to see God when He is absent: go into the watch Tower, review thine own and other men's experiences of God's dealing; resolve to trust him though he kill thee; resolve to cleave to him, as Elisha to Elijah, though he offer to depart from thee; resolve to venture upon him when he seems angry and armed against thee; resolve to run after him when he hath forsaken thee; endure rather his blows, than his absence; therefore he removes that thou shouldst cry after him; therefore he hides from thee, not that thou shouldst lose him, but only that thou shouldst seek him: And there is most comfort in a life recovered. Difficulties sweeten our fruition; and there is a fullness in Christ which will at last be an ample reward of all preceding discomforts.

Secondly, the life which we have by Christ is a plenteous and abundant life. I am come, saith he, that they might have Life, and that they might have it more abundantly. He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water, like the waters of Ezekiel's vision which swelled from the ankles to the loins, and from thence to an unpassable Stream. So the Apostle saith, that the Lord had shed forth the spirit abundantly in the renewing of his Saints. And it is an observation which you may easily make, that sundry times in the Apostles' writings, the Graces of the Gospel are called the riches of Christ, and the riches of his Grace, and the riches of his mystery, and the riches of his Glory, and the riches of his reproaches, and the treasure of a good heart; By all which is expressed the preciousness, and the abundance of the Spirit which we have from the Life of Christ. Therefore the Spirit is compared unto water, and that not only to sprinkle and bedew men, but to wash and baptize them; ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. As water knows no

bounds within itself, is only limited by the vessel which holds it; so the Spirit is of a very spreading and unlimited property itself, and is only straitened by the narrowness of those hearts unto which it comes. Ye are not straitened in us, saith the Apostle, or in our ministry, we preach abundance of Grace unto you; but ye are straitened in your own bowels; you are like narrow-mouthed vessels; though floods of knowledge, fall down, (The Earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the Sea,) yet but drops fall in. This is a great grieving of the Spirit of Life, and indignity done to the springing and abounding virtue which he brings, for us by our supineness and security to dam up this fountain, to let this garden of spices be overgrown with weeds; to nip, stifle, and keep under the Graces of Christ; not to receive a proportionable measure of growth to those means, and influences which he affords us.

Lastly, the Life which we have from Christ is a Safe, an Abiding, an Eternal Life: the longer it continues, the more it abounds. It is such a life as runs not into death. Our earthly life is indeed but a dying and decaying life: but our Spiritual life is a growing life. It is called in the Scripture our abiding in Christ, to note that our estate in him is a fixed, constant and secure estate.

Life can End in Death but upon two reasons; either by an inward principle and proconsion, carrying it through slow and insensible progresses to a dissolution; or by the assaults and violence of outward oppositions: either it must be a natural or a violent death. Now the life which we have from Christ hath no seeds of mortality in itself, because it comes from Christ: and as he saw no corruption, so nothing that rises from him doth of itself tend to corruption; for Christ dieth no more, death hath no more power over him. He now liveth ever; not only by himself, but over his members; not only as man, but as a member of his own Body, which Body of itself, and as it

is His Body, in that Spiritual and Heavenly Constitution, and under that denomination can no more die, than Christ suffer again. For the Body of Christ, quà tale, hath no seeds of corruption in it from him. For the Apostle saith, that the seed by which we are regenerated is Incorruptible seed.

All the danger then must be from foreign assault, and external violence. But against all this we have the power and strength of Christ himself to oppose. He is able to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by Him. Let us consider more particularly the violences which may be offered to our Life in Christ.

First, the world assaults us with manifold temptations; On the left hand with scorn, misreports, persecutions, and cruel mockings, with Giants and sons of Anak: On the right hand with allurements, objects, promises, dalliances, and snares, with Midianitish women. How shall we secure our lives against such a siege of snares? Our Saviour quiets us in that case; be of good cheer, I have overcome the World. Alas may the Soul answer, If Sampson should have seen a little child under the paw of a Lion, and should thus comfort him, be of good cheer for I have overcome a Lion, what safety or assurance could hence arise to him who had not the strength of Sampson. But we must know that Christ overcame not for himself, but for us; and as he hath overcome the world for us, so he doth it In us likewise by his Grace; This is the victory which overcome the World, even your Faith.

Secondly, nay but Satan is a more powerful, subtle, deep, wily, working adversary than the world. Where shall I have protection and security against him? I answer, in that promise to man, and curse to the Serpent; The seed of the woman shall bruize thy head, and thou shalt bruize his heel. He thy Head, He shall tear out thy sting, and

crush thy projects and machinations against his Church, but thou only His heel; the vital parts shall be above thy reach. And this Christ did not for himself, but for us. The God of Peace, saith the Apostle, shall bruize Satan under your feet. He shall be under our feet, but it is a greater strength than ours which shall keep him down. The victory is God's, the benefit and insultation ours. If He come as a Serpent with cunning craftiness to seduce us, Christ is a stronger Serpent, a Serpent of Brass; and what hurt can a Serpent of flesh do unto a Serpent of Brass? If as a Lion, with rage and fiery assaults: Christ is a stronger Lion, A Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the victorious Tribe. Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first? Judah shall go up. If he come as an Angel of light to persuade us to presume and sin; The mercy of Christ begets fear: The Love of Christ constraineth us. Satan can but allure to disobedience, but Christ can constrain us to live unto him. If he come as an Angel of darkness to terrify us with despairing suggestions, because we have sinned: If any man sin, we have an Advocate; and who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect? It is Christ that is dead, yea rather that is risen again, who also sitteth at the right hand of God, to make intercession for us.

Thirdly, but I have an enemy within me which is the most dangerous of all. The World may be if not overcome, yet endured, and by being endured it will at last be overcome. The Devil may be driven away for a time, though he return again: but the flesh is an Inhabiting sin, and an encompassing sin. If I break through it, yet it is still within me; and if I reject it, yet it is still about me. Saint Paul who triumphed and insulted over all the rest, over the World, Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. Over Satan and Hell, O Death, where is thy sting? O Hell, where is thy victory? Even

he cries out against this enemy his own flesh. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of Death? Yet even against this unremovable and unvanquishable corruption the Life of Christ is safe in us upon these grounds. First, we have his Prayer which helps to subdue it, and to sanctify our nature: Sanctify them by thy Truth. Secondly, we have His Virtue and Power to purge it out, and to cure it: The Sun of righteousness hath healing in his wings. Thirdly, we have His office and sidelight to appeal unto, and where to complain against our own flesh. He undertook it as a part of his business to purge and cleanse his people. Fourthly, we have His Spirit to combat and wrestle with it, and so by little and little to crucify it in us; and lastly we have his Merits as Sanctuary to fly unto; to forgive them here, and hereafter to expel them.

Fourthly, for all this, I am full of doubts and restless fears, which do continually fight within me and make my spirit languish and sink; and that which may decay may likewise expire and vanish away. To this, I answer that which inwardly decayeth and sinketh at the foundation is perishable: but that which in its operations and, in regard of us, in terms of sense and present complacency may seem to decay, doth not yet perish in its substance. A cloud may hide the Sun from the eye, but can never blot it out of its orb. Nay, Spiritual grief is to that light which is sown in the heart, but like harrowing to the Earth; it macerates for the time, but withal, it tends to joy and beauty. There is a difference between the pains of a woman in travail and the pains of a gout, or some mortal disease: for though that be as extreme in smart and present irksomeness as the other, yet it contains in it, and it proceeds from a Matter of Joy: And all the wrestlings of the Soul with the enemies of Salvation are but as the pains of a woman in travail; when Christ is fashioned, when the issue is victorious and with gain, the soul no more remembereth those afflictions which were but for a moment.

Fifthly and lastly, I have fallen into many and great sins, and if all sin be of a mortal and venomous operation, how can my Life in Christ consist with such heavy provocations and apostasies? To this, in general, I answer. If the sight of thy sins make thee look to Christ, If thou canst believe, all things are possible. It is possible for thy greatest apostasies to vanish like a Cloud, and to be forgotten. Though sin have weakened the Law, that we cannot be saved by that; yet it hath not weakened Faith or made that unable to save. For the strength of sin is the Law, it hath its condemning virtue from thence. Now by Faith, we are not under the Law, but under Grace. When once we are incorporated into Christ's body and made partakers of the new Covenant, though we are still under the Law's conduct, in regard to its obedience (which is made sweet and easy by Grace) yet we are not under the law's malediction. So that though sin in a Believer be a transgression of the Law and doth certainly incur God's displeasure; yet it doth not defect (though it do merit) subject him to wrath and vengeance, because every justified man is a person privileged, though not from the duties, yet from the curses of the Law. If the King should graciously exempt any subject from the Law's penalty and yet require of him the Law's obedience; if that man offend, he hath transgressed the Law and provoked the displeasure of the Prince, who may make him some other way to atone for it: yet his offense doth not nullify his privilege nor void the Prince's grace, which gave him immunity from the forfeitures, though not from the observance of the Law. Adultery amongst the Jews was punished with Death, and Theft only with restitution: amongst us, Adultery is not punished with Death, and Theft is. Now then, though a Jew and an Englishman are both bound to the obedience of both these Laws, yet a Jew is not to die for Theft, nor an Englishman for Adultery, because we are not under the Judicial Laws of that people, nor they under our Laws: Even so those sins which, to a man under the covenant of works, do, de facto, bring Death if he continues always

under that covenant, do only create a Merit of Death in those who are under the Covenant of Grace, but do not actually exclude them from Salvation, because without infidelity, no sin doth peremptorily and in terms of event condemn.

But it may be further objected here, How can I believe under the weight of such a sin? Or how is Faith able to hold me up under so heavy a guilt? I answer, the more the greatness of sin doth appear, and the heavier the weight thereof is to the Soul, the more abundant is the Grace of God to beget Faith, and the strength of Faith prevails against anything that would oppose it. To understand this, we must note that the strength of Faith does not arise out of its formal quality (for Faith in itself, as a habit and endowment of the Soul, is as weak as other graces); but only out of the relation it has to Christ. Faith denotes a mutual Act between us and Christ; and therefore the Faith of the patriarchs is expressed in the Apostle by saluting or embracing; they did not only clasp Christ, but He clasp them again. So, the strength of Faith takes in the strength of Christ because it puts Christ into a man, who by His Spirit dwells and lives in us. And here it is worth our observing that the reason why the house in the parable did stand firm against all tempests was because it was founded upon a Rock. Why? May not a weak superstructure of rotten and inconsistent materials be built upon a sound foundation? As a strong house falls from a weak foundation, may not in like manner a weak house by a tempest fall from a strong foundation? Surely in Christ's Temple, it is not as in ordinary material buildings. In these, though the whole frame stands upon the foundation, yet it stands together by the strength of the parts amongst themselves, and therefore their mutual weakness and failings do prejudice the stability of the whole. But in the Church, the strength of Christ, the foundation, is not an immanent, personal, fixed thing; but a derivative and an effused strength that runs through the whole

building. Because the foundation being a vital foundation is able to shed forth and transfuse its stability into the whole structure. Whatever the materials are of themselves, though never so frail, yet being once incorporated in the building, they are presently transformed into the nature and firmness of their foundation. "To whom coming as unto a living stone," says Saint Peter, "ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house," to note unto us the transformation and uniformity of the Saints with Christ, both in their spiritual nature, and in the firmness and stability of the same.

More particularly, the strength of Faith preserves us from all our spiritual enemies. From the Devil, "He that is begotten of God keeps himself, and the wicked one touches Him not." "Above all, take the shield of Faith, by which you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." From the World, "This is the victory which overcomes the World, even our Faith." From our fleshly corruptions, "The Heart is purified by Faith." "The Law of the Spirit of Life in Jesus Christ (that is, the Law of Faith) has made me free from the Law of Sin, that is, the Law of the members, or fleshly concupiscence." And all this is strengthened by the Power of God; not by Faith alone are we kept, but you are kept, says Saint Peter, "By the power of God through Faith unto Salvation," and that not such a Power as that which concurs in the ordinary and natural operations of the Creature, which proportionates itself and condescends to the exigency of second causes, failing where they fail, and accommodating the measure of his agency to those materials which the second causes have supplied (as we see when a Child is born with fewer parts than are due to natural integrity, God's concurrence has limited itself to the materials which are defective, and has not supplied nor made up the failings of nature). But that power whereby he preserves men unto Salvation does prevent, bend, and carry the heart of man (which is the secondary agent) unto the effect itself,

does remove every obstacle that might endanger his purpose in saving the Creature, and makes his people a willing people.

But you will say, Faith is indeed stronger than sin when it works, but not when it sleeps; and the working of Faith, being dependent upon the faculties of the Soul which are essentially mutable and inconstant in operation, must necessarily be uncertain too: that sin, though it is far weaker than Faith, may yet, when Faith falls asleep due to our security, surprise and kill it, just as Jael, a weak woman, upon the same advantage, killed Sisera, a strong Captain. But though Faith sleeps, yet He who keeps Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps, and we are kept not only by Faith, but by His Power, which works all our works for us and in us, gives us both the Will and the Deed; the Gift of continuing in His Fear, and the Will to continue. The heart of the king, says Solomon, which is the most sovereign, unconquerable, peremptory, and unsubjected will in the World, is in the Hand of God, even as clay in the hand of the Potter. So that though our hearts, in regard to themselves, are not only at large and undetermined for any Spiritual operations but have an extreme reluctance to all the motions of God's Spirit, yet considering their subordination to God's merciful purposes, to the Power of His Grace, to His Heavenly Call according to purpose, to the exceeding greatness and working of His mighty Power, it is manifest that they are undeniably moved mightily by a hidden, wonderful, most effectual power; yes, by an Omnipotent facility, and yet most sweetly and congenitally moved towards Grace. These are all the frequent words of Holy Augustine, that Champion of Grace, whose invaluable industry in that behalf all after ages have admired but hardly paralleled.

Now then, for further establishing the heart of a man, seriously and searchingly humbled with the sense and consciousness of some great

relapse (for what I shall say can yield no comfort to a man in an unrelenting, obdurate, and persisting apostasy), let him consider the safety and firmness of his life in Christ upon these grounds.

First, God's Eternal Love and free Grace, which is towards us the Highest link of Salvation, both in the order of time, nature, and causality. Whom He predestined, those He also called; and whom He called, those He justified; and whom He justified, those He also glorified. It is not those He will glorify, but has glorified. To note that glorification is linked and folded up with justification and is present with it in regard to their Eternal coexistence in the predisposition and order of God, though not in effectum operis, in actual execution. Now this Eternal Love and Grace of God is not founded upon reasons in the Object; for He justified, and by consequence, loved the ungodly. He Loved us when we were His enemies; and enemies we were not but by wicked works. Now then if wicked works could not prevent the Love of God, why should we think that they can nullify or destroy it? If His Grace did prevent sinners before their repentance, that they might return, shall it not much more preserve repenting sinners that they may not perish? If the mass, guilt, and greatness of Adam's sin, in which all men were equally sharers, and in which equality God looked upon us with Love and Grace (then which sin a greater I think cannot be committed against the Law of God) If the bloody and crimson sins of the unconverted part of our life, wherein we drew iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with cartropes: If neither iniquity, transgression, nor sin; neither sin of nature, nor sin of course and custom, nor sin of rebellion and contumacy could oppose the goodness and favor of God to us then, nor intercept or frustrate His Counsel of loving us when we were His enemies: why should any other sins overturn the stability of the same love and counsel, when we are once His Sons, and have a spirit given us to bewail and lament our falls? I cannot here omit the excellent

words of P. Fulgentius, to this purpose. The same Grace, says he, of God's Immutable Counsel does both begin our merit unto righteousness and consummate it unto Glory; does here make the will not yield to the infirmity of the flesh, and does hereafter free it from all infirmity; does here renew it Continuo Juvenamine, and elsewhere JugI auxilio, with an uninterrupted supportance, and at last bring it to a full Glory.

Secondly, God's Promise flowing from this Love and Grace. An everlasting Covenant will I make, says God, and observe how it comes to be everlasting, and not frustrated or made temporary by us: I will not turn away from them, says the Lord, to do them good. True Lord; we know thou dost not repent thee of thy Love; but though thou turn not from us, O how frail, how apt are we to turn away from thee, and so to nullify this thy Covenant of mercy unto ourselves! Nay, says the Lord, I will put my fear into their hearts and they shall not depart from me. So elsewhere the Lord tells us that his Covenant should be as the water of Noah; the sins of men can no more utterly cancel or reverse God's Covenant of mercy towards them than they can bring back Noah's flood into the World again: though for a moment he may be angry and hide His face, yet His mercy in the main is great and everlasting. The Promises of God as they have Truth, so they have Power in them; they do not depend upon our resolutions whether they shall be executed or not, but by Faith apprehending them, and by Hope waiting upon God in them, they frame and accommodate the heart to those conditions which introduce then Execution. God makes us do the things which He commands, we do not make Him do the things which He promises. You are kept, says the Apostle, by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation. Faith is first by God's Power wrought and preserved (It is the Faith of the operation of God, namely that powerful operation which raised Christ from the dead: and your Faith stands

not in the wisdom of men, but in the Power of God) And then it becomes an effectual instrument of the same power to preserve us unto Salvation. They shall be all taught of God, and every man that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me. There is a voluntary attendance of the heart of man upon the ineffable sweetness of the Father's teaching: to conclude this point with that excellent and comfortable speech of the Lord in the prophet. I the Lord change not, therefore ye Sons of Jacob are not consumed. It is nothing in or from yourselves, but only the immutability of my Grace and Promises which preserves you from being consumed.

Thirdly, the Obsignation of the Spirit ratifying and securing these promises to the hearts of the faithful, for the spirit is the hansell, earnest, and seal of our Redemption; and it is not only an obsignation 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , unto redemption, arguing the certainty of the end upon condition of the means; but it is an establishing of us 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 too, into Christ as a means unto that end; so that from the first fruits of the Spirit a man may conclude his interest in the whole at last, as Saint Paul from the resurrection of Christ the first fruits argues to the final accomplishment of the resurrection.

Fourthly, the nature and effects of Faith, whose property it is to make future things present to the believer, and to give them a Being, and by consequence a necessity and certainty to the apprehensions of the Soul, even when they have not a Being in themselves. Saint Paul calls it the subsistence of things to come, and the evidence and demonstration of things not seen: which our Saviour's words do more fully explain; He that drinketh my blood hath eternal Life, and shall never thirst. Though Eternal Life be to come in regard of the full fruition, yet it is present already in regard of the first fruits of it; And therefore we find our Saviour take a future medium to prove a

present Blessedness, 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , ye are blessed when men shall hate you, &c: for great is your reward in Heaven. Which inference could not be sound unless that future medium were certain by the Power of Faith, giving unto the promises of God as it were a presubsistence. For it is the privilege of Faith to look upon things to come, as if they were already conferred upon us. And the Apostle uses the like argument; Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the Law, but under Grace. This were a strange inference in natural or civil things, to say you shall not die, because you are in health; or you shall not be rejected, because you are in favour. But the Covenant of Grace, being sealed by an Oath, makes all the grants which therein are made, irreversible, and constant. So that now, as when a man is dead to the Being of sin (as the Saints departed this life are) the Being of sin does no more trouble them, nor return upon them: so when a man is dead to the dominion of sin, that dominion shall never anymore return upon him.

Consider further the formal effect of Faith, which is to unite a man unto Christ. By means of which union, Christ and we are made one Body: for He that is joined to Christ is one, and the Apostle says that He is the Saviour of his Body, and then surely of every member of his Body too; for the members have all care one of another, else the Body of Christ would be a mangled and a maimed thing, and not as Saint Paul calls it, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. In the Body of Christ, there is a supply to every joint, a measure of every part, an edification and growth of the whole compacted body, from Him who is equally the Head to all.

Being thus united unto Christ, first the Death and Merit of Christ are ours; whatsoever He really, in His human nature, suffered for sin, we are in moderated Justice reputed to have suffered with Him. The

Apostle says that we were crucified and dead with Christ, and that as truly, as the hand which steals is punished when the back is beaten; and surely if a man were crucified in and with Christ, by reason of His mystical communion with him, then he was crucified, as Christ, for all sins which should otherwise have lain upon him. He was not in Christ to cleanse some sins and out of him to bear others himself. For the Apostle assures us that the Merit of Christ is unconfined by any sin. The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. As Saint Ambrose said to Monica the mother of Augustine, when with many tears she bewailed her son's unconversion: "Non potest tot lacrymarum filius perire," that is, that it could not be that the Son of so many tears should perish; so may I more certainly say to any Soul that is soundly and in truth humbled with the sense of any grievous relapse, "non potest tot lacrymarum frater perire," It cannot be that the brother of so many tears and so precious blood, which from Christ trickled down with an unperishable sovereignty unto the lowest and sinfullest of his body, should perish for want of compassion in Him who felt the weight of our sufferings, or for want of recovery from him who hath the fullness of Grace and Spirit.

Secondly, the Life of Christ is ours likewise. "Christ liveth in me," saith the Apostle. Now the Life of Christ is free from the power and the reach of death. If death could not hold Him when it had Him, much less can it reach or overtake Him having once escaped. He died once unto sin, but He liveth unto God: likewise saith Saint Paul, reckon you yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God, and that through or in Jesus Christ, by whom we in like manner are made partakers of that Life which He by rising again from the Grave, did assume, as we were by Adam made obnoxious to the same death which he by failing did incur and contract. For Christ is the second Adam, and as we have borne the Image of the earthly in sin and guilt; so must we bear the Image of the Heavenly in Life and

righteousness: and that which in us answers to the Resurrection and Life of Christ (which He ever liveth) is our holiness and newness of life, as the Apostle plainly shows, to note that our Renovation likewise ought to be perpetual and constant, not frail and mutable, as when it depended upon the life of the first Adam, and not of the second.

Thirdly, the Kingdom of Christ is ours also. Now His Kingdom is not perishable, but eternal: a Kingdom which cannot be shaken or destroyed, as the Apostle speaks. Heb. 12. 28.

Fourthly, the Sonship and, by consequence, inheritance of Christ is ours. I speak not of His personal Sonship by eternal generation, but of that dignity and honour which He had as the firstborn of every Creature, and Heir of all things. That Sonship which He had as He was born from the Dead; "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," namely in the Resurrection, in which respect He is called the firstborn and the first begotten of the Dead. In this dignity of Christ, of being Heirs, and a kind of firstborn unto God, do we in our measure partake, for we are called the Church of the firstborn, and a kind of first fruits of His Creatures: For though those attributes may be limited to the Jews in regard to precedency to the Gentiles, yet in regard to the inheritance (which was usually and properly to descend to the firstborn) they may be applied to all, for of all believers the Apostle says, "If you are Sons, then are ye heirs, Coheirs with Christ." We hold in chief under his guardianship and protection, as his sequel and dependent. Now from hence our Saviour's argument may bring much comfort and assurance; "The Son abideth in the house forever"; and the House of God is His Church, not in Heaven only, but on Earth likewise, as the Apostle shows.

Fifthly, Christ's victories are ours: He overcame the World, and Temptations, and Enemies and Sins for us. And therefore they shall not be able to overcome Him in us. He is able to succour them that are tempted. He who once overcame them for us, will certainly subdue them in us: He that will overcome the last Enemy, will overcome all that are before; (for if any be left, the last is not overcome.)

Lastly, we have the benefit of Christ's Intercession: "I have prayed for thee that thy Faith fail not." It is spoken of a saving Faith, as the learned prove at large. And I have shown before that particular promises in Scripture are universally applicable to any man whose case is parallel to that particular. If then Peter's faith did not, by reason of this prayer of Christ, overturn his Salvation, or bring a total deficiency upon his faith; why should any man, who is truly and deeply humbled with the sense of relapse, or consciousness of some sin, not of ordinary guilt, or daily incursion, but indeed very heinous, and therefore to be repented of with tears of blood, yet why should he in this case of sound humiliation stagger in the hope of forgiveness or mistrust God's mercy, since a greater sin than Peter's, in the gross matter of it, can I think hardly be committed by any justified man.

These are the comforts which may secure the Life of Christ in a lapsed but repenting sinner: the sum of all is this. Since we stand not, like Adam, upon our own bottom, but are branches of such a Vine as never withers, Members of such a Head as never dies, sharers in such a Spirit as cleanseth, healeth, and purifieth the heart, partakers of such promises as are sealed with the Oath of God: Since we live not by our own life, but by the Life of Christ; are not led or sealed by our own spirit, but by the Spirit of Christ; do not obtain mercy by our own prayers, but by the Intercession of Christ; stand

not reconciled unto God by our own endeavours, but by the propitiation wrought by Christ, who loved us when we were enemies and in our blood; who is both willing and able to save us to the uttermost, and to preserve his own mercies in us; to whose office it belongs to take order that none who are given unto him be lost; undoubtedly that Life of Christ in us, which is thus underpropped, though it be not privileged from temptations, no nor from backslidings, yet is an abiding Life: He who raised our Soul from death will either preserve our feet from falling, or, if we do fall, will heal our backslidings, and will save us freely.

Infinitely, therefore, does it concern the soul of every man to be restless and unsatisfied with any other good thing until he finds himself entitled to this happy Communion with the Life of Christ, which will never fail him. As all the creatures in the world, so man especially has in him a twofold desire; a desire for perfection and a desire for perpetuity; a desire to advance and a desire to preserve his being. Now, then, until a man's soul, after many roving and inquiries, has at last fixed itself upon some such good thing as has enough compass to satiate and replenish the vastness of these two desires, it is impossible for that soul, though otherwise filled with a confluence of all the glory, wealth, wisdom, learning, and curiosity of Solomon himself, to have solid contentment enough to withstand the fears of the smallest danger or to outface the accusations of the smallest sin. Now then, let us suppose that any good things of this world, without the Life of Christ, were able to satisfy one of these two desires, to perfect and advance our nature (though indeed it be far otherwise, since without Christ they are all but like a stone in a serpent's head, or a pearl in an oyster; not our perfections, but our diseases, like Cleopatra her precious stone; when she wore it, a jewel; but when she drank it, an excrement). I may boldly say that as long as a man is out of Christ, he were better be a beggar or an idiot than

to be the steward of riches, honours, learning, and wisdom, which should have been improved to the Glory of Him that gave them, and yet be able to give up at that great day of accounts no other reckoning unto God but this: Thy riches have been the authors of my covetousness and oppression; thy honours, the steps of my haughtiness and ambition; thy learning and wisdom, the fuel of my pride.

But now I say, suppose that nature could receive any true advancement by these things; yet alas, when a man shall begin to think with himself, may not God this night take me away, like the fool in the Gospel, from all these things, or all these from me? May I not, nay must I not within these few years, instead of my honour, be laid under men's feet? Instead of my purple and scarlet, be clothed with rottenness? Instead of my luxury and delicacies, become myself the food of worms? Is not the poor soul in my bosom an immortal soul? Must it not have a being, as long as there is a God who is able to support it? And will not my bags and titles, my pleasures and preferments, my learning and natural endowments, everything save my sins and mine adversaries, and mine own Conscience forsake me, when I once enter into that immortality?

When a man, I say, shall begin to summon his heart unto such sad accounts as these, how will his face gather blackness, and his knees tremble, and his heart be even dampened and blasted with amazement in the midst of all the vanities and lies of this present world? What a fearful thing is it for an eternal soul to have nothing between it and eternal misery to rest upon, but that which will moulder away and crumble into dust under it, and so leave it alone to sink into bottomless calamity? O Beloved, when men shall have passed many millions of years in another world, which no millions of years can shorten or diminish, what accession of comfort can then

come to those glorious joys which we shall be filled with in Heaven, or what diminution or mitigation of that unsupportable anguish which without ease or end must be suffered in Hell, by the remembrance of those few hours of transitory contentments, which we have here, not without the mixture of much sorrow and allay enjoyed?

What smack or relish think you hath Dives now left him of all his delicacies, or Esau of his pottage? What pleasure hath the rich fool of his full barns, or the young man of his great possessions? What delight hath Jezebel in her paint, or Ahab in the vineyard purchased with the innocent blood of Him that owned it? How much policy hath Ahithophel, or how much pomp hath Herod, or how much rhetoric hath Tertullus left to escape or to bribe the torments, which out of Christ they must forever suffer? O how infinitely doth it concern the soul of every man to find this Life of Christ to rest upon, which will never forsake him till it bring him to that day of Redemption, wherein he shall be filled with blessedness infinitely proportionable to the most vast and unlimited capacities of the Creature.

And now, when we can secure our consciences in the inward, true, and spiritual renovation of our heart, in this invincible and imperishable oblation of the spirit, who knitteth us as really (though mystically) unto Christ as his sinews and joints do fasten the parts of his sacred body together, how may our heads be crowned with joy, and our hearts sweetly bathe themselves in the prefruition and preoccupation of those rivers of glory which attend that Spirit wheresoever he goeth? Many things, I know, there are which may extremely dishearten us in this interim of mortality; many things which therein encounter and oppose our progress. The rage, malice, and subtlety of Satan; the frowns, flatteries, threats, and insinuations

of this present world; the impatience and stubbornness of our own flesh; the strugglings and counterlustings of our own potent corruptions; the daily consciousness of our falls and infirmities; the continual intercourse of our doubts and fears; the ebbing and languishing, decaying and even expiring of our Faith and Graces; the frequent experience of God's just displeasure and spiritual desertions, leaving the Soul to its own dumps and darkness. Sometimes, like froward children, we throw ourselves down and will not stand; and sometimes there comes a tempest which blows us down so that we cannot stand. And now whither should a poor Soul, which is thus on all sides environed with fears and dangers, betake itself? Surely so long as it looks either within or about itself, no marvel if it be ready to sink under the concurrent opposition of so many assaults.

But though there be nothing in thee, nor about thee, yet there is something above thee which can hold thee up. If there be strength in the merit, life, kingdom, victories, Intercession of the Lord Jesus: If there be comfort in the Covenant, Promises, and Oath of God, believe, and all this strength and comfort is thine: lean not upon thine own wisdom, trust not thine own righteousness, arrogate nothing to thyself but impotency to good: no strength of thyself but against thyself, and God's Grace; no power but to resist and withstand the Spirit. But rest only upon the Promises and Power of Him who is Alpha and Omega, the Author and Finisher of thy Faith; Who is a Head to take care of his weakest members. When thou art as weak as a worm in thine own sense, yet fear not, O worm Jacob, be not dismayed, O Men of Israel, saith the Lord, for I am thy God, I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness, that is, with the strength of my Truth and Promises. How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? It is spoken to backsliding Ephraim; How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I

make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? That is, How shall I make mine own Church as the cities of Sodom? My heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together, and mark the reason of all. I am God, and not man. Though you are Men, subject to many changes and miscarriages, yet I am not a Man that I should repent of my goodness, and therefore I will not turn to destroy Ephraim.

But now, as men who look upon the Sun, when they look downward again upon darker objects, can scarcely see or distinguish anything; so ought it to be with us; our looking up unto God should make us see nothing in ourselves but matter to be humbled by, and driven back unto Him again. If once the strong man begins to glory in his strength, or the wise man in his wisdom; if our prosperity and security make us resolve with David that we shall never be moved; if because we find our corruptions wounded and mortified, we begin to insult over them more with our pride than with our faith: how easy and just it is with God to let in Satan upon us, to remove His hand from under us, to overshadow and withdraw His countenance from us, to set our very wounded corruptions upon us, to burn up our city, and perhaps to plunge us in the guilt of some such fearful sins as at the very names and first suggestions whereof we would have been startled and amazed? Alas, what are we compared to David, Peter, Solomon, and Hezekiah, men of such daily communion and intimate acquaintance with the Almighty? And yet, notwithstanding, what fearful testimonies have they left on record for all posterity to take notice of what a frail and inconstant creature man is when once God's Spirit departs from him? That the strength of the greatest champions in the Church of God is but like the strength of Samson, of whom in all his great exploits the Scripture says that the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and when he was overcome, the Lord had departed from him. We should, therefore, labor to rejoice in the Lord

with trembling, to work out our salvation with fear, to pray that we may be delivered from ourselves and from the snares of Satan; that we may never know by our own fearful experience into what an incredible excess of sinning our flesh, though otherwise mortified, would break forth if God should for a while withdraw His hand and give us over to the violence of our own passions and the treachery of our own hearts. We should be very watchful and cautious against ourselves, that we presume not to sin because Grace has abounded. "How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" says the Apostle. What a monstrous perversion of the grace and mercy of God is this, to build straw and stubble upon so precious a foundation? Surely, we would esteem that man prodigiously foolish and contumelious to nature who should spend his time, substance, and industry to find out a perverse philosopher's stone that should turn all the gold it touched into lead or dross. How injurious then and reproachful are they to the grace of God who extract their own presumptions out of His mercy and turn the redundancy of divine Grace into an advantage and privilege of sinning? As if God's mercy had no other use than a dog's grass, or a drunkard's vomit, or a Papist's confession to his Priest, to absolve us from some sins that there might be room made for more. Surely, Grace teaches men to draw other conclusions from God's mercy. "Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may keep thy Word," was David's inference from God's favor. And Saint Paul assures us that none but hard and impenitent hearts despise the goodness and riches of God's patience and forbearance, not knowing that the goodness of God should lead them to repentance. It is the work of grace to re-imprint the image of God in us, to conform us unto Christ, to bend and incline the heart to a spiritual delight in the Law, to remove in some measure the ignorance of our minds, that we may see the beauty and wonders of God's Law, and the difficulty and frowardness of the fleshly will

against grace, that God's Commands may not be grievous, but sweet unto us.

These are the branches and properties of that Life which we have from Christ. And we have them from Him as the Son, as a middle person between us and His Father. First, because the Son has His Father's Seal: He has Judgment, Power, liberty to dispose of and dispense Life and Salvation to whom He will. "Labour for the Meat that endureth unto Eternal Life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you; for Him hath God the Father sealed." Secondly, because the Son is in His Father's bosom, has His heart, His ear, His affections, and therefore He is heard always in whatsoever He desires for any of His members: and this interest in His Father's Love was that by which He raised Lazarus unto Life again. Lastly, he that has the Son, has the greatest gift which the Father ever gave to the World. He cannot deny Life where He has given the Son; He cannot withhold silver where He has given gold and Diamonds. "If He spared not His Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things?"

Now our life is conveyed from Christ unto us. First, by the Imputation of His merit, whereby our persons are made righteous and acceptable to God. Secondly, by Infusion or communion with His Spirit, which sanctifies our nature and enables us to do spiritual services. For though we exclude works from Justification formally considered, yet we require them of every Justified man. Neither does any Faith Justify but that which works by Love, though it justifies not under that reason as a working Faith, but under that relative office of receiving and applying Christ. Thirdly, by His Life and Intercession, applying His merits unto us and presenting our services unto His Father as living sacrifices, cleansed from those mixtures of deadness and corruption which, as passing from us, did cleave unto them.

Having thus unfolded our Life by Christ, we are, in the last place, to inquire into that Property which we have in Christ, which is the ground of the Life we receive from Him. For one thing cannot be the principle and seed of Life unto another, except there be some union and fellowship, which may be the ground of the conveyance. And this is what the Text calls the having of Christ, which is the same as that of Saint John, "To as many as received Him, He gave power to become the Sons of God." So then there must be a mutual Act: Christ exhibits Himself unto us, and we adhere and dwell in Him; whereby there is wrought a Unity of wills, a Confederacy of affections, a Participation of natures, a concurrence to the making up of the same body, so that Christ accounts Himself incomplete without His Church. This union of the faithful to Christ, being one of those deep things of God which are not discernible without the Spirit, is yet set forth unto us in the Scriptures under sundry vulgar and obvious similitudes, which I will but touch upon.

It is first set forth by the expression of a Body, consisting of diverse members. Romans 12:4, 5; 1 Corinthians 12:12, 13; Ephesians 1:22, 23. In these places, the purpose of the Apostle is to show how the proportion that is between Christ and His Church answers to that relation which is between the members of a Body and the Head. For as in the natural Body, all the members are joined by nerves and vital ligatures to the Head, from whence they receive their strength and sensation, and do, by virtue of that union to the Head, retain a fellowship and communion amongst themselves: So it is between Christ and His Church. Every member of the true and mystical Body of Christ is by a secret knot of his Spirit so fastened unto Him and so compacted with the other members by that which every joint supplies, that the whole world of Elect, from Christ the Head and firstborn of the Creatures, down to the lowest and meanest of all His members, do make up but one Body, unto which Christ, by being the

Head, has these principal relations. First, He is the principle of all Spiritual Influences, as the Head of the natural. All the Grace in us is but an overflowing and measure from His fullness. Secondly, He is the principle of all government and direction; all the wisdom and prudence of the Church is from Him. He is the everlasting Counsel, or the Light that enlightens every man that comes into the world, the power and the wisdom of God unto us. Thirdly, He is conformable to the members (for Christ's Church is no monster) and makes them conformable unto Him; He to us in our infirmities, tempted in all things as we are; and we to Him in His holiness: "He that Sanctifies and they that are Sanctified are all of one." Now, as in a body, we resolve the whole into no parts but those which are integral and proper to it in the nature of a living and organical Body, namely, the members; though many other things are in the Body, yet nothing belongs integrally unto it but the members. So many men are in the Body of Christ only by an external and sacramental admission, or by some false and presumptuous persuasions and professions (as wens or excrements in the natural body) they do no services, they exercise no vital and spiritual functions, but rather cumber and infest the members.

Secondly, this union is compared to a building or house, Eph. 2:20, 21, 1 Tim. 3:14, 1 Pet. 2:5, whose stones are knit together by the juncture and bond of Love, and are firmly grounded upon the Elect precious and sure foundation, who as He does by His power uphold all things, so much more those that are built upon Him. Now as in a structure the stones cannot subsist in the building by any qualities or inherent virtues of their own, but only by that direct and perpendicular dependence and subsistence which they have upon the foundation: so in the Church, no graces, no carvings, no inherent excellencies do hold men up, but only that full and sole reliance, and subsistence of the Soul upon Christ. If a man has any other bottom

that holds him up, if he is not even and full upon Christ, if he is not in all things levelled and proportioned unto him by the doctrine of the Apostles and Prophets (which is therefore likewise called a foundation because by it we are set right upon Christ, who is the Foundation of foundations, as the Scripture speaks), He cannot abide in the building forever; the wall and the foundation must all have the same center; and there must be the same propensions, and affections in us which were in Christ, His Rule must be ours, and His Ends ours, and His Will ours. If there be any such exorbitancies, and swellings out, as make the heart have quite another point and center to move to, other grounds to fix upon, if men will despise the Word, will not be pared and regulated to the foundation, but will trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay on that; this iniquity will at length prove a breach which comes suddenly at an instant.

Thirdly, this union is compared to an ingrafting of a branch in a tree, whereby the juice and nourishment of the stock is conveyed, and the branch thereby quickened to bring forth fruit. Whereby the way, it is worth our noting that the Church is most usually in this particular compared to a Vine, and the branches of a Vine, to note that there is nothing of worth or expectation in Christians but their fruit. A man cannot make a pin to fasten in a wall of the branch of a vine. An unfruitful Christian is the most unprofitable Creature that is; there are no secondary uses which can mediate (as I may so speak) for a dead vine, to keep that from the fire: either it must be for fruit or for fuel; to all other purposes it is utterly improper and unprofitable.

Now we must observe that a Branch may be in a Tree two ways. First, by a mere corporeal adherence or continuation with the stock; by cleaving and sticking to the body of the Tree; and so every dead branch is in the Tree, as well as those that live: but this alone is not that which our Saviour requires, for such branches the husbandman

will cut off and cast into the fire. Secondly, by a real participation of the life, sap, and influences of the root, which unto the former sort of branches, though offered, yet is not received because of the inward deadness and indisposition that is in it: thus it is between Christ and Christians. That which makes us be in Christ after any kind of way is Faith. And according to the differences of Faith, are these differences of being in Christ to be discerned. Saint James makes mention of a dead Faith when men are in Christ by some general acknowledgment, by external profession, by a partial dependence (coming to Him only as to a Jesus for room and shelter to keep them from the fire; not as to a Christ for grace and government in His service) not by any particular and willing attraction of those vital influences, those working principles of grace and obedience which are from him shed abroad upon true believers. And this is the semi-conversion and imperfect renovation of many men, whereby they receive from Him only general light of truth and common virtues, which make them visibly, and externally branches in Him. But Saint Paul makes mention of a lively, operative, unfeigned faith, which in true believers draws in the power of Christ's death, and the virtue of His resurrection, unto the mortification of sin, and quickening of Spirit, and bringing forth fruit unto God, and this only is that which is the ground of our life from Him. "The Life that I live, I live by the Faith of the Son of God."

Lastly, this Union unto Christ is compared to Marriage, Psal. 45, Eph. 5. 32, whereby the Church has a right and propriety created to the body, name, goods, table, possessions, purchases of Christ, and does reciprocally become all His, resigning its will, ways, desires unto His government. Now for the discovery of this, we may consider either the essentials or the consequents of marriage. The former has, for the genuine most general requisite, consent: and that must have these differences and restrictions. First, it must be mutual consent:

for though Christ declares His goodwill when He knocks at our doors and beseeches us in the ministry of His Word; yet if we keep our distance, reject His tokens of Love and Favor, and stop our ears to His invitations, there is then no covenant made; this is but wooing, and no marriage. Secondly, it must be a present consent, and in words de præsentî, or else it is only a Promise, but no Contract. Many men, like Balaam, would fain die the death of the righteous, but live their own lives; would fain belong to Christ at the last and have nothing to do with Him ever before; would have Him out of need but not at all out of love; and therefore for the present they put Him off: Many other suitors they have whom they cannot defer or deny; till at last perhaps He grows jealous and weary, departs from them, and turns to those who will esteem Him worthy of more acceptance. "Seeing you put the Word from you," says the Apostle, "and judge yourselves unworthy of Eternal Life, Lo, we turn unto the Gentiles." Thirdly, it must be free and unconstrained; for compulsion makes it a ravishment, and not a marriage. They who must be but one Body ought first to agree on the same free and willing resolution. Many men when God slays them will inquire early after Him; when He puts them on a rack will give a forced consent to serve Him; when He sends His Lions among them will send for His Priests to instruct them how to worship Him; but this is only to flatter with their lips, that they may escape the present pain; (like the howling devotion of some desperate Mariner in a storm) not at all out of cordial and sincere affection; wicked men deal no better with God, than the frogs in the fable with the block which was thrown in to be their king. When He makes a noise, and disturbs their peace; when He falls heavily upon them, they are sore affrighted, and seem to reverence His Power: but if He suffers their stream to be calm about them, and stirs not up His wrath, they securely dance about Him, and reassume their wonted looseness. Fourthly, it must be without error, for he that errs cannot consent. If a woman takes herself upon some

absence of her husband to be now free from him, and conceives him dead, and thereupon marry again; if it appears that the former husband is yet living, there was a mistake and error in the person, and so a nullity in the contract. So if a man mistakes himself, judges himself free from his former tie unto sin and the Law, and yet lives in obedience to his lusts still, and is not cleansed from his filthiness, he cannot give any full consent to Christ, who will have a chaste spouse, without adulterers or corrivals. Lastly, It must be a universal and perpetual consent, for all time, and in all states and conditions. This is a great difference between a wife and a strumpet: A wife takes her husband upon all terms; his burdens, as well as his goods; his troubles, as well as his pleasures: whereas a strumpet is only for hire and lust; when the purse is emptied, or the body wasted, the love is at an end. So here, He that will have Christ, must have Him All; (for Christ is not divided) must entertain Him for all purposes, must follow the Lamb wherever He goes, must leave Father, Mother, Wife, Children, his own life for Christ; must take as well His Yoke, as His Crown; as well His Sufferings, as His Salvation; as well His Grace, as His Mercy; as well His Spirit to lead, as His Blood to redeem. He that will be his own Master to do the works of his own will, must, if he can, be his own Saviour too, to deliver his soul from the wrath to come.

The consequents and intendments of marriage are two, *Convictus & Proles*. First mutual society; Christ and a Christian must live together, have intimate, and dear acquaintance with each other; the spirit of a Christian must solace itself in the arms and embracements, in the riches and loveliness of Christ; in his absence and removes long after Him; in His presence and returns delight in Him, and entertain Him with such pure affections, and Heavenly desires, as may make Him take pleasure in His Beauty. Secondly, there must be fruitfulness in us, we must bring forth unto God. Christ will not have

a barren Spouse: everyone that loveth Him, keepeth His Commandments.

Now then, in one word, to unfold the more distinct quality of this our union to Christ, we may consider a threefold unity. Of Persons in one nature; of natures in one Person; of natures and Persons in one quality. In the first is one God. In the second, is one Christ. In the third, is one Church. Our union unto Christ is the last of these, whereby He and we are all spiritually united to the making up of one mystical Body. The formal reason or bond of this union is the Spirit of Christ, by which, as by immortal and abiding seed, we are begotten anew unto Christ. For He being the second Adam, we are spiritually in Him, and from Him, as we are naturally, or corruptly, in and from Adam. As Adam was the fountain of all that are naturally generated, and by that means transmitted condemnation to all that are One with Him: so Christ is the Head of all that are Spiritually born again, and by that means transmitteth grace & righteousness to all that are one with Him.

From this Union of the faithful unto Christ doth immediately arise a Communion with Him in all such good things as He is pleased to Communicate. I will but touch them, it having been the subject of this discourse hitherto.

First, we have a Communion with Him in His merits, which are as fully imputed unto us for Justification, as if His sufferings had been by us endured, or the debt by us satisfied. As we find in the body medicines often applied unto sound parts, not with relation to themselves, but to cure others which are unsound; In a distillation of humours on the eyes, we cup and scarify the neck which was unaffected, to draw back the humour from the part distempered: even so Christ the glorious and innocent Head of a miserable and

leprous body suffered Himself to be wounded and crucified; to wrestle with the wrath of His Father; to be One with a wretched people in the condition of their infirmities, as He was with His Father in the unity of divine holiness; that so by His infirmity being joined unto us, the Communion of His purity might join us unto God again. He alone without any demerit of His suffered our punishment, that we without any merit of ours might obtain His Grace. The pains of Christ's wounds were His, but the profit ours; the holes in His hands and side were His, but the balm which issued out was ours; the thorns were His, but the Crown was ours: in one word, the price which He paid was His, but the Inheritance which He purchased was ours. All the ignominy and agony of His Cross was infinitely unbeseeming so honourable a Person as Christ, if it had not been necessary for so vile a sinner as man.

Secondly, we have Communion with Him in His Life and Graces by habitual and real infusion and inhabitation of His Spirit unto Sanctification. For we are Sanctified in Him, and except we abide in Him, we cannot bring forth fruit. Christ comes not only with a passion, but with an unction to consecrate us to Himself: except thou be a partaker as well of this, as of that, be as willing to be ruled, as redeemed by Christ; In Him indeed thou art, but it is as a withered branch in a fruitful vine; while thou art in Him, it is to thy shame, that thou shouldest be dead, where there is such abundance of Life; and the time will come that thou shalt be cut off from Him: Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, He taketh away.

Lastly, we have Communion with Him in many privileges and dignities. But here we must distinguish of the privileges of Christ: some are personal and incommunicable; others, general and communicable. Of the former sort are all such as belong to Him either in regard to His Divine Person, as to be the everlasting Son,

the Word and Wisdom of His Father, the express Image of His Person, and the brightness of His Glory, the upholder of all things by the Word of His Power, and the like; or in regard to His Office, as to be the Redeemer of the Church, the Author and finisher of our Faith, the Prince of our Salvation, the propitiation for the sins of the world, the second Adam, the Mediator between God and Man, in which things He is alone, and there is none with Him. Other privileges there are which are communicable, all which may be comprised under this general of being fellow members with Him in the most glorious Body and society of Creatures in the world.

The particulars I touched before. First, we have communion in some sort with Him in His Holy unction, whereby we are consecrated to be Kings and Priests, to subdue our corruptions, to conquer spiritual wickedness, to offer up the sacrifices of prayer, praises, alms, and Holy services; for we are, by Him, a royal priesthood.

Secondly, we have Communion in His victories; we are more than conquerors through Him, because in the midst of the enemy's insults and our own distresses, the victory is still ours. The enemy may kill us, but not overcome us, because our death is victorious. As Christ triumphed upon the Cross and had His government on His shoulders: so we rejoice in afflictions, glory in tribulations, and in all of them, in a confluence and conspiracy of them all, we are more than conquerors.

Thirdly, we have Communion with Christ in His Sonship, from whence it comes to pass that Christ and His Church do interchangeably take one another's names: Sometimes He is not ashamed to call Himself Jacob and Israel. "This is the generation of them that seek thy face, O Jacob, and Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified," saith the Lord speaking unto Christ: nay,

He giveth to the Church His own Name. "As there are many members, and yet but one body; so is Christ," that is, so is the Church of Christ. And "what manner of love is this," saith the Apostle, "that we should be called the Sons of God?" From hence it comes that we have fellowship with the Father, access and approach with confidence for all needful supplies, assurance of His care in all extremities, interest in the inheritance which He reserveth for His Children, confidence to be spared in all our failings, and to be accepted in all our sincere and willing services; secret debates, spiritual conferences of the heart with God, He speaking unto our spirits by His Spirit in the Word, and we by the same spirit speaking unto Him in prayers, complaints, supplications, thanksgivings, covenants, resolutions: He kissing us with kisses of Love and comfort, and we kissing Him again with kisses of reverence and worship.

We see then, to conclude all, what an absolute necessity lies upon us of having Christ, because with Him we have all things, and can do all things: without Him we are poor and can do nothing. And the more necessary the duty, the more sinful the neglect, especially considering that Christ withholds not Himself but is ready to meet, to prevent, to attend every heart that in truth desires Him. If a man has a serious, simple, sincere will to come wholly to Christ, not to be held back from Him by His dearest and closest corruptions, by the sweetest pleasures, or strongest temptations which can allure or assault him, he may draw near unto Him with boldness and assurance of acceptation: he has a call, Christ invites, yea entreats him, and therefore he may come; he has a command, Christ requires it of him, and therefore he must come.

And now when we have Christ, how careful should we be to keep Him; how tender and watchful over all our behaviors towards Him,

lest He be grieved and depart again. The Spirit of the Lord is a delicate spirit, most sensible of those injuries which His friends do to Him. Let us, therefore, take heed of violating, afflicting, discouraging, grieving this Spirit (which is the bond of all our union and interest with Christ) in any of His sacred breathings and operations upon the Soul. But when He teaches, let us submit and obey, receive the belief and the love of His Truth: when He promises, let us neither distrust nor despise, but embrace as true and admire as precious all the offers which He makes to us: when He contends with our lusts in His Word and secret suggestions, let Him not always strive, but let us give up our fleshly affections to be crucified by Him: when He woos and invites us, when He offers to lead and to draw us, let us not stop the ear, or pull away the shoulder, or draw backward like froward children, or cast cold water in the face of Grace, by thwarting the motions and rebelling against the dictates thereof, but let us yield ourselves unto Him, captivate all our lusts, and consecrate all our powers, and submit all our desires to His rule and government; and then when He has been a Spirit of union to incorporate us into Christ's Body, and a Spirit of unction to sanctify us with His Grace, He will undoubtedly be a Spirit of comfort and assurance to seal us unto the day of our full redemption.

PART II

That I may know Him, and the Power of His Resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings. PHILIP. 3. 10.

The purpose of the Apostle in this place is to arm the church of the Philippians against those false Judaizing Teachers that Confounded Christ and Moses, Circumcision and the Gospel together. This he does by Arguments Personal from men, and by arguments real from the matter itself. Arguments Personal are first from the disposition, quality, End of those false teachers, whom he describes ver. 3. They are evil trees, and therefore no great heed to be given to the fruits they bear, to the doctrines they obtrude. They are Dogs, unclean beasts, that bark only for their bellies, and do not only bark but watch their times to bite too. They are Evil workers; though they come like fellow workers with Christ, pretending much strictness in the edification of the Church, yet indeed their business is only to pull down and to pervert. They are the Concision, where the Apostle by an Ironicall paranomasia shows the end of their doctrines, They preach indeed Circumcision, but their business is schism and Concision; In the Law, it was Circumcision, God's ordinance, but now being by Christ abolished it is nothing at all but a bare Concision or cutting of the flesh, and will in the Event prove a rent and schism in the Church. The Second personal Argument is taken from the Apostles own condition, who neither by nature nor Education was an enemy to legal Ceremonies, who in all points had as great reason to vindicate the Law and to boast in fleshly privileges as any of those False Teachers. ver. 4. He was by nature an Israelite of the whole blood as well as they; by Education, of the strictest sect of all, a pharisee; by custom and practice a persecutor of the Church, under that very name because the law he had been bred under was endangered by that new way; and in his course of life altogether unblameable in regard to legal Obedience and observations: and lastly in his opinions touching them, he counted them gainful things, and rested upon them for his salvation, till the Lord opened his eyes, to see the light of the Glorious Gospel of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The arguments from the matter are first from the Substance

of which Circumcision was the shadow. We are the Circumcision, who worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, &c. Vers. 3. They boast in the flesh, they have a Concision, but we are the Circumcision, because we have the fruit and Truth of Circumcision, the spiritual worship of God, which is opposite to external Ceremonies. John. 4. 23. Secondly from the plenitude and all sufficiency of Christ, which stands not in need of any legal accession to piece it out, and this the Apostle shows by his own practice and experience. What things were gain to me those I counted loss for Christ, because they were things that kept him from Christ before, and he repeats the same words Confidently again, that he might not to be thought to have spoken them unadvisedly or in a heat, yea doubtless and I count all things but loss for the Excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, As a merchant in a tempest is contented to Suffer the loss of all his goods to redeem his life, or rather as a man will be content to part with all his own beggarly furniture for a Jewel of great value, Math. 13. 44. Only here we are to note that the Apostle did not suffer the loss of them quoad Substantiam, in regard to the Substance of the duties, but quoad qualitatem et officium Iustificandi, in regard of that dependence, and Expectation of happiness which he had from them before. Neither did he only Suffer the loss of them (as a man may do of things which are excellent in themselves and use, as a merchant throws his wares out of the ship, when yet he dearly loves them, and delights in them) but he shows what estimation he had of them, I count them dung, that I may win Christ, I Count them then filthy carrion: so the word signifies; 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , quasi 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , garbage and filth that is thrown out to dogs, things which dogs (such as he describes these false teachers to be) may delight in; but the spirit of God in a sincere heart cannot relish nor savour in comparison of Christ. And may be found in him, when I shall appear before the face

of God, or may find in him All that I lose for him, that is a most plentiful recompense for any legal commodities which I part from for his sake, not Having mine own righteousness, &c. Here the Apostle distinguisheth of a twofold Righteousness; Legal, which is a man's own, because a man must come by it by working himself, Rom. 10. 5. And Evangelical, which is not a man's own, but the righteousness of God Rom. 3. 21. 22. Freely given to us by grace through Christ. That I may know Him, &c. That I may have the Experience of his Grace and mercy in Justifying me freely by faith through the virtue of his sufferings and resurrection.

Here, then, we have these two things set down: first, the Preciousness, and secondly, the nature of Saving Faith. The Preciousness is in the whole scope of the place, for the words are a comparative speech, where faith is preferred before all legal or moral performances. The nature is opened by the Act of it Knowledge, and the Object, the virtue of Christ's Resurrection, and the fellowship of his Sufferings.

Touching the former of these two, the scope of the Apostle in this place is to show that faith is the most precious and excellent gift of God to a Christian man. So it is expressly called by Saint Peter, a precious faith. 2 Pet. 1. 1. For understanding of which point, we must note that faith may be Considered in a double respect. Either as it is a Quality inherent in the Soul, or as an Instrument whereby the Soul apprehendeth some other thing. Now, in the same thing, there is much difference between itself as a Quality and as an Instrument. Heat as a Quality can only produce the like quality again, but as an Instrument of the Sun, it can produce life and sense, things of more excellency than the Quality itself. Faith as a Quality is no better than other graces of the spirit, but as an Instrument, it hath a Quickening

quality which no other Grace hath. The just shall live by Faith. Heb. 10. 38.

This preciousness of Faith is seen chiefly in two respects. First, in regard to the Objects, and secondly, in regard to the Offices of it. First Faith hath the most precious and excellent object of any other, Christ and his Truth, and promises. Herein, saith the Apostle, God commended His Love, in that when we were sinners Christ died, Rom. 5. 8. This was the sovereign and most excellent love token and testification of divine favour that ever was sent from Heaven to men. God so loved the world, so superlatively, so beyond all measure or apprehension, that He gave His Son, John. 3. 16. There is such a compass of all dimensions in God's love manifested through Christ, such a height and length, and breadth, and depth, as makes it exceed all knowledge, Eph. 3. 18, 19. It is exceeding and unsearchable riches. In one word that which faith looks upon in Christ is the price, the purchase, and the promises which we have by Him. The price which made satisfaction unto God; the purchase which procured Salvation for us; and the promises which comfort and secure us in the certainty of both; and all these are precious things, The blood of Christ, precious blood: 1. Pet. 1. 18. The promises of Christ, precious promises: 2. Pet. 1. 4. And the purchase of Christ, a very exceeding and abundant weight of Glory. 2. Cor. 4. 17. But it may be objected, Have not other Graces the same object as well as Faith? Do we not love Christ, and fear Him, and hope in Him, and desire Him, as well as Believe in Him? True indeed, but herein is the excellency of Faith, that it is the first grace which looks towards Christ.

Now the Scripture useth to commend things by their order & precedency. As the women are commended for coming first to the Sepulchre; the messenger which brings the first tidings of good things is ever most welcome; the servant who is nearest his master's

person is esteemed the best man in that order: so Faith being the first grace that brings tidings of Salvation, the nearest Grace to Christ's Person, is therefore the most excellent in regard of the object.

Secondly, Faith is the most precious Grace in regard to the offices of it. Though in its inherent and habitual qualification it be no more noble than other graces, yet in the offices which it executes, it is far more excellent than any. Two pieces of parchment and wax are in themselves of little or no difference in value, but in their offices which they bear as instruments or patents, one may as far exceed the other as a man's life exceeds his lands; for one may be a pardon of life, the other a lease of a Cottage. One man in a City may in his personal estate be much inferior to another, yet as an Officer in the City, he may have a great precedence and distance above him. Compare a piece of gold with a seal of silver or brass, and it may have far more worth in itself; yet the seal hath an Office or Relative power to ratify covenants of far more worth than the piece of gold: so is it between Faith and other Graces; Consider Faith in its inherent properties, so it is not more noble than the rest: but consider it as an instrument, by God appointed for the most noble offices, so it is the most superlative and excellent grace. These offices which are peculiar to it, I take it, are principally these three. The first to unite to Christ, and give possession of Him. The Apostle prays for the Ephesians, that Christ may dwell in their hearts by Faith. Eph. 3. 17. Wealth in the Mine does no good at all until it be severed and appropriated to persons and uses: Water in the Fountain is of no service unto me until it be conveyed thence to my own Cistern; the light of the Sun brings no comfort to him who has no eyes to enjoy it: So though Christ be a Mine full of excellent and unsearchable riches, a Fountain full of comforts and refreshments, a Sun of righteousness,

a Captain and Prince of Life and Salvation, yet until He is made ours, until there be some bond and communion between Him and us, we remain as poor and miserable as if this Fountain had never been opened, nor this Mine discovered.

Now this Union to and Communion with Christ is on our part the work of Faith, which is as it were the spiritual joint and ligament by which Christ and a Christian are coupled. In one place we are said to live by Christ, "Because I live," saith he, "you shall live also." John 14. 19. In another, by Faith, "The Just shall live by Faith." Heb. 10. 38. How by both? By Christ, as the Fountain; By Faith, as the pipe conveying water to us from the fountain; By Christ, as the Foundation; By Faith, as the Cement knitting us to the foundation; By Christ, as the Treasure; By Faith, as the clue which directs; as the Key which opens, and lets us in to that Treasure. This the Apostle explains in the former place, where he shows by what means Faith makes us live, namely by giving us an entrance and approach to Christ; for he opposes Faith to drawing back, verse. 19. 30. Noting that the proper work of Faith, is to carry us unto Christ, as our Saviour Himself expoundeth believing in Him, by coming unto Him, John. 6. 64. 65. Therefore the Apostle puts both together, "Not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I live, I live by the Faith of the Son of God." Gal. 2. 20. Faith is compared to eating and drinking, John. 6. and we know there is no sense requires such an intimate and secret union to its object as that of tasting, no sense that is the instrument of so near a union as that. So then as the motion of the mouth in eating is not in the nature of a motion any whit more excellent than the motion of the eye or foot, or of itself in speaking; yet in the instrumental office of life and nourishment, it is far more necessary: So though Faith in the substance of it as it is an inherent quality hath no singular excellency above other graces; yet as it is an instrument of conveying Christ our spiritual Bread unto our souls,

and so of assimilating and incorporating us into Him, which no other Grace can do, no more than the motion of the eye or foot can nourish the body; so it is the most precious and useful of all others. It may be objected, do not other graces join a man unto Christ, as well as Faith? Union is the proper effect of Love; therefore we are one with Christ as well by loving Him, as by believing in Him.

To this I answer that Love creates only a moral union in affections, but Faith creates a mystical union, a closer and more intimate fellowship in nature between us and Christ. Besides, Faith is the immediate connection between Christ and a Christian, but love is a secondary union that follows and is grounded on the former. By nature, we are all enemies to Christ and His Kingdom, with the mindset of the Jews who said, "We will not have this man to reign over us." Therefore, until we are thoroughly convinced by Faith of Christ's Love for us, we can never respond with Love to Him. "Herein is Love," says the Apostle, "not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son." 1 John 4:10. So, between God's Love and ours, Faith comes to make us one with Christ. "We have known and believed the Love that God has to us," says the Apostle. 1 John 4:16. And hence it follows that because by Faith, as He is, so are we in this world, therefore, our love to Him is made perfect, and so we love Him because He first loved us. 1 John 4:19. So, we see that the union we have with Christ by Love presupposes the Unity we have in Him by Faith; thus, Faith still has the preeminence.

The second office in which the excellency of Faith consists is a consequence of the former, namely, to justify a person. For no one is righteous in the sight of God any further than he is taken into the unity of Christ and into the fellowship of His Merits. God is well pleased in Christ alone, and until a person becomes a member of His Body, a part of His fullness, they cannot appear in God's presence.

This was the reason why Christ would not have any of His bones broken or taken away from the communion of His natural body, as seen in John 19:36, to emphasize the indissoluble union between Him and His mystical Members. So, just as in a natural body, a member is certainly fastened to the whole as long as the bones are firm and sound, in the mystical body, where the body is, there must every member be too, because the bones must not be broken asunder. Therefore, if Christ goes to Heaven, if He stands blameless before God's justice, we all shall also appear so, because His bones cannot be broken. What thus places us into the Unity of Christ must necessarily justify our persons and set us right in the presence of God, and this is our Faith.

The Apostle gives two excellent reasons why our Justification should be by Faith rather than by any other grace. The first reason is on God's part, so that it might be of Grace. The second reason is on the part of the promise, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed. Romans 4:16. First, Justification by Faith is of pure Grace and favour, with no work or merit involved. For the Act whereby Faith Justifies is an act of humility, self-derelection, a holy despair of anything in ourselves, a going to Christ, a receiving, a looking towards Him and His All-sufficiency. So, as Mary said of herself, we may say of Faith: "The Lord has respect unto the lowliness of His grace," which does not look inward for matter of Justification, but rather, as a work of the heart, (*credere*), does not justify. Only when it is an apprehension or taking hold of Christ does it have the power to justify. Just as the hand in receiving something must first make itself empty (if it is full before, it must let go of everything before it can take hold of anything else), Faith, being the act of receiving Christ, must suppose an emptiness in the soul first.

Faith has two properties, like a hand: it can work and receive. When Faith purifies the heart, supports the drooping spirits, works by love, carries a person through afflictions, and the like, these are the works of Faith. When Faith accepts righteousness in Christ, receives Him as the gift of His Father's Love, embraces the promises from afar, Heb. 11:13, and lays hold on Eternal Life, 1 Tim. 6:12, this is the receiving aspect of Faith. Faith justifies not by working (lest the effect should not be wholly of Grace, but partly of Grace and partly of work, Ephesians 2:8-9), but by simply receiving and accepting or yielding consent to that righteousness. This righteousness, with regard to working, belongs to Christ (Romans 5:18), and with regard to disposing, imputing, and appropriating it to us, it is the righteousness of God (Romans 3:21, 1 Corinthians 1:30, Philippians 3:9). To make the point of Justification by the receiving and not the working of Faith clear, let us consider it through a familiar analogy.

Suppose a surgeon should perfectly cure the hand of a poor man from some desperate wound that had rendered him unable to work. After this, the surgeon, on one occasion, freely gives the man some charitable assistance, for which he was enabled by the previous cure. On another occasion, the surgeon sets the man to work, for which the previous cure had also enabled him, and after the work is done, rewards him in proportion to his labour. I ask, which of these two gifts demonstrates greater grace on the part of the man? Is it the recompense for the labour that was accomplished through the restored strength, or is it the free bestowal of an equal gift for which the man was also made capable by the surgeon's mercy? Anyone would easily answer that the gift given freely was a greater demonstration of grace than the reward, even though both were made possible by the surgeon's merciful cure. This is the clear difference between our doctrine and the doctrine of our adversaries regarding Justification. They claim that we are justified by Grace and

yet by works because grace enables us to work. We, on the other hand, assert that we are justified freely, not by the works of grace, but by the grace that provides our Justification and, along with it, the strength to work. Indeed, God's free grace is more glorified in giving us both righteousness and the ability to perform good works undeservedly than in merely giving us works to merit our righteousness.

Secondly, Justification by Faith makes the promise sure to all the seed. Suppose a beggar were offered a significant benefit on the condition of performing an acceptable and perfect service to the one making the offer. However, it would be impossible for the beggar to please the benefactor through his own work without exact ability for the required duty. In such a case, the beggar might doubt the certainty of the benefit because the fulfillment of the required condition is uncertain. But if the same benefit were offered with no other requirement than the acknowledgment of his own need and the willing acceptance of the offered gift, then the beggar could not be unsure of it. Similarly, if the Lord were to offer righteousness or salvation to a person on the condition of moral obedience, given the multitude of human corruptions, weak abilities, powerful adversaries, and treacherous hearts that are prone to disobedience, the promise could not be made sure to that person based on their own works. However, when nothing is required of a person except to cleave to Christ, to abandon their own efforts, to accept the aid of a reliable Savior, and to rely on the sure mercies of David, this inevitably makes our righteousness and salvation as certain as the worth of the merits or the faithfulness of the promise on which we rely.

If there is nothing needed to ensure the stability and consistency of a house other than being placed on the foundation, then the house

must be as secure as the foundation. Similarly, if there is nothing required to safeguard a person's money or documents other than placing them in a closet or box, then those things must be as safe as the place they are put into. Therefore, since nothing else is necessary to make our salvation certain but to rest upon Christ, who is a secure foundation for His Church (Matthew 16:18) and a guaranteed Treasure (Colossians 3:3), Faith, which alone places us in Him, also makes our Salvation secure. "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect and precious" (here we have both our foundation and our Treasure). Now, the security that Faith brings from this is that "he that believeth shall not be confounded" or put to shame. In the Prophet, it is expressed as "shall not make haste" (1 Peter 2:6), and both phrases signify safety. When a person relies on another for something good and ends up failing in their expectation, this will undoubtedly shame them due to the disappointment of their hopes. However, when a person's hopes are grounded in the unsearchable riches, the unfailing promise, and the unchanging truth, power, and goodness of God, it is impossible for their faith to shame or deceive them.

When a person is certain of something good, they are willing to wait for the right time to receive it. For instance, David, through God's promise and anointing, was certain of his future kingship and therefore did not take Saul's life when he had the opportunity but waited for the time appointed by God (1 Samuel 26:9, 10, 11). In contrast, a person who is uncertain about something is eager to seize every opportunity and make use of every circumstance to advance their desires. If I were to observe two men competing for a position or promotion and saw one of them rushing day and night, denying himself the comforts of the journey, and expressing impatience and frustration at every obstacle, while the other took their time, relied on previous promises from the ruler, or counted on the support of

influential friends, and even mocked the eagerness of their competitor, I would easily conclude that the person with less haste had greater hopes. When a person already has a promise of something, especially from someone they are certain has the power and fidelity to fulfill it, they do not rush for its fulfillment but willingly await the appropriate time and the good pleasure of the one who made the promise.

Now, the role of faith is to give substance to the things we hope for, even though they may be distant and out of sight. Faith makes them real and within reach through the promise, as if they were already fulfilled (Hebrews 11:1, 13). Consequently, Faith keeps a person from being hasty and impetuous in their pursuit and from experiencing confusion and shame in their hopes of good. This is because Faith perceives them as safe and certain in the power and promises of Christ, just as if they were already realized. To conclude, Faith is the most suitable grace for a merciful Justification because it magnifies the fullness and freeness of God's favour and secures His promise to all the descendants.

The third function of Faith is, having placed us into Christ and justified us through Him, to grant us, together with Him, all other things. This is the conviction the Apostle presents in Romans 8:32: "If He have given us Christ, how shall He not with Him freely also give us all things?" These "All Things" can be categorized into two types: First, all graces, and second, all secular blessings. Saint Peter combines them and demonstrates how they flow from Christ to us through Faith as the conduit: "His divine Power hath given unto us all things that pertain to Life and Godliness, and that through the knowledge (that is, the Faith) of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue" (2 Peter 1:3).

Firstly, all Graces: Faith is the foremost grace in a Christian soul and the source of the others. This is the primary theme of the excellent chapter in Hebrews 11, which illustrates how Faith was the central driving force in the lives and actions of the esteemed men and women of faith listed there. The Apostle informs us that "Faith worketh by Love" (Galatians 5:6). By "Love," we may understand either the general disposition of all other active graces collectively. In this sense, Faith activates and animates all other graces, directing them towards their respective functions. Alternatively, "Love" can specifically refer to the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. In this case, the passage's intention is as follows: Firstly, Faith reveals to us the great Love of God in Christ. The Apostle emphasizes this when he says, "The life that I live, saith the Apostle, I live by the Faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). Here, we observe that the primary revelation that Faith provides in Christ and the central focus of Faith is Christ's love for us. This is an exceedingly sublime and supreme love. As the Apostle puts it, "Herein saith the Apostle God commended, God heaped together His Love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

Secondly, after Faith has thus unveiled the Love of God in Christ to our hearts, it ignites within us a reciprocal Love for Christ, prompting us to adopt the same mindset as Christ (Philippians 2:5) and enflaming our spirits to respond with Love for Love. As the Apostle states, "We have believed the Love that God hath to us, saith the Apostle, and therefore, saith he, we love Him because He loved us first" (1 John 4:16, 19). Thus, Faith produces Love.

However, thirdly, Faith possesses another power, for it not only engenders Love but also operates through Love, as the text suggests. It employs the Love it has ignited as a prod and incentive for further

obedience. The Love we return to Christ stimulates us towards an intimate and Heavenly communion with Him, fostering complete and spiritual conformity to Him. This Love is likened to a marital Love, thus making it fruitful, as the purpose of marriage is procreation. As the Apostle declares, "Ye are become dead to the Law, saith the Apostle, by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead." The outcome of this spiritual marriage is subsequently explained as "That we should bring forth fruit unto God," which is further elaborated as "That we should serve in newness of Spirit" (Romans 7:4-6).

"If a man Love me," says our Saviour, "he will keep my Words." This obedience is the offspring of Faith, as stated in the same passage: "Ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you; and immediately upon this Faith it follows, He that hath my Commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto Him" (John 14:20, 21, 22, 23). In this passage, several noteworthy aspects emerge. Firstly, Faith contemplates noble objects—the excellence of God's Love towards us in Christ. It reveals that we are in Christ's bosom, in His affections, and one with Him in mercy, counsel, and power. This Love of God draws us into an intimate relationship with Him. It is the foundation of our mutual Love. These are the mysteries of the Love of the Father and the Son towards us.

Now this Love engenders Love in us in return, which manifests itself in two ways. Firstly, by accepting the Commandments of Christ—listening to them, opening our eyes to comprehend the wonders of the Law. Secondly, by keeping these Commandments, which requires us to employ the strength of our Love. Love is as potent as Death; it can make a person neglect their own life to serve and please the one

they Love. Our Love was not the initial mover, as "we loved Him, because He loved us first." Nor will it be the final act. Just as the Father and the Son incited our Love with their initial Love, they will reward our Love with their second Love. Therefore, it follows, "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him." This does not imply a new Love but rather a deeper manifestation of their prior Love, leading to a closer and more intimate communion and Heavenly cohabitation with them. They will come to us, make their abode with us, reveal themselves to us, commune with our spirits, share a feast with us, provide us with an abundance of consolation, and delight us with their Glory.

Relevant to the present point is the passage from the Apostle in 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15: "The Love of Christ, saith he, constraineth us." This Love, either Christ's Love to us apprehended by Faith or our Love to Christ aroused by the awareness of His Love wrought in us, through a sweet and compelling force, wins and rules our hearts. It compels us "not to live henceforth unto ourselves, but unto Him that died for us and rose again." The foundation of this strong conviction is added: "because we thus judge," that is, because we know and believe that if one died for all, then all are dead to the guilt and power of sin and ought to live a new life conformable to the resurrection of Christ again. Therefore, in two parallel passages, the Apostle uses Faith and a new Creature interchangeably. "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but Faith which worketh by Love" and "neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." The reason for this interchangeable use lies in the inseparable connection between Faith and renewal. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new Creature."

Secondly, Faith provides us with all the good things necessary for our condition. Adam was created as the lord of his fellow inferior

creatures, endowed with ownership of them all. In his fall, he forfeited every good thing that God had given him. In the second Covenant, once reconciliation is procured, Faith, which entitles a person to the Covenant, also reinstates them with ownership of the creatures. "All things," says the Apostle, "are yours," and he clarifies the title and conveyance of them, stating, "You are Christ's, and Christ is God's" (1 Corinthians 3:23). Elsewhere, he says, "the living God gives us all things richly to enjoy," signifying not only the possession but also the use of these things (1 Timothy 6:17). By "all things," we can first understand the liberty and freedom of Christians, as opposed to the pedagogy and discipline of Moses' Law, which classified creatures into clean and unclean, and consequently, into useful and unuseful. Therefore, believers are not now prohibited by any immediate conscience constraint from freely enjoying any of God's creatures. Secondly, by "all things," we mean not all things without exception, but all things that are necessary for life and godliness in our current circumstances. Our Saviour said to a woman, "O woman, great is thy Faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt" (Matthew 15:28). This is a generous promise to receive whatever one desires, but He who promises believers whatever they desire also regulates and confines their desires to seek nothing except in subordination to His Will, and nothing beyond their rightful portion—what is necessary for them. The heathen could say, "That man has as much as he desires who desires nothing but what he has." Similarly, we can say of a Christian, "He indeed has whatever he wills," because God gives him a heart that desires nothing except what is promised by God and necessary for his own well-being.

Now, Faith bestows all these things upon us. Firstly, because it leads us to the Fountain, which is God, as the Prophet David says, "With Thee, there is the Fountain of Life" (Psalms 36:9). As the Apostle

states, "But of Him you are in Christ Jesus" (1 Corinthians 1:30). We are aware that a Fountain possesses a kind of All-sufficiency—whatever water a person requires, they can obtain it from the Fountain. In contrast, cisterns and broken pits are quickly emptied. We can observe in many fountains that, to the eye, they appear to contain far less water than a larger river or a winter flood that overflows entire valleys, carrying away trees and rocks in its path. Yet, as Job tells us, a river may cause men to be ashamed in summer when they seek water to refresh themselves and find none (Job 6:19-20). However, anyone who comes to a Fountain for refreshment will never be ashamed because it provides living and continuously flowing water, ensuring an everlasting supply. Often, the faithful possess fewer material possessions and earthly riches than others. Nevertheless, they possess the Fountain and, as a result, enjoy greater certainty and sweetness.

Firstly, they have more certainty because Fountain water is living water and multiplies, whereas others store their water in cisterns that are broken, riddled with holes and cracks that allow the water to leak out. The Prophets tell us that some people toil and labour, but their work is consumed in the fire; their efforts perish as fast as they grow. Others earn wages but put them in bags with holes; their earnings fall out as quickly as they are put in. These "holes" and this "fire" that dissolve and drain away the estates of wicked individuals are principally two things: first, the lusts of their hearts. As the Apostle says, "You ask and receive not, because you spend it upon your lusts" (James 4:3). Lust not only keeps wealth away but also lets it out once it is acquired. How many substantial fortunes have been dissipated and reduced to nothing by the allure of wine, women, gambling, extravagance, pride, vanity, whims, and projects, conflicts, disputes, indulgence, extravagance, and idle ideas—all these sap away one's estate. Second, the cisterns of wicked individuals are

broken, and their bags are full of holes due to God's secret judgment and curse, punishing their sinful desires in their sinful gain, withering their unproductive estates, much like Christ did to the barren fig-tree. We can observe how the Lord threatens to curse people for their sins, affecting their livelihoods and prosperity. This is not the case for the faithful. They have both the Bread and the Word, the Creator and the blessings of God together. They enjoy greater certainty in these matters.

Consider the example of the woman with her oil and meal. Her supply was not substantial, yet it increased and met her needs. There was a spring in her cruse and in her barrel. It was living oil and living meal that grew and sustained her during the famine. The Fountain provides for a person according to their needs. If someone requires a cup, a bucket, or a cistern full, the Fountain supplies accordingly. Thus, regardless of the necessity the Lord brings to the faithful, He grants them the ability to see, the capacity to rest, and the expectation that, by using honest means, they will receive a supply proportionate to their needs. Not only do the faithful have more certainty, but they also derive greater sweetness from the waters they draw from the Fountain. Water stored in pits and cisterns becomes stagnant, murky, and unpleasant, as do the blessings of God to wicked individuals. Worries, fears, suspicions, desires, hopes, goals, and countless mixtures and disturbances rob the blessings of their innate purity and goodness. To a feverish palate, even the sweetest wine tastes bitter due to the underlying bitterness. Therefore, when lusts and curses entwine themselves with the blessings in the hands of wicked individuals, they inevitably lose their inherent goodness, turning their table into a snare. The things meant for their benefit become stumbling blocks. In contrast, by sanctifying the Creature through the Word and Prayer, the faithful receive the blessing as intended. They remove God's curse and discipline their own lusts,

preventing them from corrupting the blessings. Thus, Faith provides us with all things from the Fountain, making them more certain and more sweet by plugging the holes that allow them to escape and by removing the lusts and curses that once made them bitter.

Secondly, Faith provides us with all things by granting us the Promises. "Godliness has the promises of this life and that which is to come" (1 Timothy 4:8). Wicked individuals possess good things only through God's general providence, which bestows His blessings upon both the righteous and the unrighteous through common benevolence. However, this form of possession is subject to many forfeitures, curses, taxes, invasions, and devastations caused by insatiable and destructive desires, making it incapable of settling and securing the heart in the enjoyment of these blessings. But through Faith in the promises, the godly experience a transformation in their ownership, their estate is secured under a better and more reliable tenure, freed from the numerous encumbrances and entanglements to which they were previously vulnerable. Consequently, a person's heart is now safeguarded beyond all doubts or human fears.

A poor individual might object, "I lack the wisdom to manage my affairs, I am incapacitated by sickness and weakness to attend to my responsibilities, my responsibilities are increasing, and my ability to provide for them is diminishing." However, Faith is capable of addressing these objections and all similar ones by presenting the promise. "Do you live by your own strength? Do you prosper through your own wisdom and industry, or through the blessing and faithfulness of God in His promises? Is God's Truth a respecter of persons? Is His faithfulness any less firm toward weak and poor believers than toward the wealthy? Is there any scarcity or weakness, poverty or deficiency in heaven? Do God's promises depend on human wisdom or strength to be fulfilled? Can your increased

responsibilities or needs deplete God's Treasures or deplete His Fountains of truth? If an honourable and wealthy person has the need to expand his retinue and live at a higher standard than before, he does not complain about this necessity because he possesses an abundance. All the faithful belong to the household and family of God, who does not become poorer in His state and power by maintaining many or few. He gives to all people, and He gives generously (James 1:5), a feat that no wealthy person in the world can accomplish because as he gives to others, he diminishes himself. However, God gives from a Fountain, much like the Sun provides light, which remains equally radiant within itself, whether it shines on one person or thousands. The eyes of men cannot deplete or extract the Sun's light. As God declares, "All the creatures are mine, upon a thousand hills." If a thousand hills can produce enough crops or feed enough cattle for the relief of any poor individual, he need not doubt or fear, for God possesses thousands of mountains, like granaries or storehouses, in His truth and promises, to which the faithful can turn in times of need. Thus, Faith provides us with all things by entitling us to the Promises.

In response to the objection that the Apostle's statement, "Now abides Faith, Hope, and Charity, these three; but the greatest of these is Charity" (1 Corinthians 13:13), appears to diminish the precedence of faith, I would like to clarify. The Apostle is speaking of greatness in terms of duration, with Charity being an everlasting Grace, whereas faith pertains only to this life, as it is necessary for the current quality and state of the Church. (For faith and fruition are opposed—faith looks upon things in their promises, while fruition looks at their real existence.) However, consider faith as an instrument to lay hold on Christ and the precious promises of life and grace in Him. View it as a living principle that sets the heart in motion, purifies the conscience, ignites the heart towards spiritual obedience, and

reciprocates holy love to God for all His love towards us in His Son. In this context, Faith surpasses Charity, just as the motion of the mouth during eating, which directly sustains life, exceeds the motion of the mouth in speaking, which serves a less vital and not absolutely necessary purpose.

Another objection might be raised: "Other Graces make a man like Christ, which Faith cannot do, because Christ could not believe unto justification or life, having the Fountain of both abundantly in himself. Whereas the proper and primitive work of Faith is to carry a man out of himself and to make him see all his sufficiency in another." In response to this objection, I provide two answers.

First, Christ did possess faith, though not for the same purposes as us. He had faith in its common nature, which implies assent to all divine truth and adherence or reliance of the soul on the benefit and goodness that it brings (for the reason for truth and the reason for advantage are the two objects of true faith, or rather, various qualifications of the same object). In this sense, it is a matter of the Law, falling within the scope of the duties of the Law to which Christ subjected himself. However, faith as a condition, an agent, an instrument of justification, could not apply to Christ, for He was not to become righteous by believing but to be the righteousness itself for those who believe. In other respects, when the Apostle says, "He was heard in that which he feared," when Christ himself says, "My God, my God," it is evident that though He did not have faith for righteousness, He did have it for deliverance. While He was not saved by believing, He was obedient in believing.

Secondly, it is more significant to be one with Christ than to be like Him, more significant to be a part of Him than a mere representation. Faith establishes a unity with Christ, while other

graces only create a resemblance. Faith makes a person a member, whereas other graces only make them a follower of Him. Therefore, in this respect, faith still holds the pre-eminence.

Now, from the great necessity and preciousness of this duty, we may first infer the enormity of the sin of those who neglect it. Many people consider lying, swearing, revelry, deceit, and the practice of other notorious wrongdoings as heinous and unacceptable. However, living in unbelief, without knowledge or fellowship with Christ, in complete ignorance of their own unworthiness and inexperience of their eternal insufficiencies for their own salvation, are things that are seldom or never seriously contemplated by them. Yet, indeed, unbelief is the edge and sting of all other sins, binding them and their guilt eternally to the soul and locking them like shackles to the conscience, which, otherwise, with the help of Christ, could easily cast them off. As Christ says, "He that believeth is not condemned; he that believeth not is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him." There is a temporary displeasure, a fleeting wrath that merely touches and blows upon the soul and then dissipates, which even the faithful may experience after venturing into sinful ways. And there is a wrath that is constant, permanent, closely and eternally attached to the soul, which will seize only upon unbelievers. "The Spirit shall convince the world of sin because they believe not," says Christ. Sin stands in opposition to righteousness and judgment or holiness. Therefore, the meaning is that the Spirit will convince people that they are unrighteous and unholy, held captive by the guilt, condemnation, and power of sin, locked up in strong chains awaiting the wrath and judgment of the great Day. They are inevitably cast and condemned in the Court of Law because they did not flee by faith to that office of mercy and reconciliation which the Father has established in His beloved Son. All sins inherently deserve damnation, but none actually lead to damnation without

unbelief. This was the great provocation in the wilderness that kept the people from entering the Promised Land, for which God is said to have been grieved for forty years. "How long will this people provoke me? How long will it be ere they believe in me? They despised the holy Land; they believed not His word; they drew backward and turned again in their hearts into Egypt." The Apostle sums up all their murmurings and provocations, which resulted in their exclusion from that representation of heaven, in this one word: "They entered not in because of their unbelief." If there is only one remedy for a deadly disease, and when that remedy is offered to the sick person, he refuses it and throws it under his feet, that person's state is irrevocably desperate and without remedy. There is only one name, one sacrifice, one blood by which we can be saved, perfected, and forever cleansed, without which God can take no pleasure in us. How then can we escape if we neglect so great a salvation and trample underfoot the blood of the Covenant? It is fruitless labor and endless folly for people to employ any other means (no matter how plausible, probable, rigorous, mortified, Pharisaical, or even angelic they may appear) to extricate themselves from the labyrinth of sin or to free their consciences from guilt or its power without faith. Even if a person could scourge rivers of blood from their own body and could outfast Moses or Elijah through self-neglect, if they could pray fervently with worn-out knees and have their eyes fixed on heaven, even if they could build hospitals for all the poor on earth and deplete the mines of India in charitable acts, even if they could walk like an angel of light, dazzling the eyes of all who behold them with the radiance of outward holiness—nay, if it were possible to conceive—though they could live a thousand years in perfect and perpetual observance of the entire Law of God, with the sole exception of their original corruption, or any other deviation or digression from that Law—such a person could no more stand before the tribunal of God's justice than stubble before a consuming fire.

It is only Christ in the bush that can keep the fire from burning; It is only Christ in the heart that can keep sin from condemning. Without me, that is, separated from me, you can do nothing towards the justification of your persons, or salvation of your souls, or sanctification of your lives or natures. No burden can a person shake off, no obstacle can be overcome, no temptation can be vanquished without faith. Shake off everything that presses down, and the sin that clings so tightly, and run with patience, namely, through all oppositions and contradictions, the race that is set before you, says the Apostle. But how can we accomplish such unfeasible tasks? He shows that in the next words, looking off from ourselves unto Jesus the Author and finisher of our faith. When a person looks inward upon their own strength, they may as justly despair of moving sin from their soul as of casting down mountains with one of their fingers. However, He who is able to give us faith is by that able to make all things possible for us.

The world tempts with promises, rewards, and sinful pleasures, with frowns, threats, and persecutions for righteousness. If a person does not have faith to see in Christ more precious promises, more sure mercies, more full rewards, more abundant and everlasting pleasures; if they do not see in the frowns of God more terror, in the wrath of God more bitterness, in the threats of God more certainty, and in the Law of God more curses than all the world can heap upon them, then it is impossible for them to withstand such assaults. For this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith. Satan hurls his fiery darts at the soul, darts pointed and poisoned with the venom of serpents, setting the heart on fire, moving from one lust to another. If a person has not put on Christ and does not make use of the shield of faith to hold up their heart with the promises of victory, to maintain the triumph of Christ over the powers of death and darkness, to see themselves under the protection of Him who has

already cast down the Dragon from Heaven, who has Satan in chains and the keys of the bottomless Pit at His command; if they do not say to Him, "The Lord rebuke you, Satan, even the Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you," then it is impossible to quench any of Satan's temptations or to withstand the rage and fury of such a roaring Lion. "Whom resist," says Saint Peter, "steadfast in the faith."

Our corruptions assail us with our own strength, with high-minded imaginations, with strong reasoning, with lustful enticements, with treacherous solicitations, with plausible pretenses, with violent importunities, with deceitful promises, with fearful prejudices, with profound and inscrutable plots. On all sides, lust stirs and works within us like sparks in a dried leaf, setting every faculty against itself. The mind tempts itself to vanity, the understanding tempts itself to error and curiosity, the will tempts itself to stubbornness and defiance, the heart tempts itself to hardness and complacency. If a person does not have faith, it is impossible either to pray against themselves or to deny the requests of sin that they themselves make. Only faith can purify the heart and trust in His power and fidelity, who is both willing and able to subdue corruptions. In vain is the effort unless a person strives lawfully. In prayer, it is faith that must make us successful; in the word, it is faith that must make us profitable; in obedience, it is faith that must make us cheerful; in afflictions, it is faith that must make us patient; in trials, it is faith that must make us resolute; in desertions, it is faith that must make us comfortable; in life, it is faith that must make us fruitful; and in death, it is faith that must make us victorious. So, as it was said of water, so may I say of faith: it is the most sovereign and precious of all things because it is of universal use in the life of a person. Therefore, the Apostle calls those without faith "absurd men" because it is unreasonable and foolish for a workman to be without his chief instrument, something that is universally required for all of

his work. A farmer without a plow, a builder without a ruler, a preacher without a bible, and a Christian without faith are equally absurd and unreasonable. Yet, this is how people usually are.

By faith, Moses repelled and fled from the solicitations of his adulterous mistress. Have those who run after temptations of lust, letting their hearts indulge in speculations and their bodies in beds of uncleanness, then faith? Faith made David turn to God when Shimei reviled him. Have those who hurl oaths, curses, and execrations against their enemy and against God then faith? Faith made Noah fear God when warned by Him. And Josiah trembled at His word. Have those who mock the messengers, despise the Word, mistreat the Prophets, reject the remedies, and disregard the times of their peace and visitation that God gives them then faith? Faith made Abraham place a sword to the throat of his beloved son, the Son of blessing and the Son of promise. Have those who will not sacrifice a loathsome lust, nor part from a prodigious vanity when God requires it then faith? O, what sweetness and attachment there is in sin to our nature when people love a lust, a rag, a fashion, or an excrement more than Abraham loved his Son Isaac! Faith made Moses prefer the reproaches of Christ over the riches of Egypt. Have those who would rather be without Christ than their profits and pleasures, who subordinate the blood, the spirit, the will, the ways, and the glory of Christ to their earthly desires and base resolutions then faith? Thus, every sin willingly committed is supported and strengthened by unbelief. If people could see, through faith, Him who is invisible, an unapproachable light, and a consuming fire, if they could see the sword in His left hand ready to avenge iniquity and the Crown in His right hand ready to reward holiness, if they could perceive His judgments as present in His power and His glory as present in His promises, then it would be impossible for them to continue in such transgressions against Him and His Law. Saint Paul said, "Do you

not know that neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, etc., shall inherit the kingdom of God?" Nothing but faith can unbind and unlock sins from the soul, and by faith, not only their guilt but their power and dominion are removed and subdued.

A second use and inference from this doctrine is to inflame the heart to seek faith as if it were a precious jewel or a hidden treasure. Men are never satisfied with earthly treasures, although they often accumulate them for the future. How much more careful should they be to lay up a good foundation for the time to come, that they may obtain eternal life? We can have great encouragement for this upon these considerations.

First, the more faith a person has, the more comfort they may derive from all the good things they enjoy. They can view them as witnesses of God's truth and promises, as tokens of His love, as additions and supernumerary increments to His Kingdom, as the supplies and daily provisions of a Father who cares for us.

Secondly, the more faith a person has, the more security they possess against all evils. They can endure them with patience, hope, joy, triumph, and profit. They may consider them as necessary, precious, conformities to Christ their Head, seeds of peace, righteousness, and praise. Just as rain, although it may make the way muddy, makes the land fertile.

Thirdly, the more faith a person has, the more certain and victorious their conquests will be against their enemies. What we rely upon and put on by faith will be impregnable fortification and impenetrable armor to protect us. Love, blood, compassion, and temptations of Christ, when apprehended by faith, have torn down walls, subdued kingdoms, silenced the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of

fire, escaped the edge of the sword, and put to flight the armies of aliens.

Fourthly, the more faith a person has, the deeper their insight into Christ and the mysteries of salvation, which the angels desire to investigate. Faith serves as the eye, mouth, and ear of the soul, allowing us to glimpse through the curtains of mortality and catch a view and foretaste of heavenly things. Through it, we have a more secret and intimate communion with God in His covenants, promises, precepts, His guiding will, and His comforting favor.

Fifthly, the more faith a person has, the greater tranquillity and establishment of the heart they will find in the midst of all spiritual desertions, distractions, and difficulties. When a person's wits are puzzled, their reason confounded, their plans and counsels thwarted, their heart clouded with sorrow and fear, and they walk in darkness without light, having a sanctuary, an altar to flee to, a God to rest upon, to lean upon His wisdom, to lay hold upon His Covenant, to quietly await the salvation of that God who does not cast off forever—though He may cause grief, He will have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies. Committing one's way to Him, who is able to bring it to pass and do abundantly above our thoughts, desires, expectations, or petitions—what peace and serenity must this bring to the soul otherwise devoid of light and peace?

Lastly, the more faith a person has, the more joy and glory they have in spiritual matters, and the more contentment and peace in earthly things. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God. In believing, we rejoice with joy that is indescribable and full of glory. Let your conduct be free from covetousness, and be content with what you have, for He has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." Earthly-mindedness and worldly cares stem from a lack of faith. In

these and similar considerations, we should be motivated to seek this grace diligently, especially because the heart is naturally barren and prone to be overrun with lusts and vanities. Therefore, we must be diligent to make our assurance full and certain, diligent in the Word of faith and with the spirit of faith. "Do not be slothful," says the Apostle, "but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

Lastly, we must treat faith as one would treat precious things: test it and put it to the touchstone to prove whether it is truly valuable and sincere. There is much counterfeit faith, just as there is false money, deceitful jewels, and wild herbs in the field that closely resemble the genuine ones. This is a topic that has been explored extensively by more learned and spirited individuals. Therefore, I will touch upon it briefly by considering four principal effects of this grace.

The first effect is a love and affection for the spiritual truths that the heart assents to through faith. The measure of our love for a truth corresponds to its evidence and preciousness. Saving faith involves assent with adherence and delight, in contrast to the faith of demons, which is marked by trembling and horror. This delight is essentially a taste and experience of the goodness of the truth we assent to. Therefore, according to the dictate of nature, which instructs us to love that which brings comfort and delight, love for the truths from which such sweetness flows naturally arises from this assent. Through the first act of faith, we apprehend God as a reconcilable God, and through the second act, we perceive Him as a reconciled God. Faith reveals God's love for us in Christ and presents Him as altogether lovely, the fairest among ten thousand, leading us to love Christ in return. This love is sincere, uncorrupted, and immortal, akin to conjugal and supreme love. Nothing should be loved in competition with Christ; everything else should be rejected either as

a snare when He despises it or as a sacrifice when He calls for it. In some cases, God required a person's closest kin to cast the first stone at an idolater to show that no relations should outweigh or divert our hearts from His love. Often in life, Christ and earthly things come into conflict. In every unjust gain, it's a choice between Christ and a bribe or Christ and cruelty; in every oath or curse, it's Christ and blasphemy; in every sinful indulgence, it's Christ and a rag or Christ and filth; in every vain pursuit, it's Christ and a burst of vanity; in every excess, it's Christ and vomiting, staggering, shame, or illness. Where is the faith in people that should overcome the world and its allurements? Why should people delight in anything during their lives, which, as their deathbeds approach (a time rapidly approaching), they will not be able to reflect on with comfort or recall without astonishment and horror? Certainly, those who nurture any beloved sin against the will and command of Christ may deceive themselves with foolish notions that they love the Lord Jesus. Still, let them be assured that while they may deceive themselves, God will not be mocked. Not everyone who says, "Lord, Lord," shall be counted as friends of Christ, but only those who keep His commandments.

The second effect of faith is assurance and hope, confidently relying on the goodness of God for the present and waiting on His power for the future to fully perform what He has promised in His Word. "I have set life and death before you," said Moses to the people, "so that you may love the Lord your God, obey His voice, and cling to Him." The Apostle also says, "We are confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord." When a person's mind is so convinced of the divine promises made in Christ that they acknowledge an interest, claim, and ownership of them, and believe that these promises will ultimately be fulfilled not by a fallible human but by Almighty God, who has, to further confirm our faith,

engaged His fidelity through both His word and oath, and who possesses the omnipotence to accomplish what He has purposed or promised, it is impossible for such an assent, grounded in the veracity and all-sufficiency of God, not to result in a believer's confident reliance on these promises. In the meantime, believers renounce all self-sufficiency, recognising their own impotence, and they resolve to rely on God, holding fast to His mercy and the confession of their faith without wavering, with their eyes fixed on the promised reward, and with the assurance that He who has promised will certainly bring it to pass.

The third effect of faith is joy and peace of conscience. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." "The God of peace fill you with all joy and peace in believing." Through the taste and experience of the sweetness of God's promises, the mind is settled into a state of calmness and serenity. This is not a dead peace, which is mere immobility and lethargy of conscience, like the rest of a person who is dreaming atop a mast. Instead, it is a peace that a person can safely infer to themselves through a syllogism of practical judgment, based on a proper examination of their own connection to Christ. The wicked may often appear to have peace, just as the faithful do, but there is a significant difference. For the wicked, there is only a door separating them from their sin, and that door will eventually open, allowing sin to assault their soul. However, for the faithful, there is a wall of fire and an immovable and impregnable fortress, even the merits of Christ, separating them from their sin. The peace of the wicked arises from ignorance of God, the law, and themselves, whereas the peace of the righteous arises from knowledge of God and Christ. Thus, in this peace, there are two elements: tranquillity, signifying quietness, and serenity, indicating clarity and distinctness. Even if a person of faith does not currently experience peace (because peace is an effect not of the first and direct act of faith but

of the second and reflexive act), there is always, in every instance of faith, the seed of peace and a determination to seek and pursue it.

The last effect of faith that I will now discuss is fructification. "Faith worketh by love." First, it works repentance, which should not be understood as merely grief for sin or a sense of its weight and guilt, which is a legal aspect of it (if it does not go further), and may precede faith. Instead, it is a hatred of sin as something contrary to the new spirit of holiness and grace received in Christ. The sense of sin as a cursed thing (which is legal humiliation) arises from that faith in which we believe and assent to the truth of God in His threatenings (a legal faith). However, abominating sin as an unclean thing and contrary to the image and holiness of God (evangelical repentance) arises from evangelical faith, where we view God as most merciful, most holy, and therefore most worthy to be imitated and served. Second, it brings about renovation, which occurs in two ways. First, inwardly, in the constitution of the heart, which is purified by faith. Second, outwardly, in one's conduct and practice, when a person brings forth good things from the good treasure of their heart and walks in the Lord Jesus as they have received Him. In all our obedience, we must adhere to these three rules. First, the binding power of the law solely depends on the authority of the Lawgiver, who is God. Whoever habitually and without concern for obedience, fear of displeasure, or aversion in spirit breaks any one commandment ventures to violate the authority that, through the same ordinance, made the entire law equally binding and, consequently, habitually and in the preparation of the mind, transgresses the entire law. Therefore, obedience must be universal, proceeding from faith that equally respects all of God's will and views Him as most truthful and holy in all His commands. Second, just as God is spiritual and perfect, His law is also spiritual and perfect, demanding an inward universality of the subject, which means a

spiritual and sincere obedience of the heart that uniformly directs the whole person to the same way and end, without any mercenary or reserved motives. Third, every law includes all homogenous matter and that of the same kind as the particular command named, meaning that every duty, sprig, seed, and origin is encompassed by the law. We are to examine the truth of our obedience by these rules.

Before I apply these premises specifically, I must clarify that faith may be in the heart either habitually, as a primary act, a form or seed, or a principle of working, or actually, as a secondary act, a particular operation. In the former sense, it only disposes and orders the soul to these properties remotely, but in the latter, it more visibly and distinctly produces them. Thus, the more faith is exercised in the heart, the more these properties appear and operate.

Secondly, it's important to note that Satan uses various tactics to attack and weaken faith according to its different workings. There are two main works of faith: obedience and comfort, to purify and pacify the heart. Satan's main objective is to harm and dishonor God, so he primarily seeks to disable the former virtue of faith and tempt believers to sin against God. However, when he cannot achieve this, he tries to distress and crush believers' spirits. If he succeeds in the former, he weakens all the properties of faith, but if he only succeeds in the latter, he does not weaken all of them, but rather intercepts and darkens a Christian's peace.

To understand this point, it's crucial to recognize that faith has many acts, some direct, looking outward toward Christ, and others reflexive, looking inward upon oneself. The first act of faith is one in which a person, having previously faced extremities and impossibilities within themselves, looks upon God as omnipotent

and, therefore, able to save. They also view God as merciful and reconcilable in Christ, making salvation likely if sought.

Upon this foundation arises a second act, namely, an exclusive resolution. The individual determines not to consider new ways, not to rely on inferior causes for salvation or righteousness, to value all else as worthless, and not to consult any further with human considerations. Instead, they prepare their heart to seek the Lord, to resolve as the lepers did during the famine in Samaria: not to remain in their current state, nor to return to the city and their usual habits and ways, where they would surely perish. Once resolved, a person cannot be moved or tempted by discomfort to consider any other new way, except what appears possible and likely, where acceptance promises life and sustenance. This act may coexist with fear, doubt, and trembling. The Syrians had food, while Samaria had none, so the lepers decided to venture outside. Nevertheless, they did so with much doubt and distrust because the Syrians they would encounter were their enemies. However, their resolution prevailed because in their present state, they were certain to perish, whereas in the alternative, there was room for hope and the possibility of survival. This carries them to Esther's resolution: "If we perish, we perish." Such is the act of faith in this scenario. Although it acknowledges that the current situation only leads to death, it resolves to abandon it. Faith views God as plenteous in power and mercy, likely to save, yet also armed with justice against sin, justly provoked and weary in His patience. Consequently, faith may fear rejection and not being saved alive. However, because the former state guarantees perishing, and the latter offers a possibility of not perishing, a third act arises: a conclusive and positive purpose to trust in Christ. Faith not only denies all other ways but resolves to attempt this way, to pursue it, and to go to Him who possesses abundant redemption and life. Even if faced with perishing, it determines, "He shall not reject me; I will

not reject myself. I will go to Him." This act or resolution of faith is based on several grounds.

First, God's love and free grace are the initial movers in our salvation. If God began His work based on anything He foresaw in us, we would never dare to approach Him because we would never find anything in ourselves to justify His mercy toward us. However, God's love is so absolute and independent that it does not require anything in us to arouse it; it is not even grounded upon Christ Himself. This pertains to His initial love and grace. Christ was not the impulsive cause of God's initial love for humanity but was the great gift that God sent to testify that He freely loved them beforehand. "God so loved the world that He gave His Son." "Herein is love, not that we loved Him, but that He loved us and sent His Son." Love precedes the gift because the gift is an effect, a sign, and a testimony of the love. "Christ first loved the Church before He gave Himself for it." Consequently, if God's initial love for humanity was not procured, earned, or incited by Christ Himself as a Mediator, but was absolutely free, His love does not depend on anything in us. The entire sequence of our salvation occurs without regard for anything from us or about us. He loved us without any reason or basis in ourselves. "For we love Him because He first loved us." He elected us purely by grace, without anything from ourselves as a reason. "There is a remnant, according to the election of grace." If it is by grace, then it is no longer by works; otherwise, grace would not be grace. He called us without considering anything in ourselves. "Not according to our works but according to His purpose and grace, He called us with a holy calling." He justified us without any basis in ourselves, freely by His grace, when we were enemies and ungodly individuals. He saves us without any basis in ourselves. "By grace, you are saved through faith, and this is not of yourselves." In the matter of salvation, there is nothing in us to boast about, and therefore, there

is nothing in us to cause despair or to drive us away from God. All the stages and progressions of our salvation come solely from His grace.

Secondly, because there is an all-sufficiency in the righteousness and merits of Christ to cleanse all sin, to complete our salvation, to conquer all our enemies, to address all our objections, and to silence all charges and accusations against us.

Thirdly, because of the numerous experiences that many other grievous sinners have had of the same love and all-sufficiency. When faith observes a converted Manasseh, a thief transported into paradise, a persecutor transformed into an apostle, and contemplates that God still has an abundance of spirit, that the blood of Christ is an inexhaustible fountain, and that these demonstrations of God's compassion are presented in the Scriptures to offer hope through the patience and comfort of those Scriptures, it prompts introspection and a resolution to approach the same gate that others have entered before.

Fourthly, because there is a universality and inclusiveness in the invitation to come to Christ. "Come unto me, all that are weary." "Let everyone who will come." In Christ, an Office of Salvation has been established, a Heavenly Chancery of equity and mercy, not only to temper the severity but also to reverse and annul the very actions of the Law. Christ is openly presented as a Sanctuary and a standard for all nations to seek refuge in, and He has dispatched His Ambassadors to caution and invite everyone. Just as a fountain is open for anyone to drink from, a school is open for anyone to learn in, a city gate is open for anyone to enter, and a Court of Equity is open for anyone to seek relief, so Christ is publicly and universally offered as a general escape from impending wrath, on no other

condition than a willing heart that not only desires His mercy but is also willing to submit to His rule and glorify the power of His Spirit and Grace through new obedience.

Fifthly, because God Himself initiates both the work and the will in us. In the new Covenant, God takes the first step. In the old Covenant, man, by his inherent and natural strength, could work towards his own salvation and then expect God's fulfilment of the covenant. However, in the New Covenant, there are differences in the promises – from righteousness and salvation to forgiveness of sins and adoption; in the means or intermediaries, which are now Christ, His righteousness, and His Spirit; in the permanence, with the old covenant being perishable and the new one being eternal and unalterable; and in the conditions, where the old required legal obedience and the new demands only faith, with repentance as its inevitable outcome. Furthermore, there is a distinction in the manner of fulfilling these conditions: in this new Covenant, God Himself initiates His work within us before we even move or turn towards Him. He does not merely issue commands and leave us to our own natural strength to obey those commands; instead, He equips us with His own grace and Spirit to fulfil His commandments. When He calls us to come to Him, He also draws us towards Him. In this Covenant, the initial transaction occurs between God and Christ, even though the Covenant is between God and us. The negotiation and implementation of the Covenant take place between God and Christ, who acts as our surety within the Covenant. Initially, God, in His decree of Love, gave us to Christ. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them unto me." We were chosen in Him, to be His members, and He, in turn, became our Head and the source of all grace and glory. God entrusted Him with the power to redeem His Church, and He received a command from His Father to complete the work of mediation.

Secondly, being thus made Christ's, partly by the gift of God's eternal love, partly by Christ's voluntary assumption of the Office in which He was to be the Head and Captain of Salvation to His Members; God, at the appointed time, reveals Himself, His Name, Power, and Covenant to us: "I have manifested thy Name unto the men which thou gavest me," and this marks the offering of the Covenant and the beginning of an agreement with us. Here, God initiates His work in us: even though the Covenant is proposed with a condition, God provides us both with the condition and the Covenant. Our Faith is the result of God's operation and the work of His Power: what He requires from us, He also bestows upon us. The first work of God here is spiritual and heavenly teaching. The second is the outcome or product of that teaching, which I call God's work, not because we do nothing when we learn and come to Christ, but because everything we do is by the strength and grace that we receive from Him. We come to Christ as a child might come to its mother or nurse, who keeps the child at a distance and draws it closer when she calls. Just as we were made Christ's by God's gift – "Thou gavest them me" – we are later incorporated and unified with Him in His spirit, having the Spirit of Christ. Through this, He works in us both the will and the action. Thus, our seal is placed on God's covenant, and to some extent, we have confirmation of it within ourselves. Unbelief, on the other hand, makes God out to be a liar, either by saying that we seek life in some other way or that we have no reason to depend on Christ for it, even though God has presented Him as an all-sufficient Savior. So, when a person experiences God working this will in them, when they find their heart open to listen and their will ready to obey the call, when they desire to fear God's Name and are prepared to seek His face, and when they are willing to subscribe and bear witness to all God's ways and methods of salvation – that He is righteous in His judgments, wonderful in His patience, mighty in His power, wisdom, and mercy, unsearchable in the riches and treasures of Christ, most

holy, pure, and good in all His commands, the sovereign Lord of our persons and lives, to order and dispose them as He wills – upon the awareness and experience of these works, the decision and resolve to cleave to Christ arise.

Lastly, because this act of Faith is our duty to God: just as we come to Christ because we are called, we must also come because we are commanded. Just as Christ was commanded to save us, we are commanded to believe in Him. From these and similar considerations, a determination to rely on Christ emerges. However, this initial determination is very weak due to the mixture of sin, the insistent and persistent temptation of Satan, the inexperience of the heart in trials, the sensitivity of the spirit, and the fresh recognition and reflection on the state of sin. It coexists with much fear, doubt, unease, hesitation, and self-distrust. Therefore, while other effects flow to a significant extent from it, the effect of comfort and inner peace is weaker. This is because the heart is primarily occupied with spiritual debates, prayers, groans, conflicts, struggles of the heart, languishing and sighing supplications of the spirit, and is not at leisure to contemplate its own transformed state, or to reap a harvest of joy during the season of tears. Just as a newly planted tree is prone to bend at every touch or gust of wind, or newborn children cry at every turn and noise, those who are newly converted are usually more inclined to retain fearful impressions than those of comfort.

The final act of faith is the reflective act by which a person acknowledges their own faith and knowledge of Christ. This self-awareness of faith is the foundation of the joy and peace experienced by a Christian. It has different qualities and degrees depending on the clarity of this self-reflection. Just as beauty is more distinctly seen in a clear glass than in a blurry or distorted one, comfort is more evident and clear based on the degree of evidence and

assurance in one's faith. To conclude with this general principle: the firmer and more deeply rooted the habits of faith, the stronger, more consistent, and evident the acts of faith; the more frequent and successful the victories and experiences, the more apparent the properties of faith become. The measure and intensity of a specific emotion or effect always follow the perfection of the nature and cause from which it originates. Therefore, every individual who values their love and obedience to God, or who seeks comfort within themselves, must strive to attain the highest degree of faith and, like Saint Paul, continually grow in the knowledge of Him and His resurrection and sufferings. With these premises in mind, the heart should examine itself concerning the truth of faith within it. Do I love all divine truth, not because it aligns with my desires but because it conforms to God, the Author of it? Can I cast myself upon God's mercy in all situations without complaining, impatience, or rebellion, even if He were to take my life? Have I completely renounced all self-confidence, reliance on my own worthiness, or contribution to righteousness? Can I willingly, sincerely, and with truth in my heart, acknowledge all shame and condemnation, acquitting God as righteous and holy even if He were to reject me? Do I not base my hopes or fears on the opinions of others, making them or myself the standard or purpose of my desires? Do I offer and sincerely strive for universal obedience to all of God's laws, in their full extent and scope, without any exceptions or reservations? Is my obedience not motivated by self-interest but by sincerity? Do I not make excuses for the slightest sins, errant thoughts, occasions of offense, appearances of evil, lustful thoughts, idle words, and frivolous conversations, or anything that bears the semblance of sin? When I am overtaken by any of these, do I lament my weakness and renew my resolutions against them? In short, when I have impartially and honestly assessed my heart against this standard, does it not condemn me for self-deception, hypocrisy, pretense, and equivocation in God's

service? I can then conclude with confidence that my faith is, to some extent, operative and effective within me. However, I can further test it based on its nature, as expressed by the Apostle in the text: "That I may know Him."

Here, the nature of faith is described as an act of knowledge, limited to Christ in terms of justification. Eternal life, according to the scripture, is to know God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, where knowledge is understood as a certain and evident assent. Such assents come in two types: some are grounded in the evidence of the object and the light that the thing itself presents to the understanding. For example, I assent to the truth that the Sun is light based on the evidence of the thing itself. This kind of assent is distinguished from faith by the Apostle, who calls it sight. Others are grounded in the authority or authenticity of a narrator. When we rely on the narrator's report without evidence of the thing itself, the resulting assent is an act of faith or credence. It is universally acknowledged that faith involves a certain assent, even surpassing the certainty of natural conclusions. While we may sometimes falter due to our weakness and doubt, the essence of faith depends on the infallibility of God's Word, who has spoken it. Therefore, faith is nearer to the source of all truth and thus shares in the qualities of truth, namely, certainty and evidence, more than truths established by mere natural reason. Even scholars differentiate the assent produced by faith from suspicion, hesitation, or doubt. Therefore, as we are obliged to give evident assent to divine truths, it is essential that our understanding is convinced of two things. First, that God possesses infallible authority and cannot lie or deceive (a principle evident through natural reason). Second, that the authority we rely upon in faith is indeed and infallibly God's own authority.

The means by which I come to know may be either extraordinary, such as revelation, as was made by the Prophets concerning future events; or else ordinary and common to the faithful. The Papists claim that the authority of the Church is the means for this. If one were to dispute this, much could be said. Briefly (first granting to the Church a ministerial, introductory, persuasive, and guiding role in this work, like pointing to the star, which, although shining by its own light, is presented in such a way that its light reaches and is exhibited to me, explaining the evidence of those truths to which I assent for their intrinsic certainty), I would like to ask: how does each person come to believe? The humblest worker will quickly respond, "As the Church believes." But now, how or why does the Church believe these or those truths to be divine? Surely not because the Church has so determined it; even our Saviour Himself would not be believed on such grounds, for He said, "If I bear record of myself, my record is not true." Well then, the Church must necessarily believe through the Spirit that leads it into all truth. And what is the Church if not the Body of Christ, the congregation of the faithful, consisting of diverse members? What is the work by which the Spirit illuminates and elevates the understanding to perceive divine truth correctly, if not that "Ointment which dwelleth in you," as the Apostle says, by which Christ's sheep are enabled to hear His voice in matters of a more heavenly and fundamental nature, and to distinguish it from the voice of strangers?

Now, do all the faithful have this anointing? Does it not flow from the head to the skirts of the garment? Are we not all a royal priesthood? And in both these respects, are we not anointed by the Spirit? Having all received the Spirit (though in varying measures and degrees), is it not likely that we have also received those life-giving and enlightening operations that come with Him? The poorest member of Christ's Church, once grown to maturity, is capable of gaining

knowledge in the faith. Therefore, it is strange that the Spirit, not leaving me destitute of other life-giving graces, would leave my soul to travel as far as Rome to seek that knowledge by candlelight, or rather by an ignis fatuus, which He could more evidently make known to me. For the Spirit begets knowledge. "We have received the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God." And again, "Hereby we know that we dwell in Him and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit." And again, "Hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us." Especially since we must rely on even the determinations of the Church and Pope (even if they were infallible in themselves) secondhand, as they pass through the mouth of a Priest, whose authority is not infallible or apostolic but human. It is impossible that he may not misreport His holy Father and, by that means, misguide and delude an unsettled soul.

Again, I ask, how does it appear to me that the judgment of the Church is infallible when it alone serves as the basis for my faith? That this is not a self-evident principle or immediately clear to natural reason from the evidence of its terms is certain. For the idea that this group of men cannot err, while other groups of men may err, cannot possibly be immediately and self-evidently clear, as there must first be some internal difference discovered between these men, from which the difference between erring and not erring must necessarily arise as a prior principle.

Now, I ask, what is it that makes me assent to this proposition (assuming it were true) that the Church cannot err? It cannot be the Church itself, for nothing can bear witness to itself, and if it did, the proof would be more ridiculous than the opinion itself, as it would be circular reasoning and a begging of the question. Above the Church, a priori, there is nothing but the Scriptures and the Spirit. Therefore,

by these means, I must assent to at least that one proposition. And if I can assent to that through these means, then why can't I assent to all other divine truths through the same light? It's evident that the same light which enables me to rightly understand one object is sufficient for any other object that requires a lesser light. So, true faith has its evidence and certainty grounded in the authority of the word as the instrument and the Spirit of God, which raises and quickens the soul to attend to and acknowledge the things revealed therein and to set its own seal on the truth and goodness of them.

But how do I know that this word is God's Word or that this Spirit is God's Spirit, especially when there are many false and lying spirits? Firstly, there are many individual Churches and Bishops that consider themselves to be members and Bishops of the universal Church just as much as Rome does. How can it be invincibly proven to my conscience that all other Churches and Bishops except for this one may err, and that this one, which asks me to believe in its infallibility, is not itself a heretical and apostate Church? This is a contested question. By what authority can it be decided, or into what principles a priori can it be resolved? And how will the evidence of those principles appear to the conscience? Whether the Popes are successors of Peter in his see of Rome, whether they are doctrinal as well as personal successors, whether Peter sat as a moderator of the Catholic Church in Rome, whether his infallibility should apply to his chair in Antioch as well as in Rome, whether Christ gave him a principality, jurisdiction, and apostleship to have over all others and to leave to his successors (who, though they may be otherwise private men and not the authors of the Holy Ghost, should still have power over those Apostles who survived Peter, as it is evident that John did) - all of these points are controversial. Although there is an abundance of sorcery in the Church of Rome, I doubt whether they

have enough to conjure themselves out of the circular reasoning posed by these questions.

Secondly, there are various lights; there is light in the Sun, and there is light in a blazing or falling star. How do I differentiate between these lights, you may ask? Surely, I can only do so by examining the lights themselves. Undoubtedly, the Spirit imparts a distinctive and uncommunicable majesty and lustre to the soul, which cannot be counterfeited by any false spirit. This Spirit first opens the eyes and then the Word, and reveals the marks of truth and certainty in it, which are as clear as the light that is discerned by itself without any other medium.

So, in general, we see that saving faith is an assent created by the Word and Spirit. It's important to note that this knowledge is twofold: first, general, mental, and speculative, which is simply necessary as a medium, degree, and passage to saving faith because how can one believe without a teacher? Second, particular, practical, and applicative, which directs the soul to Christ and anchors it there. For example, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life; we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ." "I know that my Redeemer liveth." "That ye being rooted and grounded in Love, may be able to comprehend, and to know the Love of Christ." "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many." This saving knowledge must correspond to the object known and to the purposes for which it is instituted, which are to make Christ ours for righteousness and salvation. Christ is not presented as an object of mere and naked truth to be assented to but as a sovereign and saving truth to do good to humanity. Christ is proposed as the Desire of all flesh. The heart is the one that believes; "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness," and Christ dwells in the heart "by

faith." "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest be baptized." The heart not only seeks truth but goodness in the objects it desires, seeking an all-sufficiency and adequate foundation for the full satisfaction of the soul's desires. It looks for such a compass of goodness that the whole person can rely on it and possess it personally. In summary, faith is a particular assent to the truth and goodness of God in Christ, His sufferings and resurrection, as an all-sufficient and open treasury of righteousness and salvation for everyone who comes to them. It involves a resolution of the heart to anchor itself there and to seek no further.

Now, this faith is called knowledge. Firstly, in regard to its principles, the Word and the Spirit, both of which produce faith through conviction and manifestation. Secondly, in regard to the ground of believing, which is the knowledge of God's revealed will. No one should dare to demand or receive anything from God until He has revealed His will to give it; "He hath said" must be the foundation of our faith. Thirdly, in regard to the certainty and unquestionable nature of the faith's assent. Abraham was fully persuaded of God's power and promise. Now, there are two kinds of certainty: certainty regarding the thing believed, based on the power and promise of the One who has spoken it, and certainty within the believing mind. The former is as full and sure to one believer as to any other, just as alms are as certainly and fully given to one poor man who receives them with a trembling and shaky hand as they are to another who receives them with greater strength. However, one person's mind may be more certain and assured than another's, or even more certain than it is at some other time. Sometimes it may have a certainty of evidence, assurance, and full persuasion of God's goodness, while at other times it may have only a certainty of adherence. In the midst of the assaults of Satan and strong temptations, the believing mind resolves to cling to God in Christ, even though it walks in darkness

and has no light. Fourthly, and finally, in regard to the last reflexive act by which we know that we know Him and believe in Him. Yet both this and all the rest are capable of growth, as the Apostle here intimates. We know here only in part, and therefore our knowledge of Him may still increase. The heart may have a more abundant experience of God's mercy in comforting, guiding, defending, enlightening, and sanctifying it, which the Scripture calls "the learning of Christ." Therefore, it cannot help but desire to have more knowledge of Him and communion with Him, especially in the two great benefits of His resurrection and sufferings.

"And the power of His resurrection." The Apostle's desire in these words is twofold. Firstly, that he may experience the workings of that power in his soul, which was demonstrated in Christ's resurrection from the dead. This power is the Spirit of Holiness, which is the mighty principle of faith in the heart. The same Spirit of Holiness that quickened Christ from the dead also begets faith and other graces in the soul. It is as great a work of the Spirit to form Christ in the heart of a sinner as it was to fashion Him in the womb of a virgin.

Secondly, so that He may experience the power of Christ's resurrection within Himself. Now, Christ's resurrection has a twofold impact on us or towards us. First, it applies all His merits to us, accomplishes the work of His satisfaction, demonstrates His victory over death, and presents Himself as an all-sufficient Savior to the faithful. Just as a stamp adds no intrinsic value to a piece of gold but only makes it actually applicable and valid, so Christ's resurrection, while not part of the price or satisfaction He made, gave force to all His merits for His members. Therefore, the Apostle says that Christ was justified in Spirit. In His death, He suffered like a criminal and took on the guilt of our sins (in the sense of being subject to punishment, not deserving punishment). But by the Spirit that raised

Him from the dead, He justified Himself, meaning He declared to the world that He had completely shaken off all guilt and left it in His grave along with His burial clothes. Just as Christ's righteousness is compared to a triumphant robe, our guilt can be compared to a garment of death, which Christ, in His resurrection, completely shook off, signifying that death had no hold on Him. When Lazarus was raised, it is said that he came forth bound hand and foot with grave clothes, indicating that he did not emerge as a victor over death, to which he was to return. But when Christ rose, He left those clothes behind because death had no more power over Him. Through His resurrection, He was declared to have endured the full punishment He was to suffer for sin, and having thus justified Himself, He demonstrated His ability to justify others who believed in Him. This is why the Apostle uses these words to prove the resurrection of Christ: "I will give you the sure mercies of David," for none of God's mercies would have been certain for us if Christ had remained under the power of death. Our faith would have been in vain, and we would still be in our sins. But since His work was fully completed, the mercy that followed was made certain, and, as the Apostle says, sure to all the seed. Just as the day on which redemption is victorious and consummated is called the day of redemption, so the work in which Christ's merits were declared victorious is said to have been for our justification because they were thereby made applicable for that purpose.

The second work of the power of Christ's resurrection is to overcome all death in us and restore us to life. Therefore, He is called the Lord of the living and the Prince of life to signify that His life is operative in others. By His resurrection, we are first secured against the death and condemnation of the Law under which we were held, for every transgression is already condemned. When Christ was condemned for sin, He delivered us from the death of the Law, which is its curse.

So even though we may still wear some of the grave clothes, subject to the influences and fears of the Law on certain occasions, its curse has been forever removed. Secondly, we are safeguarded against the death of sin, being regenerated, quickened, renewed, and transformed by the power of godliness, which subdues our rebellions, tames our corruptions, and redirects all our affections. Thirdly, we are protected against the grip and conquest of death in the grave, from which we shall be translated to glory. A foreshadowing of this was seen at the resurrection of Christ when the graves were opened, and many bodies of saints who had died were raised and entered into the city. Just as a prince, during his inauguration or solemn state, opens prisons and releases many who were held captive to honour the occasion, so did Christ at His resurrection with those saints, assuring all His followers of their victory over the ultimate enemy.

What a fearful condition then are all men out of Christ in, who will have no share in His resurrection? They will indeed rise, but only by His power as their Judge, not in fellowship with Him as the first fruits and the firstborn from the dead. Therefore, their resurrection will not be properly, or at least not comfortably, a resurrection, just as a condemned person going from prison to execution cannot be called liberation. Both Pharaoh's butler and baker left the prison, but only one was delivered. Similarly, both the righteous and the wicked will appear before Christ and be raised from their graves, but not all will be Children of the Resurrection; this privilege belongs only to the righteous. The wicked will be eternally dead to all the pleasures and sinful ways they indulged in during their earthly lives. Just as a drunkard or adulterer, after all their youthful excesses, is left with nothing but ailments, decay, diseases, and a guilty conscience, the wicked will carry no worldly satisfactions or pleasures of lust with them to hell. Their glory will not accompany them. These truths are

clearly stated in the Scriptures: First, that none outside of Christ will rise to glory. Secondly, that all those in Christ are cleansed from the love and power of sin, made obedient to His sceptre, and have been given the ability to see beauty only in His kingdom. Thirdly, it is evident that no unclean thing will rise to glory. A prince, on the day of his coronation or during any royal celebration, would not allow beggars or base companions into his presence. His eyes are too pure to behold, let alone to commune with, unclean individuals. Only the pure in heart will see God. Fourthly, it is clear that every wicked person becomes progressively worse; the one who is filthy becomes even more corrupt, and sin hardens the heart, while unbelief hastens one's destruction. Thus, the conclusion is evident: every unrepentant sinner who allows himself to continue in a course of impurity without any inward hatred or resolve to turn from sin, wasting all their time and strength on nothing but accumulating coals of juniper against their own soul, gathers a treasure of sins and wrath, like an infinite pile of wood to burn themselves.

Furthermore, the power of Christ's resurrection is a source of solid and unshakable comfort to the faithful in the face of any dire trials or calamities, no matter how desperate they may seem, because God has the power and has promised to raise them up again. This provides sufficient support, firstly, against both public and private afflictions. No matter how much the Church appears to be reduced to an irreparable state, like dried bones in a grave or wood consumed by fire, it will only be a temporary darkness, for "after two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him." God's interventions in the defence of His Church are as sure as the dawn. When Job was sitting in his misery on a dungheap with his loins consumed, when Jonah was at the bottom of the mountains, enveloped in seaweed, and the deep waters seemed to engulf him, when David was plagued by troubles, and Hezekiah was in great

bitterness, the only comfort they had was the power of God to raise to life again. Secondly, it provides solace against all temptations and discouragements. Satan's schemes and tactics come too late once Christ has risen from the dead, for His resurrection liberates the Church. Thirdly, it provides solace against death itself, as we will emerge from our graves like gold from the fire or miners from their pits, laden with glory and honour in the end.

Lastly, we must learn from this to seek the things that are above, where Christ is. Christ's kingdom is not of this world, and therefore our hearts should not be set on earthly things. He has ascended on high and has given gifts to men, like absent lovers who send tokens to each other to attract affection and call to mind their thoughts. If Christ wanted our hearts to rest on the earth, He would have stayed with us here, but His will is for us to be where He is. Therefore, we must make it the primary goal of our lives to move towards Him. Things of a similar nature incline towards each other, even to their detriment. A stone will naturally fall towards its centre, even if there are many obstacles along the way that will break it into pieces during the descent. So should be the resolution of a Christian. Christ is his centre, and Heaven is his homeland, and thus he must determine to go there, even if he is broken by manifold temptations and afflictions along the way. Saint Paul desired, if possible, to be clothed with immortality and to have his mortality swallowed up by life, longing to arrive whole in Heaven. But if he cannot attain it on such favourable terms, he will not only endure but will confidently desire to be dissolved and broken into pieces by any means, as long as he may come to Christ. That, being the best of all, will be more than sufficient compensation for any temporary losses. It is not a loss but a marriage and an honour for a woman to forsake her own family and home to join her husband. Likewise, it is not a loss but a

promotion for the soul to leave the body temporarily so that it may be with Christ, who has forever joined it to Himself in marriage.

"And the fellowship of his sufferings"] This fellowship denotes two things: Firstly, participation in the benefits of his sufferings; Secondly, conformity of ours to his. First, His sufferings are Ours; we were buried and Crucified with him, and this indicates two things. First, we share in the Price of Christ's Death, covering the guilt of sin, satisfying the wrath of God, and being an Expiation and propitiation for us. Secondly, in the Power of his Death, cleansing our Consciences from dead works, mortifying our earthly members, crucifying our old man, subduing our iniquities and corruptions, pulling down the throne of Satan, stripping him of all his armour, and destroying the works of the Devil. This power works, first, through the prophetic office of Christ, Revealing; secondly, through his Regal office, applying and extending the power of his blood to subdue sin, as it had previously triumphed over death and Satan.

But the main point and question here will be what this mighty power of the Death of Christ is, which kills sin in us, and wherein its Causality lies? To this I answer that Christ's Death is a threefold Cause of the death of sin in his members.

First, It is *Causa meritoria*, a meritorious Cause. Christ's death was such a great price that it deserved from God the subjugation of our sins. All power and Judgment were given to him by his Father, and that power was given to him to purchase his Church. This was one of the conditions of the covenant, that their sins should be Crucified. He gave himself to God's Justice for his Church, and what he purchased by that gift was its sanctification and cleansing. As a price is said to do what a man does through the power that the price purchased, so the blood of Christ is said to cleanse us because the

office or power by which he purifies us was conferred upon him under the condition of suffering. Remission and purification had to be achieved through blood.

Secondly, it is *Causa exemplaris*, the death of Christ was the exemplar pattern and idea of our death to sin. He bore our sins in his Body on the tree to show that just as his Body naturally died, so sin died by analogy and legally. Therefore, the Apostle says that he was made sin for us to indicate that not only were our persons accounted Crucified with him for Justification, but that sin itself was also nailed to his Cross for mortification and holiness. In this respect, Saint Paul says that he condemned sin in the flesh because he died as sin in the abstract. Thus, in terms of mortification, we are said to be planted in the likeness of Christ's Death because, just as when an ambassador solemnizes the marriage of his king with a foreign princess, the true effect is between the parties themselves, transacted by the agent and representative person for that purpose and with the authority to do so: similarly, Christ, being made sin for us (as the Sacrifice had the sins of the people laid upon it) and in that capacity, dying, sin itself also dies in us. There is a correspondence between the Death of the Cross that Christ died and the death of sin in us. Christ died as a Servant to signify that sin should not rule but should be brought into slavery and bondage. He died a Curse to indicate that we should regard sin as accursed and devoted, and therefore we should not, like Achan, hide or reserve any of it. He drank vinegar on the Cross to signify that we should make sin feel the sharpness of God's displeasure against it. He was firmly nailed to the Cross to show that we should not provide any comfort to sin and should leave no lust or corruption unrestrained but crucify the entire body of sin. Lastly, although he did not die immediately, he hung there until he died to signify that we should never stop subduing sin while it has any life or

activity in us. Thus, the Death of Christ is the model for the death of sin.

Thirdly, It is Causa Obiectiva, an impelling or moving cause like objects are. Objects have an attractive power. Achan saw the wedge of gold, and then coveted it. David saw Bathsheba, and then desired her. Therefore, the apostle mentions "Lusts of the Eye," which are kindled by the things of the world. Just as the strength of imagination, fixated on a blackamoor on the wall, made the woman bring forth a black child; there is a kind of spiritual imaginative power in faith that crucifies sin by looking upon Christ Crucified. Just as the Brazen Serpent healed those who had been bitten by the fiery serpents by faith, merely by being looked upon; Christ Crucified heals sin by being looked upon with the eyes of faith. Now faith looks upon Christ crucified and bleeding. Firstly, as the gift of His father's love, as a token and spectacle of more unsearchable and transcendent mercy than the comprehension of the whole host of angels can reach. Hereby the heart is overwhelmed with love and a grateful desire to return all our time, parts, powers, and services to Him, who did not spare the son of His own love for us. Secondly, it looks on Him as a sacrifice for Sin and Expiation thereof to God's Justice. Hereby the heart is moulded into a humble fear of reproaching, voiding, or nullifying the Death of Christ through the continuance in sin, effectively crucifying the Lord Jesus again. It becomes more acutely aware in the sufferings of Christ of the infinite guilt and hellish filthiness inherent in sin, which brought such great punishment upon such a great person. From this grows a more profound hatred of sin and vigilance against it, seeing it as a greater enemy to his Jesus than Judas who betrayed Him, or the Pharisees who accused Him, or the soldiers who crucified Him; sin is seen as more harmful to the soul of Christ than the nails or spears that pierced His sacred body. The faithful soul thinks, "How can I dare to

live in those sins, by which I may be as truly labelled a betrayer and Crucifier of Him who saved me, as Judas or Pilate were?" Thirdly, it looks on Him as Our Forerunner into Glory, whom He trod not upon but by the way of blood. From this, the heart readily concludes, if Christ did not enter into His own glory except through suffering, how can I enter into that glory, which is none of mine, if I do not shed the blood of my lusts and take steps to crucify them before I go?

Therefore, no one can conclude that Christ died for him if he does not find himself set against the life of sin within him, in whom the body of corruption is not so lessened that it no longer rules to waste his conscience or enrage his heart. If a man grows worse and worse, his heart harder, his conscience more senseless, his resolutions more desperate, his prayers more lifeless, his ways more carnal and worldly than before; certainly, the fellowship and virtue of the blood of Christ have thus far done little good to such a man. How woeful it is for a man to live and die in a state much more miserable than if there had never been any Jesus given to men! For that man who has heard of Christ, at whose heart He has knocked, to whose conscience He has been revealed, and yet never believes in Him for righteousness or sanctification but lives and dies in his filthiness, shall be punished with a far severer condemnation than those of Tyre, Sidon, or Sodom who knew nothing of Him. Therefore, let us labour to show forth the power of Christ's Death, and that He did not die in vain for us. Though we cannot yet entirely kill, let us crucify our corruptions, weaken their vigour, diminish their rage, dispossess them of the throne in our hearts, and put them to shame. Inasmuch as Christ has suffered for sin, let us cease from sin and live the rest of our lives not to the will of the flesh or the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

The second part of our fellowship in sufferings with Christ is the conformity of ours to His. In all our afflictions, He is afflicted, and Saint Paul calls His sufferings the filling up of that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ. Not as if Christ's sufferings were imperfect (for by one offering He has perfected forever those who are sanctified). But as Christ had personal sufferings in His own human body as Mediator, which He finished once and for all, so He had general sufferings in His mystical body, in His Church, as a member with the rest.

Now, concerning these sufferings of the Church, we must note that they do not conform to Christ's in these two things. First, not in office, in the office of Christ's sufferings, for His were meritorious and satisfactory, while ours are only ministerial and for edification. Secondly, not in weight and measure, not as bitter, heavy, and woeful as Christ's were. For Christ's sufferings, if imposed on any other creature, would have crushed them as low as Hell and swallowed them up forever. In other respects, there is a conformity of our sufferings to Christ's, so that He considers them His.

Our sufferings are: First, such as we bring upon ourselves through our own folly, and even in these afflictions, which Christ as the Sovereign over His people inflicts upon them, yet as their Head and fellow member, He sympathizes and, as it were, shares the pain with them. For Christ is so full of tenderness and so acquainted with sorrows that we may rightly imagine Him touched with the feeling of those pains, which He Himself sees as necessary for them. Secondly, such as are imposed by God for the trial and exercise of the graces He Himself gives us. In these, we have a twofold communion and conformity to Christ. First, by association, Christ gives us His Spirit to bear the same burden with us and to support us with His strength. The Spirit of Holiness by which Christ overcame His sufferings helps

us in ours. Secondly, in the manner of enduring them, with a measure of the same meekness and patience that Christ showed in His sufferings. Thirdly, such as are brought upon us by the injustices of Satan and wicked people. These also bear conformity to Christ's sufferings in the two previous respects and, thirdly, in the cause of them, for it is Christ alone, in His members, whom Satan and the world persecute. All the enmity between them exists because of the seed of the woman. If Christ were among us now in the humble form of a servant and in a lowly state as He once was, and He were to convict people of their wickedness as piercingly as He once did, undoubtedly, He would be the most hated person on Earth. Now that He is perceived as God in glory, people deal with Him as Joab did with Abner: they outwardly profess His Name and Worship with kisses and flattery, but they stab and persecute Him out of hatred for His ways and His followers. This is the primary reason why many hesitate to fully embrace Christ and His ways. When they are truly part of His body, they must follow His path to Heaven, which is a path of suffering. Those who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus must endure persecution and be considered signs and wonders to be spoken against, not only among pagans and professed enemies of the Truth but even among the people of Israel, those who outwardly make the same profession.

But this should comfort us in all our sufferings for Christ's sake and for our obedience to His Gospel: we drink from our master's own cup; we fill up that which is lacking in His afflictions. Christ Himself was called a Samaritan, a Devil, a wine-bibber; He was entrapped, spied upon, snared, and slain. The One who is now our Captain to lead us will be our Crown to reward us in the future. We can safely claim Christ's heritage as our own. First, we have fellowship with Christ in our sufferings, and if it were possible, it would be better to

be in Hell with Christ than in Heaven without Him, for His presence would make any place a Heaven, just as a King's presence turns any place into a court. Secondly, we have Christ's strength to bear our sufferings. Thirdly, we have His victories to overcome them. Fourthly, we have His Intercession to preserve us from falling away in them. Fifthly, we have His Graces to be glorified all the more by our sufferings, like a torch that shines brighter when shaken. Sixthly, we have His compassion to moderate and proportion our sufferings to the measure of strength He gives us. Lastly, we have His Crown on our heads, His Palm branches in our hands, His triumphal Garments upon us, when we have endured our share of them. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

FINIS.

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