

Monergism



CHRIST'S EXALTATION

PURCHASED BY HUMILIATION

R I C H A R D S I B B E S

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RICHARD SIBBES

Christ's Exaltation Purchased by Humiliation

by Richard Sibbes

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SERMON I:

CHRIST'S EXALTATION PURCHASED BY HUMILIATION

For, for this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.—ROM. 14:9.

THE dependence of these words upon the former I take to be this: The scope of the apostle in this chapter is to stay the rigid censures of others concerning weaker Christians, especially about matters of indifferency, or at the least of a less nature. In the 6th verse, saith he, 'He that regards not a day, regards it not, to the Lord he that eats,

eats to the Lord; and he that eats not to the Lord, he eats not, and gives God thanks,' &c. His reason is this: they that in eating or in not eating do it with a religious respect to the Lord; if they eat, it is to the Lord; if they eat not, it is to the Lord; that is, in obedience to the Lord. They are to be borne withal, because they do it with religious respects. Though perhaps there may be a little error in the matter, yet there be some things of such indifferency that they [do] not give denomination to the action, if it be to the Lord. Howsoever the action be not altogether to be excused, yet the person is to be excused, and is not to be hardly censured. Therefore considering that they* do it, and they that do it not, do it to the Lord, be not hasty in your censures.

Quest. How doth he prove that these holy Christians did eat or not eat to the Lord?

Ans. From this, because they were the Lord's. They that are the Lord's, they live to him, and die to him; and therefore they do particular actions to him. 'No man,' ver. 7, 'lives to himself, nor no man dieth to himself,' which includes all particular actions. 'Whether we live, we live to the Lord; or whether we die, we die to the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.' He proves therefore that they do eat or not eat to the Lord, if they be good Christians, because they are the Lord's.

Those that are the Lord's live to the Lord, and do all particular actions to the Lord. Such must not be harshly censured, because they are the servants of the Lord.

Quest. In the third place, How doth he prove that they are the Lord's that live and die to him?

Ans. He proves it from the main ground in the text: 'For, for this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.' So you see the dependence of the

reason, they eat or eat not to the Lord. Why? 'Because they are the Lord's.'

But how is it they are the Lord's? It is the end of the three actions of Christ here. 'Christ died, and rose again, and revived, for this end, that he might be the Lord of the dead and of the living.' So you see the connection of these words with the former.

In the words you have *argumentum et argumenti ratio*, the argument, and the reasoning from the argument; the ground, and the inference from the ground. The ground is: 'Christ died, and rose again, and revived.' What is the inference from that? 'That he might be Lord of the dead and of the living.'

In the words therefore we will consider the argument itself, and the ground itself, and then the inference.

'For, for this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived.'

There are three branches of the ground.

Christ died, rose, revived.

Of the inference we will speak afterwards, and shew how these grounds enforce that inference, that he should be 'Lord both of the dead and of the living.'

'Christ died.'

1. First of all, you must know that Christ died here as a public person, or else the inference were not good. Christ took upon him the person of no man, but the nature; for this end, that he might be a public person. If Christ had taken the person of any body, there had been two persons of Christ. He had died in one person and not in another. Now having the nature that is common to all men, and not the person of Peter or James, &c., when he died the person died in that nature wherein he might die; so when it is said, 'Christ died,' we

must consider Christ as a public person, not taking the particular person of any man, but the general nature of man into union with the second person. Christ died as a public person.

2. Secondly, Christ died as the 'second Adam.' The spring of all misery and death was from the 'first Adam,' but the 'second Adam' was a quickening Spirit, 1 Cor. 15:45. He died as a public person, and the 'second Adam.'

We must know, moreover, that he died as the great High Priest of the church, offering to God the Father a sacrifice that made him Lord over all, as we shall see after. He died as a priest, as indeed he that was foresignified by all the sacrifices and priests. He was both priest and sacrifice: Heb. 9:14, 'By the eternal Spirit, the Godhead, he offered himself to his Father.'

3. Again, He died a voluntary death, for else he had not died in obedience. His death was violent in regard of them that forced it, but it was voluntary in regard of them that he offered himself for, as a sweet sacrifice to his Father. That voluntariness made his death a sweet sacrifice; for whatsoever the Father did to him, he joined with the Father in it. The Father gave him; he gave himself. The Father appointed him to be so and so; and he joined with the Father in all things. 'No man takes away my life from me,' saith he himself, John 10:18. It was a voluntary death in regard of his freedom; nay, he thirsted after it, as you have it in the Gospel. He longed after it, upon high considerations, howsoever in a lower consideration, as it was a tormenting thing and a bitter cup, he had a desire that it might pass; but it was upon lower respects. Upon higher respects, the will of his Father and the salvation of mankind, he thirsted to drink of that cup.*

A man may will and nill the same thing upon presenting different objects and respects, and reasons. That which a man may decline, as we say, in this respect, looking to a particular end, that a man may desire, looking to a higher end; because man is framed so to yield to

the stronger reason alway. Thereupon that is no objection, 'he seemed sometime a little unwilling.' It was looking upon something presented to him that made him in that respect unwilling; but looking upon other respects he gave himself willingly; the Father and he joined together.

And therefore by the way, when they talk of the active and passive obedience, there was action in all his passion'; chiefly in his passion there was action; for if it had been mere suffering without voluntary obedience, what obedience had that been? A beast may so suffer, but against his will; but his voluntary obedience was the chief in all his passion. 'He humbled himself to the death of the cross,' as it is Phil. 2:8.

4. Yet further, as he died voluntary, so he died as our surety. Therefore he died a 'cursed death' due to us. 'He was made a curse for us,' Gal. 3:13, that he might remove the curse from us. These and such like conclusions must be observed in this, that the apostle saith, 'To this end Christ died,' because we shall have use of them afterwards.

Here we might stay and admire, † that life should die! that glory should become shame for us! and that he that is the author of all blessing should become a curse! Indeed, it is a great mystery that Christ, being God, should stoop so low that he could join together the infinite majesty of God, and that low degree of abasement, that he might condescend unto. *Domine quo descendis, &c.*: Lord, how far goest thou? (a) He could not go lower and be God. God, to shew his love to us, shewed himself God in this, that he could be God and go so low as to die; and not only to die, but to die a shameful and cursed death for us. But I pass to the particulars.

'For this end Christ both died and rose,' &c.

1. He rose again; and indeed it was impossible but he should rise again, because he is the Lord of life. Now the Lord of life, and life

itself, could not long die. It was but by dispensation that he died, viz., to work our salvation. But he could not be detained any longer by the sorrows of death. He died therefore, and rose. He rose, even as he died. He rose a public person, and as a 'second Adam,' to give and infuse spiritual life into all his branches. He rose as our surety in our room. He rose in spite of the Jews, that laboured to keep him down all they could. By the way, this shews that he will rise in his church, and in his children, in his religion, and in his cause. Let the world and all the devils in hell lay a stone upon Christ, upon his cause, and church, and children; they will rise again, even as his blessed body did, in spite of all the watchfulness of the Jews.

2. Again, As he rose, so he rose with many; not alone, to shew, as I said before, that he rose as a public person. Another man riseth as himself; the rest rise not with him as caused by his rising. But Christ rose as a public person. Therefore many rose with him, Mat. 27:53. The graves were opened to shew that he rose as a public person, as our surety, as a spiritual head, and as the 'second Adam,' who could infuse life into others (b). What became of those bodies that rose with him after? The Scripture saith nothing of it; nor what became of Moses's body. They rose to do God a service and Christ an honour, which when they had done they were content to be disposed of by God again, and, it is likely, to return from whence they came. For if the head of the church himself was content to come from heaven into the virgin's womb, and from thence to the cross, and from thence to the grave, and to be abased for us, those that have the Spirit of Christ, those blessed souls in heaven, might well be content for a time to be abased, to take bodies, to do a service for their Lord and Master, who was content to forego heaven thirty-four years, and the glory due to him.

Therefore by the way, if God will use us, though we be never so great, for a particular service to the church, shall we stand upon it, when the blessed saints in heaven, those blessed souls, were content to come and take bodies for a time, to do God service, and then to sleep again?

3. Again, He rose on that day which was ever after, and well may still be, called the Lord's day; for a new world began with his rising, therefore a new Sabbath. Saint John saith, 'I was in the Spirit upon the Lord's day,' Rev. 1:10. If a man be ever in the Spirit, it is upon the Lord's day, when the Lord of the day doth honour his people, giving them to enjoy his ordinances, and joining effectually with them, maketh them full of the Spirit, and raiseth up our dead hearts after him.

'And revived.'

Why is this added to rising again? 'He revived.'

1. To shew that he rose never to die again, and that indeed he never meant to lay aside that body again, as once he had, to die for us. Consonant hereunto is that Rev. 1:18, 'Behold, I was dead and am alive, and I live for evermore; I have the keys of death and of hell.' He lives for evermore, as Heb. 7:25, 'He sits for evermore at the right hand of God, there making intercession for us.' He dies no more.

2. Again, This 'revived' is added to shew the kind of his life, differing from that life he lived before. That life he lived before he died, was supported with meat and drink and refreshings, even as our poor lives are. It was a life subject to death that he died in, but after his resurrection, except it were for a particular dispensation, to confirm the faith of his disciples, he needed no more to eat or drink or sleep, or any natural supports and helps; for he was enlivened immediately by the Spirit of God which flowed into him. He was full of the Spirit, and that did supply all other things whatsoever. Even as in heaven, 'God shall be all in all,' 1 Cor. 15:28; that is, he shall be so immediately to us, to supply all, as we shall neither eat nor drink nor sleep, nor have magistrates nor ministers; but the Spirit of God will be all in all; so it was with this life of our blessed Saviour when he revived. The Spirit supplied the absence of all other supports whatsoever that he used before he died. And indeed our Saviour Christ came to bestow that life upon us that he lived after his

resurrection; not this natural life of ours, that needs meat and drink and refreshings. This is not that life that Christ specially aimed at when he came to die, but that spiritual and eternal life that he lived after the resurrection; a life not subject to death; a spiritual life, not needing any created support whatsoever.

You see the grounds; the inference from these grounds follow in these words, 'that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.' The ground hath three branches: death, resurrection, and reviving. How all these do flow and give strength to this inference, I will touch in the particulars. First, then, Christ died 'that he might be Lord of the dead and of the living,'

Christ died, 1 Peter 1:18, to offer himself a sacrifice, to redeem us by his precious blood. 'We are not redeemed with gold or silver, but with the blood of Christ.' He could not be our Lord till he had bought us. Now his death was the price of our redemption; I say 'redemption,' not 'emption.' A thing may be bought that was never sold away before. Now we were sold to Satan, and under a contrary government. Now Christ satisfying divine justice redeems us. He buys us again. We had subjected ourselves to the devil, and put ourselves under his regiment,* till we were ransomed by Christ. Now Christ shall have no right to us till the price be paid to divine justice; for mercy must have justice satisfied; the attributes of God must not fight one against another. Christ, therefore, is Lord of us, because by death he gave full content to divine justice. So that now, notwithstanding justice, yet we are Christ's, and are saved. Nay, now the justice of God helps us. The most terrible attribute, justice, is a ground of comfort, for it stands not with justice to have the same debt paid twice. For God is just and faithful, saith the apostle, 1 John 1:9. So then you see there is a ground from death why we are the Lord's. We are Christ's because we cost him dear. He hath paid a price for us that is worth more than the whole world. Now God shewed his love in nothing more than in this, that he parted with that that is next himself, the greatest, his Son, who being God, yet died, in

that nature that could die, to redeem us, and hereupon becometh Lord.

2. Secondly, He rose again, therefore 'he is Lord of the quick and the dead.'

(1.) First, Because his rising again was a manifestation that his death was a full satisfaction to divine justice, or else our sins should have kept him in the grave still, he being our surety. But our surety being out of prison, it is a sign he hath fully discharged all our debt, and the price is paid. If the surety and the creditor be agreed, we know the debt is paid.

(2.) Secondly, In that he rose again, he is Lord, because in rising again he entered into the possession and exercise of that Lordship that he had purchased. The right is one thing, and the use and possession of the right is another. Christ was Lord of us before he died. He was Lord of us when he died. But he did not enter into possession of his Lordship till he rose again. Therefore he saith, 'All power is given to me, both in heaven and earth,' Mat. 28:18, when he was ready to go up to heaven, to shew that by his resurrection the right he had by death was manifest.

(3.) Lastly, Because his rising again shewed that the Father was fully pacified. He obtained the gift of the Spirit, which next Christ himself is the greatest gift. God gave his Son first, and then the Spirit that comes from the Father and the Son. The Spirit was not given till his resurrection and ascension, as it is John 6; 7:39. Why? Because till all enemies were fully subdued by his death, and witnessed to be subdued by his resurrection, the Spirit could not be so fully given, the Spirit being a declaration of the good will of God that sent it. Now when the enemies of Christ were triumphed over, and God had shewed by the raising of his Son again, that he was fully satisfied, then the Spirit comes as the Son[†] of God's favour, which Spirit doth enable us to be subject to Christ, and makes us come under Christ's kingdom, which is a spiritual government. Wherefore because he

obtained the Spirit for his members upon his resurrection, thereupon is the inference good. He rose again, therefore he is Lord 'of the quick and of the dead.'

3. Thirdly, He revived; therefore he is Lord of the quick and of the dead. Reviving and taking such a life as is not subject to death any more, he is now in heaven to make good that he purchased on earth. He revived, I say, to be a king, priest, and prophet at the right hand of God for ever: there to rule his church, and to overrule all the enemies of it till he hath subdued all; till he hath 'gathered all the elect,' Mat. 24:31, and brought his church out of the world, and made 'his enemies his footstool,' Ps. 110:1. You see then the ground is good, and the inference is good. 'Christ died, and rose, and revived,' that he might be Lord of the quick and dead.' I come now to the thing proved.

'That he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.'

Christ is Lord both of the dead and of the living. For the better clearing of the point, let us see what is lordship.

'Lordship' properly is *jus in rem et personas*. It is a right, and where it is full, it is a right with possession either in things or persons.

But what manner of 'lordship' is this?

1. Christ is an universal Lord of and over all, over all the world; both over all the dead, and all the living; but more especially, and in a peculiar manner, he is Lord of his church, even as a husband is lord over his wife, which is a lordship with sweetness. So Christ's government is with unspeakable, with unconceivable sweetness. He is Lord as the Elder Brother, as the first begotten is over the rest; for he is the 'first begotten among the dead,' Rev. 1:5. This likewise is a sweet government. It is indeed a lordship of a king over his subjects, as his lordship is a branch of his kingly office; but it is such a lordship as is for the good of his subjects. It is not a derived* happiness. They enjoy the head and the subjects. Christ accounts

himself happy in his church, which is his fulness. The church is 'the fulness of him that filleth all things,' Eph. 1:23. And more especially is the church most happy in this government. It is such a lordship as is, indeed, altogether for the good of the subjects. 'To us a child is born, to us a Son is given,' Isa. 9:6. He died, and rose, and revived, and all is for us. A Christian may say of Christ that he is totus in meos usus expensus, as one well said (c). He is all mine; he is all expended for my use and profit. It is such a lordship as makes all his subjects kings. Therefore it is said, Rev. 1:5, 'He loved us, and gave himself for us;' to purge his church, as it is Eph. 5:26, and likewise to 'make us kings and priests.' Where note, Christ hath a notable attendance upon him. He is served with none but kings. All God's children are kings. Even the meanest servant that is anywhere in the world, in spiritual respects is a king. What a Lord and King is this, that makes all his servants kings! You see, therefore, as Christ is an universal Lord, so also he is a peculiar Lord over his church.

2. Again, He is an independent Lord; only his Father joins with him in all. He is subordinate to his Father as Mediator, but he is independent in respect of all human authority whatsoever. All human authority is derived from him. 'By me princes reign,' &c., Prov. 8:15. His government in regard of all those governments is altogether independent. Therefore he is called 'the Lord of lords,' and 'King of kings.' He is Lord Paramount, as we say, over all; and they all are or should be dependent upon him.

3. And likewise he is a Lord of the whole man, body and soul; he is a spiritual Lord. He commands not the body only, but the soul. He sits in the throne of conscience especially, and there he subdues the conscience and the soul to him. There he prescribes laws to the conscience and pacifies the conscience, and stablisheth conscience and settles it against all fears and terrors whatsoever. He is Lord of body and soul, especially of the soul. He bows the neck of the inward man, and brings it wholly to be subject to him. He lays his command upon the very soul itself.

4. And he is an eternal Lord. You see here he is Lord of the 'quick and of the dead;' all other lords have nothing to do with men when they are dead. They can do them no more harm. They have some power, indeed, over their dead bodies, but, alas!* that is senseless (d). Their government ends in death, because they are lords over the outward man only. But Christ's lordship is when we are gone hence, and then more especially. For then we are more immediately with him. We are nearer the fountain when our souls are gone to him that gave them. 'I desire,' saith St Paul, 'to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is best of all,' Philip. 1:23; especially then he is Lord, when we are gone hence.

5. In a word, he is an excellent Lord, for he hath all things that a lord should have. A lord should have three things: authority, suitable virtues and abilities, power and strength answerable to all. Now the Lord Christ hath all these. And, first, he hath authority, for God the Father gave him power over all. He purchased it, and his Father gave it him. 'He gave him the heathen for his possession,' Ps. 2:8; and 'All power is given to me in heaven and earth,' Mat. 28:18; and he hath full authority, as it is John 17:2, 'Thou hast given me power over all flesh.' He hath then authority. Secondly, he hath all graces and virtues fit for a lord and governor. He hath righteousness, wisdom, bounty, affections, &c. We need not make doubt of it; for he is the spring of all these in others. 'His sceptre is a sceptre of righteousness,' Ps. 45:6. Thirdly, he hath strength answerable to his authority; for he is a Lord that is God. Sometimes among men authority wants power or other qualifications; but in Christ is all, the utmost and greatest fulness of all. These things premised, let us make some use of all.

But, first, let us see why it is said, 'He is Lord both of the dead and of the living,' prefixing the dead before the living? To shew, I conceive, that Christ is Lord of those that were dead before, as well as of those that are alive now. Christ is the Lord of all from the beginning of the world, from Adam to the last man that shall stand upon the face of the earth; therefore he is Lord of those that were dead before, as well

as of those that are alive now, and that shall die after. 'He is Lord of the dead, and of the living.' Now for use, first, where he saith,

'For this end.'

Use 1. It is a point wondrous pregnant, and full of very comfortable use: first, shewing that the grounds of a Christian's faith and comfort are very strong, as you see how the Holy Ghost dwells upon the argument. 'For this end,' saith he, Christ died and rose again and revived, that he might be Lord of the quick and of the dead.'

God doth all to ends, it being a point of wisdom to prefix an end, and work to it. If God hath an end and providence in the hairs that fall from our heads, hath he not a far greater in disposing of things for the good of the church? His Son is given to death, and raised again. It is for the greatest end in the world, being the greatest work. The greatest work hath the greatest end. Such was this end, the lordship of the church: 'For this end,' saith he, 'Christ died, and rose again, that he might be Lord of the dead, and of the living,' which is his church.

And is this Christ's end, to be Lord of the living and of the dead? We must have it then our end too, to serve Christ, to live and die to him; for being under him, our ends must be answerable to his, as we shall see after.

'For this end.'

Use 2. Again, where it is said he died, and rose, and revived, 'that he might be Lord of the dead and of the living'—It is a profitable course—I speak it only in general—when we think of the abasement of Christ, to think of the end why. So of his exaltation: it is good to keep these together to avoid scandal* that might arise in our minds from either, thought of by itself, that God should stoop so low. Lest the thoughts of Christ dying and stooping so low should offend us, it is good also to think of the end, that 'he might be Lord of quick and dead;' and if that dazzle thee again, to think of our Saviour now in

glory, full of majesty in heaven, and how shalt thou have access to so glorious majesty. Oh come down again, and think of God incarnate, God going up and down in our flesh, of God dying, dying a cursed death, and rising again. Thus in your meditations interweave these thoughts, to avoid scandal. Think of his glory; and that you may not be amazed at the glory, so as to be deterred from going boldly to him, think of bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, God dying in your nature. Join these two together. 'For this end the Son of God died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.'

Use 3. Again, You see here in general that the grand principal points of religion have an influence into all the particulars; and there is a homogeneal deduction, as we call it, of divine truths one from another. All depend one upon another, and all divinity; for howsoever divine truth be contrary to carnal reason sometimes, yet there is strong reason in all divine truth. For one is the cause of another, and one depends upon another, as here, 'Christ died, and rose, and revived.' One follows another. What from all this? 'To be Lord of quick and dead.' How then proves he that he is Lord of all? Because he died, and rose, and revived. One riseth from another. So that, though carnal reason be one thing and all divinity be another, yet there is reason and deduction issuing of one thing from another in divinity, most wisely and holily; and it is a part of wisdom to observe how conclusions rise from principles, as branches and buds do from roots. Indeed, if we would enter into serious considerations of the grounds of religion, how they give life, and rise unto their particulars, they would have an influence into the whole course of our life, as perhaps we shall see in the particulars more clearly.

'For this end,' &c.

Use 4. Again, in general, when he saith Christ is 'Lord of the quick and of the dead,' we see hence the truth of the catholic church, from the first man living to the end of the church, under one head Christ. Christ is the Saviour of those that were before the law, under the law,

under the gospel. Christ was the Saviour of all. He is the Saviour of the dead as well as of the living. All come under one head, which hath no further use than to inform us in that one point of doctrine, to shew that Christ is 'yesterday' as well as 'to-day,' to-morrow, 'and for ever,' Heb. 13:8. All that were saved before, that are saved now, and shall be for ever, are saved by Christ. 'There is no other name under heaven whereby we can be saved,' Acts 4:12. 'He is Lord of the dead and of the living.' Now, therefore, to come more particularly, 'Christ is Lord both of the dead and of the living.' What a Lord [is] we heard before.

This is a point of wondrous comfort, and likewise a point informing us of our duty; and withal shewing us that Christ will work that duty in us, because he is a Lord not only that should rule over us, that we should be subject to him, but to make us subject to him. It is a point of wondrous comfort and of duty, and of this issue, that we under the covenant of grace shall be enabled to perform that duty to our Lord.

And then it is a point of wondrous security in life, in death, as, alas! sometime one thing amazeth us, sometime another; sometime we are willing to die—Elias was afraid to live; sometimes we are afraid of death, as we are all naturally. Why, come life or death, come what will come, we are under a Lord that is Lord of 'the dead and of the living.' So it is a point of wondrous security and quiet to a Christian in all passages. He sometimes lives and sometimes dies, but his salvation is not at that hazard to be off and on, but 'whether he live or die,' he is sure to be saved, for he is under the Lord of the living and the dead.

But to speak a little of the first. It is intended for comfort, as well as direction to duty, and to be subject, to submit to the Lord. It is a comfort that we have a Lord that rules us for our good while we are living, and when we are dead, and for ever; and indeed we cannot have a greater comfort, beloved, than this, that 'we are not our own, but that we are bought with a price,' 1 Cor. 6:20, that we are under Christ. Why, what a comfort is this, will you say. Homo non est

natus, &c. (e), as the natural man said, a man is not born to subjection but to honour and government. What comfort is this to be under Christ, to be under a governor!

Ans. Oh beloved, know that it is the greatest comfort; as the rule is, everything is perfect if it be weak, by that whereby it is subject to a higher. The vine is perfect by leaning to the elm. It would lie on the ground else, and be spoiled. The perfection of the weak creature the sheep is to have a shepherd. The perfection of a weak nature is to have a rule for their good. The perfection of the ship is the pilot. It would dash on every rock, and be tossed with every wave else. And so it is our perfection, that we are under a Lord, such a Lord as this is, cui servire regnare est, &c. (f), to whom to serve is to reign; for all his servants are so many kings. It is our perfection to be subject to him, therefore it is a wondrous comfort that Christ is become 'Lord of the living and of the dead.' I beseech you, therefore, think of it in your meditations. All the Scripture aims at this end to comfort. Whatsoever is written, is written for our comfort; and this is a principle of divinity among the rest, that a Christian is not his own man now, but he is under Christ. And this is a comfort both in life and death at all times. As the psalmist saith, 'My times are in thy hands, Lord,' Ps. 31:15. He saith not, 'my time,' but 'my times are in thy hand;' so we may say our times are in Christ's hands; our time of being born, our time of living and dying; and when we are dead, our time of rising again. Our time, the whole current of our time, is in thy hands, not in the devil's hands, not in our enemies' hands, beloved, for they would make short work with us then; but our times are in our Lord's hands. Christ is the Lord of our times, the Lord of our life and death; and when we are dead, he is a Lord for ever; for he lives for ever, and therefore he is or ever a Lord. Beloved, we do not die at the devotion* and good pleasure of any man whatsoever. They cannot stir so much as a hair from our head, without the will of this Lord. All the devils in hell cannot stir a hair of our head, I say, nor all men that are acted by the spirit of the devil. They may threaten punishment, but, alas! they can do no more than this Lord of lords will give them leave. Therefore it is a point of wondrous comfort.

Obj. Oh but will a poor soul say, Christ indeed is Lord of the living and of the dead, but I find a great deal of corruption in me, &c., and I am a sinner.

Ans. Why, he is Lord over thee. He hath a sweet lordship over thee, as well as a commanding lordship. He is not only a king, but a husband, as it is Eph. 5:26, 27, 'He gave himself to purge his church,' and to make his church fit by little and little. Thou hast sin and corruption, but thou hast a merciful husband that will bear with the weaker vessel. Doth he command others to do that; and will he not practise that that he enjoins others? Undoubtedly he will; and therefore it is a comfort, it is a sweet government and subjection, as of the husband over the wife. Christ purgeth and cleanseth his church; he doth not cast it away.

For I beseech you, consider, he that died for his church and children, when they were enemies, will he cast them away now they are poor friends, and desire to please him? as Saint Paul divinely reasoneth, Rom. 5:10, 'Much more shall we be saved by his life.' If he saved us by death, much more now by his life, being in heaven. Consider he rose and lives for ever; therefore will he cast us away for some imperfections, that died for us when we were enemies? He that will not 'quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed,' Mat. 12:20, will he cast away his poor children that strive against their corruptions? He will not, nay, he hath promised where he hath begun a good work, he will finish it to the day of the Lord, Phil. 1:6, 'Though it go but slowly forward, yet that beginning is a pledge of proceeding. God will never remove his hand from his own work till he have brought it to perfection. Therefore let any soul comfort itself that will come under this Lord. In a word, what greater comfort can we have than this, that he is such a Lord over us, as is Lord over all other things in the world besides? For he could not be Lord of his church, except he were Lord over hell, and all power were subject to him. Now being so he is such a Lord of the church as can restrain the power of all creatures whatsoever; because else they might annoy the church and affront him in his government by opposition, if he were

not Lord of all things else, as well as of the Church. But this is the comfort of a Christian; he is under a Lord that is Lord of all the enemies of the church; and he is so Lord over them till by little and little he make them his footstool. That that is begun in this world shall be consummate hereafter by that lordship; nay, he will make all the enterprises of the very enemies of his church whatsoever serviceable to his poor church; for as the apostle saith, 'All things are yours, because ye are Christ's,' 1 Cor. 3:23. He is such a Lord as that besides himself being onrs, he makes all the world ours, yea, the devil is ours; for in spite of him, whatsoever he doth, it is ordained to the salvation of the church. The church's enemies are the servants of the church, the involuntary servants; for they weaken[†] the church and scour it. God raiseth them up for the exercise of the church; and when he hath done, you know what course he takes with them. So then he is Lord, not only over all, but he overrules their actions for the good of the church, whatsoever they are; and he makes all the endeavours and plots of the enemy for the church's good; all is yours, life and death. Though it be death by tyrants, all kind of death whatsoever, it is yours. What a comfort is this, that we are under such a Lord as this.

Especially, what a comfort is this at the hour of death, when Christ, that ruled us all our lifetime before, will take then the government and possession of that jewel that he hath bought with such a price, our precious souls; that when we must part with friends, and part with this sweet body, that the soul so much loved, and with the world and all things in the world, then Christ will own [us] for his when the world will own us no longer. Therefore methinks Christians should be at a point, for life or death. He never goes out of the dominion of Christ; nay, he is nearer Christ; he is more Christ's. If there be any comparison to be made when he is dead than when he is alive, 'Blessed are those that died in the Lord.'

To apply this a little to the present occasion.* Here in this sacrament we are to have communion with the Lord, of his death and resurrection. For what is the sacrament but a representation of his

body broken, and of his blood poured out for us, that he might be Lord over us? The more communion and fellowship you have with Christ, the more assurance you shall have that you are his, which is indeed the grand comfort of all, that we are Christ's, that Christ is ours; for then heaven and earth is ours, all is ours. Now God hath ordained these sacraments for this end. The word is the sceptre of his kingdom whereby he rules. The sacrament is the seal of the word. Therefore all good subjects, that submit themselves to the kingdom of Christ, must submit themselves to this sweet ordinance of Christ, that he hath ordained for our good, the word and the sacraments. Thereby we shall find the effectual working of his Spirit in us, subjecting the whole inward man to his gracious government. But having spoken of this subject at large heretofore, I only desire you to raise up your thoughts to consider whom you have to deal with; with him that is Lord of the quick and of the dead. We have to deal with the mighty Monarch of heaven and earth, Christ. Therefore come, as with faith, because he hath ordained these things to strengthen faith; so come with reverence, knowing with whom we are to feast and to deal. Consider of these things; and then I hope that God will vouchsafe a blessing answerable to the intendment[†] of his ordinance.

SERMON II:

CHRIST'S EXALTATION PURCHASED BY HUMILIATION

For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and of the living.—ROM. 14:9.

I shewed the dependence in the forenoon; a Christian, by the Spirit of God in him, he hath a blessed aim at all times. Howsoever he may fail in particulars, yet his aim is right.

This doubt rose from difference of aims, whether he should please God or man. His doubt rose in pleasing of God, what might please him most; and because he sees not always what might please him, therefore he carries this honesty, that whatsoever he doth he will do it to the Lord, and whatsoever he doth not he will not do it to the Lord. His aim is for good at all times.

Now this is proved from the general disposition of Christians. They live and die to the Lord. Therefore their particular actions must be to the Lord. If their whole life and death be to the Lord, their actions must be to him.

Now he proves their whole life and death are to the Lord, because they are the Lord's. How doth he prove that they are the Lord's—that is, Jesus Christ's? Because the text saith here, 'For this end Christ both died, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.'

And surely he is Lord. He will not miss of his end. God never misseth of his end, because he can remove all impediments between him and his end. Now it being Christ's end to be Lord of the quick and of the dead, he is Lord. If he be Lord, then those that are under him, and led by his Spirit, aim both in life and death to glorify him in all things. This in a word be spoken, for the inference of the words.

'To this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived.'

Here you have a ground and an inference; an argument and a reasoning from it.

The argument or ground is, 'Christ died, and rose, and revived.'

That that riseth thence is, 'That he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.'

In the ground itself I told you how Christ died as a public person, as the 'second Adam,' &c.; and now here you are to take notice likewise

that he rose again as a public person, as the 'second Adam,' &c.

And likewise he revived, not to die again, as in his first life. When he began to live, he began to die; but when he revived he did not die again. He lives for ever to make intercession for us in heaven. Christ never dies again, Rom. 6:8, seq. He rose to a life that shall never end; for the divine nature doth flow into his human nature, and doth immediately inspire such a spiritual life into it, as it lives for ever, by virtue of the Spirit of Christ actuating, and stirring, and moving him, as his natural life did here, when he was upon the earth.

'Christ died, and rose, and revived.'

To what end is all this? What is grounded hence? That Christ therefore is Lord of quick and dead? This is inferred from all three.

'Christ died,' that he might reconcile us to God by his death, satisfying justice; and so justice being fully satisfied, he might have his end in being Lord of his church. He had a mind to marry us, but he could not till he had rescued us. Therefore to rescue us out of divine justice, and from the tyranny of Satan, God's jailor, he made satisfaction to divine justice. As for Satan he brought us out of his kingdom by strong hand; and so doth continually by the power of his Spirit. Now hereupon it must needs be that he must be Lord of that he paid so dear a price for.

And then he rose again for this end, that he 'might be Lord,' because, howsoever he had a title to be Lord of the church,—by the union of the human nature with the divine, he was Lord alway,—yet in regard of the exercise of his lordship, it was deferred till his glorious resurrection and ascension. Then that that lay hid before, Christ's divine power, majesty, and lordship, that appeared and manifested itself, as it is Rom. 1:4, 'He was mightily declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead.' He was the Son of God before; but then it was a kind of begetting, because it was then manifest. Things are said in Scripture and divinity to be when they

are apparent to be. So this day of the resurrection Christ was begotten; because it was apparent then by raising himself from the dead, that he was the only-begotten Son of God. Now that made way for his lordship; for after his resurrection God gave him power over all things in heaven and earth; and then upon the resurrection he had the Spirit in more abundance, having conquered all enemies between God and us. Therefore he was fit to be Lord by that, because he could give the Spirit to them over whom he meant to rule.

But then in his own person, he rising, triumphed over all opposite enemies whatsoever; over death the last enemy, and over Satan, sin, and the law, having cancelled all. Surely [since] he hath overruled all for himself, he will overrule all for his church and people; and therefore he rose again to be 'Lord of quick and dead;' and he may well be, because he is Lord of 'quick and dead' in his own person. He is Lord over all in his own person, and therefore he is Lord over the church, and all the enemies of the church. So far as the enemies seized upon his person, so far he over came them all. He hath as much care of his mystical person the church, as he had on* his own body; and more too, for he gave that for the other.

And then he revived to be Lord over all; that is, he lives for ever to make good what he hath gotten by his death. He will not lose the price of his own blood. He is in heaven to appear before God, and sits at the right hand of God, and rules there till he have made his enemies his footstool, till he draw his church home to heaven, to himself. 'He lives for ever,' as the apostle saith, 'to make intercession,' Heb. 7:25. Hereupon it must needs be that by living for ever he is fitly qualified to be Lord over all the 'quick.' Now I proceed.

'That he might be Lord both of quick and dead.'

Christ is Lord both of the dead and of the living. You see upon what ground he is Lord of all, as well as of his church. He is an eternal Lord over the dead and the living. He is a transcendent Lord, above all other lords whatsoever; and he is independent. He is not

obnoxious † to any. All have power from him; and in some sort indeed Christ hath redeemed even all other creatures. They are Christ's. And in some sort even proud wicked men, that live in the church, that have perhaps some parts (which are the occasion of their damnation, because of and by them, they are proud and insolent), they are redeemed by Christ, thus far to be serviceable to his church, to use their parts to his own ends. They go a great way in salvation, that so by their parts they may be fit to do service to the church. So he is Lord not only over the church, but of others for the service of the church.

Now this point, that Christ is Lord of the dead and of the living, it yields many comfortable uses. I spake of some things in general, and then we came to some particulars, as,

1. First, Seeing Christ is Lord of the quick and of the dead, we may comfort ourselves under the sovereignty of Christ. To be Solomon's servant was accounted a great happiness. Those that did observe the government of Solomon did think so, as the Queen of Sheba, 1 Kings 10:8. Alas! what shall we think of those that are under Christ, who 'is greater than Solomon,' Mat. 12:42, a most great, a most wise, a most loving, a most gracious and powerful Lord over all. Therefore it is a most comfortable condition, here in this life, to add a little to that point, however it be service. It is against the nature of man to serve a man, yet not to serve a more noble; to serve God is to reign.

Besides, while we live here, such is our disposition, such is the weakness of base sinners, that they must be ruled by another; and indeed our happiness and security consists in being ruled by another higher than ourselves. We are not fit to be our own governors. St Paul saith to the Galatians, 'an heir in his non-age differeth little from a servant,' Gal. 4:1. So it is with Christians. Till they be in heaven they differ little from servants; and therefore they must be under tutors and government.

And as it is a comfortable, so it is an honourable condition; for Christ's servants are so many kings. Christ is served of none but kings, and such kings as do not rule over slaves, but such kings as in Christ rule over the greatest and terriblest enemies of all. A Christian can think with comfort and encouragement upon those enemies that make the greatest tyrants of the world to quake; he can think of death, of sin, of damnation, of judgment, of the law: of all these things Christ's kingdom is another manner of kingdom than the kingdom of the world. They are poor kingdoms; their monarch's head must lie as low as the basest subject they have. They know not how soon, and perhaps have a more terrible account to give than any other under them. It is not so in Christ's kingdom.

Therefore those Christians that are afraid of death, they forget their dignity; they forget him on whom they depend, for Christ is Lord 'both of the quick and of the dead.' If so be Christ be their Lord when they die, what need they fear to die? And therefore let us comfort ourselves when God calls for us. He is our Lord as well when we die as while we live, and more too; for then our souls have more immediate communion with him. Can there be more comfort than this, that we have a Lord ever that died for us, that rose for us, and lives for ever, and doth immortalise his subjects too? Join these together, an ever-living Lord and ever-living subjects, co-existent, I mean, for the time to come. We indeed have a beginning—Christ hath none as God—but we have an eternal state to be for ever, and an eternal Lord to rule us for ever, and to make us happy for ever. What comfort is more than this, that howsoever there be variety of conditions in this world, we live, we die, we are in prosperity, we are in misery; yet here is no variety in the state of salvation. Christ is not a Lord to-day and none to-morrow; but 'yesterday, to-day, and the same for ever,' Heb. 13:8.

2. Again, As it is a point of comfort, so it is also of duty. If Christ be our Lord in life and death, our duty is to look to him in life and death, to live and die to him. For our aim must answer his aim, if we ever intend to come to heaven; for we are understanding creatures,

and have a communion with him in a poor measure. Therefore what he will make his end must be our end. His end was that whether we live or die he might rule over us. Our end should be, in life and death to be ruled by him.

How shall we live to Christ?

We live to Christ—this is a ground of all other duties that follow—when we know and acknowledge Christ hath a full interest in us, by being our head, by being our husband, by being our king, our elder brother. He hath all the sweet interest to us that any relation can inright* (g) him to; for all other relations among men are but shadows of that grand relation. There only is the reality of things. He is a true head, a true king, a true elder brother, a true husband to his church. All ours are but poor representations of those glorious things. Then know and acknowledge so much. That is the ground of all living to him.

Upon knowing and acknowledging issues all other obedience in our life to Christ. Those that thus acknowledge Christ, they must be directed by his will, and not their own. As a servant as far as he is a servant, and a wife so far as she is a wife, they have no will of their own, so he that lives to Christ and acknowledgeth him to be a Lord, he must have no will of his own, but he must live according to the will of Christ, as you have it excellently set down, 1 Peter 4:1, 2, 'Christ suffered for us in the flesh. Let us arm ourselves therefore with the same mind; for he that suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin, that he should no longer live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.' It is a comment upon this place, 'Christ died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord of the quick and of the dead;' that is, that we might live according to his will, and not after our own. Do you think our Saviour Christ would so far deny himself to leave heaven, to take upon himself our base nature, and be so far abased in it, to let us live as we list? Oh no; we must live the rest of our days, not according to the lusts of men, or our own lusts, but according to the will of God;

and therefore as the apostle admonisheth, Rom. 12:2, we must search 'what is the acceptable will of God in all things.' What is the end of our hearing sermons, of our reading, and all the pains we take in the means of salvation? Not only to know what God will do to us, but what he will have of us. He will have the directing of our lives; and therefore if we live to Christ, we must labour to know his good pleasure to us; what he means to do for us and so his good pleasure with us; what he will have us do again by way of thankfulness. Christ squared his life immediately according to his Father's will. 'It is written in the volume of thy book, that I should do thy will, O God,' Ps. 40:7. So all that are Christ's must have the same spirit, to direct all their lives according to his will. Now the most grand things of his will—for his will is in the Scriptures—are that we repent. He commands all to repent. His will is that we believe in him. His will is our sanctification, as it is 1 Thes. 5:23. His will is that we suffer, and in suffering submit ourselves to him; and the Scriptures is express in many other particulars, but these especially are named, to shew something wherein we must direct ourselves according to his will. But, not to insist upon particulars, in all things we must labour to direct our lives according to his will.

Secondly, That we may live to God, we must aim at the glory of Christ in all things, and at the credit of religion, not at our own credit. If Christ be Lord of the quick and dead, while we live we must not seek our own glory but his. The contrary to this the apostle complains of: 'All seek their own,' saith he, 'and not the things that are of the Lord Jesus Christ,' Phil. 2:21. We must consider what is for the credit of religion and the honour of Christ; and not what is for our own advantage. Is it not good reason that we should seek the glory of him that is Lord over us? Naturally proud man is led with a spirit of self-love; and he seeks himself in all things, even in his religion. So far as it stands with his own lusts he will be religious, and no further. So long as God's will is not contrary to his, he will do God service; but if it cross his will once, then he will give God leave to seek him a servant.

Thus man makes himself an idol; he sets up himself in the room of God; he doth all things, as from himself, so for himself; nor indeed can he do otherwise, till he put off himself wholly, and deny himself—a man cannot go beyond himself but by grace, that raiseth a man above himself. It makes him have an eye to some excellency, out of himself, conformity whereto and interest whereinto will make him happy.

Now that we may aim at Christ in all things, it is good to call ourselves to account for our aims. Wherefore we live and wherefore we have, are or do anything, either in grace or nature, it is or should be, not only that we may be saved ourselves, but that Christ in all may be glorified. We need not sever these; for Christ joins them both together; and he that seeks his own salvation seeks the glory of God, because God will be glorified in saving us. The end hath a main influence into all actions; and as it differenceth man from other creatures, that though he do the same action as a beast, he eats and drinks and sleeps, all for another end, for an end beyond himself, because he is a reasonable creature, whereas other creatures rest in themselves. So it differenceth between natural men and Christians; they differ in their aims, not in their actions. Both do the same thing. One doth it for base ends of his own; keeps within the circle of those ends. The other having a light discovering excellencies better than the world can afford, and having another spiritual life above, he is thereby directed to further aims in all; yea, even in his civil actions.

Saint Paul gives a rule, that 'whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we should do all to the glory of God,' 1 Cor. 10:31. Though the action be common and civil, not tending directly to the glory of God, as eating, &c., yet our aim should be in it, at Christ and at God, that the body thereby being refreshed may be fit to serve God.

And indeed there is not the commonest action of this life, but we may shew that we have a good end in it, and therein glorify God. Therefore in Scripture it is put as a kind of limitation: 'Obey in the Lord,' 'marry in the Lord,' do all things in the Lord; that is, in Christ.

He shews that we should do all such things, intimating that as we must go about such enterprises with invocation of the name of the Lord, &c., so chiefly we should do them so far, and no farther, as they may stand with the favour and glory of Christ. In subordinate things, the rule of subordinate things is to do them so far as they may help to the main end. Now the service of all other is subordinate to the service of Christ, and all other bonds are serviceable to the main bond in marriage, or whatsoever may not prejudice the bond of marriage in the Lord; marry not rich, nor honourable, but in the Lord, All things must have their limitation to be done in the Lord; that is, so far as they may stand with pleasing the Lord. Thus we see what it is to live to the Lord with his good pleasure and likening.*

Now an assistant help—of living to the Lord—is a perpetual self-denial of our own wisdom, will, and affections in all things, else we shall live to ourselves, and to the Lord we shall never attain.

But you will say this is a hard saying. True. But consider this one thing, that we are the greatest enemies to ourselves of all; and we carry in ourselves a cursed enmity to all that is divine and supernatural. Naturally we are trained up to our own will, therefore we cannot endure the yoke of Christ without supernatural strength.

Again, Divine things perpetually cross the liking of the soul; whereupon there is an antipathy between us and Christ, and divine things. Therefore there must be self-denial of necessity. Now the knowledge of this will be a good means to enable us to the duty.

Another help to this, of living to Christ, is to complain of ourselves to Christ, as Saint Paul, Rom. 7:24, 'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?' &c.; to inform against our rebellions, that we live too much to the flesh and too little to the Spirit, too much to ourselves and too little to Christ, by reason of that principle of flesh and blood, and to desire him to captivate all,* and bring all in subjection by his Spirit. This is always a sign of a man led by the Spirit, that it directs him to Christ. The Spirit, as it comes from

Christ, and the Father, so it directs to Christ, to the pleasing of the Father, and of Christ in all things.

Here I might take just occasion to reprove a company of men that live under the gospel, that will be saved by Christ forsooth, but will not have Christ a Lord to rule over them. They will be ruled by rules of state, or rules of flesh and blood, and their own lusts, by the rules of hell sometime, so that they may have their own aims, their own ambition satisfied, and raise themselves to their own pitch; a disposition cursed, and opposite to that religion which they profess. For our life should be a living to Christ, and under Christ a living to the church and state. But say they, 'Let us break their bonds, and cast their cords from us,' Ps. 2:3. What! do they think we will be awed with a company of poor preachers? Away with them! We will have our own wills; let us break their bonds in sunder. Christ sits in heaven, and laughs them all to scorn, Ps. 2:4. They shall know at length he will be no Saviour where he is no Lord. If he may not rule them by his Spirit and holy directions while they live, he will not own them when they die. For you see the text joins both here, 'he died,' and 'he is Lord.' When he died there came water and blood out of his side, to shew that he came not only to shed his blood, to die, and to satisfy divine justice, but by water to cleanse us, and to fit us to be subject to his government. Therefore those that take him as a priest to die, and will not have him as a Lord, they rent[†] his offices. I do but touch these now.

We see what it is to live to Christ. Let us see what it is to die to the Lord?

(1.) 'To die to the Lord' is to know and acknowledge that Christ hath power over us when we die; thereupon to submit ourselves to him, and not to murmur and fret, when he comes to call for our life and soul, as if we were unwilling to part with them.

(2.) Then again, to die to Christ, is when upon any good occasion he calls for our lives in standing for a good cause—for the church or

state—to be ready to lay it down. There is not the least tittle of truth, but that it is better than a man's life. A man may not only die, in case of martyrdom, but in case of justice and truth, and so he must be willing to die if he will die to Christ.

(3.) Again, We die to the Lord when we carry ourselves so when death comes, as we may express some graces to glorify God, even in our very death; when we study to do all the good we can, that we may die fruitfully; out of this consideration, my time is short, I will labour to be sowing to the Spirit as much as I can, not to die like fools, but wisely, knowing that there is no further opportunity. Here is the time of seed; hereafter will be the time of reaping. Therefore there is no Christian that is master of himself at the hour of death, if some disease disable him not, but he studies how to shew himself as fruitful as he can at that time; as you see our Saviour when he was to die, what long chapters there are, three together, of his demeanour, how he strengthened his disciples, what an excellent prayer he made to God. See Moses, how he carried himself at his death, what excellent admonitions he gives; and good Jacob, what an excellent will he made; and St Peter, knowing he must put off his earthly tabernacle, 2 Peter 1:14, he labours to put them in mind 'to glorify God,' as Saint Paul saith, 1 Cor. 6:20.

A Christian ought to end his days in faith and obedience; in faith that God will take his soul, when he commits it to him, and he shall reign for ever in heaven. In obedience thereupon, because he believes, he dies in faith, he will die in obedience. I even offer myself to thee, because I believe thou wilt care for me when I am gone hence; for thou art the Lord of life and death, and thou art the Lord of me when I live, and when I am dead.

Well, as it implies duty, so it implies a gracious effect, that we shall be enabled to this duty. He indeed in himself is a Lord. We ought to acknowledge him so, nay, we shall have the Spirit if we be his, to cause us to acknowledge him. You have a notable place, 2 Cor. 5:15, to this purpose, 'The love of Christ constrains us, because we thus

judge, if one died for all, then we are all dead.' If he died to redeem us from death, to what end did he die? He died for all, that 'they might not live to themselves, but to him that died, and rose again,' 2 Cor. 5:15. It is nothing but this in the text, 'we should live to him.' Now this, that we should live to him, it is not an aim of ours only, but an effect that he works in us. He died 'that we might live to him.' For he died and rose that he might obtain the Spirit. By this Spirit he enableth us to live and die to God: as you have it, Rom. 8:8, at large proved. Those that are Christ's have the Spirit of Christ, and are led with it.

Beloved, it is a part of the new covenant, that whatsoever our duty is, we shall have ability to perform it by the Spirit of Christ; for all the gracious promises of the gospel are not only promises upon condition, and so a covenant, but likewise the covenant of grace is a testament and a will (a will is made without conditions; a covenant with conditions), that as he hath made a covenant what he would have us to do, so his testament is, that we shall have grace to do so; he will put his Spirit into us, and circumcise our hearts, or else, beloved, there would be no more strength of the covenant of grace than there was of that of nature in Adam. Why did Adam fall? He had not the Spirit to uphold him, nor had he the promise of it to keep him that he should not fall. Therefore the covenant of works was frustrate. But now the covenant of grace is this, that whatsoever God requires he will give his Spirit to enable us to do it, that the covenant may not be frustrate. If God should not make good our part as well as his, we should not be saved. Therefore, now in the covenant of grace we may boldly go to God and Christ; and allege unto him, when any duty is pressed upon us, and when we are about to perform any duty, and find want of strength, 'Lord, thou knowest I have no strength of myself, I am a barren wilderness; but thou hast entered into a covenant of grace with me, which covenant now is a testament, a free will, that thou wilt give what thou requirest, Lord, in the use of means that thou hast ordained; in attending upon thee, and looking up to thee, I desire that thou wouldst give me strength to submit to thee, to live and die to thee, to direct my course as I should.' This

should be the course of a Christian, and not to set upon things in his own strength; but when duty is discovered, look to the promise of grace and of the Spirit, and put them into suit, and allege them to Christ in the use of sanctified means, as reading, hearing, holy conference, and the like; and he will enable us to do that that is our duty.

Therefore a man may know who is indeed under Christ's government by this, for he that is actually under Christ's government and acknowledgeth him to be his Lord, he hath ability to live and die to him in some comfortable measure; to deny himself, to go out of himself, to live and to die to the glory of God. The Spirit of God hath given him this victory and triumph over his own heart.

Last of all, if this be so, here see the wondrous secure state of a Christian. Beloved, that as Christ is his Lord both in life and death, and it is his duty to subject himself, so Christ will give him grace so to direct his life. Therefore let us do our duty, attend upon the means, and lift up our hearts to God; let God and Christ alone with all the rest, let Christ alone with ruling us and with enabling us to be ruled by him. He is Lord not only over us, but in us by his Spirit. But the Spirit 'breatheth where it listeth,' John 3:8. There must be waiting upon God in his ordinances, till we find ability to holy duties; and those that have so much patience to honour God and Christ so far as to attend in the use of good means till the good hour come, till the Spirit come to subject their spirits to duty, no doubt but God intends well to them. But those that are so short-spirited that if they find not ability to deny themselves and to live to God, and to break off their course of sin, but give over in a kind of base despair, it is just with God to leave them to themselves, that they shall even live and die to themselves; that is, they shall live without respect to Christ, and die without respect to Christ at all, as if there were no Christ to take care for them.

Now out of this branch of holy security, upon the care and power and lordship that Christ hath over us for the time to come, it riseth that a

Christian may be assured of his salvation, of his perseverance, because Christ is Lord of all. He is Lord of his heart. He is Lord not only of the things without us, but of our spirits within us, and he will enable us to subject ourselves to him, 'that neither things present, nor things to come, or anything, shall ever be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ,' Rom. 8:39; not only from God's love to us, but from our love to God.

Beloved, let this encourage us to come under the government of Christ. There is no security or safety but in his government. We are sure of nothing in this world, but we are sure of this, that Christ, if he be our Lord, is our Lord for ever, and that nothing in the world shall ever be able to separate us from him.

I will close with this. You see Christ is ours, whether 'we live or die.' He is 'Lord of quick and dead.' Let us labour to live to him, that he may rule over us while we live, else when we come to die, though we never so much—perhaps out of principles of self-love—desire him to be ours, it is to no purpose. While we live, therefore, let us submit to his government, and if we live to him we shall easily die to him. If we do not inure ourselves by daily self-denying and practising of the duties of obedience to live to him, how shall we come to die to him? Our life may be snatched from us against our wills; we may die with a kind of fretting and indignation that we can live no longer, that we can enjoy our pleasures no longer. But to die meekly and quietly, as to a Lord, submitting ourselves to him that is the Lord of life and death, a man can never do it that hath not lived to the Lord, Therefore I beseech you every day be acquainted with the actions of living to the Lord. Whatsoever you do to men, do it as to the Lord, in the Lord's strength to please him, and as it may stand with his favour and no further. And especially take the advantage of your younger years to root out lusts that will grow to that head else, that God in his judgment, giving you up to yourselves—after long rebellion—you shall never be able to deny yourselves to live to Christ, and, when death comes, to die to Christ; therefore let us inure ourselves to deny ourselves in the practice of every holy duty, as to the Lord betimes,

that so we may get the upper hand of our flesh in these holy performances, that they may be easy and sweet to us, as indeed the yoke of Christ is after it is worn a while. The subjection of Christ is the sweetest subjection in the world. It breeds the greatest peace and joy and love and contentment to the soul, and which is more than all, a blessed hope for the time to come. He that is* life is inured to holy duties, and hath overcome the rebellions of his base flesh; when he comes to die he can say with Simeon, 'Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace,' Luke 2:29; that is, Thou Lord of life, now thou wilt have me die, I am even content to die, to resign myself to thee. Who can say so but he that makes Christ his Lord all his lifetime? Then when death comes he is content to yield unto him as a Lord, else it will be just in the hour of death for Christ to say, as it is Judges 10:14, 'Do you come to me and commend yourselves to me? go to the lords you have served.' You have served the humours of such a one, you have alienated your souls to such a one, you have given your souls to sin and to such men as are instruments of the devil, you have denied your honesty, your faith, your religion; go to him, go to the gods you have served, they are your lords; I am not your Lord, I was not all your lifetime. Though these speeches be not uttered, the effect of them will; the soul will conclude I have served mine own lusts and the humours of others all my lifetime, how can I look that the Lord should take my soul? Therefore let it be our daily practice to live to the Lord, to have the chief aim of our life in our eye to direct our actions so as they may be serviceable to the main, else not to perform them.

Herein consists the main happiness of a Christian, that whether he lives or dies he is not his own, but he is his, that can dispose of him better than ever he could of himself; for if we had the disposing of ourselves, as Adam had, what would become of his?† What became of Adam when he was master of himself? He lost himself and all. The 'second Adam' hath bought us with his blood and life, to rule us for ever. Will he then suffer us to be disposed of by ourselves? No. Whether 'we live or die, we are his,' if we yield ourselves sweetly to his government, in life and death.

SERMON III:

CHRIST'S EXALTATION PURCHASED BY HUMILIATION

For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and of the living.—ROM. 14:9.

In these words, as you heard heretofore at large, the apostle labours to stay the thoughts and affections of men concerning the things of indifferency, that they should not be hasty to censure another's servant, who stands or falls to his own master, as you have it in verse 4.

The reason is, because whatsoever they do they do it to the Lord. 'He that regards a day, regards it to the Lord; he that regards not a day, regards it not to the Lord.' Some things are of that nature that the right aim puts a qualification upon the actions. A good end cannot qualify many actions, but some actions are of that nature that a good end doth not altogether justify it, but it frees the person from some censure; he doth it to God. Some upon some conceit may abstain from a thing for religious ends, and are not to be censured; some again perform it, and are not to be censured, because they do it to the Lord; that is, out of religious respects.

How doth he prove that they do it to the Lord? He proves it more generally, ver. 7, 'None of us live to ourselves, nor none of us die to ourselves,' which I spake of before.

Then he proves that we are the Lord's, because it was the end of Christ's dying and rising and reviving, 'that he might be the Lord both of the dead and of the living; and if he be the Lord, then we ought to live to this 'Lord of the quick and dead.'

We see Saint Paul here makes use of a general truth, of a grand principle, that we are the Lord's, and therefore live to him and die to him, and do particular actions to him, or not do them to him, to shew that we should have in mind information on sound general truths, that are the ground of all particular practice, as we shall see after.

'For to this end Christ both died, rose, and revived,' &c.

The words they are Christ's universal government of the dead and of the living, inferred from the end of his death, reviving and rising again, a comfortable inference from a strong ground.

We considered the particulars, Christ's death, rising and reviving.

Christ died as a 'second Adam,' as a public person, in whom dying all died. When other men die particular men die; when Paul was dead, Paul died and there was an end, only there was an exemplary good in his death. But there is more than an exemplary good in the death of Christ. Christ died alone and singular in this respect; because in him dying all died that were his, that the Father gave him to die for. For they go parallel, God's gift and Christ's death. He did all by commission, and he would not transgress his commission, and he died a violent and cursed death, because otherwise he could not have saved us that were under a curse. So as a 'second Adam' he rose, and as a public person. Therefore we see in the resurrection of Christ many rose. It is like enough they died again. It was for a particular dispensation, to shew that Christ rose as a public person; and it is not strange to think so that to honour God they should be content to live a while, when Christ himself that was God was content to be man, and to be abased to death. That grand mystery makes all other

things credible. He rose, therefore, as a public person, to give life to all that he died for.

So he revived. That is more than to rise again, never again to lay down his life, as you have it excellently set down among other places, Rev. 1:18, 'I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I live for evermore, Amen;' and he seals it too, 'I have the keys of hell and of death;' that is, the dominion of hell and death; for indeed Christ is life itself, and life cannot die. As God he could not die, and therefore he took upon him that nature, wherein he might die for us; and now having done that dispensation, that office, there is a perpetual influence of life from the fountain of life, his Godhead, to his humanity. So he never dies any more. Then here follows the scope and end of all,

'That he might be Lord of the dead and of the living.'

The three offices of Christ, they have this order in regard of manifestation. First, he was a prophet to instruct and teach his in himself, and likewise by his ministry. And then a priest to die for those that are his, to make intercession now for ever in heaven. And then a king. First, a prophet, then a priest, and then a king. He was all at once. The very union invested him in all these, but in regard of manifestation he was first a prophet to instruct us of the end of his coming into the world; and then a priest to do that grand office that we have most comfort by; and then a king to rule us. He could not be otherwise, for if he had manifested himself a King and a Lord in his glory, where had been his abasement? If they had known him to be the Lord of glory, they would never have crucified him. Only some sparkles of his Godhead and lordship and kingdom and royalty over all flesh break out in his miracles; yea, in his greatest abasement there were some sparkles, I say. Even when he lay in the manger, kings came to adore him. When he paid tribute, he had it out of a fish by a command, by majesty. When he was on the cross he converted the good thief. So somewhat brake out of him that he was a person more than ordinary, but that was for special ends. Ordinarily he went

on in a course of abasement, and all that he might perform the great work of redemption. Therefore he made a stop of his glory and kingly office, that he might not manifest himself in that relation and office; that he might do the office of a priest to die for us. Therefore you have it here in the due order. Christ died and rose again, as the high priest of his church, 'that he might be Lord of the dead and of the living.' He was so before, but he was not manifest before. Therefore he is said to be manifest to God by the resurrection, Rom. 1:4. He was God from eternity, but he was born then: 'This day have I begotten thee,' Ps. 2:7. It is spoken of the resurrection. So you see here Christ's offices, the state and condition of his humiliation and of his exaltation, and the use and end of all, 'that he might be Lord of the dead and of the living.'

And if we be anything offended with that abasement, that God should die, look to his rising and reviving and lordship over all, both quick and dead; and if we be dazzled with his glory, look back again to God in our flesh, and God in our flesh abased, even to the death of the cross. Oh, it is a sweet meditation, beloved, to think that our flesh is now in heaven, at the right hand of God; and that flesh that was born of the virgin, that was laid in the manger, that went up and down doing good, that was made a curse for us and humbled to death, and lay under the bondage of death three days; that this flesh is now glorious in heaven, that this person is Lord over the living and the dead. It is an excellent book to study this. Beloved, study Christ in the state of humiliation and exaltation.

'That he might be Lord of the dead,' &c.

How is Christ Lord? He is Lord of the dead, those that died before he was born, and of the living, those that are since. He is 'yesterday,' that is, to those that were before he was; and 'to-day,' that is, when he was; and 'to-morrow' and 'for ever the same.' Therefore he saith of the dead and of the living; of the dead, that is, in reference to former times Christ; is the 'Lamb of God slain from the beginning of the world,' Rev. 13:8.

By what title is he Lord?

By a title, beloved, not as God, but by a title of conquest as a redeemer, for he died that he might be Lord. We are a 'bloody spouse' to Christ. We are the price of his blood. He died that he might be Lord. He must win us before he could have us. Thereupon dying and purchasing us, now he is Lord of his church and children by marriage. Before he could marry us he must be born in our nature, for the husband and wife must be of one nature; and being in bondage to a contrary king, to Satan, he must redeem and purchase us out of Satan's hands. So he is a Lord by conquest; and then he is a Lord in a nearer relation, he is a Lord as a husband, 'He is Lord both of the dead and of the living.'

But the point is sweetest in the use of it; only know for a ground that 'Christ is Lord of the dead and of the living,' as mediator, God-man, not as God, but as God-man, God in our nature; and hereupon we have divers sweet comforts, as for example.

First of all, it shews what we may expect from Christ, what Christ will do to us, and what we ought to return to him again. For relations are bonds, especially when they are so founded as this of Christ's is, to be Lord over us both in life and death. It is founded upon redemption and upon our spiritual marriage. Relations are bonds, and therefore they tie on his part to shew what we may expect from him. He is 'Lord of the living and of the dead.' We may expect on his part all that a gracious Lord should do to provide for his church and children. We may expect that from him that we can from none else, that he should not only be Lord over us, but that he should make us subject, that he should flow into us by his Holy Spirit. For here is the prerogative of Christ, that he is such a head as quickeneth dead members. He is such a husband as makes his spouse beautiful. He puts glory upon her; no other husband can do it. Moses married a black woman, but he could not alter her hue, much less her disposition. It is not in the power of any man. A king cannot alter his subjects; but he is such a King as alters the nature of his subjects. He

makes them subject, he takes them out of a contrary kingdom, as being not born his subjects, but 'born anew by the Spirit.' He doth all provision, protection, the changing of our natures, the beginning of a good work; and where this Lord begins a good work he finisheth it to his own day. For, beloved, know this for a ground, that now in the second covenant we are not left, as Adam was, in the hands of our own free will to stand or fall, but now in the second covenant that is founded upon Christ's death and satisfaction for us, Christ gives grace. He gives his Holy Spirit to bring us within the compass, and performs both our part and his too. He makes good his own to be a gracious Saviour to us; and he performs our part too, or else the second covenant, the covenant of grace, should be frustrate as the first was, if it were left to our freedom. Therefore that is that that we may expect from this lordship of Christ, the performance of the covenant of grace in 'writing his law in our hearts,' Jer. 31:33. Other kings give laws and write them in tables, but they cannot write them in the hearts of their subjects. But he is such a lawgiver as writes his own will in the heart; he teacheth the very heart obedience. We are taught of God 'to love one another.' 'I will write my law in their bowels, and in their inward parts;' that is, they shall not only know what they should do, but they shall know the doing, the affecting,* and performing of the things. They shall be able to do the things. So Christ is a Lord over us, not only teaching us what we should do, and enjoining us in a kind of superiority, this is your duty, and not this; but enabling us to do that that he commands. He gives us the very doing, the affections and loving. He teacheth our hearts to love. I say this we may expect from him in the use of means, and subjecting to his ordinances; which is a wondrous prerogative to those who will submit to his law.

We may expect again from this Lord advancement. He is such a Lord as makes all his subjects kings. The meanest man that is a subject to Christ, that hath the Spirit of Christ, is a king. Now he is a king over that that all others are slaves to, that are not Christians. They rule over others, but they are in thralldom to their own lusts. But he is a spiritual king, a king over hell and death, and those things that the

very greatest of men are afraid of, as who fears death most and hell most? Those that deserve it most, by reason of their great place, sink most in sin and rebellion against God, and contract more guilt than other men. That that they are afraid of, a true Christian as a Christian is most triumphant over. He is a king over those things, for every subject of this Prince is a king.

Christ's manner of government is hid now. There is more reality in this than can be expressed; therefore wonder not. In a word, Christ as our Lord binds himself to bring us to glory, never to leave us till he hath brought us to that place that he is in himself. 'Father, I will that where I am they be also,' John 17:24; and he purgeth his church, Eph. 5:27, 'that he may make it a glorious church.' He takes upon him not only to die, to redeem us from hell and damnation, and to set us in a state of favour with his Father, but to go on in a course of fitting us till he have brought us to the glorious condition that he is in. It lies upon him to do it. Therefore let us do our duty, as we shall see after; and let him alone with that that belongs to him.

For ourselves, beloved, this is our honour, that we are under such a King, such a Lord, both living and dying. It was the honour of those who lived in Solomon's time, that they were under such a wise king and prince. The queen of Sheba judged it so, 1 Kings 10:8. But what an honour is it to a Christian now, that he is under such a blessed prince as Christ is. It is a great honour to be the spouse of such a husband, to be the subject of such a King, to be members of such a head. And therefore we should oft think of it, to put honourable thoughts into us; and I know no greater way to keep us from sin, from base courses, than to have our thoughts strained to this high point, to think of the dignity of a Christian, what a condition he is now brought into in Christ, and what he shall be brought unto ere long. This should make him honourable to himself, to make him in a holy state, to think himself too good to defile his soul or body, that is so dearly bought and so highly advanced: 'Shall such a man as I flee?' saith Nehemiah, Neh. 6:11. Oh look to that. Shall such a man as I

flee? It is the honour, beloved, of a Christian, that he is Christ's, living and dying.

Obj. But you will say an honour. It is an honour to be free; the subject is bound, *non sumus nati, &c.*, as the heathen man said; we are not born to slavery, but to honour and liberty,* and it is an appetite ingrafted in man, to desire freedom above all things.

Ans. It is true, in *regno nati sumus Deo, &c.*, we are born in a kingdom, and to serve Christ is to reign (h); for where there is a subordination it is a prerogative to be under a better; as for the body, being baser than the soul, it is for the good of it to be under the soul, because it is more excellent. It hath life and wisdom. The body is a loathsome dead thing of itself. The sheep being a weak, simple creature, shiftless,† to be guided by a shepherd, who is of a superior nature, and wise to defend it. It is its security and safety for the vine, that is a weak plant of itself, to have support. It is for the good of it. For man that is in a subordination to a higher nature, to God, for him to be under the government of Christ, God-man, of God in our nature, it is a great honour; as they could say in the schools, everything hath its perfection, by being subject to a superior, except the highest of all, which is not subordinate, but independent (i). Whatsoever is dependent hath its perfection by dependence; therefore it is an honour that we be under Christ, the greatest honour in the world; especially if we consider what manner of government Christ's is. It is a rational government, agreeable to our principles; for he guides us as a prophet. He is not only a king, but a prophet to teach us. He saith, not, you shall do this; he stands not upon terms of will; no. He is a prophet to teach us what we should obey. He convinceth us, and then useth us, that we would not be but under such a government; and then when he rules our will he doth it sweetly. He draws it with the cords of a man, as the prophet speaks, Hosea 11:4; that is, by allurements, he brings us to heaven by way of love and enticements. What greater rewards can there be thought of than those that Christ leads us by, and draws us to subjection by?

And therefore he works upon our will sweetly, by persuading us by allurements in that kind.

In a word, he is such a king as is a husband. Would you have a milder government than that of a husband, which though it be not a parity, yet it comes as near as can be. Such a government is Christ's. As he is a king, so he is a husband. He knows how to bear the infirmities of his church. He that bids the husband to favour the wife as the 'weaker vessel,' doth not he practise his own principles? Will not he favour his own spouse as the 'weaker vessel,' think you, that hath promised not 'to quench the smoking flax, and break the bruised reed'? Undoubtedly he will. Therefore it is an honour to be under the government of Christ, so rationally and sweetly he draws us with the cords of a man. It is the government of a husband, and of a wise husband. I do but give a taste. You may enlarge them in your own meditations.

And as it is our honour, so it is our security and safety to be under him. Why? Because when we come sweetly under Christ's government, we need fear nothing. He that fears Christ, all things fear him. Since Christ hath taken our nature upon him, the devil himself is afraid of man's nature. He trembles to think God hath appeared in our nature. Now he is afraid of a Christian [since] God hath taken this nature. Then he is such a king as we may be secure under him, as a universal King over all things, that he may be King over his church; for he hath all power in heaven and earth: Mat. 28:18, 'All power is given to me in heaven and earth,' and all for the government of his church. It is our security to be under him that governs all things for the good of the church. He saith, John 17:2, 'Thou hast given me power over all flesh.' Christ hath all power given to him in relation to his church; therefore he hath power over the devil, over hell, and over all wicked men; and all monarchs and opposite power is subject to him, that they shall serve the church. When they do scourge the church, they are but Christ's rod; they are but instrumental to Christ; they do but his work; therefore it is a great security, and we need to fear none if we be under Christ.

3. Again, To go on: as it is our honour and security, so it is a spring of our duty. Christ is our Lord. He is Lord of all. Therefore it teacheth us our duty every way.

Our duty one to another—to those that are not Christians—to Christ himself.

It teacheth us in all standings how to carry ourselves. To give a taste of this, the apostle presseth it oft, that Christ is our Lord, and will be our judge.

Therefore for others we ought not to be hasty in judging or censuring. We ought to love them, because we have all one Lord. This must force love. 'We have all one Lord, one baptism,' &c., Eph. 4:5. We are many in our severals; but we are all one under this bond, being all under one Lord.

2. Then again, it teacheth us how to carry ourselves to men otherwise affected; not to be servants to the humours of men. Christ rules over us, both living and dying; therefore be not the servants of men, but according to the Scripture's limitation, 'marry in the Lord,' 'obey in the Lord,' 'walk in the Lord,' do all in the Lord; that is, so far as it may stand in the will and pleasure of him that is the Lord of lords. For when the authority of any superior doth countermand against the will of this Lord, it ceaseth to bind. When they command anything in subordination that may stand with the pleasure of the Lord, then the authority is divine. We obey Christ in obeying them. As Christ said to his own mother, when she commanded things that she had no authority to do, he calls her mother no longer, but 'woman,' she stretching then beyond her compass, John 2:4.

3. Again, To go on: this should teach us, in that Christ is the Lord of the living and of the dead, to account ourselves not our own. It should teach us perfect self-denial in matters of religion, especially not to be overwhelmed of our own conceits in the great mysteries that Saint Paul cries out of, 'Oh the depth,' Rom. 11:33. You have

many that quarrel with those things, and would bring them to reason. They will go no further in religion than they can see reason; whereas one saith, I believe, because it is impossible, and too far above reason; therefore I the rather believe it (j). It is oftentimes good to stand at a stay in God, as if we were at a nonplus, to admire* at him in the mysteries of Christ's governing the church, why he suffers some part of the church, that perhaps is better than other parts, that are quiet and exempt from the cross, to be exercised with afflictions, and others not, not to scandal † at this, and to be over-busy in searching out the reason of this. Christ is our Lord, and he is infinite in wisdom; and it is his prerogative to do such things, as he is not liable to give a reason of to us. So God 'will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy,' Rom. 9:18. In great mysteries remember the sovereignty of this our Lord. He is 'Lord of quick and dead.' Let this stop our judgments, and teach us to deny ourselves when we cannot give a reason of them; in a holy admiration, say with Saint Paul, 'Oh the depth.'

And so for our will. He is Lord of the quick and dead. We say of a wife she hath no will; and a servant is not a distinct person, as it were, in law, he is another's. We are Christ's servants, his subjects, and his spouse; and when we begin to be Christ's we have lost our own wills, we resign them up to Christ. Thy will shall be mine in all things. If thou wilt have me do this, I will do it; if thou wilt have me suffer, I will suffer; if thou wilt honour thyself with my goods and with my life, thou shalt have them. Of thee I had this body, this soul, this state, this reputation; I have whatsoever I have from thee; it is maintained by thee. Thou art mine, and I am thine; therefore I give up all to thee back again. It is a ground of perfect resignation, that Christ is Lord of the quick and of the dead. Therefore stand not upon terms with Christ. When he calls for anything, in case of suffering and sealing the truth, let him have it. It is not lost. We have a better foundation in him than we have in ourselves. When we give anything to him, life, or state, or credit, or whatsoever, we have a better life, a better state and condition in him; because all is more eminently in him, the primitive fountain, than in the derivation and beams from

him. When we lose anything it is but a beam from the sun, and whatsoever we lose in particulars we have in the whole, in the fountain again, in Christ. Therefore faith would help all this. In case of suffering and trial, what! is the cause good or no? Then I will resign myself and all that I have and am to Christ. He is Lord both of the quick and of the dead.

We must know, beloved, that we are redeemed from ourselves; and therefore make this use of it when we are tempted by any sin: Christ is my Lord; I am redeemed from my base lusts. What have I to do with this anger? what have I to do with this ambition? I am no debtor to the flesh. I am under Christ. I am under grace. He hath redeemed me from my vain conversation. I owe it nothing but mortification and denial. Therefore, in all solicitations of corruption, learn this lesson, fetch arguments hence. Christ hath done great matters for me. He lived and died, and lives for ever, that is Lord of me living and dying. There is no greater slave than he that is a slave to his own flesh and to his own lusts. Therefore when we are stirred to anything by our base nature, which must die, or else we shall never live eternally, we must kill it more and more daily; and death is the sum and accomplishment of mortification. When we are stirred to anything, go to Christ and complain to him. Blessed Saviour, thou didst die, and rise, and revive, that thou mightst be Lord of the living and of the dead. I beseech thee, claim thine own interest in me. Bring all into captivity to thine own Spirit. What hath this base affection to do with me? What have I to do with it? I am freed from it; I am redeemed from myself. What have I to do with myself but deny all? I am thine altogether; therefore take thine own interest in me, possess me, fill me with thy Spirit, be all in all in me; let pride and ambition and such things have no footing in me. It is good pouring out the soul to God to that purpose: to complain to Christ when it is thus with us, because it is his office to rule us. Now, Lord Jesus, do thine office. Thy office is to be king; to rule in me. Other lords would fain rule in me. Pride, and lust, and base covetousness would fain rule, as the prophet saith, Isa. 26:13; but what hath other lords to do with me? Thou art my Lord, and hast right to me living and dying.

It is a point of wondrous comfort likewise to us in all afflictions whatsoever, especially such as concern the state of the church. We are now in ill times, if we look about us. However, God continues better to us than we deserve. We are as the three young men in the fiery furnace, untouched, when all is in a combustion round about us. Where is Christ's ruling now, when his poor church is thus used and trampled upon in France, in the Palatinate, in Bohemia, and the Princes of Germany (k).

Beloved, it is our faults. Perhaps we waken not Christ as the disciples; they awaked Christ when there was a mighty storm, and moved him to rebuke the winds and the waves, and there followed a calm; so should we. Christ loves to be awaked by our prayers; and if the church would join in forces, one church with another, altogether they might work wonders. Let us offer a holy violence to Christ by prayer and the use of holy means. He is Lord still of the church; and take things at the worst as they are, he is but carrying things to his own ends. Beloved, if we consider things aright, it can hardly be otherwise with the church than it is. If we consider the former security, and dulness, and want of prizing the great things of Christ, the ministry of the word, and the sacraments, we live under the gospel in such deadness and such sins as a Turk would scarce commit. We are no more affected with it than a Jew or a Turk that hath not the means. Will Christ endure this, that we should come to be careless whether we have the gospel, the blessed truth of God, or no, and grow sinful, and have less conscience than a Turk or a Jew? Will Christ continue his blessed prerogatives and privileges to such? Therefore, if we do but look to the ordinary dispositions of most men, a man would think it impossible but that judgment should come. Will there be a reformation of these men without a spirit of fire, without some purging flame?

Then again, Christ is humbling his church for the advancement of it, and suffers the enemies to triumph for their further abasement. He is compassing a blessed work. There is a great wheel a-going, but we do not see the issue of things. All this great wheel the Lord rules, and

governs, and moves. You shall see at length what it will drive to. We see in a clock there are many wheels, one contrary to another, but all helps the clock to strike, all join in that; so there is a stroke, there is somewhat that will come out of all these troubles that seem contrary one to another, some up and some down; but all these wheels will help to bring out some stroke, some glorious thing, that posterity perhaps may see that is now a-working. Therefore let none take scandal.* Christ 'rules now in the midst of his enemies,' Ps. 110:2. We must not catch at pieces of Christ's workmanship; as in a poem, we judge not by a piece, but look to the catastrophe, we look to the upshot and closure of all. Though all was in a combustion, there we see all things brought to an excellent and wise issue. Therefore, I beseech you, suspend your judgments a while, and then you shall see with a spirit of faith all the enemies overthrown, even as if we did see it with our eyes of sense; and in the mean time, persuade ourselves that Christ is about a blessed work, as he is king of our church.

One question the papists move upon such texts as this, that I will assoyle[†] briefly, because it may trouble some, though it be of no great moment. It is said here that Christ died, and rose again, and revived, that he might be Lord of the dead and of the living. Hence, not only papists, but some others move this question, which I will give a little light unto.

Whether Christ by his dying and abasement did merit anything for himself, because it is said here he did this that he might be Lord of the dead, &c.

He abased himself to the death of the cross. 'Therefore God gave him a name above all names,' Phil. 2:9.

The papists they fall upon Calvin that saith; he did not, and that makes me the rather to touch it. Calvin, as he was a very holy man, so out of his holiness he avoided curious questions as much as he might, therefore gives an excellent answer. Saith he, whether he did or no,

'It is curious^z to search, it is rash to define' (1). For satisfaction, take these grounds, and all is well.

1. First of all, that Christ is perfectly glorious now in heaven, both body and soul. There is no question of that; and that he came to this glory, both of body and soul, and the manifestation of it, after his abasement by his humiliation; first, he must die and suffer, and then enter into glory.

2. Again, remember this for a ground that Christ as man merited not the grace of union or unction, for how could he merit before he was? Could Christ merit to be united to the second person, that was the greatest grace that ever was? No; nor the grace of unction, habitual grace in Christ, whereby the human nature was filled with all grace. It was upon unction. Presently they follow one another. There was no meriting of that thing, because from the beginning of his incarnation it was by union of his nature. These things being thought upon, for other things they are not material; only it is best and safest to think that he did not for himself merit anything. For if so be all glory was due to him by virtue of union, which he had by grace and by virtue of unction, if he had died presently; he might have gone to heaven presently indeed, without dying, if there had not been a dispensation laid upon him to die for us; and therefore by virtue of union and unction that was free, heaven was due to him presently, and all that glory that he had afterward.

Why was there a stop of that glory? that his body being united to the divine nature, was not presently glorified, as now it is in heaven, so that he lived in abasement, and died a most cursed death?

Beloved, all this was for us; and then after the dispensation was finished for us, after God's justice was satisfied for us, there was no more stop or stay of his glory. But then his divine nature did flow into his human nature; and then his human nature became glorious, so glorious as it was capable of what he did for us. Therefore it is good to think of the love of Christ, that he considered us and not

himself in that his abasement, as the Scripture runs in that strain: 'To us a Son is given, for us a child is born,' Isa. 9:6. He died for us. He gave himself for us. He rose for us. He ascended for us. He sits at the right hand of God for us. Himself indeed hath glory, but together with us. And therefore when we think of the glory of Christ, think of us in him. When we see him born, think he was born for me; when we see him die, think we die with him; when we see him buried, think ourselves buried with him. So in the state of exaltation, when we see him rise, and sit at the right hand of God, think he is there to prepare a place for me. Whatsoever he hath, or whatsoever he did, he regards us in all; therefore it somewhat obscures the glory and the love of Christ to us, to conceive that he had a self-respect in these things, when he saith in the text, 'For this end Christ died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord of quick and dead.' I beseech you, consider whose goods he respects in this lordship. Is it not a profitable lordship for us? Is it not for our good that he is our Lord in life and in death? and not only our Lord, but the Lord of Satan, of death, and of all our enemies. He is Lord over all, saith the apostle, 'God over all, blessed for ever,' Rom. 9:5. Therefore he is Lord over sin, over death, over hell, over all that we need to fear. It is for us. Therefore our good is intended. Though there be a redundance of glory in Christ, in all these things, yet think he respects our good. The best meditation of Christ is to think all is for us.

Beloved, is it not a great mercy that he should stop the issue and the beams of glory, that should otherwise have come upon his human nature, that he should be content to be in the shape of a servant, and be eclipsed in regard of manifestation, and abase himself to the death of the cross, and all for our redemption, when he might have gone to glory another way? But as one of the ancients saith well, 'If he had gone to heaven another way, he might have come thither himself, but he could not have helped us that way; therefore he would go to heaven by way of abasement and concealment, and stopping that of his glory that he might help us and pay the price to God for us and reconcile us' (m). I beseech you, let us see his love to us in all this. Enough for that question, which I would not have mentioned, but

that it hath a special use and comfort, and may be an incentive to kindle love to Christ regarding us in his birth and life and death, in his resurrection, in his ascension, in his glory, in all.

To draw to a conclusion therefore; Christ is our Lord both in life and death. It is for ever. Oh beloved, therefore I beseech thee, let us project for his glory for ever as much as we can. He is our Lord. When we are dead, he is Lord of our souls, of our happiness. We are nearer him then than we are now. He that is my Lord both living and dying and for ever, shall I not labour that when I am dead there may be a church here? that when I am dead posterity may serve him, and be subject to him? Shall he for ever be Lord for my good, and shall not I as much as lieth in me, lay a foundation for ever in his service, that when I can serve him no longer myself, then posterity may serve him?

It was a cursed wish of a pagan emperor, When I am dead, let heaven and earth be mingled if they will (n). But a Christian thinks, Christ is mine, and for my good both living and dying; nay, I have more good by him when I am dead than alive; therefore I will labour that he may have glory in his church by me and mine, and all my counsels and projects shall be that it may be for ever and ever, world without end. Therefore they desire that God may be served and glorified in the church for ever, as he is their Lord living and dying.

And let it be our comfort in the hour of death—that may be nearer us than we are aware of—that he is not only Lord of the living, but of those that are dead. He hath the keys both 'of hell and death;' that is, he hath the government of death; and therefore shall I be afraid to commit my soul to Christ? What a ground is this comfortably to yield our souls to Christ! Lord, take the soul that thou diedst to purchase, that thou didst rise again to justify, that thou dost live now in heaven to make intercession for, that thou hast given thy Holy Spirit in some measure to sanctify; take this soul to thee! It is thy soul as much and more than mine; I am not mine own, nor my soul is not my own. 'Into thy hands I commend even thy spirit; for thou hast redeemed

me, O Lord of truth,' Acts 7:59. Thou hast redeemed this soul of mine, therefore now take this soul, that thou by thy Spirit hast wrought in some poor measure to desire to please thee: that soul that thou hast sprinkled with thy own blood; take that soul, for thou art Lord both living and dying. And what a comfort is it, when death shall close up our eyes, that we can look forward and see then ourselves nearer Christ; for then we go to Christ our husband, as Paul saith, 'I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is best of all,' Philip. 1:23. When a Christian thinks at death, Now I am changing for the better; Christ will not leave me at the hour of death, neither dying nor living, but will watch over my dust. My dead body is a member of Christ. Death may separate body and soul, but it cannot separate soul or body from him; therefore take no thought for body or soul. For my soul I know he will receive it; and my body, as a good depositum, is laid up in the dust. He watches over all the dust and ashes and everything, and will make the earth faithful in giving up that depositum. He is Lord of me dying as well as living. Shall I be afraid to die, when in death I commend my soul to such a sweet Lord, and go to my husband and to my king?

And that is the end of the sacrament, for the word and sacrament are parts of the regiment* of Christ whereby he rules his church. He rules his church outwardly by the word and sacraments, and inwardly by his Spirit. His Holy Spirit makes good his own good means; and therefore as the subjects of Christ, I beseech you let us come to the ordinance of Christ. He is such a Lord as doth great things by despised means, bread and wine, poor means. But consider what a mighty Lord useth them for our soul's good; and it is his glory to magnify himself by base and weak means. He goes contrary to the course of the world, that stands all upon outward excellency; therefore let no man stumble at the meanness of the means, but consider what great things he works by the foolishness of preaching, and the meanness of his ordinance, the sacraments. He beats down strongholds. He builds us up in Christ to salvation. He communicates himself and all his benefits to us. Therefore, I beseech you, come with faith; come with this persuasion, Christ will bless his

own ordinance; and come with comfort. Christ communicates himself to us. The nearer we come to the fountain, the more we draw. And come with preparation; know with whom we have to deal, with him that is 'Lord of quick and dead.' Come with reverence. But these things I have oft upon this occason stood upon. So much for this text.

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