



Fire and Ice Sermon Series

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Commentary on the Song of Songs, Chapter Three

by James Durham

CHAPTER III. BRIDE.

Verse 1. By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.

2. I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.

This chapter hath three parts, 1. The Bride's sad exercise under the want of Christ, and in seeking after him till she find him, to verse 6. 2. The daughters of Jerusalem come in, commending the Bride, verse 6. 3. The Bride, from verse 7, to the end, returns to discourse of, and commend the excellency and amiableness of Christ.

In her exercise consider, 1. Her case. 2. Her carriage in several steps. 3. Her success in every step. 4. Her practice when she hath obtained her desire: or, we may take them up in these two, 1. Her sad condition, and her carriage under it. 2. Her outgate and her carriage suitable thereto. Her case is implied in two words, in the beginning of verse 1. 1. It was night with her. 2. She was on 'her bed.' By 'night,' is ordinarily understood darkness and affliction, opposite to light of day and joy; and here her exercise being spiritual, it must imply some spiritual affliction, or soul-sad spiritual exercise. So 'night' is taken, Psalm 42:8. 'He will command his lovingkindness in the day, and in the night' (while the day comes, that his loving kindness be intimated) this song shall be with me,' &c: The scope shows, that it is a night of desertion she is under, through the want of Christ's presence whom she loves: his presence, who is the Sun of righteousness with healing under his wings, makes the believer's day; and his absence is their night,

and makes them droop, as being under a sad night of soul affliction; therefore is it, that she seeks so carefully after his presence. 2. Her being 'on her bed,' is not taken here, as implying nearness with him, for the scope shows he is absent; but a laziness of frame on her spirit, opposite to activeness and diligence, as it is taken, chap. 5, verse 3, and so it is opposed to her after-rising and diligence, and therefore it is also called 'my bed,' implying that she was here alone in a secure comfortless frame, and therefore for this, it is distinguished from 'our bed,' chap. 1:16, and 'his bed' afterward, verse 7, where she is allowed rest, and spiritual ease, and solace in his company; but here on her bed she hath no such allowance, whatever carnal ease and rest she takes to herself; believers have their own fits of carnal security, when they give their corruptions rest, that is, their own bed: and it is a heartless lair (to speak so) to lie alone and want the Beloved: this is her case, wanting Christ, yet lying too still, as contented some way in that condition; though it cannot continue so with believers, it will turn heavy and perplexing at last to them, as it doth here to the Bride: and sure, the easiest time under security is not so comfortable and profitable to believers, as is an exercise that takes them more up; therefore afterward she prefers rising and seeking, to this woful rest. It shows, 1. That believers' distance and darkness may grow; for, in the former chapter, Christ was absent, yet, as through a window or lattice, there were some glimpses of him; but here it's 'night,' and there is not so much as a twilight discovery of him. 2. Often, distance with Christ, and security and deadness (as to our spiritual life) go together: when Christ is absent, believers then usually fall from activity in their duty, Isa. 64:7. 'No man stirreth up himself to lay hold on thee,' and the reason is, 'thou hast hid thy face,' &c. Matt. 25:5, 'While the Bridegroom tarried,' even the wise virgins 'slumbered and slept.'

Her carriage, or way that she takes in this case, is set out in four steps: The 1. Is in these words, 'I sought him, whom my soul loveth.' Consider here, I. The title Christ gets, 'him, whom,' &c. Christ got this name before, and now several times she repeats it, And it holds forth, 1. The sincerity of her love, it was her soul and heart that loved him. 2. The degree and singularity of it, no other thing was admitted in her heart to compare with him, he bears the alone sway there in respect of the affection she had to him, it is he and none other, upon whom her soul's love is set, otherwise, this title would not suitably designate him; Christ loves well to have such titles given to him, as may import the heart's special esteem of him. 3. It shews, that even in believers' lowest conditions, there remains some secret soul-esteem of Christ, and that in their judgment he is still their choice and wale above all the world. Yet, 4. That their practice while security prevails, is most unsuitable to their convictions and judgment.

II. Consider her practice and carriage. While Christ is absent her practice is not altogether a lying by, without the form of religion; for, (saith she) on my bed 'I sought him,' that is, I prayed and used some means, but in a lazy way, not stirring up my self vigorously in it. *Observe.* 1. Believers in a secure frame, may keep some form of duty, yet their duties are like the frame of their heart, lifeless and hypocritical. 2. There is much of believers' practice, such as themselves will find fault with, when they come to look rightly upon it; yea, even much of their way, while they keep up the form of duty, is but like the sluggard, Prov. 26:14, turning themselves upon their beds, as the door upon the hinges; not lying still nor altogether daring to give over the form, yet little better on the matter, because they make no effectual progress, nor can they say their soul is in and with their service, which they perform. 3. Her success, as to this step, is, 'But I have found him not,' that is, I was nothing the better, these sluggish endeavours did not my business: every form of seeking will not obtain, and one may seek Christ long in their ordinary formal way, ere they find him; yet it is good not to give over, but to observe the form: life and love is not altogether gone, when one discerns absence and their own laziness, with discontent.

When this doth not reach her design, she proceeds to a more lively step, verse 2, and that is, to get up, and seek him in a more active and stirring way: which says, 1. She observed the continuance of her distance, and, what came of her prayers and seeking: which is a good beginning of one's recovery, and winning to their feet after a fit of security and decay. 2. It says, it is often good for a believer, as to his rousing, and his recovering of spiritual life, that sense is not always easily obtained; this activity had not followed (readily) had not Christ constrained her to it, by cross dispensations and disappointments. In this step we have, 1. Her resolving to fall about a more active way in seeking him. 2. Her performance. 3. Her success. First, Her resolution is, 'I will rise now' (saith she) and go about the streets,' &c. In which there are these three, 1. What she resolves to do; not to give over (for that should never be given way to) but to bestir herself more actively in duty, 'I will rise and go' from the bed to the streets of the city and seek him there. By 'city' is understood the church, whereof all members are 'fellow-citizens,' Eph. 2:19. It is called so, 1. For its order and government; so the church is as a city, that hath watchmen and laws. 2. For its unity; it is one commonwealth and incorporation, Eph. 2:12. This Jerusalem is a city compacted together, Psalm 122:3. 3. For its privileges, whereof all believers (who are the burgesses and fellow-citizens) are partakers, Eph, 2:19, and unto which all others who are without, are strangers.

Her 'going into the city,' suppones a communicating of her case to others for help, and her using of more public means, opposite to her private dealing with herself on her bed, verse 1. even as rising imports a stirring of herself to more activity in the manner of performing, these duties, opposite to her seeking him formerly while she lay still on her bed: the thing then resolved upon is to this sense, what am I doing? Are there not more means, in the use of which I may seek Christ? Is there not another way of enquiring after him, than this lazy formal way? I will up and essay it. There are many means given for a believer's help, and when one fails, another may be blessed, and therefore, believers are still to follow from one to another; and where true love to Christ is, it will make them do so, and spare no pains till they meet with him. Again, verse 2. Ere she gets to her feet, and goes to the streets, &c. she deliberately resolves it, 'I will rise,' &c. which shows, 1. That her former disappointment did put her to a consultation what to do, and made her more serious; and this is the use that ought to be made of disappointments in the duties of religion. 2. That there will be heart-deliberations in a christian walk, when it is serious; and they are the best performances and duties, that are the results of those. 3. Serious resolutions are often very useful, and helpful in duty; for, they are engagements, and spurs to stir up to duty, when we are indisposed for it. 4. It is good cordially to resolve upon duty, when the practice of it is somewhat difficult or obstructed; for, this both speaks sincerity, and also helps to lessen the difficulty which is in the way of duty. 5. Resolutions to set about duty are sometimes the greatest length believers can win at, while under indisposition; and this much is better than nothing, because it draws on more.

This resolution is qualified, 'I will rise now' (saith she); that is, seeing these sluggish endeavours doth not avail me, I will delay no longer, but will now presently fall about it in more earnest. It is the sign of a sincere resolution, when it doth not put off or shift duty, but engageth the soul in a present undertaking of it, Psalm 119:59,60.

Next, her performance, or her putting this resolution in practice, doth accordingly follow instantly, 'I sought him' (said she) that is, in the streets, &c. *Observe.* 1. It is not a resolution worth the mentioning, that hath not practice following; for every honest resolution is followed with practice, whatever shortcoming wait upon it. 2. Honest resolutions are often to duty, like a needle that draws the thread after it; and believers should not fear to resolve on duty from fear of coming short in performance, if their resolutions be undertaken in the strength of Christ, as this was, as is clear by considering her former frame, which was such as would give no great encouragement to self undertakings in duties.

Lastly. Her success, or rather her disappointment follows in these words, 'but I found him not,' even then when I was most serious in seeking him, I missed him still; which is not only spoken to show the event, but also by way of regret, she is deeply affected with it. *Observe.* 1. When the Lord's people have been formerly lazy, Christ may keep up himself, even when they become more active, rather hereby chastening their former negligence, than being offended at their present diligence in duty. 2. It is sad when Christ is missed even in duty, and that once and again. 3. She continues to be a distinct observer of the fruits both of public and private duties which is a commendable practice, and to be made conscience of by all the seekers of his face.

Verse 3. The watchmen that go about the city, found me; to whom I said, saw ye him whom my soul loveth?

This verse contains the third step of the Bride's carriage, being now abroad, the watchmen found her, and she enquires for her beloved at them: and her success in this may be gathered from what follows, she doth not upon recourse to them immediately find him, but is put to go a little further. In the words, there is, 1. An opportunity or means for finding Christ, met with. 2. Her improving of it. 3. Her success which is implied, as is said.

I. The means holds forth these three things, 1. What the church is; it is a city, wherein there is order, and a common fellowship, as hath been said, verse 2. 2. The minister's office is here implied: this city hath 'watchmen;' so are ministers called Ezek. 3:17; Isa. 62:6; Heb. 13:17. Which words imports, 1. That the church is a city in danger, having outward and inward enemies, and therefore needing watchmen. 2. That there is the office of a ministry appointed in the church for guarding against and preventing her danger; and that some are peculiarly designed, and separated from others for that purpose; some who may be called 'watchmen,' which others cannot be said to be, and so they are here distinguished from believers or private persons. 3. This office is most necessary, burdensome, and of great concernment to the safety of the church, as watchmen are to the city; for so watch they over the souls of the people committed to their trust.

Again these watchmen, are in the exercise of their duty, They went about the city: which shows their diligence according to their trust; at least, it holds forth the end wherefore they are appointed. *Observe.* There is but one city or church,

and all ministers are watchmen of that one church, given for the edification of that body; and they should watch, not only for this or that post (to say so) but for the safety of the whole, as watchmen that stand at their post, for the good of the whole city.

These watchmen found her, that is, (as we conceive) by their doctrine they spoke to her condition, and by their searching and particular application, made the two-edged sword of the word reach her; as if they had discernably pointed her out, beyond all the rest of the congregation which shews, 1. The efficacy of the word when rightly managed, Heb. 4:12, It's a 'discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.' 2. That God can make it find out one in the midst of many others, when the minister knows not; and can make it speak to a believer's case, or any other particular person's condition, as if he did know and aim at them particularly. 3. That ministers should be searching, and differencing in their doctrine, as, their several conditions, and various exercises of hearers require: that is, they ought to put differences betwixt the precious and the vile, and rightly to divide the word of truth, or to lay every one's portion to them so as it be not even in gross, or heaped together to all, but to every one their own allowance. In sum then, that which she says, is this, when I had gone abroad, (saith she) in heaviness to hear (if so I might meet with Christ in public) God made some watchmen speak to my condition particularly, as if one had acquainted them with it.

II. Her improving of this opportunity (coming as it were, beyond her expectation) follows in the next words she cries out in an abrupt manner, 'Saw ye him;' she thinks they can help her, being acquainted with such cases, and therefore she will consult them; that is, she follows in, upon the little experience she had felt of their skill, to seek for help from them, and for that end to communicate her case to them, as it were after sermon is done, or when some convenient time offers. *Observe.* 1. That believers that are serious, will let no fit opportunity for meeting with Christ pass; they are accurate observers, and frugal managers of them all. 2. She observes and is glad when a word speaks home to her case, and finds her; and this is indeed the disposition of a sound and serious believer. 3. Ministers should be well acquainted themselves with soul-sickness, and expert in the various exercises and cases incident to the people of God, both in order to the finding out their disease, and the cause of it (who often can scarce make language of their own condition themselves) and also in order to the making suitable applications for the cure of it; for, this is to have the tongue of the learned, to speak a word in season. 4. Believers often can say little of their cases, but in a broken and confused way; which says, ministers had need to be the better acquainted with the spiritual cases and exercises of souls, that they may

understand by half a word what they would say. 5. Believers should advert well to whom they communicate their case, this should not be done to all. 6. Ministers are suitable physicians (though not the sole, or only physician) to whom believers should make known their soul-exercises and cases, and therefore, there should be much spiritual sympathy betwixt their people and them. 7. It is a great encouragement to a distressed soul, to impart its case to a minister, when in his public doctrine he useth to speak pertinently unto it. 8. It is not unsuitable for exercised souls (besides the public hearing of their minister) to have their particular queries to him in private. 9. How Christ shall be obtained, is a suitable subject for ministers and people, in their converse together, to be mainly taken up with; and holy anxiety concerning this, is a frame fit for making addresses to ministers; they may indeed come to ministers with such questions, who are much in longing after him. 10. There may be much tenderness in affection and love, where there is much weakness in knowledge. He is the 'him' whom her soul loveth, even now when she knows not where he is; and the most grown believers may be sometimes brought to this low ebb in their condition, for good ends, and for demonstrating the usefulness and necessity of public ordinances, even to them. 11. An exercised soul prizeth most a ministry; and such spiritual exercises (as are here mentioned) do cherish their esteem of that ordinance, when other debates among a people often do derogate from its due esteem. 12. Ministers should not cast affection, nor reject zeal in weak christians, even though these be joined with some infirmities, and may occasion some more trouble to themselves: but where sincerity is, there should be an overcoming condescendance as to both these, and the questions of a tender soul should be by them entertained, as having learned at their Master, not to break a bruised reed. 13. Tender exercised souls usually confine their questions to their own soul's case; there is no abstract curious query here, nor for the fashion proposed, nor any needless debate about extrinsic things, or the faults or practice of others: but, 'Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?' This is the sore upon which she keeps her finger, and this is the wound which she keeps bleeding, till he bind it up.

III. The success of her meeting with the watchmen, and of this query she puts to them, though it be not expressed, yet it is implied in the first words of the next verse, which being compared with this, holds out two things, 1. That she did not presently find an outgate from under her sad case, for she beboved to go further. 2. It was but a little further that she is put to go, till she find him; which says, that her endeavours were not altogether fruitless. *Observe.* 1. Christ will sometimes let believers know, that all means without him are empty, and that he is restricted to none of them; yea, nor to any fellowship, no not of the most powerful minister. 2. Public means do not always bring present ease unto believers under

disquieting cases, yet, (to say so) they dispose and make way for it in private; and one may get the good of an ordinance, and of fellowship with ministers or christians, though not in the mean time, yet afterward even when they are retired at home; and it is as good a time thereafter, yea, and better for their behoof.

If it be asked here, what we should judge of these watchmen, if they were tender or not? The ground of the doubt is, because chap. 5:7, watchmen that are not tender are spoken of, which yet are there said to find the Bride. *Answer.* There is a twofold finding, 1. When one searches an exercised condition for this end, that he may contribute something for the exercised person's ease and help. 2. When one follows or searches after tenderness in others, that we may find some advantage against them, thereby to make the heart of the righteous sad; the one finds, as a friend finds another: the other as an enemy or mocker finds another: the first sort of finding is to be understood here in this chapter, for the watchmen here carry as friends; the second sort of finding, chap. 5:7, for there they carry as mockers: which will appear by these differences, 1. Here she propones her case to them for their help, it is like being encouraged thereto, by their finding out her case before in the preaching of the word, but chap. 5:7, she doth no such thing.

2. When they find her, chap. 5:7, they smite her and put her to shame, which makes her silent: but their finding her here, doth encourage her. 3. Though here she find not Christ instantly, yet she says not as in the former steps, 'I found him not,' she could not altogether say so, and immediately after she finds him; but [in] chap. 5 she goes long seeking him, after she meets with the watchmen; yea, goes from them heavier, and more wounded than when she came: and this Song being to hold forth the various conditions of a believer, and it being incident to them sometimes to fall in tender bands, and sometimes, yea, often in the hands of those which are rough and untender, we judge it safest to understand this place of the first, and chap. 5 of the last, and especially because this makes most for the believer's instruction and consolation, which is here aimed at, and this is more suitable to the scope of the Song, than that both should be understood one way.

Verse 4. It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.

The beginning of this verse, contains the last step of the Bride's carriage, and also her desired success, She went 'a little' further, and 'but a little,' and she finds him whom her soul loveth: public ordinances and fellowship with godly men, are very useful and necessary, but not to be rested on; and they who find not the desired outgate by these, should not immediately give over the business as desperate and hopeless; for, there is something even beyond these to be aimed at, 'a little further' must be gone, which is the first thing in the verse: and we conceive it doth import these two, 1. A more immediate going to Christ himself, (as if the ministers had said) ye must go over and beyond means, to Christ himself, and denying these, lean and rest, and that wholly on him: they go beyond means, that rest not on them, and are denied to them in the use of them, as that man, Matt. 17:14, that brought his son to the disciples, to get the Devil cast out, and when they did it not, he went not away, but stayed for Christ himself, and told the case to him: Christ can do when means fail, and we should trust him, when they seem to disappoint us how feckless are the best of ministers, when himself is not present? 2. This going 'a little further,' doth not import the doing of any duties she had not done, but a more vigorous and lively manner of going about these. There had some heartlessness, unbelief, and indisposition stuck to her, in all the former steps and strugglings; now she steps further in, and goes further in the use of these same means; and not speaking to the minister, when she finds that the moving of his lips cannot assuage her grief, she looks through to the Master, and vigorously addresses herself to the exercise of faith in him, and of prayer to him, &c. in a more serious way than she had done before *Observe*. 1. Sometimes believers may lay too much weight on outward and public means; they may rest too much there, and go on further than these. 2. It is God's goodness, by disappointment in means, to train his people on to a further length of power and life in their practice. 3. It may be when a believer hath satisfied himself in going about all external means, and that in the due order, hath neglected none of them, that there is still somewhat more to do, as to the bettering of his inward frame. 4.

It is not a desperate business, nor are believers forthwith to conclude that their hope is perished, because they have not attained their desire in the use of means for a time. 5. It is not a less practise in the soul-exercises, to go over and beyond means and ordinances in suing for Christ, than to go about them; and the last is no less necessary than the first. 6. Believers in the use of means, should join these three together, 1. Making conscience of means; and yet, 2. For the success, looking higher than they; and, 3. Not standing when they find not instantly ease, or satisfaction by them.

The second thing here, is her success, which is according to her desire, ‘I found him’ (saith she); when I had pressed but a little further, he sensibly and surprisingly made himself known to me. *Observe.* 1. Christ is not far off from his people when they are seeking him, whatever they may think when he hides himself. 2. They who love Christ, and conscionably follow all means for obtaining him are not far from finding, nor he far from manifesting himself to them. 3. They who sincerely press forward to the life of ordinances beyond the form, and by faith take themselves to Christ himself for the blessing, not resting on their performances will not long miss Christ, yea, it may be, he will give them a sensible manifestation of himself sooner than they are aware; for, ‘the Spirit is obtained, not by the works of the law, but by the hearing of faith,’ Gal. 3:2. 4. A soul that sincerely loves Christ, should not, and when in a right frame will not give over seeking Christ till it find him, whatever disappointment it meets with; and sure such will find him at last. 5. Christ found after much search, will be very welcome, and his presence then will be most discernible. 6. Believers should no less observe, and acknowledge their good success in the means, than their disappointments; there are many who often make regrets of their bonds, that are deficient in acknowledging God’s goodness when they get liberty.

Next, In this verse we have her carriage set down, when she hath found him; she doth not then lay by diligence, as if all were done, but is of new taken up, with as great care to retain and improve this mercy, as before she was solicitous to attain it: whether a believer want or have; whether he be seeking, or enjoying, there is still matter of exercise for him in his condition. This her care to retain Christ (which is the fourth thing in the first part of this chapter) is laid down in three steps. 1. She endeavours to hold him that she again lose not the ground she had gained. 2. She seeks to have other members of that same church getting good of Christ also: and these two are in this verse. 3. When his presence is brought back to the church and ordinances, her care is to admonish, yea, charge that he be entertained well with them, lest they should provoke him to be gone, verse 5.

The first step then of her care is, 'I held him and would not let him go:' as a wife having found her husband, whom she much longed for, hangs on him lest he depart again, so doth she; which is an expression both of her fear, love, care, and faith. This holding of Christ, and not letting him go, imports, 1. A holy kind of violence, more than an ordinary, wherewith the Bride strives and wrestles to retain him. 2. That Christ (as it were) waits for the believer's consent in this wrestling, as he saith to Jacob, Gen. 32:26, 'I pray thee, let me go:' which upon the matter seems to say, I will not go, if thou wilt hold me, and have me stay. 3. It imports an importunate adhering to him, and not consenting upon any terms to quit him. And lastly it imports the singular and inexpressible satisfaction she had in him; her very life lay in the keeping him still with her, and therefore she holds him, and cannot think of parting with him. Now this presence of Christ (being spiritual) cannot be understood in a carnal way, nor can they be carnal grips that retain him; and his power being omnipotent, it cannot be the force of a frail creature that prevails, but it is here as in Hos. 12:2,3, In Jacob's prevailing, 'he wept and made supplication,' that is, an humble, ardent suing to him by prayer, with a lively exercise of faith on his promises (whereby he allows his people to be pressing) engageth him to stay; he is tied by his own love that is in his heart, and his faithfulness in his promises, that he will not withdraw, and deny them that, for which they made supplication to him, more than if he were by their strength prevailed over, and overcome; as a little weeping child will hold its mother or nurse, not because it is stronger than she, but because the mother's bowels so constrain her, as she cannot almost, though she would, leave that child; so Christ's bowels yearning over a believer, are that which here hold him, that he cannot go; he cannot go, because he will not. Here we have ground to observe the importunateness of sincere love, which is such, as with an holy wilfulness it holds to Christ and will not quit him, as Jacob said, 'I will not let thee go.' 2. We may observe here the power of lively faith (to which nothing is impossible) love and faith will stick to Christ against his own seeming entreaties, till they gain their point, and will prevail, Gen. 32:28. 3. See here the condescending, the wonderful condescending of the Almighty, to be held by his own creature, to be, as it were, at their disposal, 'I pray thee, let me go,' Gen. 32:26, and Exod. 32:10, 'Let me alone, Moses;' so long as a believer will not consent to quit Christ, so long keeps their faith grip of him, and he will not offend at this importunity; yea, he is exceedingly well pleased with it: it cannot be told how effectual prayer and faith would be, if fervent and vigorous.

The second step of her carriage, which is the scope of the former; namely of her holding him, is in these words, 'till I had brought him to my mother's house to the chambers of her that conceived me.' By 'mother' in scripture is understood

the visible church, which is even the believer's mother, Hos. 2:1, 'Say to Ammi (my people) 'plead with your mother.' So chap. 1:6, this mother hath children, both after the flesh and after the spirit, the former hating the latter; and chap. 8:5. It is the mother that hath ordinances, for the Bride's instruction. The church visible is called the mother, because, 1. By the immortal seed of the word, the Lord begets believers in his church, to which he is Husband, and the Father of these children; she is the Wife and Mother that conceives them, and brings them up. 2. Because of the covenant tie that stands betwixt God and the visible church, whereby she may claim right to him as her husband (the covenant being the marriage contract betwixt God and the church) which is therefore the ground of the former relation of mother. Again, Christ is said to be brought into the church not only when his ordinances are pure in her, (which is supposed to be here already; for verse 3, there were watchmen doing their duty, and dispensing pure ordinances) but when there is life in them, the presence and countenance of his Spirit going along with them, that they may be powerful for the end appointed: as it was one thing to have the temple, the type of his church, and another, to have God's presence singularly in it; so it is one thing to have pure ordinances set up in the church, and another, to have Christ's presence filling them with power: now (saith she) when I got Christ, I knew there were many fellow-members of that same church, that had need of him, and I was importunate that he might manifest himself in his ordinances there, for their and my good. Church ordinances, are the allowed and ordinary means of keeping fellowship with Christ, and they are all empty when he is not there. *Observe.* 1. That even true believers have the visible church for their mother, and it is written of them as their privilege, that they were born there, Psalm 87:4,5. 2. Believers should not disclaim the church in which they are spiritually begotten and born, nor their fellow-members therein; but reverence her as the mother that gave them life, and carry respectfully toward her as such; 'honour thy father and mother' being a moral command, and the first with promise. See Psalm 122:3,6. 3. When believers get nearest Christ for themselves, it is then the fit time to deal with him for others, especially for the church whereof they are members; it is Moses' only express suit, Exod. 34:9, when God admits him to his company (in presenting whereof it is said, verse 8, he made haste) 'I pray thee, O Lord, go amongst us.' 4. It is true tenderness, when one is admitted to more nearness with God than others, not to separate from the church whereof they are members, and as it were to carry Christ to their own chamber; but to endeavour to have Christ brought also to the church, that what is wanting of life amongst her members, or the rest of the children, may be made up by his presence. 5. They who are tender of their own comfort, and of retaining Christ's presence with themselves, will be careful to have others, not yet sensible of their

need of it, nor acquaint with it, made partakers thereof also. 6. Believers in their serious applications to Christ for the church whereof they are members may prevail much, and have much influence for obtaining his presence there, and for the putting of every thing in a better frame for the good of others. 7. A kindly member of the church, is brought up ordinarily in that church, and by that mother, where she was conceived, therefore she goes back to her mother's house, for they have breasts to nourish, who have a womb to bring forth in this respect, and yet here were both children that hated her, chap. 1:6, and watchmen that smote her, chap. 5:7, yet to this mother's house she goes. In a word, this is, as a kind spouse living in her mother's house, having after long seeking found her husband, will be desirous to have him home with her, not only for their mutual solace, but for the comfort of all the family; so do believers, living yet in the church, desire to improve their credit and court with Christ, for the good of the whole church, that where she was conceived, others may be conceived also: where Christ's ordinances are, there ordinarily are children begotten of God; and where a church conceives seed, and brings forth to him, it is a token he hath not given her a bill of divorce, nor will disclaim her to be his wife; so much less, the children ought not to disclaim her as their mother: it is a shame that many who profess to be children, either are not yet conceived, or the mother that conceived them, is despised by them; it is strange if the father will own such as children, who not only cry out against, but curse their mother, and place a piece of religion in this.

Verse 5. I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my Love till he please.

The third part of her care is in this verse, when she hath prevailed with him, to give his presence and countenance to her mother's house, then she turns to the daughters of Jerusalem, the visible professors and members of the church, charging them, that now seeing Christ is returned, they would be careful to entertain him well, and not to provoke him to withdraw. These words were spoken to the former chapter, verse 7, where they have the same general scope, which is to shew her care of having Christ retained; but in this they differ, there they look to her particular enjoyment of Christ; here they look (as the scope and connexion with the former words shew) to his presence in the church, or her mother's house, lest that should, by the daughter's fault, be interrupted: the first

shews a believer's care, conjuring all (as it were) that nothing in her might provoke him: this shews what should be the church's care in reference to his visible presence, and blessing (to say so) in his church: now (saith she) Christ is amongst you, O ye who are of my mother's house, beware of putting him away; and in this she deals with them, as considered in their visible church state and relation, and not as real believers; the charge being to all: and therefore in the following verse, and chap. 8:5, the daughters return an answer, which they do not, chap. 2:7, because here she directs her words to the visible professors; whereas, chap. 2:7, her scope was only to compose herself, seeing the presence she enjoyed was only to her particular sense. Here, *Observe*. 1. As there is more of Christ's sensible presence, and also of distance from him, in his way with particular believers at one time than another; so is there, in respect of his way to his church: sometimes he is not in the mother's house, sometimes he is. 2. As every believer should endeavour to retain Christ in his presence with their own souls, so all the members of a visible church should be careful to prevent his departure from his ordinances. 3. Often it is with Christ's presence in his church, as it is with the condition of particular believers in it; if they be secure, and he away from them, then often he is from the 'mother's house' also; if they be lively, and he with them, then he is brought back again to the church with them. 4. As Christ may withdraw, if provoked and not entertained, from a private believer, so he will do from a church, if they bold not fast what they have received, and walk not answerably thereto. 5. Church members, by their sins, have much influence on Christ's removal from amongst them; yea, sometimes it may come to pass, when the body of a church turn despisers of the gospel, that no intercession of the godly, for preventing his departure, will prevail, even though Noah, Daniel, and Job were amongst them, Jer. 15:1, and Ezek. 14:14. 6. Believers, that know the hazard of provoking Christ, and what a loss the loss of his presence is, should interpose seriously with new unexperienced beginners, and give them warning faith fully concerning this their hazard. 7. As a believer, in respect of the visible church, stands under the relation of a child to a mother; so, in respect of visible professors, they stand under the relation of brethren and sisters, and should keep religious communion with them, even as such, that being an external duty that lieth upon them. 8. True love to Christ will be affected even with the wrongs that others .do to him who is their beloved, and will endeavour to prevent his being wronged and provoked, as she doth here. 9. True love to others, will not only put to pray and intercede for them, and employ all the court the believer hath with Christ for their good (as the Bride did in the former verse) but will also manifest itself in giving faithful admonitions, advertisements, &c. and in doing what else may prevent sin in them.

DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM.

Verse 6. Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?

The visible professors having now gotten a serious charge (because they are not easily engaged; and it mars the good of our fellowship one with another in admonitions and warnings, when we are not serious even in the manner of our dealing with others) they are some way put into a little piece of warmness, and admiration more than ordinary (as ordinarily Christ's return to a church and his ordinances in it, after a palpable decay, hath some stir and affectionate like motions accompanying it, such as were to be found in John's hearers, John 5:35.) And in this affected and stirred condition they answer the Bride's charge, 'O who is this?' say they, importing they have more respect to the godly, and shew forth more evidences of it in their expressions, than ever they used formerly to do.

That these are the words of the daughters of Jerusalem, may be cleared from these things, 1. That they are placed on the back of her charge to them; and when she charges, they used to answer (as chap. 5:9, and 8:5,) and then she proceeds to speak to them; even so it is here; for, the words hold forth a mutual conference betwixt her and them, and therefore the words of this verse will be most pertinently understood as spoken by them. 2. They are the same words on the matter, and spoken on the same occasion with these, chap. 8:5. which we will find to be spoken by them. 3. They can agree to none other. To say, they are the words of angels, is not warrantable, they not being a speaking party in this song: to say, they are the Bride's own words, will not suit with the commendation that is given to her, and of her in them, as by a distinct party: neither can they be Christ's words spoken immediately by him: for chap. 8:5. where these words upon the matter are repeated, she is said to ascend, 'leaning on her beloved;' and he is spoken of, and

looked on as a third, both from the Bride and the speaker. It remains then, that they must be the words of the daughters of Jerusalem, wondering at the change that was to be seen on the church, her case being now compared with what it was before; and wondering at believers in her, upon the same account also, as almost mistaking them, and so they speak as having other affections to them than they had before. It is like that wondering expression, Isa. 49:21. Thou shalt say (to wit, when the sudden change comes) ‘Who hath begotten me these?’ or, as it is, Rev. 3:9, where it is promised to the church of Philadelphia, that others should ‘fall down, and worship at her feet,’ as being convinced now, that Christ loves his church. And that this verse is spoken of the Bride, the words in the original, being in the feminine gender, puts it out of question; for, they are in the original, as if it were said, ‘Who is she that cometh up,’ &c.

The words contain a commendation of the church, expressed both in the matter, and also in the manner of the expression (being by way of question) and it is given by visible professors, some whereof may be more tender than others, yet both contradistinguished from the Bride. The commendation hath three part or steps. 1. She ‘cometh,’ or (as it is chap. 8:5.) ‘ascends from the wilderness:’ it is like before this manifestation of Christ, the Church was dry and withered-like, in a wilderness condition, without any beauty or lustre; but now that condition is changed, when Christ is present, she ascends and comes out of it: and this wilderness (considering her ascent from it) signifies the world, wherein believers sojourn in the way of heaven (as Israel did in the wilderness to Canaan) and wherein there is no true content, nor satisfying rest sought by them, nor to be found by any, therefore is their back on it, though formerly they seemed to be settled in it with the rest of the worldly; thus the heavenliness of believers in their conversation is set out.

2. She comes like ‘pillars of smoke;’ this looks not in all things to ordinary smoke but (as the afterwords do clear) to the ‘smoke of incense,’ &c. Now she ascends like smoke in a calm day, and like pillars of it together, making heavenward, as the smoke of incense, which being commanded in God’s worship, was acceptable to him: and as smoke fleeing from kindled fire cannot but ascend, (especially new kindled) cannot but have smoke, and that in abundance; so now the church being warmed, and of fresh inflamed and made lively with Christ’s presence, cannot but send out a sweet savour, which discernibly ascends upward from the world (which is but a wilderness) as smoke doth from the earth.

3. She is ‘perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, and all the powders of the merchant:’ that is, as precious powders are used to make one savoury, so the believer being replenished with the graces of Christ’s Spirit, (often in this song

compared to sweet spices, chap. 1:12 and 4:6,13,14,16, &c.) and these graces being now quickened by his presence, they cast a delightful savour to them with whom such believers converse: so it was, Acts 2:*ult.* and the ordinances, being powerful and lively, will have such a powerful influence, as to be a 'sweet savour in every place,' 2 Cor. 2:14,15, and to leave some conviction of their amiableness and excellency, even upon the consciences of those who will never get good of them, so that there is no costly ointment or powder, that will so perfume a person or place, as the gospel will do a church especially when immediately on the back of Christ's return, he doth in an extraordinary manner countenance the dispensing of his own ordinances, so that even the temporary believer is made in a manner, to receive the gospel with joy.

Next, the manner of the expression is by way of question, and admiration, 'who is this?' say they, we never saw the like of her, she hath no match; and so the question expresseth a wonderful beauty and loveliness in her, and a great conviction and astonishment in them. In reference to which two, these things are to be learned, 1. That there is nothing more lovely and savoury in itself, than grace exercised in a believer's walk, and Christ's ordinances beautified with his own presence in his church. 2. That where Christ's ordinances in his church, and the graces of his Spirit in the hearts of his people are made lively with his presence, they will be in their beauty very discernible to others, and will be much admired, spoken of, and commended by them. 3. That this beauty is usually most fresh, when Christ returns to his people and church, after he hath been a while away; for, then tenderness is in life amongst them. 4. The world in itself, and being compared with Christ's church (especially in their estimation, whose eyes God hath opened) is but a miserable wilderness, and cannot give a heartsome being or place of abode to a believer. 5. Believers have a more noble design to compass, than to sit down and take up their rest in this world, their faces bend upwards, and their backs are upon it. 6. Christ's presence gives life to a believer's motions, and ravisheth them upward, as fire put to fuel necessitates smoke to ascend. 7. A heavenly-minded believer is a comely sight, and a world-denied professor will extort a commendation, even from ordinary onlookers. 8. As there is more of the exercise of true grace amongst believers, by Christ's more than ordinary presence with them, and in his church; so there is often a more than ordinary warmth and motion in the generality of church-members at such a time, whereof yet many may be unsound, as no question all the daughters of Jerusalem were not sound. 9. The church of Christ and believers in it, will look much more beautiful to professors at one time than at another, and they will be much more taken with this beauty sometimes than at other times; for, chap. 1:5,6. The daughters of Jerusalem were in hazard to stumble at her spots; here they are ravished with her beauty as

thinking her another thing than she was before. 10. Christ's presence will indeed put another face, both on a church and person, and make them every way different (but still to the better) from what they were. 11. The more active, believers be in exercising their graces, they will have the more fresh relish and savour; for, her ascending here, makes all her perfumes to flow.

BRIDE.

Verse 7. Behold his bed, which is Solomon's: threescore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel.

8. They all hold swords, being expert in war: every man hath his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night.

The Bride, being commended in the former verse by the daughters of Jerusalem, as being jealous that they gazed upon her, to the prejudice of the Bridegroom, and being ever restless till every commendable thing that is in her, redound to his praise, to whom she owes, and from whom she derives all her beauty; she steps in hastily with a 'behold,' as having a far more wonderful and excellent object to propose to them, to wit, Christ Jesus, the true Solomon himself, whose loveliness and glory should take them all up, rather than any poor perfections they saw in her.

That this is the scope, the matter will clear, especially, verse 11, where, what she would be at, is propounded in plain terms; and her sudden coming in with a 'behold,' as in chap. 1:6, doth confirm it. That they are the Bride's words also, the scope and connexion bear out; this being her disposition, that she can suffer no commendation from Christ, nor from any other to stay or rest upon her, but is restless till it be turned over to his praise, as, chap. 1:16, 2:3, &c. There is none so tender of him, or jealous of his honour, as Christ's Bride is: again, the daughters being spoken unto, and Christ spoken of as a third person, it can be no other that speaks here, but the Bride; what? (saith she) are ye taken with any loveliness ye see in me? I will propose to you a far more excellent object.

And this short but very sweet discourse, holds forth Christ, lovely and glorious in three most excellent steps, wherein by a notable gradation, Solomon is ever mentioned; his name (who was a special type of Christ) being borrowed to

design him, while his glory is set forth. He is described, 1. From his bed, verses 7,8. Whereby is set forth, the excellent happiness and quietness that believers have in enjoying him. 2. From his chariot, a most stately piece of work by which is signified that excellent means (to wit, the covenant of redemption revealed and preached) whereby our Lord Jesus brings his people to his rest, verse 9,10. 3. She propounds his own most excellent self, and that crowned with the stately majesty and glory of his love, beyond which there is no step to proceed, but here she sits, and willeth all others to be taken up, in ‘beholding him,’ as the only desirable and heart ravishing object, verse 11.

For opening of the first, in the 7th and 8th verses, we have these five things to consider. 1. Who this Solomon is. 2. What this bed is. 3. What this guard, that is about it, doth signify. 4. For what end that guard is appointed. 5. The use of the note of attention, behold, which is prefixed.

1. By Solomon, David’s son properly, is not understood, this scope will not agree to him (he was indeed a great king, ‘but a greater than Solomon is here’) therefore seeing in scripture, Solomon was typical of Christ, as from Psalm 72, and other places may be gathered; through all these verses, by Solomon, is understood Christ, the beloved, and Bridegroom, who especially was typified by Solomon in these things: 1. Solomon had a great kingdom from the river to the sea, and so will our Lord have many subjects. 2. As Solomon was, so Christ is, a powerful, rich king; our Lord Jesus hath all power in heaven and in earth committed unto him. 3. Solomon was a royal, magnificent king, sought unto from all parts of the earth; and so the name and glory, wherewith the Mediator is furnished, is above every name in heaven and in earth. 4. Solomon was a wise judicious king; and singular for that: and so in our Lord Jesus ‘dwells all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;’ there is no need to fear that any thing that concerns his people will miscarry in his hand. 5. Solomon had a peaceable reign (for which cause he had that name) and his government was blessed and happy to his people and servants; and so our Lord Jesus is the ‘Prince of peace,’ Isa. 9:6, and of his government there is no change: and happy are his subjects, and blessed are his servants, for the one half of his glory, magnificence, wisdom, &c. and of their happiness can neither be told nor believed. This is an excellent person, and a most stately king, who yet is the believer’s Bridegroom; Christ’s Bride is nobly and honourably matched.

2. By bed here, is understood the same thing that is signified by it, chap. 1:16, to wit, that access, nearness and familiarity that the believer hath with Christ, and whereunto he admits them that are his; and the rest, solace and refreshment that they enjoy in fellowship with him: beds being especially

appointed for these two, 1. For refreshing and rest, Isa. 57:2, and Psalm 132:3. 2. For the mutual fellowship of husband and wife. So then, by this is holden forth the excellent refreshing and soul-ease, that a believer may have in the enjoying of Christ; there is no bed that can give quietness, rest and solace, like this. Again it's called 'his bed' 1. To distinguish it from hers, chap. 3:1. There is great odds betwixt the two, as was hinted upon that verse. 2. To show, that although she be admitted to it (and therefore it's called 'ours,' chap. 1:16,) yet it's wholly procured and framed by him alone. 3. It's called 'his,' to show the communion that a believer hath with Christ in his refreshings. O sweet! It is Christ's own bed, if he lie well, they lie well who are married to him; It is his peace which they enjoy here, 'my peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you,' &c. John 14:27. And it is his glory and throne, that they are made partakers of hereafter, when they are set down on the same throne with him. Again, it's called 'his bed, which is Solomon's:' which expression, is added to show where the weight of this wonderful refreshing lies, to wit, in this, that the rest (which he invites them to behold) is no mean man's, it's Solomon's; yea, a greater than Solomon's, whose curtains and hangings are much above his, chap. 1:6. If Solomon's servants were happy that were admitted to his presence, how wonderfully happy are believers, Christ's Bride, who are admitted to his own bed: the dignity of believing and union with him, should be read out of the dignity and glorious majesty of the person with whom we are united.

3. There is a guard mentioned here, which in relation to Christ, shows his stateliness, and in relation to us, shows our safety and security, that as kings (and it is like, Solomon) used to be attended by guards, for stateliness and security, that quietly they may rest (their guards watching about them) so this rest that a believer hath in Christ, O it is sure! there is an excellent guard compassing them about. It is particularly described, 1. In its number, they are 'sixty' that is a competent and sufficient number. 2. They are 'valiant,' gallant, courageous men, that will not fail to execute orders: they are the choice men of Israel, that Solomon had to watch his bed, they are choice ones our Lord makes use of for the security of believers. 3. They are orderly disposed for their security, they are 'about it,' on all hands, there can be no approach made upon believers, to the prejudice of the repose they have in Christ. 4. They are well armed; yea, always at their arms, in a posture of defence, 'they all hold swords,' none of them want arms, and they have them still in readiness. 5. They are not only stout, but skilful, 'expert' men, who have been tried and well proved: none of his people needs to suspect Christ's watch over them, dexterous is he in preserving poor souls. 6. 'Every one hath his sword girt on his thigh,' and is standing at his post. All the expressions tend to show that here, and here only, in Christ's bed may a coal rest secure; there is no

access for wrath to seize upon them that are in Christ, nor to devils to pull them from Christ; for, He and his Father are stronger than all, and none is able to pluck them out of his hand. Believers have a notable security and defence, Christ's bed and his guard, if he be sure, they are sure, one watch watcheth both him and her. The same power of God, Isa. 27:2, the twenty thousand of angels, which are his chariots, Psalm 68:17, are for the believers' protection in Christ's company, 'pitching their tents about them,' Psalm 34:8. In a word, they are not only guarded with angels, but with divine attributes, the wisdom and power of God, and this makes them dwell in safety.

The end of all this; is, for 'fear in the night;' there are no nights to Christ himself, and so no fear; yea, Solomon the type, having such a peaceable kingdom, it is not like he had much fear; but the fear is in respect of believers, who are admitted to Christ's company and fellowship: for preventing their fears, he hath settled all firmly, as if guards were set for their security. Hence we gather, that the believer is supposed to be in the bed with him, otherwise there is no use of this guard; and his bed here is a piece of work that is framed not only for himself, but also for the daughters of Jerusalem, as the following chariot is. By 'night' here is understood believers' darkness and lightless conditions (to speak so) wherein fears, doubts, challenges, &c. are most ready to assault, as affrightments use to befall men in the night. These words, 'because of fear in the night,' hold forth the use that our Solomon hath of that guard, to wit, for quieting his poor people, against the doubtings, difficulties, discouragements, and such like, whereto believers are so subject in their drooping, night-conditions though when light shines, they are little troubled.

These words shew, I. That Christ's Bride admitted to fellowship with him, may have her black and dark nights. 2. That believers, who have thought themselves above doubtings and fears, when things went well with them, et in nights of temptation, darkness, and trial may be overtaken with many sad fears; it's not always day with them, and when it is night with them, they are apt to fear. 3. That believers in their nights, and under their fears have good security and an excellent guard; yea, their safety and defence is as good then, as when there is no night nor fear; how dark soever their night be, Christ's guard will sufficiently preserve them. 4. Christ is tender even of believers' fears, and hath provided so well for their peace, as he hath appointed means, not only to prevent their hurt, but also to prevent their fears: for, 'because of fear' hath he appointed this guard. 5. There is no king or monarch so well attended and guarded, or who may sleep so secure and sound as a believer: his guard is still at their post, and they are valiant men, that cannot fail; for, 1. He is at peace with God; and he that is within the

peace of God, hath the warrant, right, and advantage of it to ‘guard the heart and mind,’ Phil. 4:7. 2. The believer hath all the promises, and confirmations of oath and seals, in which it is impossible for God to lie, to secure and quiet him. 3. He hath the watch of angels, Psalm 34:7, pitching their tents about him, and chariots of angels waiting on him. 4. He hath God himself, and his almighty power for his defence, who alone may make him dwell in safety, wherefore he may lie down with confidence, and also sleep with quietness, Psalm 4:8. It is good sleeping in Christ’s bed, there is not so good rest to be found any where in the world: so then, by the guard is understood, whatever contributes for confirming believers’ faith, and strengthening them against their fears of being interrupted in their rest, which (being in Christ) is allowed upon them.

5. A ‘behold’ is prefixed to all this, and that deservedly, 1. To shew the wonderfulness of what she was to say, O how wonderful is it, if believed! 2. To provoke, and stir up to observe and take notice of it; few are acquainted with believers’ privileges, and if they had not been recorded in the word, we durst never have likened or evened ourselves to them. 3. It is to shew an holy impatency in her affection, in breaking in so with this discourse, as more fervently desirous to fill their mouths and hearts with the commending of Christ, than what they were about in commending of her; a notable diversion, and sign of love in a friend of the Bridegroom, who with John the Baptist is content to decrease, so he may increase: true believers should and will endeavour more the commendation of Christ, in their fellowship together, than to commend any grace, gift, or what else they have gotten from him; they will not conceit, or cry up their graces and gifts as they are theirs, for that were base ingratitude, but withal they mention what they have received, partly to endear him to themselves, and partly to commend him to others; and thus they design to return him his own with advantage, wherein nevertheless they are the gainers, even while they seem to give what they have received.

Verse 9. King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon.

10. He made the pillars thereof of silver, the bottom thereof of gold, the covering of it of purple; the midst thereof being paved with love, for the daughters of Jerusalem.

The second piece of work, mentioned for the commendation of the worker, is a chariot, described at large, verses 9,10. For clearing of the words, we are to enquire concerning these three things. 1. Its worker or former. 2. The end for which it is framed. 3. Concerning this chariot itself.

The author or maker thereof, is Solomon, and that King Solomon, that is Christ, as was cleared before, he is mentioned thrice under this name; but there is a gradation here that is observable, 1. He is called Solomon, verse 7. 2 King Solomon, verse 9. 3. King Solomon crowned, or, crowned King Solomon, verse 11. The longer she speaks of Christ, and insists in mentioning his excellency, her thoughts draw the deeper, she sets him up the higher, and becomes warmer in her apprehensions, affections, and expressions concerning him: acquaintance with him, would make one speak eloquently of him, he that is the worker and former of this chariot, is a most excellent king, it must needs then be a stately, royal piece of work.

2. There are two ends mentioned wherefore he makes it, 1. It is to himself, that is, for his own glory, and that thereby he may in a special way hold forth himself to be glorious, and that particularly in his grace; for, though he made all things for himself, yet is he said especially to manifest his glory in doing good to his people; and what serves for the manifestation of his grace, is in a peculiar manner made for: so Isa. 43:7,21. ‘This people have I formed for myself’ (in a far other way than he formed nations) ‘they shall’ (in a singular way) ‘shew forth my praise;’ that is, the praise of his goodness, wherein his way was peculiar to them, and the paving of this chariot with love, and appointing of it for the daughters of Jerusalem, doth confirm this also, that it is the praise of grace that especially shines in this piece of work. And the second end, subordinate to the former is in the end of verse 10, in these words ‘for the daughters of Jerusalem,’ that is, for their good that are weak and far short of perfection; it is not only fitted for his glory, but also, it is fitted and confirmed to them, so as it may procure and bring about their good. *Observe.* 1. In the greatest pieces of Christ’s workmanship, he had mind of poor sinners yet unglorified, his delight was with them before the world was, Prov. 8:31. 2. The glorifying of grace is the great thing Christ aims at in all his contrivance and way toward his church and people. 3. He hath knit his own glory and the good of his people together; that same work which is for himself, is also for them, that if he obtain his end, they cannot but be well; his glory and their good, ride (to say so) in one chariot. 4. For as stately a person as our Lord Jesus is, he disdains not to be occupied in making works, and as it were framing chariots, for the behoof of his people: rather than they should want what may further them in their way, he will make and furnish them himself.

3. The third is the work itself, which indeed is very admirable, as the worker and ends are: it is a chariot, several ways described, both in its matter, form, and furniture. The word translated chariot is no where else in scripture, it is translated bed on the margin, it is by the Septuagints expressed by such a word as signifieth, to be carried, and to carry, as chariots and litters (wherein men are carried) used to be carried by horses: we think it fitly expressed by chariot, not only because the word is different from that which is translated bed, verse 7, but, 1. The immediate end and use seems to be different also; for, as stately kings use their beds for repose and rest in their chambers, and their chariots to ride in when they go abroad, and wherein their queens may ride with them; so is it here. As Christ hath abed for believers' quieting, he hath also a chariot for safe conveying and carrying them through their journey, till they come to their complete rest, this being no less necessary for believers (such as the daughters of Jerusalem are) than the former.

In short, by this chariot we understand the way of redemption in general, as it is contrived in the eternal council of God, and so called the covenant of redemption, and also as it is preached and manifested to us in the gospel. The reasons why we thus apply it, are, not only because there is no other thing that it will agree unto; for, 1. It is a work of Christ and so not Christ himself. 2. It is a work of special grace for his own, and that while they are in the way (for the elect in heaven are not daughters of Jerusalem) therefore it is no common work of creation, or providence, or of glory in heaven. 3. It is for the church's good, and therefore cannot be understood of her; for, besides that the several parts of its description will not suit her, not only Christ, but the daughters of Jerusalem are to be borne in this chariot; and we know not a fourth thing imaginable, that can be understood by it but the covenant of redemption revealed in the gospel. But, 2. The covenant of redemption is that work of Christ's wherein most eminently the glory of his grace and love to sinners doth appear, which makes him wonderfully lovely and admirable; (to set forth which is the present scope) it therefore must be here understood. 3. That work is signified by this chariot, whereby Christ communicates his love to poor sinners, and carries them through, therefore it is said to be 'paved with love' for that end; now there is no partaking of special love from Christ, but by this covenant, nor was there ever another means made, or appointed for conveying love to them, or for bringing them through to the partaking of it, but this same covenant; therefore it must be understood. 4. All that is spoken of this chariot, as it will be applicable to no other thing, so will it well agree to the covenant of redemption manifested and preached in the gospel. 1. It may well be compared to a chariot, because by it poor believers are carried through as in a chariot, borne up and sustained by it, even in the way: yea, in it

and by it they triumph and ride in triumph, (as he in his gospel rides prosperously) and if it be that wherein he rides, it must be that wherein they ride also, and therefore well compared to a chariot, because both he and they triumph by it. 2. It is eminently and peculiarly Christ's workmanship, he made this covenant for their behoof, and entered himself surety, undertaking for them, when there was none upon their side of the covenant to undertake but he the Mediator; and therefore is he stiled Jesus and Redeemer, and it is by his purchase (having procured this unto them) that they are admitted to it, and carried through in it. 3. It is in a peculiar way contrived and framed for the glory of his grace, and the good of his people, as hath been said; by it is manifested in the church the manifold wisdom of God, and the riches of the grace of Christ; if ever a piece of work was made for the good of sinners, and the glory of grace, this is it, without which all the creatures had been uncom fortable; yea, hurtful to them. 4. It may be said to be of the 'wood of Lebanon,' that is excellent and durable, for so the wood of Lebanon was, for which cause it was made use of in building of the temple; and so all the materials of this covenant, and its properties are excellent and durable, it is an everlasting covenant, that fails not, and vanishes not away, but endures for ever.

5. The form is suitable also, 'he made the pillars thereof' (saith she) 'of silver:' pillars in a piece of work signify, 1. Decoration. 2. Orderliness. 3. Stateliness, for which cause when 'wisdom builds her house,' Prov. 9:1,2, 'she heweth out seven pillars;' and Solomon made pillars for the temple, the inscriptions whereof signified their end and use, Jachin and Boaz, stability and strength, 2 Chron. 3:17. And they are as silver pillars to shew their excellency, and so this covenant hath precious promises, as the pillars thereof, able to support believers, and hath all these so well ordered and contrived that every thing is excellently in its own place; this covenant is therefore said to be 'well ordered in all things, and sure,' the pillars will not shrink, shake, nor bow, 2 Sam. 23:5. 6. It hath a 'bottom' and that of 'gold:' a bottom is to shew its stability and firmness to sustain and keep up those who ride in it, and gold shews its solidity and preciousness, it is a rich bottom, therefore the New Jerusalem is said to have streets of pure gold. Rev. 21:22. So this covenant hath a sure foundation, elect and precious; this covenant cannot be unbottomed, and sinners cannot fall through, if once in it. 7. It hath 'a covering,' and that 'of purple:' a cover is to preserve and save from any thing that may fall from above; and purple or scarlet (for in scripture both are one, as may be' seen, Matt. 27:28, compared with Mark 15:17.) sets out the excellency and efficacy of that cover, it is not of every thing, it is of purple; and this in scripture way made use of to be dipt in the blood of the sacrifices, Heb. 9:14, which was called, verse 20, 'the blood of the covenant,' typifying the application of Christ's blood: this is the cover of the covenant, the

worth and efficacy of Christ's satisfaction, whereby all in covenant (as it were riding in his chariot) are preserved from the wrath of God, and their sins hid, and so covered by that blood, that they are never called to a reckoning for them, Psalm 32:1,2, Jer. 50:20. 8. 'The midst thereof is paved with love:' what can this be? gold is much but love is more; what workman but Christ can make this pavement: and what piece of work of his, but the covenant of redemption, is so lined and stuffed with love? 'the midst thereof' is the inward of it, as great men in their chariots and coaches, have their pillows and cushions of velvet, &c. to repose them; but here there is a far other thing, to repose and rest upon, love lines all this chariot, so that there is none in the covenant, but love is still next them, the word speaks good to them, and all the promises run like pipes, with streams of love to them: God's dispensations toward them breathe out love, they walk on love, sit on love, rest on love; it must be good to be here; and love is reserved for the midst of it, to shew, that though its excellency and beauty may someway shine, and glitter to those that are without; yet, none knows or can know the heart and bowels of the covenant, (to say so) and the love that is there, but those that are within.

Love is put over the bottom of gold, and made the pavement, 1. Because love in this covenant condescends lowest to us, and there can be no lower stooping imaginable, than that to which the love of Christ hath made him bow. 2. It is love that makes the riches of Christ applicable to us, we could not walk on that gold, if love paved it not, the freedom of his grace and love makes all refreshful; the believer, even though a sinner, may ride and rest here. 3. It is to hearten a sinner to come in and close with this covenant, and it shews what fits it to be chariot for him to ride in, it is the pavement of love; a sinner may leap here, there is no hazard to fall, or if he fall, he falls soft, for it is upon love: there will be no rejecting of sinners that would enter and sit down in it, why? They are to sit, stand, and lie on love, which will cover their infirmities and not contend, otherwise there would be no access to it, nor abiding in it, it would cast them out. Thus doth grace shine in the covenant, as the lining and inside of all the promises, when they are seen, therefore is it peculiarly called the covenant of grace, 9. It is 'for the daughters of Jerusalem:' all the work is for them, but especially the 'pavement of love;' it is for them, who while they are in the way are subject to infirmities, it is fitted for them to roll on, and rest in, even when sense of sin would otherways sting and disquiet them; this suits well with that word, 2 Sam. 23:5, 'although my house be not so with God,' but there are many things sinful to be found in it; yet, 'he hath made with me an everlasting covenant well ordered in all things, and sure, this,' saith he, (when he was to die) 'is all my salvation, and all my desire:' there needs no more for carrying believing sinners through, and giving them ease under their challenges and perplexities but this, it is so well

suiting for believers' conditions. From all this she proceeds, verse 11, to point out Christ as precious, this covenant putting as it were the crown of grace, and loveliness on him.

Observe. 1. The work of redemption, bringing sinners out of a state of wrath, and carrying them through to glory, is a noble design, a wonderful excellent work, and hath been deeply contrived. 2. O, the excellent wisdom, and wonderful grace that shines in his covenant! 3. They who would rest in Christ's bed, must ride in his chariot; they who would share his peace and be admitted to sweet fellowship with him, must accept of his offers, and enter into covenant with him. 4. The weight of all contained in the covenant lies on Christ, therefore it is his workmanship alone, as being the surety thereof to the Father, the messenger of the covenant to us, and in effect the sum and substance of it himself, therefore is he called 'the covenant,' Isa. 42:6. 5. Christ hath spared no invention nor cost, to make this covenant large and full for the believer's consolation and happiness. 6. Love is a main ingredient in this work of redemption, and the predominant qualification of this covenant, love being the thing which he chiefly intended to make conspicuous and glorious therein. 7. Every particular of the contrivance of grace will be found more precious than another, every step thereof proceeds to a greater excellency, and therefore there is mention made here, 1. Of 'wood.' 2. Of 'silver.' 3. Of 'gold,' &c. The further in we come in the covenant, we will find it the more rich. 8. Love is here mentioned in the last place, to shew the great excellency of Christ's love unto redeemed sinners; there is something beyond gold, but nothing beyond love, especially that of the mediator: it is left last also in the description, to leave the daughters of Jerusalem to consider the more of it, as being the great attractive commendation of this work, which should make it amiable and desirable unto them: love hath the last word, and there is nothing beyond it, but himself, whose glory and loveliness is spoken to in the following verse.

Lastly, her scope is, 1. To commend Christ, for they will never esteem him that are not acquainted with his covenant. 2. To engage both herself and the daughters to fall more thoroughly in love with him; the right uptaking of the covenant is a most forcible argument for drawing souls to Christ; for, 1. It hath all fulness in it, for the matter: 2. All wisdom, for the manner. 3. All gracious condescending, in the terms. 4. It is most engaging in respect of its end, being made for this same very purpose, and designed for this very end, that it may bring about the peace and salvation of sinners; which considerations exceedingly commend it, and may much strengthen a sinner in applying himself to it. 5. It is most necessary in regard of the salvation of sinners, there is no riding or

journeying to heaven, but in this chariot. 'No other name by which men can be saved, but the name of Christ,' that is manifested by this covenant.

Verse 11. Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.

She proceeds in this verse, to hold forth the worker of this great work, and although all the pieces of the work be admirable, yet hath he much more glory, in as far as the builder is more glorious, and hath more honour than the house; and because his commendation is her scope, therefore she propounds him in his beauty and glory, with an exhortation filled with admiration; if (saith she) ye would wonder, 'O daughters,' &c. here is a wonderful object, Christ himself, on whom all eyes should be fixed; up therefore, come forth and behold him. There are four things in the verse, 1. The parties spoken unto. 2. A glorious object propounded to them. 3. This glorious object being Christ, is qualified and set out in his most lovely and wonderful posture, by three qualifications. 4. A duty in reference to him so qualified, is called for, and pressed upon the daughters.

1. The parties excited and spoken to here, are the 'daughters of Zion:' by Zion oftentimes in Scripture is understood the church: wherein Christ is set as king, Psalm 2:6, and elsewhere; and so by 'daughters of Zion,' we are to understand members of the church; they are the same with the daughters of Jerusalem mentioned verse 5, and her scope being to speak to them who spoke, verse 6, and they being the same to whom she spake, verse 5, doth confirm it; for, the words run in one context. They are called here 'daughters of Zion.' 1. Because it was for Zion's sake that the Lord so much prized Jerusalem, Psalm 87:2, his temple and ordinances being especially there. 2. To put the daughters of Jerusalem

in mind, what was the especial ground of the relation which God owned in them, namely their being

incorporated into his church, whereby they had access to his ordinances: and that so they might know whoever was deficient, yet this duty called for, did exceedingly become them, Christ being king of Zion; for which cause elsewhere, Zech. 9:9, the exhortation runs in these terms, 'Tell the daughter of Zion, behold thy King cometh,' &c. It is no little thing to get professors taking up the relation they stand under to Christ, and engaged to walk accordingly.

2. The object proposed to these daughters, is King Solomon, even the King of Zion, the King of peace, and King of saints, in a word, their King: this relation makes him lovely to them, yet, it's not Christ simply that is here proposed to their view, but Christ with a crown, in most stately magnificence, such as kings use to be adorned with, when they are in great state, or on their coronation day. While it's said he hath a crown, hereby is not signified any material crown, but majesty and glory, as Psalm, 21:3, 'Thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head,' &c. and so Christ conquering on the white horse, Rev. 6:3, is said to have a crown: and Rev. 19:12, it's said, he hath on his head many crowns, to shew his great and manifold glory, such as becomes the Prince of the kings of the earth: every look of Christ is not enough, many think not much of him; this shews how Christ's glory is to be seen, and how for that end he is to be considered by on-lookers; he is to be looked upon as he doth discover and hold forth himself, otherwise his glory will never rightly be taken up: and therefore to help us in this, and to prevent an objection which carnal sense might make against her scope, she qualifies this crown and glory of his three ways. 1. It is the 'crown wherewith his mother crowned him:' where we are to enquire, 1. What different crowns Christ may be said to have, and what this is. 2. Who this 'mother' is. 3. How she is said to crown him.

Christ may be said to have a fourfold glory, or crown. 1. As God co-essential with the Father; this crown is not put on him, being natural to him, who is 'the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person,' Heb. 1:2,3. 2. He hath a crown and glory as mediator, in respect of the power, authority and glory wherewith he is invested, as God's great deputy, and anointed upon the holy hill of Zion, having power and a rod of iron, even in reference to enemies: and seeing this is not of his mother's putting on, it is not that which is here understood. 3. He hath a crown and glory in respect of the manifestation of his glory in the executing of his offices, when he makes his mediatory power and glory apparent in particular steps: thus sometimes he is said to 'take his power to him,' Rev. 11:17, and is said to be 'crowned,' when the white horse of the gospel

rides in triumph, Rev. 6:2. The last step of this glory will be in the day of judgment: in short, this consists in his exercising his former power, committed to him as mediator. 4. There is a crown and glory which is in a manner put on him by particular believers, when he is glorified by them, not by adding any thing to his infinite glory, but by their acknowledging of him to be so, especially their acknowledging his rich and free grace, and by believing, 'putting their seal thereunto,' John 3:33, and giving him glory, as Abraham did, Rom. 4:20, in which respect he is crowned, as on the contrary, when he meets not with this, he is despised, and it is a saying upon the matter, 'this man shall not reign over us:' now this last is to be here understood. Again, by 'mother' here, is not understood his natural mother, but it must be taken in a spiritual sense for one of two, either, 1. For the church catholic, which being mother to Christ mystical, may be said to be mother to him, as Rev. 12:5, the church is said to 'bring forth a man-child,' who is taken to heaven, and hath ascribed to him the properties due to Christ, and yet Christ mystical is there understood; or, 2. For a particular, believer, who may be said to be Christ's mother in these respects, 1. For the near relation that is betwixt Christ and particular believers, and the account be hath of them: for which reason they are called 'his sister, and spouse,' chap. 4:10, and Matt. 12:ult. He calls them 'his brother, his sister;' yea, 'mother.' 2. Because Christ is formed and brought forth in them, being as it were conceived in every one of them, Gal. 4:19, Christ (as it were) getting a new being in them, which he had not before. We conceive both may be understood here, and the last especially, as serving most to the scope of commending Christ to them: and if the first be included, to wit, the church universal, then particular believers (being homogeneous parts of the whole) cannot be excluded; for, the church crowns Christ, when she brings forth children to him, which is, when by the ordinances Christ is begotten in them.

Now they are said to crown Christ and glorify him, not by adding any new degrees of glory to him, considered in himself; but this his being crowned by them, doth especially appear in these three: 1. Their high estimation of them, beyond what others have, and what themselves were wont to have; now he is highly esteemed who before was despised by them, and whereas to them he wanted a crown and dominion, now he hath it. 2. Their acceptation of him as their king, when by their consent, they ratify (as it were) God's donation of the crown to him, and in acknowledging thereof, they submit to his sceptre and government: thus he is crowned by them, when he is expressly with full consent of the soul acknowledged as king and Lord: even as David formerly crowned, anointed and made king over Israel by the Lord, is said to be made king of Judah, when they accept of him to reign at Hebron; and afterward by the ten tribes in their submission to him, and consenting to the former appointment: even so believers'

submission to Christ, is a crowning of him, as to themselves: and so there are particular coronations (to say so) of Christ, even as there are particular espousals betwixt him and believers. 3. This is in respect of the glory, that results to Christ from their submission and acknowledgment; even as sinners despising him, put (as it were) a blot on him, put him to open shame, and say, we will not have him to reign over us; so believers, yielding up themselves to Christ, do in a manner put honour and glory upon him, Isa. 62:2,3. The married church or people are said to be ‘a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord,’ when the grace of Christ hath its native effect amongst them, as the conversion of souls proves to faithful ministers their ‘crown and joy,’ 1 Thess. 2:14, so doth it to the great bishop and shepherd of souls: and, as Prov. 12:4, ‘a virtuous woman is a crown,’ or ornament ‘to her husband,’ whereas if she be not so, she maketh him ashamed: so are believers some way a crown to Christ, because all the glory and beauty which is to be found on them, is his, and from him. This then is the meaning: consider Christ in the beauty wherein he appears to believers, and with the esteem they have of him, as full of grace and truth, when they acknowledge him, and become subject to him, and he will be seen to be exceedingly stately and lovely.

The second qualification confirms this: this crown is put on him ‘in the day of his espousals;’ now Christ’s general espousals are not yet come, and so the crown in that respect is not yet put on him; it must be therefore the day of his espousals with particular believers (which is here understood, there being no other before his second coming) who are, 2 Cor. 11:2, ‘espoused to him,’ by their consenting to accept him for their husband, as he is king to them, by their submitting to his dominion. His being crowned here, is mentioned with respect to this day of his espousals, because as bridegrooms used to be most glorious in their marriage-day, so Christ hath at the time of espousals, a special loveliness to the new married believer, what by the more kindly and tender manifestations of his love, and what by the fresh relish it hath then to them, when their spirits are broken with the sense of their sin, and warm with a deal of holy joy and fainness which useth then to abound in their heart, in reference to so good a bargain; so Christ is then to believers wonderfully lovely: and although the effects of his kindness may be enlarged afterward, and their esteem of him may also grow, yet readily then as it is most sensible, so their admiration is most in exercise, and their thoughts of Christ’s excellent worth, are most affectingly, and overcomingly ravishing; and when in their after-thoughts they are taken up with him, the remembering of that day of espousals, when he took them by the hand, puts still a loveliness on him to them, that in his love he so wonderfully condescended unto them.

The third qualification confirms the same (for, it is in effect one qualification in three expressions) and it is in these words, ‘and in the day of the gladness of his heart;’ what is it (saith she) that cheers Christ, and makes him heartily glad? It is even this, when poor sinners accept of him, that is Christ’s marriage-day; and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride that day, so doth he rejoice: and as ‘the good shepherd’ rejoiceth when he recovers his ‘lost sheep,’ or the ‘father’ his ‘prodigal son,’ Luke 15:32, so doth Christ when sinners are brought in to him by the gospel: and this joy is called ‘the gladness of his heart,’ to shew the reality of it. Christ (in a manner) can enjoy no such satisfying thing as a marriage with a poor sinner; then ‘he sees the travail of his soul, and is satisfied,’ Isa. 53:11, that cheers him and makes him smile (if I may say so) and this looks to that glory which shines in Christ, and is expressed by him when he is well satisfied with poor sinners, and that is mainly when he gets welcome by them. This signifies not joy in Christ, as it’s in us: but, 1. It shews how acceptable a sinner’s believing in him, is to him. 2. What confident welcome they may expect from him, when they come unto him. 3. How kindly he useth them, by manifesting himself to be well pleased, as one that is cheerful doth on his marriage-day to his bride.

3. The duty pressed upon the daughters is in two words, holding forth two duties, the one whereof is the middle or mean to the other, and the other the end of this. The first is, ‘behold,’ which points at the great scope and thing called for; and it imports, 1. A wonderful object, and indeed Christ is so, being considered in his most royal posture, as a crowned king upon his coronation-day; and in his most loving posture, as a beautiful bridegroom on his marriage-day. 2. It imports a dulness in the daughters, needing upstirring to take up Christ in this lovely and glorious posture. 3. A difficulty rightly to take him up under this consideration, yet a necessity of it, and that it be done with attention. 4. It implies an intenseness or bensil of spirit in the act of beholding; so rare an object calls for greatest intention of heart, and gravest consideration of mind in the beholder; it is not every look or glance of the eyes that will discern it; but, 1. There must be attentiveness and steadiness, a stayed looking, and as it were dwelling on the object with their eyes. 2. The exercise of faith must go along with this their looking, reading his worth by faith exercised on him, as Isa. 45:19, ‘Look unto me and be ye saved;’ beholding of him, as the stung Israelites did the brazen serpent. 3. Also the exercise of love; an affectionate look is here necessary, delighting in him, and being taken up with him, as one with that wherein they take pleasure, the eye of the seer here, cannot but affect and inflame the heart. 4. This looking is attended with wondering at this glorious object, as one beholding a wonder, and

ravishing with the admirableness of it: all these are comprehended under this expression, 'behold him.'

The second word (which hath in it another piece of their duty) is, 'go forth,' and this is a help to the other: and (besides what hath been hinted at in the former expression) it shews it is not in every posture that they will take up Christ thus, but there is a necessity they must come out from under the natural condition they were into: we take it to be the same with that precept, Psalm 45:10,11, 'Forget thine own people and thy father's house, so' (and no otherwise) 'shall the King greatly desire thy beauty.' Christ manifests not himself, as reconciled and pleased, till former lovers be given up with; and this beholding of his smiling and glorious countenance, cannot be obtained till then, even as one sitting in the house cannot discern a stately sight going by, except they go forth: thus the similitude is borrowed; to shew the necessity of rousing of affections within; but not to signify any local mutation. This then is the sense and scope; O professors (saith the Bride) would you see a stately sight? Then get up, and set yourselves to take up Christ, more glorious than Solomon, either on his coronation or marriage-day (to which there is an allusion here) and because few see great comeliness and beauty in Christ, why he should be desired; therefore she adds what a sight it is she understands. Endeavour (saith she) to behold him as he is discernable to believers, when they close with him, and accept of him; if so ye will exercise faith in him, so as ye may perfect espousals with him, and satisfy him by resting on him, ye will then have a stately and ravishing object to look upon, otherwise Christ is not alway and to every one, pleasant and cheerful company.

Observe. 1. Christ, when rightly conceived and taken up, is a most ravishing satisfying sight, and a most glorious stately person to look upon. 2. Though Christ Jesus be so stately a person, yet he condescends to espouse and marry himself to the believer: thus Christ by faith becomes theirs. 3. This marrying hath its day, and men are not born espoused to Christ, but their accepting of him, their espousals with him are consummated. 4. Christ is never taken up aright but by the believer, nor doth his glory ever appear as it is, but to the believer: others that are not spiritual cannot discern it. 5. Christ's condescending to marry sinners, and accept of them, is as the crown and diadem of his glory; and that which makes him most singularly admirable, is that he is 'full of grace and truth,' John 1:18. 6. Christ accounts believing on him by a poor sinner, a singular piece of honour done unto him; it is as the putting of a crown on his head, when they make use of his grace; as he accounts it the greatest dishonour can be done to him, to refuse and slight him and therefore, misbelief (when Christ calls) is a most heinous sin, it is as it were the taking of Christ's crown from him. 7. There is no

such pleasure that a sinner can do to Christ, as to believe on him; and Christ is ever cheerful then, when sinners are thronging on him by faith, and he is never discontented with that; for, that is the day of the gladness of his heart, as other days in the church are sad, when this design of his, is (as it were) obstructed and disappointed. 8. Usually the sight and sense of Christ's grace are most fresh and sensible to the soul, about the time of their closing with Christ, or of their being clear that they have closed with him. 9. Every lazy looking on Christ, or wishing for him, will not be acceptable to him, nor solidly comfort a sinner; but there must be a going forth, and a beholding of him. 10. This being spoken to the daughters of Zion, saith, many may have much of a profession and a name, yea, they may have a kind of high esteem of gracious people (as the daughters had verse 6,) and yet be such as have not rightly taken up Christ, but are exceeding ignorant of him, as these are, chap. 5:9. 11. Considering these words as spoken by the Bride, who was so much commended, verse 6, we may observe, that no particular esteem or commendation will satisfy a sincere believer, so long as Christ gets not his due: his honour will still be nearer them than their own.

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