



Fire and Ice Sermon Series

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A Practical Exposition Upon The Fifty-Third Chapter Of Isaiah.

by Thomas Manton

THE ELEVENTH VERSE.

He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

THE prophet goeth on in describing the glorious effects of the covenant of God with Jesus Christ, and his obedience and humiliation answerable thereunto. God the Father's part was to bestow privileges, grace, and glory, and every good thing upon believers; and God the Son's part was to obey, and suffer, and die, to submit himself to all kind of labour and travail of spirit for our sakes: for God being about to deal with us in mercy, would first deal with Christ in justice; and the state of the work of redemption was so laid, that, as Suarez proveth well, our grace and glory was due to Christ in justice, as the reward of his merit. Much was spoken before what God would do, and what Christ might expect in case he would lay down his soul as an offering for sin; he should 'see his seed, prolong his days, and God's pleasure should prosper in his hands.' And the prophet here goeth on in repeating the same thing, only addeth words more particular and significant, that he might more fully and expressly draw out the sense and meaning of the former privileges to your apprehensions: 'He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.'

In these words three things are asserted:—

1. Christ's travail of soul in the work of our redemption.
2. The certainty of success: *he shall see*; that is, reap the wished and expected fruits of his labour and sorrows, which is the comfort and salvation of poor creatures.

3. His contentment therein: *he shall be satisfied*. He counts the salvation of lost sinners to be satisfaction enough for all his pains. You may take the words as relating to God's decree, or to the execution of it.

[1.] As to God's decree, the foregoing verse intimateth the compact and bargain between God the Father and the Son; there were articles of agreement stated between them. Now when Christ came to consider what he should give, and what he should gain, he professeth he is satisfied, and abundantly pleased with the terms propounded. Our Lord Jesus made no blind bargain. He knew from all eternity what it would cost him to save sinners; he had leisure enough to cast up his accounts. And when he foresaw the temptations of the wilderness, and the agonies of the garden, the ignominy of the cross, the vile usage of his body, and the travail of his soul, yet saith our dearest Redeemer, I will go down and suffer upon these terms; I am ,satisfied out of all this, if a few broken-hearted creatures may be brought home to God.

[2.] To the execution of God's decree. When sinners are brought to accept of mercy, I count my blood well shed, my bitter agonies well recompensed: here is wages enough for all my toil. There is joy in heaven, in Christ's heart, when a sinner is converted. I begin with the first; the travail of his soul. The word for travail noteth the highest degree of labour, such as is tiring and wearisome. The *soul* is often put for the whole man; so many *souls* came out of Egypt, that is, so many persons. So Acts 27:37, 'There were in the ship two hundred threescore and six *souls*.' So that the travail of his soul is his whole labour and travail. Or properly it may imply his soul-troubles, which were the passion of his passion, the bitterest part of his sufferings: 'Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say?' John 12:27.

The *doctrine is*, that our salvation cost Christ much travail of soul. He was afflicted in his whole man, but chiefly in his inward man.

1. As a kind of imaginary person: he suffered in his reputation, which is another kind of being in the hearts and opinions of others. They accuse him of the two highest crimes in either table, blasphemy and sedition; blasphemy against God, and sedition against Caesar, Luke 23:2. They mock him in all his offices; his kingly office, by putting a soldier's coat upon him for a royal robe, a reed for a sceptre, and thorns for a crown, and floutingly saying unto him, 'Hail, King of the Jews,' Mat. 27:29. In his prophetic office; when they had blindfolded him, they smote him on the face, saying, 'Prophecy who it was that smote thee;' scoffing at those who honoured him as a prophet. When he was upon the cross, offering up himself for our sins, they wagged the head, saying,

‘Save thyself,’ and ‘He saved others, himself he cannot save,’ Mat. 27:39,42. There they scoff at his priestly office, while doing the part of a Saviour.

2. Nearer they come to his real person. In his body he suffered in every part, and afflictions were poured in upon him by the conduit of every sense. His feeling was exercised with weariness, and wounds, and scourges; his ears with their railing and the clamorous noises of popular outrage; his taste with vinegar and gall; his sight and smell with Golgotha, the place of skulls and dead men’s bones. We have made all our senses inlets of sin, and therefore in Christ they were inlets of sorrow.

But the consummation of his bodily sufferings was at his death, which consisted in the separation of the soul from the body, though both still remained united to the divine nature; otherwise for a while he would not be God-man, and his resurrection would be a new incarnation; though separate from one another, yet they were both united to the Godhead. As a man drawing his sword holdeth the sword in one hand, and the sheath in the other; there is a separation between the sword and the sheath, but the same man holdeth both. O Christians! do we believe this, and wonder no more that life itself should die, and Christ be free among the dead? If any had cause to love his life, Christ had; every man’s life is valuable, much more Christ’s, which was enriched with the continual presence of God. We are often a burden to ourselves; we wish for death; but that Christ should die, whose soul dwelt with God in a personal union, is a wonder.

His death was not a naked death, but the painful, shameful, and accursed death of the cross. The law pronounced the death of the cross accursed: Deut. 21:23, ‘He that is hanged is accursed of God.’ In the account of all nations it is ignominious. It was cruel and painful, to show that he came to bear not only our curse but our sorrows: Gal. 3:13, He was ‘made a curse for us;’ Isa. 53:4, ‘Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.’ If you follow him to the grave, it was a continuation of his abasement, though not of his pain. Thither Christ went to shut and seal up our sins, that they should no more come into remembrance, as Abraham buried his dead out of his sight. If we look only to what was visible, Christ was a man of sorrows; his life was full of sorrows, his death violent, and bloody, and ignominious.

But all this doth not answer the expression, *travail of soul*. Our souls sinned, and therefore Christ must lay down his soul as an offering for sin, Isa. 53:10. In Christ’s soul-sufferings we may take notice of two things—his desertion and agonies. These have some correspondence with the *poena damni et sensus* (the penalty of the loss and it’s feeling).

1. His desertion: Mat. 27:46, ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’ Christ’s desertion cannot be meant of outward afflictions, of being left to the rage and violence of men. The word *forsaking* implieth God’s withdrawing: 2 Cor. 4:9, ‘We are persecuted, but not forsaken;’ though given up to the will of men,— yet still enjoying the presence of God: but Christ was both persecuted and forsaken.

But how could he be forsaken, who was God-man in the same person?

Ans. As the personal union gave way to the death of the body, so it gave way to the troubles of the soul. Christ, by virtue of the eternal covenant, was to yield up the whole human nature, both body and soul, to suffer according to the will of God. Now, he declined no part of the service; as he offered his body to the pains of death, so his soul to the trouble of desertion.

But what was this desertion?

[1.] The personal union was not dissolved—the two natures united, *acwristw*,—his inherent holiness not lessened, for then he should have been less fit to be either priest or sacrifice. God’s love to him was not abated; he was now doing his work, and in the height of obedience: John 10:17, ‘Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life.’ This was a new argument and reason of love.

[2.] Assisting and sustaining grace was not wholly withdrawn: Isa. 42:1, ‘Behold my servant, whom I uphold;’ and John 16:32, ‘I am not alone, because the Father is ever with me.’ What was that, then, which Christ lost? It was the sense and actual comfort of his Father’s love, the want of a sensible consolation, those effects of joy and solace which he used to have. Now, this was a very grievous loss to Christ. He complaineth of it. The disciples were fled, his friend and lover was afar off, but he doth not complain of that: Disciples, why have ye forsaken me? Peter, why hast thou denied me?—but, ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’ It was a greater loss to Christ, because it was more natural to him to enjoy this comfort and solace than it can be to any creature. To have a candle put out, is no great matter; but to have the sun eclipsed, who is the fountain of light, that sets the world a-wondering. Christ, as God-man, had more to lose. We lose drops; he an ocean. The greater the enjoyment, the loss or want of it is the greater.

[3.] He knew how to value the comfort of the union, having a pure understanding, heavenly affections, excellent contemplations. God’s children, that have tasted of his love, if anything of it be shed abroad in their hearts, they would not part with it to gain the world. They know how to value it, and so none

are so sensible of the loss of it as they. Now, Christ was best able to apprehend the worth of communion with God, having such a clear understanding, and such tender affections.

[4.] So near an interest and relation to God: Prov. 8:30, 'I was by him as one brought up with him; I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; 'Col. 1:13, he is called 'his dear Son.' Creatures that have any interest in God, how mournfully do they brook his absence! As Mary Magdalene: 'Woman, why weepest thou?' 'They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.' She sought for Christ, and found a grave.

[5.] Christ's trouble was more than a believer's, because it was to be satisfactory. Our desertions are for trial or correction; his from vindictive justice, and the revenging hand of God for our sins, that met on him: Isa. 53:6, 'The Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all.' He was forsaken for a time, that we might be received for ever.

2. There is something positive, or the apprehension of his Father's wrath, which he was to undergo for man's sins. There is the trouble of a guilty conscience, that is proper to the sinner himself; and there is a penal disturbance, which was found in our surety. He was to stand in the sinner's stead, and the great burden of sin he was to undergo was an amazement to him that had such a delicate and tender spirit as Christ had: Mat. 26:38, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.' He was 'sore amazed,' Mark 14:33. He had his 'fears,' Heb. 5:7. The effects were sensible in his bloody sweat. These were a part of that fire in which our sacrifice was to be roasted. It was not the fear of temporal death that caused these agonies. Christ had not a childish, womanish spirit; not to say anything of the fortitude of the martyrs, many of whom kissed the stake, and thanked the executioner. And we see in malefactors what a courage and stubbornness men of a stout heart will put on. No; it was the apprehension of his Father's wrath, which he was to undergo for man's sin, when 'made a curse for us,' Gal. 3:13. We have slight thoughts of sin, and the wrath of God deserved thereby; but Christ had other thoughts of it. When God cometh to deal with him in our stead, we, that know not the power of God's anger, are not affected with it. But when the Father shall fall upon him with all his weight, this was properly the travail of his soul: Isa. 53:10, 'It pleased the Father to bruise him: he hath put him to grief.'

Hence learn:—

1. The heinousness of sin. You see it is no easy matter to reconcile sinners to God. It cost Christ a life of sorrows, and afterwards a painful, shameful, and an accursed death; the loss of actual comfort, and a terrible feeling, or an amazing

sense of the wrath of God. We jest and sport away our souls, but Christ found it hard work to save them, and recover them to God. Surely they that sin freely in thought, and foully in act, have low thoughts of the blood of Christ. You count it common blood: Heb. 10:29, 'And have counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing.' When you make it a light thing to sin, you do in effect say so. When a precious vessel cannot be mended or repaired but with the cost of a thousand pounds, you would be careful how you break it. You slight the sufferings of Christ when you break with God for every trifle. Is it nothing for the Son of God to come down from heaven to die for poor sinners? He calleth to you, 'Behold, all ye that pass by, is any sorrow like unto my sorrow?' Is it nothing to offend your heavenly Father, and to lie under the burden of his displeasure? By his dealing with his dear Son, substituted into the room and place of sinners, God would convince all wicked and hard-hearted sinners what it is to break his commandments. Dare you, after all this, to go on pleasingly and delightfully in an evil course, as if God made a small matter of our sins? Now he is satisfied for them by a Mediator.

2. Learn hence the terribleness of God's wrath. It put Jesus Christ upon dying, yea, upon much travail of soul. Christ knew before all that he was to suffer, and yet he is amazed when it came upon him. Many roar upon their death-beds when the anger of the Lord breaketh in upon them like an armed man. They never thought of their danger before, and were not prepared for it; but Christ knew it before. Besides, Christ had no personal guilt to weaken his strength; you have wounded consciences. Christ had all graces in him to the height; but you have none or little patience and fortitude. Christ was God-man, you are poor creatures. Christ knew what glory his sufferings would bring to God, what good to man; and yet he feareth what he was to undergo; and Christ knew they would be short, yet he prayeth, 'Father, save me from this hour:' but yours are to endure for ever. The Lord Jesus is lifted up as a sign of salvation to them that trust in him, and is a pledge of what shall light upon the wicked to all eternity—an instance to all others of God's wrath. God will make you see what it is to lie under his wrath. If a spark of it light upon the conscience, what a burden is a man to himself!

3. We learn hence the greatness of our obligations to Christ, that he willingly condescended to endure such hard and bitter things for our sakes. He would be deserted and submit to soul-troubles; he knew well enough what it would cost him, yet he willingly undertook the business: Ps. 40:7,8, 'Then Said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is within my heart.' Divine justice is there introduced proposing its demands: Son, you must take a body and suffer in it. Man's blood is

tainted, and you must be formed in fashion like one of them, and stand before me in their stead. You must expect to be tempted by the devil, hunted and baited by men,—to be responsible to my justice, to bear my wrath, and to be handled as if you were the sinner in law. And Christ Said, Heb. 10:7, ‘Lo, I come to do thy will, O God;’ I am satisfied and well pleased with the terms. Oh! woe unto us, if after all this we should slight Christ, and will not come at him, though it cost us travail of soul. To pray, wait, meditate, is tedious, and to break our hard hearts we are hardly brought to; yet how willingly and readily did Christ undergo all his sufferings for our sakes!

4. We learn hence what reason we have to be willing to suffer anything for Christ, and to yield obedience to God at the dearest rate. We are called upon in the gospel to take up our cross and follow Christ, and when he invited us first to engage with him, he gave us warning of it; yet most men hope to shift well enough for all this, and are not troubled, and out of the impatience of the flesh repine when it cometh really and actually to their share to take it up and bear it. Certainly, in the general, we should not desire a better lot than Christ himself had; for the disciple is not above his Lord: ‘If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also,’ John 15:20. He stooped to more than ever we were or shall be, put to. But, in particular, we should be as willing to suffer for his sake as he for ours. He left the bosom of his Father to suffer for you, and will not you leave the bosom of your dearest relations to suffer for Christ? There is a great disproportion between the persons, and his sufferings and ours. Christ suffered as an evil-doer, and we suffer for well-doing; otherwise, it is the cross of Barabbas, not of Christ. His name was rent and torn with reproaches; and though he never did anything worthy of blame, yet he bore the taunts of the world, as well as the curse of God that was due for our sips, and suffered not only in his person, but in his name and reputation, and foul crimes were unjustly laid to his charge. It is an honour to suffer for Christ, and for his interest, and can be no disgraceful thing. He was the innocent Son of God, completely just and righteous—not only as God, but as man, being wholly freed of that original contagion wherewith others that come of Adam are defiled, Luke 1:35; fully conform to the law of God, both in heart and practice, Mat. 3:15; and by just deserving lovely in the eyes of God and men, for he did all things well. But we, how innocent soever of those things which the world chargeth upon us, yet we are faulty before God, and cannot altogether justify ourselves before men. And so far as God’s hand is in our troubles, we must keep silence. Therefore, in the sense of our sinfulness in other things, we should the sooner submit: Micah 7:9, ‘I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him.’ Again, he hath taken the sting out of our sufferings, and borne all the wrath due for our

sins. Our crosses are not a satisfaction to his vindictive justice; he is but trying our sincerity, not pursuing his vengeance upon us. And we have our comforts allowed us; his were suspended. In short, since he endured the anger and wrath of God for us, shall not we endure the anger and wrath of men for his sake? So that, upon the whole matter, our murmuring and impatience under the cross show that we have not a due sense of Christ's sufferings, but too slight a value of them.

The next thing offered in this scripture is the certainty of success. *He shall see*; that is, enjoy, receive the fruits of it. The prophet speaketh of some that travail in vain; as if they went but with the wind: Isa. 26:18; 'We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind.' And of others we read, that when the child came near to the birth, there was not strength to bring forth, Isa. 37:3. But the fruits of this travail should be a plentiful harvest of souls, or a numerous issue of believers begotten unto God.

Doct. That Christ will infallibly, and without miscarrying, obtain the end of his death.

What was the end of his death?

1. The salvation of all such as belong to the election of grace. Christ died not at uncertainties, nor laid down his life at a venture, that some might be saved if they would; but his intention is fixed. He laid down his life 'for his sheep,' John 10:17; 'for his church,' Eph. 5:26; 'for his people,' Mat. 1:21. These expressions are exclusive; these, and not all.

2. He effects and procures the conditions by which this salvation is brought about:—

[1.] In effectual calling.

[2.] By final perseverance.

[1.] Effectual calling. Christ died not only to procure privileges for us, but to purchase faith and repentance: Acts 5:31, 'Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of Sins;' Heb. 12:2, 'Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God;' and Heb. 13:21, 'Working in you what is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ;' Phil. 1:29, 'For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake,' *uper Cpistou*, that is, upon Christ's account. He merited faith and holiness for us.

[2.] Final perseverance. He is both the author and finisher of our faith: John 10:29, 'My Father, who gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's band;' Heb. 10:14, 'For by one offering he perfected for ever them that are sanctified,' i.e., set apart for God. He hath made them fully and perfectly happy.

But briefly to show why Christ cannot miscarry in his ends from the eternal covenant: Isa. 53:10, 'When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed.' Look to the undertaking of the Father and the Son, and the salvation of the elect is secured; both are intimated in that phrase of being given to Christ: John 17:6, 'Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.' All souls were God's in one sense; now they are given to Christ two ways:—

1. By way of reward: Ps. 2:8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.'

2. By way of charge; and of this charge Christ is to give an account: John 6:37,38, 'All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out for I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.' And they not only may, but they shall come: John 6:39, 'And this is the Father's will, who hath sent me, that of all that he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.' Otherwise Christ would lose part of his reward and part of his charge: Heb. 2:13, 'Behold I and the children whom thou hast given me.'

Use. Is to persuade us to wait for this power, and observe how the whole good pleasure of his will is fulfilled in us. Doth your salvation thrive and prosper in the hands of Christ? Do you come on kindly in a way of faith? You seek to put your Redeemer to shame,—to hinder Jesus Christ of the fruit of his travail, when you are vain, and careless, and obstinate. As a moral agent, so all his travail may be in vain, though not as Mediator. He complaineth as a minister of the circumcision: Isa. 49:4, 'Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought and in vain; yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.' When a people that have the means of grace will not be reclaimed, they seek to rob Christ of his purchase, and to make all his labour of love to be in vain. Christians are co-workers with God: 'We therefore, as workers together with him, beseech you to receive not this grace in vain,' 2 Cor. 6:1. Oh, when shall Christ be formed in you? There is travelling in pain till that be done, Gal. 4:19: Will you be shut out from the blessing?

Use 2. Here is comfort to God's elect, and an engagement to make your election sure. How shall we know it? Do you ratify God's decree by your consent? Consecration answereth giving by way of reward, and committing by way of charge.

1. Consecrate and set apart yourselves for the use and service of the Lord: Rom. 12:1, 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.' Employ whatever is bestowed upon you for his glory; live according to his will: Ps. 119:94, 'I am thine, save me.' Lord, I would not be my own, unless I be thine. Thus we should do when God seemeth to put us off.

2. Commit yourselves to him in well-doing, and in the course of your obedience venture your souls in Christ's hands without trouble 2 Tim. 1:12, 'For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day;' 1 Peter 4:19, 'Commit the keeping of your souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator;' Ps. 31:5, 'Into thy hands I commit my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.'

I come to the third thing in this scripture, and that is the satisfaction Christ took in the salvation of men; it was that which gave him full content for all his pains and travail: 'He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.' The gaining and recovering of lost sinners was a great satisfaction to Jesus Christ: John 4:34, Christ saith unto them, 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.' When the disciples asked him whether he had eaten anything, it was satisfaction enough to him that he had gained a soul. See Luke 15:5, 'And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.' He rejoiceth at the return of a poor wandering sinner; after all the refusals of grace, and despising of offers, Christ is glad if he may at length get him home to himself. It is a welcome work to Christ to carry home his lost sheep upon his shoulders.

Doct. That Jesus Christ taketh an infinite contentment and satisfaction in the salvation of sinners.

I shall give you—(1.) Evidences of it; (2.) The reasons of it.

1. For the evidences:—

[1.] Christ pleased and entertained himself in the thought of it before the world was: Prov. 8:31, 'Rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights were with the sons of men.' But why the habitable parts? The inhabitable are also the work of God's hands. There are objects of wonder—

there is the great leviathan, and there is the sun, moon, and stars; but no men there with whom he was to dwell, or whom he was to save. Next to the complacency he took in God the Father, this was the delight of Christ, that he should come into the world and recover a people to himself.

[2.] This was the end and aim of his coming into the world; and it is pleasant when a man hath attained his end, especially if it be greatly desired and much laboured for. For delight is according to the degree of the desire and labour.

(1.) Desires: Luke 12:50, 'I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!' Luke 22:15, 'With desire have I desired to eat this passover;' that was immediately before his death. And it is remarkable, when Peter dissuaded him from suffering, Christ rebuked him with the same words that he did Satan tempting him to idolatry: Mat. 16:23, with 4:10, 'He turned and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan.'

(2.) Labour. According to the labour in the means, so is the joy in the end: 'God hath made me forget all my toil,' saith Joseph, Gen. 41:51, when advanced after all his hardships and sorrows; Ps. 128:2, 'Thou shalt eat of the labour of thine hands, and happy shalt thou be.' These were the wished, longed, laboured-for fruits of his mediation: no such sorrows as his sorrows, therefore no such satisfying joys; things that are the purchase of his blood—things dearly bought, are highly prized. Rachel is brought in mourning because she had a son in sorrows, Jer. 31:15; John 16:21, 'A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more her anguish for joy that a man is born into the world.' This was Christ's travail, and the end that he pursued the salvation of poor, lost, and undone sinners.

[3.] Now, in heaven it is his rejoicing to see the work thrive Lure 15:7, 'Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth;' and ver. 10, 'There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth;' that the lost sheep is found, and the lost son returned: John 15:11, 'These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.' There is our joy and Christ's joy; these are distinct things, joy in us and for us. It is not only matter of rejoicing to us to be taken to grace, but a rejoicing to Christ. When he seeth the gospel prevail, when sins are pardoned, hearts are sanctified, their spirits comforted, he is more pleased in this, and rejoiced in this than you can be, when he heareth in heaven and knoweth how it is with your souls on earth.

[4.] When he shall come from heaven to judge the world, oh, with what triumph and rejoicing will he come, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father! 1 Cor. 15:24; Heb. 2:13, 'Behold I and the children which thou hast given me.' He will present them and show them to God as the fruit and proof of his death. See what joy and rejoicing Paul had as a subordinate instrument: 1 Thes. 2:19, 'For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?' They are the fruit of his ministerial labours. Paul had not such an interest in them as Christ had; the main virtue came from his death.

But to determine the point, what this contentment and satisfaction is—negatively and positively:—1. Negatively. It is not only that complacency which God taketh in acts of grace and mercy: Micah 7:18, 'He delighteth in mercy.' It is a native act. Justice is as natural to God as mercy; yet the exercise of justice in a punitive way presupposeth a foregoing act of ours; and the due desert of the creatures' punishment is wrested and extorted from him, and therefore called his 'strange work,' Isa. 28:21: but mercy, like live honey, droppeth of its own accord; the exercise of it is more pleasing to him: Lam. 3:33, 'He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.' It is not from his heart; for when the rod is in his hand, tears are in his eyes; but, on the other side, Jer. 32:41, 'I will rejoice over them to do them good, with my whole heart and whole soul.' It is an act most suitable to the nature of God, which goeth before, and is done without any regard to the creatures' desert; this is part of it.

[2] It is not only that complacency which he taketh in the holiness of his people. In the holiness of his people there is *amor benevolentiae*, a good-will and happiness to the unconverted; and there is *amor placentiae*, his delight in them as they are holy, because of the suitableness of their nature: Isa. 62:4, 5, 'Thou shalt be called Hephzibah, for the Lord delighteth in thee. And as a bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.' When we are drawn into a near relation to God, there is another love, for we are in another state; and Zeph. 3:17, 'He will rejoice over thee with joy, he will rest in his love.' His love putteth a comeliness upon his people,—there is the ground of Gods delight. So, for their prosperity, it is said, Ps. 35:27, 'Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.' He is glad to see when they are holy, and when they do well.

2. Positively. The formality of the expression implieth more: he is satisfied, he accounts our well-being a sufficient recompense for all his pains, and all the travail of his soul well bestowed, though he hath been at that expense for it. It is natural and kindly for a good man to do good, and to rejoice in others' good.

But now for Christ to count it a saving bargain, if with the expense of his all he may promote the welfare of others; this is the delight and the contentment here spoken of. Christ did not reckon of the charges, so he might gain sinners to God.

The reasons of the point:—

1. Because this was his work, his personal work; every person of the Godhead is refreshed in his work. God the Father, his personal work is creation,—the first mercy we received, and so proper to the first person. Now, it is said, Exod. 31:17, ‘In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh he rested and was refreshed;’ not in point of weariness, but in point of delectation. It was a refreshment to God the Father, to see all the creatures disposed into their apt cells and places, as the fruit and effect of his goodness, wisdom, and power. He delighted himself in the survey of his work. So God the Spirit is grieved with the resistance and opposition he meeteth with in our hearts, Eph. 4:30, but gratified and delighted with our obedience to his sanctifying work. And likewise the second person, when he seeth of the travail of his soul, what a numerous increase his death will bring in, he is refreshed and satisfied. Christ, bath his rest as God hath his rest: he took great complacency and delight in the salvation of poor sinners, as the fruit of all his labours.

2. His love was the cause of all: his love to the Father, and his love to the saints.

[1.] His love to the Father, to see him fully glorified. When Christ came into the world, it was sung by the angels: Luke 2:14, ‘Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good-will towards men;’ John 13:31, ‘Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.’ Our comfort is not only concerned in the salvation of the elect, but God’s glory. He would have been but half discovered to the world if we had only been created and not redeemed: we should have known but half his goodness, for that goodness which was manifested in creation was in order to some other thing. God did not create us merely that he might create us, but that he might communicate himself to us, and manifest more of his glory, and that we might see more of his wisdom, and goodness, and power. These were in part discovered in making the world, but much more in the gospel: there is much of his wisdom seen in making the creatures, but much more in the mystery of redemption, in bringing God and man together—justice and mercy together, ‘which the angels desire to look into,’ 1 Peter 1:12. We see his power in making us out of nothing, in dissolving the works of the devil, loosing the bands of death, raising the dead. His goodness is seen in giving the world, in giving Christ, in giving eternal life. Christ saith in

love to his Father, I am satisfied; I see it will be a way wherein the glory of God will be much promoted.

[2.] Love to poor lost sinners.

(1.) They are dearly bought: they are his own; and having loved them so as to buy them, he will love them to the end. The saints are the purchase of his blood, and therefore they are called ‘the purchased possession,’ Eph. 1:14. Things dearly bought are much esteemed and valued. The church, which he hath purchased with his precious blood, he paid dear for it—expended his royal blood for it. The Lord Jesus forgets all his agonies and sorrows, because this was it he travailed for, and the end which he pursued.

(2.) They are his own, his interest is concerned in them: John 17:6, ‘I have manifested thy name unto the men thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me.’ He hath not only undertaken a charge concerning them, but received them as a reward at the hands of God: John 13:1, ‘Having loved his own.’ Propriety endeareth a thing. They are his, and therefore his heart is made glad when they thrive and do well—when his work doth prosper in their hands. He is the owner of the saints; and as a man is dissatisfied when his bargain turneth to no good account, so is Christ when you do not grow in grace and make a daily progress in your heavenly journey.

Use 1. Let us consider our obligations to Christ. It was wonderful love that the Son of God should lay aside his glory and willingly come down from heaven, and undertake the business of our salvation. He needed us not; God was alone from all eternity, and yet happy from all eternity, when there was nothing besides his divine majesty. If he had any happiness by making the world, he might have made it sooner; he wanted not us, we are of no worth to him. What can we, that are less than the dust of the balance, contribute to the perfection of our Redeemer? Yet that he should take pleasure in our welfare, and count himself satisfied, so we may be saved! Oh, the greatness of this love! How shall we answer it but by loving Christ again, by imitating him? Let us be satisfied in Christ; let it be enough to, allay our cares, and fears, and worldly distractions, that we have an interest in him. Say with the psalmist: Ps. 73:25, ‘Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee.’ Let this draw us from outward comforts and worldly satisfactions: if Christ did so much for you, that are not worth the having, oh, how should your souls be satisfied in him! The merchant sold all for the pearl; but what doth Christ get by us creatures, of us sinners? We can give a reason of our love to Christ, because of his excellency and our obligations to him: Cant. 6:9,10, ‘My dove, my undefiled, is but one; she is the choice one of her that bare her: the

daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they blessed her. Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?' But 'Lord, what is man that thou regardest him? and the son of man that thou makest account of him?' Let all worldly contentments be as nothing to you, so you may win Christ, Phil. 3:8. And when you have him, you should say, It is enough. He that hath God for his portion may say with the psalmist, Ps. 16:5,6, 'The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage.'

Use 2. It is a ground of comfort in the work of faith. We may plead with you not only from your own interest, but from Christ's contentment: he hath chidden many for not coming, but never any for coming to him. Nay, in point of gratitude, thou hast long grieved the Spirit of God with thy stubbornness and impenitency, taking liberty in fleshly delights, and running after vanity and folly. Oh, come now, and make glad the heart of thy Redeemer! When Isaac longed for savoury meat, a profane Esau would take his bow and arrows and go and kill. Go and try how thou canst mourn over an unbelieving heart, what thou canst do in compliance with Christ's desire. So, in point of hope, when he seeth you begging pardon, you speak to his very heart; he will join issue with you, and sue out the fruit of his labour. He rejoiceth in our justification and salvation. It will be accomplished by his desire and contentment.

Use 3. It giveth ample encouragement to faith to come to Christ. It maketh his heart joyful when you come; the Lord Christ counteth it worth all his pains. People question Christ's willingness; would any be against their own joy and satisfaction? You have high thoughts of an interest in Christ, and Christ hath high thoughts of our interest in him; and therefore the saints plead it reciprocally Ps. 13:5, 'Why art thou disquieted, O my soul? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.' They speak to their own hearts. Again, Ps. 119, 'I am thine; save me.' It is your gain, and yet Christ counts it his joy. Why should we stand back, when Christ crieth earnestly to us? Mat. 11:28, 'Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you 'rest.' Pray come; he chideth earnestly for not coming: John 5:40, 'Ye will not come unto me, that you may have life.' But he never chid you for coming. It is hard to distinguish whether Christ be more willing to take the soul, or the soul to take Christ. We cannot desire it more than Christ will delight in it. If you are afraid of seeking self in it, consider it would not be for your contentment but Christ's; when he seeth the travail of his soul he is satisfied. Your souls are enough to him. You are vile creatures. It is

no matter; your Spouse thinketh it worthy of all his pains and entreaties to gain a daughter of light into his embraces; your comfort is his privilege.

Use 4. It yieldeth fuel to increase the flame of love. There are three circumstances offered here as matter of this divine fire:—The impatience of his desires; the painfulness of his endeavours; and the sweetness and fulness of his contentment, intended for the good of our souls.

1. The impatience of his desires. The whole life of Christ was but a thirst after our good, spent in the heat of love and desire. And when he died, he said, John 19:28, ‘I thirst.’ No doubt, in such agonies, his natural moisture was turned into drought; but especially it was a thirst after the good of souls, the good of the creatures; it was a thirst that the prophecies might be fulfilled. Paul, that had the Spirit of Christ by measure, see what longings he expresseth Gal. 4:19, ‘My little children, of whom I travail in birth again till Christ be formed in you.’ This was but a taste, a drop of what was in Christ. Phil. 1:8, ‘For God is my record, how greatly I long for you in the bowels of Christ’ All Paul’s longings were but a glimpse or specimen of those bowels in Christ. The impressions upon his spirit were more pure and powerful.

2. The painfulness of his endeavours, such as could not be expressed by a lower term than the travail of his soul; and do but remember all the hardships of Christ’s life, the woes of the garden, all the conflicts and assaults of hell upon his spirit; you shall see Christ’s love did not dwindle in a wish, nor die away in a cold desire. The sparks of the creature’s love may soon languish, but Christ’s love did not leave him till it got him out of heaven into the womb, from the womb to the wilderness, to the garden, to the cross, to the grave. All these waters could not quench it. The apostle expresseth the common acts of the creature’s love by labour: ‘The labour of love,’ Heb. 6:10. But here was higher labour in the utmost degree, yea, travail: ‘He shall see the travail of his soul.’ Paul maketh it an endearing circumstance 1 Thes. 2:9, ‘Ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail, labouring night and day.’ But what was it for Paul to part with his allowance, when Christ parted with his glory? Well, then, consider it was no lazy love, no idle wish, but such as ended in restless endeavours for your good. There are pains on the cross, and pains in his spirit.

3. The sweetness and fulness of contentment. Still the Lord went on till he took the last sour draught of vinegar; then he said, ‘It is finished,’ John 19:30. Christ’s spirit was restless, but then satisfied; it was enough if he could gain souls. O vile wretches that we are, that God should think our souls enough! Alas! what can we bring to him that Jesus Christ should set up his rest in the good

of our souls? The merchant sold all for a pearl; but alas! we are but an ill purchase. What doth Christ get by us so as to be satisfied when he gaineth sinners?

Use 5. It holdeth forth a high pattern for our imitation.

1. To ministers. All the toil and travail of Christ's spirit was to, gain souls, and he thought that a good purchase. He did not mind other things but for our good; heaven, that we might be glorified in his glory. He was head over all things, that he might be so to the church; otherwise he did not mind dignities and honours. Oh that our spirits did act thus purely, that we would not drive on a selfish design in such a weighty calling! God's work must be done to God's ends. Oh that the joy of our hearts might be the good of souls, and not a thriving in our own concerns: 3 John 4, 'I have no greater joy than to hear that thy children walk in the truth.' Oh, that should most affect our spirits! Many mind the gain, but not the soul, and rather oppose grace than further it; and as the dragon sought to devour the man-child, so they to nip the early blossoms of grace.

2. To all. If Jesus Christ seek you, that are not worth the having, oh, what should you do to serve him, who is all desire, as the spouse calleth him, Cant. 1:16, enough to invite me and others!

[1.] Desire him: Ps. 73:25, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee: Christ, that had no need of you, thirsted after you; and who would not but pant for Christ? Disclaim all other things, they are nothing to his gain. What is it, so I may win Christ? Phil. 3:8, all is nothing, all is but dung and dross. Who would leave the pearl of price, to trade for dung?

[2.] Pursue hard after him. The Lord Christ sought you with bruises in his body and travail in his soul; and will you begrudge him an hour in duty, a little time in prayer? When Augustus refused the petition of one of his soldiers, he told him, I did not serve you so at the battle of Actium: so may Christ say to us. Though you gain him by meditation, prayer, hearing, great endeavours against the unbelief of your souls; though you search for him about the city as the spouse doth, Cant. 5:2, which is spoken in allusion to Jerusalem, where God was worshipped in his ordinances; though you go from duty to duty, yet still seek him; Christ will recompense all the endeavours that are laid out in the pursuit of him.

[3] Value him in the enjoyment. Alas! your travail is nothing to your gain: if Christ be satisfied, you should much more be satisfied. Say then, as

Jacob, 'It is enough, I have seen Joseph;' so say, It is enough, I have Christ: Ps. 16:5,6, 'The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance: the lines have fallen to me in a pleasant place; yea, I have a goodly heritage.' It is like the trade with the Indians, you have gold for a toy, a glass, or a basin. Therefore you may well be satisfied; this labour is well spent, these carnal desires well renounced: Oh, it is all made up abundantly above whatever I could part with for it. Therefore say as the psalmist, Ps. 103:2, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits,' as it is in the Hebrew. You may say, Here is a wonderful recompense indeed.

By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many.

We are now come to that clause wherein one particular glorious effect of God's covenant with Christ, and his obedience answerable thereunto, is mentioned; to wit, justification, which is here set out to us by most of its considerable causes. Here is the efficient cause; the instrumental cause on God's part, the doctrine of the gospel. On our part, the knowledge of God; for it may be taken either way, *by his knowledge*, or *by the knowledge of him*. The meritorious cause; and that is the satisfaction of Christ. The subject of it, *many*.

The first thing that is offered to us in the order of the words is the instrumental cause of justification: *bedaato*, 'by his knowledge.' There is some little difference about the opening of this word. The Septuagint do plainly pervert the sense of it, while they reflect upon the person spoken of in this chapter, and render it thus: That God would show him light, and form his mind with knowledge, and justify his righteous servant that served many. But we need not stay upon that among Christians.

1. Some take it actively, for the knowledge which he shall give out concerning himself, the doctrine of the gospel, which is the power of God to salvation, because it containeth the revelation of the righteousness of Christ: Rom. 1:16, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.' And it is contradistinguished to the law, which holdeth out a discovery of sin: Rom. 3:20, 'By the law is the knowledge of sin;' and so worketh wrath, as it is said, Rom. 4:15; that is, all that we can get out of the law is guilt and wrath; and that will show us that we are in a condition not to be justified, and the sadness and misery of that condition. But now the gospel, that discovereth a way of justification, even for the justification

of sinners. 'By his knowledge;' that is, by his doctrine, by his gospel, he shall discover a way of justification.

2. It is taken passively, for our apprehension of Christ; for so it may be rendered: 'By the knowledge of him shall he justify them.' And this I conceive to be most proper to this place, though I cannot wholly exclude the other. The other without this is nothing; the gospel condemneth rather than justifieth, where it is not apprehended and embraced by faith. Christ saith, they had no sin if he had not spoken to them, John 15:22; that is, not so much sin. And it is said, John 3:19, 'This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light;' that is, the light of the gospel by accident proveth the cause of the greatest condemnation. Therefore you must take in this; and besides, the words will bear it. First, it must be so, for the prophet speaketh not only of a way of justification, but of actual justification. But then all the difficulty will be, why we are said to be justified by knowledge, since everywhere the scripture carries it for faith, and usually faith is made the instrument in our justification. We apprehend the righteousness of Christ for justification. There may be divers reasons given for the expression.

[1.] Because the first radical act of faith is knowledge. There are three radical acts of faith—knowledge, assent, and trust. The first is knowledge; by that God begetteth persuasion and confidence in the spirit. God dealeth in the new creation, and framing of the heart to his own use and service, as he dealt in the old creation and framing of the world. The first creature that he made was light; so in the new creation he shineth in upon the heart, and taketh away the natural blindness and folly of the spirit.

[2.] Because it is the property of the Hebrews to count and apply all words of knowledge and of the understanding to such affections as are suitable and becoming such knowledge; so God's knowing and remembering of us implieth his pity and relieving, and our remembering of God our duty and observance of him; and in an ill sense imaginations are usually put for all those vicious affections following them. What the New Testament expresseth by *lusts*, the Old does by *imaginations*; because the understanding being the great wheel of the soul, the scripture expresseth the good or ill carriage of the soul by acts proper to the understanding. By knowledge is meant such an apprehension of Christ according as he hath revealed himself in the gospel, so as to close with him, embrace him, and rely upon him for salvation, acknowledging and relying upon Christ for justification. To all such as thus know him, Christ will procure a perfect absolution from all their sins. By one act are implied the other acts of faith, it being the manner of the Hebrews thus to express

themselves. And therefore you must understand other suitable dispositions and goings out of the heart to Christ as will become such knowledge.

[3] Because it is no unusual thing in scripture to make knowledge to be the hand to receive the greatest conveyances of grace: 2 Peter 1:2, 'Grace and peace be multiplied unto you, through the knowledge of God, and Jesus Christ our Lord.' He maketh it to be multiplied, and shed into the heart through knowledge. So eternal life, which is the greatest of blessings: John 17:3, 'This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.' It is made to be a happy fruit of knowledge, even life eternal. The knowing of God in Christ entitleth us to it. Well, then, you see the reason of the expression why he saith 'by his knowledge.'

I shall give you the points:—

Doct. 1. That it is the privilege of the gospel to discover a way for the justification of sinners 'by his knowledge,' or by his doctrine; and you have that only in the gospel of Christ.

Doct. 2. That faith is knowledge, or an apprehension of Christ; and therefore it is expressed by such a term here: 'the knowledge of him.'

Doct. 3. That by faith we are justified. He saith by his knowledge, but he meaneth faith; such a knowledge as is affective, such apprehensions of Christ as cause answerable dispositions in the spirit.

For the first of these, that it is the privilege of the gospel to discover a way for the justification of sinners.

My work shall be to show you:—1. That by no other way, doctrine, or knowledge in the world, can this be done to make a sinner just before God; not by your vain pretences, that may serve to justify you before men, but not in the sight of God: Ps. 143:2, 'Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified;' which is quoted by the apostle. The business is to get a righteousness that will endure the eye of God: Rom. 2:13, 'For the hearers of the law are not justified before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.' That is the intent of that verse; that it is not appearances, but exact obedience, not any outward excellency and privilege, that could endear you to God's acceptance: Rom. 2:11, 'For there is no respect of persons with God, bond or free, Jew or Gentile.' God is not charmed by any outward pomp and glory of the creatures; the wicked may be justified for a reward. Men are apt to prize anything that is pompous. The disciples showed Christ the buildings of the temple, Mat. 24:1. God did not regard Saul for his personage, nor Jezebel for her painting, nor Absalom for his beauty, nor

Sodom for her beauty. Not any device of the creatures; men and angels could not find out a way for the reinstating of sinners into the favour of God, and absolving them from their guilt. God himself seemeth to hint that he could find no other way: Isa. 59:16, 'And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore his arm brought salvation.' No endeavours or contrivance of the creature would serve the turn; our own prayers and endeavours, lashing and punishing others, will not serve the turn; nor the law, which is the chiefest thing that discovereth a way of justification, but not for the justification of sinners, for the making of a man righteous, but not for the making of a sinner righteous: if a man could walk up to the exactness of it, yet how should he do to redeem his soul from guilt, and to expiate sin? Papists fondly dream of a satisfaction in the creature's endeavours. Alas! all will not do: 'The law is weak through our flesh:' Rom. 8:3; that is, we being weak creatures, it were impossible it should be done that way. The law in itself might have done it, were it not that we were sinners; and therefore mere doing will not serve. Doing indeed may make us less sinners, but it cannot make us righteous. But alas! we are weak through the flesh, and we cannot do anything: Rom. 4:5, 'But believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly;' that is the circumstance that maketh it emphatically glorious.

2. Here it is fully and amply done; the gospel holdeth out a clear way: and that it may appear to you, I shall show you what the way is, and prove that it must needs be a sure way.

[1.] What the gospel doth.

(1.) It discovereth perfect righteousness. The drift of the gospel is to discover this righteousness—actively, for the fulfilling of the law; passively, for the satisfying of the breaches of it. For 'therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith.' The apostle proveth that it is 'the power of God to salvation,' for there is a righteousness to be found in it. For that is it which the creature wants, a righteousness to appear just before God: Rom. 1:21, 'But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested.' We must be righteous, or we cannot be saved. Now the gospel discovereth this perfect righteousness in Jesus Christ; for it is by his righteousness that we are justified. And therefore it is everywhere called 'God's righteousness,' and distinguished from our own. Now this is done here; the wrath of God is pacified, and the law fulfilled by Jesus Christ.

(2.) The gospel discovereth a way how this righteousness may become ours: it is made ours by faith, and our union with Christ. When a man hath an interest in Christ, he is possessed of all that is in him you have his.

righteousness, and therefore he is so often called *Jehovah tsidkenu*, ‘the Lord our righteousness,’ Jer. 33:16; and Isa. 58:8, ‘Thy righteousness shall go before thee.’ You shall have an interest in. what is his: ‘Thy righteousness;’ i.e., you have it in Jesus Christ.

[2] This must needs be a sure way, because God’s ends are furthered by it.

(1.) God is glorified. God would honour his justice; and whatever that required to be done or suffered was accomplished by Christ; God justifying sinners, and yet being just: Rom. 3:26, ‘To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth, in Jesus.’ That was the special attribute; mercy shineth forth from it. But the chiefest was that he might be just; and therefore here you have mercy and justice. shining forth in their greatest strength and brightness.

(2.) The creature is contented and satisfied. God, as he would glorify every one of his own attributes, so he would do that which was most satisfying and engaging to our spirits. Now this is so done that every doubt and scruple is answered. The creature is troubled because he cannot keep the law; it is kept for us: because it cannot satisfy for breaches, it is done for us. If our consciences be scorched with the wrath of God, there is the blood of Christ to quiet them; if troubled with fears, Christ was heard in, what he feared, to allay ours.

Use. Is byway of inference:—

First, To exhort us to bless God for the gospel. Oh, what a mercy is it that such a way is found out for our returning to God! Acts 13:48, ‘They were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord;’ that is, spake wonderfully and affectionately of the gospel. What so good a word? If we had been to have satisfied the law, we had been miserable. Christians, we are not sensible of the mercy of being freed from the rigour of the law, of being justified by the knowledge of the doctrine of Christ. Do but consider what it would have been with us then, and how it is with us now.

First, How it would have been with us then; the misery that we were in then by reason of the rigour of the law, which consisteth in two things:—

1. The matter, what was required; such a burden as we nor our fathers were ever able to bear. See what kind of obedience it was that it requires.

[1] It must be full and entire; so as to take in the inward and outward man. The Pharisees indeed did strive to lighten the law, and would have it only reach the outward part and external acts in worship, and obedience to the commanding part, and the grosser acts in the prohibition. But alas! our

Saviour in Mat. 5 showeth that it reacheth the least dissonancy that may be, as a glance of the eye, the roving of the thoughts, looking upon a woman to lust after her, and there all their peace is gone: Rom. 7:14, 'The law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.' Paul, when a pharisee, thought that the law was only conversant about externals, but he found it spiritual, and himself carnal. So Ps. 19:7, 'The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.' Man's law reacheth the body and the flesh, but God's law goeth to the very spirit and conscience. And alas! upon what miserable terms should we be with God, if this were the rule of our acceptance with him! A man hath some command of himself in these outward things, but who can guide his spirit in an even proportion to the law of God?

[2.] Such as requireth the whole man; so as the soul must be exactly perfect in all the actings of it, or else it could not be accepted with God: Deut. 6:5, 'Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and all thy might.' A little failing in the intenseness of the spirit might make you to miscarry. The law knoweth not how to wink at failings; the least deadness and coldness of affection, the least restraint of spirit, would have been fatal to you. It doth not only reach the spirit, but the whole spirit, and bindeth over every faculty to obedience.

[3.] It must be constant and universal, carried on without the least interruption to all the things of the commandments: Gal. 3:10, 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all, things that are written in the book of the law to do, them.' The least deviation maketh us liable to the curse. So James 2:10, 'Whosoever shall offend in one point, is guilty of all.' Though he keep the whole law, yet the breach of any one point maketh him guilty of the breach of all. And so all your endeavours would come to nothing, and be in vain; one sin would undo your hopes. Well, then, you that have observed the wanderings of your spirits, and are acquainted with your failings, oh, what cause have you to bless God that justification is not dispensed upon such rigorous terms! Otherwise you might cry out with the men of Bethshemesh, 1 Sam. 6:20, 'Who is able to stand before this holy God?' when fifty thousand were smitten for the breach of a ceremony, for looking into the ark. Or you will be ready to say as David: Ps. 130:3, 'If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity, O Lord, who should be able to stand?' There were no subsistence for the creature before the power of his wrath; and if God should deal with us upon these terms, we could not stand in our beings, much less be *recti in curia* (innocent in court), stand in our righteousness and innocency.

2. Consider the manner how this must be done, viz., in our own persons: Mat. 19:17, 'If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.' That is all

we can get, the law taketh no notice of a mediator and common person. Adam, that had the knowledge of the whole law, had no knowledge of Christ. Though the law should a thousand times be fulfilled by another, that is nothing to us. The law requireth obedience in our own persons; cursed is every one. And the law is said to be our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. But that is the law ceremonial, which was but a dark gospel, and did hint Christ out of the elements of the ceremonies; a man might spell Christ out of them: Gal. 3:12, 'But the man that doeth them shall live in them.' Well, then, out of all this you may conclude that the creature can fetch nothing from the law but aggravations of his misery; it is not to make us righteous before God, but to make us guilty: Rom. 3:19, 'That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God;' Rom. 5:20, 'Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound.' You see then what cause you have to bless God. All that the rigour of the law could do, is but to make the offence more abounding in our apprehensions.

Secondly, But you shall see more cause of rejoicing, O Gentiles! when you look upon the second thing, which is the privilege of the gospel. You have abundant cause to bless God that there is a way found out that sinners may draw nigh to God; that there is commerce between heaven and earth revived again: Luke 5:8, Peter said unto Christ, 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man.' Alas! what should sinners do with a holy God, or stubble with everlasting burnings? When the law was pronounced, there were bounds about the mount, Exod. 19:23. And when the people saw it, they removed and stood afar off, at the promulgation of the law, Exod. 20:18. And our first parents hid themselves: Rev. 6:16, 'They said to the rocks and mountains, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.' Therefore it is much that we may now come nigh to God.

Secondly, We may come with confidence and joy. That which was their terror is our comfort, viz., nearness of converse with God Eph. 3:12, 'In whom we have boldness, and access with confidence.' We do not come like malefactors to a tribunal of justice, but like favourites to a throne of grace. Our greatest confidence is with God: Heb. 10:22, 'Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.' That we may be thankful, consider what is done that we may enjoy it.

1. The gospel holdeth out a way how poor sinners may be accepted with God, a way wherein God will look, after sinners: 2 Sam. 19:28, as Mephibosheth said to David, 'For all of my father's house were but as dead men before my lord the king; yet didst thou set thy servant among them that eat at thine own table.' All we were as dead men before God: Ezek. 16:6, 'I said unto

thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live.’ The expression is doubled, because that is a notable circumstance, that God should seek to them twice, that he should look upon them when they were in their blood, that he should think of poor sinners, that could expect nothing but the sentence of condemnation.

2. The gospel holdeth out a way how sinners may be made righteous. If we are vile in ourselves, yet we shall be glorious and comely in Christ: Ezek. 16:14, ‘For it was perfect through my comeliness, which I have put upon thee;’ Zech. 3:4, ‘I will cause thine iniquities to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.’ If thine own garments be filthy, Christ will give thee the royal robe of his righteousness: Luke 15:22, ‘Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him.’ We have raiment out of Christ’s own wardrobe.

3. It sheweth a way how God cometh to be delighted in the persons, and prayers, and services of poor sinners: Prov. 15:8, ‘The prayer of the upright is his delight;’ Prov. 11:20, ‘But such as are upright in their way are his delight’ Alas! we do not deserve the meanest respect with God; as Abigail said to David, 1 Sam. 25:41, ‘Let thine handmaid be a servant, to wash the feet of the servants of my lord;’ Isa. 62:3, ‘Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord.’ Oh, therefore let us prize the gospel, and never leave till we have gotten a share in it. The corn in Egypt will not nourish us, unless we go and fetch it: Mark 10:49, ‘Be of good comfort, rise, he calleth thee.’

Doct. 2. That faith is a knowledge, or an apprehension of Jesus Christ. So it is called here.

To clear and vindicate the point, and to recover it out of the hands of exception, observe—

1. That the doctrine I have laid down is not convertible; for there is a knowledge, and there are apprehensions of Christ that are not faith; every faith hath knowledge, but every knowledge is not faith.

2. The doctrine is not an adequate and absolute definition of faith; for there is more than knowledge in faith. There is a firm assent, consent, and trust. So that the point is not exclusive of other acts of it, but only to show what is a most necessary and radical act of faith; and the sense of it will be this: In faith there is a knowledge, and that only because of the prophet’s word here, and because knowledge is the most necessary and first act of faith; therefore did I put it in this form. So that I do not only make faith to be a knowledge, and an assent to the truths of the gospel, as some do, mistaking the nature of it; nor, with the papists, make this knowledge to be some general apprehension and

avowing the articles of religion. But I shall show you by and by what kind of knowledge is here meant.

But to determine the point, or to prove the acts of it; it appeareth that faith is knowledge by these hints from scripture.

1. Because the effects and consequents of faith are given to knowledge: as knowledge is said to justify here, and life eternal is said to be through knowledge, John 17:3; and ‘grace and peace’ is said to be ‘multiplied through knowledge,’ 2 Peter 1:2. And so Luke 1:77, ‘To give the knowledge of salvation to his people.’ And the work of faith is called ‘the knowledge of salvation.’

2. Because the most considerable acts of faith are expressed by words that are proper to knowledge, and belong to the understanding; and yet that barely is not sufficient: Job 19:25, ‘I know that my Redeemer liveth,’ for ‘I believe.’ And Mat. 13:23, ‘He that heareth the word, and understandeth it,’ that is, understandeth and believeth it. And Eph. 1:28, ‘The eyes of your understandings being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling.’ But yet more expressly: John 6:69, ‘We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.’ We believe, and *egnwkanen*; we translate it, ‘are sure that thou art the Son of the living God;’ 2 Tim. 1:12, ‘For I know in whom I have believed;’ and that is made the ground of his committing his soul to him, his knowledge of God 1 John 5:20, And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him.’

3. Because there are some objects of faith that are *inter cognoscibilia*, among those things that are only to be known and apprehended by us according to the revelation of God. I say, all that faith hath to do about them, is to understand and apprehend the truth of them, according to the discoveries of the word; as the creation of the world; the making man out of nothing: and therefore the apostle saith, Heb. 11:3, ‘Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God; so that the things which are seen were not made of things that do appear.’ That was the great riddle to the philosophers, but by faith we understand it.

4. Because faith is opposed to such things as imply a defect and want of knowledge, and therefore there is a knowledge in faith; as to ignorance, darkness, and folly. Therefore Paul maketh his ignorance and unbelief the joint causes of his rebellion against God: 1 Tim. 1:13, ‘But I did it ignorantly in unbelief.’ It must needs be so, if in unbelief. So Mat. 4:16, unbelief is made to be a state of darkness; ‘The people which sat in darkness saw great light’ Till men come to

believe the gospel, they are under darkness. So Rom. 11:25, the apostle saith, 'Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.' Now the great sin of the Jews is unbelief, and rejecting the light of the gospel. So Eph. 4:18, the state opposite to faith, or to the learning of Christ, is expressed by 'the vanity of the mind,' 'the darkness of the understanding,' and 'blindness of heart.' Which three expressions note vain principles, corrupt inferences, and want of spiritual wisdom to oversway the affections, and all the inclinations of the heart, into a subjection to the will of God.

5. Because God's work, in reference to the begetting of faith, is plainly expressed to be a work upon the understanding; as by opening the eyes: Acts 26:18, 'To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.' The first creature in the new creation is light opening the eyes, and many of Christ's cures were about the sight; as he dispossessed Satan, so he opened the eyes; for I plainly find they had a spiritual signification John 6:44,45, 'No man can come unto me, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him;' 'They shall all be taught of God.' There must be teaching as well as drawing; a work upon the understanding as well as the will. So Mat. 11:25, there is mention made of revealing the things of God: a main cause of faith is this revelation. Thus it is proved.

Secondly, To demonstrate the point, or to show why it must be so, and that for these reasons:—1. Because otherwise faith would not do its work: the work and business of faith is to show us things unseen to sense and reason. The apostle's word is *elegcoV*, the force of which I shall show you by and by. It is to carry us within the veil, to reveal to us the things of God, such as 'Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive,' 1 Cor. 2:9; that is, such as cannot otherwise be discovered without this light. There is a knowledge for faith and in faith; a knowledge that followeth it, and a knowledge that maketh it up. It is *oj JalmVthVyuchV*, the eye of the soul. Look, as sense is the light of beasts, and reason of a man, so is faith of a Christian. It is to guide and direct us to, and to ravish us with the beauties of Christ; to show us what is in our beloved more than in another beloved, Cant. 5:9. It is to provoke holy desires and fervent affections towards God. All this cannot be done without knowledge.

2. Because there must be something done to sanctify the understanding, something to irradiate and enlighten the mind: grace must have influence upon every faculty, upon the understanding much more, for these reasons:—

[1] Because the understanding is the great wheel of the soul, and guide of the whole man. Usually there the business of the salvation sticketh: either

we do not rightly apprehend Christ, or not rightly determine concerning Christ, and therefore we, do not close with him. The rest of the faculties follow that same *dictamen intellectus*, the dictates and decisions of the understanding. It is with men according to their knowledge: the same grace which enlighteneth the mind worketh again to the subduing of the affections. We see men are as their minds are: God giveth men up first to vain minds, and then to vile affections, Rom. 1:28. This is the *primum mobile*, the great and first moving cause, and great wheel of the soul: Eph. 2:3, 'Fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.' They are the wills of the mind, and therefore of the flesh, of the lower and more sensual soul. A corrupt judgment embaseth the spirit.

[2.] Because all the great opposition against faith is from thence.

(1.) There is great opposition against the working of faith in the soul Mark a few places, and you will easily perceive it: 2 Cor. 4:4, 'In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, which is the image of God, should shine upon them: Satan casteth a veil of carnal prejudices upon the heart, so as natural men cannot see the beauty and glory of the gospel. There are blind minds, dark hearts, corrupt principles, and carnal prejudices and fleshly conceits; so that they scorn the truth, rather than receive it in the love of it: 1 Cor. 2:14, 'The natural man receiveth not the things of God.' Full vessels can receive no more water: you cannot pour in the gospel to such vessels as are full of sin, and flesh, and folly; they scorn it, and dash it over. There are sly pretences and crafty excuses; these are in the understanding and the spirit, and therefore, Heb. 4:12, the word is said to 'divide between soul and spirit;' that is, between vile affections and crafty pretences. There is the pretence of inability and unworthiness; we cannot come, and we are unfit to come. Now the light of the gospel showeth what is inability, and what is laziness; what is pride, and what unworthiness. The word discovereth all the collusions and jugglings of the spirit, so that we shall not easily excuse duty by affecting inventions to befriend affections, and so to beguile ourselves in these vain pleas and excuses. From all this are those secret persuasions and lying counsels concerning the goodness of our estate, the happiness of worldly comforts and pleasures, the hardships of the gospel, which hinder the soul from coming freely to Jesus Christ. Thus, you see, in the understanding is the great obstruction to the begetting of faith.

(2.) So likewise against the acting of faith, carnal counsels, false suggestions, corrupt reasonings in the spirit and, therefore, the apostle speaketh, 2 Cor. 10:5, of 'casting down imaginations, and every high thought that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.' These reasonings and thoughts are the things that

are against the knowledge of God and the obedience of Jesus Christ. What is the reason men are upon such uncertainty, and terms of perplexity between Christ and themselves? It is through some false reasonings. We think Christ will not accept of us, or that we may do well enough without him. Now, this I take for a rule, that graces are seated in those faculties where there is most opposition against them; and there must be something in faith to sanctify the understanding, where it meeteth with such corrupt thoughts, carnal reasonings, dangerous persuasions, and crafty pretences.

(3.) Because this is the main difference betwixt faith and presumption. Faith is a child of light, and presumption a child of darkness the more ignorant, the more presuming. Deceits are best carried on in the dark: groundless conceits cannot endure the light; true faith always goeth upon sure grounds from the word, not upon every vain surmise: Rom. 10:14, 'How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?' Faith is according as we have heard out of the word. 1 Peter 3:15, we are to 'give a reason of the hope that is in us.' Faith is rational, though we cannot always give a reason of the thing believed. Mysteries surpass reason, yet we must see a reason why we believe. Cant. 5:9, the spouse being asked, 'What is her beloved more than another beloved?' she gives an account of the special excellences in Christ that engaged her affections: 'My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.' Presumption only taketh up the name of Christ, and talketh of him by rote and hearsay; but there is not a distinct knowledge and apprehension of his excellences; they do not know any special grounds for their belief. Custom and common illumination furnish the tongue with good words. But they do not, 2 Cor. 3:18, 'with open face behold the glory of the Lord;' that is, most nearly examine and consider the glorious beauties of the Lord Christ.

(4.) To explicate the point a little more thoroughly, you will be ready to ask me what kind of knowledge this is? That is very necessary to be cleared. Of all things men will stand upon their knowledge; they will sooner own a fault in their morals, than a weakness in their intellectuals: John 9:40, 'Are we blind also?' What I thinking men and speaking men, men of study and parts? If there be but any superficial apprehensions and flashy irradiations, then men are quiet; there is a notional light, and there is a spiritual light; and there are also common works and common knowledge; and there are *ta ecomena thV swteriaV*, 'Things that do accompany salvation,' Heb. 6:4,5, compared with ver. 9. Every knowledge then is not the knowledge of faith; wild plants and garden plants have the same name and common nature, though they differ much in their virtues and operations. So it is here; there is a great

deal of difference in the workings and influence of this knowledge. Let us a little reflect upon the differences and properties of true knowledge, which are these:—

(1st.) It is considerate; it looketh to the grounds and to the nature of things. False apprehensions of Christ, they are hasty and surreptitious. Men have knowledge of the gospel, but they are loth to ponder and weigh the business of it in their thoughts. We may talk after one another like parrots, and yet never take it into our serious thoughts and considerations; as the apostle saith of some that taught the law, 1 Tim. 1:7, ‘Neither understanding what they say, nor whereof they affirm.’ Men talk of things by rote, after others, and out of books and sermons; reason of matters of which they have no spiritual understanding: many prophesied in the name of Christ that knew him not. Nicodemus, though a teacher, was ignorant of the doctrine of regeneration. As Aristotle observed of young men, that they attain to the height of mathematics, and there ponder the reason of everything; but when it cometh to morals and matters that should do them good, *ta men ou pisteuousin oi neoi legousi*, they rather recite it by rote, than believe it. Men talk of the mysteries of Christ, that are only revealed to the saints, but they do not seriously consider with what disadvantages the doctrine of Christ is represented to carnal reason, and, on the other side, what may be the benefits of it. Contrary desires and carnal inclinations will not suffer us to pause on those things. When we begin to think on the gospel, there are jealousies, discontents, reluctations, and distractions: such things as exasperate the affections, the soul cannot easily get leave to pause upon. Felix had some apprehensions of the doctrines of temperance and judgment to come, but he could not easily bring his heart to think of them Acts 24:25, ‘When I have a more convenient season, I will call for thee.’ A man may hear the sound of music, but he is not affected with the melody till he hearkeneth to it. We suffer ourselves to be cumbered with other cares, carried aside with other desires, and therefore cannot stay upon these things that are most necessary, and so are not taken with them. It is the commendation of Mary, Luke 2:19, ‘But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.’ Truths work with us usually when we take them into our serious thoughts. All false knowledge of Christ lies in trivial and slight apprehensions. Christ often calleth upon his disciples to let things sink into their hearts; then it is best.

(2dly.) It is convincing; that is, it is such a knowledge as maketh us to subscribe to the truth and good of things, humbling us for former misapprehensions and misconceits, causing us to smite upon the thigh, as being thoroughly sensible of the vanity of them; and maketh the heart thoroughly to determine concerning them. Many men have some knowledge concerning the

gospel, but they are not fully convinced of the truth of the gospel; it is mingled with much doubting, unbelief, error, and ignorance; they think it a vain fable, and a false or a fruitless doctrine, invented perhaps for a good end, to make men live an honest and orderly life: or at least, there is some fear that it may not prove true. They are not brought thoroughly to subscribe to the truth and worth of it: Heb. 11:1, 'Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen;' not a knowledge, but an evidence, an evidencing knowledge, when the heart is made to yield to such discoveries, and the word is received and lodged in the heart with much assurance, as the apostle speaketh, I Thes. 1:5. They were convinced that it was the only good and true way. Others have only some conjectural persuasions, or some opinionative thoughts; they apprehend the gospel with a loose heart: John 16:9, 'The Spirit convinceth of sin, righteousness, and judgment,' *el egxei*. The Spirit dealeth by way of conviction, so as to overcome all gainsaying and contradiction of the spirit, of sin without excuses, and grace without suspicions and jealousies, of judgments without crafty pretences and evasions; conviction draweth the mind to a full consent. As Paul, when he was convinced, consented to the law that it was good, Rom. 7:16; so they consent and yield to the goodness of the word: it is a true word, and the best word in the world; all former vain thoughts are gone, and the force of vain, carnal reasonings are broken, and the soul is brought to a full consent.

(3dly.) It is a wise, a prudent, and a directive light. You shall see unbelief is opposed to folly, as well as to ignorance: Luke 24:25, O ye fools, and slow of heart to believe! 'Many have faith, but they have not wisdom. Faith is a spiritual wisdom.; it is a grace that hath judgment in it; not only apprehension, but judgment. There is a foolish knowledge that puffeth up, loose apprehensions of the doctrine of the gospel that feed pride.: 1 Cor. 8:1, 'Knowledge puffeth up.' Knowledge goeth the wrong way when it gets up into the tongue and the head only. But this is a knowledge in which there is wisdom, which teacheth us to make the best choice for ourselves. Wisdom implieth something more than bare knowledge and empty speculations; it is a directive light, not only an idea or model of truth in our brains, which the apostle calleth *mopj wsin thV gnwsewV*, a form of knowledge, a platform of knowledge gathered into some compendiums or method for their own or others' good, able to branch out things, and talk well of them, a map and perfect system of all the enjoyments of the saints; for alas! such things may be easily learned from others' experience; but such a knowledge as is able to guide us in all the actings of our spirits, such a knowledge as aimeth at a right frame of affections. We shall easily discern knowledge by the ends and use of it. It is not merely that we may conceive distinctly of the Godhead, to better our art and skill, and to be able to discourse of Christ, but that we may glorify

him, that we may honour him in our lives, that is the end and the aim. Some desire to know God, as a painter desireth to know a man that he may take his image and likeness, and so draw his picture, and set it out in paint upon a table. Others know Christ as a child doth his father, that he may become the lively image and resemblance of him, that men may read their heavenly Father in their conversations Mat. 5:16, 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.' Not that we may paint out God and Christ in words, but that we may become a lively representation of him in our lives. Faith is wise, it doth not aim only at abstracted conceits of God, but to know him so as we may live by it.

(4thly.) It is affective; that is, it is such a knowledge as, besides the representation of the object, leaveth an impression upon the affections, and stirreth up desires and delights: as Prov. 2:10, 'When wisdom entereth upon thy heart.' The heart, in the scripture dialect, is the seat of the affections, of esteem, desire, and delight; it stirreth up trust, and embracing of Christ and his righteousness to salvation, when there is heat as well as light, if it provoke affections and suitable inclinations, and there is a powerful sway upon the whole spirit. As the church saith, Lam. 3:51, 'Mine eye affecteth my heart' There are proportionable affections stirred to the apprehensions that we have of Christ; and the gospel as a light, by the further concurrence of the Spirit, breaketh the force of contrary inclinations, and causeth yearnings and languishings in the soul after Christ. This must be understood rightly, for the most abstract speculations do suppose some inclination in the soul; but it must be answerable. And besides, in the first work of the Spirit upon the heart, there is not only an enlightening, but some impressions of joy. The stony ground received the word with joy, Mat. 13. There may be some flashes of joy in the apprehension of Christ, though it be but a conditional proffer, some slight apprehensions of happiness in having Christ, when we look upon it as a probable way for salvation, and yet have no interest in him. As the Jews mistook John for Christ, so many mistake these preparations for grace or a real work, Heb. 6:5. This is called a 'tasting of the good word,' a causing of contentment in the joy the word holdeth forth. Therefore' it is not to be understood by these flashy joys and transient glances, but by the settled and serious constitution of the spirit towards God, when the whole frame, stream, and bent of the soul goeth that way. As it is not a few thoughts and affections that make a man bad, but the frame and bent of his thoughts and affections, so here, it is not some glancing desires, or some slight wishes, but the general bent and delight of the spirit. Saving knowledge begets standing affections and gracious dispositions, that are as the chariots of Aminadab to carry out the soul towards Christ.

(5thly.) It is practical, as it doth not stay in the brain, but goeth down to the affections; and it doth not stay there, but gets out into the conversation and into the actions. When men pretend to know much and practise little, it is a sign their knowledge is but slight and trivial; and it is so far from being a privilege, that it obligeth us to many stripes: Luke 12:47, 'That servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.' There is a knowledge that doth not end in doing, but alas! that is but a fancied knowledge rather than true: 1 John 2:4, 'He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.' Saving light and true apprehensions of Christ will end in practice: 3 John 11, 'He that doeth evil hath not seen God.' A true sight and apprehension of God is renewing and transforming; false apprehensions cannot work it: therefore the apostle saith: 2 Cor. 3:18, 'But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory.' God's glory maketh us shine like Moses's face when he talked with God. The greater acquaintance with him, the more holy, and heavenly, and spiritual; the life will be according to the light, and the light of Christ will carry the glory of Christ into the heart, and make it shine out in the conversation. Like windows that shine in the day when the sun is risen, so we may arise and shine, for the glory of the Lord is risen upon us, and holiness of conversation is made to depend upon the clearness of the apprehension of Christ: Eph. 4:2, 'But ye have not so learned Christ;' that is, to walk in such looseness as the Gentiles did. A true sight of him maketh us the same that Christ is.

(6thly.) It is spiritual: I mean, such as is begotten by the power of the Spirit, not a taking up of reports of Jesus Christ, but a closing with him upon the revelation made of him; not upon the reports of men, but the Spirit's testimony: John 4:42, 'Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.' They would not take him upon the common report, but had heard his own voice; not only upon the belief of the church, but upon Christ's own voice, that maketh it sure to the soul: 1 John 5:6, 'And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.'

Use 1. Serveth for information, to show us the misery of those that are without knowledge. Without knowledge, without faith; and without faith, without God, without a promise. It was a great reproach that Nahash would lay upon Israel, that he would put out their right eyes: 1 Sam. 11:12. And the great design the god of this world hath upon the men of the world is to blind their eyes, that they may not come to the knowledge of the truth. Ignorance is

one of God's sorest judgments; when he hath left off threatening of other things, then he threateneth a blind heart and a vain mind. Oh that we could be sensible of it! Ignorance is twofold: either—

1. Necessary; or
2. Negligent.

1. Necessary ignorance, which is otherwise called the ignorance of pure negation, when men do not know God in Christ, because they have not heard of him. And it happeneth in two cases—either in the total want of means, or the want of due means. I shall a little examine the particulars, that you may not think they do not concern you, or that you may make this use of it, at least, to affect your hearts with pity and compassion towards them that want it. When Christ saw the blindness of the Jews, he wept over them, because 'the things which belong to their peace' were 'hid from their eyes,' Luke 19:41, 42. Oh, how may we weep over many corners of this kingdom, where Jesus Christ is not so much as named: Rom. 15:2, 'Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.' Arid not only that, but that we may be sensible of our mercies, and bless God for our enjoyments. When Christ had told his disciples of the gross ignorance of others, he presently added, Mat. 13:16, 'Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear'! Oh, what a mercy is it that it is otherwise with you! So far you may reckon yourselves blessed, as you have more advantages of increasing your knowledge, and bettering your apprehensions of God in Christ. Therefore consider how ill it is with them that want means, or the due means. 'Faith cometh by hearing;' God dealeth with us in a way suitable to our intellectual nature, and beginneth with knowledge. How should they know? and yet their case is very sad.

[1.] As to those that want the means. God leaveth no man without some witness of himself. Those that have not the word and Spirit, they have showers of rain and fruitful seasons; God is not wanting to them. If they have not those larger and clearer discoveries of God, yet their ignorance is deadly and fatal to them: Prov. 29:18, 'Where there is no vision, the people perish.' Oh, think of such unhappy times, when frequenting of ordinances was counted a crime, the want of which will be your undoing; for the apostle saith Christ cometh 'to render vengeance to them that know not God,' 2 Thes. 1:8. Men think if their lives be not vicious, and they have good meanings, it will be well with them; they are not troubled for their ignorance. I tell you, Christ will come in flames of fire to them that know not God, and obey not the gospel. A vain mind is as bad as vile affections. The blind and the lame, they were equally an abomination to God; and it is every way as dangerous to want knowledge as obedience. Oh, consider

the sad state of such souls and places where there are no means! Our Saviour saith, 'He that knoweth not the will of God shall have few stripes;' he doth not say *no stripes*, Luke 12:48. Ignorance will not excuse them. What a sorry privilege is it that they shall have a cooler hell?

[2] That want due means. This is as bad or worse than the former. Men rest in that which carrieth the face of an ordinance; and usually it is harder to teach them who know something in religion than those who know nothing at all; for a little knowledge does but prepossess the mind with carnal truth and prejudices, and the real truth is rejected with more stubbornness. Consider the sadness of such an estate. Men think to cause all the blame to reflect upon their teachers, they have been taught so; but what saith our Saviour: Mat. 15:14, 'If the blind lead the blind, they shall both fall into the ditch.' Ignorant, misled people will perish with their blind guides: Isa. 9:16, 'For the leaders of this people cause them to err, and they that are led of them are destroyed.' And indeed it is but just. Men make them their darlings, and humour them in the way of their lusts. Ill instruments would be cast out if cast out of the people's hearts: Jer. 5:31, 'The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will you do in the end thereof? What will be the end of this? It is the property of this blindness to love those that do increase it. If naturally blind, we would have a good guide. Elymas, the sorcerer, sought for one to lead him by the hand, Acts 13:11. But oh, how sad is their case that dote upon their blind guides! These are the people's idols everywhere. Thus for necessary ignorance; I mean, that which must needs be so.

2. Ignorance that ariseth from negligence; that is, when men have means and do not improve them. This is sad, and increaseth the sin, when you have the gospel, and do not suffer it to shine in upon your souls: John 15:22, 'If I had not spoken unto them, they had not had sin;' that is, not so much sin. The great aggravation of sin is from the advantages and opportunities you have to do better. All your privileges do but heighten your offence if you neglect to improve them. If you have but the witness of sense and reason, you are left without excuse; how much more when you have the word and Spirit. Christ often threateneth heavier judgments to those places that were privy and conscious to his mighty works, and more glorious discoveries, and the testimonies of his Godhead. Look, as it will be a great vexation to the men of the world at the last day, that the saints' Saviour will be their judge; so the gospel, the word of salvation, will become a killing word to them that have it preached, and yet do not benefit by it. There are divers degrees of this negligent ignorance, which I shall name.

[1.] When men have not any proportionable measures of knowledge to their means,—men that have sat a long time under the word, and yet their foolish heart is darkened within them, and they know little of the mysteries of salvation, and scarce get rid of their natural thoughts and apprehensions of God; this is sad, and yet this may in some measure befall the people of God: John 14:9, ‘Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?’ Have you had so many conferences and sermons, and are yet to seek? Heb. 5:12, ‘When for the time ye ought to be teachers of others, ye have need that one should teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God.’ After all the pains taken with them, men must still be kept to their milk and first rudiments, and still we must be forced to press you from things odious to mere nature. And when we should go up to spiritual evils, unbelief, resting in duties, want of making the most of Christ, want of communion and commerce with him; we find that we must deal with you about drunkenness, and surfeiting, and excess in sensual things, you being in the lowest form of godliness, scarce brought to a seemly pitch of morality, so that sublime discoveries do but amuse you or harden you, and are certainly lost upon you. When the apostle could not by all his endeavours bring them off from their ceremonies, he sadly complaineth, Gal. 4:10,11, ‘Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.’ All the choice discoveries of Christ were to no purpose. If they were at that pass, oh, what a sad thing it was that notwithstanding all the pains the apostle had taken with them, they would still stick at a ceremony, when there is so small a proficiency, that we can scarce bring them to the low things of Christianity.

[2.] When men have some knowledge with the means, but it is flashy and superficial. Men do not know God as they ought to know him, as the apostle’s word is. All their knowledge ends in speculation; their lives do not answer it: Titus 1:16, ‘They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him.’ Superficial and slender knowledge will not reach the heart, and go down as low as the conversation. Some are like toads, that have a jewel in their heads, when their whole bodies are poison; like the devil, that taketh Christ to the top of the pinnacle, that he might throw him down again. Some men have light in their understandings, when their conversations are foul and defiled. Oh, consider, mere knowledge will not profit when you know only to aggravate your wickedness. *Quid prodest*, &c. What will it profit to be dignified with learning and knowledge, and to perish at last? The name of the evil angels is *daimonia*, because of their knowledge; they are intellectual natures. The good angels know the will of God, and do it: Ps. 103:20, ‘They do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word.’ Christ leadeth us to heaven for a pattern of

duty: 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' You shall find the saints of God drawing out their knowledge into practice, as David prayeth for it upon this ground: Ps. 119:34, 'Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law.' That was his end, to know so as he might be guided in his way: Ps. 119:11, 'Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.' He had laid up, some principles that he might argue from them, and draw them out to every case; and upon every temptation might bring out these truths, and enforce them upon his heart. It is true, sometimes the people of God may be too backward, and too often cherish an empty knowledge and naked apprehension, which the apostle calleth a being 'barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of Christ,' 2 Peter 1:8. They know his plenty, but do not make use of it; his comforts, but are not refreshed by them; his will, but do not do it. This is a being barren and unfruitful; but it, should not be so. Therefore, bewail that your affections are not heated, your conversations bettered and amended by what you know.

[3.] Those that have knowledge of Christ, but abuse their knowledge to countenance their lusts, and to defend their sins. Oh, this is sad! The Gnostics were so called from their knowledge, and yet were the impurest heretics. These are those who, as the apostle saith, Gal. 5:13, 'Use their liberty as an occasion to the flesh,' and make the knowledge of Christ the ground of looseness and laziness: Jude 4, 'Turning the grace of God, into lasciviousness;' that is, the knowledge of the gospel. Carnal hearts are like the sea, that turneth everything into the nature of itself, even the sweet influences of heaven into salt waters. The learning of Christ, and the looking upon Christ, is made the great ground of holiness everywhere in the scripture; and they make it the ground of carnal liberty and a loose life: like the devil, the more cunning the more wicked; the more knowing, the more hurt they do to their own souls, and to the souls of others.

[4.] When men grossly affect their ignorance. And this is seen in two things:—

(1.) By the unteachableness of their hearts. They are not knowing or tractable; the plainest truths of God are riddles to them. A child of God may be ignorant, but a child of God cannot be unteachable. There is a suitableness and cognation between his spirit and divine truths; there is something in his heart that answereth to it, though he never heard it before. When God regenerates the heart, he introduceth a frame of truth, something that is of kin, and answerable to everything that is revealed. But now it is not so with wicked men; they are carried aside with, contrary inclinations, that their spirits bear no proportion, with, truth. As the apostle saith of silly women laden with sin, and led away with divers lusts, 2 Tim. 3:7, they are 'ever learning, and never able to come to the

knowledge of the truth;' that is, they make not use of the advantages, occasions, and opportunities of learning; for otherwise it might be the description of a godly man; they never reach the uttermost truths of the spiritual life, though always learning. Oh, it is a sad thing this untractableness and unteachableness of heart! Men cannot tell what to make of divine things: Isa. 28:9, 'Whom shall I teach knowledge, and whom shall I make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts;' that is, he were as good go and prattle with poor infants as teach them. Men have unsavoury, injudicious minds that do not relish the things of God.

(2.) By downright opposition, raging against the light. As the Ethiopians, that are said once a year solemnly to curse the sun; so their hearts rage against knowledge, because it reviveth guilt: Job 21:14, 'They say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.' They did not desire knowledge. This is the perverseness of man's nature, to love his own blindness, to refuse the means of helping and relieving his soul. We are not only blind, but mad; when we cannot keep out the light, we rage against it: Jer. 44:16,17, 'As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee; but we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth.' Who would not pity such mad persons as these? Here is the result of blindness and ignorance, desperate opposition against the word. They will have their old ways, their old principles, their old customs. Oh, the malignity that is in their hearts!

Use 2. Is exhortation, to press you to get knowledge. If faith be knowledge, there lieth a great necessity upon you to get it. You can as well be without the sun in the world as without knowledge and light in the heart.

1. To get knowledge. Shall I press it in the general,—the knowledge of divine things, and the knowledge of God in Christ?

[1.] The knowledge of divine things. in the general. And here consider:—

(1.) You cannot be well without it: Prov. 19:2, 'That the soul be without knowledge, it is not good.' Men will plead thus: We are ignorant, but we hope we have a good meaning; the spirit cannot be good without knowledge. This shows the goodness of your spirits.

(2.) It is your excellency above the beasts: the more knowledge, the more manly; and the more ignorant, the more brutish: Ps. 49:12, 'Nevertheless man, being in honour, abideth not, but is like the beasts that perish.' In all communications of grace, God beginneth with the understanding. The perfection

of man is his angelical nature: Job 24:11, 'Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven.' Common light is man's excellency, but to have a mind to know God distinguishes you from other men. Others may go beyond you in other things, but this will be your excellency, to know him: Jer. 9:23,24, 'Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord.' If you will glory, there is our glory. It is not who is most wealthy, or who most mighty, or who most wise; this is your excellency above other men, that excel in wisdom and knowledge. They maybe able, with Berengarius, to dispute *de omni scibili* (all that can be known), from the cedar to the hyssop, from the highest star to the lowest mineral, yet yours is a better knowledge: 1 Cor. 1:20, 'Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?' The great prejudice against divine knowledge is, because men do not know the excellency of it. The Gentiles refused the gospel, because they would fain be conversant about the nobler sciences, and because those would enrich their senses with wisdom, which they seemed to want in the gospel: 1 Cor. 2:6, 'Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect; yet not the wisdom of the world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought.' Oh, if you had eyes to see it, you would find this to be the greatest wisdom; here is your excellency.

(3.) You cannot serve God without it. The papists say, ignorance is the mother of devotion, whereas it is the great hindrance of it 1 Chron. 28:9, 'And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind.' There is the method and order: first, know him, and then the heart and the will must follow. God doth not love blind obedience. Christ reproveth the Samaritans for worshipping they knew not what, John 4:22. And Paul calleth it superstition in the Athenians to build an altar to the unknown God. Simple credulity may be very awful, and the light may work upon our fear, but rational service is performed most with love and delight.

2. Above all things know God in Christ: John 17:3, 'And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. Not only to know the true God, but Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. 2 Cor. 4:6, it is said, God 'giveth the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' He being the express image of the Father, there is the express representation of him. I am afraid Christians do not prize the knowledge of God in Christ so much as they should. Oh, consider, there you have the most comfortable representation of him: Ps. 116:5, this is David's

rejoicing, 'Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.' Oh, that you could see both together, that is most beneficial. Remember it is said, 'by the knowledge of him,' or 'by his knowledge,' in the text. The knowledge of Christ carrieth the image of Christ into the soul: John 1:14, 'And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' And then in the 17th verse, 'Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.' All the good of your souls cometh this way. The more particular discoveries your hearts have of him, the better it is for you.

Secondly, Grow up in the knowledge of Christ: 2 Peter 3:18, 'But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Search out more of the particularities of his love. When men think they have knowledge enough, they know nothing: 1 Cor. 8:2, 'He that thinketh he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing as he ought to know.' You have not knowledge enough to see your ignorance: 1 Cor. 14:20, 'In understanding be ye men.' Do not think that you know all things that can be taught; you cannot so easily go through all the dimensions, height, breadth, depth and length.

The means are these:—.

1. Be conversant with the word, in reading of it. Therefore it is said, Ps. 19:8, 'The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.' St Austin calleth the scriptures his chief light.

2. In hearing, wait upon God in it: Isa. 2:3, 'Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his ways: Wait at the doors of wisdom, that God may cause your souls to lie under the power of truth.

3. Pray instantly and earnestly: Jer. 31:34, 'They shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord.' It is his covenant promise to give understanding, therefore ask it of God. The blind man would not hold his peace, Luke 18:39-41, 'But cried so much the more, Lord, that I may receive my sight.'

4. Meditate often upon the love of Christ, search out all the particularities of it. The Indian gymnosophists would all the day be gazing upon the beauty of the sun; oh! view the Sun of Righteousness in all his glorious beams and influences with more delight and pleasure.

5. Lay aside your own prejudices and misapprehensions, for they will lead you aside, and you will gravel yourselves, and run into great uncertainties and

contradictions: Job 23:8, ‘There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding.’

By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

I shall now apply this first circumstance, the instrument, specified in that word *by his knowledge*, to the act in the other word, *justify*. For the word of the instrument, *knowledge*, we showed you it importeth faith—an effective knowledge—such as causeth the soul to embrace Christ, and receive him for our comfort. The other word is a little to be opened, and then we shall the better match these two together. To justify, in a scripture notion, is to absolve and acquit. It is a judicial and court word, and signifieth not so much to make righteous as to account so. The papists would have it that it signifies a righteousness infused, not a reckoning of the wicked as if they were not guilty. But the word is used otherwise, Isa. 5:23, ‘Woe to them that justify the wicked for a reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from them;’ Luke 18:14, ‘This man went down to his house justified rather than the other.’ To be justified, then, is to be acquitted before God of that condemnation and censure which we had deserved, and to be accepted as righteous in his sight. Well, then, the point from both these linked together is this:—

That by faith we are justified; or, Jesus Christ justifieth poor sinners by their faith. The prophet meaneth faith, though he saith knowledge. For scriptures to prove the point, take these, that are full to the purpose:—Rom. 3:28, ‘Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith.’ The apostle had been labouring throughout all the three chapters to bring the discourse to that issue; and at length there was the result of all, that we must be justified by faith. So Rom. 5:1, ‘Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ You see these scriptures are express enough without any improvement; therefore I go off to the reasons why faith, of all other graces, is deputed to this service.

1. Because it is the most receptive grace, and so most fit for the needy condition of the creature. Other graces are more operative, but faith is most receptive. It is the right hand of the soul, to take in the fulness of Jesus Christ. Nature liveth upon alms, and the continued bounty and supplies of heaven, since the fall; and therefore those graces are most serviceable that are most receptive. Love giveth, but faith taketh. All God’s stars shine with a

borrowed light. We are beggars now, rather than workers. The blessing of life is not in ourselves, but in Christ. Faith standeth in a passive receptiveness to take the conveyances of grace: 1 John 5:12, 'He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son hath not life.' It is all in having Christ. We must be beholden to another. God will trust us no more with the keeping of it, but hath placed our support in Jesus Christ. Our safety is like the ivy, or those weaker strings that are strengthened by cleaving about the oak. Now faith serveth for that, for relying on Christ to clothe us with his righteousness.

2. Faith is most loyal and true to God. It giveth him all the glory, it looketh for all from him; therefore the apostle saith, Rom. 3:26,27, The grand condition of the new covenant is faith, to exclude boasting. God would have everything carried in a way of grace, that if we glory in anything, we may glory in the Lord, 1 Cor. 1:31. Our boasting must be in the glorifying of grace. God honoureth those graces that honour him most. It is said, Rom. 4:20, of Abraham, that he was 'strong in faith, giving glory to God;' so doth God to faith. And faith is most abasing; it casteth down all the excellence of the creature. Man had rather be doing than borrowing: we cannot endure to hear of going out of ourselves; therefore God ordained this grace.

3. To make the way more sure: Rom. 4:16, 'Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed.' Now things are not so floating and uncertain as when we were left to working graces. Now we have a sure Christ for the foundation: Isa. 28:16, 'Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation.' It is sure in Christ, and we have Christ too by a sure tenure and claim: 2 Sam. 23:5, 'Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure.' We may be uneven and unconstant with God; and though we be so with him, yet we have a sure, unvariable promise to hold by. And now here is faith, that taketh a sure hold upon this promise: Heb. 6:19, 'Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast;' a sure faith, a sure promise, a sure Christ. Things are not left upon doubtful terms; God hath deputed all to faith, which hath a sure ground, a sure claim, and a sure hold.

4. Because God would bring us back again in the same way that we went off and departed from him, that so the return might be the more satisfactory, that we might see the defects of nature repaired and made up in Christ. We went off by unbelief. Eve distrusted the truth of, God, and therefore God will bring us about again by faith. To this day the heart is loosened from God by unbelief. Diffidence Is the first step to apostasy: Heb. 3:12, 'Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.' And

faith is a drawing near to God, even to such a degree of nearness as a union. We are not only made like to Christ, as by other graces, but one with Christ. Thus the point is proved.

I shall now a little clear the point to you by dispatching these two questions —

First, What faith is that justifieth?

Secondly, How it justifieth?

First, What faith is? It is not every faith,—not a general assent or loose acknowledgment of the articles of religion; but there is a faith which, to distinguish it from all others, is called justifying faith. It may be defined thus:—It is a grace wrought in our hearts by the Spirit, by which the soul doth rest and cast itself upon Christ, tendered to us in the offer of God, for pardon and acceptance. I will not stand examining every part of this definition, but shall endeavour to discover to you the nature of it by the several acts and effects of it, beginning with the lowest, whilst it is but a seed, as a grain of mustard-seed, in some small and weak beginnings, planted in the heart. St Mark saith, chap. 4:31, ‘The kingdom of God is likened to a grain of mustard-seed.’ Very small and inconsiderable is the first work of grace; but we must not despise the day of small things, nor neglect the soft waters of Siloah. And therefore—

First, To begin with the acts:—There are some implicit acts, and some explicit and formal acts. Since I am willing to give you the whole nature of faith, it will not be amiss to reflect upon these things.

1. The implied acts of faith are two.

[1.] A sight of ourselves, which faith supposeth, and the curse of God due to us. Man is a lazy creature, and will not apply himself to any religious care till he be spurred on by his need of Christ. Christ saith, ‘The whole need not the physician,’ Mat. 9:12. The stung Israelites looked up to the brazen serpent; and those that were ‘pricked in their hearts’ cried out, ‘What shall we do?’ Acts 2:37 ‘I sat alone because of thy hand, for thou hast filled me with indignation,’ Jer. 15:17. It maketh the soul sensible that it is no easy matter to deliver ourselves from the wrath of God. Men slight mercy till they need it, and are careless of the great salvation till God affect them with a sight of their sin and his own wrath. We are like Israel in Egypt, not easily weaned from the flesh-pots, till the burdens be doubled, and wrath presseth to anguish.

[2.] A sense of our inability to help ourselves. Believing implieth that a man hath given up all his vain confidence. How should we lean upon Christ, whilst we fancy we have props and' supports of our own to bear up the soul? The Corinthians did not care for Paul when they were full, and 'reigned as kings without him,' 1 Cor. 4:8. No more do sinners for Christ that are full of self; they can be merry and happy, and keep their church, and do no harm, and all without Christ: Hosea 14:3, 'With thee the fatherless findeth mercy,' i.e., those that were destitute of all helps and supplies. Paul could not look upon Christ as gain till he saw the loss that was in his carnal endeavours, Phil. 3:8. His care to relieve his soul was a greater incumbrance to him.

2. There are formal explicit acts of faith, and they are:—

[1] Knowledge of Christ, his goodness and excellency; how satisfying and how proportionable an object he is to the soul: John 4:10, 'If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that speaketh unto thee,' &c. The first act is an apprehension of Jesus Christ; but I have spoken of that largely.

[2.] There is desire. The soul thirsteth after Christ with such a restless desire as will not be satisfied but with an enjoyment. It is compared to the panting of a chased hart: Ps. 13:1, 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.' In the Hebrew it is the chased she-hart, appetite in females being most impetuous and impatient. And it is expressed by hungering and thirsting; Mat. 5:6, 'Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.' They are such voluminous and large desires that can in no wise endure check and restraint. Nothing in the world can give quiet and content to the mind possessed with them. The soul is sick of love for Christ, till it be stayed with his flagons, and comforted with his apples, Cant. 2:5; the soul desireth him in the night season, Isa. 26:9. And it is said, Ps. 63:1, 'My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is.' They would have him rather than all things in the world.

[3.] There is a seeking of Christ, as the spouse sought her beloved, Cant. 3:1-3. This is usually expressed by coming, which is one of the lowest degrees of faith, whilst the soul is in the way, and in the pursuit of Christ, but hath not fully closed with him: John 6:35, 'He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.' He that is coming—*qui se dat in viam* (he who puts himself in the way), so Beza—shall never hunger nor thirst. It is like the poor prodigal returning to his father. Though Christ and the soul be not as yet brought to close together, yet the souls of believers will adventure upon Christ; yea, though they are not so comfortably

persuaded of acceptance with him; as said the king of the Ninevites, Jonah 3:9, ‘Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger?’ So Joel 2:13,14, ‘Turn unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him?’ There is encouragement, a cable-rope cast out to save a sinking soul; though they cannot so comfortably apply Christ to their case, they are resolved to seek him.

[4.] The soul resteth upon him; there is a receiving of Christ John 1:12, ‘To as many as received him;’ which noteth a higher degree than coming to him. It implieth an apprehension, and particular application of the promises for our use; as when the prodigal and the father were fallen upon each other’s necks, and joined together in mutual embraces. It is the welcoming of Christ into the soul, the clasping him about with the arms of faith; as old Simeon took the child in his arms and said, ‘Mine eyes have seen thy salvation.’ And so the faith of the patriarchs is described: Heb. 11:13, they ‘embraced the promises.’ The word is *aspasameno*, they hugged and embraced promises. I conceive it hinteth the practice of the patriarchs, who upon every new hint of Christ went and worshipped; which was a testimony of the joy of their faith and their cleaving to Christ in the promise. And when faith is once come to this, it is no longer a seed hidden in the earth, but it springeth up in all the happy effects and fruits of it. Therefore the next thing I shall speak to is the effects of a justifying faith.

Secondly, The effects of faith; there are many. I shall name those which I conceive to be most essential and proper; and they are of two sorts:—

1. Such as concern faith itself.
2. Other gracious constitutions of spirit.
1. For those that concern faith itself, and they are two:—

[1] It is always renewing its own acts. God doth not delight in dead and useless habits. It is not faith that will profit us, but the exercise of it. God delighteth in the work of faith, that we should ‘with joy draw water out of the wells of salvation,’ Isa. 12:3; that we should not only have faith, but act it—that is, as we should make Christ ours, so we should possess ourselves of all that he hath, and that we should maintain our lives out of the supplies of his grace Gal. 2:20, ‘I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me,’—that we should not only have Christ, but live in him. The perfection of graces is in their acting: James 2:22, ‘By works was faith made

perfect;' that is, strengthened and increased; as the right arm groweth stronger and full of spirits by frequent action.

[2.] It aimeth at the increase of itself. Therefore a weak faith may grow into assurance. The first thing faith struggleth against is doubts and fears: Mark 9:24, 'Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief.' Graces are much tried by this opposition against the contrary inclinations of spirit. Graces in pretence do not exasperate opposite propensions; and therefore the soul enjoyeth a great deal of quiet and calmness under shows. False graces do not aim at growth, and so exclude care; and do not exasperate doubts, and so exclude fear. There is not such a struggling with the relics and remainders of unbelief. The children of God believe that they may believe: 1 John 5:13, 'These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.' They would grow up into greater measures. David checketh distrusts: Ps. 13:5, 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God.'

Gracious hearts are troubled at their evil imaginations. Others are drawing back, till God hath no pleasure in them, Heb. 10:38.

2. The effects that concern other gracious constitutions: so justifying and saving faith hath four effects:—

[1.] It humbleth and melteth for sin. The passover is to be eaten with sour herbs. A man cannot look upon Christ but with a bitter remembrance of his own guilt: Zech. 12:10, 'They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son.' Even our best actions to a believing soul cause grief. Like the ancient Israelites, who had seen the glory of the first house, when, they saw how unlike the last was to the former, Ezra 3:12, 'wept with a loud voice.' So these, when they have such a perfect model before them as Christ's love, and being like to make such weak returns, it humbleth their hearts. As the queen of Sheba, beholding the glory of Solomon, had no spirit left in her, 1 Kings 10:5, thinking her own glory nothing to his, so doth the soul at the contemplation of the excellences of Christ.

[2.] It purgeth the heart from sin: Acts 15:9, 'Purifying their hearts by faith.' The apostle speaketh of the Gentiles: if they had not the ceremonial purgings, they have that which is better—their hearts are purified by faith. The blood of Christ cleanses from sin. It doth not only allay the burning of the spirit when it is upon it, but also doth away the defilement. Faith and lusts are like a poison and a preservative, they cannot lodge quietly in one soul.

Apprehensions of grace, even in the Gentiles, are the keenest arguments against sin. A man never learned how to deal with sin to purpose till the appearance of grace. Therefore the apostle saith, Titus 2:11, 12, 'The grace of God, that bringeth salvation, appeareth to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world.'

[3.] It sets a high price and value upon Christ, so as to part with all for his sake. Love is not to be measured with respect to the intenseness of the object, but the valuation of it: Mat. 13:46, 'He parted with all for the pearl of great price.' See whether you can part with worldly comforts, or with Christ. Let lusts go, and sin go. Our Father's house is the least thing that we can quit for him: Ps. 45:10, 'Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house.' A small contentment. It was Abraham's commendation that he did not withhold his son, his only son, Gen. 22:12. God trieth us sometimes by things that are great in our esteem, to see whether we will hazard the comforts of Christ, or the loss of our own contentments. Alas! there should be no worldly respect but should be sacrificed upon this account. Many profess Christ, but they do not prize him; they are apt to be scandalised with the least suffering for his sake: Luke 16:26, 'If ye forsake not all, ye cannot be my disciples.'

[4.] It worketh by love: Gal. 5:6, 'For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith, which worketh by love.' It aboundeth in all holy duty out of love. Mercies are such an argument as leaveth a constraint upon the soul: 2 Cor. 5:14, 'The love of Christ constraineth us.' Terrors and fears cannot urge the spirit so as love will. Carnal affections make us lazy, but faith begets in us love, and love maketh us labour. Those that love much, will do much. Now by this you may discern the nature of justifying faith.

Secondly, My next work is to show you how it justifieth. There being mistakes in this matter, I shall endeavour to lay the truth before you.

1. Faith does not justify as a mutual cause together with works, as if they did cooperate together; but we must distinguish. There is a first and second justification, the one ascribed to faith, the other to works. This opinion maketh as if we were beholden to grace only for some courtesies, where we cannot engage God of ourselves. It is true James saith, 'Not by faith, but by works;' but that is only to justify faith. It is a false faith that doth not end in works; but works have nothing to do in justification. God abhorreth such a profane medley; he would have it wholly of grace. The papists exact an imaginary faith, and so are put upon a necessity of eking it out with works.

2. Not as an act and grace in us. Faith justifieth *relativ*’, not *effectiv*’ *et formaliter*: not as if the act of believing were instead of perfect obedience to the law, and as if it were grace in us, and not an apprehending of Christ’s righteousness. But it is in reference to the object that it is said to justify, only because of its necessary concurrence as an instrument. Christ’s righteousness maketh us righteous, only because it cannot apprehend this righteousness but by faith, therefore it is said faith doth it. The hand may be said to feed and nourish the body, but the nutritive virtue is not in the hand, but the meat. There are divers reasons to sway you to believe this:—

[1.] Because faith is always said to justify as complicated with its object, from whom it receiveth all its virtue.

[2.] Because the righteousness of faith is always contradistinct and opposed to that which is in ourselves: Rom. 10:3, ‘For they, being ignorant of God’s righteousness, they go about to establish their own righteousness.’ Now how anything in us can be called God’s righteousness, judge ye. So Phil. 3:9, ‘And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.’ Rom. 1:17, in the gospel, ‘the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith;’ Rom. 3:22, ‘Even the righteousness of God, which is by the faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all that believe.’

[3.] Because the apostle speaketh of imputing righteousness for faith, as well as faith for righteousness: Rom. 4:6, ‘Unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works.’

[4.] Because we are never said to be justified *propter fidem*, but *per fidem*; not because of faith, but by faith. But I shall speak to the matter of imputation in the next point.

3. Faith doth not justify, that is, merely receive the witness of our justification, as those that make it assurance; that is a thing that followeth faith. We are not justified before faith, for then actual unbelievers would be subject to no condemnation; whereas ‘he that believeth not is condemned already,’ John 3:18.

But to show affirmatively how faith justifieth, as an instrument which God hath deputed to the apprehension and application of Christ’s righteousness, the whole order is thus:—

[1.] By effectual calling God begetteth faith, and uniteth us to Jesus Christ. Faith is the grace of union, and we are said to ‘live in him by faith,’ Gal. 2:20. And he is said to ‘dwell in our hearts by faith,’ Eph. 3:17.

[2.] And being united to Christ, we are possessed of all that is in Christ; so that whatsoever he hath suffered or done becometh ours 2 Cor. 5:21, 'For he was made sin for us, that knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.' As Christ had our sins, so we have his righteousness. So that we find imputation a real thing.

[3.] Then God looketh upon us as righteous; and so—

(1.) He absolveth us from all sin by a free and full pardon, and we are as if we were not sinners in the sight of God: Jer. 50:20, 'The iniquities of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found;' Ps. 103:12, 'As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.'

(2.) He accepteth us as righteous to eternal life, so complete as we cannot be challenged: Rom. 8:32, 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth;' Rom. 5:21, 'That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.'

Use 1. It sheweth us the excellency of faith. Cod hath put a high honour upon it; all the conveyances of Christ come into the soul this way, but especially of justification; and what a mercy is it that God would require nothing of us but faith.

2. It presseth us to get faith; it is the instrument of justification, the grace that maketh all sure to the people of God. The world liveth by guess or random; and alas! what a misery is it to have only our own contrivances and good meanings! Faith is designed to clothe us with the righteousness of Christ, and that is the best robe. Oh, labour only for that! Take heed it be a justifying faith. To this end take two cautions:—

[1.] Get such a faith as will endure the sight of God. If you be justified it must be by faith, a righteousness that will endure that Ps. 143:2, 'For in thy sight shall no man living be justified.' And that is the reason why the deeds of the law are excluded. Nay, get such a faith as will endure the appearance of Jesus Christ, even his terrible appearance in judgment. Graces are true when they can endure that brunt: Luke 21:36, 'Watch and pray, that you may be able to stand before the Son of man at his coming.' 1 John 4:17. 'That we may have boldness in the day of judgment;' that is a sensible proof of the truth of graces. 1 John 2:28, 'And now, little children, abide in him, that when he shall appear, you may have confidence, and may not be ashamed at his coming.'

[2.] Let it be such a faith as taketh Christ out of God's hand, such a faith as will stand with knowledge and more discoveries of Christ. The more ignorant any are, the more presumptuous. It must be such a faith as apprehends Christ in the use of all the means appointed. To talk of faith while we contemn or neglect the means, is but an idle fancy, an imaginary persuasion, not faith, and will easily discover our folly.

By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

I am now come to the next circumstance in the order of the words, and that is the efficient cause in justification, which is Jesus Christ, expressed here by God's 'righteous servant;' for so he is to be considered in the business of justification, or else it were ill for the creatures. What this expression will amount to we shall see by and by. The point is:—

Doct. That Jesus Christ justifieth as God's righteous servant. I shall—

1. Explain the point.
2. Prove it.
3. Apply it.

For the explaining the matter to you, consider these two things:—

1. How Christ was God's servant.
2. How Christ was God's righteous servant.

First, Christ was said to be God's servant, partly as he subjected himself to the condition of man, and because he lived among men in a needy, servile, and abject state of life, not like a prince, but a servant, which is the lowest form of rational creatures. And it is expressed by 'taking the form of a servant' upon him, Phil. 2:7. Angels are called sons, and man a servant; 'The sons of God shouted for joy,' Job 38:7. In the family of heaven they were to God as servants.

And partly as he was a choice instrument for the executing of God's decrees. Those that are taken into any degree of subserviency to God's counsels have this badge of honour put upon them, to be God's servants, as Nebuchadnezzar is called God's servant, Jer. 27:6. Now, because Christ submitted himself to the office of the mediatorship, and so to a subserviency to God's decrees, he is called a servant: Isa. 13:1, 'Behold my servant, whom I uphold;' Isa. 49:3, 'Thou art my

servant.’ And this being an instrument of God’s decrees, is called service, because whosoever is employed in it is to sequester himself for the uses of God, and to divest himself of all self-respect, and like a servant to be at the command of another, and wholly to give up himself to the profit and benefit of his Master. So Christ, not aiming at himself, accomplished the work of God to God’s glory and the salvation of man. And—

Partly as he subjected himself to the law of God and the covenant of works, which was a covenant of servants. A servant expects his hire as the reward of his work, and therefore the state of the gospel is called a state of sonship: Gal. 4:5, ‘To redeem them that were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons.’ So in the 1st verse of that chapter, ‘The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant;’ that is, those that are under the covenant of grace did very little differ from those that are under the covenant of works, in the time of the church’s infancy and ceremonial dispensation, because it was a ministry of condemnation. Everywhere the covenant of works is made as the covenant of an hireling, and implieth bondage and service. And therefore Christ, because he submitted himself to such a covenant, and seeing he was to be judged of God according to all extremity and rigour, things were carried between God and Christ in a way of justice, and our grace and glory were due to him. So that in all these respects Christ was God’s servant.

Use 1. Is to commend to us the service of God. It is a glory to a society when princes are of it: you count the order or company dignified when they will come into your fellowship: You have Jesus Christ in your fellowship. Oh, certainly the service of God can be no disgrace to you! God calleth him my servant. This was David’s choice: Ps. 84:10, ‘I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.’ The meanest employment in God’s service is a greater honour than any sinful dignity. Christ did not honour kingship and lordship, and the dignities of the world in his person here upon earth, but only meanness and obedience. Think it no reproach to be engaged in such services with David as are most mean and low in the world’s eye. Your fellow-servant is Christ.

Use 2. To commend to us the love of Christ, that he should divest himself of all his glory, and appear in the form of a servant.

1. It was love that he should submit himself to our nature. Do but consider what an infinite distance there was between the Godhead and us, and then you may guess somewhat what a strange condescension there was in his love. How many degrees it came down to meet the creatures for their good. There are divers things to aggravate it. That Christ should take our nature, when he left equal glory with the Father. It was a great abasement for Adam to fall from his excellency by sin to

meanness; for us to stoop is no such matter, but it was most amazing in him that 'thought it no robbery to be equal with God,' Phil. 2:6. Then that he 'took upon him the form of a servant,' not of angels, which is a higher degree of natures, and would have been a fitter form for a Son, but of a man, and that the form of a servant—he went to the lowest rank of rational creatures. Then how he took it, not of the highest order of men; he came not in the pomp, equipage and appearance of a king and prince. The Jews looked for a mighty monarch. Christ had right to all the world, but he would not hold by that tenure. It was the form of a servant, not only in respect of the angels, but in respect of men. He was found in the lowest rank of men, poor and destitute, therefore called *chadall ishim*: Isa. 53:3, 'despised and rejected.' In the Hebrew it is the leavings off of men; man just left off there where Christ was found if he had gone lower, he could not be man: Ps. 20:6, 'I am a worm, and no man;' rather found among the rank of poor despicable worms, than of men. Then, what were the effects of it? Even upon this he was refused of those for whose good he came; they rejected him, nay slew him, because he came in this disguise of meanness for their sakes. He gained no honour by it, neither did the world know him the better: John 1:11, 'He came to his own, and his own received him not.' In short, this was the great cause why he was the object of the Jewish scorn and rejection. Nay, further, consider this was not only an accidental event, and a thing that was not aimed at, but the very end of Christ. He was found in the form of a servant, that he might

be handled in a despiteful manner, and that the decrees of God might be accomplished upon his person. He could have shown himself in majesty, and have prevented his sufferings, as he saith, Mat. 26:53,54, 'Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray unto my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how, then, shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?' Well, then, you find a great deal of matter to be offered to your thoughts for the commendation of Christ's love.

2. There is more in Christ's being a servant. He subjected himself to your covenant—the covenant of works—that lay upon all men naturally: Gal. 4:4, 'Made under the law'—not only the moral law, which is not a slavery, but a freedom; whereas, on the contrary, the satisfying of our corrupt desires is the greatest slavery in the world 2 Peter 2:19, 'While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption.' But that he should put himself into such a condition as to make himself liable to his Father's wrath, to take our curse upon him, yea, to be 'made a curse for us,' Gal. 3:13, that is a high instance of the love of Christ—that he, that was the beloved of his Father—the apostle calleth him 'the Son of his love,' Col. 1:13; —we translate it 'his dear Son'—that he, I say, should become the receptacle

of his Father's wrath, and that all his anger should as it were be pitched upon him,—what a circumstance is this! Thus you see Christ is God's servant.

Secondly, In the next place, you must look upon him as God's righteous servant; and thus he hath taken our work and burden upon him. There is a threefold righteousness of Christ:—

1. Essential and divine, which is that infinite and surpassing perfection which is in him as he was God. That is not to be considered in this place, partly because he speaketh here of the righteousness of Christ as a servant; but this is the righteousness of Christ as a Lord. And besides, this is not communicable to the creatures. It was the dream of Osiander that the Lord should, in justification, communicate to us his essential righteousness. But hear what the prophet saith Isa. 42:8, 'My glory will I not give to another.' God saith expressly he will part with none of his essential glory. His creatures are not vested with that.

2. There is his absolute and personal righteousness, as he is Mediator and God-man, and is able to make others righteous. And so it is said, John 3:34, 'God giveth not the Spirit by measure to him.' He had as a man the Spirit without measure, not sparingly, but poured out with a full hand and in abundance. And so it is said, Col. 1:19, 'It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;' and Col. 2:9, 'For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.' Christ's soul is filled by the union of the Godhead with all created and habitual graces. Though these things are for us, and God hath made Christ a storehouse of sufficiencies for the elect, yet they are not imputed to us. It is true, though we are full of sin, and Christ came into the world full of righteousness, and so it is a just remedy against the sinfulness of our natures, and it qualified the Lord Jesus to be a fit person to do us good; yet here we speak not of the righteousness of Christ as a servant, but of his service; and we have not this fulness imputed to us so as that we may become saviours to one another. Christ was by these things fitted to do us good, and to be a continual magazine of comforts and graces, to which the creatures might have recourse in all their troubles: Eph. 4:7, 'But unto every one of us is grace given according to the measure of the gift of Christ.'

3. There is a dispensative and relative righteousness, which is called *justitia fidejussoria*, the righteousness that Christ performed for us, and in our stead, as our surety, even the righteousness that he manifested in the work and service of our redemption. And so chiefly he is to be considered as God's righteous servant. He showed it in two things:—

[1.] In exact obedience, even to the least tittle of the law, for our sakes. We could not possibly keep in with God, therefore Christ did: Rom. 8:3, 'For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, for sin condemned sin in the flesh;' Mat. 3:15, 'It becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.' He doth that for us which we could not do in ourselves. And therefore Christ is said to be 'the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth,' Rom. 10:4. The end of the law is perfection of obedience, and Christ is that to us by having fulfilled it in his own person. The scriptures do everywhere avow this righteousness of Christ and exactness of keeping the law Isa. 53:9, it is said, 'There was no deceit in his mouth.' It was not a pretended show. As to the holiness of his conversation: 2 Cor. 5:21, 'He knew no sin;' that is, he had no experimental knowledge of it in his own soul: 1 Peter 2:22, 'Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.' There could be nothing justly charged upon him as to his conversation. Farther, it is said, Heb. 4:15, 'He was in all points tempted like us, yet without sin.' Men usually miscarry in their temptations. Jesus Christ was tempted, his soul was assaulted even to a consternation; but there was no sin in it; like a glass of pure water that is jogged, but it stirreth up no mud. Thus you see what a righteous servant Christ is. God ordained him to the suretyship of the creature, and he was faithful in it, and did all things well.

[2.] His passive obedience. And it is that sacrifice and offering of himself that Christ made for the sins of the world, bearing our curse and punishment, and so satisfying for our transgression: 1 Tim. 2:5,6, 'The man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for all.' He suffered so long till he had satisfied God's justice, and engaged the very righteousness of God to the good of the creature too, and would not expire his soul till all were finished and made sure. See John 19:30, 'It is finished,' and then he gave up the ghost. The scriptures everywhere speak of this, and therefore I shall be more sparing in it.

You see now how Christ was God's righteous servant.

To apply it:—

Use 1. It holdeth out a pattern for us to imitate God's righteous servant as well as we can, and to enjoin us to write after this copy. Several things are remarkable in the righteousness of Christ; I shall only instance in two:—

1. The sincerity of his spirit.
2. Innocency of his conversation.

1. The sincerity of his spirit. There is no guile in Christ, and there should be none in those that have benefit by him: Ps. 32:2, ‘Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.’ Be not for appearances and shows. Corrupt aims and self-advantages, and desire of esteem amongst men, argue a false spirit, which is all for appearances. They do not care what God thinketh of them, for they are all for repute: 1 Cor. 4:3, ‘But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man’s judgment.’ Gracious hearts count that nothing; their desire is to approve themselves to God.

2. Innocency of conversation. It became our High Priest to be harmless and undefiled; so should we be: Phil. 2:15, ‘That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.’ Be righteous in your ways, be faithful to your work. Christ knew no sin; it is a holy simplicity to be simple in evil. Christ was tempted, yet without sin. Watch over your spirits in temptations, that they may not encroach upon you to the betraying of yourselves into any unbecoming or unworthy walking.

Use 2. Is comfort to poor broken-hearted sinners. Christ was God’s righteous servant, and, so fitted to make a Saviour for sinners, and to plead with God for you. You say you are sinners, but Jesus Christ is righteous. You are all ill servants of God, compassed about with daily infirmities. Ay! but Jesus Christ was a righteous servant—he was righteous in our stead: 1 John 2:1, ‘I write unto you that you sin not; and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.’ Sin not; that is, do not allow yourselves in sin; but if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father. Though God will not hear you, he will hear Christ; he never offended him. It is very observable that all comfort usually in scripture is made to flow from the righteousness of Christ: Zech. 9:9, ‘Behold thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation.’ He bringeth salvation with him, for he is righteous. So Dan. 9:24; the Messiah was to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in an everlasting righteousness. You may be confident he is gracious with God, and he will make you gracious. There is righteousness to satisfy justice. Christ’s righteousness is fit to satisfy, for there is no sin in it. And there is righteousness to make up your defects—to make you righteous in his righteousness. But that is the work of the next inquiry.

And, therefore, I now come to show how Christ is said to justify as God’s righteous servant. I shall open this matter to you:—1. Negatively. He justifieth as a servant, and therefore—

[1.] He doth not exclude God the Father from being the first eternal moving cause of our justification. It hath its first rise at his mercy in ordaining Christ: Rom. 3:24, ‘Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.’ It was the pleasure of the Father. Grace is most sure and free when we look upon his contrivances for your good. He gave Christ, and pre-destinated you to enjoy the benefits; he elected you rather than another: Eph. 1:5, ‘Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Therefore, it implieth that Christ was not the first moving cause of justification. He only is a righteous servant. There was some antecedent love and mercy that deputed him to that service.

[2.] It doth not exclude the grant and sentence of the Father; and the sentence is passed by the Father, though it be procured by Christ as the servant of God’s decrees in this matter. Rom. 3:26, the Father is said to be ‘the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.’ ‘We have an advocate with the Father,’ 1 John 2:1. Sin is committed against him; his will is the rule of justice; and by nature, right, and office, he is the supreme judge.

2. Affirmatively. So Christ is said to justify two ways:—

[1] By meriting that righteousness which will serve for justification. His obeying and suffering have procured such a righteousness as will stand us in stead, for Christ’s righteousness is ours. We have share in whatever he had, for he was our surety; as he saith, John 17:19, ‘I sanctify myself, that they may be sanctified;’ and Eph. 1:6, ‘He hath accepted us in the beloved.’ We are beloved in his love, sanctified in his sanctification, and so righteous in his righteousness. I shall prove it more by and by. And then it is the best way, in procuring such a righteousness by his life and death as should avail the creatures in their acceptance with God.

[2.] By meriting the Spirit that constitutes and gives us an interest in this righteousness: 2 Cor. 5:20, We pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.’ All the entreaties of the word are from Christ. He offereth grace in the word, and conferreth it by the Spirit. He justifieth them as a righteous servant, because it is his righteousness which is the matter of justification, and it is his Spirit that effects it in us, and interests us in it. His righteousness and his Spirit, though imputed and bestowed upon us by the Father, yet they are merited by Christ, and bestowed upon us by the Spirit of Christ.

To apply this.

Use 1. Is to check those that deny the imputation of Christ's righteousness. He justifieth as a righteous servant, as having procured righteousness for us by his own obedience and suffering. He causeth us to be absolved as righteous before God by his own righteousness; made ours by virtue of our union with him.

1. Some deny the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, either active or passive, as the papists and Socinians, who both deny that we are justified by the imputation of Christ's righteousness. But what a strange thing is it that the papists, who in other doctrines establish the imputation of the righteousness of a man, of a monk, or a dead man, in their works of supererogation, should yet deny the righteousness of Christ! They say there is no such expression in scripture. But to both these I oppose these places:—The apostle speaketh of the imputation of righteousness, Rom. 4:6, 'Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works.' And the prophet calleth Christ 'the Lord our righteousness,' Jer. 33:16. And Christ is said to be 'made to us of the Father righteousness,' 1 Cor. 1:30. And we are said to be 'made the righteousness of God in him,' 2 Cor. 5:21, as he was made sin for us, and both by imputation. And he addeth this as an argument, that it would not stand with the justice of God—take it for the exact tenor of righteousness, which is essential to his nature, or his will revealed in his word—to constitute a wicked man righteous, unless there be some righteousness to make him so. Now, none will serve the turn, but Christ's, for that is exact and regular. For the former, see Prov. 17:15, 'He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord.' And God saith, Exod. 20, that he will not hold sinners guiltless. And you may add, that still the righteousness whereby we are justified is opposed to that which is inherent in us. Certainly we are made righteous by imputation; for by the same justice that Christ is made a sinner, we are made righteous.

2. There are others that deal with the robes of Christ's righteousness as the king of Ammon did by the garments of David's messengers; they cut them off by the middle, they exclude the active obedience of Christ, but upon slender grounds. In opposition to these consider:—

[1.] The need of both his active and passive obedience. By his passive obedience, by death, the punishment of sin is taken away; and by his active obedience the law is fulfilled for us: so that we have not only pardon but acceptance; so that there is not only a restraint of vengeance, but pardon obtained. The guilt and punishment of sin is done away by his death; the other benefit, favour and acceptance, is procured by his obedience. There must be something done by way of satisfaction to divine justice and to appease his wrath,

and something by way of acquisition of favour: these are the two things procured by Christ. Absalom was pardoned, but he saw not the king's face. We are God's creatures, bound to his law, as well as his prisoners, liable to his wrath; and there must be the expiation of sin and the fulfilling of all righteousness. There are two blessings obtained by Christ—freedom from death, and the benefit of eternal life.

[2.] We are expressly said in scripture to be made righteous by the obedience of Christ, which is exactly opposed to the disobedience of Adam: Rom. 5:19, 'For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.' We are condemned by Adam's actual guilt, and made righteous by Christ's active obedience.

[3] In the very passive obedience of Christ, the, active part is the chief; for the sufferings of Christ do not simply justify us, but as they are the sufferings of Christ, voluntarily yielding up himself in obedience to his Father's will. For Christ was to be considered as the sacrifice or the priest: as a sacrifice, so passive; as a priest, so active Phil. 2:8, 'He became obedient to death, even the death of the cross;' and Heb. 10:10, 'By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ.' He willingly undertook to do for us what we were bound to do.

Use 2. Is to press you to go to Christ, that you may be interested in his righteousness: it cometh by union.

The rules are these:—

1. See the insufficiency of your own righteousness. The creatures' fig-leaves will never cover a naked soul; there must be first a sight of your own vileness, and of your own inability to help yourselves out of it. It is observable in John 16:8, that the Spirit doth first convince of sin and then of righteousness. Christ doth not seek us till we be lost, and we cannot seek Christ till we are lost. The soul doth most truly seek Christ when loosened from all other things, from all false props and expectations, and seeth plainly that it shall perish if it have not an interest in Christ. As Simon Peter said, John 6:68, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.' Whither should we go? thou hast the only righteousness.

2. Consider your own filthy rags, and then you will long, desire, and groan for change of raiment. Alas! your persons are covered with your own guilt, and your natures are full of sin; what will you do to appear before God? Alas! you can scarce keep tip a fair show before a discerning man; what will you do before a God of pure eyes? Job 15:15, 'The heavens are not clean in his sight.' The holy

angels in comparison of God are nothing, yea, less than nothing. But do you think to help yourselves by your services, your duties, and good meanings? Alas! as long as you stick there, no good will be done the saints blame themselves in the sense of their duties; their best performances are poor, worthless things: Isa. 64:6, 'But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.' They will not make your souls amiable: Phil. 3:9, 'And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness.'

3. Consider the willingness of God to clothe you with the righteousness of Jesus Christ; Christ was appointed to this very end: Rom, 3:25, 'Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness.' Gods design was to lay open his heart to the creatures, and to show how willing he was that you should come unto him in this way: 1 Cor. 1:30, 'Who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness.' If we had framed it, it had been more doubtful, but God appointed a righteousness of his own making; and therefore it is everywhere called in scripture 'the righteousness of God,' not only because it was the righteousness of God-man, Christ Jesus, but God's righteousness, that is, of his appointment.

4. Consider the worth of this righteousness; it is better than if we had stood in our innocency, and had procured it in our own persons. Luke 15:22, it is called 'the best robe;' better than we should have had if we had stayed in our father's house; far better than that we lost in Adam. Our repair is more excellent than our first make, and it contents God better; the creature is most humbled, and God most exalted: this is as it should be, when we have nothing in ourselves, and fetch all from God. It is as good as the best of the saints have; you are as righteous as David, and as righteous as Abraham and all the worthies of God: Rom. 3:22, 'Even the righteousness of God, which is by the faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all that believe, for there is no difference.' In this case there is no difference indeed: Rev. 19:8, 'And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.' The saints have one common righteousness; as it was with the Israelites in point of the manna, none had more than another, none had over or under; nay, higher, it is as good or better than the righteousness of angels, for they are confirmed in their own righteousness. Isa. 6:2, the seraphims covered their faces as being abashed at the glorious holiness of God; and before him they are not clean, they cannot stand before the holiness of God. And in Job 4:18, 'His angels he chargeth with folly;' that is, comparatively, and in respect of himself, they might be accused, rather than accounted righteous. But now we may have access with confidence and boldness, as the apostle saith, Eph. 3:12, because we do not come in our own holiness, but Christ's. Nay, further, in some

sort, it maketh us as righteous as Christ himself; therefore it is said, 1 John 3:7, 'He that doth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous;' that is, he doth truly show forth that he is righteous in Christ's righteousness; nay, this is a righteousness that will endure God's sight. You must needs obtain the blessing in the garment of your elder brother.

5. Seek it in Christ's way; then you are like to obtain it, at least you shall be sure not to deceive yourselves. Many conceit themselves to be in a good estate, and that Christ is theirs, and all his righteousness theirs, when they never sought it in his way; you must therefore look to this. This way of Christ respects two things:—

[1.] The manner of obtaining.

[2.] Our ends and aims in it.

[1.] The manner of obtaining it must be by union; this righteousness is not gotten by an assent to the truth of any promise or proposition in the word, but by an union with Jesus Christ. We are not united to any promise, but to Christ. Many take a promise, and go away with it. But alas! you are to take Christ in the promise, for there is no promise that appertaineth to any till they are one with Christ. Therefore there must be union before you can take any comfort in him; for all the promises are his, and you have not right in them till you have a right in him: 2 Cor. 1:20, 'All the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen.' So they will be true and certain to you. Many flatter themselves in this kind. They go away with the words of a promise, but do not care to carry out their faith to the person of Christ tendered in the promise. You cannot close with Christ without a promise, so not with a promise without him. Look, as it is in the spiritual life, many think to live upon a comfortable word or a promise of God, whereas they should live upon Christ in a promise; as men do not live upon their conveyances and leases, but their lands: so here, you do not come to a promise for righteousness, but to Christ in it.

[2] The ends and aims in it; both the subordinate and the ultimate ends must be right.

(1.) The subordinate end, which concerneth ourselves and our own good. Be not contented without the king's face, the grace of God, and the light of his countenance. Many desire to allay the burnings of their consciences, and to cool the heat that is in their spirits through guilt, and would fain shun hell and horror, but do not care for communion with God, and to be in a state of favour and amity with the Lord. Alas! a pardon is nothing without acceptance; it were hell enough not to enjoy God. In justification there must be both done, an allaying of wrath

and procuring of favour. Zech. 3:4. The filthy garments must be taken away, and we must be clothed with change of raiment. 'I have caused thine iniquities to pass from thee;' but that is not enough: 'I will clothe thee.' There must be a charming of wrath and a being accepted in the beloved, Eph. 1:6. Hypocrites they are altogether for removal of punishment, but do not care how they stand in God's favour, so as they may receive the communications of grace. Oh, do not you. rest in that, and only make it your care to get the punishment off.

(2.) The ultimate end, which concerneth God's glory. God's end in the covenant of grace is to exalt mercy; and therefore it is said, Eph. 1:6, 'He hath accepted us in the beloved;' that is God's end in the covenant of grace, to exalt the glory of grace; Isa. 48:9, 'For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.' There is God's end in all: and when our end and God's end are the same, then our desires are the most regular. Now what is your end in desiring the righteousness of Christ—God's glory, or your own good? The natural inclination and propension that is in us to our own good may work a desire to have sin forgiven, and to be saved from wrath, or that conscience, may be pacified; but to desire that we may be accepted in the beloved, to the praise of the glory of his grace, that is a heavenly frame of spirit; not that you may be exalted, but grace in you. Seek the righteousness of Christ with the same mind that God offereth it in the covenant.

Use 3. It serveth for instruction to us, to make Jesus Christ, as. he is Mediator, God-man, the object of our faith. We may do it, and we ought to do it. Whosoever justifieth me becomes the object of my faith. Now not only God the Father justifieth, but also Jesus Christ, God's righteous servant. And therefore, in the work of our faith, we are not only to reflect upon God the Father, but Jesus Christ as Mediator. And indeed we ought to do so, for much of the comfort of believing dependeth upon our taking of him into our thoughts: John 14:1, 'Let not your hearts be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me.' It easeth us much of the trouble of our hearts when our souls have recourse to Christ, when we believe in him who was God's righteous servant.

I shall here handle two questions, and so despatch this use:—

First, What it is to believe in Christ as God's righteous servant? It is not only to believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; not only to have distinct and explicit thoughts of the Trinity; but to believe in Christ as Mediator. You have a willing God, and you have an able Saviour. It is to reflect upon the whole carriage of Christ's mediatorship, as a sufficient help for poor creatures; there is enough in God's righteous servant to become a sufficient bottom and

ground for our faith. Though faith is not to rest in Christ, it is to begin in him, that by him we may the more comfortably believe in God. And this is the reason why many times there is no other object of faith expressed but Jesus Christ: John 1:12, 'To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.'

Second question, What special comfort and privilege doth there come to faith by it?

1. By this you have a double claim. An interest in God by virtue of the covenant of grace made with your persons, and the covenant of works made with Jesus Christ. It is due to you as it is all of grace, but to Jesus Christ it was a due debt; he satisfied justice and merited mercy: Rom. 3:24, 'Being justified freely by his grace, through 'the redemption that is in Jesus Christ;' that is Christ's claim, and your claim by virtue of your interest in him. So the 26th verse, 'That he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.' When you reflect upon Jesus Christ, your claim is not disannulled but strengthened by the justice of God. Christ hath satisfied justice and merited mercy; Christ hath satisfied the covenant of works by suffering what was due in point of transgression, and by discharging what was due in point of obedience. You see satisfaction as well as imputation.

2. It ministereth matter of glory and triumph of faith, considering every scruple. You have not only a proof of the Father's love, but the Son's merit: Rom. 8:34, 'Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died.' And therefore faith speaketh of glorying in the cross of Christ, Gal. 6:14. There is matter of glorying in the cross of Christ, in his obedience and death, that there is so full satisfaction and such exact obedience. Oh, plead it to your souls; he fulfilled every tittle. Alas! we have but little cause to boast; we know but in part, and do but in part; but in Christ we may glory; nay, you may glory in God the Father: I Cor. 1:31, 'That according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.' Why? because Christ is made all to us by the Father—wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: an object fully satisfying, so that now you may make your boast of God all the day long.

3. It ministereth joy, in that you see God in your own nature, and he is your kinsman. Affinity begets obedience and hopes of speeding. Your hearts would tremble and quiver at the sight of God's back parts in his own glorious nature; and therefore, because you cannot converse with God in his own nature, there is Christ to help to relieve you; in believing God in your own nature, that is an object of our faith. Hence it is said, Eph. 3:12, 'We have access with boldness through the faith of him;' and Heb. 10:19,20, 'Having therefore boldness to

enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.’ The manhood of Christ is the means to bring God and us together; otherwise, there was a flaming sword against us every way, and we could not come near but we must die. The mere God-head was incensed against us; and therefore, till God became man, there was no hope left unto us to see him; but when he became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, it was matter of great encouragement to the creature. There are other considerations, but these are enough to persuade you in believing, not only to look upon God, but to look upon Christ, to look upon God’s righteous servant; not only upon the mercy or grace of God, but upon the mercy and grace engaged to you by the sufferings and obedience of Jesus Christ. Thus you see you have a double claim to God, and you have an excellent remedy against the doubts of your own hearts; you may see God in your own natures. The Lord grant you may have a right sight of these things, not that you may abuse them to looseness, and to the cherishing of presumption, and so turn Aaron’s rod into *a* serpent, but that you may be helped in the great work of believing.

I go on in the text to the next circumstance, and that is the object or subject of justification, that is *many*. He shall ‘justify many.’

1. It is put here exclusively, to shut out the universality of mankind; it is but many that he justifieth, it is not all.

2. It is put inclusively, to take in the whole company of the faithful. Look upon those that are called of Christ in all ages, and they will come to such a number.

I shall handle the first acceptance, as it excludeth the greater part of the world.

Observe, then, that all are not justified by Christ. The privilege that God bestowed upon Christ was, that he should justify many.

The reasons of the point are:—

1. Because of his sovereign pleasure, to pass by some for their sins, and for the glory of his justice; and not to bestow upon them the grace of election; he may do with his own as it pleaseth him. And indeed, usually in this matter, the scriptures make God’s pleasure to, be all in all. There are some whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. Some translations read it, ‘Whose names are not written before the foundation of the world in the Lamb’s book of life.’ God never gave Christ a charge to save such men whose names are not in the Lamb’s book. God dealeth out of absolute sovereignty: Prov. 16:4, ‘God hath made all things for himself, and the wicked

for the day of evil.’ You would overlook that, but it is for the glorifying of his justice. It is observable, he doth not say he made the elect for the day of evil. There are many who grant that the wicked are for the day of evil, who do not grant eternal reprobation and preterition; these cavil at God’s prerogative: Rom. 9:18, ‘Whom he will he hardeneth;’ i.e., withdraws the influences of his grace from them. They are hardened as water is freezed by the absence of the sun. The preterition of God is not the cause of sin, but the antecedent: 2 Tim. 2:20, In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.’ And Jude 4, speaks of ‘some who were of old ordained to this condemnation, before the world was.’

2. Because all do not believe. It is a visible argument that all are not justified, because all do not apply themselves to Christ for justification. The righteousness of Christ will bear this limitation, none have a share in it but believers: Rom. 3:22, ‘Even the righteousness which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all that believe, for there is no difference.’ All they, and none but they. Now, all are not believers: ‘All have not faith,’ 2 Thes. 2:12, 13; Mat. 20:16, ‘Many are called, but few are chosen.’ The preaching of the gospel doth not work upon all; they have the outward means, but not the inward grace. Scarce all have the outward means.

Use 1. This checketh that wild charity that was in Origen, who thought that all should be saved at last, even the devils themselves. And this opinion was revived in Germany by a man of an obscure name, and by some in our days. Now, consider that the general drift of the scriptures saith, ‘Depart from me, I know you not,’ Mat. 7:23. That there are goats as well as sheep; some to whom Christ will say, ‘Go ye, cursed,’ Mat. 25:41. Some that are without: Rev. 22:15, ‘Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.’ The main places whereupon they build their conceit are these: Rom. 5:18, ‘Wherefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came unto all men to justification of life;’ where Christ and Adam are compared together, and the one’s sin and the other’s sufferings are made equivalent: 1 Cor. 15:22, ‘As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.’ But in these places Christ and Adam are compared as two common roots, and the one should be as able to save, as the other to ruin those that belong to him. The other place is 1 Cor. 15:28, ‘That God may be all in all,’ which they understand of God’s presence and glory in all. But the apostle speaketh there only of those holy ones who shall have a glorious manifestation of the presence of God, so that God will be all in all to them. But I shall no longer rake in this dirt.

Use 2. Is to teach you:—

1. Not to be contented with those common privileges which all men may enjoy, for you may have all these and not be saved. All men are not justified, and therefore not saved. As in creation, because God bestowed a human form upon you, therefore you think he will save you; but God doth not save all those he hath made: Isa. 27:11, ‘It is a people of no understanding; and therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will show them no favour.’ It is ill trusting to that. Men will say, I hope to be saved as well as others, and the like. The covenant of works was made with all men, as being in Adam’s loins; but not that of grace, that is made to those that are given to Christ. Hath he given you a mind to know him? Heb. 8:10, and a heart to receive him? John 1:12; then it is well. It is no privilege to be an intellectual creature, only to be wiser than the beasts to our own destruction. So for an estate; surely God loveth and favoureth me, because he blesseth me with worldly good things: Eccles. 9:1, 2, ‘No man knoweth love or hatred by all that is before them. All things come alike to all, and there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked.’ This all men may have, but you must have some privilege that is distinct. So for good meanings; they thank God they have a good heart towards him, and ever had, and that they know they have done their best; as the young man said, Mat. 19:20, ‘All these have I kept from my youth.’ I tell you, whatever you have by nature, every man may have; and therefore, till you have faith and other graces, it is as nothing.

2. It teacheth you not to flatter yourselves with the universality of grace and mercy. Many live and die, and rot in their sins, and think Christ will save them, and mercy will save them. You see Christ will not save all, and God gave him no commission to justify all: Deut. 29:19,20,’ When he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst: the Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man: Mark, it is said, *against that man*. God hath a special quarrel at him that abuseth mercy: there will a time come when they shall see his justice; as the thief said on the cross, Luke 23:41, ‘And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds.’

Use 3. Is to the people of God, that have had any sense of their justification by Christ—any inclination to walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh: Rom. 8:1, ‘There is no condemnation to them.’ Man is most taken with anything that is appropriate; it is a privilege that is mine,—it is not given to others. This exhorteth you to the greater sense of this privilege; it is not every one’s mercy. The apostle sheweth this is one of God’s reasons in passing

by the reprobate world: Rom. 9:23, 'That he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.' Your mercies are mightily aggravated by their want. Respects are not favours when they are bestowed promiscuously. Oh, consider this is the mercy of God's own people: Ps. 119:132, 'Look upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do to those that love thy name.' Alas! what should engage God to you above others? Oh, consider and admire the goodness of God, that hath passed by millions, and yet manifested himself to thee, in whom there was no desert! 'This was an endearment to the Israelites: Ps. 147:19,20, 'He hath showed his word to Jacob, his statutes and his judgments to Israel; he hath not dealt so with any nation;' Deut. 7:7,8, 'The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people, but because the Lord loved you.'

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