

SERMON LXXX.

QUESTION XXI.

QUO is the Redeemer of GOD's Elect?
W Elect?

ANSWER.

The only Redeemer of GOD's Elect, is the Lord JESUS CHRIST, who being the Eternal Son of GOD became Man, and so was, and continues to be GOD and Man, in two distinct Natures, and one Person for ever.

HAVING considered of the nature and necessity of Man's Redemption, and that for it, it was requisite that there should be a Redeemer. As also, how this affair was settled in an eternal compact. We are now to proceed to a more distinct enquiry into this mysterious and astonishing Redemption. And here two things will come under our contemplation. 1. The Person of the Redeemer together with his Fitness for such a Work; which is pointed at in the six subsequent Questions. 2. His Execution of this Work, in two Questions more.

I. THE Person of the Redeemer together with his Fitness for such a Work. Touching the Person himself, I shall not insist on a distinct consideration of him, separate from the consideration of his fitness to redeem, where there will be occasion to treat of it. Only in general observe, That the same Person who undertook this province in the Covenant of Redemption, was he that engaged in, and went through it in pursuance of that Covenant. Who, as we have observed, was no other but the eternal Son of God, the second Person in the sacred Trinity, who in respect to the design he was prosecuting is called *Jesus a Saviour*; and with regard to his unction to it is called *Christ*, God's anointed. Let us then pass over to the speculation of his fitness to redeem. That the Son of God might actually redeem us, it was requisite that he should be every way fitted and furnished for his work. And for this there were two things necessary. (1.) That he might be furnished for the work it self. (2.) That his work might be accepted and to become effectual to accomplish the end

for which it was undertaken. And hereupon there are two things to be looked upon as belonging to this preparation of his, viz. His Incarnation, and his Uction. The former of these is laid open to us in this Question, and that which follows; the latter in the Four that come after, which we may accordingly look into.

1. *THE first thing in Christ's fitness to Redeem is his Incarnation.* It may not be amiss to give the reason why we are to assign it hither; since it is a consideration of weight, and hath afforded matter of dispute. That the Incarnation of the Son of God hath a proper respect to his Redemption is undeniable, without it he had not been, could not be our Redeemer, as will be afterwards made evidently to appear. Now it is certain that this Incarnation is no part of the work it self; nor doth it belong to either of them. There are two parts assigned to the work of Redemption wrought out by Christ, viz. His Humiliation, and Exaltation. I know of none that assign it to his Exaltation, but divers do to his Humiliation. Now that Christ's Incarnation is no part of his Humiliation may be sufficiently demonstrated. By Christ's Incarnation we understand, the assumption of an humane nature by the Son of God into union with his Person; of which we are to consider afterwards. Now that this assumption did not belong to his Humiliation as a part of it will be made to appear by these things,

(1.) *IF this belongs to his Humiliation, then he was actually humbled by virtue of this assumption, which he was not.* If indeed we reckon his humbling himself for any act of his condescendency to his creatures, so it may be acknowledged. So God himself is said to humble himself, *Psal.* 113. 6. But if we take it as we do here, for his debasing himself, it cannot be affirmed of it. For it must be either in respect to the nature assuming, or assumed; but in neither. Not in regard of the nature assuming, which was divine, for that is in it self incapable of being humbled or abased; and he therefore took our nature on him that he might be humbled in it. *Phil.* 2. 7. Nor in respect of the nature assumed, which was humane, for that was indeed exalted and honoured by this

this assumption: for, though it hereby lost its distinct humane personality, yet it gained a more glorious condition, in being of the Person of the Son of God.

Against this it is Objected,

Obj. *THAT* it was in regard of neither nature by it self, both of both in conjunction meeting in Christ in the state of a Mediator.

To which I reply,

1. *THAT* the conjunction of his two natures belongs to his Incarnation. And hence if by this conjunction he was humbled, it must refer to one of the two, which renders the conjunction to be a debasing of Christ: for still it is true, that the Person himself is divine, and hath nothing added to him but the relation of the assumed humanity; which relation doth no way diminish his eternal glory; nor is that nature made more low by it.

2. *THAT* Christ's Incarnation did not of it self put him into the state of a Mediator. It only fitted him for it, but it was his Office that made him so; so that he was, in order of nature incarnate antecedently to his bearing of his mediatorial Offices. For they were given him considered as God and Man in one Person.

(2.) *CHRIST'S* Humiliation was that part of his Redemption in and by which he made satisfaction to the law of God on our account. But his Incarnation made no part of this satisfaction. The Humiliation of Christ is, by all the Orthodox, accounted to be that which in all the parts of it referred to the satisfaction of the justice of God; but he did not satisfy by taking our nature, only he became capable of it.

AND whereas it is here objected, *That* Christ was humbled in his very Incarnation; and hence it must needs be a part of his Humiliation. It may be readily answered; That because that things are together, it doth not follow that they are the same: and some things may be together in time, and one in order of nature before the other. There were but two states in which Christ was to be, referring to Redemption, for both of which he was to take our nature, viz. Humiliation and Exaltation; and he must therefore of necessity no sooner be in our nature, but be in one of them. Now his Humiliation was the first, being to make way for his Exaltation, which was the reward of it. *Phil.* 2. 7, 8, 9. Hence he was no sooner Incarnate, but he was in a state of Humiliation; and together with our nature, he took the infirmities of it upon him. Yet we are to distinguish between the assumption it self, and the quality he put himself into when he assumed it. Christ was first to appear in our nature in a state of Humiliation, when therefore he took our nature, he put himself into a debased state, but all the considerations of that debased condition, were only adjuncts of his Incarnation, and not essential to it: and these adjuncts were not only separable, but in due time separated. Hence,

(2.) *CHRIST'S* Incarnation bore an equal respect to his Humiliation and his Exaltation. And hence may as properly be called a part of the one as of the other. Christ as God is capable of neither, but he became man that he might be capacitated for both of them. *Phil.* 2. 6. &c. It is in our nature that he was humbled, and it is in the same nature that he is exalted. So that if his Incarnation be part of his Humiliation, we must necessarily conclude either that when his work of Humiliation was done, he laid aside or put off our nature again; or else that, being still Incarnate, he remains in a state of Humiliation now he is in Glory; and consequently that the work of satisfaction is not performed, upon which he was to be exalted, which we neither do, can, or may believe. It then properly belongs to his fitting or preparation for this great work, and is accordingly here to be enquired into.

IN the farther prosecution of this Article, we are led by the *Catechism* to take notice of two things, 1. The nature of this Incarnation; in the present Question. 2. The manner of it, in that which follows.

1. IN our enquiry into the nature of it, there are two things we may lay out our thoughts about. 1. The necessity of it. 2. The Incarnation it self.

First. TOUCHING the necessity of it. The enquiry may be; *Why* must the Son of God become Man in order to his being a fit Person to be a Redeemer?

A. IN reply to which let it be observed in general, *That* the Son of God, having in the Covenant of Redemption undertaken the province of a Redeemer, did therein engage to perform all that was requisite to make him effectually so. Now there were such things necessary to be gone through by such an one, as required his being a man, so that he could no way keep covenant with his Father, but by such an assumption. Here then are two things worthy our taking notice of. 1. That the Person of the Redeemer must needs be God. 2. That he could not be our Redeemer without being Man too. A word or two of each.

(1.) *THAT* the Person of our Redeemer must needs be God. Such is the work, that no other could have engaged in and gone through it. It must have broken the back of the strongest Angel of Heaven, though they excell in strength. There was *Omnipotence* requisite to the discharge of this affair. That is therefore one of his titles, *Isai.* 9. 6. *The mighty God.* *Isai.* 63. 1. *Mighty to save.* He must be God on a threefold account.

1. TO sustain his humane nature in and under its work. It was more than such a frail thing could go through and not sink and break under it, if it had not been supported by his divine power. To bear the whole weight of the wrath of God due to sinners, and to hold our and go through, and not be swallowed up with it, required infinite strength

strength to support him, and on this account, he is said to offer himself by the eternal spirit, Heb. 9. 14.

2. *TO put the value into his obedience whereby it might be satisfactory to the justice of God.* It must be precious blood indeed that was able to redeem us. Hence that in, 1 Per. 1. 18, 19. *Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things,—but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.* And if the reason of its being so precious be asked, we are sufficiently answered, because it was the blood of God. Acts 20. 28. It was an infinite debt we had contracted, and it must be infinite satisfaction that could pay it, for the Redemption of so many millions as are to be made happy by it for ever: and the value of this satisfaction must flow from the worth of his Person. He must then be God.

3. *TO be fit to pursue this Redemption to efficacy.* That he might with boldness appear before God for us, to demand the Salvation of his Redeemed. He is a mediating Redeemer; and could not be so but in being God as well as Man. He must be able to lay his hand upon both God and man, Job 9. 32. and therefore must participate in the nature of both.

(2.) *THAT he could not be our Redeemer without being Man also.* This will appear on the consideration of these things,

1. *THAT in the restoring of man from misery to felicity, respect is to be had to the Covenant of Works.* God will not leap over that Covenant to save one of the children of men. He hath made it suter than Heaven or Earth, Mat. 5. 18. It was the first fixed rule of relative Justice between God and man. It must therefore be complied with in the whole tenor of it. If any receive a reward of glory, it must be upon a perfect obedience to it, for so that was the promise connected. If any be delivered from the curse of it, after he hath incurred it by disobedience, the threatened misery must be suffered. If man be saved, mercy and truth must meet. Psal. 85. 10. Provision must be made that God may as well be just as be a justifier of any, Rom. 3. 26.

2. *HENCE he that is man's Redeemer must be one able to comply with that Covenant on this account.* Man being himself fallen short of this obedience, cannot be his own Redeemer, but must look for it from another. Now man's Redemption is not a meer work of power, but of righteousness too; in which respect the revelation of it is called, *the revelation of his righteousness of God*, Rom. 3. 21. So that although Christ be almighty in respect of his God-head, yet if he cannot perform for man this righteousness which the law demands, in that nature which is omnipotent, that nature is not sufficient to constitute him an able Redeemer; but there must be something else to render him so.

3. *IT is requisite that man's Redeemer be subject to the law of Justice which was given to*

man. For if he must answer it and yield full satisfaction to it, he must be in subjection to it. It must be able to charge upon him all that it had against them whom he ransoms, and accordingly, arraign, judge, condemn and do execution upon him in pursuit of that charge: how else should it recover its own of him? The law can come upon none but such as are under the command of it, and subjected to it. He is therefore said *to be made under the law, that he might redeem sub.* Gal. 4. 4, 5. Now he was not capable of this as he was God. The law-maker, who is absolutely suprem, cannot come under the censure of his own law.

4. *THE law of the first Covenant hath none but man for its subject.* When God Covenanted with man, it was with him as he was such a *species* of being; the whole kind were contracted in our first parents, and with them all, & none else, was that compact made: it was to man the precept was directed. Job 28. 28. and to him was the promise and threatening. Gen. 2. 17. So that this law can challenge subjection of none but one that is a man, and of Adam's race and lineage. Christ therefore was first made of a woman, that so he might be under the law. Hence the connection, Gal. 4. 4. Had he assumed any other nature, it would not have done. To have taken an *Angelical* nature, would have done us no kindness. This is designed in that emphatical expression, Heb. 2. 16. *For verily he took not on him the nature of angels: but he took on him the seed of Abraham.* They therefore who deny the Incarnation of the Son of God, pluck up a necessary foundation of man's hope for Salvation. Had not the Word been made flesh, we should never have seen God in glory. In sum, had Christ been meer man, he had been too weak; had he been only God and not man, he had not been fit to be our Redeemer, as the case stood with us upon the apostacy under which we lay.

Secondly. WE now pass to the consideration of the Incarnation it self, according as it is laid down in the Answer before us. Which we may take an account of in four particulars, (1.) The Person assuming our nature. (2.) The nature which was assumed by him. (3.) The assumption it self, where we are to observe the distinction and union of these two natures. (4.) We may add to look into the communion between them, which follows upon the former.

1. *FOR the Person assuming our nature.* We are told that it was the *Eternal Son of God.* The Apostle commending the doctrine of godliness for a great mystery, makes this the first article in which it appears to be so, 1 Tim 3. 16. *And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh.* And when the Prophet would give us the letters of Christ's name, the first is, *Wonderful.* Isai. 9. 6. And indeed every point in this Incarnation of Christ is a wonder

too astonishing for us to comprehend; the clearest eyes of our weak understandings are not able to gaze on this light without dazing: and therefore it is our safest way to let faith embrace the truth of divine revelation, in believing that it is so; which we have reason enough to do, because God hath said it; although if we critically examine at our bar how it *is* or *can be*, we must be non-pluss'd, and put to silence. I shall therefore here only give you Scriptural evidence for the proving the truth of two assertions,

(1.) *THAT the Person assuming our nature was true God.* As this belongs to each Person in the sacred Trinity, so the word of God abundantly confirms it concerning the Person of the Redeemer.

1. *THE divine Names are there given to him.* And not only such as are sometimes given to men; as *Psal.* 82. 6. but the incommunicable name, *Jehovah*, which peculiarly notes the divine essence, and, as some *Criticks* observe, sounds as much as, he who was, is, and is to come: and was never in Scripture ascribed to any meer creature. See, *Gen.* 18. 14. *Psal.* 68. 19. and, *I am*, which is also peculiar; compare, *Exod.* 3. 14. with *Joh.* 8. 58. which notes the enjoyment of himself in an eternal now.

2. *THE divine incommunicable Attributes are there ascribed to him as his right and propriety.* So *Prov.* 8. 22. *Joh.* 1. 1. *Eternity* is acknowledged to him. *Omnipotency*, *Rev.* 1. 3. *Ubiquity*, or incomprehensible *Omnipresence*, *Mat.* 28. ult. *Omniscience*, *Joh.* 2. 24. 25. *Immutability*, *Heb.* 13. 8. and many other instances might be reckoned up.

3. *HE is equal to God, and therefore must needs be God.* There is no comparison, much less any equality between God and a creature. *Psal.* 89. 6. *Isai.* 40. 17. God is equalled by none but himself, and yet see *Phil.* 2. 6. *Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.* And for that reason the Lord of hosts calls him *his fellow*, *Zech.* 13. 7. And what saith Christ himself of himself, *Joh.* 10. 30. *I and my Father are one.*

4. *HE performs divine works, or such as none but God can do, in his own name, and by his own power.* Meer creatures have indeed been instrumental, but not in their own name, but his, *Acts* 3. 6. nor their own virtue, but his, *ver.* 12, 13. But Christ co-operates with his Father in all his great works. *Joh.* 5. 17, 19. *But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doth, these also doth the Son likewise.* And in his own name, *Mat.* 8. 3. *And Jesus put forth his hand and touched him saying, I will, be thou clean, And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.* The blind saw, the deaf heard, the dead lived at his pleasure. Yea the work of *Creation* is assigned to him, *Joh.* 1. 3. *All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* *Heb.* 1. 2.

By whom also he made the worlds. And the great works of *Providence*, *Joh.* 5. 21. *For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickneth them: even so the Son quickneth whom he will.*

5. *HE hath the form of God.* *Phil.* 2. 6. According to our conception, things are differenced by their forms; that therefore which hath the same form is the same thing; and if it be an individual form it is the same individual thing; and so it must be here, for God is but One. And hereupon, that which we call the definition of God is proper to him. It is the special nature of the Deity, to have life of it self; and so hath Christ, *Joh.* 5. 26. *For as the Father hath life in himself: so hath he given the Son to have life in himself.*

6. *HE is the object of Faith.* Divine confidence for eternal life is to be placed on him as well as on God. *Joh.* 14. 1. *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.* Yea, faith on him is enough to give a man title to salvation. *Joh.* 3. 16. — *Who-soever believeth in him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life.* And men are eternally happy or miserable, according as they believe or believe not on him, *ver.* 36. Now no meer creature can be the object of our faith.

(2.) *THE Person assuming our nature was the Son of God, or the Second Person in the blessed Trinity.* It was not the God-head or divine essence absolutely considered; though, how all should be but one God, and yet but one of these Persons assume, is beyond our fathoming; yet it is no where ascribed to any of the other, but ever to him: Nor to the whole Deity abstractly considered. It was the divine Wisdom that was with God from eternity, *Prov.* 8. 22. It was the Word, *Joh.* 1. 14. the Son, *Gal.* 4. 4. We are then to believe it to be, though we know not how it is. And if we cannot reach the understanding of the distinction of the persons themselves, how should we see through this?

II. *THE nature assumed was Humane.* So we are told, that the Eternal Son of God became Man. But of the particular manner of this, we shall have occasion to speak under the following Question, to which I refer it. Only let us observe that he took this nature upon him, into union with his divine person truly and really; as the word of God abundantly testifies. And for that reason it is that he so often calls himself, *the Son of man.*

U S E I. *LEARN* we hence what ground of confidence we have to look for compleat Redemption from Christ. Is our Redeemer God? Well then may he be said to be mighty. If he had been less than God, well might our faith stumble. How could any other have born the eternal weight of divine wrath, and not have sunk under it? How could he have broken those everlasting bars of divine Justice that held us fast, had he not been God? Had he had the force of all the Creation in one, it would not have done it. To deny Christ to be God, is to undermine our faith; nor shall we ever be able to give a good reason of our

hope, unless we firmly believe him to be a divine Person. But what cannot he do for us who is God?

USE II. *STAND still and contemplate the admirable condescendency of the Son of God, who, to bring about the Salvation of fallen man, caused time and eternity to meet in one.* The infinite Being to tabernacle in an house of clay: how highly hath he dignified our nature above that of Angels? And how gloriously hath he favoured us, that to do us good, he was pleased to become one of us? And because we could not else have been Redeemed, rather than to suffer us to lie and perish in our cursed state, put on the nature of man to do and die in for us? Can we sufficiently celebrate this good will of his to such vile sinners? Let us then worship him because he is God, and yet draw near to him with holy confidence, because he is our brother, and hath taken part in our nature, that so he might have a fellow feeling of our miseries and succour us.

[JANUARY 22. 1694.]

SERMON LXXXI.

III *NOTE* are now to look into the Assumption

These things are essential to the Deity, and were found in him who was incarnate.

2. *NEITHER doth the humane Nature of Christ lose its Essence.* But he is true and perfect man. He took the same form, shape, fashion with other men, *Phil. 2. 7.* The humane nature of Christ remains in itself a secondary Being, a reasonable creature, consisting of a Soul and Body, as will be afterwards more enlarged on. He is the Man Christ, *1 Tim. 2. 5.* And on this account he so often calls himself the Son of Man.

(2.) *EACH Nature retains its essential Properties.* And this is necessary from the former.

1. *THE divine properties are not taken away or laid aside by this Assumption.* He put none of them off in his Incarnation. He abides eternal still, he could therefore say of himself as in, *Joh. 8. 58. Before Abraham was, I am.* He is still infinite and omnipresent, *Mar. 28. 20.* He is still omniscient, knowing the very hearts and secrets of men, *Joh. 2. 24, 25.* He hath a divine understanding, *Joh. 21. 17.* and a divine Will; *v. 22.* yea, he is still God eternally blessed. *Rom. 9. 5.*

2. *HIS humane properties continue without being taken away.* Consider him in the nature assumed, and he is a compound, limited, timed Being. He is a finite creature, hath a Body that is circumscribed and cannot be