

SERMON CLVI.

2. **H**OW fallen Man is to exercise this Faith in his Worshipping of God?

Ans. THAT God is the ultimate Object of our Faith still, hath been before observed; but that because Sin hath made a distance between him and us, we cannot now Worship him acceptably, but by and through a Mediator, and therefore our Faith must derive its strength and activity in this way. And here,

1. WE are to exercise our Faith in Acknowledging the way in which he comes to be our God again, viz. of Free Grace. And this is the Foundation of right Evangelical Worship. Except we believe him to be our God, we cannot rightly Worship him. Now we have no other ground for this Faith, but the Grace that is revealed in the New-Covenant. Herein only can sinful Men glorify God aright, when they ascribe to him the Glory of those Perfections, which shine forth in their recovery, from the misery under which they were fallen. And that which here peculiarly shines forth, is his rich Grace, Eph. 2. 8. *For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of your selves: it is the gift of God.* And if we do not resolve our Faith and Hope into this, we do not Worship him aright. For all the contrivance of the way in which we are saved, was to this design, Eph. 1. 6. *To the praise & glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*

2. WE are to perform all Worship of him, in the way of the New Covenant, i. e. in and by a Mediator. Our Faith must lay its hold on him, and by him we are to come unto God. We are therefore told, Eph. 3. 12. *And the law is not of faith: but, the man that doth them, shall live in them.* And here,

(1.) WE are to exercise our Faith on Christ for all the Assistance by which we may perform acceptable Service to him. We must come to him for all our Strength to do Duty aright. Paul tells us, Phil. 4. 13. *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.* And Christ himself hath assured us, in Joh. 15. 5. *Without me ye can do nothing.* And that we may have his aid to carry us thro' our Duty, we must look up to him with an eye of Faith. For which reason he is set before us, as an Object for our trust on this account, *Isai. 26. 3. Ch. 45. 24.* And we are assured, in Chap. 40. ult. *But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint.*

(2.) AND by this Faith we must depend on him for our Acceptance with God in our service. As he must help us to do aright, so he must procure for us the entertainment of what we do, else it will not be of a sweet savour with God. Eph. 1. 6. *Wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.* There is great imperfection cleaving to all, even the best that we

do, for which we must be rejected, were it not for him; but he covers all under his perfect Obedience. Our Prayers must be offered with his Incent, Rev. 8. 3.

(3.) IN sum, Our whole Worship, in every part of it is to be done in his Name. There are other Duties besides Faith belong to this Command, as will be presently considered: But if we would do them aright, we must have an eye and respect to Christ in them all, Col. 3. 17. And the reason is, because our Salvation, which we are, in subordination to God's Glory, to seek in all our serving of him, intirely depends on him, Act. 4. 12. *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*

II. WE are to Worship God by an holy Fear of him. So essential is this to Natural Worship, that the whole of it is frequently stiled by it, and called the Fear of God, because there is no Duty in it, that can be performed as it ought without the influence of it. There is indeed a slavish fear of God to which fallen Man is subjected, which is not so properly a Duty, as a Misery, which derives from the relation, which Sin hath contracted between God, and Sinners, viz. Enemies. And it is a great duty to seek a deliverance from this Spirit of Bondage, by seeking the removal of the Curse, which hath occasioned it, Rom. 8. 15. *For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear: but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.* But there is a natural fear of God, which is raised by an apprehension of his Glory and Greatness, and the vast distance that there is between him and us; which Fear was put into Man at first, and was sanctified in him; whereby he was fired to pay a due subjection to God, as his Sovereign Lord and Lawgiver. This is that which is commonly called a Reverential Fear, because it procures an holy Reverence of God in our Hearts and Lives; and is abundantly pressed on us in the Word of God, *Psal. 2. 11. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Deut. 10. 12. And now Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God. Psal. 5. 7.* On this account God is called the Fear of his People, *Gen. 31. 53. Psal. 76. 11.* Man lost the due reverence of God by Sin, and it degenerated into that which is Servile: He obliterated true Fear out of him, *Psal. 36. 1.* But it is put into us again by the Grace of God in Conversion. Hence that, *Prov. 1. 7. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom & instruction.* And it is one of the Promises of the New Covenant, *Jer. 32. 40. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them,—I will put my fear in their hearts.*— This is that which we usually call a Filial or Child-like Fear, and it flows from the Spirit of Adoption, which teacheth us to carry it towards God as our Father. And the want of this is the cause of all the Atheism, Irreligion, and Wicked-

nels among Men. See *Gen. 20. 11.* And there are two Things wherein this Fear of God doth especially discover it self.

I. *IN a Reverential Respect which we bear toward him.* And it hath a double respect,

(1.) *TO his Glorious Majesty.* When we view his Greatness, and our own littleness; when we contemplate his Infinite Perfections, his Incomprehensible Immediacy, his Wonderful Omnipresence, his Almighty Power, his Admirable Holiness and Justice, his Supreme Sovereignty, and Dominion over all Second Beings; it fills us with an holy Awe of him. Hence that, *Exod. 15. 11. Who is like unto thee, O Lord, amongst the gods? who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?* *Jer. 10. 7. Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain.* And God himself thus argues with Men, *Jer. 5. 22. Fear ye not me saith the Lord? will ye not tremble at my presence?* This is that which should make us to prostrate our selves before him, lay our Crowns at his Feet, and pay him all submissive deference in our Words and Carriages at all times.

(2.) *TO the Authority of all his Commands.* We are by this Fear to acknowledge him to be our Master, *Mal. 1. 6. If I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts.* God hath laid us under the Obligation of Duty; and we are to look upon his Precepts, as coming from him with Sovereign Authority, and yield our selves voluntarily to the Authority of them; not daring to resist it, or so much as call it in question, or contend with him about the equity of them: much less may we dare to refuse our Obedience, or say they are unjust. Hence Fearing him, and keeping his Commands are inseparable, *Ecc. 12. 13.*

2. *IN an awful Dread of Offending him in any thing.* For tho' there is a desperate fear of God's Judgments, arising from an impression on Men's Consciences, making them apprehensive that they are under the Curse and Condemnation of the Law, and putting them in a fearful expectation of the Execution, which drives them to horror and despair; which God's Children ought not to entertain, because Christ hath delivered them from that danger: Yet there is an holy Fear of God's Judgments, which keeps his Children in awe in this World, and they cannot Worship him aright without it. Of this *David* speaks, *Psal. 119. 120. My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.* And *Job*, *Chap. 31. 23. For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure.* And tho' there was more of terror attending it in the times of the Law, yet it is to be exercised with Faith and Love under the Gospel. This stimulated *Paul* to his work, *2 Cor. 5. 11. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.* And indeed if we Love God as a Father, it will make us afraid of offending him, lest we incur his Fatherly Displeasure. And what other use have we to make of Evangelical Threatnings,

but to make us fearful not to offend God in any thing, lest we expose our selves to his just displeasure, and accordingly to be very careful of our ways. As he, *Psal. 39. 1. I said I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue.* And whensoever we draw near to him to keep our distance.

III. *WE are to Worship him by Praying to him.* Not only is Prayer a Duty required of us by Divine Precept, but it truly belongs to Natural Worship, and is required of us by this First Command. And the very light of Nature teacheth Men this Duty, *Jonah 1. 5. Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man to his god.* And the neglect of it is a Sin, which procures God's displeasure against such as are guilty of it. According to that, *Jer. 10. 25. Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not upon thy name.*

A distinct Consideration of the Nature and Kinds of Prayer, belong to another Place, which follows afterwards, to which it may be Adjourned. Only here in general, it will appear to belong to Natural Worship, if we consider the reason on which it is founded, which is our Natural Dependance upon God, as his Creatures. That Prayer is a Duty of Worship, and belongs to the First Table, none can deny; because in it we apply our selves to God in Christ, and therein pay our Acknowledgments to him as God, and express our whole reliance upon him for all good. And that we should thus depend on him, & address our selves to him, his Glory, & our Necessity call for. As will appear if we consider,

1. *THAT our Being, Preservation, and whole Supply, intirely depends upon him.* So we are told, *Act 17. 28. For in him we live & move, and have our being.* ver. 25. *He giveth to all life, & breath, & all things.* Our both Natural and Spiritual Life are at his dispose, *Psal. 84. 11. Whatever help we have by Second Causes, yet all are ordered by him, and no further avail, than as he pleaseth.*

2. *THAT hence we can have nothing but what he Bestows upon us.* There is indeed an order of Means appointed to be used by us in Obedience to his Command, but the Success is governed and determined by him, *Psal. 104. 27, &c.* And without his Blessing upon our Endeavours, our greatest Prudence and Diligence are in vain, *Psal. 127. begin.*

3. *THAT he hath the Sovereign Liberty to Dispose of all his Gifts and Blessings.* He is not bound to the Creature, but is a free giver. He oweth us nothing, but may do with his own as he sees good. The best of Men cannot oblige him by any thing, *Rom. 11. 35.* And sinful Man hath provoked him.

4. *GOD expects to be Called upon by us in order to our obtaining these Favours.* This is a way of Communion between him & them, *Ezek. 36. 37. Thus saith the Lord thy God, I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them.* And reason it self calls for it, nor can we in any other way better

better declare our Dependance on him for all. Now to this right Worshipping of God in Prayer, it is requisite,

(1.) *THAT we profess our intire Dependance upon him.* That we have no where else to go, 2 Chron. 20. 12. Hereby we give him the Glory of his All-Efficiency. This therefore the Church professeth, *Psal. 44. 3, &c.*

(2.) *THAT we deny our own Worthiness of any favour from him.* That all must flow from his free benignity. Yea, that we acknowledge our demerit of the contrary, and that we have nothing to rely upon, but his meer Mercy. Thus it becomes sinful Men to address him, Dan. 9. 8, 9. *O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face: to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee. To the Lord our God belong mercies & forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him.*

(3.) *THAT we ask all of him in the Name of Christ, and for his sake.* Our Saviour directs his Disciples to this way, as that which was like only to speed, *Joh. 14. 24, 26.* We are to come to God through him, *Heb. 7. 25.*

(4.) *WE must resolve to Knock at no other Door.* We must seek our help no where else. We must acknowledge all other Succours to be vain, *Psal. 60. 11.* And accordingly resolve that, let others do what they will, we will fix our entire reliance here, *Psal. 20. 7.*

IV. *WE are to Worship God, by placing our Love wholly upon him, and hating of every thing that is contrary to him.* We owe all our Affections unto God, by the Obligation of the first Command. This Love indeed is to be exerted in our Obedience to all the rest, but here is the root & rise of it. The very light of Nature challengeth our best Love to be set upon God. For it is certain, that Goodness in the Object, is that which attracts our closing Affections after it; and hence the more Goodness there is in it, the more intently ought they to be let out upon it; whereas God is the chief Good, he is Goodness itself, there is none Good as he is, *Mat. 19. 17. There is none good but one, that is God.* We therefore then glorify him, when we love him above all; and to love any thing more than him, or in Co-ordination with him, is to dishonour him; but when we use all proper Courtes to express and testify our endeared Respect to him, as the most amiable Being, we then Worship him. His Goodness therefore is offered as an Argument to excite us, *Psal. 107. 1. And 136. 1. O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.* And because Love to the Object, infers naturally an Hatred of whatsoever is contrary unto it, this also is a necessary ingredient of this Worship. Hence we have that Direction, *Psal. 97. 10. Ye that love the Lord, hate evil.* And that Profession, *Psal. 139. 21, 22. Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies*

NOW there are diverse things wherein we

are to shew forth this Love of him, that we may so glorify him.

1. *WE are to Love his Name.* It is promised, *Psal. 69. 36. The seed also of his servants shall inherit it; and they that love his name shall dwell therein.* Now God's Name is sometimes taken more largely, for all that whereby he discovers himself to us, and so it contains every particular now to be mentioned. Sometimes more limitedly, it points to his Divine Attributes, by which he declares who, or what manner of God he is. We ought then to contemplate these, such as are mentioned in, *Exod. 34. 6, 7. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.* And the Consideration of every one of them, should engage our Hearts to him, and we should take delight, in giving him the Honour of them. And God's Children may well thus love him for them, because he is all this to them, which is their Happiness, *Psal. 118. 1, 2.*

2. *WE are to Love his Word and Ordinances.* And this is a genuine improvement of the former, because in them he displays so much of his Perfection. By this the Psalmist proves his Sincerity or Uprightness in his Appeal to God, *Psal. 26. 8. Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.* And by his Preference of them before all other things, *Psal. 27. 4. In nothing doth God so communicate himself to his own, as in these Appointments of his; and if we love him, we shall love his Company, and so the means of having it.*

3. *WE are to Love his Law.* By this David approved his sincere Love of God, *Psal. 119. 97. O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.* And what a Value he had for it, *Psal. 19. 10. More to be desired are they then gold, yea, then much fine gold: sweeter also then honey, and the honeycomb.* And indeed, the Law is a discovery of God's Holiness and Justice, so that if we love him, we must love that, *Rom. 7. 12.* And we have David's Resolution, *Psal. 56. 10. In God will I praise his word: in the Lord will I praise his word.* Now there are three things to be considered in the Law, for all of which we are to love it: The Precepts enjoining Duty and forbidding Sin. And we are to express our Love by freely acknowledging the Goodness and Equity of them, *Psal. 119. 8. 33. 4. 119. 128.* The Promises made to Obedience, which are great and precious, to which some apply but now cited *Psal. 56. 10.* And in this regard he saith, *Psal. 19. 11. In keeping of them there is great reward.* And the Threatnings against Disobedience; these prejudice ungodly Men against his Law, but we are to love it for them too, because therein he manifests his Holiness, *Psal. 119. 119.*

4. *WE are to Love his Providences.* By these God discovers himself to us, and in every of them

them he is to be admired & adored. We are told, *Pfal. 145. 10. All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints shall bless thee.* And *9. 16.* And when we ascribe to him the Honour that is his due, from the Observation of all his doings in the World, we then Worship him. Thus we are exhorted, *Pfal. 66. 2, 3. Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious. Say unto God, how terrible art thou in thy works?* Hence that, *Pfal. 86. 9, 10. All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord, and shall glorify thy name. For thou art great and doest wondrous things; thou art God alone.* And *77. 13, 14.*

V. *WE are to Worship God by placing our whole Hope on him.* And indeed, if our Faith trust in him, our Hope will wait upon him. This belongs to natural Worship. If we acknowledge him to be our God, we shall shew it by a dependance on him for all, which necessarily infers an Expectation of all from him. Hence we have the Psalmist chiding himself for the contrary, and calling upon his Soul to the Exercise of this, *Pfal. 42. 5.* And again, *Pfal. 62. 5, 6.* And there are three things in which this Hope is mainly concerned to glorify God.

1. *THAT we heartily recommend the whole disposal of all our Affairs into his Hands.* Thus in, *Pfal. 10. 14. 31. 5.* We can trust him with them; we believe that he is our God, and that he knows what is best for us, and thereupon we make all over to him, assuring our selves that we shall be no losers by it. And this is from the Activity of Hope, but for which, we could never so do. And herein God is greatly glorified by us.

2. *THAT we expect all the good we want from him, and quiet our Souls in that Expectation.* We not only depend upon him, as the fountain of all Mercy and Good to us, but it silenceth all disquieting Turmoils in our Minds about it: we commend it to him, and now we are still, as, *1 Sam. 1. 18.* Let what will come, we believe that this God is our God, and we are confident in it, *Pfal. 27. begin.*

3. *IN this Expectation we comfort ourselves in waiting for him.* Let what Changes will come, be the face of Providence what God sees meet, let things look as black and dismal as may be supposed, yet we resolve we will look out and rejoyce in our Hope, *Hab. 3. 17, 18.* This David tells us that he did, *Pfal. 40. 1.* And the Church concluded upon it to be good for any so to do, *Lam. 3. 26.* And this belongs to natural Worship, for it flows from our acknowledging him, to be our God. And it is established upon,

1. *HIS Almighty Power, or his All-sufficiency.* *Gen. 17. 1.* We look upon God as able to do for us beyond our Conceptions, *Eph. 3. 20.* That there is nothing too hard for him to do for us, nor any Powers that are able to withstand and hinder him in so doing; and hence this prevents our being discouraged by any thing that lies in the way, *Zech. 4. 7.*

2. *HIS all Working Providence.* This estab-

lished the Churches Hope, *Pfal. 115. 3.* And it is confirmed by the Observation of the mighty Works which he hath already done, beyond which, there can be nothing needed, for our help and succour; all of which are food to Faith, by which Hope is strengthened and established, *Pfal. 74. 12, &c.*

3. *HIS Promise.* And here this Hope nourisheth it self; altho' it is satisfied by the Consideration of his Power and Providence. Faith takes God at his Word, and Hope hereupon grows confident, that having such a God freely engaged, he hath no need to fear or doubt, but that certainly he will be as good as his Word, *Pfal. 116. 10. I believed, therefore have I spoken.*

4. *HIS Fidelity.* Though his Power helps us to rely upon him as our God, yet his Truth establisheth us on the Promise. If he had not purposed, he would not have engaged himself, and he cannot repent, or alter his Word, *1 Thef. 5. 24.*

5. *HIS Wisdom.* Here also Hope is not a little confirmed. We acknowledge him the only wise God. Hence we believe, that he doth all by Counsel, and that satisfies us, *Pfal. 73. 24. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel.* This satisfies us, that his way is the best way, and that he knows it tho' we are in the dark about it, and that his time is the best time; and this stops our precipitancy, *Isai. 28. 16.*

VI. *WE are to Worship him, by Patience under all his Afflictive Dispensations towards us.* There is not only active, but also passive Obedience, due to God from his People, in the right carriage of themselves towards him, when they meet with Trials in this Life, of one kind or other, in which no small part of our Worship due to him, is to be discovered. It is recorded concerning *Job, Chap. 1. 20. Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped.* Now we cannot better glorify God under such Providences, than by a due exercise of Patience, *1 Per. 4. 14.* Now this Patience consists in a steady and cheerful holding on in the Service of God, notwithstanding the Trials which we encounter, which would discourage us. We neither murmur at God, nor tire in our Minds, but can say concerning our Afflictions, as the Church, *Pfal. 44. 17. All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant.* This also belongs to Natural Worship, and hath its Reason and Motive,

1. *FROM the Divine All-Efficiency.* We see and acknowledge God's Hand in all, and that satisfies us. *Pfal. 39. 6.* We tarry not at Instruments, but look on them as no more, and in his Hand; which Hand we adore, and answer all Temptations to impatience with that, *Job. 2. 10. What shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?*

2. *FROM the Sovereignty of God in his Governing of the World.* We not only confess his Efficiency, but also his Supremacy; not only

only that he doth it, but that he hath all Right and Authority to do as he sees good; that he can do no wrong; there is no injustice with him, Job 42. 2. *I know that thou canst do every thing.* And if he doth us no injury, we can have no reason to find fault with him.

3. *FROM his End or Design in Afflicting his People.* There is his Counsel in it, *Psal. 73. 24.* He hath promised that he will bring good to them out of all, *Rom. 8. 28.* They are no other but what he sees them to stand in need of, *1 Pet. 1. 6.* They are Chastisements of Sin, and therefore there is no reason to find fault with him for them, *Lam. 3. 39.* And they are not for our hurt but advantage, by taking away our Sin, *Isai. 27. 9.* And to produce in us happy fruits, *Heb. 12. 11.* And the Operation of them shall be very glorious, *2 Cor. 4. 17.*

USE. LET this serve to Convince us of, and Humble us for our short comings in our Obedience. We need look no further than this First Com-

mand, and consider the several Duties required of us by it, to lay us in the dust before God, and make us ashamed of our selves, and tell us, how unable we are to hold up our Heads in the Judgment, or plead, not Guilty. Let us not justify our selves then, but be driven to seek his Mercy and Forgiveness, through the Merits & Obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ; to say as he, *Psal. 130. 3, 4. If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities: O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee that tho' unawares be feared.* This should riv us to daily Repentance, and to seek of him his Grace, to strengthen and help us in our Work, that we may in Sincerity and Uprightness glorify him: And that knowing him to be both God and our God, we may Worship and Serve him as such, all the days of our Lives, and find our Acceptance, in and through his own Son,

[JULY 29. 1701.]

S E R M O N CLVII.