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T W O  
DISCOURSES  
CONCERNING THE  
HOLY SPIRIT  
AND HIS  
W O R K.

THE ONE  
OF THE SPIRIT AS A COMFORTER.  
THE OTHER,  
AS HE IS THE AUTHOR OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

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By the late Reverend JOHN OWEN, D. D.

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G L A S G O W:

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T H E  
  
P R E F A C E.

**T**HAT there are sundry great and eminent promises referring to New Testament times concerning the pouring out of the Spirit, none who is acquainted with the scriptures, and believes them, can doubt. By the performance of them a church hath been begotten and maintained in the world through all ages since the ascension of Christ, sometimes with greater light and spiritual lustre, and sometimes with less. It hath been one of the glories of the Protestant reformation, that it hath been accompanied with a very conspicuous and remarkable effusion of the Spirit: and indeed thereby there hath from heaven a seal been set, and a witness born unto that great work of God. In this unvaluable blessing we in this nation have had a rich and plentiful share; insomuch as it seems Satan and his ministers have been tormented and exasperated thereby: and thence it is come to pass,

that there have some risen up among us, who have manifested themselves to be not only despisers in heart, but virulent reproachers of the operations of the Spirit. God who knows how to bring good out of evil, did for holy and blessed ends of his own suffer those horrid blasphemies to be petulantly vented.

On this occasion it was, that this great, and learned, and holy person, the author of these Discourses, took up thoughts of writing concerning the blessed Spirit, and his whole oeconomy, as I understood from himself sundry years ago, discoursing with him concerning some books then newly published, full of contumely and contempt of the Holy Spirit and his operations. For as it was with Paul at Athens, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry; so was Dr. Owen's spirit stirred up in him, when he read the scoffs and blasphemies cast upon the Holy Spirit, and his grace, and gifts, and aids, in some late writers.

Had not Pelagius vented his corrupt opinions concerning the grace of God; it is like the church had never had the learned and excellent writings of Augustine in defence thereof. It appears from Bradwardin that the revival of Pelagianism in his days, stirred up his zealous and pious spirit to write that profound and elaborate book of his, *De Causa Dei*. Arminius, and the Jesuits endeavouring to plant the same weed again, produced the scholastic writings of Twiss and Ames, (not to mention foreign divines) for which we in this generation have abundant cause of enlarged thankfulness

unto the Father of lights. The occasion which the Holy Ghost laid hold on to carry forth Paul to write his Epistle to the Galatians, (wherein the doctrine of justification by faith is so fully cleared) was the bringing in among them of another gospel by corrupt teachers, after which many in those churches were soon drawn away. The obstinate adherence of many among the Jews to the Mosaical rites and observances, and the inclinations of others to apostatize from the New Testament worship and ordinances, was in like manner the occasion of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The light which shines, and is held out in those Epistles, the church of Christ could ill have wanted.

The like way and working of the wisdom of God, is to be seen and adored, in stirring up this learned and excellent person to communicate and leave unto the world that light touching the Spirit and his operations, which he had received by that Spirit from the sacred oracles of truth, the scriptures.

To what advantage and increase of light it is performed, is not for so incompetent a pen to say as writes this. Nevertheless, I doubt not but the discerning reader will observe such excellencies shining out in this, and other of this great author's writings, as do greatly commend them to the church of God, and will do so in after ages, however this corrupt and degenerate generation entertain them. They are not the crude, and hasty, and untimely abortions of a self-full, distempered spirit, much less the boilings over of

inward corruption and rottenness put into a fermentation ; but the mature, sedate, and seasonable issues of a rich magazine of learning, well digested with great exactness of judgment. There is in them a great light cast and reflected on, as well as derived from the holy scriptures, those inexhaustible mines of light in sacred things. They are not filled with vain, impertinent jangling, nor with a noise of multiplied futile distinctions, nor with novel and uncouth terms foreign to the things of God, as the manner of some writers is *ad nauseam usque*. But there is in them an happy and rare conjunction of firm solidity, enlightning clearness, and heart-searching spiritualness, evidencing themselves all along, and thereby approving and commending his writings to the judgment, conscience, spiritual taste and experience of all those who have any acquaintance with, and relish of the gospel.

On these, and such like accounts, the writings of this great and learned man, as also his ordinary sermons, if any of them shall be published, (as possibly some of them may) will be while the world stands an upbraiding and condemning of this generation, whose viciated and ill-affected eyes could not bear so great a light set up and shining on a candlestick, and which did therefore endeavour to put it under a bushel.

These two Discourses, with those formerly published, make up all that Dr. Owen perfected or designed on this subject of the Spirit, as the reader may perceive in the account which himself hath given in his prefaces to some of the former



pieces, published by himself in his lifetime. Not but that there are some other lucubrations of his on subjects nearly allied unto these, which possibly may be published hereafter; viz. one entitled, *The Evidences of the Faith of God's Elect*; and perhaps some others. What further he might have had in his thoughts to do, is known to him whom he served so industriously and so faithfully in his spirit in the gospel while he was here on earth, and with whom he now enjoys the reward of all his labours, and all his sufferings. For certain it is concerning Dr. Owen, that as God gave him very transcendent abilities, so he did therewithal give him a boundless enlargedness of heart, and unsatiabie desire to do service to Christ and his church: insomuch as he was thereby carried on, through great bodily weakness, languishing and pains, besides manifold other trials and discouragements, to bring forth out of his treasury (like a scribe well instructed unto the kingdom of heaven) many useful and excellent fruits of his studies, much beyond the expectation and hopes of those who saw how often and how long he was near unto the grave.

But while he was thus indefatigably and restlessly laying out for the service of Christ, in this and succeeding generations, those rich talents with which he was furnished, his Lord said unto him, *Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* No man ever yet, but Jesus Christ, was able to finish all that was in his heart to do for God. On the removal

of such accomplished and useful persons, I have sometimes relieved myself with this thought, that Christ lives in heaven still, and the blessed Spirit from whom the head and heart of this chosen vessel were so richly replenished, liveth still.

L O N D O N, }  
*October 27th, 1692.* }

NATH. MATHER.



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T H E  
H O L Y S P I R I T,  
AND HIS  
W O R K.

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C H A P. I.

*The Holy Ghost the Comforter of the church, by way of office. How he is the church's Advocate, John xiv. 16. 1 John ii. 1, 2. John xvi. 8, 9, 10, 11. opened.*

**T**HAT which remains to complete our discourses concerning the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, is the office and work that he hath undertaken for the consolation of the church. And,

Three things are to be considered with respect unto this head of the grace of the gospel: (1.) That the Holy Spirit is the Comforter of the church, by way of especial office. (2.) What is in that office, or wherein the discharge of it doth consist. (3.) What are the effects of it towards believers.

It must be granted, that there is some impropriety in that expression, *by way of office*. An office is not simply, nor it may be properly spoken of a divine person, who is absolutely so, and nothing else. But the like impropriety is to be found in most of the expressions which we use concerning God; for who can speak of him aright,

or as he ought. Only we have a safe rule whereby to express our conceptions, even what he speaks of himself. And he hath taught us to learn the work of the Holy Ghost towards us in this matter, by ascribing unto him those things which belong unto an office among men.

Four things are required unto the constitution of an office: (1.) An especial trust. (2.) An especial mission or commission. (3.) An especial name. (4.) An especial work. All these are required unto an office properly so called; and where they are complied withal by a voluntary susception in the person designed thereunto, an office is completely constituted. And we must enquire how these things, in a divine manner, do concur in the work of the Holy Spirit, as he is the Comforter of the church.

First, He is intrusted with this work, and of his own will hath taken it on himself. For, when our Saviour was leaving of the world, and had a full prospect of all the evils, troubles, dejections, and disconsolations which would befall his disciples, and knew, full well, that if they were left unto themselves, they would faint and perish under them, he gives them assurance, that the work of their consolation and supportment was left intrusted and committed unto the Holy Spirit, and that he would both take care about it, and perfect it accordingly.

The Lord Christ, when he left this world, was very far from laying aside his love unto and care of his disciples. He hath given us the highest assurance, that he continueth for ever the same care, the same love and grace towards us he had and exercised when he laid down his life for us. See Heb. iv. 14, 15, 16. chap. vii. 27. But inasmuch as there was a double work yet to be performed in our behalf, one towards God, and the other in ourselves, he hath taken a twofold way for the performance of it. That towards God he was to discharge immediately himself in his human nature: for other mediator between God and man there neither is,

nor can be any. This he doth by his intercession. Hence there was a necessity, that, as to his human nature, the heavens should receive him unto the time of the restitution of all things, as Acts iii. 21. There was so, both with respect unto himself and us.

Three things with respect unto himself, made the exaltation of his human nature in heaven to be necessary: For,

1. It was to be a pledge and token of God's acceptance of him, and approbation of what he had done in the world, John xvi. 7, 8. For what could more declare or evidence the content or delight of God in what he had done and suffered, than after he had been so ignominiously treated in the world, to receive him visibly, gloriously, and triumphantly into heaven. He was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, and, in the issue, received up into glory, 1 Tim. iii. 16, Herein God set the great seal of heaven unto his work of mediation, and the preaching of the gospel which ensued thereon. And a testimony hereunto was that which filled his enemies with rage and madness, Acts vii. 55, 56, 57. His resurrection confirmed his doctrine with undeniable efficacy; but his assumption into heaven testified unto his person, with an astonishing glory.

2. It was necessary with respect unto the human nature itself, that, after all its labours and sufferings, it might be crowned with honour and glory. He was to suffer and enter into his glory, Luke xxiv. 26. Some dispute whether Christ, in his human nature, merited any thing for himself or no; but not to inmix ourselves in the niceties of that enquiry, it is unquestionable that the highest glory was due to him upon his accomplishment of the work committed unto him in this world, which he therefore lays claim to accordingly, John xvii. 4, 5. It was so.

3. With respect unto the glorious administration of his kingdom: for, as his kingdom is not of this world, so it is not only over this world, or the whole creation

here below; the angels of glory, those principalities and powers above, are subject unto him, and belong unto his dominion, Eph. i. 21. Phil. ii. 9, 10. Among them attended with their ready service and obedience unto all his commands, doth he exercise the powers of his glorious kingdom. And they would but degrade him from his glory, without the least advantage unto themselves, who would have him forsake his high and glorious throne in heaven, to come and reign among them on the earth, unless they suppose themselves more meet attendants on his regal dignity than the angels themselves, who are mighty in strength and glory.

Secondly, The presence of the human nature of Christ in heaven, was necessary with respect unto us. The remainder of his work with God on our behalf, was to be carried on by intercession, Heb. vii. 26, 27. And whereas this intercession consisteth in the virtual representation of his oblation, or of himself as a Lamb slain in sacrifice, it could not be done without his continual appearance in the presence of God, Heb. ix. 24.

The other part of the work of Christ respects the church or believers, as its immediate object. So in particular doth his comforting and supporting of them. This is that work which, in a peculiar manner, is committed and intrusted unto the Holy Spirit, after the departure of the human nature of Christ into heaven.

But two things are to be observed concerning it. (1.) That whereas the whole work consisteth in the communication of spiritual light, grace and joy to the souls of believers, it was no less the immediate work of the Holy Ghost whilst the Lord Christ was upon the earth, than it is now he is absent in heaven; only, during the time of his conversation here below in the days of his flesh, his holy disciples looked on him as the only spring and foundation of all their consolation, their only support, guide, and protector, as they had just cause to do. They had yet no insight into the mystery of the dispensation of the Spirit, nor was he yet so given or pou-



red out, as to evidence himself and his operation unto their souls. Wherefore they looked on themselves as utterly undone, when their Lord and Master began to acquaint them with his leaving of them. No sooner did he tell them of it, but *sorrow filled their hearts*, John xvi. 6. Wherefore he immediately let them know, that this great work of relieving them from all their sorrows and fears, of dispelling their disconsolations, and supporting them under their trouble, was committed to the Holy Ghost, and would by him be performed in so eminent a manner, as that his departure from them would be unto their advantage, ver. 7. Wherefore the Holy Spirit did not then first begin really and effectually to be the Comforter of believers upon the departure of Christ from his disciples, but he is then first promised so to be upon a double account: (1.) Of the full declaration and manifestation of it. So things are often said in the scripture then to be, when they do appear and are made manifest. An eminent instance hereof we have in this case, John vii. 38, 39. The disciples had hitherto looked for all immediately from Christ in the flesh, the dispensation of the Spirit being hid from them. But now this also was to be manifested unto them. Hence the apostle affirms, that *though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth we know him no more*, 2 Cor. i. 16, that is, so as to look for grace and consolation immediately from him in the flesh, as it is evident the apostles did, before they were instructed in this unknown office of the Holy Ghost. (2.) Of the full exhibition and eminent communication of him unto this end. This in every kind was reserved for the exaltation of Christ, when he received the promise of the Spirit from the Father, and poured it out upon his disciples.

2. The Lord Christ doth not hereby cease to be the Comforter of his church. For what he doth by his Spirit, he doth by himself. He is with us unto the end of the world by his Spirit being with us, and he dwelleth in us by the Spirit dwelling in us; and whatever else is done

by the Spirit, is done by him. And it is so upon a three-fold account: For, (1.) The Lord Christ, as Mediator, is God and man in one person, and the divine nature is to be considered in all his mediatory operations: for he who worketh them is God, and he worketh them all as God-man, whence they are theandrical. And this is proposed unto us in the greatest acts of his humiliation, which the divine nature in itself is not formally capable of. So God redeemed his church with his own blood, Acts xx. 28. *Inasmuch as he who was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, the death of the cross, Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8.* Now, in this respect, the Lord Christ, and the Holy Spirit, are one in nature, essence, will, and power. As he said of the Father, *I and my Father are one, John x. 30.* So it is with the Spirit, he and the Spirit are one. Hence all the works of the Holy Spirit are his also; as his works were the works of the Father, and the works of the Father were his: all the operations of the holy Trinity, as to things external unto their divine subsistence, being individed. So is the work of the Holy Spirit in the consolation of the church his work also.

(2.) Because the Holy Spirit, in this condescension unto office, acts for Christ, and in his name. So the Son acted for and in name of the Father, where he every where ascribed what he did unto the Father in a peculiar manner. *The word, saith he, which you hear, is not mine, but the Father's which sent me, John xiv. 24.* It is his originally and eminently, because as spoken by the Lord Christ, he was said by him to speak it. So are those acts of the Spirit, whereby he comforteth believers, the acts of Christ, because the Spirit speaketh and acteth for him, and in his name.

(3.) All those things, those acts of light, grace, and mercy, whereby the souls of the disciples of Christ are comforted by the Holy Ghost, are the things of Christ, that is, especial fruits of his mediation. So speaketh our

Saviour himself of him and his work: *He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shew it unto you,* John xvi. 14. All that consolation, peace, and joy which he communicates unto believers; yea, all that he doth in his whole work towards the elect, is but the effectual communication of the fruits of the mediation of Christ unto them. And this is the first thing that constitutes the office of the Comforter; this work is committed and intrusted unto him in an especial manner, which, in the infinite condescension of his own will, he takes upon him.

Secondly, It farther evinceth the nature of an office, in that he is said to be sent unto the work. And mission always includes commission. He who is sent is intrusted and empowered as unto what he is sent about. See Psal. civ. 30. John xiv. 26. chap. xv. 26. chap. xvi. 7. The nature of this sending of the Spirit, and how it is spoken of him in general, hath been considered before in our declaration of his general adjuncts, or what is affirmed of him in the scripture, and may not here again be insisted on. It is now mentioned only as an evidence to prove, that in this work of his towards us, he hath taken that on him which hath the nature of an office. For that is his office to perform which he is sent unto, and he will not fail in the discharge of it. And it is in itself a great principle of consolation unto all true believers, an effectual means of their supportment and refreshment, to consider, that not only is the Holy Ghost their Comforter, but also that he is sent of the Father and the Son, so to be. Nor can there be a more uncontrollable evidence of the care of Jesus Christ over his church, and towards his disciples in all their sorrows and sufferings, than this is, that he sends the Holy Ghost to be their Comforter.

Thirdly, He hath an especial name given him, expressing and declaring his office. When the Son of God was to be incarnate, and born in the world, he had an especial name given him; *He was called Jesus.* Now, although there was a signification in this name of the work he was to do; for he was called Jesus, *because he was to*



save his people from their sins, Matth. i. 21. yet was it also that proper name whereby he was to be distinguished from other persons. So the Holy Spirit hath no other name but that of the Holy Spirit, which how it is characteristical of the third person in the holy Trinity, hath been before declared. But, as both the names of Jesus and of Christ, though neither of them is the name of an office, as one hath dreamed of late; yet have respect unto the work which he had to do, and the office which he was to undergo, without which he could not have rightly been so called: So hath the Holy Ghost a name given unto him, which is not distinctive with respect unto his personality, but denominative with respect unto his work. And this is *ὁ παρακλητικός*.

This name is used only by the apostle John, and that in his gospel, *only from the mouth of Christ*, chap. xiv. ver. 16, 26. chap. xv. ver. 26. chap. xvi. ver. 7. And once he useth it himself, applying it unto Christ, 1 John ii. 1. where we render it an Advocate.

The Syriack interpreter retains the name *מַטְא פְּרַהְלוּ*, *Paracleta*, not as some imagine, from the use of that word before among the Jews, which cannot be proved. Nor is it likely that our Saviour made use of a Greek word barbarously corrupted *ἡμπακλή*, was the word he employed to this purpose. But looking on it a proper name of the Spirit with respect unto his office, he would not translate it.

As this word is applied unto Christ, which it is in that one place of 1 John ii. 1. it respects his intercession, and gives us light into the nature of it. That it is his intercession which the apostle intends, is evident from its relation unto his being our propitiation. For the oblation of Christ on the earth, is the foundation of his intercession in heaven. And he doth therein undertake our patronage, as our Advocate, to plead our cause, and in an especial manner to keep off evil from us. For although the intercession of Christ in general respects the procurement of all grace and mercy for us, every thing where-

by we may be *saved unto the utmost*, Heb. vii. 25, 26. yet his intercession for us, as an Advocate, respects sin only, and the evil consequents of it. For so is he in this place said to be our Advocate, and in this place alone is he said to be, only with respect unto sin: *If any man sin, we have an Advocate*. Wherefore his being so, doth in particular respect that part of his intercession, wherein he undertakes our defence and protection when accused of sin. For Satan is ὁ κατηγοροῦς, the accuser, Rev. xii. 10. And when he accuseth believers for sin, Christ is their παρακλητός, their patron and advocate. For, according unto the duty of a patron or advocate in criminal causes, partly he sheweth wherein the accusation is false, and aggravated about the truth, or proceeds upon mistakes; partly, that the crimes charged have not that malice in them as is pretended; and principally in pleading his propitiation for them, that so far as they are really guilty, they may be graciously discharged.

For this name is applied unto the Holy Spirit. Some translate it a Comforter, some an Advocate; and some retain the Greek word *Paraclete*. It may be best interpreted from the nature of the work assigned unto him under that name. Some would confine the whole work intended under this name unto his teaching, which he is principally promised for: for the matter and manner of his teaching, what he teacheth, and the way how he doth it, is, they say, the ground of all consolation unto the church. And there may be something in this interpretation of the word, taking teaching in a large sense, for all internal, divine, spiritual operations. So are we said to be taught of God when faith is wrought in us, and we are enabled to come unto Christ thereby. And all our consolations are from such internal, divine operations. But take teaching properly, and we shall see that it is but one distinct act of the work of the Holy Ghost, as here promised, among many.

But, 2dly, The work of a Comforter is principally ascribed unto him: For, (1.) That he is principally un-

der this name intended as a Comforter, is evident from the whole context and the occasion of the promise. It was with respect unto the troubles and sorrows of his disciples, with their relief therein, that he is promised, under this name, by our Saviour, *I will not, saith he, leave you orphans*, chap. xiv. 18. Though I go away from you, yet I will not leave you in a disconsolate condition. How shall that be prevented in his absence, who was the life and spring of all their comforts? Saith he, *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you ἄλλον παρακλητον*, ver. 16. that is, *another to be your Comforter*. So he renews again his promise of sending him under this name, because *sorrow had filled their hearts* upon the apprehension of his departure, chap. xvi. 7, 8. Wherefore he is principally considered as a Comforter: And, as we shall see further afterwards, this is his principal work, most suited unto his nature, as he is the Spirit of peace, love, and joy. For he, who is the eternal, essential love of the divine being, as existing in the distinct persons of the Trinity, is most meet to communicate a sense of divine love with delight and joy unto the souls of believers. Hereby he sets up the kingdom of God in them, which is *righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, Rom. xv. 17. And in nothing doth he so evidence his presence in the hearts and spirits of any, as by the disposal of them unto spiritual love and joy, for *shedding abroad the love of God in our hearts*, as Rom. v. 5. He produceth a principle and frame of divine love in our souls, and fills us with joy unspeakable and full of glory. The attribution therefore of this name unto him, the Comforter, evidenceth that he performs this work in the way of an office.

Neither, (2.) Is the signification of an advocate to be omitted, seeing what he doth as such tendeth also to the consolation of the church. And we must first observe, that the Holy Spirit is not our Advocate with God. This belongs alone unto Jesus Christ, and is a part of his office. He is said indeed to *make intercession with*

*groans that cannot be uttered*, Rom. viii. 26. But this he doth not immediately, nor in his own person. He no otherwise maketh intercession for us, but by enabling us to make intercession according unto the mind of God. For to make intercession formally is utterly inconsistent with the divine nature, and his person, who hath no other nature but that which is divine. He is therefore incapable of being our Advocate with God: The Lord Christ is so alone, and that on the account of his precedent propitiation made for us. But he is an Advocate for the church, in, with, and against the world. Such an advocate is one that undertaketh the protection and defence of another, as to any cause wherein he is engaged. The cause wherein the disciples of Christ are engaged in and against the world, is the *truth of the gospel, the power and kingdom of their Lord and Master*. This they testify unto; this is opposed by the world, and this under various forms, appearances, and pretences, is that which they suffer reproaches and persecutions for in every generation. In this cause the Holy Spirit is their Advocate, justifying Jesus Christ and the gospel against the world.

And this he doth three ways: (1.) By suggesting unto, and furnishing the witnesses of Christ with pleas and arguments to the conviction of gainfayers. So it is promised that he should do, Matth. x. 18, 19, 20. *And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.* They were to be given up, that is, delivered up as malefactors unto kings and rulers for their faith in Christ, and the testimony they gave unto him. In this condition the best of men are apt to be solicitous about their answers, and the plea they are to make in the defence of themselves and their cause. Our Saviour therefore gives them encouragement not



only from the truth and goodness of their cause, but also from the ability they should have in pleading for it unto the conviction or confusion of their adversaries. And this he tells them should come to pass not by any power or faculty in themselves, but by the aid and supply they should receive from this Advocate, who in them would speak by them. This was that mouth and wisdom which he promised unto them, which all their adversaries should not be able to gainsay or resist, Luke xxi. 15. A present supply of courage, boldness, and liberty of speech above and beyond their natural temper and abilities, immediately upon their receiving of the Holy Ghost. And their very enemies saw the effects of it unto their astonishment. Upon the plea they made before the council at Jerusalem, it is said, that *when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were ignorant and unlearned men, they marvelled*, Acts iv. 13. They saw their outward condition, that they were poor and of the meanest of the people, yet carried it with courage and boldness before this great Sanhedrim, with whose authority and unusual appearance in grandeur, all persons of that sort were wont to be abashed and tremble at them. They found them ignorant and unlearned in that skill and learning which the world admired, yet plead their cause unto their confusion. They could not therefore but discern and acknowledge that there was a divine power present with them, which acted them above themselves, their state, their natural or acquired abilities. This was the work of this Advocate in them who had undertaken the defence of their cause. So when Paul pleaded the same cause before Agrippa and Felix, one of them confessed his conviction, and the other trembled in his judgment-seat.

Neither hath he been wanting unto the defence of the same cause in the same manner in succeeding generations. All the story of the church is filled with instances of persons, mean in their outward condition, timorous by nature, and unaccustomed unto dangers, un-

learned and low in their natural abilities, who, in the face of rulers and potentates, in the sight of prisons, tortures, fires provided for their destruction, have pleaded the cause of the gospel with courage and success, unto the astonishment and confusion of their adversaries. Neither shall any disciple of Christ, in the same case, want the like assistance, in some due measure and proportion, who expects it from him in a way of believing, and depends upon it. Examples we have hereof every day in persons acted above their own natural temper and abilities unto their own admiration. For being conscious unto themselves of their own fears, despondencies, and disabilities, it is a surprisal unto them, to find how all their fears have disappeared, and their minds have been enlarged when they have been called unto trial for their testimony unto the gospel. We are in such cases to make use of any reason, skill, wisdom, or ability of speech which we have, or other honest and advantageous circumstances which present themselves unto us, as the apostle Paul did on all occasions. But our dependence is to be solely on the presence and supplies of our blessed Advocate, who will not suffer us to be utterly defective in what is necessary unto the defence and justification of our cause.

(2.) He is the Advocate for Christ, the church, and the gospel, in and by his communication of spiritual gifts, both extraordinary and ordinary, unto them that do believe. For these are things at least in their effects visible unto the world. Where men are not utterly blinded by prejudice, love of sin, and of the world, they cannot but discern somewhat of a divine power in these supernatural gifts. Wherefore they openly testify unto the divine approbation of the gospel, and the faith that is in Christ Jesus. So the apostle confirms the truths that he had preached, by this argument, that wherewith and thereby, or in the confirmation of it, the Spirit as unto the communication of gifts was received, Gal. iii. 2. And herein is he the church's Advocate, justifying their

cause openly and visibly by this dispensation of his power towards them and in their behalf. But because we have treated separately and at large of the nature and use of these spiritual gifts, I shall not here farther insist on the consideration of them.

(3.) By internal efficacy in the dispensation of the word. Herein also is he the Advocate to the church against the world, as is declared, John xvi. 8, 9, 10, 11. *For when he is come he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not on me. Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more. Of judgment, because the Prince of this world is judged.* That which is ascribed unto him with respect unto the world, is expressed by the word ἐλεγεῖν: He shall reprove or convince: ἐλεγχω in the scripture is used variously. Sometimes it is to manifest, or bring forth unto light, Eph. v. 13. *τα δε παντα ἐλεγχονται ὑπο φωτος φαινηται.* For all things that are reprov'd or discovered, are made manifest by the light. And it hath the same sense, John iii. 20. Sometimes it is to rebuke and reprove, 1 Tim. v. 20. *τις ἀμαρτανιτας ὅστις πειται ἐλεγει.* Those that sin rebuke before all. So also, Rev. iii. 19. Titus i. 13. Sometimes it is so to convince as in that, to stop the mouth of an adversary, that he shall have nothing to answer or reply, John viii. 9. *ὑπο της συνειδησεως ἐλεγχομεναι.* Being convicted by their own consciences, so as not having a word to reply, they deserted their cause. So Titus i. 9. *τις ἀτιλεγοιτας ἐλεγειν,* *To convince gainsayers,* is explained, ver. 11. by ἐπισομιζειν, to stop their mouth, namely, by the convincing evidence of truth. Ἐλεγχεις is an uncontrollable evidence, or an evident argument, Heb. xi. 1. Wherefore ἐλεγειν here, is by undeniable argument and evidence so to convince the world, or the adversaries of Christ and the gospel, as that they shall have nothing to reply. This is the work and duty of an advocate, who will absolutely vindicate his client when his cause will bear it.

And the effect hereof is twofold. For all persons up-



on such an overpowering conviction take one of these two ways: (1.) They yield unto the truth and embrace it, as finding no ground to stand upon its refusal. Or, (2.) They fly out into desperate rage and madness, as being obstinate in their hatred against the truth, and destitute of all reason to oppose it. An instance of the former way we have in those Jews, unto whom Peter preached on the day of Pentecost. Reproving and convincing of them beyond all contradiction, *they were pricked in their hearts, and cried out, men and brethren, what shall we do?* And therewithal came over unto the faith, Acts ii. 37, 41. Of the latter we have many instances in the dealings of our Saviour with that people: for when he had at any time convinced them, and stopped their mouths as to the cause in hand, they called him Beelzebub, cried out that he had a devil, took up stones to throw at him, and conspired his death, with all demonstration of desperate rage and madness, John viii. 48, 58. chap. x. 30, 31, 39. So it was in the case of Stephen, and the testimony he gave unto Christ, Acts vii. 56, 57, 58. and with Paul, Acts xxii. 22, 23. an instance of bestial rage not to be paralleled in any other case; but in this it hath often fallen out in the world. And the same effects this work of the Holy Ghost, as the Advocate of the church ever had, and still hath upon the world. Many being convinced by him in the dispensation of the word, are really humbled and converted unto the faith. So God adds daily to the church such as shall be saved. But the generality of the world are enraged by the same work against Christ, the gospel, and those by whom it is dispensed. Whilst the word is preached in a formal manner, the world is well enough contented that it should have a quiet passage among them. But wherever the Holy Ghost puts forth a convincing efficacy in the dispensation of it, the world is enraged by it; which is no less an evidence of the power of their conviction, than the other is of a better success.

The subject-matter concerning which the Holy Ghost

manageth his plea by the word against the world, as the Advocate of the church, is referred unto the three heads of sin, righteousness, and judgment, ver. 8. the especial nature of them being declared, ver. 9, 10, 11.

1. What sin it is in particular that the Holy Spirit shall so plead with the world about, and convince them of, is declared, ver. 9. *Of sin, because they believe not in me.* There are many sins whereof men may be convinced by the light of nature, Rom. ii. 14, 15. more that they are reproved for by the letter of the law. And it is the work of the Spirit also in general, to make these convictions effectual. But these belong not unto the cause which he hath to plead for the church against the world; nor is that such as any can be brought unto conviction about by the light of nature, or sentence of the law; but it is the work of the Spirit alone by the gospel. And this, in the first place, is unbelief, particularly not believing in Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, the promised Messiah and Saviour of the world. This he testified concerning himself, this his works evinced him to be, and this both Moses and the prophets bare witness unto: hereon he tells the Jews, that if they believed not that he was he, that is, the Son of God, the Messiah and Saviour of the world, *they should die in their sins*, John viii. 5, 21, 24. But in this unbelief, in this rejection of Christ, the Jews and the rest of the world justified themselves, and not only so, but despised and persecuted them who believed in him. This was the fundamental difference between believers and the world, the head of that cause wherein they were rejected by it as foolish, and condemned as impious. And herein was the Holy Ghost their Advocate: for he did by such undeniable evidences, arguments, and testimonies, convince the world of the truth and glory of Christ, and of the sin of unbelief, that they were every where either converted or enraged thereby. So some of them, upon this conviction, *gladly received the word, and were baptized*, Acts ii. 41. Others, upon the preaching of the same truth by the apostles; *were cut to the heart,*

*and took counsel to slay them*, chap. v. 33. In this work he still continueth. And it is an act of the same kind whereby he yet in particular convinceth any of the sin of unbelief, which cannot be done but by the effectual, internal operation of his power.

2. He thus convinceth the world of righteousness, ver. 10. *Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more.* Both the personal righteousness of Christ, and the righteousness of his office, are intended. For concerning both these the church hath a contest with the world, and they belong unto that cause wherein the Holy Spirit is their Advocate. Christ was looked on by the world as an evil doer, accused to be a glutton, a wine-bibber, a seditious person, a seducer, a blasphemer, a malefactor in every kind; whence his disciples were both despised and destroyed for believing in such an one. And it is not to be declared how they were scorned and reproached, and what they suffered on this account. In the mean time they pleaded and gave testimony unto his righteousness, that he did no sin, nor was guile found in his mouth, that he fulfilled all righteousness, and that he was the holy one of God. And herein was the Holy Ghost their Advocate, convincing the world principally by this argument, that after all he did and suffered in this world, as the highest evidence imaginable of God's approbation of him, and what he did, that he was gone to the Father, or assumed up into glory. The poor blind man, whose eyes were opened by him, pleaded this as a forcible argument against the Jews, that he was no sinner, in that God heard him, so as that he had opened his eyes; whose evidence and conviction they could not bear, but it turned them into rage and madness, John ix. 30, 31, 32, 33, 34. How much more glorious and effectual must this evidence needs be of his righteousness and holiness, and God's approbation of him, that after all he did in this world, he went unto his Father, and was taken up into glory. For such is the meaning of those words, *Ye shall see me no more*, that



is, there shall be an end put unto my state of humiliation, and of my converse with you in this world, because I am to enter into my glory. That the Lord Christ then went unto his Father, that he was so gloriously exalted, undeniable testimony was given by the Holy Ghost unto the conviction of the world. So this argument is pleaded by Peter, Acts ii. 33. This is enough to stop the mouths of all the world in this cause, that he sent the Holy Ghost from the Father to communicate spiritual gifts of all sorts unto his disciples. And there could be no higher evidence of his acceptance, power, and glory with him. And the same testimony he still continueth in the communication of ordinary gifts in the ministry of the gospel. Respect also may be had (which sense I would not exclude) unto the righteousness of his office. There ever was a great contest about the righteousness of the world. This the Gentiles looked after by the light of nature, and the Jews by the works of the law. In this state the Lord Christ is proposed as the Lord our righteousness, as he who was to bring in, and had brought in, everlasting righteousness, Dan. ix. 24. being *the end of the law for righteousness unto all that believe*, Rom. x. 4. This the Gentiles rejected as folly, Christ crucified was *foolishness unto them*, and to the Jews it was a *stumbling-block*, as that which everted the whole law: and, generally, they all concluded, that he could not save himself; and therefore it was not probable that others should be saved by him. But herein also is the Holy Spirit the Advocate of the church. For in the dispensation of the word, he so convinceth men of an impossibility for them to attain a righteousness of their own, as that they must either submit to the righteousness of God in Christ, or die in their sins.

3. He convinceth the world of judgment, because the Prince of this world is judged. Christ himself was judged and condemned by the world. In that judgment, Satan, the grand adversary of mankind, had the principal hand; for it was effected in the hour, and under the

power of darkness. And no doubt but he hoped that he had carried his cause, when he had prevailed to have the Lord Christ publicly judged and condemned. And this judgment the world sought by all means to justify and make good. But the whole of it is called over again by the Holy Ghost, pleading in the cause, and for the faith of the church. And he doth it so effectually, as that the judgment is turned on Satan himself. Judgment with unavoidable conviction passed on all that superstition, idolatry, and wickedness which he had filled the world withal. And whereas he had born himself under various masks, shades, and pretences, to be the god of this world, the supreme ruler over all, and accordingly was worshipped all the world over, he is now by the gospel laid open and manifested to be an accursed apostate, a murderer, and the great enemy of mankind.

Wherefore, taking the name *Paracletus* in this sense, for an Advocate, it is proper unto the Holy Ghost in some part of his work in and towards the church. And whensoever we are called to bear witness unto Christ and the gospel, we abandon our strength, and betray our cause, if we do not use all means appointed of God unto that end, to engage him in our assistance.

But it is as a Comforter that he is chiefly promised unto us, and as such is he expressed unto the church by this name.

Fourthly, That he hath a peculiar work committed unto him suitable unto this mission, commission, and name, is that which will appear in the declaration of the particulars wherein it doth consist. For the present, we only assert, in general, that his work it is to support, cherish, relieve, and comfort the church in all trials and distresses. And this is all that we intend, when we say that it is his office so to do.

## C H A P. II.

*General adjuncts or properties of the office of a Comforter,  
as exercised by the Holy Spirit.*

**T**O evidence yet further the nature of this office and work, we may consider and enquire into the general adjuncts of it as exercised by the Holy Spirit. And they are four:

First, Infinite condescension. This is among those mysteries of the divine dispensation which we may admire, but cannot comprehend. And it is the property of faith alone to act and live upon incomprehensible objects. What reason cannot comprehend, it will neglect as that which it hath no concernment in, nor can have benefit by. Faith is most satisfied and cherished with what is infinite and inconceivable, as resting absolutely in divine revelation. Such is this condescension of the Holy Ghost. He is by nature over all, God blessed for ever. And it is a condescension in the divine excellency to concern itself in a particular manner, in any creature whatever. God humbleth himself to behold the things that are done in heaven and earth, Psal. cxiii. 5, 6. How much more doth he so in submitting himself unto the discharge of an office in the behalf of poor worms here below?

This, I confess, is most astonishing, and attended with the most incomprehensible rays of divine wisdom and goodness in the condescension of the Son. For he carried the term of it unto the lowest and most abject condition that a rational, intelligent nature is capable of. So is it represented by the apostle, Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8. For he not only took our nature into personal union with himself, but became in it, in his outward condition as a ser-

vant, yea, as a worm and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of the people, and became subject to death, the ignominious, shameful death of the cross. Hence this dispensation of God was filled up with infinite wisdom, goodness, and grace. How this exinanition of the Son of God was compensated with the glory that did ensue, we shall rejoice in the contemplation of unto all eternity. And then shall the character of all divine excellencies be more gloriously conspicuous on this condescension of the Son of God, than ever they were on the works of the whole creation, when this goodly fabric of heaven and earth was brought, by divine power and wisdom, through darkness and confusion out of nothing.

The condescension of the Holy Spirit unto his work and office is not indeed of the same kind, as to the *terminus ad quem*, or the object of it. He assumes not our nature, he exposeth not himself to the injuries of an outward state and condition. But yet it is such as is more to be the object of our faith in adoration, than of our reason in disquisition. Consider the thing in itself, how one person in the holy Trinity, subsisting in the unity of the same divine nature, should undertake to execute the love and grace of the other persons, and in their names, what do we understand of it? This holy oeconomy in the distinct and subordinate actings of the divine persons in these external works, is known only unto, is understood only by themselves. Our wisdom it is to acquiesce in express divine revelation: nor have they scarcely more dangerously erred by whom these things are denied, than those have done, who by a proud and conceited subtilty of mind, pretend unto a conception of them, which they express in words and terms, as they say, precise and accurate, indeed foolish and curious, whether of other mens coining or their own finding out. Faith keeps the soul at an holy distance from these infinite depths of the divine wisdom, where it profits more by reverence and holy fear, than any can do by their utmost attempt to draw



high unto that inaccessible light wherein these glories of the divine nature do dwell.

But we may more steadily consider this condescension with respect unto its object; the Holy Spirit thereby becomes a Comforter unto us poor miserable worms of the earth. And what heart can conceive the glory of this grace? what tongue can express it? Especially will its eminency appear, if we consider the ways and means whereby he doth so comfort us, and the opposition from us which he meets withal therein, whereof we must treat afterwards.

Secondly, Unspeakable love accompanieth the susception and discharge of this office; and that working by tenderness and compassion. The Holy Spirit is said to be the divine, eternal, mutual love of the Father and the Son. And although I know that much wariness is to be used in the declaration of those mysteries, nor are expressions concerning them to be ventured on not warranted by the letter of the scripture, yet I judge, that this notion doth excellently express, if not the distinct manner of subsistence, yet the mutual, internal operation of the persons of the blessed Trinity. For we have no term for, nor notion of that ineffable complacence and eternal rest which is therein, beyond this of love. Hence it is said that God is love, 1 John iv. 8, 16. It doth not seem to be an essential property of the nature of God only, that the apostle doth intend. For it is proposed unto us as a motive unto mutual love among ourselves: and this consists not simply in the habit or affection of love, but in the actings of it in all its fruits and duties. For so is God love, as that the internal actings of the holy persons which are in and by the Spirit, are all the ineffable actings of love, wherein the nature of the Holy Spirit is expressed unto us. The apostle prays for the presence of the Spirit with the Corinthians, under the name of the God of love and peace, 2 Epist. xiii. 11. And the communication of the whole love of

God unto us is committed unto the Spirit, for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us, Rom. v. And hence the same apostle distinctly mentioneth the love of the Spirit, conjoining it with all the effects of the mediation of Christ, Rom. xv. 30. *I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ his sake, and for the love of the Spirit: I do so on the account of the respect you have unto Christ, and all that he hath done for you, which is a motive irresistible unto believers. I do it also for the love of the Spirit; all that love which he acts, and communicates unto you. Wherefore in all the actings of the Holy Ghost towards us, and especially in this of his susception of an office in the behalf of the church, which is the foundation of them all, his love is principally to be considered, and that he chuseth this way of acting and working towards us to express his peculiar, his personal character, as he is the eternal love of the Father and the Son. And among all his actings towards us, which are all acts of love, this is most conspicuous in those wherein he is a Comforter.*

Wherefore, because this is of great use unto us, as that which ought to have, and which will have, if duly apprehended, a great influence on our faith and obedience, and is moreover the spring of all the consolations we receive by and from him, we shall give a little evidence unto it, namely, that the love of the Spirit is principally to be considered in this office, and the discharge of it. For whatever good we receive from any one, whatever benefit or present relief we have thereby, we can receive no comfort or consolation in it, unless we are persuaded that it proceeds from love; and what doth so, be it never so small, hath refreshment and satisfaction in it unto every ingenious nature. It is love alone that is the salt of every kindness or benefit, and which takes out of it every thing that may be noxious or hurtful. Without an apprehension hereof, and satisfaction herein, multiplied beneficial effects produce no internal satisfac-

tion in them that do receive them, nor put any real engagement on their minds, Prov. xxiii. 6, 7, 8. It is therefore of concernment unto us to secure this ground of all our consolation; in the full assurance of faith, that there was infinite love in the susception of this office by the Holy Ghost. And it is evident that so it was:

1. From the nature of the work itself. For the consolation or comforting of any who stand in need thereof, is an immediate effect of love, with its inseparable properties of pity and compassion. Especially it must be so where no advantage redounds to the Comforter, but the whole of what is done respects entirely the good and relief of them that are comforted. For what other affection of mind can be the principle hereof from whence it may proceed? Persons may be relieved under oppression by justice, under want by bounty; but to comfort and refresh the minds of any, is a peculiar act of sincere love and compassion: So therefore must this work of the Holy Ghost be esteemed to be. I do not intend only that his love is eminent and discernable in it, but that it proceeds solely from love. And without a faith hereof we cannot have the benefit of this divine dispensation, nor will any comforts that we receive be firm or stable. But when this is once graciously fixed in our minds, that there is not one drop of comfort or spiritual refreshment administered by the Holy Ghost, but that it proceeds from his infinite love; then are they disposed into that frame which is needful to comply with him in his operations. And, in particular, all the acts wherein the discharge of this office doth consist, are all of them acts of the highest love, of that which is infinite, as we shall see in the consideration of them.

2. The manner of the performance of this work is so expressed, as to evince and expressly demonstrate that it is a work of love. So is it declared where he is promised unto the church for this work, Isa. lxvi. 13. *As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.* He whom his mother com-

forteth, is supposed to be in some kind of distress: nor indeed is there any, of any kind that may befall a child, whose mother is kind and tender, but she will be ready to administer unto him all the consolation that she is able. And how or in what manner will such a mother discharge this duty, it is better conceived than it can be expressed. We are not in things natural able to take in a conception of greater love, care, and tenderness than is in a tender mother, who comforts her children in distress. And hereby doth the prophet graphically represent unto our minds the manner whereby the Holy Ghost dischargeth this office towards us. Neither can a child contract greater guilt, or manifest a more depraved habit of mind, than to be regardless of the affections of a mother endeavouring its consolation. Such children may sometimes, thro' the bitterness of their spirits, by their pains and distempers, be surpris'd into frowardness, and a present regardlessness of the mother's kindness and compassion, which they know full well how to bear withal. But if they continue to have no sense of it, if it make no impression upon them, they are of a profligate constitution. And so it may be sometimes with believers; they may, by surprisals into spiritual frowardness, by weakness, by unaccountable despondencies, be regardless of divine influences of consolation. But all these things the great Comforter will bear with and overcome. See Isa. lvii. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. *For thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: For the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made. For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him, and to his mourners. I create the fruit of the lips;*



*peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord, and I will heal him.* Where persons are under sorrows and disconsolations upon the account of pains and sickness, or the like, in a design of comfort towards them, it will yet be needful sometimes to make use of means and remedies that may be painful and vexatious. And these may be apt to irritate and provoke poor, wayward patients. Yet is not a mother discouraged hereby, but proceeds on in her way till the cure be effected, and consolation administered. So doth God, by his Spirit, deal with his church. His design is to revive the Spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones, ver. 15. and he gives this reason of it, namely, that if he should not act in infinite love and condescension towards them, but deal with them after their deservings, they would utterly be consumed, the spirit would fail before him, and the souls which he had made, ver. 16. However, in the pursuit of this work he must use some sharp remedies that were needful for the curing of their distempers and their spiritual recovery. Because of their iniquity, the iniquity of their covetousness, which was the principal disease they laboured under, he was wroth, and smote them, and hid his face from them, because his so doing was necessary to their cure, ver. 17. And how do they behave themselves under this dealing of God with them? They grow peevish and froward under his hand, chusing rather to continue in their disease, than to be thus healed by him, *they went on frowardly in the way of their hearts,* ver. 17. How therefore doth this holy Comforter now deal with them? Doth he give them up unto their frowardness? Doth he leave and forsake them under their distemper? No, a tender mother will not so deal with her children. He managetb his work with that infinite love, tenderness, and compassion, as that he will overcome all their frowardness, and cease not until he hath effectually administered consolation unto them, ver. 18. *I have seen,* saith he, *all these his ways,* all his frowardness and mis-

carriages, and yet, saith he, *I will heal him*; I will not for all this be diverted from my work and the pursuit of my design; before I have done, I will lead him into a right frame, and restore comforts unto him. And that there may be no failure herein, I will do it by a creating act of power, ver. 19. *I create the fruit of the lips, peace, peace.* This is the method of the Holy Ghost in administering consolation unto the church, openly evidencing that love and compassion from whence it doth proceed. And without this method should no one soul be ever spiritually refreshed under its dejections. For we are apt to behave ourselves frowardly more or less under the work of the Holy Ghost towards us. Infinite love and compassion alone working by patience and long-suffering can carry it on unto perfection. But if we are not only froward under particular occasions, temptations, and surprisals clouding our present view of the Holy Spirit in his work, but are also habitually careless and negligent about it, and do never labour to come into satisfaction in it, but always indulge unto the peevishness and frowardness of unbelief, it argues a most depraved unthankful frame of heart, wherein the soul of God cannot be well pleased.

3. It is an evidence that his work proceedeth from, and is wholly managed in love, in that we are cautioned not to grieve him, Eph. iv. 30. And a double evidence of the greatness of his love here is tendered unto us in that caution: (1.) In that those alone are subject to be grieved by us, who act in love towards us. If we comply not with the will and rule of others, they may be provoked, vexed, instigated into wrath against us. But those alone who love us, are grieved at our miscarriages. A severe schoolmaster may be more provoked with the fault of his scholar, than the Father is; but the Father is grieved with it, when the other is not. Whereas therefore the Holy Spirit is not subject or liable unto the affection of grief as it is a passion in us, we are cautioned not to grieve him, namely, to teach us with what love and compassion, with

what tenderness and holy delight he performs his work in us, and towards us. (2.) It is so in that he hath undertaken the work of comforting them who are so apt and prone to grieve him, as for the most part we are. The great work of the Lord Christ was to die for us. But that which puts an eminence on his love, is that he died for us whilst we were yet his enemies, sinners, and ungodly, Rom. v. 6, 7, 8. And as the work of the Holy Ghost is to comfort us, so a lustre is put upon it by this; that he comforts those who are very prone to grieve himself. For although it may be we will not through a peculiar affection, hurt, molest, or grieve them again by whom we are grieved, yet who is it that will set himself to comfort those that grieve him, and that when so they do. But even herein the Holy Ghost commendeth his love unto us, that even whilst we grieve him, by his consolations, he recovers us from those ways wherewith he is grieved.

This therefore is to be fixed as an important principle in this part of the mystery of God, that the principal foundation of the susception of this office of a Comforter by the Holy Spirit, is his own peculiar and ineffable love. For both the efficacy of our consolation, and the life of our obedience, do depend hereon. For when we know that every acting of the Spirit of God towards us, every gracious impression from him on our understandings, wills, or affections, are all of them in pursuit of that infinite, peculiar love whence it was that he took upon him the office of a Comforter, they cannot but all of them influence our hearts with spiritual refreshments. And wherein faith is defective in this matter, that it doth not exercise itself in the consideration of this love of the Holy Ghost, we shall never arrive unto solid, abiding, strong consolation. And as for those by whom all these things are despised and derided, it is no strait unto me whether I should renounce the gospel, or reject them from an interest in Christianity, for the approbation of both is inconsistent. Moreover, it is evident how great



a motive hence ariseth unto cheerful, watchful, universal obedience. For all the actings of sin or unbelief in us, are in the first place re-actings unto those of the Holy Ghost in us, and upon us. By them he is resisted in his persuasions, quenched in his motions, and himself grieved. If there be any holy ingenuity in us, it will excite a vigilant diligence not to be overtaken with such wickednesses against unspeakable love. He will walk both safely and fruitfully whose soul is kept under a sense of the love of the Holy Spirit herein.

Thirdly, Infinite power is also needful unto and accordingly evident in the discharge of this office. This we have fixed, that the Holy Ghost is and ever was the Comforter of the church. Whatever therefore is spoken thereof, belongs peculiarly unto him. And it is expressed as proceeding from and accompanied with infinite power, as also the consideration of persons and things declare it necessary that so it should be. Thus we have the church's complaint in a deep disconsolation: *My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God, Isa. xlviii. 27.* It is not so much her affliction and miseries, as an apprehension that God regarded her not therein, which causeth her dejection. And when this is added unto any pressing trouble, whether internal or external, it doth fully constitute a state of spiritual disconsolation. For when faith can take a prospect of the love, care, and concernment of God in us and our condition, however grievous things may be at present unto us, yet can we not be comfortless. And what is it that in the consolation which God intendeth his church, he would have them to consider in himself as an assured ground of relief and refreshment? This he declares in the following verses, ver. 28, 29, 30, 31. *Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, nor is weary, &c.* The church seemeth not at all to doubt of his power, but of his love, care, and faithfulness towards her. But it is his infinite power that he abuseth first to satisfy her in,

as that which all his actings towards her were founded in and resolved into, without a due consideration whereof all that otherwise could be expected would not yield her relief. And this being fixed on their minds, he next proposeth unto them his infinite understanding and wisdom; *there is no searching of his understanding*. Conceive aright of his infinite power, and then leave things unto his sovereign unsearchable wisdom for the management of them as to ways, degrees, times, and seasons. An apprehension of want of love and care in God towards them, was that which immediately caused their disconsolation; but the ground of it was in their unbelief of his infinite power and wisdom. Wherefore in the work of the Holy Ghost, for the comforting of the church, his infinite power is peculiarly to be considered. So the apostle proposeth it unto the weakest believers for their supportment, and that which should assure them of the victory in their conflict, that *greater is he that is in them, than he that is in the world*, 1 John iv. 4. That Holy Spirit which is bestowed on them, and dwelleth in them, is greater, more able and powerful than Satan that attempts their ruin in and by the world, seeing he is of power omnipotent. Thoughts of our disconsolation arise from the impressions that Satan makes upon our minds and consciences by sin, temptation, and persecution. For we find not in ourselves such an ability of resistance as from whence we may have an assurance of a conquest. This, saith the apostle, you are to expect from the power of the Holy Spirit, which is infinitely above whatever Satan hath, to make opposition unto you, or to bring any disconsolation on you. This will cast out all that fear which hath torment accompanying it. And however this may be disregarded by them who are filled with an apprehension of their own self-sufficiency as unto all the ends of their living and obedience unto God; as likewise, that they have a never-failing spring of rational considerations about them, able to administer all necessary relief and comfort at all times: yet those who are really sen-

sible of their own condition, and that of other believers, if they understand what it is to be comforted with the consolation of God, and how remote they are from those delusions which men embrace under the name of their rational considerations, will grant that the faith of infinite power is requisite unto any solid, spiritual comfort: For,

1. Who can declare the dejections, sorrows, fears, despondencies, and discouragements that believers are obnoxious unto, in the great variety of their natures, causes, effects, and occasions? What relief can be suited unto them, but what is an emanation of infinite power? Yea, such is the spiritual frame and constitution of their souls, as that they will oft-times reject all means of comfort that are not communicated by an almighty efficacy. Hence God creates *the fruit of the lips, peace, peace*, Isa. lvii. 20. produceth peace in the souls of men by a creating act of his power; and direct us in the place before-mentioned to look for it only from the infinite excellency of his nature: none therefore was meet for the work of being the church's Comforter, but the Spirit of God alone. He only, by his almighty power, can remove all their fears, and support them under all their dejections in all that variety wherewith they are attempted and exercised. Nothing but omnipotence itself is suited to obviate those innumerable disconsolations that we are obnoxious unto. And those whose souls are pressed in earnest with them, and are driven from all the reliefs which not only carnal security and stout-heartedness in adversity do offer, but also from all those lawful diversions which the world can administer, will understand that true consolation is an act of the exceeding greatness of the power of God, and without which it will not be wrought.

2. The means and causes of their disconsolation direct unto the same spring of their comfort. Whatever the power of hell, of sin, and the world, separately or conjunction can effect, it is all levelled against the peace and comfort of believers. Of how great force and effi-



cacy they are in their attempts to disturb and ruin them, by what various ways and means they work unto that end, would require great enlargement of discourse to declare. And yet when we have used our utmost diligence in an enquiry after them, we shall come short of a full investigation of them; yea, it may be of what many individual persons find in their own experience. Wherefore, with respect unto one cause and principle of disconsolation, God declares, that it is he who comforts his people, Isa. li. 12, 13, 14, 15. *I, even I, am he that comforteth you: Who art thou that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grass? And forgettest the Lord thy Maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth? And hast feared continually every day, because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he was ready to destroy? And where is the fury of the oppressor? The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail. But I am the Lord thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared: the Lord of Hosts is his name.* He sees it necessary to declare his infinite power, and to express, in sundry instances, the effects thereof.

Wherefore, if we take a view of what is the state and condition of the church in itself, and in the world; how weak is the faith of most believers, how great their fears, how many their discouragements? As also, with how great temptations, calamities, oppositions, persecutions, they are exercised? How vigorously and sharply these things are set on upon their spirits, according unto all advantages inward and outward that their spiritual adversaries can lay hold upon? It will be manifest how necessary it was that their consolation should be intrusted with him with whom infinite power doth always dwell? And if our own inward or outward peace seems to abate of the necessity of this consideration, it may not be amiss, by the exercise of faith herein, to lay in provision for the future, seeing we know not what may befall us in the



world. And should we live to see the church in storms, as who knows but we may, our principal supportment will be, that our Comforter is of almighty power, wonderful in counsel, and excellent in operation.

4. This dispensation of the Spirit is unchangeable. Unto whomsoever he is given as a Comforter, he abides with them for ever. This our Saviour expressly declares in the first promise he made of sending him as a Comforter in a peculiar manner, John xiv. 16. *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.* The moment of this promise lieth in his unchangeable continuance with the church. There was indeed a present occasion rendering necessary this declaration of the unchangeableness of his abode. For in all this discourse, our Saviour was preparing the hearts of his disciples for his departure from them, which was now at hand. And whereas he lays the whole of the relief which in that case he would afford unto them, upon his sending of the Holy Ghost, he takes care, not only to prevent an objection which might arise in their minds about this dispensation of the Spirit, but also, in so doing, to secure the faith and consolation of the church in all ages. For, as he himself, who had been their immediate, visible Comforter during the whole time of his ministry among them, was now departing from them, and that so, as that the heavens were to receive him until the time of the restitution of all things, they might be apt to fear that this Comforter, who was now promised unto them, might continue also only for a season, whereby they should be reduced unto a new loss and sorrow. To assure their minds herein, our Lord Jesus Christ lets them know, that this other Comforter should not only always continue with them unto the ends of their lives, work and ministry, but abide with the church absolutely unto the consummation of all things. He is now given in an eternal and unchangeable covenant, Isa. lix. 21. and he can no more depart from the

church, than the everlasting, sure covenant of God can be abolished.

But it may be objected by such as really enquire into the promises of Christ, and after their accomplishment, for the establishment of their faith; whence it is, that if the Comforter abide always with the church, that so great a number of believers do in all ages spend, it may be, the greatest part of their lives in troubles and disconsolation, having no experience of the presence of the Holy Ghost with them as a Comforter. But this objection is not of force to weaken our faith as unto the accomplishment of this promise. For,

1. There is in the promise itself, a supposition of troubles and disconsolations thereon to befall the church in all ages. For with respect unto them it is that the Comforter is promised to be sent. And they do but dream, who fancy such a state of the church in this world, as wherein it should be accompanied with such an assurance of all inward and outward satisfaction, as scarce to stand in need of this office or work of the Holy Ghost. Yea, the promise of his abiding with us for ever, as a Comforter, is an infallible prediction, that believers, in all ages, shall meet with troubles, sorrows, and disconsolation.

2. The accomplishment of Christ's promises doth not depend, as to its truth, upon our experience, at least not on what men sensibly feel in themselves under their distresses, much less on what they express with some mixture of unbelief. So we observed before from that place of the prophet concerning the church, Isa. xli. 27. that her way was hidden from the Lord, and her judgment passed over from her God. As she complained also, *The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me*, chap. xlix. 14. But yet in both places God convinceth her of her mistake, and that indeed her complaint was but a fruit of unbelief. And so it is usual in great distresses, when persons are swallowed up with sorrow, or

overwhelmed with anguish, that they are not sensible of the work of the Holy Ghost in their consolation.

3. He is a Comforter unto all believers at all times, and on all occasions wherein they really stand in need of spiritual consolation. But yet if we intend to have experience of his work herein, to have the advantage of it, or benefit by it, there are sundry things required of ourselves in a way of duty. If we are negligent herein, it is no wonder if we are at a loss for those comforts which he is willing to administer. Unless we understand aright the nature of spiritual consolations, and value them both as sufficient and satisfactory, we are not like to enjoy them, at least not to be made sensible of them. Many under their troubles suppose there is no comfort but in their removal; and know not of any relief in their sorrow, but in the taking away of their cause. At best, they value any outward relief before internal supports and refreshments. Such persons can never receive the consolation of the Holy Spirit unto any refreshing experience. To look for all our comforts from him, to value those things wherein his consolations do consist, above all earthly enjoyments, to wait upon him in the use of all means for the receiving of his influences of love and grace, to be fervent in prayer for his presence with us, and the manifestation of his grace, are required in all those towards whom he dischargeth this office. And whilst we are found in these ways of holy obedience and dependence, we shall find him a Comforter, and that for ever.

These things are observable in the office of the Holy Ghost in general, as he is the Comforter of the church, and the manner of his discharge thereof. What is further considerable unto the guidance of our faith, and the participation of consolation with respect hereunto, will be evident in the declaration of the particulars that belong thereunto.

## C H A P. III.

*Unto whom the Holy Spirit is promised and given as a Comforter; or the object of his acting in this office.*

**W**E have considered the promise of Christ to send the Holy Spirit to be the Comforter of the church, and unto that end to abide with them for ever. The nature also of that office and work in general which hereon he undertakes and dischargeth, with the properties of them, have been declared. Our next enquiry is unto whom this promise is made, and towards whom it is infallibly fulfilled. How and unto what ends, in what order as unto his effects and operations, the Holy Spirit is promised unto any persons, and received by them, hath been already declared in our former discourses, lib. 4. chap. 3. We shall therefore here only declare in particular who he is promised unto, and received by, as a Comforter. And this is to all, and only unto believers; those who are actually so. All his operations required unto the making of them so to be, are antecedent hereunto. For the promise of him unto this end, wherever it is recorded, is made directly unto them, and unto them it is confined. Immediately it was given unto the apostles; but it was not given unto them as apostles, but as believers and disciples of Christ, with a particular respect unto the difficulties and causes of disconsolation which they were under, or should meet withal upon the account of their being so. See the promises unto this purpose expressly, John xiv. 16, 17, 26. chap. xv. 26. chap. xvi. 7, 8. And it is declared withal that the world, which in that place is opposed unto them that do believe, cannot receive him, chap. xiv. 17. Other cf-



fectual operations he hath upon the world, for their conviction, and the conversion of many of them. But as a Spirit of consolation he is neither promised unto them, nor can they receive him, until other gracious acts of his have passed on their souls. Besides, we shall see that all his actings and effects, as a Comforter, are confined unto them that believe, and do all suppose saving faith as antecedent unto them.

And this is the great fundamental privilege of true believers, whereby, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, they are exalted above all other persons in this world. And this will the more evidently appear, when we shall consider those especial operations, acts, and effects whereby consolation is administered unto them. That the life of man is the subject of innumerable troubles is made evident and uncontrollable by catholic experience. That man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward, has been the constant acknowledgment of all that have been wise in all ages. And those who have designed to drown the sense of them in security and sensuality of life, have been ever looked on as greatly exorbitant from the principles of nature and dictates of reason, voluntarily degenerating into the condition of creatures brutish and irrational. Others who will not forego the privilege of their being, have always made it a principal enquiry, how or whence they might take and receive relief and comfort for their supportment against their unavoidable troubles, sorrows, and disconsolation. Yea, it is natural and necessary unto all men so to do. All men cannot but seek after rest and peace, not only out of choice, but instinct of nature, trouble, and sorrow, being diametrically contrary unto it in its being, and tending unto its dissolution. Wherefore they all naturally seek for consolation. Hence the best and most useful part of the old philosophy consisted in the prescription of the ways and means of comforting and supporting the minds of men against things noxious and griev-

ous to nature, with the sorrows which ensue thereon. And the topics they had found out unto this purpose were not to be despised, where men are destitute of spiritual light and supernatural revelation. Neither did the wisdom or reason of man ever arise unto any thing more useful in this world than to discover any rational considerations that might allay the sorrows, or relieve the minds of them that are disconsolate. For things that are really grievous unto the generality of mankind, do outweigh all the real satisfaction which this life and world can afford. And to place either satisfaction or relief in the pursuit of sensual lusts is brutish. But yet what did all the spring and well-heads of rational and philosophical consolation rise unto? what refreshment did their streams afford? The utmost they attained unto, was but to confirm and make obstinate the minds of men in a fancy, an opinion, or persuasion, contrary unto what they felt and had experience of. For what they contended for, was but this, that the consideration of the common lot of mankind, the unavoidable nature of grieving accidents, the shortness of human life, the true exercise of reason upon more noble objects with others of the like nature, should satisfy men that the things which they endured were not evil or grievous. But what doth all this amount unto, in comparison of this privilege of believers, of this provision made for them in all their disconsolations, by him in whom they do believe? This is a relief that never entered into the heart of man to think of or conceive. Nor can it be understood by any but those by whom it is enjoyed. For the world, as our Saviour testifies, neither knoweth this Spirit, nor can receive him. And therefore what is spoken of him, and this work of his, is looked on as a fancy, or the shadow of a dream. And although the Sun of Righteousness be risen in this matter, and shine on all that dwell in the land of Goshen, yet those that abide still in Egypt make only use of their lanterns. But those who are really partakers of this privilege do know, in some measure, what they do en-

joy, although they are not able to comprehend it in its excellency, nor value it in a due manner: for how can the heart of man, or our poor, weak understandings, fully conceive this glorious mystery of sending the Holy Ghost to be our Comforter; only they receive it by faith, and have experience of it in its effects. There is in my judgment an unspeakable privilege of those who are believers antecedent unto their believing as they are elect; namely, that Christ died in their stead alone. But this is like the wells which Isaac's servant digged, that the Philistines strove about, as those which belonged unto them, which, though fresh useful springs in themselves, caused them to be called *Esek* and *Sitna*. Mighty strivings there are to break down the inclosure of this privilege, and lay it common unto all the world, that is indeed waste and useles. It is contended, that the Lord Christ died equally for all, and every one of mankind, for believers and unbelievers, for those that are saved, and those that are damned. And to this purpose many pretences are pleaded to shew how the most of them for whom Christ died, have no real benefit by his death, nor is any thing required in them to evidence that they have an interest therein. But this privilege we now treat of, is like the well *Rehoboth*, Isaac kept it unto himself, and the Philistines strove not about it. None contend that the Spirit is a Comforter unto any but believers: therefore is it by the world despised and reproached, because they have no interest in it, nor have the least pretence to strive about it. Did believers therefore duly consider how they are advanced hereby through the love and care of Jesus Christ into an inexpressible dignity above the residue of mankind, they would more rejoice in it than in all that this world can supply them withal. But we must proceed.

It appears, from what hath been discoursed, that this is not the first saving work of the Holy Spirit on the souls of men. Regeneration and habitual sanctification do always precede it. He comforteth none but those.

whom he hath before sanctified. Nor are any other but such capable of his consolations. There is nothing in them that can discern his acting, or value what he doth of this kind. And this is the true reason why the whole work of the Holy Spirit, as a Comforter, wherein consists the accomplishment of the most glorious promise that ever Christ made to his church, and the greatest evidence of his continued care thereof, is so neglected, yea, despised amongst the generality of professed Christians. A great evidence of the apostatized state of Christianity. They can have no concern of any work of his but in its proper order. If men be not first sanctified by him, they can never be comforted by him. And they will themselves prefer in their troubles any natural or rational reliefs, before the best and highest of his consolations. For however they may be proposed unto them, however they may be instructed in the nature, ways, and means of them, yet they belong not unto them, and why should they value that which is not theirs? The world cannot receive him. He worketh on the world for conviction, John xvi. 8. and on the elect for conversion, John iii. 8. But none can receive him as a Comforter but believers. Therefore is this whole work of the Holy Spirit little taken notice of by the most, and despised by many. Yet is it never the less glorious in itself, being fully declared in the scripture, nor the less useful to the church, being testified unto by the experience of them that truly believe.

That which remaineth for the full declaration of this office and work of the Holy Ghost, is the consideration of those acts of his which belong properly thereunto, and of those privileges wherof believers are made partakers thereby. And whereas many blessed mysteries of evangelical truth are contained herein, they would require much time and diligence in their explanation. But as to the most of them, according unto the measure of light and experience which I have attained, I have prevented myself the handling of them in this place. For I



have spoken already unto most of them in two other discourses, the one concerning the *Perseverance of True Believers*, and the other of our *Communion with God, and of the Holy Spirit in particular*. As therefore I shall be sparing in the repetition of what is already in them proposed unto public view, so it is not much that I shall add thereunto. Yet, what is necessary unto our present design, must not be wholly omitted, especially seeing I find that further light and evidence may be added unto our former endeavours in this kind.

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## C H A P. IV.

*Inhabitation of the Spirit, the first Thing promised.*

**T**HE first thing which the Comforter is promised for unto believers, is, that he should dwell in them, which is their great fundamental privilege, and whereon all other do depend. This therefore must in the first place be enquired into.

The inhabitation of the Spirit in believers is among those things which we ought, as to the nature or being of it, firmly to believe; but as to the manner of it cannot fully conceive. Nor can this be the least impeachment of its truth unto any who assent unto the gospel, wherein we have sundry things proposed as objects of our faith, which our reason cannot comprehend. We shall therefore assert no more in this matter, but what the scripture directly and expressly goeth before us in. And where we have the express letter of the scripture for our warrant, we are eternally safe, whilst we affix no sense thereunto that is absolutely repugnant unto reason, or contrary unto more plain testimonies in other places.

Wherefore to make plain what we intend herein, the ensuing observations must be premised.

First, This personal inhabitation of the Holy Spirit in believers, is distinct and different from his essential omnipresence, whereby he is in all things. Omnipresence is essential; inhabitation is personal. Omnipresence is a necessary property of his nature, and so not of him as a distinct person in the Trinity, but as God essentially, one and the same in being and substance with the Father and the Son. To be every where, to fill all things, to be present with them, or indistant from them, always equally existing in the power of an infinite being, is an inseparable property of the divine nature as such. But this inhabitation is personal, or what belongs unto him distinctly as the Holy Ghost. Besides, it is voluntary, and that which might not have been, whence it is the subject of a free promise of God, and wholly depends on a free act of the will of the Holy Spirit himself.

Secondly, It is not a presence by virtue of a metonymical denomination, or an expression of the cause for the effect, that is intended. The meaning of this promise, *The Spirit shall dwell in you*, is not, he shall work graciously in you; for this he can without any especial presence. Being essentially every where, he can work where and how he pleaseth, without any especial presence. But it is the Spirit himself that is promised, and his presence in an especial manner, and an especial manner of that presence; he shall be in you, and dwell in you, as we shall see. The only enquiry in this matter is, whether the Holy Spirit himself be promised unto believers, or only his grace? which we shall immediately enquire into.

Thirdly, The dwelling of the person of the Holy Spirit in the persons of believers, of what nature soever it be, doth not effect a personal union between them. That which we call a personal union, is the union of divers natures in the same person, and there can be but one person by virtue of this union. Such is the hypostatical u-

nion in the person of the Son of God. It was our nature he assumed, and not the person of any. And it was impossible he should so assume any more but in one individual instance: for if he could have assumed another individual being of our nature, then it must differ personally from that which he did assume. For there is nothing that differs one man from another, but a distinct personal subsistence of each. And it implies the highest contradiction, that the Son of God could be hypostatically united unto more than one: For if they are more than one, they must be more persons than one: and many persons cannot be hypostatically united, for that is to be one person, and no more. There may be a manifold union, mystical and moral, of divers, of many persons, but a personal union there cannot be of any thing but of distinct natures. And as the Son of God could not assume many persons, so supposing that human nature which he did unite to himself to have been a person, that is, to have had a distinct subsistence of its own antecedent unto its union, and there could have been no personal union between it and the Son of God. For the Son of God was a distinct person; and if the human nature had been so too, there would have been two persons still, and so no personal union. Nor can it be said, that, although the human nature of Christ was a person in itself, yet it ceased so to be upon its union with the divine; and so two persons were conjoined and compounded into one. For if ever human nature have, in any instance, a personal subsistence of its own, it cannot be separated from it, without the destruction and annihilation of the individual. For to suppose otherwise, is to make it to continue what it was, and not what it was; for it is what it is, distinct from all other individuals by virtue of its personality. Wherefore, upon this inhabitation of the Spirit, wherein soever it doth consist, there is no personal union ensuing between him and believers, nor is it possible that any such thing should be. For he and they are distinct persons, and must eternally abide so

whilst their natures are distinct. It is only the assumption of our nature into union with the Son of God, antecedent unto any individual personal subsistence of its own, that can constitute such an union.

Fourthly, The union and relation that ensues on this inhabitation of the Spirit, is not immediate between him and believers, but between them and Jesus Christ. For he is sent to dwell in them by Christ, in his name, as his Spirit, to supply his room in love and grace towards them, making use of his things in all his effects and operations unto his glory. Hence, I say, is the union of believers with Christ by the Spirit, and not with the Spirit himself. For this Holy Spirit dwelling in the human nature of Christ, manifesting and acting himself in all fullness therein, as hath been declared, being sent by him to dwell in like manner, and act in a limited measure in all believers, there is a mystical union thence arising between them, whereof the Spirit is the bond and vital principle.

On these considerations, I say, it is the person of the Holy Ghost that is promised unto believers, and not only the effects of his grace and power, and his person it is that always dwelleth in them. And as this, on the one hand, is an argument of his infinite condescension in complying with this part of his office and work, to be sent by the Father and Son to dwell in believers, so it is an evident demonstration of his eternal Deity, that the one and self-same person should at the same time inhabit so many thousands of distinct persons as are, or were at any time, of believers in the world; which is fondness to imagine concerning any one that is not absolutely infinite. And therefore that which some oppose as unmeet for him, and beneath his glory, namely, this his inhabitation in the saints of God, is a most illustrious and uncontrollable demonstration of his eternal glory. For none but he who is absolutely immense in his nature and omnipresence, can be so present with, and indistant from all believers in the world; and none but he whose per-



son, by virtue of his nature, is infinite, can personally, equally inhabit in them all. An infinite nature and person is required hereunto. And in the consideration of the incomprehensibility thereof are we to acquiesce as to the manner of his inhabitation, which we cannot conceive.

1. There are very many promises in the Old Testament, that God would thus give the Holy Spirit in and by virtue of the new covenant; as Ezek. xxxvi. 27. Isa. lix. 21. Prov. i. 23. And in every place God calls this promised Spirit, and as promised, *His Spirit, my Spirit*, which precisely denotes the person of the Spirit himself. It is generally apprehended, I confess, that in these promises the Holy Spirit is intended only as unto his gracious effects and operations, but not as to any personal inhabitation. And I should not much contend upon these promises only, although in some of them his person as promised be expressly distinguished from all his gracious effects: but the exposition which is given of them in their accomplishment under the New Testament, will not allow us so to judge of them. For,

2. We are directed to *pray for the Holy Spirit*, and assured that God will give him unto them that ask of him in a due manner, Luke xi. 13. If these words must be expounded metonymically, and not properly, it must be because either, (1.) They agree not in the letter with other testimonies of scripture. Or, (2.) Contain some sense absurd and unreasonable. Or, (3.) That which is contrary unto the experience of them that believe. The first cannot be said, for other testimonies innumerable concur with it. Nor the second, as we shall shew. And for the third, it is that whose contrary we prove. What is it that believers intend in that request? I suppose, I may say, that there is no one petition wherein they are more intense and earnest, nor which they more frequently insist upon. As David prayed, that God *would not take his Holy Spirit from him*, Psal. li. So do they, that God *would bestow him on them*. For this they do, and ought

to do, even after they have received him. His continuance with them, his evidencing and manifestation of himself in and to them, are the design of their continued supplications for him. Is it merely external operations of the Spirit in grace that they desire herein? Do they not always pray for his ineffable presence and inhabitation? Will any thoughts of grace or mercy relieve or satisfy them, if once they apprehend that the Holy Spirit is not in them, or doth not dwell with them? Although they are not able to form any conceptions in their minds of the manner of his presence and residence in them, yet is it that which they pray for, and without the apprehension whereof by faith, they can have neither peace nor consolation. The promise hereof being confined unto believers, those that are truly and really so, as we shewed before, it is their experience whereby its accomplishment is to be judged; and not the presumption of such, by whom both the Spirit himself, and his whole work, is despised.

3. And this inhabitation is that which principally our Lord Jesus Christ directeth his disciples to expect in the promise of him. *He dwelleth in you, and shall be in you,* John xiv. 17. He doth so who is the *Comforter, the Spirit of truth*: or, as it is emphatically expressed, chap. xvi. 13. *He, the Spirit of truth.* He is promised unto, and he inhabits them that do believe. So it is expressly affirmed towards all that are partakers of this promise, Rom. viii. 9. *You are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwells in you.* Ver. 11. *The Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you.* *The Holy Spirit dwelleth in us,* 1 Tim. iii. 12. *He that is in us, is greater than he that is in the world,* 1 John iv. 4. And many other express testimonies there are unto the same purpose. And whereas the subject of these promises and propositions is the Holy Ghost himself, the person of the Holy Ghost, and that so expressed as not to leave any pretence for any thing else, and not his person to be intended: And whereas

nothing is ascribed unto him that is unreasonable, inconvenient unto him in the discharge of his office, or inconsistent with any of his divine perfections, but rather what is every way suitable unto his work, and evidently demonstrative of his divine nature and subsistence: It is both irrational and unsuitable to the œconomy of divine grace to wrest these expressions into a lower, meaner, figurative signification: and I am persuaded that it is contrary to the faith of the catholic church of true believers so to do. For however some of them may not have exercised their minds about the manner of the abode of the Holy Spirit with the church, and some of them when they hear of his personal indwelling, wherein they have not been duly instructed, do fear it may be, that indeed that cannot be, which they cannot comprehend, and that some evil consequence may ensue upon the admittance of it, although they cannot say what they are: yet it is with them all even an article of faith, that the *Holy Ghost dwelleth in the church*, that is, them that truly believe, and herein have they an apprehension of such a personal presence of his as they cannot conceive. This therefore being so expressly, so frequently affirmed in the scripture, and the comfort of the church, which depends thereon being singular and eminent, it is unto me an important article of evangelical truth.

3. Although all the principal actings of the Holy Spirit in us, and towards us as a Comforter, do depend on this head, or flow from this spring of his inhabitation, yet, in the confirmation of its truth, I shall here name one or two, by which itself is evidenced, and its benefits unto the church declared.

(1.) This is the spring of his gracious operations in us. So our Saviour himself declares it: *The water that I shall give unto him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life*, John iv. 14. The water here promised is the Holy Spirit, called the *gift of God*, ver. 10. This is evident from that parallel place, John vii. 38, 39. where this living water is plainly declared to be

the Holy Ghost. And this water which is given unto any, is to be in him, and there to abide, which is but a metaphorical expression of the inhabitation of the Spirit. For it is to be in him as a well, as a living fountain, which cannot be spoke of any gracious habit whatever. No quality in our minds can be a spring of living water. Besides, all gracious habits are effects of the operation of the Holy Spirit, and therefore they are not the well itself, but belong unto the springing of it up in living waters. So is the Spirit in his indwelling distinguished from all his evangelical operations of grace, as the well is distinct from the streams that flow from it. And as it is natural and easy for a spring of living waters to bubble up, and put forth refreshing streams; so it belongs unto the consolation of believers, to know how easy it is unto the Holy Spirit, how ready he is on the account of his gracious inhabitation, to carry on and perfect the work of grace, holiness, and sanctification in them. And what instruction they may take for their own deportment towards him, may be afterwards spoken unto. So, in many other places is his presence with us (which we have proved to be by the way of gracious inhabitation) proposed as the cause and spring of all his gracious operations, and so distinct from them. So the Holy Ghost that is given us, *sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts*, Rom. v. 5. *The Spirit of God that dwelleth in us, shall quicken our mortal bodies*, Rom. viii. 12. *He beareth witness with our spirits that we are the sons of God*, Rom. viii. 16. Which places have been elsewhere explained and vindicated.

(2.) This is the hidden spring and cause of that inexpressible distance and difference that is between believers and the rest of the world. Our apostle tells us, that *the life of believers is hid with Christ in God*, Col. iii. 3. A blessed life they have while they are here, *dead to the world*, and as *dead in the world*. A life that will issue in eternal glory: But no such thing appears, no lustre of it is cast abroad into the eyes of men: True, faith the



apostle, for it is *hid with Christ in God*. It is so, both in its causes, nature, operations, and means of preservation. But by this hidden life it is that they are discerned from the perishing world. And it will not be denied, as I suppose, that this difference is real and great: for those who believe, do enjoy the especial love and favour of God; whereas those who do not, are under the curse, and the wrath of God abideth on them. They are alive unto God, but these are dead in trespasses and sins. And if men will not believe that there is so inexpressible a difference between them in this world, they will be forced to confess it at the last day, when the decretory sentences of *Come ye blessed*, and *go ye cursed*, shall be openly denounced. But, for the most part, there is no visible cause in the eyes of the world of this inexpressible and eternal difference between these two sorts of persons. For besides, that, for the most part, the world doth judge amiss of all that believers are and do, and do rather, through an inbred enmity, working by wicked and foolish surmises, suppose them to be the worst, rather than absolutely the best of men: there is not, for the most part, such a visible, manifest difference in the outward actions and duties, on which alone a judgment may be passed in man's day, as to be a just foundation of believing so unspeakable difference between their persons as is spoken of. There is a difference in their works, which indeed ought to be far greater than it is; and so a greater testimony given to the righteousness of God, 1 John iii. 12. There is yet a greater difference in internal, habitual grace, whereby the minds of believers are transformed initially into the image of God, Titus i. 15. But these things will not bear the weight of this inconceivable distance. Principally therefore it depends hereon, namely, the inhabitation of the Spirit in them that believe. The great difference between the two houses that Solomon built, was, that God dwelt in the one, and he himself in the other. Though any two houses, as unto their outward fabric, make the same

appearance, yet if the King dwell in the one, and a robber in the other, the one may be a palace, and the other a den. It is this inhabitation of the Spirit whereon all the privileges of believers do immediately depend, and all the advantages which they have above the men of the world. And the difference which is made hereby, or ensueth hereon, is so inconceivably great, as a sufficient reason may thence be given of all the excellent things which are spoken of them who are partakers of it.

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## C H A P. V.

*Particular actings of the Holy Spirit as a Comforter.  
How he is an unction.*

**T**HE especial actings of the Holy Spirit towards believers as their Comforter, with the privileges and advantages which by them they are made partakers of, have been severally spoken unto by many; and I have also in other discourses had occasion to treat concerning some of them. I shall therefore be the more brief in the present discourses of them, and waving things commonly known and received, shall endeavour to state right conceptions of them, and to add further light unto what hath been already received.

The first of this sort which we shall mention, because, as I think, the first in order of nature, is the unction, or anointing which believers have by him. So are they said to be anointed, 2 Cor. i. 21. and 1 John ii. 20. Ye have  $\tau\omicron\ \chi\epsilon\iota\sigma\mu\alpha$ , an unction, an unguent from the holy One, ver. 27. *The anointing which you have received abideth in you. And the same anointing teacheth you of all things.* What this  $\chi\epsilon\iota\sigma\mu\alpha$  is which we do receive, and wherein this anointing doth consist, we must, in the first place,

enquire. For a distinct comprehension and knowledge of that which is so great a privilege, and of so much use unto us, is our duty and advantage. It is so the more, because by the most these things are neglected. That is an empty sound unto them, which hath in itself the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. Some things there are which pretend unto this unction, or which some would have it to consist in, that we must remove out of our way to render the truth more evident.

Some think that by this unction, the doctrine of the gospel, or the truth itself, is intended. This Episcopus pleads for in his Exposition of the place. That doctrine of the gospel which they had received, was that which would preserve them from the seducers, which in that place of the apostle, 1 John ii. 20. believers are warned to beware of. But neither the context nor the text will admit of this interpretation. For, (1.) The thing itself in question, was, the doctrine of the gospel. This the seducers pretended to be on their side, which the apostle denies. Now, although the doctrine itself was that whereby this difference was to be determined; yet is not the doctrine itself, but the advantage they had for the right understanding of it, that which is proposed for their relief and comfort. (2.) This unction is said to abide in them who have received it, whereas we are said to abide in the doctrine or the truth, and not that in us properly. (3.) This unction is said to teach us all things; but the doctrine of the truth is that which we are taught, and there must be a difference between that which teacheth, and that which is taught thereby. (4.) Whereas in all other places of the scripture, either the Holy Ghost himself, or some especial operation of his, is hereby intended, there is no reason nor pretence of any to be taken from the words or context, why another signification should be here imposed on that expression. (5.) For the reason which he adds, that there is no mention in any other place of scripture of any peculiar, internal act or

work towards any persons, in their teaching or reception of the truth, it is so extremely remote from the truth, and is so directly opposite unto express testimonies almost innumerable, that I wonder how any man could be so forgetful as to affirm it. Let the reader satisfy himself in what hath been discoursed on the head of spiritual illumination.

Secondly, The testimony given by the Holy Ghost unto the truth of the gospel imparted unto them, is the exposition of this unction in the paraphrase of another. This testimony was by his miraculous operations, at his first effusion on the apostles. But neither can this be the mind of the Holy Ghost herein: for this unction which believers had, is the same with their being anointed of God, 2 Cor. i. 21. And that was a privilege whereof they were all personally made partakers. So also is that which is here mentioned, namely, that which was in them, which abode with them, and taught them. Neither is this a tolerable exposition of these words, you have an unction from the holy One, abiding in you, teaching of you, that is, you have heard of the miraculous operations of the Holy Ghost in the confirmation of the gospel, giving testimony unto the truth.

Thirdly, It is to no purpose to examine the pretences of some of the Romanists, that respect is had herein to the chrysome or unguent that they use in baptism, confirmation, and in their fictitious sacraments of order and extreme unction. For, besides that all their unctions are inventions of their own, no institution of Christ, nor of any efficacy unto the ends for which this unction is granted unto believers, the more sober of their expositors take no notice of them on this occasion. Those who would know what respect they have thereunto, may find it in the commentaries of A-Lapide on this place.

These apprehensions being removed, as no way suiting the mind of the Holy Ghost, nor expressing the privilege intended, nor the advantage which we have there-



by, we shall follow the conduct of the scripture in the investigation of the true nature of it. And to this end we may observe,

1. That all persons and things that were dedicated or consecrated unto God, under the Old Testament, were anointed with material oil: so were the kings of the people of God, so were the priests and prophets: in like manner the sanctuary, the altar, and all the holy utensils of divine worship were anointed. And it is confessed, that among all the rest of Mosaical institutions, those also concerning unction were typical and figurative of what was to come.

2. That all these types had their first, proper, and full signification and accomplishment in the person of Jesus Christ. And because every person and thing that was made holy to God, was so anointed, he who was to be the most holy, the only spring and cause of holiness in and unto others, had his name and denomination from thence. Both the Messiah, in the Old Testament, and Christ, in the New, are as much as the anointed one. For he was not only in his person typified in the anointed kings, priests, and prophets, but also in his mediation by the tabernacle, sanctuary, altar, and temple. Hence his unction is expressed in those words, קדש קדש קדש, Dan. ix. 24. *To anoint the Holy of Holies*, who was prefigured by all the holy anointed ones before. This became his name, as he was the hope of the church under the Old Testament, *The Messiah*, and the immediate object of the faith of the saints under the New, *The Christ*. Here, therefore, in the first place, we must enquire into the nature of this unction; that of believers being an emanation from thence, and to be interpreted by analogy thereunto. For (as it is usually expressed by way of allusion) it is as the oil, which being poured on the head of Aaron, went down to the skirts of his garments.

3. That the Lord Christ was anointed, and how, is declared, Isa. lxi. 1. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon*

*me, because the Lord hath anointed me.* His unction consisted principally in the communication of the Spirit unto him. For he proves that the Spirit of the Lord was upon him, because he was anointed. And this gives us a general rule, that the anointing with material oil under the Old Testament, did prefigure and represent the effusion of the Spirit under the New, which now answers all the ends of those typical institutions. Hence the gospel, in opposition unto them all in the letter, outwardly, visibly, and materially, is called the ministration of the Spirit, 2 Cor. iii. 6, 8. So is the unction of Christ expressed, Isa. xi. 2. *The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.*

4. Whereas the unction of Christ did consist in the full communication of the Spirit unto him not by measure in all his graces and gifts, needful unto his human nature or his work, tho' it be essentially one entire work, yet was it carried on by several degrees and distinctions of time. For, (1.) He was anointed by the Spirit in his incarnation in the womb, Luke i. 35. the nature of which work we have at large before explained. (2.) He was so at his baptism, and entrance into his public ministry, when he was anointed to preach the gospel, as Isa. lxi. 1. *And the Holy Ghost descended on him in the shape of a dove*, Matth. iii. 17. The first part of his unction more peculiarly respected a fulness of the grace, the latter of the gifts of the Spirit. (3.) He was peculiarly anointed unto his death and sacrifice, in that divine act of his, whereby he sanctified himself thereunto, John xvii. 19. which hath also been before declared. (4.) He was at his ascension when he received of the Father the promise of the Spirit, pouring him forth on his disciples, Acts ii. 23. And in this latter instance he was anointed with the oil of gladness, which includes his glorious exaltation also. For this was absolutely peculiar unto him, whence he is said to be so anointed above his fellows. For although in some other

parts of this anointing, he hath them who partake of them by and from him in their measure, yet in this of receiving the Spirit with a power of communicating him unto others, herein he is singular, nor was ever any other person sharer with him therein in the least degree. See the Exposition on Heb. i. 8, 9. Now, although there be an inconceivable difference and distance between the unction of Christ and that of believers, yet is his the only rule of the interpretation of theirs, as to the kind thereof. And,

5. Believers have their unction immediately from Christ. So is it in the text: *You have an unction from the holy One.* So is he called, Acts iii. 14. Rev. iii. 7. *These things saith he that is holy. He himself was anointed as the most holy,* Dan. ix. 24. And it is his Spirit which believers do receive, Eph. iii. 16. Phil. i. 19. It is said, that he who anointeth us is God, 2 Cor. i. 21. And I do take God there personally for the Father, as the same name is in the verse foregoing. *For all the promises of God in him, that is in Christ, are yea, and in him, Amen.* Wherefore the Father is the original, supreme cause of our anointing, but the Lord Christ, the holy One is the immediate efficient cause thereof. This himself expresseth, when he affirms, that he will send the Spirit from the Father. The supreme donation is from the Father; the immediate collation from the Son.

6. It is therefore manifest, that the anointing of believers consisteth in the communication of the Holy Spirit unto them from and by Jesus Christ. It is not the Spirit that doth anoint us, but he is the unction wherewith we are anointed by the holy One. This the analogy unto the unction of Christ makes undeniable; for, as he was anointed, so are they in the same kind of unction, though in a degree inferior unto him. For they have nothing but a measure and portion from his fulness as he pleaseth, Eph. iv. 7. Our unction therefore is the communication of the Holy Spirit, and nothing else. He is that unction which is given unto us, and abideth with us. But this communication of the Spirit is general, and respects

all his operations. It doth not yet appear wherein the especial nature of it doth consist, and whence this communication of him is thus expressed by an unction. And this can be no otherwise learned, but from the effects ascribed unto him as he is an unction, and the relation with the resemblance that is therein, unto the unction of Christ. It is therefore some particular grace and privilege which is intended in this unction, 2 Cor. i. 21. It is mentioned only neutrally, without the ascription of any effects unto it, so that therein we cannot learn its especial nature. But there are two effects elsewhere ascribed unto it. The first is teaching with a saving, permanent knowledge of the truth thereby produced in our minds. This is fully expressed, 1 John ii. 20, 27. *You have an unction from the holy One, and you know all things; that is, all those things of the fundamental, essential truths of the gospel, all you need to know that you may obey God truly, and be saved infallibly. This you have by this unction. For this anointing which you have received, abideth in you, and teacheth you all things. And we may observe, that it is spoken of in an especial manner with respect unto our permanency and establishment in the truth, against prevalent seducers and seductions; so it is joined with establishing in that other place, 2 Cor. i. 21.*

Wherefore, in the first place, this anointing with the Holy Ghost, is the communication of him unto us with respect unto that gracious work of his in the spiritual, saving illumination of our minds, teaching us to know the truth, and to adhere firmly unto it in love and obedience. This is that which is peculiarly ascribed unto it; and we have no way to know the nature of it, but by its effects.

The anointing then of believers with the Spirit consists in the collation of him upon them, to this end, that he may graciously instruct them in the truths of the gospel, by the saving illumination of their minds, causing their souls firmly to cleave unto them with joy and de-



light, and transforming them in the whole inward man into the image and likeness of it. Hence it is called the *anointing of our eyes with eye-salve*, that we may see, Rev. iii. 18. So doth it answer that unction of the Lord Christ with the Spirit, which made him *quick of understanding in the fear of the Lord*, Isa. xi. 3. Let these things therefore be fixed, in the first place, namely, that the *τεχνηται*, the unction which believers receive from the holy one, is the Spirit himself; and that his first peculiar, especial effect as an unction, is his teaching us of the truths and mysteries of the gospel by saving illumination in the manner before described.

Hereunto also is referred what is said of believers being made kings and priests, Rev. i. 5. For there is an allusion therein unto the anointing those sorts of persons under the Old Testament. Whatever was typical therein was fully accomplished in the unction of Christ unto his office, wherein he was the sovereign king, priest, and prophet of the church. Wherefore by a participation in his unction, they are said to be made kings and priests, or a royal priesthood, as it is, 1 Peter ii. 9. and this participation of his unction consists in the communication of the same Spirit unto them wherewith he was anointed. Whereas therefore these titles denote the dignity of believers in their especial relation unto God, by this unction they are peculiarly dedicated and consecrated unto him.

It is manifest, therefore, first, that this unction we receive from the holy One, is the Holy Spirit, which he hath promised unto all that believe in him; and then that we have these two things by virtue thereof, (1.) Spiritual instruction by saving illumination in the mind of God, and the mysteries of the gospel. (2.) An especial dedication unto God, in the way of a spiritual privilege.

What remains, is to enquire, (1.) What benefit or advantage we have by this unction:

(2.) How this belongs unto our consolation, seeing

the Holy Spirit is thus bestowed on us, as he is promised to be the Comforter of the church.

As unto the first head, it is hereon that our stability in believing doth depend. For it is pleaded unto this purpose in a peculiar manner by the apostle, 1 John ii. 20, 27. It was the unction from the holy One, which then kept believers from being carried from the faith by the craft of seducers. Hereby he makes men according unto their measure of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. Nor will any thing else give assurance in this case. Temptations may come as a storm or tempest, which will quickly drive men from their greatest fleshly confidences. Hence oftentimes those who are forwardest to say, "Though all men should forsake the truth, yet "would not they so do," are the forwardest upon trials so to do. Neither will mens skill, cunning, or disputing abilities secure them from being at one time or other inveigled with fair pretences, or intangled with the cunning sleights of them who lye in wait to deceive. Nor will the best defences of flesh and blood, stand firmly and unshaken against powerful allurements, on the one hand, or fierce persecutions, on the other, the present artillery of the patrons and promoters of apostacy. None of these things doth the apostle prescribe or recommend unto believers, as an effectual means of their preservation, when a trial of their stability in the truth shall befall them. But this unction, he assures them, will not fail, neither shall they fail because of it.

And to this end we may consider, (1.) The nature of the teaching which we have by this anointing: *The anointing teacheth you.* It is not merely an external doctrinal instruction, but an internal, effectual operation of the Holy Ghost. Herein doth God give unto us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, that the eyes of our understanding being enlightened, we may know what is the hope of his calling, Eph. i. 17, 18. He maketh use indeed of the outward means of instruction by the word, and teacheth nothing but what is re-

vealed therein. But he gives us an understanding that we may know him that is true, and openeth our eyes, that we may clearly and spiritually see the wondrous things that are in his law. And there are no teachings like unto his. None so abiding, none so effectual. When spiritual things through this anointing are discovered in a spiritual manner, then do they take up an immoveable possession in the minds of men. As God will destroy every oppressive yoke because of the anointing of Christ, Isa. x. 27. so will he break every snare of seduction by the anointing of Christians. So it is promised that under the gospel, wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of the times, Isa. xxxiii. 6. Nothing will give stability in all seasons, but the wisdom and knowledge which are the effects of this teaching, when God gives us the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.

(2.) What it is that it teacheth; and that is *all things*. The same anointing teacheth you all things. So was the promise that he should *teach us all things, and bring all things to our remembrance* that Christ hath said unto us, John xiv. 26. and guide us into all truth, chap. xvi. 13. It is not all things absolutely that is intended, for they are restrained unto those of one certain kind, even the things which Christ had spoken, that is, such as belonged unto the kingdom of God. Neither are they all of them absolutely intended, especially as to the degrees of the knowledge of them. For in this life we know but in part, and see all things darkly as in a glass. But it is all things and all truth with respect unto the end of this promise and teaching. In the promise the whole life of faith, with joy and consolation thereon, is the end designed. All things necessary thereunto, this unction teacheth us. And in the other place of the apostle, it respects the great fundamental truths of the gospel which the seducers opposed, from whose seduction this unction doth secure believers. Wherefore it teacheth all that are made partakers of it, all that truth, all those things, all that Christ hath spoken, that are necessary unto these

ends that they may live unto God in the consolation of faith, and be delivered from all attempts to draw them into error.

The degrees of this knowledge which are exceeding various, both with respect unto the clearness and evidence of conception, and the extent of the things known, depend on the various measures whereby the Spirit acteth according unto his own will, and the different use of the external means of knowledge which we do enjoy. But what is necessary unto the ends mentioned, none shall come short of who enjoy this anointing. And where its teachings are complied withal in a way of duty, where we obstruct them not by prejudices and sloth, where we give up ourselves unto their directive efficacy in a diligent, impartial attendance unto the word whereby alone we are to be taught, we shall not fail of that knowledge in the whole counsel of God, and all the parts of it, which he will accept and bless. And this gives stability unto believers, when trials and temptations about the truth do befall them; and the want hereof in the uncurred darkness of their minds, and ignorance of the doctrine of the gospel, is that which betrays multitudes into a defection from it in seasons of temptation and persecution.

(3.) It so teacheth, as to give withal an approbation of and love unto the things that are taught. These are the next principle and cause of practice, or the doing of the things that we know, which is the only cement of all the means of our security, rendering them firm and stable. The mind may discern spiritual truths, but if the will and affections be not brought over to love them and delight in them, we shall never conform ourselves unto them in the diligent exercise and practice of what they do require. And what we may do on the solitary efficacy of light and conviction without the adherence of love and delight, will neither be acceptable unto God, nor shall we be permanent and stable therein. All other means in the world without the love and practice of the



truth, will be insufficient unto our preservation in the saving profession of it. And this is the characteristical note of the teachings by this unction. It gives and communicates with it, the love of that truth wherein we are instructed, and delight in obedience unto what it doth require. Where these are not, however raised our minds may be, or our understandings enlarged in the apprehension of objective truths, whatever sublime notions, or subtle conceptions about them we may have, though we could master and manage all the speculations and niceties of the schools in their most pretended accuracy of expression; yet, as to the power and benefit of religion, we should be but as sounding brass and tinkling symbals. But when this Holy Spirit doth in and by his teaching breathe into our hearts an holy divine love unto, and complacency in the things we are taught, when he enables us to taste how gracious the Lord is in them, rendering them sweeter unto us than the honey or honey-comb, when he makes them our delight and joy, exciting and quickening the practical principles of our minds unto a compliance with them in holy obedience, then have we that unction from the holy One which will both sanctify and secure our souls unto the end.

And hereby may we know, whether we have ourselves received of this anointing. Some would fain put it off unto what was peculiar unto the times of the apostles, and would suppose another kind of believers in those days, than any are now in the world, or need to be, though what our Saviour prayed for them, even for the apostles themselves, as to the Spirit of grace and consolation; he prayed also for all them who should believe on him, through their word, unto the end of the world. But, take away the promise of the Spirit, and the privileges thereon depending, from Christians, and in truth they cease so to be. Some neglect it, as if it were an empty expression, and either wholly insignificant, or, at best, intended somewhat wherein they need not much concern themselves; and whatever it be, they

doubt not but to secure the pretended ends of it in their preservation from seduction by their own skill and resolutions. On such pretences are all the mysteries of the gospel by many despised, and a religion is formed wherein the Spirit of Christ hath no concernment. But these things are otherwise stated in the minds of the true disciples of Christ. They know and own of how great importance it is to have a share in this unction; how much their conformity unto Christ, their participation of him, and the evidence of their union with him; how much their stability in profession, their joy in believing, their love and delight in obedience, with their dignity in the sight of God, and all his holy angels, do depend thereon. Neither do we look upon it as a thing obscure or unintelligible, that which no man can know whether he hath or no. For, if it were so, a thing so thin, aerial, and imperceptible, as that no spiritual sense or experience could be had of it, the apostle would not have referred all sorts and degrees of believers, fathers, young men, and little children unto it, for their relief and encouragement in the times of danger. Wherefore it evidenceth itself in the way and manner of its acting, operation, and teaching before declared. And as by those instances they satisfy themselves as unto what experience they have of it; so it is their duty to pray continually for its encrease, and further manifestation of its power in them: yea, it is their duty to labour that their prayers for it may be both fervent and effectual. For the more express and eminent the teachings of this anointing in them are, the more fresh and plentiful is their unction, the more will their holiness and consolation abound.

And whereas this is that by which, as it immediately proceeds from the Holy Spirit, they have their peculiar dedication unto God, being made kings and priests unto him, they are highly concerned to secure their interest therein. For it may be they are so far from being exalted, promoted, and dignified in the world by their profession, as that they are made thereby the scorn of men,

and the outcasts of the people. Those, indeed, whose kingdom and priesthood, their dignity and honour in Christianity, their approximation to God and Christ in a peculiar manner, consist in secular titles, honour, power, and grandeur, as it is in the papacy, may content themselves with their chryfine, or greasy unctiōn of their outward ceremonious consecration, without much enquiry after, or concern in this spiritual anointing. But those who get little or nothing in this world, that is, of the world, by their profession, but labour, pain, travail of soul and body, with scorns, reproaches, and persecutions, had need look after that which gives them a dignity and honour in the sight of God, and which brings in satisfaction and peace unto their own souls: and this is done by that anointing alone, whereby they are made kings and priests unto God, having honour before him, and a free, sacred access unto him.

I shall only add, that whereas we ascribe this anointing, in a peculiar manner, unto the Holy Ghost, as the Comforter of the church, we may easily discern wherein the consolation which we receive by it, doth consist: for who can express that satisfaction, refreshment, and joy which the mind is possessed with, in those spiritual, effectual teachings which give it a clear apprehension of saving truth in its own nature and beauty, and enlarge the heart with love unto it, and delight in it. It is true, that the greatest part of believers are oft-times either at such a loss, as unto a clear apprehension of their own spiritual state, or so unskilled in making a right judgment of the causes and means of divine consolations, or so confused in their own experiences, or so negligent in their enquiries into these things; or are so disordered by temptations, as that they receive not a refreshing sense of those comforts and joys which are really inseparable from this anointing. But still it is in itself that spring from whence their secret refreshments and supportments do arise. And there is none of them, but, upon guidance and instruction, are able to conceive, how their

chiefest joys and comforts, even those whereby they are supported in and against all their troubles, are resolved into that spiritual understanding which they have into the mysteries of the will, love, and grace of God in Christ, with that ineffable complacency and satisfaction which they find in them, whereby their wills are engaged into an unconquerable constancy in their choice. And there is no small consolation in a due apprehension of that spiritual dignity which ensues hereon. For when they meet with the greatest troubles, and the most contemptuous scorns in this world, a due apprehension of their acceptance with God, as being made kings and priests unto him, yield them a refreshment which the world know nothing of, and which themselves are not able to express.

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## C H A P. VI.

### *The Spirit a Seal, and how.*

**S**ECONDLY, another effect of the Holy Spirit, as the Comforter of the church, is, that by him believers are sealed, 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. *He who anointed us is God, who hath also sealed us.* And how this is done, the same apostle declares, Eph. i. 13. *In whom also, after ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.* And, chap. iv. 30. *And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed to the day of redemption.* In the first place, it is expressly said, that we are sealed with the Spirit, whereby the Spirit himself is expressed as this seal, and not any of his especial operations; as he is also directly said himself to be the pledge of our inheritance. In the latter, the words are *ἐν ᾧ ἐσφραγισθησθε,*



in whom, in and by the receiving of whom, ye are sealed. Wherefore no especial act of the Spirit, but only an especial effect of his communication unto us, seems to be intended hereby.

The common exposition of this sealing is taken from the nature and use of sealing among men. The sum whereof is this, sealing may be considered as a natural or moral action, that is, either with respect unto the act of it as an act, or with respect unto its use and end. In the first way it is the communication of the character or image that is on the seal unto the thing that is sealed, or that the impression of the seal is set unto. In answer hereunto, the sealing of the Spirit should consist in the communication of his own spiritual nature and likeness unto the souls of believers: so this sealing should materially be the same with our sanctification. The end and use of sealing among men is twofold: (1.) To give security unto the performance of deeds, grants, promises, testaments, and wills, or the like engaging signification of our minds. And, in answer hereunto, we may be said to be sealed when the promises of God are confirmed and established unto our souls, and we are secured of them by the Holy Ghost. But the truth is, this were to seal the promises of God, and not believers. But it is persons and not promises that are said to be sealed. (2.) It is for the safe-keeping or preservation of that which a seal is set upon. So things precious and highly valuable, are sealed up, that they may be kept safe and inviolable. So, on the other hand, when Job expressed his apprehension that God would keep an everlasting remembrance of his sin, that it should not be lost or out of the way, he saith, *his transgression was sealed up in a bag*, chap. xiv. 17. And so it is that power which the Holy Ghost puts forth in the preservation of believers, which is intended. And in this respect they are said to be *sealed unto the day of redemption*.

These things have been spoken unto and enlarged on by many, so that there is no need again to insist upon

them. And what is commonly delivered unto this purpose, is good and useful in the substance of it, and I have, on several occasions long since, myself made use of them. But, upon renewed thoughts and consideration, I cannot fully acquiesce in them: For, (1.) I am not satisfied that there is such an allusion herein unto the use of sealing among men, as is pretended. And if there be, it will fall out as we see it hath done, that there being so many considerations of seals and sealing, it will be hard to determine on any one particular which is principally intended. And if you take in more, as the manner of the most is to take in all they can think of, it will be unavoidable that acts and effects of various kinds will be assigned unto the Holy Ghost under the term of sealing, and so we shall never come to know what is that one determinate act and privilege which is intended therein. (2.) All things which are usually assigned as those wherein this sealing doth consist, are acts or effects of the Holy Ghost upon us whereby he seals us; whereas it is not said that the Holy Spirit seals us, but that we are sealed with him: he is God's seal unto us.

All our spiritual privileges, as they are immediately communicated unto us by Christ, so they consist wholly in a participation of that head, spring, and fulness of them which is in him. And as they proceed from our union with him, so their principal end is conformity unto him. And in him in whom all things are conspicuous, we may learn the nature of those things, which in lesser measure, and much darkness in ourselves, we are made partakers of. So do we learn our unction in his. So must we enquire into the nature of our being sealed by the Spirit in his sealing also. For, as it is said, that *he who hath sealed us is God*, 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. so of him it is said emphatically, *For him hath God the Father sealed*, John vi. 27. And if we can learn aright how God the Father sealed Christ, we shall learn how we are sealed in a participation of the same privilege.

I confess there are variety of apprehensions concern-

ing the act of God whereby Christ was sealed, or what it is that is intended thereby. *Maldonate* on the place reckons up ten several expositions of the words among the Fathers, and yet embraceth no one of them. It is not suited unto my design to examine or refute the expositions of others, whereof a large and plain field doth here open itself unto us. I shall only give an account of what I conceive to be the mind of the Holy Ghost in that expression. And we may observe,

First, That this is not spoken of Christ with respect unto his divine nature. He is indeed said to be the character of the person of the Father in his divine person as the Son, because there are in him, communicated unto him from the Father, all the essential properties of the divine nature; as the thing sealed receiveth the character or image of the seal. But this communication is by eternal generation, and not by sealing. But it is an external, transient act of God the Father on the human nature, with respect unto the discharge of his office. For it is given as the reason why he should be complied withal and believed in in that work. *Labour for that bread which the Son of Man shall give unto you; for him hath God the Father sealed.* It is the ground whereon he persuades them to faith and obedience unto himself.

Secondly, It is not spoken of him with an especial respect unto his kingly office, as some conceive. For this sealing of Christ they would have to be his designation of God unto his kingdom, in opposition unto what is affirmed, ver. 15. That the people designed to come and make him a King by force. For that is only an occasional expression of the sense of the people, the principal subject, treated on, is of a nobler nature. But whereas the people did flock after him on the account of a temporal benefit received by him, in that they were fed, filled, and satisfied with the loaves which he had miraculously increased, ver. 26. He takes occasion from thence to propose unto them the spiritual mercies that he had to tender unto them. And this he doth in answer to the bread



they had eat, under the name of meat, and bread enduring to everlasting life, which he would give unto them. Under this name and notion of meat, he did comprise all the spiritual nourishment in his doctrine, person, mediation, and grace, that he had prepared for them. But on what grounds should they look for these things from him? how might it appear that he was authorised and enabled thereunto? In answer unto that enquiry, he gives this account of himself, *For him hath God the Father sealed*, namely, unto this end.

Thirdly, Wherefore the sealing of God unto this end and purpose, must have two properties, and two ends also annexed unto it: (1.) There is in it a communication of authority and ability: for the enquiry is, how he could give them that meat *which endured unto everlasting life?* As afterwards they ask expressly, *How can this man give us his flesh to eat?* ver. 52. To this it is answered, that God the Father had *sealed him*, that is, he it was who was enabled of God the Father to give and dispense the spiritual food of the souls of men. This therefore is evidently included in this sealing. (2.) It must have evidence in it also, that is, somewhat whereby it may be evidenced that he was thus authorised and enabled by God the Father. For whatever authority or ability any one may have unto any end, none is obliged to make application unto him for it, or depend upon him therein, unless it be evidenced, that he hath that authority and ability. This the Jews immediately enquired after. *What sign (say they) dost thou then, that we may see and believe thee? what dost thou work?* ver. 30. How shall it be demonstrated unto us that thou art authorised and enabled to give us the spiritual food of our souls? This also belonged unto his sealing; for therein there was such an express representation of divine power communicated unto him, as evidently manifested that he was appointed of God unto this work. These two properties therefore must be found in this sealing of the Lord Christ with respect unto the end



here mentioned, namely, that he might be the *Promiscundus*, or principal dispenser of the spiritual food of the souls of men.

Fourthly, It being God's seal, it must also have two ends designed in it: (1.) God's owning of him to be his. Him hath God the Father sealed unto this end, that all may know and take notice of his owning and approbation of him. He would have him not looked on as one among the rest of them that dispensed spiritual things, but as him whom he had singled out and peculiarly marked for himself. And therefore this he publicly and gloriously testified at the entrance; and, again, a little before the finishing of his ministry: for, upon his baptism, there came a voice from heaven, saying, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased*, Matth. iii. 17. which was nothing but a public declaration, that this was he whom God had sealed, and so owned in a peculiar manner. And this testimony was afterwards renewed again at his transfiguration on the Mount, Matth. xvii. 5. *Behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased, hear ye him*: this is he whom I have sealed. And this testimony is pleaded by the apostle Peter, as that whereinto their faith in him as the sealed one of God, was resolved, 2 Peter i. 17, 18. (2.) To manifest that God would take care of him, and preserve him in his work unto the end, Isa. xlii.

Fifthly, Wherefore, this sealing of the Son is the communication of the Holy Spirit in all fulness unto him, authorising him unto, and actuating his divine power in all the acts and duties of his office, so as to evidence the presence of God with him, and approbation of him, as the only person that was to distribute the spiritual food of their souls unto men. For the Holy Spirit, by his powerful operations, in and by him, did evince and manifest, that he was called and appointed of God to this work, owned by him, and accepted with him, which was God's sealing of him. Hence, the sin of them who despised this seal of God, was unpardon-

able. For God neither will nor can give greater testimony unto his approbation of any person, than by the Great Seal of his Spirit. And this was given unto Christ in all the fulness of it. He was *declared to be the Son of God according to the Spirit of holiness*, Rom. i. 4. and justified in the Spirit, or by his power, evidencing that God was with him, 1 Tim. iii. 16. Thus did God seal the Head of the church with the Holy Spirit; and thence, undoubtedly, may we best learn how the members are sealed with the same Spirit, seeing we have all our measures out of his fulness, and our conformity unto him is the design of all gracious communications unto us.

Sixthly, Wherefore, God's sealing of believers with the Holy Spirit, is his gracious communication of the Holy Ghost unto them, so to actuate his divine power in them, as to enable them unto all the duties of their holy calling, evidencing them to be accepted with him both unto themselves and others, and asserting their preservation unto eternal salvation. The effects of this sealing are gracious operations of the Holy Spirit in and upon believers; but the sealing itself is the communication of the Spirit unto them. They are sealed with the Spirit. And, farther, to evidence the nature of it with the truth of our declaration of this privilege, we may observe,

1. That when any persons are so effectually called, as to become true believers, they are brought into many new relations, as to God himself, as his children, unto Jesus Christ, as his members, unto all saints and angels, in the families of God above and below; and are called to many new works, duties, and uses which before they knew nothing of. They are brought into a new world, erected by the new creation, and which way soever they look or turn themselves, they say, *Old things are past away, behold all things are become new.* So it is with every one that is made a new creature in Christ Jesus, 2 Cor. v. 17. In this state and condition,

wherein a man hath new principles put within him, new relations contracted about him, new duties presented unto him, and a new deportment in all things required of him, how shall he be able to behave himself aright, and answer the condition and holy station wherein he is placed? This no man can do of himself; for who is sufficient for these things? Wherefore,

2. In this state God owns them, and communicates unto them his Holy Spirit, to fit them for their relations, to enable them unto their duties, to actuate their new principles, and every way to discharge the work they are called unto, even as their Head, the Lord Christ, was unto his. God doth not now give unto them the spirit of fear, but of *power*, of *love*, and of a *sound mind*, 2 Tim. i. 7. And hereby doth God seal them: For,

(1.) Hereby he gives his testimony unto them, that they are his, owned by him, accepted with him, his sons, or children; which is his seal: for, if they were not so, he would never have given his Holy Spirit unto them. And herein consists the greatest testimony that God doth give, and the only seal that he doth set unto any in this world. That this is God's testimony and seal, the apostle Peter proveth, Acts xv. 8, 9. For, on the debate of that question, whether God approved and accepted of the humble believers, although they observed not the rites of Moses? he confirmeth that he did, with this argument: *God, saith he, which knoweth their hearts, bare them witness.* How did he do it? how did he set his seal to them as his? Saith he, *By giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us.* Hereby God gives testimony unto them. And lest any should suppose that it was only the gifts and miraculous operations of the Holy Ghost which he had respect unto, so as that this sealing of God should consist therein alone, he adds, that his gracious operations also were no less an effect of this witness which God gave unto them; *and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.* This therefore



is that whereby God giveth his testimony unto believers, namely, when he seals them with his Spirit, or by the communication of the Holy Spirit unto them. And this he doth in two respects: For,

(2.) This is that whereby he giveth believers assurance of their relation unto him, of their interest in him, of his love and favour to them. It hath been generally conceived, that this sealing with the Spirit, is that which gives assurance unto believers; and so indeed it doth, although the way whereby it doth it, hath not been rightly apprehended. And therefore none have been able to declare the especial nature of that act of the Spirit whereby he seals us, whence such assurance should ensue. But it is not any act of the Spirit in us that is the ground of our assurance, but the communication of the Spirit unto us. This the apostle plainly testifieth 1 John iii. 24. *Herby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.* That God abideth in us, and we in him, is the subject-matter of our assurance; *This we know*, saith the apostle; which expresth the highest assurance we are capable of in this world. And how do we know it? even by the Spirit which he hath given unto us. But, it may be, the sense of these words may be, that the Spirit which God gives us doth by some especial work of his, effect this assurance in us; and so it is not his being given unto us, but some especial work of his in us, that is the ground of our assurance, and consequently our sealing. I do not deny such an especial work of the Spirit as shall be afterwards declared; but I judge that it is the communication of the Spirit himself unto us that is here intended: for so the apostle declares his sense to be, chap. iv. 13. *Hereby know we, that we dwell in God, and he in us, because he hath given us his Spirit.* This is the great evidence, the great ground of assurance which we have, that God hath taken us into a near and dear relation unto himself, because he hath given us of his Spirit; and that great and heavenly gift which he will impart unto no others. And indeed on this one hinge



depends the whole case of that assurance which believers are capable of. If the Spirit of God dwell in us, we are his; *But if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*, Rom. viii. 9. Here alone depends the determination of our especial relation unto God. By this therefore doth God seal believers, and therein gives them assurance of his love. And this is to be the sole rule of your self-examination, whether you are sealed of God or no.

(3.) Hereby God evidenceth them unto the world, which is another end of sealing. He marks them so hereby for his own, as that the world cannot but in general take notice of them. For where God sets this seal in the communication of his Spirit, it will so operate and produce such effects, as shall fall under the observation of the world. As it did in the Lord Christ, so also will it do in believers according unto their measure. And there are two ways whereby God's sealing doth evidence them unto the world. The one is by the effectual operation of the Spirit communicated unto them both in gifts and graces. Though the world is blinded with prejudices, and under the power of a prevalent enmity against spiritual things, yet it cannot but discover what a change is made in the most of those whom God thus sealeth, and how by the gifts and graces of the Spirit, which they hate, they are differenced from other men. And this is that which keeps up the difference and enmity that is in the world between the seeds. For God's sealing of believers with his Spirit evidenceth his especial acceptance of them, which fills the hearts of them who are actuated with the spirit of Cain, with hatred and revenge. Hence many think that the respect which God had unto the sacrifice of Abel was testified by some visible sign, which Cain also might take notice of. And that there was an *εμπυρισμος*, the kindling of his sacrifice by fire from heaven, which was the type and resemblance of the Holy Ghost, as hath been shewed. All other causes of difference are capable of a composition, but this, about the

seal of God, can never be composed. And that which followeth from hence is, that those who are thus sealed with the Spirit of God, cannot but separate themselves from the most of the world, whereby it is more evidenced unto whom they do belong.

(4.) Hereby God seals believers unto the day of redemption, or everlasting salvation. For the Spirit, thus given unto them, is, as we have shewed already, to abide with them for ever, as a *well of water*, in them, *springing up into everlasting life*, John vii.

This therefore is that seal which God grants unto believers, even his Holy Spirit, for the ends mentioned, which, according unto their measure, and for this work and end, answers that great seal of heaven which God gave unto the Son, by the communication of the Spirit unto him in all its divine fulness, authorising and enabling him unto his whole work, and evidencing him to be called of God thereunto.

## C H A P. VII.

### *The Spirit an Earnest, and how.*

**A** GAIN, the Holy Spirit, as thus communicated unto us, is said to be an earnest. Ἀρραβων the word in the original is no where used in the New Testament, but in this matter alone, 2 Cor. ii. 22. chap. v. 5. Eph. i. 14. The Latin translator renders this word by *Pignus*, a pledge. But he is corrected therein by Hierom on Eph. i. *Pignus*, saith he, *Latinus Interpres pro arrabone posuit. Non id ipsum autem Arrabo quod pignus sonat. Arrabo enim futuræ emptioni quasi quoddam testimonium, & obligamentum datur. Pignus vero, hoc est ἐνεχον pro mutua pecunia apponitur, ut quum illa reddita fuerit, red-*

*denti debitum pignus a Creditore reddatur.* And this reason is generally admitted by expositors. For a pledge is that which is committed to and left in the hand of another, to secure him, that money which is borrowed thereon shall be repaid, and then the pledge is to be received back again. Hence it is necessary, that a pledge be more in value than the money received, because it is taken in security for repayment. But an earnest is a part only of what is to be given or paid, or some lesser thing that is given to secure somewhat that is more or greater in the same or another kind. And this difference must be admitted, if we are obliged to the precise signification and common use of pledges and earnest among men, which we must enquire into. The word is supposed to be derived from the Hebrew ארבה; and the Latins make use of it also, *Arrhabon*, and *Arrha*. It is sometimes used in other authors; as Plutarch in *Galba*. Ἐφθακει προειληφως ἀρραβωσι μεγαλοκ τοι Οβινιον; he prepossessed Obinius with great sums of money, as an earnest of what he would do afterwards. Hesychius explains it by προδομα, a gift beforehand. As to what I apprehend to be the mind of the Holy Ghost in this expression, I shall declare it in the ensuing observations:

First, It is not any act or work of the Holy Spirit on us, or in us, that is called his being an earnest. It is he himself who is this earnest. This is express in every place where there is mention made of it, 2 Cor. i. 22. δεσ τοι ἀρραβω τα τε πνευματος; the earnest of the Spirit; that earnest which is the Spirit, or the Spirit as an earnest; as Austin reads the words, *Arrhabona Spiritum*, chap. v. 5. *Who hath also given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.* The giving of this earnest is constantly assigned to be the act of God the Father, who, according to the promise of Christ, would send the Comforter unto the church. And in the other place, Eph. i. 14. it is expressly said that the Holy Spirit is the *earnest of our inheritance*. Every where the article is of the masculine gender, ος εστιν ἀρραβων; and πνευμα, the Spirit is of the neuter. Some would

have it to refer unto Christ, ver. 12. But, as it is not unusual in scripture that the subjunctive article and relative should agree in gender with the following substantive, as  $\epsilon\iota$  here doth with  $\alpha\rho\rho\alpha\lambda\omega\tau$ ; so the scripture speaking of the Holy Ghost, though  $\piνευμα$  be of the neuter gender, yet having respect unto the thing, that is, the person of the Spirit, it subjoins the pronoun of the masculine gender unto it, as John xiv. 26. Wherefore the Spirit himself is the earnest, as given unto us from the Father by the Son. And this act of God is expressed by giving or putting him into our hearts, 2 Cor. i. 22. How he doth this, hath been before declared, both in general, and with respect in particular unto his inhabitation. The meaning therefore of the words is, that God gives unto us his Holy Spirit to dwell in us, and to abide with us, as an earnest of our future inheritance.

Secondly, It is indifferent whether we use the name of an earnest or a pledge in this matter. And although I chuse to retain that of an earnest, from the most usual acceptation of the word, yet I do it not upon the reason alledged for it, which is taken from the especial nature and use of an earnest in the dealings of men. For it is the end only of an earnest whereon the Holy Ghost is so called, which is the same with that of a pledge; and we are not to force the similitude or allusion any farther. For, precisely, among men an earnest is the confirmation of a bargain and contract made on equal terms between buyers and sellers, or exchangers. But there is no such contract between God and us. It is true, there is a supposition of an antecedent covenant, but not as a bargain or contract between God and us. The covenant of God, as it respects the dispensation of the Spirit, is a mere free gratuitous promise; and the stipulation of obedience on our part is consequential thereunto. Again, he that giveth an earnest in a contract or bargain, doth not principally aim at his own obligation to pay such or such a sum of money, or somewhat equivalent thereunto, tho'



he do that also; but his principal design is to secure unto himself that which he hath bargained for, that it may be delivered up unto him at the time appointed. But there is nothing of this nature in the earnest of the Spirit, wherein God intends our assurance only, and not his own. And sundry other things there are wherein the comparison will not hold, nor is to be urged, because they are not intended.

The general end of an earnest or a pledge, is all that is alluded unto: and this is to give security of somewhat that is future, or to come. And this may be done in a way of free bounty, as well as upon the strictest contract. As if a man have a poor friend or relation, he may, of his own accord, give him a sum of money, and bid him take it as a pledge or earnest of what he will yet do for him: so doth God, in a way of sovereign grace and bounty, give his Holy Spirit unto believers; and, withal, lets them know, that it is with a design to give them much more in his appointed season. And here is he said to be an earnest. Other things that are observed from the nature and use of an earnest in civil contracts and bargains between men, belong not hereunto, though many things are occasionally spoken and discoursed from them of good use unto edification.

Thirdly, In two of the places wherein mention is made of this matter, the Spirit is said to be an earnest, but wherein, or unto what end, is not expressed, 2 Cor. i. 22. chap. v. 5. The third place affirms him to be an *earnest of our inheritance*, Eph. i. 14. What that is, and how he is so, may be briefly declared. And,

1. We have already manifested, that all our participation of the Holy Spirit, in any kind, is upon the account of Jesus Christ, and we do receive him immediately as the Spirit of Christ. *For to as many as receive Christ, the Father gives power to become the sons of God*, John i. 12. *And because we are sons, he sends forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts*, Gal. iv. 6. And as we receive the Spirit from him, and as his Spirit, so he is given unto us

to make us conformable unto him, and to give us a participation of his gifts, graces, and privileges.

2. Christ himself, in his own person, is the heir of all things. So he was appointed of God, Heb. i. 2. and therefore the whole inheritance is absolutely his. What this inheritance is, what is the glory and power that is contained therein, I have at large declared in the exposition of that place.

3. Man, by his sin, had universally forfeited his whole right unto all the ends of his creation, both on the earth below, and in heaven above. Death and hell were become all that the whole race of mankind had either right or title unto. But yet all the glorious things that God had provided were not to be cast away, an heir was to be provided for them. Abraham, when he was old and rich, had no child, complained that his steward, *a servant, was to be his heir*, Gen. xv. 3, 4. but God lets him know, that he would provide another heir for him of his own seed. When man had lost his right unto the whole inheritance of heaven and earth, God did not so take the forfeiture, as to seize it all into the hands of justice, and destroy it: but he invested the whole inheritance in his Son, making him the heir of all. This he was meet for, as being God's eternal Son by nature, and hereof the donation was free, gratuitous, and absolute. And this grant was confirmed unto him, by his unction with the fulness of the Spirit. But,

4. This inheritance, as to our interest therein, lay under a forfeiture; and, as unto us, it must be redeemed and purchased, or we can never be made partakers of it. Wherefore the Lord Christ, who had a right in his own person unto the whole inheritance by the free grant and donation of the Father, yet was to redeem it from under the forfeiture, and purchase the possession of it for us: thence is it called the *purchased possession*. How this purchase was made, what made it necessary, by what means it was effected, are declared in the doctrine of our redemption by Christ, the price which he

paid, and the purchase that he made thereby: And hereon the whole inheritance is vested in the Lord Christ, not only as unto his own person, and his right unto the whole, but he became the great trustee for the whole church, and had their interest in this inheritance committed unto him also. No man therefore can have a right unto this inheritance, or to any part of it, not unto the least share of God's creation here below, as a part of the rescued or purchased inheritance, but by virtue of an interest in Christ, and union with him. Wherefore,

Fourthly, The way whereby we come to have an interest in Christ, and thereby a right unto the inheritance, is by the participation of the Spirit of Christ, as the apostle fully declares, Rom. viii. 14, 15, 16, 17. For it is by the Spirit of adoption, the Spirit of the Son, that we are made children. Now, saith the apostle, *If we are children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.* Children are heirs unto their father. And those who are children of God, are heirs of that inheritance which God hath provided for his children. *Heirs of God.* And all the good things of grace and glory which believers are made partakers of in this world, or that which is to come, are called their inheritance, because they are the effects of free, gratuitous adoption. They are not things that themselves have purchased, bargained for, earned, or merited, but an inheritance depending on and following solely upon their free gratuitous adoption. But how can they become heirs of God, seeing God hath absolutely appointed the Son alone to be heir of all things? Heb. i. 2. He was heir unto whom the whole inheritance belonged. Why, saith the apostle, by the participation of the Spirit of Christ, we are made joint heirs with Christ. The whole inheritance, as unto his personal right, was entirely his by the free donation of the Father, all power in heaven and earth being given unto him. But if he will take others into a joint right

with him, he must purchase it for them, which he did accordingly.

Fifthly, Hence it is manifest, how the Holy Spirit becomes the earnest of our inheritance; for by him, that is, by the communication of him unto us, we are made joint heirs with Christ, which gives us our right and title, whereby our names are, as it were, inserted into the assured conveyance of the great and full inheritance of grace and glory. In the giving of his Spirit unto us, God making us coheirs with Christ, we have the greatest and most assured earnest and pledge of our future inheritance. And he is to be thus an earnest until, or unto the redemption of the purchased possession. For, after that a man hath a good and firm title unto an inheritance settled on him, it may be a long time before he can be admitted into an actual possession of it, and many difficulties he may have in the mean time to conflict withal. And it is so in this case. The earnest of the Spirit given unto us, whereby we become coheirs with Christ, whose Spirit we are made partakers of, secures the title of the inheritance in and unto our whole persons. But before we can come unto the full possession of it, not only have we many spiritual trials and temptations to conflict withal in our souls, but our bodies also are liable unto death and corruption. Wherefore, whatever first-fruits we may enjoy, yet can we not enter into the actual possession of the whole inheritance, until not only our souls are delivered from all sins and temptations, but our bodies also are rescued out of the dust of the grave. This is the full redemption of the purchased possession, whence it is signally called the *redemption of the body*, Rom. viii. 23.

Thus, as the Lord Christ himself was made heir of all things by that communication of the Spirit unto him, whereby he was anointed unto his office; so the participation of the same Spirit from him, and by him, makes us coheirs with him, and so he is an earnest given us of God of the future inheritance. It belongs not unto my



present purpose to declare the nature of that inheritance, whereof the Holy Spirit is the earnest. In brief, it is the highest participation with Christ in that glory and honour that our natures are capable of.

And in like manner we are said to receive ἀπαρχὴν τοῦ πνεύματος, Rom. viii. 23. that is, the Spirit himself, as the first-fruits of our spiritual and eternal redemption. God had appointed that the first-fruits, which are called רשית and בכורים should be a תרומה, an offering unto himself. Hereunto ἀπαρχὴ answereth, and is taken generally for that which is first in any kind, Rom. xvi. 5. 1 Cor. xv. 20. James i. 18. Rev. xiv. 4. And the first-fruits of the Spirit must be either what he first worketh in us, or all his fruits in us with respect unto the full harvest that is to come; or the Spirit himself, as the beginning and pledge of future glory. And the latter of these is intended in this place. For the apostle discourseth about the liberty of the whole creation from that state of bondage whereunto all things were subjected by sin. With respect hereunto, he saith, that believers themselves having not as yet obtained a full deliverance, as he had expressed it, chap. vii. 24. do groan after its perfect accomplishment. But yet, saith he, we have the beginning of it, the first-fruits of it, in the communication of the Spirit unto us: *For where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty*, 2 Cor. iii. 17. For although we are not capable of the full and perfect estate of the liberty provided for the children of God, whilst we are in this world, conflicting with the remainders of sin, pressed and exercised with temptations, our bodies also being subject unto death and corruption, yet, where the Spirit of God is, where we have that first-fruit of the fulness of our redemption, there is liberty in the real beginning of it, and assured consolation, because it shall be consummated in the appointed season.

These are some of the spiritual benefits and privileges which believers enjoy by a participation of the Holy Ghost, as the promised Comforter of the church: these things he is unto them, and as unto all other things be-

longing unto their consolation, he works them in them, which we must, in the next place, enquire into. Only something we may take notice of from what we have already insisted on: As, (1.) That all evangelical privileges whereof believers are made partakers in this world, do centre in the person of the Holy Spirit. He is the great promise that Christ hath made unto his disciples, the great legacy which he hath bequeathed unto them. The grant made unto him by the Father, when he had done all his will, and fulfilled all righteousness, and exalted the glory of his holiness, wisdom, and grace, was this of the Holy Spirit, to be communicated by him unto the church. This he received of the Father, as the complement of his reward, when he saw the *travail of his soul, and was satisfied*. This Spirit he now gives unto believers, and no tongue can express the benefits which they receive thereby. Therein are they anointed and sealed, therein do they receive the earnest and first-fruits of immortality and glory. In a word, therein are they taken into a participation with Christ himself in all his honour and glory. Hereby is their condition rendered honourable, safe, comfortable, and the whole inheritance is unchangeably secured unto them. In this one privilege, therefore, of receiving the Spirit, are all others enwrapped: For, (2.) No one way, or thing, or similitude, can express or represent the greatness of this privilege. It is anointing, it is sealing, it is an earnest, and first-fruit, every thing whereby the love of God, and the blessed security of our condition may be expressed or intimated unto us: for what greater pledge can we have of the love and favour of God? what greater dignity can we be made partakers of? what greater assurance of a future, blessed condition, than that God hath given us of his Holy Spirit? And, (3.) Hence also it is manifest, how abundantly willing he is, that the heirs of promise should receive strong consolation in all their distresses, when they fly for refuge unto the hope that is set before them.

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T H E  
A P P L I C A T I O N  
O F T H E  
F O R E G O I N G D I S C O U R S E.

**W**ITH respect unto the dispensation of the Spirit towards believers, and his holy operations in them and upon them, there are sundry particular duties, whereof he is the immediate object, prescribed unto them. And they are those whereby, on our part, we comply with him in his work of grace, whereby it is carried on, and rendered useful unto us. Now, whereas this Holy Spirit is a divine person, and he acts in all things towards us as a free agent according unto his own will, the things enjoined us, with respect unto him, are those whereby we may carry ourselves aright towards such a one, namely, as he is an holy, divine, intelligent person, working freely in and towards us for our good. And they are of two sorts; the first whereof are expressed in prohibitions of those things which are unsuited unto him, and his dealings with us; the latter in commands for our attendance unto such duties as are peculiarly suited unto a compliance with him in his operations; in both which our obedience is to be exercised with a peculiar regard unto him. I shall begin with the first sort, and go over them in the instances given us in the scripture.

I. We have a negative precept to this purpose, Eph. iv. 30. *μη λυπετε το πνευμα το ἅγιον, Grieve not the Holy Spirit.* Consider who he is, what he hath done for you, how great your concern is in his continuance with you; and, withal, that he is a free, infinitely wise and holy agent, in all that he doth, who came freely unto you, and can withdraw from you, and grieve him not. It is the person of the Holy Spirit that is intended in the words, as appears, (1.) From the manner of the expression, *το πνευμα το ἅγιον*, that *Holy Spirit.* (2.) By the work assigned unto him; for by him we are *sealed unto the day of redemption*; him we are not to grieve. The expression seems to be borrowed from Isa. lxiii. 10. where mention is made of the sin and evil here prohibited, *יהמה מרו ועצב את רוח קדשו*, *but they rebelled, and vexed the Holy Spirit.* *קצב* is to *trouble* and to *grieve*, and is used when it is done to a great degree. The LXX render it here by *παρῆξιον*, which is *to grieve*, as also *to irritate* and *provoke to anger and indignation*, because it hath respect unto the rebellions of the people in the Wilderness, which our apostle expresseth by *παρῆξιον* and *παρῆξιον*, words of the same signification. To *vex*, therefore, is the heightening of *grieving* by a provocation unto *anger and indignation*; which sense is suited to the place and matter treated of, though the word signify no more but *to grieve*, Gen. xlv. 5. 1 Kings xix. 2.

Now, grief is here ascribed unto the Holy Spirit, as it is elsewhere unto God absolutely, Gen. vi. 6. *It repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.* Such affections and perturbations of mind are not ascribed unto God or the Spirit but metaphorically. That intended, in such ascriptions, is to give us an apprehension of things as we are able to receive it. And the measure we take of them is their nature and effects in ourselves. What may justly grieve a good man, and what he will do when he is unjustly or undeservedly grieved, represent unto us what we are to



understand of our own condition with respect unto the Holy Ghost, when he is said to be grieved by us. And grief, in the sense here intended, is a trouble of mind arising from an apprehension of unkindness not deserved, of disappointments not expected, on the account of a near concernment in those by whom we are grieved. We may therefore see hence, what it is we are warned of, when we are enjoined not to grieve the Holy Spirit: As,

1. There must be unkindness in what we do. Sin hath various respects towards God, of guilt and filth, and the like. These several considerations of it have several effects. But that which is denoted, when it is said to grieve him, is unkindness, or that defect of an answerable love unto the fruits and testimonies of his love which we have received, that it is accompanied withal. He is the Spirit of love, he is love. All his acting towards us, and in us, are fruits of love, and they all of them leave an impression of love upon our souls. All the joys and consolation we are made partakers of in this world, arise from a sense of the love of God, communicated in an endearing way of love unto our souls. This requires a return of love and delight in all duties of obedience on our part. When, instead hereof, by our negligence and carelessness, or otherwise, we fall into those things or ways which he most abhors, he greatly respects the unkindness and ingratitude which is therein, and is therefore said to be grieved by us.

2. Disappointment in expectation. It is known that no disappointment properly can befall the Spirit of God. It is utterly inconsistent with his prescience and omniscience. But we are disappointed, when things fall not out according as we justly expected they would, in answer unto the means used by us for their accomplishment. And when the means that God useth towards us, do not, by reason of our sin, produce the effect they are suited unto, God proposeth himself as under a disappointment.

So he speaks of his vineyard, *I looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes*, Isa. v. 2. Now, disappointment causeth grief: As when a father hath used all means for the education of a child in any honest way or course, and expended much of his estate therein, if he, through dissoluteness or idleness, fail his expectation, and disappoint him, it fills him with grief. They are great things which are done for us by the Spirit of God. These, all of them, have their tendency unto an increase in holiness, light, and love. . . Where they are not answered, where there is not a suitable effect, there is that disappointment that causeth grief. Especially is this so with respect unto some signal mercies. A return in holy obedience is justly expected on their account. And where this is not, it is a thing causing grief. This are we here minded of, *Grieve not the Spirit whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption*. So great a kindness should have produced other effects, than those there mentioned by the apostles. .

3. The concernment of the Holy Spirit in us concur to his being said to be grieved by us. For we are grieved by them in whom we are particularly concerned. The miscarriages of others we can pass over without any such trouble. And there are three things that gives us an especial concernment in others: (1.) Relation, as that of a father, and husband, a brother. This makes us to be concerned in, and consequently to be grieved for the miscarriages of them that are related unto us. So is it with the Holy Spirit: he hath undertaken the office of a Comforter towards us, and stands in that relation to us. Hence he is so concerned in us, as that he is said to be grieved with our sins, when he is not so at the sins of them unto whom he stands not in especial relation. (2.) Love gives concernment, and makes way for grief upon occasion of it. Those whom we love we are grieved for, and by: others may provoke indignation, but they cause not grief, I mean on their own account; for otherwise

we ought to grieve for the sins of all. And what is the especial love of the Holy Ghost towards us, hath been declared.

From what hath been spoken, it is evident what we are warned of, what is enjoined unto us, when we are cautioned not to grieve the Holy Spirit, and how we may do so: For we do it,

(1.) When we are not influenced by his love and kindness, to answer his mind and will in all holy obedience, accompanied with joy, love, and delight. This he deserves at our hands, this he expects from us; and where it is neglected, because of his concernment in us, we are said to grieve him: for he looks not only for our obedience, but also that it be filled up with joy, love, and delight. When we attend unto duties with an unwilling mind; when we apply ourselves unto any acts of obedience in a bondage or servile frame, we grieve him, who hath deserved other things of us.

(2.) When we lose and forget the sense and impressions of signal mercies received by him. So the apostle, to give efficacy unto his prohibition, adds the signal benefit which we receive by him, in that he seals us to the day of redemption; which, what it is, and wherein it doth consist, hath been declared. And hence it is evident, that he speaks of the Holy Spirit as dwelling in believers; for as such he seals them. Whereas therefore, in and by sin, we forget the great grace, kindness, and condescension of the Holy Spirit in his dwelling in us, and by various ways communicating of the love and grace of God unto us; we may be well said to grieve him. And certainly this consideration, together with that of the vile ingratitude and horrible folly there is in neglecting and defiling his dwelling-place, with the danger of his withdrawing from us on the continuance of our provocation, ought to be as effectual a motive unto universal holiness, and constant watchfulness therein, as any can be proposed unto us.

(3.) Some sins there are which, in an especial manner.

above others, do grieve the Holy Spirit. These our apostle expressly discourseth of, 1 Cor. iii. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. And, by the connection of the words in this place, he seems to make corrupt communication, which always hath a tendency unto corruption of conversation, to be a sin of this nature, ver. 29, 30.

Secondly, That which we have rendered to *vex him*, Isa. lxiii. 10. is but the heightening and aggravation of his being grieved by our continuance, and it may be obstinacy in those ways whereby he is grieved. For this is the progress in these things. If those whom we are concerned in, as children, or other relations, do fall into miscarriages and sins, we are first grieved by it. This grief in ourselves is attended with pity and compassion towards them, with an earnest endeavour for their recovery. But if, notwithstanding all our endeavours, and the application of means for their reducement, they continue to go on frowardly in their ways, then are we vexed at them; which includes an addition of anger and indignation unto our former sorrow or grief. Yet, in this posture of things, we cease not to attempt their cure for a season, which if it succeed not, but they continue in their obstinacy, then we resolve to treat with them no more, but to leave them to themselves. And not only so, but upon our satisfaction of their resolution for a continuance in ways of sin and debauchery, we deal with them as their enemies, and labour to bring them unto punishment. And, for our better understanding of the nature of our sin and provocation, this whole scheme of things is ascribed unto the Holy Ghost with respect unto them. How he is said to be grieved, and on what occasion, hath been declared. Upon a continuance in those ways wherewith he is grieved, he is said to be vexed; that we may understand there is also anger and displeasure towards us; yet he forsakes us not, yet he takes not from us the means of grace and our recovery. But if we discover an obstinacy in our ways, and an untreatable perverseness, then he will cast us off, and deal with us no



more for our recovery: and wo unto us when he shall depart from us! So, when the old world would not be brought to repentance by the dispensation of the Spirit of Christ in the preaching of Noah, 1 Peter iii. 19, 20. God said thereon, that his Spirit should give over, and not always *contend with man*, Gen. vi. 3. Now, the cessation of the operations of the Spirit towards men, obstinate in ways of sin, after he hath been long grieved and vexed, compriseth three things: (1.) A subduction from them of the means of grace, either totally, by the removal of their light and candlestick, all ways of the revelation of the mind and will of God unto them, Rev. ii. 5. or, as unto the efficacy of the word towards them, where the outward dispensation of it is continued, *so that hearing they shall hear, but not understand*, Isa. vi. 9. John xii. 40. For by the word it is that he strives with the souls and minds of men. (2.) A gracious forbearance of all chastisement, out of a gracious design to heal and recover them, Isa. i. 6. (3.) A giving of them up unto themselves, or leaving them unto their own ways; which, although it seems only a consequent of the two former, and to be included in them, yet is there indeed in it a positive act of the anger and displeasure of God, which directly influenceth the event of things; for they shall be so given up unto their own hearts lusts, as to be bound in them as in chains of darkness unto following vengeance, Rom. i. 26, 28. But this is not all; he becomes at length a professed enemy unto such obstinate sinners, Isa. lxiii. 10. *They rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit, therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.* This is the length of his proceeding against obstinate sinners in this world. And herein also three things are included: (1.) He comes upon them, as an enemy, to spoil them. This is the first thing that an enemy doth, when he comes to fight against any; he spoils them of what they have. Have such persons had any light, or conviction, any gift, or spiritual abilities, the Holy Spirit, being now become their professed ene-

my, he spoils them of it all: *From him that hath not shall be taken away, even that which he seemeth to have.* Seeing he neither had nor used his gifts or talent unto any saving end, being now at an open enmity with him who lent it him, it shall be taken away. (2.) He will come upon them with spiritual judgments, smiting them with blindness of mind, and obstinacy of will, filling them with folly, giddiness, and madness in their ways of sin, which sometimes shall produce most doleful effects in themselves and others. (3.) He will cast them out of his territories; if they have been members of churches, he will order that they shall be cut off, and cast out of them. (4.) He frequently gives them in this world a foretaste of that everlasting vengeance which is prepared for them. Such are those horrors of conscience, and other terrible effects of an utter desperation, which he justly, righteously, and holily sends upon the minds and souls of some of them. And these things will he do, as to demonstrate the greatness and holiness of his nature; so also that all may know what it is to despise his goodness, kindness, and love.

And the consideration of these things belongs unto us. It is our wisdom and duty to consider as well the ways and degrees of the Spirit's departure from provoking sinners, as those of his approach unto us, with love and grace.

These latter have been much considered by many as to all his great works towards us, and that unto the great advantage and edification of those concerned in them. For thence have they learned both their own state and condition, as also what particular duties they were on all occasions to apply themselves unto, as in part we have manifested before, in our discourses about regeneration and sanctification.

And it is of no less concernment unto us to consider aright the ways and degrees of his departure, which are expressed to give us that godly fear and reverence wherewith we ought to consider and observe him. David, on

his sin, feared nothing more than that God would take his Holy Spirit from him, Pſal. li. 11. And the fear hereof ſhould influence us into the utmoſt care and diligence againſt ſin: for, although he ſhould not utterly forſake us, which, as to thoſe who are true believers, is contrary to the tenor, promiſe, and grace of the new covenant, yet he may ſo withdraw his preſence from us, as that we may ſpend the remainder of our days in trouble, and our years in darkneſs and ſorrow. Let him therefore that thinketh he ſtandeth, on this account, alſo, take heed leſt he fall. And as for them with whom he is, as it were, but in the entrance of his work, producing ſuch effect in their minds, as being followed and attended unto, might have a ſaving event, he may, upon their provocations, utterly forſake them in the way and by the degrees before-mentioned. It is, therefore, the duty of all to ſerve him with fear and trembling on this account. And,

Secondly, It is ſo, to take heed of the very entrances of the courſe deſcribed. Have there been ſuch evils in any of us, as wherein it is evident that the Spirit is grieved? As we love our ſouls, we are to take care that we do not vex him by a continuance in them. And if we do not diligently and ſpeedily recover ourſelves from the firſt, the ſecond will enſue. Hath he been grieved by our negligence in, or of duties, by our indulgence unto any luſt, by compliance with, or conformity to the world; let not our continuance in ſo doing, make it his vexation. Remember, that whiſt he is but grieved, he continues to ſupply us with all due means for our healing and recovery. He will do ſo alſo when he is yet vexed. But he will do it with ſuch a mixture of anger and diſpleaſure, as ſhall make us know, that what we have done, is an evil thing and a bitter. But have any proceeded further, and continued long thus to vex him, and have reſuſed his inſtructions, when accompanied, it may be, with ſore afflictions, or inward diſtreſſes that have been evident tokens of his diſpleaſure? Let ſuch ſouls

rouze up themselves to lay hold on him; for he is ready to depart, it may be, for ever. And,

Thirdly, We may do well to consider much the miserable condition of those who are thus utterly forsaken by him. When we see a man who hath lived in a plentiful and flourishing condition, brought to extreme penury and want, seeking his bread in rags from door to door, the spectacle is sad, although we know, he brought this misery on himself by profuseness or debauchery of life. But how sad is it to think of a man, whom, it may be, we knew to have had a great light and conviction, to have made an amiable profession, to have been adorned with sundry useful spiritual gifts, and had in estimation on this account, now to be despoiled of all his ornaments, to have lost light, and life, and gifts, and profession, and to lye as a poor withered branch on the dunghill of the world. And the sadness hereof will be increased, when we shall consider, not only that the Spirit of God is departed from him, but also is become his enemy, and fights against him, whereby he is devoted unto irrecoverable ruin.



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S E C O N D & L A S T  
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C H A P. I.

*Spiritual gifts, their names and signification.*

1. **T**HE second part of the dispensation of the Spirit, in order unto the perfecting of the new creation, or the edification of the church, consists in his communication of spiritual gifts unto the members of it, according as their places and stations therein do require. By his work of saving grace (which in other discourses we have given a large account of) he makes all the elect living stones, and by his communication of spiritual gifts he fashions and builds those stones into a temple for the living God to dwell in. He spiritually unites them into one mystical body under the Lord Christ, as an head of

influence, by faith and love; and he unites them into an organical Body under the Lord Christ, as an head of rule, by gifts and spiritual abilities. Their nature is made one and the same by grace; their use is various by gifts. Every one is a part of the body of Christ, of the essence of it by the same quickening, animating Spirit of grace; but one is an eye, another an hand, another a foot in the body, by virtue of peculiar gifts. *For unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ, Eph. iv. 7.*

2. These gifts are not saving sanctifying graces; those were not so in themselves which made the most glorious and astonishing appearance in the world, and which were most eminently useful in the foundation of the church, and propagation of the gospel. Such as were those that were extraordinary and miraculous. There is something of the divine nature in the least grace, that is not in the most glorious gift which is only so. It will therefore be part of our work, to shew wherein the essential difference between these gifts and sanctifying graces doth consist; as also what is their nature and use must be enquired into. For, although they are not grace, yet they are that without which the church cannot subsist in the world, nor can believers be useful unto one another, and the rest of mankind, unto the glory of Christ, as they ought to be. They are the *powers of the world to come*; those effectual operations of the power of Christ, whereby his kingdom was erected, and is preserved.

3. And hereby is the church state under the New Testament differenced from that under the Old. There is indeed a great difference between their ordinances and ours; theirs being suited unto the dark apprehensions which they had of spiritual things; our accommodated unto the clearer light of the gospel, more plainly and expressly representing heavenly things unto us, Heb. x. 1. But our ordinances, with their spirit, would be carnal also. The principal difference lies in the administration of the Spirit, for the due performance of the gospel-

worship, by virtue of these gifts bestowed on men for that very end. Hence the whole of evangelical worship is called the ministration of the Spirit, and thence said to be glorious, 2 Cor. iii. 8. And where they are neglected, I see not the advantage of the outward worship and ordinances of the gospel, above those of the law. For, although their institutions are accommodated unto that administration of grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ, yet they must lose their whole glory, force, and efficacy, if they be not dispensed, and the duties of them performed, by virtue of these spiritual gifts. And therefore no sort of men by whom they are neglected, do, or can content themselves with the pure and immixed gospel institutions in these things, but do rest principally in the outward part of divine service in things of their own finding out: for, as gospel gifts are useless without attending unto gospel institutions; so gospel institutions are found to be fruitless and unsatisfactory, without the attaining and exercising of gospel gifts.

4. Be it so, therefore, that these gifts we intend are not in themselves saving graces, yet are they not to be despised; for they are, as we shall shew, *the powers of the world to come*, by means whereof the kingdom of Christ is preserved, carried on, and propagated in the world. And although they are not grace, yet are they the great means whereby all grace is ingenerated and exercised. And although the spiritual life of the church doth not consist in them, yet the order and edification of the church depends wholly on them. And therefore are they so frequently mentioned in the scripture as the great privilege of the New Testament; directions being multiplied in the writings of the apostles about their nature and proper use. And we are commanded earnestly to desire and labour after them, especially those which are most useful and subservient unto edification, 1 Cor. xii. 31. And as the neglect of internal saving grace, wherein the power of godliness doth consist, hath been the bane of Christian profession, as to obedience, issuing in

that form of it which is consistent with all manner of lusts; so the neglect of these gifts hath been the ruin of the same profession as to worship and order, which hath thereon issued in fond superstition.

5. The great and signal promise of the communication of these gifts, is recorded, Psal. lxxviii. 18. *Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men.* For these words are applied by the apostle unto that communication of spiritual gifts from Christ, whereby the church was founded and edified, Eph. iv. 8. And whereas it is foretold in the Psalm, that Christ should receive gifts, that is, to give them unto men, as that expression is expounded by the apostle; so he did this by receiving of the Spirit; the proper cause and immediate author of them all, as Peter declares, Acts ii. 23. *Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear;* speaking of the miraculous gifts conferred on the apostles at the day of Pentecost. For these gifts are from Christ, not as God absolutely, but as mediator, in which capacity he received all from the Father in a way of free donation. Thus therefore he received the Spirit as the author of all *spiritual gifts*. And whereas all the *powers of the world to come* consisted in them, and the whole work of the building and propagation of the church depended on them, the apostles, after all the instructions they had received from Christ whilst he conversed with them in the days of his flesh, and also after his resurrection, were commanded not to go about the great work which they had received commission for, until they had *received power by the coming of the Holy Ghost* upon them in the communication of those gifts, Acts i. 4, 8. And as they neither might nor could do any thing in their peculiar work, as to the laying of the foundation of the Christian church, until they had actually received those *extraordinary gifts* which gave them power so to do; so, if those who undertake in any place,



degree, or office, to carry on the edification of the church, do not receive those more *ordinary gifts* which are continued unto that end, they have neither *right* to undertake that work, nor *power* to perform it in a due manner.

6. The things which we are to enquire into concerning these gifts, are: (1.) Their name. (2.) Their nature in general, and therein how they are agreed with and differ from saving graces. (3.) Their distinction. (4.) The particular nature of them. And, (5.) Their use in the church of God.

7. The general name of those spiritual endowments, which we intend, is *δοματα*; so the apostle renders *מתנות*. Eph. iv. 8. from Psal. lxxviii. 18. *Dona*, gifts, that is, they are free and undeserved effects of divine bounty. In the minds of men on whom they are bestowed, they are spiritual powers and endowments with respect unto a certain end. But, as to their original and principal cause, they are *free undeserved gifts*. Thence the Holy Spirit, as the author of them, and with respect unto them, is called *δωρεα το θεου*, the *gift of God*, John iv. 10. And the effect itself is also termed *δωρεα το αγιου πνευματος*, the *gift of the Holy Ghost*, Acts x. 45. the *gift of God*, Acts viii. 20. the *gift of the grace of God*, Eph. iii. 7. the *gift of Christ*, Eph. iv. 7. the *heavenly gift*, Heb. vi. 4. all expressing the freedom of their communication on the part of the Father, Son, and Spirit. And in like manner, on the same account, are they called *χαρισματα*, that is, *gracious largesses*, gifts proceeding from mere bounty. And therefore saving graces are also expressed by the same name in general, because they also are freely and undeservedly communicated unto us, Rom. xi. 28. But these gifts are frequently and almost constantly so expressed, Rom. xii. 6. 1 Cor. i. 7. chap. vii. 7. chap. xii. 4, 9, 28, 30. 1 Peter iv. 14. 2 Tim. i. 6. And it is absolute freedom in the bestower of them that is principally intended in this name. Hence he hath left his name as a curse unto all posterity, who thought this free

gift of God might be purchased with money, Acts viii. 20. A pageantry of which crime the apostate ages of the church erected in applying the name of that sin to the purchase of benefices and dignities, whilst the gift of God was equally despised on all hands. And indeed this was that whereby, in all ages, countenance was given unto apostacy and defection from the power and truth of the gospel. The names of spiritual things were still retained, but applied to outward forms and ceremonies, which thereby were substituted insensibly into their room, to the ruin of the gospel in the minds of men. But as these gifts were not any of them to be bought, no more are they absolutely to be attained by the natural abilities and industry of any, whereby an image of them is attempted to be set up by some, but deformed and useless. They will do those things in the church, by their own abilities, which can never be acceptably discharged but by virtue of those free gifts which they despise, whereof we must speak more afterwards. Now, the full signification of these words in our sense is peculiar unto the New Testament. For although, in other authors, they are used for a gift or free grant, yet they never denote the endowments or abilities of the minds of men who do receive them, which is their principal sense in the scripture.

3. With respect unto their especial nature, they are called *πνευματικά*: sometimes absolutely, 1 Cor. xii. 1. *περὶ δὲ τοῦ πνευματικοῦ*, but concerning spirituals, that is, spiritual gifts. And so again, chap. xiv. 1. *ζηήσατε τὰ πνευματικά*, desire spirituals, that is, gifts; for so it is explained, chap. xii. 31. *ζηήσατε τὰ χρισμὰτα τὰ κρείττονα*, covet earnestly the best gifts. Whenever therefore they are called *πνευματικά*, there *χρισμὰτα*, denoting their general nature is to be supplied: and where they are called *χρισμὰτα* only, *πνευματικά* is to be understood, as expressing their especial difference from all others. They are neither natural, nor moral, but spiritual endowments: for both their author, nature, and object are respected

herein. Their author is the Holy Spirit; their nature is spiritual; and the object about which they are exercised, are spiritual things.

9. Again, with respect unto the manner of their communication they are called *μερίσματα τῶν πνευματικῶν ἁγίων*, Heb. ii. 4. distributions or partitions of the Holy Ghost: not whereof the Holy Ghost is the subject, as though he were parted or divided, as the Socinians dream on this place, but whereof he is the author, the distributions which he makes. And they are thus called divisions, partitions, or distributions, because they are of divers sorts and kinds, according as the edification of the church did require. And they were not at any time all of them given out unto any one person, at least so, as that others should not be made partakers of the same sort. From the same inexhaustible treasure of bounty, grace, and power, these gifts are variously distributed unto men. And this variety, as the apostle proves, gives both ornament and advantage to the church. *If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing, &c.* 1 Cor. xii. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25. It is this *μερίσματα*, this various distribution of gifts, that makes the church an organical body; and in this composure, with the peculiar uses of the members of the body, consists the harmony, beauty, and safety of the whole. Were there no more but one gift, or gifts of one sort, the whole body would be but one member: as where there is none, there is no animated body, but a dead carcass.

10. And this various distribution, as it is an act of the Holy Spirit, produceth *διαφοραὶ: διαφοραὶ χαρισμάτων, ἑκάστη*, *there are diversities of gifts*, 1 Cor. xii. 4. The gifts thus distributed in the church are divers as to their sorts and kinds, one of one kind, another of another: an account hereof is given by the apostle, particularly, ver. 8, 9, 10. in a distinct enumeration of the sorts or kinds of them. The edification of the church is the general end of them all; but divers, distinct, different gifts are required thereunto.

11. These gifts being bestowed, they are variously expressed with regard unto the nature and manner of those operations which we are enabled unto by virtue of them. So are they termed *διακονιας*, ministrations, 1 Cor. xii. 5. that is, powers and abilities, whereby some are enabled to administer spiritual things unto the benefit, advantage, and edification of others: and *ειργηματω*, ver. 6. effectual workings or operations, efficaciously producing the effects which they are applied unto. And, lastly, they are comprised by the apostle in that expression, *φανερως τε πνευματος*, the manifestation of the Spirit, ver. 7. In and by them doth the Holy Spirit evidence and manifest his power. For the effects produced by them, and themselves in their own nature, especially some of them, do evince, that the Holy Spirit is in them, that they are given and wrought by him, and are the ways whereby he acts his own power and grace.

These things are spoken in the scripture as to the names of these spiritual gifts: and it is evident, that if we part with our interest and concern in them, we must part with no small portion of the New Testament: for the mention of them, directions about them, their use, and abuse, do so frequently occur, that if we are not concerned in them, we are not so in the gospel.

## C H A P. II.

### *Differences between spiritual gifts and saving grace.*

1. **T**HEIR nature in general, which, in the next place, we enquire into, will be much discovered in the consideration of those things wherein these gifts do agree with saving graces, and wherein they differ from them.



2. There are three things wherein spiritual gifts and saving graces do agree.

1. There are both sorts of them the purchase of Christ for his church, the especial fruit of his mediation. We speak not of such gifts or endowments of mens minds as consist merely in the improvement of their natural faculties. Such are wisdom, learning, skill in arts and sciences, which those may abound and excel in who are utter strangers to the church of Christ; and frequently they do so, to their own exaltation and contempt of others. Nor do I intend abilities for actions moral, civil, or political; as fortitude, skill in government or rule, and the like: for, although these are gifts of the power of the Spirit of God, yet they do belong unto those operations which he exerciseth in upholding or ruling of the world, or the old creation as such, whereof I have treated before. But I intend those alone which are conversant about the gospel, the things and duties of it, the administration of its ordinances, the propagation of its doctrine and profession of its ways. And hercin also I put a difference between them, and all those gifts of the Spirit about sacred things, which any of the people of God enjoyed under the Old Testament. For we speak only of those which are powers of the world to come. Those others were suited to the oeconomy of the old covenant, and confined with the light which God was pleased then to communicate unto his church. Unto the gospel state they were not suited, nor would be useful in it. Hence the prophets, who had the most eminent gifts, did yet all of them come short of John the Baptist, because they had not, by virtue of their gifts, that acquaintance with the person of Christ, and insight into his work of mediation, that he had; and yet also he came short of him that is *least in the kingdom of heaven*, because his gifts were not purely evangelical. Wherefore these gifts whereof we treat, are such as belong unto the kingdom of God erected in an especial manner by Jesus Christ after his ascension into heaven: for he was exalted that he

might *fill all things*, *τα παντα*, that is, the whole church with these effects of his power and grace. The power therefore of communicating these gifts was granted unto the Lord Christ as Mediator by the Father, for the foundation and edification of his church, as it is expressed, Acts ii. 33. And by them was his kingdom both set up and propagated, and is preserved in the world. These were the weapons of warfare which he furnished his disciples withal, when he gave them commission to go forth and subdue the world unto the obedience of the gospel, Acts i. 4, 8. And mighty were they through God unto that purpose, 2 Cor. x. 3, 4, 5, 6. In the use and exercise of them did the gospel run, and was glorified, to the ruin of the kingdom of Satan and darkness in the world. And that he was ever able to erect it again under another form than that of Gentilism, as he hath done in the Antichristian apostacy of the church visible, it was from a neglect and contempt of these gifts, with their due use and improvement. When men began to neglect the attaining of these spiritual gifts, and the exercise of them, in praying, in preaching, in interpretation of the scripture, in all the administrations and whole worship of the church, betaking themselves wholly to their own abilities and inventions, accommodated unto their ease and secular interests, it was an easy thing for Satan to erect again his kingdom, though not in the old manner, because of the light of the scripture which had made impression on the minds of men, which he could not obliterate. Wherefore he never attempted openly to set up Heathenism or Paganism, with the gods of the Old World and their worship; but he insensibly raised another kingdom, which pretended some likeness unto and compliance with the letter of the word, though it came at last to be in all things expressly contrary thereunto. This was his kingdom of apostacy and darkness under the Papal Antichristianism, and woful degeneracy of other Christians in the world. For, when men who pretend themselves entrusted with the preservation of

the kingdom of Christ, did wilfully cast away those weapons of their warfare whereby the world was subdued unto him, and ought to have been kept in subjection by them, what else could ensue?

3. By these gifts, I say, doth the Lord Christ demonstrate his power, and exercise his rule. External force, and carnal weapons, were far from his thoughts, as unbecoming his absolute sovereignty over the souls of men, his infinite power and holiness. Neither did any ever betake themselves unto them in the affairs of Christ's kingdom, but either when they had utterly lost and abandoned these spiritual weapons, or did not believe that they are sufficient to maintain the interest of the gospel, though originally they were so to introduce and fix it in the world, that is, that although the gifts of the Holy Ghost were sufficient and effectual to bring in the truth and doctrine of the gospel against all opposition, yet are they not so to maintain it; which they may do well once more to consider. Herein therefore they agree with saving graces: for that they are peculiarly from Jesus Christ the Mediator, is confessed by all; unless it be by such as by whom all real, internal grace is denied. But the sanctifying operations of the Holy Spirit, with their respect unto the Lord Christ as Mediator, have been sufficiently before confirmed.

4. There is an agreement between saving graces and spiritual gifts, with respect unto their immediate efficient cause. They are both sorts of them wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost. As to what concerneth the former or saving grace, I have already treated of that argument at large; nor will any deny that the Holy Ghost is the author of these graces, but those that deny that there are any such. That these gifts are so wrought by him, is expressly declared wherever there is mention of them in general or particular. Wherefore, when they acknowledge that there were such gifts, all confess him to be their author; by whom he is denied so to be, it is only because they deny the continuance of any such gifts.



in the church of God. But this is that which we shall disprove.

5. Herein also they agree, that both sorts of them are designed unto the good, benefit, ornament, and glory of the church. The church is the proper seat and subject of them, to it are they granted, and in it do they reside. For Christ is given to be *Head over all things unto the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all*, Eph. i. 22, 23. But this church falls under a double consideration: First, As it is believing. Secondly, As it is professing. In the first respect absolutely it is invisible, and as such is the peculiar subject of saving grace. This is that church which Christ *loved and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, and present it unto himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish*, Eph. v. 26, 27. This is the work of saving grace, and by a participation thereof do men become members of this church, and not otherwise. And hereby is the professing church quickened and enabled unto profession in an acceptable manner. For the elect receive grace unto this end in this world, that they may glorify Christ and the gospel in the exercise of it, Col. i. 6. John xv. 8. But gifts are bestowed on the professing church, to render it visible in such a way as whereby God is glorified. Grace gives an invisible life to the church; gifts give it a visible profession. For hence doth the church become organical, and disposed into that order which is beautiful and comely. Where any church is organized merely by outward rules, perhaps of their own devising, and makes profession only in an attendance unto outward order, not following the leading of the Spirit in the communication of his gifts, both as to order and discharge of the duties of profession, it is but the image of a church wanting an animating principle and form. That profession which renders a church visible according to the mind of Christ, is the orderly exercise of the spiritual gifts bestowed on it, in a



conversation evidencing the invisible principle of saving grace. Now, these gifts are conferred on the church, in order unto the edification of itself in love, Eph. iv. 16. as also the propagation of its profession in the world, as shall be declared afterwards. Wherefore both of these sorts have in general the same end, or are given by Christ unto the same purpose, namely, the good and benefit of the church, as they are respectively suited to promote them.

6. It may also be added, that they agree herein, that they have both the same respect unto the bounty of Christ. Hence every grace is a gift, that which is given and freely bestowed on them that have it, Matth. xiii. 11. Phil. i. 29. And, although on the other side, every gift be not a grace, yet proceeding from gracious favour and bounty, they are so called, Rom. xii. 6. Eph. iv. 7. how, in their due exercise, they are mutually helpful and assistant unto each other, shall be declared afterwards.

7. Secondly, We may consider wherein the difference lies or doth consist, which is between these spiritual gifts and sanctifying graces. And this may be seen in sundry instances: As,

1. Saving graces are καρπος, the fruit or fruits of the Spirit, Gal. v. 22. Eph. v. 9. Phil. i. 11. Now, fruits proceed from an abiding root and stock of whose nature they do partake. There must be a good tree to bring forth good fruit, Matth. xii. 33. No external watering or applications unto the earth will cause it to bring forth useful fruits, unless they are roots from which they spring and are educed. The Holy Spirit is as the root unto these fruits; the root which bears them, and which they do not bear, as Rom. xi. 18. Therefore, in order of nature, is he given unto men before the production of any of these fruits. Thereby are they ingrafted into the olive, are made such branches in Christ, the true vine, as derive vital juice, nourishment, and fructifying virtue from him even by the Spirit. So is he a well of wa-

*ter springing up unto everlasting life,* John iv. 14. He is a spring in believers, and all saving graces are but waters arising from that living overflowing spring. From him a root or spring, as an internal virtue, power, or principle, do all these fruits come. To this end doth he dwell in them and abide with them, according to the promise of our Lord Jesus Christ, John xiv. 17. Rom. viii. 11. 1 Cor. iii. 16. whereby the Lord Christ effecteth his purpose in ordaining his disciples to bring forth fruit that should remain, John xv. 16. In the place of his holy residence he worketh these effects freely according to his own will. And there is nothing that hath the true nature of saving grace, but what is so a fruit of the Spirit. We have not first these graces, and then, by virtue of them, receive the Spirit (for whence should we have them of ourselves?) but the Spirit bestowed on us, worketh them in us, and gives them a spiritual divine nature in conformity unto his own.

8. With gifts singly considered, it is otherwise. They are indeed works and effects, but not properly fruits of the Spirit, nor are any where so called. They are effects of his operation upon men, not fruits of his working in them. And therefore many receive these gifts, who never receive the Spirit as to the principal ends for which he is promised. They receive him not to sanctify and make them temples unto God, though metonymically with respect unto his outward effects they may be said to be made partakers of him. This renders them of a different nature and kind from saving graces. For, whereas there is an agreement and coincidence between them in the respects before-mentioned, and whereas the seat and subject of them, that is, of gifts absolutely, and principally of graces also, is the mind, the difference of their nature proceeds from the different manner of their communication from the Holy Spirit.

9. Secondly, Saving grace proceeds from, or is the effect and fruit of electing love. This I have proved before in our enquiry into the nature of holiness. See it

directly asserted, Eph. i. 3, 4. 2 Theff. ii. 13. Acts ii. 41. chap. xiii. 48. Whom God graciously chuseth and designeth unto eternal life, them he prepares for it by the communication of the means which are necessary unto that end, Rom. viii. 28, 29, 30. Hereof sanctification, or the communication of saving grace, is comprehensive; for we are *chosen unto salvation through the sanctification of the Spirit*, 2 Theff. ii. 13. For this is that whereby we are made *meet for the inheritance of the saints in light*, Col. i. 12. The end of God in election is the sonship and salvation of the elect, unto the *praise of the glory of his grace*, Eph. i. 5, 6. And this cannot be unless his image be renewed in them in holiness or saving graces. These therefore he works in them, in pursuit of his eternal purpose therein. But gifts, on the other hand, which are no more so, and where they are solitary or alone, are only the effects of a temporary election. Thus God chuseth some men into some office in the church, or unto some work in the world. As this includeth a preferring them before or above others, or the using them when others are not used, we call it election; and in itself it is their fitting for, and separation unto their office or work. And this temporary election is the cause and rule of the dispensation of gifts. So he chose Saul to be king over his people, and gave him thereon another Spirit, or gifts fitting him for rule and government. So our Lord Jesus Christ chose and called at the first twelve to be his apostles, and gave unto them all alike miraculous gifts. His temporary choice of them was the ground of his communication of gifts unto them. By virtue hereof no saving graces were communicated unto them, for one of them never arrived unto a participation of them. *Have not I, saith our Saviour, chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?* John vi. 70. He had chosen them unto their office, and endowed them with extraordinary gifts for the discharge thereof, but one of them being not chosen unto salvation before the foundation of the world, being not ordained unto eter-

nal life, but on the other side, being the son of perdition, or one certainly appointed unto destruction, or before of old ordained unto that condemnation, he continued void of all sanctifying graces, so as unto any acceptance with God he was in no better condition than the devil himself, whose work he was to do. Yet was he, by virtue of this choice unto the office of apostleship, for a season, endowed with the same spiritual gifts that the others were. And this distinction our Saviour himself doth plainly lay down. For, whereas he says, John vi. 70. *I have chosen you twelve*, that is, with a temporary choice unto office, John xiii. 18. he saith, *I speak not of you all, I know whom I have chosen*, so excepting Judas from that number, as is afterwards expressly declared: for the election which here he intends, is that which is accompanied with infallible ordination unto abiding fruit-bearing, chap. xv. 16. that is, eternal election wherein Judas had no interest.

10. And thus it is in general, and in other instances. When God chuseth any one to eternal life, he will, in pursuit of that purpose of his, communicate saving grace unto them. And although all believers have gifts also sufficient to enable them unto the discharge of their duty in their station or condition in the church, yet they do not depend on the decree of election. And where God calleth any, or chuseth any unto office, charge, or work in the church, he always furnisheth them with gifts suited unto the end of them. He doth not so indeed unto all that will take any office unto themselves, but he doth so unto all whom he calls thereunto. Yea, his call is no otherwise known, but by the gifts which he communicates for the discharge of the work or office whereunto any are called. In common use, I confess all things run contrary herunto. Most men greatly insist on the necessity of an outward call unto the office of the ministry, and so far no doubt they do well; for God is the God of order, that is of his own. But whereas they limit this outward call of theirs unto certain persons, ways, modes, and ceremonies of their own, without which they



will not allow that any man is rightly called unto the ministry, they do but contend to oppress the consciences of others by their power, and with their inventions. But their most pernicious mistake is yet remaining: so that persons have or do receive an outward call in their mode and way, which what it hath of a call in it I know not, they are not solicitous whether they are called of God or no. For they continually admit of them unto their outward call, on whom God hath bestowed no spiritual gifts to fit them for their office; whence it is as evident as if written with the beams of the sun, that he never called them thereunto. They are as watchful as they are able, that God himself shall impose none on them besides their way and order, or their call. For, let a man be furnished with ministerial gifts never so excellent, yet if he will not come up to their call, they will do what lies in them for ever to shut him out of the ministry: but they will impose upon God, without his call, every day. For if they ordain any one in their way unto an office, though he have no more of spiritual gifts than Balaam's ass, yet, if you will believe them, Christ must accept of him for a minister of his whether he will or no. But let men dispose of things as they please, and as it seemeth good unto them, Christ hath no other order in this matter, but as *every one hath received the gift, so let them minister as good stewards of the grace of God*, 1 Peter iv. 10. and Rom. xii. 6, 7, 8. It is true, that no man ought to take upon him the office of the ministry, but he that is, and until he be solemnly called and set apart thereunto by the church: but it is no less true, that no church hath either rule or right so to call or set apart any one to the ministry, whom Christ hath not previously called by the communication of spiritual gifts necessary to the discharge of his office; and these things must be largely insisted on afterwards.

11. Thirdly, Saving grace is an effect of the covenant, and bestowed in the accomplishment, and by virtue of the promises thereof. This hath been declared else-

where at large, where we treated of regeneration and sanctification. All that are taken into this covenant are sanctified and made holy. There is no grace designed unto any in the eternal purpose of God, none purchased or procured by the mediation of Christ, but it is comprised in, and exhibited by the promises of the covenant. Wherefore they only who are taken into that covenant are made partakers of saving grace, and they are all so. Things are not absolutely so with respect unto spiritual gifts, although they also, in some sense, belong unto the covenant. For the promises of the covenant are of two sorts: (1.) Such as belong unto the internal form and essence of it. (2.) Such as belong unto its outward administration; that is, the ways and means whereby its internal grace is made effectual. Saving grace proceedeth from the former; gifts relate unto the latter. For all the promises of the plentiful effusion of the Spirit, under the New Testament, which are frequently applied unto him as he works and effects evangelical gifts extraordinary and ordinary in men, do belong unto the new covenant; not as unto its internal essence and form, but as unto its outward administration. And if you overthrow this distinction, that the covenant is considered either with respect unto its internal grace, or its external administration, every thing in religion will be cast into confusion. Take away internal grace, as some do, and the whole is rendered a mere outside appearance: take away the outward administration, and all spiritual gifts and order thereon depending must cease. But, as it is possible that some may belong unto the covenant with respect unto internal grace, who are no way taken into the external administration of it, as elect infants who die before they are baptized; so it is frequent that some may belong to the covenant, with respect to its outward administration, by virtue of spiritual gifts, who are not made partakers of its inward effectual grace.

12. Fourthly, Saving grace hath an immediate re-

spect unto the priestly office of Jesus Christ, with the discharge thereof in his oblation and intercession. There is, I acknowledge, no gracious communication unto men that respects any one office of Christ exclusively unto the other: for his whole mediation hath an influence into all that we receive from God in a way of favour or grace. And it is his person, as vested with all his offices, that is the immediate fountain of all grace unto us. But yet something may, yea, sundry things do peculiarly respect some one of his offices, and are the immediate effects of the virtue and efficacy thereof. So is our reconciliation and peace with God the peculiar effect of his oblation, which, as a Priest, he offered unto God. And so, in like manner, is our sanctification also, wherein we are *washed and cleansed from our sins in his blood*, Eph. v. 25, 26. Titus ii. 14. And although grace be wrought in us by the administration of the kingly power of Christ, yet it is in the pursuit of what he had done for us as a Priest, and the making of it effectual unto us. For, by his kingly power, he makes effectual the fruits of his oblation and intercession. But gifts proceed solely from the regal office and power of Christ. They have a remote respect unto, and foundation in the death of Christ, in that they are all given and distributed unto, and for the good of that church which he purchased with his own blood; but immediately they are effects only of his kingly power. Hence authority to give and dispose of them is commonly placed as a consequent of his *exaltation at the right hand of God*, or with respect thereunto, Matth. xxviii. 18. Acts ii. 33. This the apostle declares at large, Eph. iv. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. Christ being exalted at the right hand of God, all power in heaven and earth being given unto him, and he being given to be head over all things unto the church, and having for that end received the promise of the Spirit from the Father, he gives out these gifts as it seemeth good unto him. And the continuation of their communication is not the least evidence of the continuance of the exercise of his



kingdom: for, besides the faithful testimony of the word to that purpose, there is a threefold evidence thereof, giving us experience of it: (1.) His communication of saving grace in the regeneration, conversion, and sanctification of the elect: for these things he worketh immediately by his kingly power. And whilst there are any in the world savingly called and sanctified, he leaves not himself without witness as to his kingly power over all flesh. whereon he gives *eternal life unto as many as the Father hath given him*, John xvii. 2. But this evidence is wholly invisible unto the world, neither is it capable of receiving it when tendered, because it cannot *receive the Spirit, nor seeth him, nor knoweth him*, John xiv. 17. Nor are the things thereof exposed to the judgment of sense or reason, 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. (2.) Another evidence hereof is given in the judgments that he executes in the world, and the outward protection which he affords unto his church. On both these there are evident impressions of the continued actual exercise of his divine power and authority: for, in the judgments that he executes on persons and nations, that either reject the gospel, or persecute it, especially in some signal and uncontroliable instance, as also in the guidance, deliverance and protection of his church, he manifests that *though he was dead, yet he is alive, and hath the keys of hell and death*. But yet, because he is, on the one hand, pleased to exercise great patience towards many of his open stubborn adversaries, yea, the greatest of them, suffering them to walk and prosper in their own ways, and to leave his church unto various trials and distresses, his power is much hid from the world at present in these dispensations. (3.) The third evidence of the continuance of the administration of his mediatory kingdom, consists in his dispensation of these spiritual gifts, which are properly the powers of the new world. For such is the nature of them and their use, such the sovereignty that appears in their distribution, such their distinction and difference from all natural endowments, that even the



world cannot but take notice of them, though it violently hate and persecute them; and the church is abundantly satisfied with the sense of the power of Christ in them. Moreover, the principal end of these gifts is to enable the officers of the church unto the due administration of all the laws and ordinances of Christ unto its edification. But all these laws and ordinances, these offices and officers he gives unto the church, as the Lord over his own house, as the sole sovereign Lawgiver and Ruler thereof.

13. Fifthly, They differ as unto the event, even in this world they may come unto, and oft-times actually do so accordingly. For all gifts, the best of them, and that in the highest degree wherein they may be attained in this life, may be utterly lost or taken away. The law of their communication is, that who improveth not that talent or measure of them which he hath received, it shall be taken from him. For whereas they are given for no other end, but to trade withal according to the several capacities and opportunities that men have in the church, or their families, or their own private exercise, if that be utterly neglected, to what end should they be left unto rust and useflessness in the minds of any? Accordingly we find it to come to pass. Some neglect them, some reject them, and from both sorts they are judicially taken away. Such we have amongst us. Some there are who had received considerable spiritual abilities for evangelical administrations: but after a while they have fallen into an outward state of things, wherein, as they suppose, they shall have no advantage by them; yea, that their exercise will turn to their disadvantage, and thereon do wholly neglect them: by this means they have insensibly decayed, until they become as devoid of spiritual abilities, as if they never had experience of any assistance in that kind. They can no more either pray, or speak, or evidence the power of the Spirit of God in any thing unto the edification of the church. *Their arm is dried up, and their right eye is utterly darkened, Zech.*

xi. 17. And this, sometimes, they come to be sensible of, yea, ashamed of, and yet cannot retrieve themselves. But, for the most part, they fall into such a state, as wherein the profession and use of them becomes, as they suppose, inconsistent with their present interest, and so they openly renounce all concernment in them: neither, for the most part, do they stay here, but after they have rejected them in themselves, and espoused lazy profitable outward helps in their room, they blaspheme the author of them in others, and declare them all to be delusions, fancies, and imaginations. And if any one hath the confidence to own the assistance of the Holy Spirit in the discharge of the duties of the gospel unto the edification of the church, he becomes unto them a scorn and reproach. These are branches cut off from the vine, whom men gather; or those whose miserable condition is described by the apostle, Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. But one way or other, these gifts may be utterly lost or taken away from them, who have once received them, and that whether they be ordinary or extraordinary. There is no kind of them, no degree of them, that can give us any security, that they shall be always continued with us, or at all beyond our diligent attendance unto their use and exercise. With saving grace it is not so. It is indeed subject unto various decays in us; and its thriving or flourishing in our souls, depends upon and answers unto our diligent endeavour in the use of all means of holiness, ordinarily, 2 Peter i. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. For, besides that, no man can have the least evidence of any thing of this grace in him, if he be totally negligent in its exercise and improvement; so no man ought to expect that it will thrive or abound in him, unless he constantly and diligently attend unto it, and give up himself in all things to its conduct. But yet, as to the continuance of it in the souls of the elect, as to the life and being of its principle, and principal effect in habitual conformity unto God and his will, it is secured in the covenant of grace.

14. Sixthly, On whomsoever saving grace is bestowed,

it is so, firstly, and principally, for himself and his own good. It is a fruit of the especial love and kindness of God unto his own soul, Jer. xxxi. 3. This both the nature and all the ends of it do declare; for it is given unto us to renew the image of God in us, to make us like unto him, to restore our nature, enable us unto obedience, and to make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. But yet we must take heed, that we think not that grace is bestowed on any merely for themselves; for indeed it is that wherein God designeth a good unto all, *Vir bonus commune bonum*. *A good man is a good to all*, Micah v. 7. And therefore God, in the communication of saving grace unto any, hath a threefold respect unto others, which it is the duty of them that receive it, diligently to consider and attend unto: (1.) He intends to give an example by it of what is his will, and what he approveth of: and therefore he requires of them in whom it is, such fruits in holy obedience, as may express the example of an holy life in the world, according to the will of God, and unto his glory. Hereby doth he further the salvation of the elect, 1 Peter iii. 1, 2. 1 Cor. vii. 16. Convince the unbelieving world at present 1 Peter ii. 12, 15. chap. iii. 16. and condemn it hereafter, Heb. xi. 7. and himself is glorified, Matth. v. 16. Let therefore no man think, that because grace is firstly and principally given him for himself; and for his own spiritual advantage, that therefore he must not account for it also with respect unto those other designs of God. Yea, he who in the exercise of what he esteems grace, hath respect only unto himself, gives an evidence that he never had any that was genuine, and of the right kind. (2.) Fruitfulness unto the benefiting of others is hence also expected. Holy obedience, the effect of saving grace, is frequently expressed in the scripture by fruits and fruitfulness. See Col. i. 10. And these fruits, or the things which others are to feed upon, and be sustained by, are to be born by the *plants of the Lord, the trees of righteousness*. The fruits of *love, charity, bounty,*

*mercy, wisdom,* are those whereby grace is rendered useful in the world, and is taken notice of, as that which is lovely and desireable, Eph. ii. 10. (3.) God requires, that, by the exercise of grace, the doctrine of the gospel be adorned and propagated. This doctrine is from God; our profession is our avowing of it so to be: what it is the world knows not, but takes its measures of it from what it observes in them by whom it is professed. And it is the unprofitable flagitious lives of Christians that have almost thrust the gospel out of the world with contempt. But the care that it be adorned, that it be glorified, is committed of God unto every one on whom he bestows the least of saving grace; and this is to be done only by the guidance of an holy conversation in conformity thereunto. And many other such blessed ends there are, wherein God hath respect to the good and advantage of other men in the collation of saving grace upon any. And if gracious persons are not more useful than others in all things that may have a real benefit in them unto mankind, it is their sin and shame. But yet, after all, grace is principally, and in the first place, given unto men for themselves, their own good, and spiritual advantage, out of love to their souls, and in order unto their eternal blessedness; all other effects are but secondary ends of it. But as unto these spiritual gifts it is quite otherwise. They are not, in the first place, bestowed on any for their own sakes, or their own good, but for the good and benefit of others. So the apostle expressly declares, 1 Cor. xii. 7. *The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.* These gifts whereby the Spirit evidenceth and manifesteth his power, are bestowed on men for this very end, that they may profit and benefit others in their edification. And yet also, where they are duly improved, they tend much to the spiritual advantage of them on whom they are bestowed, as we shall see afterwards. Wherefore, as grace is, primarily, given unto us for ourselves, and, secondarily, for the good of others; so gifts are bestow-



ed, in the first place, for the edification of others, and, secondly, for our own spiritual advantage also.

15. Seventhly, The principal difference between them is in their nature and kind, discovering itself in their different subjects, operations, and effects. For those already insisted on are principally from external causes and considerations: And, (1.) As to the different subjects of them, spiritual gifts are placed and seated in the mind or understanding only, whether they are ordinary or extraordinary, they have no other hold nor residence in the soul. And they are in the mind as it is notional and theoretical, rather than as it is practical. They are intellectual abilities, and no more. I speak of them which have any residence in us; for some gifts, as miracles and tongues, consisted only in a transient operation of an extraordinary power. Of all others, illumination is the foundation, and spiritual light their matter. So the apostle declares, in his order of expression, Heb. vi. 4. The will, and the affections, and the conscience, are unconcerned in them. Wherefore they change not the heart with power, although they may reform the life by the efficacy of light. And although God doth not ordinarily bestow them on flagitious persons, nor continue them with such as after the reception of them become flagitious; yet they may be in those who were unrenewed, and have nothing in them to preserve men absolutely from the worst of sins. But saving grace possesseth the whole soul; men are thereby *sanctified throughout in the whole spirit, soul and body*, 1 Thess. v. 17. as hath been at large declared. Not the mind only has been savingly enlightened, but there is a principle of spiritual life infused into the whole soul, enabling it in all its powers and faculties to act obedientially unto God, whose nature hath been fully explained elsewhere. Hence, (2.) They differ in their operations: for grace changeth and transformeth the whole soul into its own nature, Isa. xi. 6, 7, 8. Rev. vi. 17. chap. xii. 2. 2 Cor. iii. 18. It is a new and divine nature unto the soul, and is in it an habit disposing, inclining, and

enabling of it unto obedience. It acts itself in faith, love, and holiness in all things. But gifts of themselves have not this power, nor these operations. They may and do in those who are possessed of them in and under their exercise make great impression on their own affections, but they change not the heart, they renew not the mind, they transform not the soul into the image of God. Hence, where grace is predominant, every notion of light and truth which is communicated unto the mind is immediately turned into practice, by having the whole soul cast into the mould of it; where only gifts bear sway, the use of it in duties unto edification is best whereunto it is designed. (3.) As to effects or consequents, the great difference is, that on the part of Christ; Christ doth thereby dwell and reside in our hearts; when concerning many of those who have been made partakers of these other spiritual endowments, he will say, *Depart from me I never knew you*, which he will not say of any one whose soul he hath inhabited.

16. These are some of the principal agreements and differences between saving graces and spiritual gifts; both sorts of them being wrought in believers by that *one and self-same Spirit which divideth to every one as he will*. And for a close of this discourse I shall only add, that where these graces and gifts in any eminency or good degree are bestowed on the same persons, they are exceedingly helpful unto each other. A soul sanctified by saving grace, is the only proper soil for gifts to flourish in. Grace influences gifts unto a due exercise, prevents their abuse, stirs them up unto proper occasions, keeps them from being a matter of pride or contention, and subordinates them in all things unto the glory of God. When the actings of grace and gifts are inseparable, as in prayer the Spirit is a Spirit of grace and supplication, the grace and gift of it working together, when utterance in other duties is always accompanied with faith and love, then is God glorified, and our own salvation promoted. Then have edifying gifts a beauty

and lustre upon them, and generally are most successful, when they are cloathed and adorned with humility, meekness, a reverence of God, and compassion for the souls of men. Yea, when there is no evidence, no manifestation of their being accompanied with these and the like graces, they are but as a parable or wise saying in the mouth of a fool. Gifts, on the other side, excite and stir up grace unto its proper exercise and operations. How often is faith, love, and delight in God excited and drawn forth unto especial exercise in believers by the use of their own gifts. - And thus much may suffice as to the nature of these gifts in general: we next consider them under their most general distributions.

### C H A P. III.

*Of gifts and offices extraordinary: And first of offices.*

1. **T**HE spiritual gifts whereof we treat, respect either powers and duties in the church, or duties only. Gifts that respect powers and duties are of two sorts, or there have been, or are at any time, two sorts of such powers and duties: the first whereof was extraordinary, the latter ordinary, and consequently the gifts subservient unto them must be of two sorts also, which must further be cleared.

2. Wherever power is given by Christ unto his church, and duties are required in the execution of that power, unto the ends of his spiritual kingdom, to be performed by virtue thereof, there is an office in the church. For an ecclesiastical office is an especial power given by Christ unto any person or persons for the performance of especial duties belonging unto the edification of the church in an especial manner. And these offices have been of

two sorts: (1.) Extraordinary. (2.) Ordinary. Some seem to deny that there was ever any such thing as extraordinary power or extraordinary offices in the church. For they do provide successors unto all who are pleaded to have been of that kind; and those such as look how far short they come of them in other things, do exceed them in power and rule. I shall not contend about words, and shall therefore only enquire what it was that constituted them to be officers of Christ in his church, whom thence we call extraordinary; and then if others can duly lay claim unto them, they may be allowed to pass for their successors.

3. There are four things which constitute an extraordinary officer in the church of God, and consequently are required in, and do constitute an extraordinary office: (1.) An extraordinary call unto an office, such as none other have or can have by virtue of any law, order, or constitution whatever. (2.) An extraordinary power communicated unto persons so called, enabling them to do what they are so called unto, wherein the essence of any office doth consist. (3.) Extraordinary gifts for the exercise and discharge of that power. (4.) Extraordinary employment as to its extent and measure, requiring extraordinary labour, travail, zeal, and self-denial. All these do and must concur in that office, and unto those offices which we call extraordinary.

4. Thus was it with the apostles, prophets, and evangelists at the first, which were all extraordinary teaching officers in the church, and all that ever were so, 1 Cor. xii. 28. Eph. iv. 11. Besides these, there were, at the first planting of the church, persons endued with extraordinary gifts, as of miracles, healing, and tongues, which did not of themselves constitute them officers, but do belong to the second head of gifts, which concerns duties only. Howbeit, these gifts were always most eminently bestowed on them who were called unto the extraordinary offices mentioned, 1 Cor. xiv. 18. *I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all.* They



had the same gift some of them, but the apostle had it in a more eminent degree. See Matth. x. 8. And we may treat briefly in our passage of these several sorts of extraordinary officers.

5. First, For the apostles; they had a double call, mission, and commission, or a twofold apostleship. Their first call was unto a subserviency unto the personal ministry of Jesus Christ; for he was a *minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers*, Rom. xv. 8. In the discharge of this his personal ministry, it was necessary that he should have peculiar servants and officers under him, to prepare his way and work, and to attend him therein. So he *ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach*, Mark iii. 14. This was the substance of their first call and work, namely, to attend the presence of Christ, and to go forth to preach as he gave them order. Hence, because he was in his own person, as to his prophetic office, the minister only of the circumcision, being therein, according to all the promises, sent only to the *lost sheep of the house of Israel*, he confined those who were to be thus assistant unto him in that his especial work and ministry, and whilst they were so, unto the same persons and people, expressly prohibiting them to extend their line or measure any further: *Go not, saith he, into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter you not; but go rather unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel*, Matth. x. 5. This rather was absolutely exclusive of the others during his personal ministry, and afterwards included only the pre-eminence of the Israelites, that they were to have the gospel offered unto them in the first place. *It was necessary the word of God should be first spoken unto them*, Acts xiii. 46.

6. And this, it may be, occasioned that difference which was afterwards among them, whether their ministry extended unto the Gentiles or no; as we may see, Acts, chap. x. and xi. But, whereas our Saviour, in

that commission, by virtue whereof they were to act after his resurrection, had extended their office and power expressly to all nations, Matth. xxviii. 19. or to every creature in all the world, Matth. xvi. 15. A man would wonder whence that uncertainty should arise. I am persuaded that God suffered it so to be, that the calling of the Gentiles might be more signalized, or made more eminent thereby. For, whereas this was the great mystery which in other ages was not made known, but hid in God, namely, that the *Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ*, that is, of the promise made unto Abraham by the gospel, Eph. iii. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. it being now to be laid open and displayed, he would, by their hesitation about it, have it searched into, examined, tried, and proved, that the faith of the church might never be shaken about it in after ages. And, in like manner, when God, at any time, suffereth differences and doubts about the truth or his worship, to arise in the church, he doth it for holy ends, although, for the present, we may not be able to discover them. But this ministry of the apostles, with its powers and duties, this apostleship, which extended only unto the church of the Jews, ceased at the death of Christ, or at the end of his own personal ministry in this world. Nor can any, I suppose, pretend unto a succession to them therein. Who, or what peculiar instruments he will use and employ for the final recovery of that miserable lost people, whether he will do it by an ordinary or an extraordinary ministry, by gifts miraculous, or by the naked efficacy of the gospel, is known only in his own holy wisdom and counsel; the conjectures of men about these things are vain and fruitless. For, although the promises under the Old Testament, for the *calling of the Gentiles*, were far more clear and numerous, than those which remain concerning the recalling of the Jews, yet because the manner, way, and all other circumstances, were obscured, the whole is called a *mystery hid in God* from all the former ages of

the church; much more, therefore, may the way and manner of the recalling of the Jews be esteemed an hidden mystery; as indeed it is, notwithstanding the dreams and conjectures of too many.

7. But these same apostles, the same individual persons, Judas only excepted, had another call unto that office of apostleship which had respect unto the whole work and interest of Christ in the world. They were now to be made *princes in all lands*, rulers, leaders in spiritual things, of all the inhabitants of the earth, Psal. xlv. 16. And, to make this call the more conspicuous and evident, as also, because it includes in it the institution and nature of the office itself whereunto they were called, our blessed Saviour proceedeth in it by sundry degrees: For, (1.) He gave unto them a promise of power for their office, or office-power, Matth. xvi. 19. So he promised unto them, in the person of Peter, the *keys of the kingdom of heaven*, or a power of spiritual binding and loosing of sinners, of remitting or retaining sin by the doctrine of the gospel, Matth. xviii. 18. John xx. 23. (2.) He actually collated a right unto that power upon them, expressed by an outward pledge, John xx. 21, 22, 23. *Jesus saith unto them, Peace be unto you, as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.* And this communication of the Holy Ghost was such as gave them a peculiar right and title unto their office, but not a right and power unto its exercise. (3.) He sealed, as it were, their commission which they had for the discharge of their office, containing the whole warranty they had to enter upon the world, and to subdue it unto the obedience of the gospel, Matth. xxviii. 18, 19, 20. *Go teach, baptize, command.* But yet, (4.) All these things did not absolutely give them a present power for the exercise of that office whereunto they were cal-

led, or at least a limitation was put for a season upon it. For, under all this provision and furniture, they are commanded to stay at Jerusalem, and not address themselves unto the discharge of their office, until that were fulfilled which gave it its compleatness and perfection, Acts i. 4, 6. wherefore it is said, that, *after his ascension into heaven, he gave some to be apostles*, Eph. iv. 8, 11. He gave not any compleatly to be apostles until then. He had before appointed the office, designed the persons, gave them their commission, with the visible pledge of the power they should afterwards receive. But there yet remained the communication of extraordinary gifts unto them to enable them unto the discharge of their office. And this was that which, after the ascension of Christ, they received on the day of Pentecost, as it is related, Acts ii. And this was so essentially necessary unto their office, that the Lord Christ is said therein to give some to be apostles. For, without these gifts, they were not so, nor could discharge that office unto his honour and glory. And these things all concurred to the constitution of this office, with the call of any persons to the discharge of it. The office itself was instituted by Christ, the designation and call of the persons unto this office was an immediate act of Christ. So also was their commission and power, and the extraordinary gifts which he endowed them withal. And whereas the Lord Christ is said to give this office, and these officers, after his ascension, namely, in the communication of the gifts of the Holy Ghost unto those officers for the discharge of that office, it is evident, that all office-power depends on the communication of gifts, whether extraordinary or ordinary. But where any of these is wanting, there is no apostle, nor any successor of one apostle. Therefore, when Paul was afterwards added unto the twelve, in the same power and office, he was careful to declare how he received both call, commission, and power, immediately from Jesus Christ: *Paul, an apostle, not of men, neither by men, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who*



raised him from the dead, Gal. i. 1. Whereas those who pretend to be their successors, if they will speak the truth, must say, that they are what they are, neither of Jesus Christ, nor God the Father, but of men and by men. However, they neither dare, nor will pretend to be of God and Christ, as not to be called by the ministry of man, which evacuates the pretence of succession in this office.

8. Furthermore, unto the office described there belongs the measure and extent of its power objectively, and the power itself intensively or subjectively. For the first, the object of apostolical power was twofold: (1.) The world to be converted. (2.) The churches gathered of those that were converted, whether Jews or Gentiles. For the first; their commission extended to all the world; and every apostle had right, power, and authority to preach the gospel to every creature under heaven, as he had opportunity so to do, Matth. xxviii. 18, 19, 20. Mark xvi. 15. Rom. x. 15, 16, 17, 18. Now, whereas it was impossible that any one person should pass through the world in the pursuit of this right and power; and whereas for that cause our Lord had ordained twelve to that purpose, that the work might the more effectually be carried on by their endeavours, it is highly probable, that they did by agreement distribute the nations into certain lots and portions, which they singly took upon them to instruct. So there was an agreement between Paul, on the one hand, with Barnabas, and Peter, James, and John, on the other, that they should go to the Gentiles, and the other take more especial care of the Jews, Gal. ii. 7, 8, 9. And the same apostle afterwards designed to avoid the line or allotment of others to preach the gospel where the people were not allotted unto the especial charge of any other, 2 Cor. x. 16. But yet this was not so appointed, as if their power was limited thereby, or that any of them came short in his apostolical power in any other place in the world, as well as that wherein, for conveniency, he particularly exercised his

ministry. For the power of every one still equally extended unto all nations, although they could not always exercise it in all places alike. Nor did that express agreement that was between Peter and Paul, about the Gentiles and the circumcision, either discharge them of their duty, that the one should have more regard unto the circumcision, or the other unto the Gentiles; nor did it limit their power, or bound their apostolical authority; but only directed the exercise of it, as unto the principal intention and design. Wherefore, as to the right and authority of preaching the gospel, and converting persons unto the faith, the whole world fell equally under the care, and was in the commission of every apostle, although they applied themselves unto the discharge of this work in particular, according to their own wisdom and choice under the guidance and disposal of the providence of God. And as I will not deny, but that it is the duty of every Christian, and much more of every minister of the gospel, to promote the knowledge of Christ unto all mankind, as they have opportunities and advantages so to do; yet, I must say, if there be any who pretend to be successors of the apostles as to the extent of their office-power unto all nations; notwithstanding whatever they may pretend of such an agreement to take up with a portion accommodated unto their ease and interest, whilst so many nations of the earth lye unattempted as to the preaching of the gospel, they will one day be found transgressors of their own profession, and will be dealt withal accordingly.

9. Out of the world by the preaching of the gospel persons were called, converted, and thereon gathered into holy societies or churches for the celebration of gospel-worship, and their own mutual edification. All these churches, wherever they were called and planted in the whole world, were equally under the authority of every apostle. Where any church was called and planted by any particular apostle, there was a peculiar relation between him and them, and so a peculiar mutual care and

love: nor could it otherwise be. So the apostle Paul pleads an especial interest in the Corinthians and others, unto whom he had been a spiritual Father in their conversion, and the instrument of forming Christ in them. Such churches, therefore, as were of their own peculiar calling and planting, it is probable they did every one take care of in a peculiar manner. But yet no limitation of the apostolical power ensued hereon. Every apostle had still the care of all the churches on him, and apostolical authority of every church in the world equally, which he might exercise as occasion did require. Thus Paul affirmeth, that the *care of all the churches was on him daily*, 2 Cor. xi. 28. And it was the crime of Diotrephes, for which he is brauded, that he opposed the apostolical power of John in that church, where probably he was the teacher, 3 John ix. 10. But what power now over all churches, or authority in all churches, some may fancy or claim to themselves, I know not; but it were to be wished that men would reckon that care and labour are as extensive in this case as power and authority.

10. Again, the power of this extraordinary office may be considered intensively or formally what it was. And this, in one word, was, *all the power that the Lord Christ hath given or thought meet to make use of for the edification of the church*. I shall give a brief description of it in some few general instances: (1.) It was a power of administering all the ordinances of Christ in the way and manner of his appointment. Every apostle, in all places, had power to preach the word, to administer the sacraments, to ordain elders, and to do whatever else belonged unto the worship of the gospel. But yet they had not power to do any of these things any otherwise but as the Lord Christ had appointed them to be done. They could not baptize any but believers and their seed, Acts viii. 36, 37, 38. Acts xvi. 15. They could not administer the Lord's supper unto any but the church, and in the church, 1 Cor. x. 20, 22, 23, 24. chap. x. 17.



They could not ordain elders, but by the suffrage and election of the people, Acts xiv. 23. Those indeed who pretend to be their successors, plead for such a right in themselves unto some, if not all gospel-administrations, as that they may take liberty to dispose of them at their pleasure by their sole authority, without any regard unto the rule of all holy duties in particular. (2.) It was a power of executing all the laws of Christ, with the penalties annexed unto their disobedience. *We have, saith the apostle, in a readiness wherewith to revenge all disobedience, 2 Cor. x. 6.* And this, principally, consisted in the power of excommunication, or the judiciary execution of any person or persons from the society of the faithful, and visible body of Christ in the world. Now, although this power were absolutely in each apostle towards all offenders in every church; whence Paul affirms, that he had himself *delivered Hymeneus and Alexander unto Satan, 1 Tim. i. 20.* Yet they did not exercise this power without the concurrence and consent of the church from whence an offender was to be cut off; because that was the mind of Christ, and that which the nature of the ordinance did require, 1 Cor. v. 3, 4, 5. (3.) Their whole power was spiritual, and not carnal. It respected the souls, minds, and consciences of men alone as its object, and not their bodies, or goods, or liberties in this world. Those extraordinary instances of Ananias and Saphira in their sudden death, of Elymas in his blindness, were only miraculous operations of God, in testifying against their sin, and proceeded not from any apostolical power in the discharge of their office. But, as unto that kind of power which now hath devoured all other appearances of church authority, and in the sense of the most is only significant, namely, to fine, punish, imprison, banish, kill, and destroy men, women, Christians, believers, persons of an unblameable useful conversation, with the worst of carnal weapons and savage cruelty of mind, as they were never intrusted with it, nor any thing of the like kind, so they have sufficiently



manifested how their holy souls did abhor the thoughts of such Antichristian power and practices; though in others the mystery of iniquity began to work in their days.

11. The ministry of the LXX also, which the Lord Christ sent forth afterwards, to go *two and two before his face into every city and place whither himself would come*, was, in like manner, temporary, that is, it was subservient and commensurate unto his own personal ministry in the flesh, Luke x. 1, 2, 3. These are commonly called Evangelists, from the general nature of their work, but were not those extraordinary officers, which were afterwards in the Christian church under that title and appellation. But there was some analogy and proportion between the one and the other: for, as these first seventy seem to have had an inferior work, and subordinate unto that of the twelve in their ministry unto the church of the Jews, during the time of the Lord Christ his converse among them; so those Evangelists that afterwards were appointed, were subordinate unto them in their evangelical apostleship. And these also as they were immediately called unto their employment by the Lord Jesus, so their work being extraordinary, they were endued with extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, as ver. 9. 17, 19.

12. In the gospel church-state there were Evangelists also, as they are mentioned, Eph. iv. 11. Acts xxi. 2. 2 Tim. iv. 5. Gospellers, preachers of the gospel, distinct from the ordinary teachers of the churches. Things, I confess, are but obscurely delivered concerning this sort of men in scripture; their office being not designed unto a continuance. Probably the institution of it was traduced from the temporary ministry of the seventy before-mentioned. That they were the same persons continued in their first office, as the apostles were, is uncertain and improbable; though it be not that some of them might be called thereunto; as Philip, and Timothy, and Titus, were Evangelists that were not of that first num-

ber. Their especial call is not mentioned, nor their number any where intimated. That their call was extraordinary is hence apparent, in that no rules are any where given or prescribed about their choice or ordination, no qualification of their persons expressed, nor any direction given the church as to its future proceeding about them, no more than about new or other apostles. They seem to have been called by the apostles, by the direction of a spirit of prophecy, or immediate revelation from Christ. So it is said of Timothy, who is expressly called an Evangelist, 2 Tim. iv. 5. that he received that gift by prophecy, 1 Tim. i. 14. that is, the gift of the office: as when Christ ascended, *he gave gifts unto men, some to be Evangelists*, Eph. iv. 8, 11. For this way did the Holy Ghost design men unto extraordinary offices and employments, Acts xiii. 1, 2, 3. And when they were so designed by prophecy, or immediate revelation from Christ by the Holy Ghost, then the church, in compliance therewith, both prayed for them, and laid their hands on them: So, when the Holy Ghost had revealed his chusing of Paul and Barnabas unto an especial work, the prophets and teachers of the church of Antioch where they then were, *fasted and prayed. and laid their hands on them*, so sending them away, Acts xiii. 14. And when Timothy was called to be an Evangelist, by especial revelation or prophecy, the apostle laid his hands on him, whereby he received the Holy Ghost in his extraordinary gifts: *The gift of God which was in him by the putting on of his hands*, 2 Tim. i. 6. And as it was usual with him to join others with himself in those epistles which he wrote by immediate divine inspiration, so in this act of laying his hands on an Evangelist as a sign of the communication of extraordinary gifts, he joined the ordinary presbytery of the church with him that were present in the place where he was so called. It is evident, therefore, that both their call and their gifts were extraordinary, and therefore so also was their office: for, although men, who have only an ordi-

nary call to office, may have extraordinary gifts, and many had so in primitive times: and although some might have extraordinary gifts, who were never called unto office at all, as some of those who spake with tongues, and wrought miracles; yet, where there is a concurrence of an extraordinary call and extraordinary gifts, there the office is extraordinary.

13. The power that these officers in the church were entrusted with, was extraordinary: for this is a certain consequent of an extraordinary call, and extraordinary gifts. And this power respected all churches in the world equally; yea, and all persons, as the apostles also did. But whereas their ministry was subordinate unto that of the apostles, they were by them guided as to the particular places wherein they were to exercise their power, and discharge their office for a season. This is evident from Paul's disposal of Titus, as to his work and time, Titus i. 5. chap. iii. 12. But yet their power did at no time depend on their relation unto any particular place or church, nor were they ever ordained to any one place or see more than another. But the extent of their employment was every way as large as that of the apostles, both as to the world and as to the churches; only in their present particular disposal of themselves, they were, as it is probable, for the most part, under the guidance of the apostles; although, sometimes they had particular revelations and directions from the Holy Ghost, or by the ministry of angels, for their especial employment, as Philip had, Acts viii. 26.

14. And as for their work, it may be reduced unto three heads: (1.) To preach the gospel in all places unto all persons, as they had occasion. So Philip went down to Samaria, and preached Christ, Acts viii. 5. And when the apostle Paul chargeth Timothy to do the work of an Evangelist, 2 Tim. iv. 5. he prescribes unto him *preaching the word in season, and out of season*, ver. 2. And whereas this was incumbent, in like manner, on the or-



dinary teachers of every church, the teaching of these Evangelists differed from theirs in two things: (1.) In the extent of their work, which, as we shewed before, was equal unto that of the apostles; whereas ordinary bishops, pastors, or teachers, were to feed, teach, and take care of the especial flocks only which they were set over, Acts xx. 17, 18. 1 Peter v. 2. (2.) They were obliged to labour in their work in a more than ordinary manner; as it should seem from 2 Tim. iv. 5. (2dly,) The second part of their work was to confirm the doctrine of the gospel by miraculous operations as occasion did require. So Philip the Evangelist wrought many miracles of sundry sorts in Samaria, in the confirmation of the doctrine which he taught, Acts viii. 6, 7, 13. And; in like manner, there is no question, but that the rest of the Evangelists had the power or gift of miraculous operations, to be exercised as occasion did require, and as they were guided by the Holy Ghost. (3dly,) They were employed in the settling and compleating of those churches, whose foundations were laid by the apostles. For whereas they had the great work upon them, of preaching the gospel unto all nations, they could not continue long or reside in any one place or church. And yet, when persons were newly converted to the faith, and disposed only into an imperfect order, without any especial peculiar officers, guides, or rulers of their own, it was not safe leaving of them unto themselves, lest they should be too much at a loss as to gospel order and worship. Wherefore, in such places where any churches were planted, but not compleated, nor would the design of the apostles suffer them to continue any longer there; they left these Evangelists among them for a season, who had power, by virtue of their office, to dispose of things in the churches, until they came unto compleateness and perfection. When this end was attained, and the churches were settled under ordinary elders of their own, the Evangelists removed into other places, according as they were directed or dis-



posed. These things are evident from the instructions given by Paul unto Timothy and Titus, which have all of them respect unto this order.

15. Some there are who plead for the continuance of this office: some in express terms, and under the same name: others for successors unto them, at least in that part of their work which consisteth in power over many churches. Some say that Bishops succeed to the Apostles, and Presbyters unto those Evangelists: but this is scarce defensible in any tolerable manner by them whose interest it is to defend it: for Timothy, whom they would have to be a bishop, is expressly called an Evangelist. That which is pleaded, with most probability, for their continuance, is the necessity of the work wherein they were employed in the rule and settlement of the churches: but the truth is, if their whole work, as before described, be consulted, as none can perform some parts of it, so it may be very few would over-earnestly press after a participation of their office. For, to preach the word continually, and that with a peculiar labour and travail, and to move up and down according as the necessity of the edification of the churches doth require, doing nothing in them but according to the rule and appointment of Christ, are things that not many will earnestly covet to be engaged in. But there is an apprehension, that there was something more than ordinary power belonging unto this office, that those who enjoyed it were not obliged to labour in any particular church, but had the rule of many churches committed unto them. Now, whereas this power is apt to draw other desirable things unto it, or carry them along with it; this is that which some pretend a succession unto: though they are neither called like them, nor gifted like them, nor labour like them, nor have the same object of their employment, much less the same power of extraordinary operations with them; yet, as to the rule over sundry churches, they must needs be their successors. I shall therefore briefly do these two things: (1.) Shew that there are

no such officers as these Evangelists continued by the will of Christ in the ordinary state and course of the church. (2.) That there is no need of their continuance from any work applied unto them.

16. And, 1. The things that are essential unto the office of an Evangelist, are unattainable at present unto the church. For where no command, no rule, no authority, no directions are given for the calling of any officer, there that office must cease, as doth that of the apostles, who could not be called but by Jesus Christ. What is required unto the call of an Evangelist, was before declared. And unless it can be manifested either by institution or example, how any one may be otherwise called unto that office, no such office can be continued. For a call by prophecy or immediate revelation none now will pretend unto. And other call the Evangelists of old had none.

17. Nor is there in the scripture the least mention of the call or appointment of any one to be an ecclesiastical officer in an ordinary stated church, but with relation unto that church whereof he was, or was to be, an officer. But an Evangelist, as such, was not especially related unto any one church more than another; though, as the apostles themselves, they might, for a time, attend unto the work in one place or church, rather or more, than another. Wherefore, without a call from the Holy Ghost, either immediate by prophecy or revelation, or by the direction of persons infallibly inspired, as the apostles were, none can be called to be Evangelists, nor yet to succeed them under any other name in that office. Wherefore the primitive church, after the apostles time, never once took upon them to constitute or ordain an Evangelist, as knowing it a thing beyond their rule, and out of their power. Men may invade an office when they please, but unless they be called unto it, they must account for their usurpation. And as for those who have erected an office in the church, or an Episcopacy, principally, if not solely, out of what is ascribed unto these

Evangelists, namely, to Timothy and Titus, they may be further attended unto in their claim, when they lay the least pretence unto the whole of what is ascribed unto them. But this doing the work of an Evangelist, is that which few men care for, or delight in; only their power and authority in a new kind of managery, many would willingly possess themselves of.

18. 2. The Evangelists, we read of, had extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, without which they could not warrantably undertake their office. This we have manifested before. Now, these extraordinary gifts, differing not only in degrees, but in kind, from all those of the ordinary ministry of the church, are not, at present, by any pretended unto: And if any should make such a pretence, it would be an easy matter to convince them of their folly. But, without these gifts, men must content themselves with such offices in the church as are stated with respect unto every particular congregation, Acts xiv. 23. chap. xx. 28. Titus i. 5. 1 Peter v. 1, 2. Phil. i. 1.

19. Some indeed seem not satisfied, whether to derive their claim from Timothy and Titus, as Evangelists, or from the bishops that were ordained by them, or described unto them. But whereas those bishops were no other but elders of particular churches, as is evident beyond a modest denial, from Acts xx. 28. Phil. i. 1. 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2, 8. Titus i. 4, 5. So certainly they cannot be of both sorts, the one being apparently superior unto the other. If they are such bishops as Titus and Timothy ordained, it is well enough known both what is their office, their work, and their duty: If such as they pretend Timothy and Titus to be, they must manifest it in the like call, gifts, and employment, as they had.

20. For, 3. There are not any, now, who do pretend unto their principal employment, by virtue of office, nor can so do: for it is certain, that the principal work of the Evangelists was to go up and down from

one place and nation unto another, to preach the gospel unto Jews and Gentiles as yet unconverted; and their commission unto this purpose was as large and extensive as that of the apostles. But who shall now empower any one hereunto? What church, what persons have received authority to ordain any one to be such an Evangelist? or what rules or directions are given as to their qualifications, power, or duty? or how they should be so ordained? It is true, that those who are ordained ministers of the gospel, and others also that are the disciples of Christ, may and ought to preach the gospel to unconverted persons and nations, as they have opportunity, and are particularly guided by the providence of God: but that any church or person have power or authority to ordain a person unto this office and work, cannot be proved.

21. Lastly, The continuance of the employment as unto the settling of new planted churches, is no way necessary: for every church being planted and settled, is entrusted with power for its own preservation and continuance in due order according to the mind of Christ, and is enabled to do all those things in itself, which at first were done under the guidance of the Evangelists; nor can any one instance be given wherein they are defective. And where any church was called and gathered in the name of Christ, which had some things yet wanting unto its perfection and complete order, which the Evangelists were to finish and settle; they did it not but in and by the power of the church itself; only presiding and directing in things to be done. And if any churches, through their own default, have lost that order and power which they were once established in, as they shall never want power in themselves to recover their pristine estate and condition, who will attend unto their duty, according unto rule to that purpose: So this would rather prove a necessity of raising up new Evangelists, of a new extraordinary ministry on the defection of churches, than the continuance of them in the church rightly settled and settled.



22. Besides these Evangelists, there were prophets also who had a temporary, extraordinary ministry in the church. Their grant from Christ, or institution in the church, is mentioned, 1 Cor. xii. 28. Eph. iv. 11. and the exercise of their ministry is declared, Acts xiii. 1. But the names of prophets and prophecy are used variously in the New Testament: for sometimes an extraordinary office and extraordinary gifts are signified by them; and sometimes extraordinary gifts only; sometimes an ordinary office with ordinary gifts; and sometimes ordinary gifts only. And unto one of these heads may the use of the word be every where reduced: In the places mentioned, extraordinary officers endued with extraordinary gifts are intended: for they are said to be set in the church, and are placed in the second rank of officers, next to the apostles; first apostles, secondarily prophets, 1 Cor. xii. 28. between them and Evangelists, Eph. iv. 11. And two things are ascribed unto them: (1.) That they received immediate revelations and directions from the Holy Ghost, in things that belonged unto the present duty of the church. Unto them it was that the Holy Ghost revealed his mind, and gave commands concerning the separation of Barnabas and Saul unto their work, Acts xiii. 2. (2.) They foretold things to come by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, wherein the duty or edification of the church was concerned. So Agabus the prophet foretold the famine in the days of Claudius Cæsar, whereon provision was made for the poor saints at Jerusalem, that they might not suffer by it, Acts xi. 28, 29. And the same person afterwards prophesied of the bonds and sufferings of Paul at Jerusalem, Acts xxi. 10, 11. And the same thing, it being of the highest concernment unto the church, was, (as it should seem) revealed unto the prophets that were in most churches; for so himself gives an account hereof. *And now behold I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city that bonds and af-*

*fictions abide me*, Acts xx. 21, 22. that is, in all the cities he passed through, where there were churches planted, and prophets in them. These things the churches then stood in need of, for their confirmation, direction, and comfort; and were therefore, I suppose, most of them supplied with such officers for a season, that is, whilst they were needful. And unto this office, though expressly affirmed to be set in the church, and placed between the apostles and the Evangelists, none that I know of do pretend a succession. All grant that they were extraordinary, because their gift and work was so; but so were those of Evangelists also. But there is no mention of the power and rule of these prophets, or else undoubtedly we should have had on one pretence or other, successors provided for them.

23. *2dly*, Sometimes an extraordinary gift without office is intended in this expression. So it is said that *Philip the Evangelist had four daughters. virgins, that did prophesy*, Acts xxi. 9. It is not said that they were prophetesses, as there were some under the Old Testament; only that they did prophesy; that is, they had revelations from the Holy Ghost occasionally for the use of the church. For, to prophesy, is nothing but to declare hidden and secret things, by virtue of immediate revelation, be they of what nature they will; and so is the word commonly used, Matth. xxvi. 68. Luke xxii. 64. So an extraordinary gift without office is expressed, Acts xix. 6. *And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.* Their prophesying, which was their declaration of spiritual things by immediate revelation, was of the same nature with their speaking with tongues; both extraordinary gifts and operations of the Holy Ghost. And of this sort were those miracles, healings, and tongues which God for a time set in the church, which did not constitute distinct officers in the church, but they were only sundry persons in each church which were endued with these extraordinary gifts for

its edification. And therefore are they placed after teachers, comprising both, which were the principal sort of the ordinary continuing officers of the church, 1 Cor. xii. 28. And of this sort do I reckon those prophets to be who are treated of, 1 Cor. xiv. 29, 30, 31, 32, 33. For that they were neither stated officers in the churches, nor yet the brethren of the church promiscuously; but such as had received an especial extraordinary gift, is evident from the context; see ver. 30, 37.

24. Again, an ordinary office with ordinary gifts is intended by this expression, Rom. xii. 6. *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith.* Prophecy here can intend nothing but teaching, or preaching, in the exposition and application of the word; for an external rule is given unto it, in that it must be done according to the proportion of faith, or the sound doctrine of faith revealed in the scripture. And this ever was and will ever continue to be the work and duty of the ordinary teachers of the church, whereunto they are enabled by the gifts of Christ, which they receive by the Holy Ghost, Eph. iv. 7. as we shall see more afterwards. And hence also those who are not called unto office, who have yet received a gift enabling them to declare the mind of God in the scripture unto the edification of others, may be said to prophesy.

25. And these things I thought meet to interpose, with a brief description of those officers which the Lord Jesus Christ granted unto his church for a season, at its first planting and establishment, with what belonged unto their office, and the necessity of their work. For the collation of them on the church, and their whole furniture with spiritual gifts, was the immediate work of the Holy Ghost, which we are in the declaration of; and, withal, it was my design to manifest how vain is the pretence of some unto a kind of succession unto these officers, who have neither an extraordinary call, nor extraordinary gifts, nor extraordinary employment, but only are plea-

fed to assume an extraordinary power unto themselves, over the churches and disciples of Christ; and that such as neither Evangelists, nor prophets, nor apostles, did ever claim or make use of. But this matter of power is fuel in itself unto the proud, ambitious minds of Diotrephists, and, as now circumstanced with other advantages, is useful to the corrupt lusts of men; and therefore it is no wonder if it be pretended unto, and greedily reached after, by such as really have neither call to the ministry, nor gifts for it, nor do employ themselves in it. And therefore, as in these extraordinary officers, and their gifts, did consist the original glory and honour of the churches in an especial manner, and by them was their edification carried on and perfected; so, by an empty pretence unto their power, without their order and spirit, the churches have been stained and deformed, and brought to destruction. But we must return unto the consideration of extraordinary spiritual gifts, which is the especial work before us.

#### C H A P. IV.

##### *Extraordinary spiritual gifts.*

1 Cor. xii. ver. 8, 9, 10, 11.

1. **E**XTRAORDINARY spiritual gifts were of two sorts: First, Such as absolutely exceed the whole powers and faculties of our minds and souls. These therefore did not consist in an abiding principle or faculty always resident in them that received them, so as that they could exercise them by virtue of any inherent power and ability. They were so granted unto some persons in the execution of their office, as that so



often as was needful, they could produce their effects by virtue of an immediate extraordinary influence of divine power, transiently affecting their minds. Such was the gift of miracles, healing, and the like. There were no extraordinary officers, but they had these gifts. But yet they could work or operate by virtue of them, only as the Holy Ghost gave them especial direction for the putting forth of his power in them. So it is said that Paul and Barnabas, preaching at Iconium, the *Lord gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands*, Acts xiv. 3. The working of signs and miracles, is the immediate operation of the Spirit of God; nor can any power or faculty, efficiently productive of such effects, abide in the souls or minds of men: these miraculous operations were the witness of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, which he gave to the truth of the gospel. See Heb. ii. 4. with our exposition thereon. Wherefore there was no more in these gifts which absolutely exceed the whole faculties of our natures, but the designing of certain persons by the Holy Ghost, in and with whose ministry he would himself effect miraculous operations.

Secondly, They were such as consisted in extraordinary endowments and improvements of the faculties of the souls or minds of men; such as wisdom, knowledge, utterance, and the like. Now, where these were bestowed on any in an extraordinary manner, as they were on the apostles and evangelists, they differed only in degree from them that are ordinary, and still continued; but are of the same kind with them; whereof we shall treat afterward. Now, whereas all these gifts of both sorts, are expressly and distinctly enumerated and set down by our apostle in one place, I shall consider them as they are there proposed by him.

2. 1 Cor. xii. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another*

*faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and self-same Spirit, dividing to every one severally as he will.*

The general concernments of this passage in the apostle were declared, and the context opened, at the beginning of our discourse on this subject. I shall only now consider the especial spiritual gifts that are here enumerated by the apostle, which are nine in number, laid down promiscuously without respect unto any order or dependence of one upon another; although it is probable that those first placed, were the principal, or of principal use in the church.

3. The first is *λογος σοφιας*, the word of wisdom. *Λογος* here is of the same signification with *דבר* in the Hebrew; which often signifies a thing or matter. Wherefore the word of wisdom is nothing but wisdom itself. And our enquiry is, what was that wisdom which was a peculiar and an especial gift (in those days) of the Holy Ghost? Our Lord Jesus Christ promised unto his disciples, that he would give them *a mouth and wisdom, which all their adversaries should not be able to gainsay nor resist*, Luke xxi. 15. This will be our rule in the declaration of the nature of this gift. That which he hath respect unto, is the defence of the gospel, and its truth, against powerful persecuting adversaries. For, although they had the truth on their side, yet being men ignorant and unlearned, they might justly fear, that when they were brought before kings, and rulers, and priests, they should be baffled in their profession, and not be able to defend the truth. Wherefore this promise of a mouth and wisdom respects spiritual ability and utterance in the defence of the truth of the gospel, when they were called into question about it. Spiritual ability of mind is the wisdom, and utterance or freedom of speech is the mouth here promised. An eminent instance of the accomplish-

ment hereof we have in Peter and John, Acts iv. For, upon their making a defence of the resurrection of Christ, and the truth of the gospel therein, such as their adversaries were not able to gainsay nor resist, it is said, that when the rulers and elders saw their *παρρησιας*, that is, their utterance in defence of their cause with boldness, and so the wisdom wherewith it was accompanied, considering that they were unlearned and ignorant, they were astonished, and only considered, *that they had been with Jesus*, ver. 13. And he it was, who, in the accomplishment of his promise, had given them that spiritual wisdom and utterance, which they were not able to resist. So it is said expressly of Stephen, that his adversaries were not able to resist the wisdom and spirit whereby he spake, Acts vi. 10. Wherefore this gift of wisdom, in the first place, was a spiritual skill and ability to defend the truths of the gospel, when questioned, opposed or blasphemed. And this gift was eminent in those primitive times, when a company of unlearned men were able, upon all occasions, to maintain and defend the truth which they believed and professed before and against doctors, scribes, lawyers, rulers of synagogues, yea, princes, and kings, continually so confounding their adversaries, as that, being obstinate in their unbelief, they were forced to cover their shame, by betaking themselves unto rage and bestial fury, Acts vi. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. chap. vii. 54. chap. xxii. 22, 23, as hath been the manner of all their successors ever since.

4. Now, although this be an especial kind of wisdom, an eminent gift of the Holy Ghost, wherein the glory of Christ, and honour of the gospel, is greatly concerned, namely, an ability to manage and defend the truth in times of trial and danger, to the confusion of its adversaries; yet I suppose the wisdom here intended, is not absolutely confined thereunto, though it be principally intended. Peter, speaking of Paul's epistles, affirms, that they were written *according to the wisdom given unto him*, 2 Peter iii. 15. that is, that especial gift of spiritual wis-



dom, for the management of gospel-truths unto the edification of the church of Christ which he had received. And he that would understand what this wisdom is, must be thoroughly conversant in the writings of that apostle. For indeed the wisdom that he useth in the management of the doctrine of the gospel, in the due consideration of all persons, occasions, circumstances, temptations of men and churches, of their state, condition, strength, or weakness, growth, or decays, obedience, or failings, their capacities and progresses, with the holy accommodation of himself in what he teacheth or delivereth, in meekness, in vehemency, in tenderness, in sharpness, in severe arguings and pathological exhortations, with all other ways and means suited unto his holy ends, in the propagation of the gospel, and edification of the church, are inexpressibly glorious and excellent. All this did he do according to the singular gift of wisdom that was bestowed on him. Wherefore I take the word of wisdom here mentioned, to be a peculiar spiritual skill and ability, wisely to manage the gospel in its administration unto the advantage and furtherance of the truth, especially in the defence of it when called unto the trial with its adversaries. This was an eminent gift of the Holy Ghost; which, considering the persons employed by him in the ministry, for the most part, being known to be unlearned and ignorant, filled the world with amazement, and was an effectual means for the subduing of multitudes unto the obedience of faith. And so eminent was the apostle Paul in this gift, and so successful in the management of it, that his adversaries had nothing to say, but that he was *subtle, and took men by craft and guile*, 2 Cor. xii. 16. The sweetness, condescension, self-denial, holy compliance, with all which he made use of, mixed with truth, gravity, and authority, they would have had to be all craft and guile; and this gift, when it is in any measure continued unto any minister of the gospel, is of singular use unto the church of God. Yea, I doubt not but the apostle fixed it here, in the first place, as that



which was eminent above all the rest. And as where it is too much wanting, we see what woful mistakes and miscarriages, men, otherwise good and holy, will run themselves into, unto the great disadvantage of the gospel; so the real enjoyment and exercise of it in any competent measure, is the life and grace of the ministry. As God filled Bezaliel and Aholiab with wisdom for the building of the tabernacle of old, so unless he give this spiritual wisdom unto the ministers of the gospel, no tabernacle of his will be erected where it is fallen down, nor kept up where it stands. I intend not secular wisdom, or civil wisdom, much less carnal wisdom; but a spiritual ability to discharge all our duties aright in the ministry committed unto us. And, as was said, where this is wanting, we shall quickly see woful and shameful work made in churches themselves.

5. I cannot pass by the consideration of this gift, without offering something that may guide us, either in the obtaining, or the due exercise of it. And hereunto the things ensuing may be subservient: As, (1.) A sense of our own insufficiency as of ourselves, as unto any end for which this wisdom is requisite. As it is declared that we have no sufficiency in ourselves for any thing that is good, all our sufficiency being of God: so, in particular, it is denied that we have any for the work of the ministry, in that interrogation containing a negative proposition, *And who is sufficient for these things?* 2 Cor. ii. 16. A sense hereof is the first step towards this wisdom, as our apostle expressly declares: *Let no man deceive himself; if any among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise,* 1 Cor. iii. 18. Untill we discover, and are sensible of our own folly, we are fit neither to receive, nor to use this spiritual wisdom. And the want hereof proves the ruin of many that pretend unto the ministry: and it were to be wished that it were only their own. They come to the work of it full of pride, self-conceit, and foolish elation of mind, in an apprehension of their own abilities, which

yet, for the most part, are mean and contemptible. This keeps them sufficiently estranged from a sense of that spiritual wisdom we treat of. Hence there is nothing of a gospel-ministry, nor its work, found among them, but an empty name. And as for those who have reduced all ecclesiastical administrations to canons, laws, acts, courts, and legal processes in them, they seem to do it with a design to cast off all use of spiritual gifts; yea, to exclude both them, and their author, name, and thing, out of the church of God. Is this the wisdom given by the Holy Ghost for the due management of gospel-administrations, namely, that men should get a little skill in some of the worst of human laws, and uncomely artifices of intriguing secular courts, which they pride themselves in, and terrify poor creatures with mulcts and penalties, that are any way obnoxious unto them? What use these things may be of in the world I know not, unto the church of God they do not belong.

6. 2. Being sensible of our own insufficiency, earnest prayers for a supply of this wisdom are required in us. *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him,* James i. 5. There is both a precept and a promise to enforce this duty. That we all want wisdom in ourselves is unquestionable; I mean, as to our concerns in the gospel, either to bear testimony unto it in difficulties, or to manage the truths of it unto edification: The way for our supply lies plain and open before us; neither is there any other that we can take one step in towards it. *Let us ask it of God, who giveth liberally,* and we shall receive it. This was that which rendered Solomon so great and glorious; when he had his choice given him of all desireable things, he made his request for wisdom to the discharge of the office and duties of it that God had called him unto. Though it were an whole kingdom that he was to rule, yet was his work carnal, and of this world, compared with the spiritual administrations of the gospel. And hereunto a worldly ministry

is no less averse, than unto a sense of their own insufficiency. The fruits do sufficiently manifest how much this duty is contemned by them: but the neglect of it, I say, the neglect of praying for wisdom to be enabled unto the discharge of the work of the ministry, and the due management of the truths of the gospel, according as occasion do require, in them who pretend thereunto, is a fruit of unbelief, yea, of atheism and contempt of God.

7. 3. Due meditation on our great pattern, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the apostles; being followers of them, as they were of him, is also required hereunto. As in all other things, so in especial, in his ministry, for the revelation of the truth, and giving testimony thereunto, the Lord Jesus was the great pattern and example; God in him representing unto us that perfection in wisdom which we ought to aim at. I shall not here, in particular, look into this heavenly treasury, but only say, that he who would be really and truly wise in spiritual things, who would either rightly receive, or duly improve this gift of the Holy Ghost, he ought continually to bear in his heart, his mind, and affections, this great exemplar and idea of it, even the Lord Jesus Christ, in his ministry, namely, what he did, what he spake, how, on all occasions, his condescension, meekness, and authority, did manifest themselves; until he be changed into the same image and likeness by the Spirit of the Lord. The same is to be done in their place and sphere towards the apostles, as the principal followers of Christ, and who do most lively represent his graces and wisdom unto us. Their writings, and what is written of them, are to be searched and studied unto this very end, that considering how they behaved themselves, in all instances, on all occasions, in their testimony, and all administrations of the truth, we may endeavour after a conformity unto them in the participation of the same Spirit with them. It would be no small stay and guidance unto us, if, on all occasions, we would diligently search and consider what

the apostles did in such circumstances, or what they would have done in answer to what is recorded of their spirit and actings. For, although this wisdom be a gift of the Holy Spirit, yet, as we now consider it, as it is continued in the church, it may be in part obtained, and greatly improved, in the due use of the means which are subservient thereunto; provided that in all we depend solely on God for the giving of it, who hath also prescribed these means unto us for the same end.

8. 4. Let them who design a participation of this gift, take heed that it be not stifled with such vicious habits of mind as are expressly contrary unto it, and destructive of it: such are self-fulness, or confidence, hastiness of spirit, promptness to speak, and slowness to hear, which are the great means which make many abound in their own sense and folly, to be wise in their own conceits, and contemptible in the judgment of all that are truly so. Ability of speech in time and season, is an especial gift of God, and that eminently with respect unto the spiritual things of the gospel. But a profluency of speech venting itself on all occasions, and on no occasions, making men open their mouths wide, when, indeed, they should shut them, and open their ears, and to pour out all that they know, and what they do not know, making them angry if they are not heard, and impatient if they are contradicted, is an unconquerable fortification against all true spiritual wisdom.

9. 5. Let those who would be sharers herein, follow after those gifts and graces which do accompany it, promote it, and are inseparable from it. Such are humility, meekness, patience, constancy, with boldness and confidence in profession, without which we shall be fools in every trial. Wisdom, indeed, is none of all these, but it is that which cannot be without them, nor will it thrive in any mind that is not cultivated by them. And he who thinks it is not worth his pains and travail, nor that it will quit cost to seek after this spiritual wisdom, by a constant watchfulness against the opposite vices mentioned, and



attendance unto those concomitant duties and graces, must be content to go without it. This is the first instance given by our apostle of the spiritual gifts of the primitive times; to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom.

10. *To another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.* Λεγος γνωσεως. I shewed before, λεγος may denote the thing itself; the word of knowledge. But if any shall suppose, that because this knowledge was to be expressed unto the church for its edification. it is therefore called a word of knowledge, as a word of exhortation, or a word of consolation, that is, exhortation and consolation, administered by words, I shall not contend to the contrary. It is knowledge that is the gift peculiarly intended in this second place. And we must enquire, both how it is an especial gift, and of what sort it is? And it should seem that it cannot have the nature of an especial gift, seeing it is that which was common to all. For so saith the apostle, speaking unto the whole church of the Corinthians: *We know that we all have knowledge*, 1 Cor. viii. 1. And not only so, but also adds, that this knowledge is a thing, which either in its own nature tends unto an ill issue, or is very apt to be abused thereunto: for, saith he, *Knowledge puffeth up*, for which cause he frequently reflects upon it in other places. But yet we shall find that it is a peculiar gift, and in itself singularly useful: however it may be abused, as the best things may be, yea, are most liable thereunto. The knowledge mentioned in that place by the apostle, which he ascribes in common unto all the church, was only that which concerned things sacrificed unto idols; and if we should extend it farther, unto an understanding of the mystery of the gospel which was in the community of believers; yet is there place remaining for an eminence therein, by virtue of an especial spiritual gift. And as to what he adds about knowledge puffing up, he expounds in the next words: *If any man thinketh that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to*

*know*, ver. 2. It is not mens knowledge, but the vain and proud conceit of ignorant men, supposing themselves knowing and wise, that so puffeth up and hindereth edification.

11. Wherefore, (1.) By this word of knowledge, not that degree of it which is required in all Christians, in all the members of the church is intended. Such a measure of knowledge there is necessary both unto faith and confession. Men can believe nothing of that whereof they know nothing, nor can they confess with their mouths what they apprehend not in their minds. But it is somewhat singular, eminent, and not common to all. Neither, (2.) Doth that eminency or singularity consist in this, that it is saving and sanctifying knowledge which is intended. That there is such a peculiar knowledge whereby God shines into the hearts of believers, with a spiritual saving insight into spiritual things, transforming the mind into the likeness of them, I have at large elsewhere declared. For it is reckoned among gifts; whereas that other is a saving grace, whose difference hath been declared before. It is expressed by the apostle, 1 Cor. xiii. 2. by *understanding all mysteries and all knowledge*, that is, having an understanding in, and the knowledge of all mysteries. This knowledge he calleth a gift, which shall vanish away, ver. 8. and so not belonging absolutely unto that grace, which being a part of the image of God in us, shall go over into eternity. And knowledge, in ver. 2. is taken for the thing known; if *I understand all knowledge*, which is the same with all mysteries. Wherefore the knowledge here intended, is such a peculiar and especial insight into the mysteries of the gospel, as whereby those in whom it was, were enabled to teach and instruct others. Thus the apostle Paul, who had received all these gifts in the highest degree and measure, affirms, that, by his writing, those to whom he wrote, might perceive his *skill and understanding in the mystery of Christ*.

12. And this was in an especial manner necessary un-

to those first dispensers of the gospel; for how else should the church have been instructed in the knowledge of it? This they prayed for them, namely, that they might be filled with the *knowledge of the will of God, in all wisdom and understanding*, Col. i. 9. Eph. i. 18, 19, 20. chap. iii. 18, 19. Col. ii. 2. The means whereby they might come hereunto, was by their instruction, who therefore were to be skilled in a peculiar manner in the knowledge of those mysteries, which they were to impart unto others, and to do it accordingly: and so it was with them, Acts xx. 27. Eph. iii. 8, 9. Col. iv. 2. Now, although this gift, as to that excellent degree wherein it was in the apostles, and those who received the knowledge of Christ and the gospel by immediate revelation, be withheld, yet it is still communicated in such a measure unto the ministers of the church, as is necessary unto its edification. And for any one to undertake an office in the church, who hath not received this gift in some good measure of the knowledge of the mystery of God, and the gospel, is to impose himself on that service in the house of God, which he is neither called unto, nor fitted for. And whereas we have lived to see all endeavours after an especial acquaintance with the mysteries of the gospel, despised or derided by some, it is an evidence of that fatal and fearful apostacy, wherein the generality of Christians are fallen.

13. Faith is added, in the third place: *To another faith, by the same Spirit.* That the saying grace of faith, which is common unto all true believers, is not here intended, is manifest from the context. There is a faith in scripture, which is commonly called the faith of miracles, mentioned by our apostle in this epistle, as a principal, extraordinary, spiritual gift, chap. xiii. 2. *Though I had all faith, so that I could remove mountains*, that is, the highest degree of a faith of miracles, or such as would effect miraculous operations of the highest nature. This I should readily admit to be here intended; but that there is mention made of working miracles in the next verse,



as a gift distinct from this faith: yet, whereas this working of miracles is every where ascribed to faith, and could not be any where, but where the peculiar faith from which those operations did proceed was first imparted, it is not unlikely, but that by faith the principle of all miraculous operations may be intended, and by the other expressions the operations themselves. But if the distinction of these gifts be to be preserved, as I rather judge that it ought to be, considering the placing of faith immediately upon wisdom and knowledge, I should judge that a peculiar confidence, boldness, and assurance of mind in the profession of the gospel, and the administration of its ordinances, is here intended. Faith therefore is *παρρησια εν πισει*, that freedom, confidence, and boldness in the faith, or profession of the faith, which is in Christ Jesus, mentioned by the apostle, 1 Tim. iii. 13. that is, *ουκ υποστανεις*, or confidence in profession, whose beginning we are to hold fast and firm unto the end, Heb. iii. 14. And we do see how excellent a gift this is on all occasions. When troubles and trials do befall the church upon the account of its profession, many, even true believers, are very ready to faint and despond, and some to draw back at least for a season; as others do utterly, to the perdition of their souls. In this state, the eminent usefulness of this gift of boldness in the faith, of an assured confidence in profession, of an especial faith to go through troubles and trials, is known unto all. Oft-times, the eminence of it in one single person hath been the means to preserve a whole church from coldness, backsliding, or sinful compliances with the world. And where God stirreth up any one unto some great or singular work in his church, he constantly endows them with this gift of faith. So was it with Luther, whose undaunted courage and resolution in profession, or boldness in the faith, was one of the principal means of succeeding in his great undertaking. And there is no more certain sign of churches being forsaken of Christ in a time of trial, than if this gift be withheld from them, and pusil-



lanimity, fearfulness, with carnal wisdom, do spring up in the room of it. The work and effects of this faith are expressed, 1 Cor. xvi. 13. *Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.* So also, Eph. vi. 10. 2 Peter ii. 1. And the especial way whereby it may be attained or improved, is by a diligent careful discharge at all times of all the duties of the places we hold in the church, 1 Peter iii. 13.

14. The gifts of healing are nextly mentioned. *χαρισματα ἰαμάτων.* *To another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit.* So they are again expressed, ver. 28. in the plural number, because of their free communication unto many persons. These healings respected those that were sick, in their sudden and miraculous recovery from long or deadly distempers, by the imposition of hands in the name of the Lord Jesus. And as many of the mighty works of Christ himself, for the reasons that shall be mentioned, consisted in these healings, so it was one of the first things which he gave in commission to his apostles, and furnished them with power for, whilst they attended on him in his personal ministry, Matth. x. 1. So also did he do to the seventy, making it the principal sign of the approach of the kingdom of God, Luke x. 9. And the same power and virtue he promiseth to believers, namely, that they should *lay hands on the sick and recover them*, after his ascension. Of the accomplishment of this promise, and the exercise of this power, the story of the Acts of the Apostles giveth us many instances, Acts v. 15. chap. iii. 7. chap. ix. 33, 34. And two things are observed singular in the exercise of this gift. As first, that many were cured by the shadow of Peter as he passed by, Acts v. 15. And again, many were so by handkerchiefs and aprons carried from the body of Paul, chap. xix. 12. And the reason of these extraordinary operations in extraordinary cases, seems to have been the encouragement of that great faith which was then stirred up in them that beheld those miraculous operations, which was of singular advantage unto the pro-

pagation of the gospel; as the magical superstition of the Roman church, sundry ways, endeavouring to imitate these inimitable actings of sovereign divine power, hath been a dishonour to Christian religion.

15. But whereas these healings were miraculous operations, it may be enquired why the gift of them is constantly distinguished from miracles, and is placed as a distinct effect of the Holy Ghost by itself; for that so it is, is evident both in the commission of Christ granting this power unto his disciples, and in the annumeration of these gifts in this and other places. I answer, this seems to be done on a threefold account: 1. Because miracles, absolutely, were a sign to them that believed not, as the apostle speaketh of tongues, *they were a sign not unto them that believe, but unto them that believed not,* 1 Cor. xiv. 22. that is, which served for their conviction. But this work of healing was a sign unto believers themselves, and that on a double account: For, first, The pouring out of this gift of the Holy Ghost, was a peculiar sign and token of the coming of the kingdom of God. So saith our Saviour to his disciples, *Heal the sick, and say unto them, the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you,* Luke x. 9. This gift of healing being a token and pledge thereof. This sign did our Saviour give of it himself, when John sent his disciples unto him to enquire, for their own satisfaction, not his, whether he were the Messiah or no, Matth. xi. 4, 5. *Go, saith he, and shew John these things which ye do hear and see; the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them:* which was the evidence of his own being the Messiah, and bringing in the kingdom of God. The Jews have an ancient tradition, that in the days of the Messias all things should be healed but the Serpent. And there is a truth in what they say; although, for their parts, they understand it not. For all are healed by Christ but the Serpent and his seed, the wicked unbelieving world. And hereof;

namely, of the healing and recovery of all things by Christ, was this gift or sign unto the church. Wherefore he began his ministry after his first miracle, with *healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of diseases* among the people, Matth. iv. 23, 24, 25. (2.) It was a sign that Christ had borne and taken away sin, which was the cause, root, and spring of diseases and sicknesses, without which no one could have been miraculously cured. Hence that place of Isaiah, chap. liii. 4. *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows:* which is afterwards interpreted, *by being wounded for our transgressions, and being bruised for our iniquities,* ver. 5. As also by Peter, by his *bearing our sins in his own body on the tree,* 1 Peter ii. 24. is applied by Matthew unto the curing of diseases and sicknesses, Matth. viii. 16, 17. Now, this was for no other reason, but because this healing of diseases was a sign and effect of his bearing our sins, the causes of them, without a supposition whereof healing would have been a false witness unto men. It was therefore on these accounts a sign unto believers also.

16. *2dly,* Because it had a peculiar goodness, relief, and benignity towards mankind in it, which other miraculous operations had not; at least, not unto the same degree. Indeed this was one great difference between the miraculous operations that were wrought under the Old Testament, and those under the New; that the former generally consisted in dreadful and tremendous works, bringing astonishment, and oft-times ruin to mankind; but those other were generally useful and beneficial unto all. But this of healing had a peculiar evidence of love, kindness, compassion, benignity, and was suited greatly to affect the minds of men with regard and gratitude. For long afflictive distempers or violent pains, such as were the diseases cured by this gift, do prepare the minds of men, and those concerned in them, greatly to value their deliverance. This therefore, in an especial manner, declared and evidenced the goodness,



love, and compassion of him that was the author of this gospel, and gave this sign of healing spiritual diseases by healing bodily distempers. And, doubtless, many who were made partakers of the benefit hereof, were greatly affected with it; and that not only by walking, and leaping, and praising God, as the cripple did who was cured by Peter and John, Acts iii. 8. but also unto faith and boldness in profession, as it was with the blind man healed by our Saviour himself, John viii. 31, 32, 33, 38, &c. But yet no outward effects of themselves can work upon the hearts of men, so as that all who are made partakers of them should be brought unto faith, thankfulness, and obedience. Hence, did not only our Saviour himself observe, that of ten at once cleansed by him of their leprosy, but one returned to give glory to God, Luke xvii. 7. But he whom he cured of a disease that he had suffered under eight and thirty years, notwithstanding a following admonition given him by our blessed Saviour, turned informer against him, and endeavoured to betray him unto the Jews, John v. 5, 8, 13, 14, 15. It is effectual grace alone which can change the heart, without which it will continue obstinate and unbelieving, under not only the sight and consideration of the most miraculous outward operations, but also the participation in ourselves of the benefit and fruits of them. Men may have their bodies cured by miracles, when their souls are not cured by grace.

17. *3aij*; It is thus placed distinctly by itself, and not placed under the common head of miracles, because ordinarily there were some outward means and tokens of it that were to be made use of, in the exercise of this gift. Such were, (1.) Imposition of hands. Our Saviour himself in healing of the sick, did generally lay his hands on them, Matth. vi. 5. Luke iv. 40: And he gave the same order unto his disciples, *that they should lay their hands on those that were sick, and heal them*, which was practised by them accordingly. (2.) *Anointing with oil: they anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them,*



Mark vi. 13. and the elders of the church, with whom this gift was continued, were to come to him that was sick, and praying over him, anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord, and he should be saved, James v. 14, 15. Some do contend for the continuance of this ceremony, or the anointing of them that are sick by the elders of the church, but without ground or warrant: for, although it be their duty to pray in a particular manner for those that are sick, of their flocks, and it be the duty of them who are sick, to call for them unto that purpose; yet the application of the outward ceremony being instituted, not as a means of an uncertain cure, as all are which work naturally unto that end, but as a pledge and token of a certain healing and recovery, where there is not an infallible faith thereof, when the healing may not ensue; it is to turn an ordinance into a lie: for, if a recovery follow ten times on this anointing, if it once fall out otherwise, the institution is rendered a lie, a false testimony; and the other recoveries manifested to have had no dependence on the observation of it. For these reasons, I judge, that this gift of healing, though belonging unto miraculous operations in general, is every where reckoned as a distinct gift by itself. And from that place of James, I am apt to think that this gift was communicated in an especial manner unto the elders of churches, even that were ordinary and fixed; it being of so great use, and such singular comfort to them that were poor and persecuted, which was the condition of many churches, and their members, in those days.

18. Miracles ensue, in the fifth place, *ἐνεργητικὰ δυνάμειον*, *effectual working of mighty powers, or powerful works*. For the signification of this word here rendered miracles, the reader may consult our Exposition on Heb. ii. 4. I shall not thence transcribe what is already declared, nor is any thing necessary to be added thereunto. Concerning this gift of miracles we have also spoken before in general; so that we shall not much further insist upon it; neither is it necessary that we should here

treat of the nature, end, and use of miracles in general, which, in part, also hath been done before. Wherefore, I shall only observe some few things as to the gift itself, and the use of it in the church, which alone are our present concernment. And, (1.) As we before observed, this gift did not consist in any inherent power or faculty of the mind; so as that those who had received it should have an ability of their own to work or effect such miracles, when, and as they saw good. As this is disclaimed by the apostles, Acts iii. 12. so a supposition of it would overthrow the very nature of miracles; for a miracle is an immediate effect of divine power exceeding all created abilities; and what is not so, though it may be strange or wonderful, is no miracle. Only Jesus Christ had in his own person a power of working miracles when, and where, and how he pleased, because God was with him, or *the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily*. (2.) Unto the working of every miracle in particular, there was a peculiar act of faith required in them that wrought it. This is that faith which is called the faith of miracles, *Have all faith, so that I could remove mountains*, 1 Cor. xiii. 2. Now, this faith was not a strong fixing of the imagination that such a thing should be done, as some have blasphemously dreamed; nor was it a faith resting merely on the promises of the word, making particular application of them unto times, seasons, and occasions, wherein it no way differs from the ordinary grace of faith: but this was the true nature of it, that as it was in general resolved into the promises of the word, and power of Christ declared therein, that such and such things should be wrought in general; so it had always a peculiar immediate revelation for its warranty and security in the working of any miracle. And without such an immediate revelation or divine impulse and impression, all attempts of miraculous operations are vain, and means only for Satan to insinuate his delusions by.

19. No man, therefore, could work any miracle, nor attempt, in faith, so to do, without an immediate revela-

tion that divine power should be therein exerted, and put forth in its operation: yet I do not suppose that it was necessary that this inspiration and revelation should, in order of time, precede the acting of this faith, though it did the operation of the miracle itself. Yea, the inspiration itself consisted in the elevation of faith to apprehend divine power in such a case for such an end, which the Holy Ghost granted not to any, but when he designed so to work. Thus Paul, at once, acted faith, apprehended divine power, and at the same time struck Elymas the forcerer blind by a miraculous operation, Acts xiii. 9, 10, 11, 12. *Being filled with the Holy Ghost*, ver. 9. that is, having received an impression and warranty from him, he put forth that act of faith, at whose presence the Holy Spirit would effect that miraculous operation which he believed. Wherefore this was the nature of this gift; some persons were by the Holy Ghost endowed with that especial faith which was prepared to receive impressions and intimations of his putting forth his power in this or that miraculous operation. Those who had this faith could not work miracles when, and where, and how they pleased; only they could infallibly signify what the Holy Ghost would do, and so were the outward instruments of the execution of his power.

20. 3. Although the apostles had all gifts of the Spirit in an eminent degree and manner above all others, as Paul saith, *I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all*; yet it appears that there were some other persons distinct from them, who had this gift of working miracles in a peculiar manner. For it is not only here reckoned as a peculiar distinct gift of the Holy Ghost, but also the persons who had received it are reckoned as distinct from the apostles and other officers of the church, 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29. Not that I think this gift did constitute them officers in the church, enabling them to exercise power in gospel administrations therein; only they were brethren of the church, made eminent by a participation of this gift, for the end whereunto it was ordained. By



these persons ministry, did the Holy Spirit, on such occasions as seemed meet to his infinite wisdom, effect miraculous operations, besides what was done in the same kind by the apostles and evangelists, all the world over.

21. †. The use of this gift in the church at that time and season was manifold: for the principles which believers proceeded on, and the doctrines they professed, were new and strange to the world, and such as had mighty prejudices raised against them in the minds of men. The persons by whom they were maintained and asserted were generally as to their outward condition poor and contemptible in the world. The churches themselves, as to their members, few in number; encompassed with multitudes of scoffers, and persecuting idolaters; themselves also, newly converted, and many of them but weak in the faith. In this state of things, this gift of miracles was exceeding useful and necessary unto the propagation of the gospel, the vindication of the truth, and the establishment of them that did believe. For, (1.) By miracles occasionally wrought, the people round about who yet believed not, were called in, as it were, unto a due consideration of what was done, and what was designed thereby. Thus when the noise was first spread abroad of the *apostles speaking with tongues, the multitude came together, and were confounded, Acts ii. 6.* So the multitude gathered together at Lystra, upon the curing of the cripple, by Paul and Barnabas, thinking them to have been gods, *Acts xiv. 11.* When therefore any were so amazed with seeing the miracles that were wrought, hearing that they were so in the confirmation of the doctrine of the gospel, they could not but enquire with diligence into it, and cast out those prejudices which before they had entertained against it. (2.) They gave authority unto the ministers of the church. For, whereas on outward accounts they were despised by the great, wise, and learned men of the world, it was made evident, by these divine operations, that their ministry was of God, and what they taught approved by him. And where these two things were effected, namely, that a suf-



ficient, yea, an eminently cogent ground and reason was given, why men should impartially enquire into the doctrine of the gospel, and an evidence given, that the teachers of it were approved of God, unless men were signally captivated under the power of Satan, 2 Cor. iv. 4. or given up of God judicially unto blindness and hardness of heart, it could not be, but that the prejudices which they had of themselves, or might receive from others against the gospel, must of necessity be prevailed against and conquered. And as many of the Jews were so hardened and blinded at that time, Rom. xi. 7, 8, 9, 10. 1 Theff. ii. 14, 15, 16. so it is marvellous to consider with what artifices Satan bestirred himself among the Gentiles by false and lying signs and wonders, with many other ways to take off from the testimony given unto the gospel by these miraculous operations.

And this was that which miracles were designed unto towards unbelievers, namely, to take away prejudices from the doctrine of the gospel, and the persons by whom it was taught, so disposing the minds of men unto an attendance unto it, and the reception of it: for they were never means instituted of God for the ingenerating of faith in any, but only to provoke and prevail with men, to attend unprejudicately unto that whereby it was to be wrought. *For faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*, Rom. x. 17. And therefore, whatever miracles were wrought, if the word preached was not received, if that did not accompany them in its powerful operation, they were but despised. Thus, whereas some, upon hearing of the *apostles speak with tongues*, mocked, and said, *These men are full of new wine*, Acts ii. 13. yet, upon preaching of the word, which ensued, they were converted unto God. And the apostle Paul tells us, that if there were nothing but miraculous speaking with tongues in the church, an unbeliever coming in would say they were all mad, 1 Cor. xiv. 23. who by the word of prophecy would be convinced, judged, and converted unto God, ver. 24, 25.

(3.) They were of singular use to confirm and establish in the faith those who were weak and newly converted. For, whereas they were assaulted on every hand by Satan, the world, and it may be their nearest relations, and that with contempt, scorn, and cruel mocking; it was a singular confirmation and establishment to behold the miraculous operations which were wrought in the approbation of the doctrine which they did profess. Hereby was a sense of it more and more let into, and impressed on their minds, until, by an habitual experience of its goodness, power, and efficacy, they were established in the truth.

22. Prophecy is added in the sixth place. *ἄλλωδε προφητείας.* *To another prophecy*, that is, is given by the same Spirit. Of this gift of prophecy we have sufficiently treated before. I take it here in its largest sense; both as it signifies a faculty of prediction, or foretelling things future upon divine revelation, or an ability to declare the mind of God from the word, by the especial and immediate revelation of the Holy Ghost. The first of these was more rare, the latter more ordinary and common. And it may be there were few churches wherein, besides their elders and teachers, by virtue of their office, there were not some of these prophets; so of those who had this gift of prophecy, enabling, in an eminent manner, to declare the mind of God from the scriptures, unto the edification of the church. It is expressed that there were some of them in the church at Antioch, Acts xiii. 1, 2. and many of them in the church at Corinth, 1 Cor. xiv. For this gift was of singular use in the church; and therefore, as to the end of the edification thereof, is preferred by our apostle above all other gifts of the Spirit whatever, 1 Cor. xii. 31. chap. xiv. 1, 39. For it had a double use: (1.) The conviction and conversion of such as came in occasionally into their church assemblies. Those unto whom the propagation of the gospel was principally committed, went up and down the world, laying hold on all occasions to preach it unto Jews and

Gentiles, as yet unconverted. And where churches were gathered and settled, the principal work of their teachers was to edify them that did believe. But whereas some would come in among them into their church assemblies, perhaps out of curiosity, perhaps out of worse designs, the apostle declares, that, of all the ordinances of the church, this of prophecy was suited unto the conviction and conversion of all unbelievers, and is oft-times blessed thereunto, whereby *this and that man is born in Sion.* (2dly,) This exposition and application of the word by many, and that by virtue of an extraordinary assistance of the Spirit of God, was of singular use in the church itself. For if all scripture given by inspiration from God, so expounded and applied, be *profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,* the more the church enjoyeth thereof, the more will its faith, love, obedience, and consolation be encreased. Lastly, The manner of the exercise of this gift in the church unto edification, is prescribed and limited by our apostle, 1 Cor. xiv. 29, 30, 31, 32, 33. And, first, he would not have the church burdened with the most profitable gift or its exercise, and therefore determines that at one time, not above two or three be suffered to speak; that is, one after another, that the church be neither wearied nor burdened, ver. 29. Secondly, Because it was possible that some of them who had this gift might mix somewhat of their own spirits in their word and ministry, and therein mistake and err from the truth; he requires that the other who had the like gift, and so were understanding in the mind of God, should judge of what was spoken by them, so as the church might not be led into any error by them; let the other judge. Thirdly, That order be observed in their exercise; and especially that way be given unto any immediate revelation, and no confusion be brought into the church by many speaking at the same time. And this direction manifests that the gift was extraordinary, and is now ceased; though there



be a continuance of ordinary gifts of the same kind, and to the same end in the church, as we shall see afterwards, ver. 30. Fourthly, By the observation of this order, the apostle shews, that *all the prophets might exercise their gift* unto the instruction and consolation of the church in a proper season; such as their frequent assemblies would afford them, ver. 31. And whereas it may be objected, that these things coming in an extraordinary immediate manner from the Holy Ghost, it was not in the power of them who received them, to confine them to the order prescribed, which would seem to limit the Holy Spirit in his operations, whereas they were all to speak as the Spirit gave them ability and utterance, let what would ensue, the apostle assures them by a general principle, that no such thing would follow on a due use and exercise of this gift. *For God, saith he, is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints,* ver. 33. As if he should have said; if such a course should be taken, that any one should speak and prophesy as he pretended himself to be moved by the Spirit, and to have none to judge of what he said, all confusion, tumult, and disorder would ensue thereon. But God is the author of no such thing, gives no such gifts, appoints no such exercise of them as would tend therunto. But how shall this be prevented, seeing these things are extraordinary, and not in our own power? yea, saith he, *the spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets,* ver. 32. By the spirit of the prophets, that their spiritual gift and ability for its exercise is intended, none do question. And whereas the apostle had taught two things concerning the exercise of this gift: (1.) That it ought to be orderly, to avoid confusion. (2.) That what proceedeth from it ought to be judged by others; he manifests that both these may be observed, *because the spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets,* that is, both their spiritual gift is so in their own power, as that they might dispose themselves unto its exercise with choice and judgment, so as to preserve order and peace,



not being actuated as with an enthusiastical afflation, and carried out of their own power; this gift in its exercise was subject unto their own judgment, choice, and understanding; so what they expressed by virtue of their spiritual gift was subject to be judged of by the other prophets that were in the church. Thus was the peace and order of the church to be preserved, and the edification of it to be promoted.

25. *Discerning of spirits* is the next gift of the Spirit here enumerated, *αλλω δε διακρισις πνευματων*, *To another the discernings of spirits*; the ability and faculty of judging of spirits; the dijudication of spirits. This gift I have upon another occasion formerly given an account of, and therefore shall here but briefly touch upon it. All gospel-administrations were in those days avowedly executed by virtue of spiritual gifts. No man then durst set his hand unto this work, but such as either really had, or highly pretended unto a participation of the Holy Ghost. For the administration of the gospel is the dispensation of the Spirit. This therefore was pleaded by all in the preaching of the word, whether in private assemblies, or publicly to the world. But it came also then to pass, as it did in all ages of the church, that where God gave unto any the extraordinary gifts of his Spirit for the reformation or edification of the church, there Satan suborned some to make a pretence thereunto unto its trouble and destruction: so was it under the Old Testament, and so was it foretold, that it should be under the New. So the apostle Peter having declared the nature and excellency, use and certainty of that prophecy which was of old, 2 Peter i. 19, 20, 21. adds thereunto, *But there were false prophets also among the people*, chap. ii. 1. that is, when God granted that signal privilege unto the church, of the immediate revelation of his will unto them by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, which constituted men true prophets of the Lord: Satan stirred up others to pretend unto the same spirit of prophecy for his own malicious ends, whereby *there were false*

*prophets also among the people.* But it may be it will be otherwise now under the gospel-church state. No, saith he; *there shall be false teachers among you,* that is, persons pretending to the same spiritual gift that the apostles and evangelists had, yet bringing in thereby damnable heresies. Now, all their damnable opinions they fathered upon immediate revelations of the Spirit. This gave occasion to the holy apostle John to give that caution, with his reason of it, which is expressed, 1 John iv. 1, 2, 3. which words we have opened before. And this false pretence unto extraordinary spiritual gifts, the church was tried and pestered withal, so long as there was any occasion to give it countenance, namely, whilst such gifts were really continued unto any therein. What way then had God ordained for the preservation and safety of the church, that it should not be imposed upon by any of these delusions? I answer, there was a standing rule in the church, whereby whatsoever was, or could be offered doctrinally unto it, might certainly and infallibly be tried, judged, and determined on. And this was the rule of the written word, according to that everlasting ordinance, *To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them,* Isa. viii. 20. This in all ages was sufficient for the preservation of the church from all errors and heresies, or damnable doctrines, which it never fell into, nor shall do so, but in the sinful neglect and contempt hereof. Moreover, the apostle further directs the application of this rule unto present occasions, by advising us to fix on fundamental principles which are likely to be opposed, and if they are not owned and avowed, to avoid such teachers, whatever spiritual gift they pretend unto, 1 John iv. 2, 3. 2 John ix. 10, 11. But yet, because many in those days were weak in the faith, and might be surpris'd with such pretences, God had graciously provided and bestowed the gift here mentioned on some, it may be, in every church, namely, of discerning of spirits; they could, by virtue of the extraordinary

gift and aid therein of the Holy Ghost, make a true judgment of the spirits that men pretended to act, and to be actuated by, whether they were of God or no. And this was of singular use and benefit unto the church in those days: for, as spiritual gifts abounded, so did a pretence unto them, which was always accompanied with pernicious designs. Herein therefore did God grant relief for them who were either less skilful, or less wary, or less able on any account to make a right judgment between those who were really endowed with extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, and those who falsely pretend thereunto. For these persons received this gift, and were placed in the church for this very end, that they might guide and help them in making a right judgment in this matter. And whereas the communication of these gifts is ceased, and consequently all pretences unto them, unless by some persons phrenetical and enthusiastical, whose madness is manifest to all, there is no need of the continuance of this gift of discerning spirits, that standing infallible rule of the word, and ordinary assistance of the Spirit, being every way sufficient for our preservation in the truth; unless we give up ourselves to the conduct of corrupt lusts, pride, self-conceit, carnal interest, passions and temptations, which ruin the souls of men.

22. The two spiritual gifts here remaining, are *speaking with tongues, and their interpretation*. The first communication of this gift of tongues unto the apostles, is particularly described, Acts ii. 1, 2, 3, 4, &c. And although they were at that time endowed with all other gifts of the Holy Ghost, called *power from above*, Acts i. 8. yet was this gift of tongues signalized by the visible pledge of it, the joint participation of the same gift by all, and the notoriety of the matter thereon, as in that place of the Acts is at large described. And God seems to have laid the foundation of preaching the gospel in this gift, for two reasons: (1.) To signify that the grace and mercy of the covenant was now no longer to be *confined unto one nation, language, or people*, but to be extended unto



all nations, tongues, and languages of people under heaven. (2.) To testify by what means he would subdue the souls and consciences of men unto the obedience of Christ and the gospel, and by what means he would maintain his kingdom in the world. Now, this was not by force and might, by external power or armies, but by the *preaching of the word*, whereof the tongue is the only instrument. And the outward sign of this gift in *tongues of fire* evidenced the light and efficacy wherewith the Holy Ghost designed to accompany the dispensation of the gospel. Wherefore, although this gift began with the apostles, yet was it afterwards very much diffused unto the generality of them that did believe. See Acts x. 46. chap. xix. 6. 1 Cor. xiv. And some few things we may observe concerning this gift: As, (1.) The especial matter that was expressed by this gift, seems to have been *the praises of God* for his wonderful works of grace by Christ. Although, I doubt not, but that the apostles were enabled, by virtue of this gift, to declare the gospel unto any people unto whom they came in their own language, yet ordinarily they did not preach nor instruct the people by virtue of this gift, but only *spake forth the praises of God* to the admiration and astonishment of them who were yet strangers to the faith. So, when they first received the gift, they were heard *speaking the wonderful works of God*, Acts ii. 11. And the Gentiles who first believed *spake with tongues, and magnified God*, Acts x. 46. (2.) These tongues were so given for *a sign unto them that believed not*, 1 Cor. xiv. 22. that sometimes those that spake with tongues, understood not the sense and meaning of the words delivered by themselves, nor were they understood by the church itself wherein they were uttered, 1 Cor. xiv. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, &c. But this I suppose was only sometimes; and that, it may be, mostly, when this gift was unnecessarily used. For I doubt not but the apostles understood full well the things delivered by themselves in divers tongues. And all who had this gift, though they might not apprehend the meaning



of what themselves spake and uttered, yet were so absolutely in the exercise of it under the conduct of the Holy Spirit, that they neither did nor could speak any thing by virtue thereof, but what was according unto the mind of God, and tended unto his praise, 1 Cor. xiv. 2, 14, 17. (3.) Although this gift were excellent in itself, and singularly effectual in the propagation of the gospel unto unbelievers, yet, in the assemblies of the church it was of little or no use, but only with respect unto the things themselves that were uttered. For, as to the principal end of it, to be a sign unto unbelievers, it was finished and accomplished towards them, so as they had no farther need nor use of it. But now, whereas many unbelievers came occasionally into the assemblies of the church, especially at some freer seasons, for whose conviction the Holy Ghost would for a season continue this gift among believers, that the church might not be disadvantaged thereby, he added the other gift here mentioned, namely, *the interpretation of tongues*. He endowed either those persons themselves who spake with tongues, or some others in the assembly, with an ability to interpret and declare to the church the things that were spoken and uttered in that miraculous manner; which is the last gift here mentioned. But the nature, use, and abuse of these gifts is so largely and distinctly spoken unto by the apostle, 1 Cor. xiv. that, as I need not insist on them, so I cannot fully do it without an entire exposition of that whole chapter, which the nature of my design will not permit.

## C H A P. V.

*The original, duration, use, and end of extraordinary spiritual gifts.*

1. **T**HIS summary account doth the apostle give of these extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost which then flourished in the church, and were the life of its extraordinary ministry. It may be mention may occur of some such gifts under other names, but they are such as may be reduced unto some one of these here expressed. Wherefore this may be admitted as a perfect catalogue of them, and comprehensive of that power from above, which the Lord Christ promised unto his apostles and disciples upon his ascension into heaven, Acts i. 8. For he *ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things*, Eph. iv. 10. that is, the church with officers and gifts, unto the perfection of the saints, by the work of the ministry, and the edification of his body, ver. 11. For being *by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he shed forth, or abundantly poured out these things whereof we speak*, Acts ii. 33. And as they were the great evidence of his acceptation with God, and exaltation, seeing in them the Spirit *convinced the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment*; so they were the great means whereby he carried on his work amongst men, as shall afterwards be declared.

2. There was no certain limited time for the cessation of these gifts. Those peculiar unto the apostles, were commensurate unto their lives. None after their decease had either apostolical office, power, or gifts. The like may be said of evangelists. Nor have we any undoubted

testimony, that any of those gifts which were truly miraculous, and every way above the faculties of men, were communicated unto any after the expiration of the generation of them who conversed with Christ in the flesh, or those who received the Holy Ghost by their ministry. It is not unlikely, but God might, on some occasions, for a longer season, put forth his power in some miraculous operations, and so he yet may do, and perhaps doth sometimes. But the superstition and folly of some ensuing ages inventing and divulging innumerable miracles false and foolish, proved a most disadvantageous prejudice unto the gospel, and a means to open a way unto Satan to impose endless delusions upon Christians. For as true and real miracles, with becoming circumstances, were the great means that won and reconciled a regard and honour unto Christian religion in the world; so the pretence of such as either were absolutely false, or such as whose occasions, ends, matter or manner, were unbecoming the greatness and holiness of him who is the true author of all miraculous operations, is the greatest dishonour unto religion that any one can invent. But although all these gifts and operations ceased in some respect, some of them absolutely, and some of them as to the immediate manner of communication and degree of excellency; yet so far as the edification of the church was concerned in them, something that is analogous unto them, was, and is continued. He who gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, gave also some pastors and teachers. And as he furnished the former with extraordinary gifts, so far as any thing of the like kind is needful for the continual edification of the church, he bestows it on the latter also, as shall be declared.

3. And these gifts of the Spirit, added unto his grace in real holiness, were the glory, honour, and beauty of the church of old. Men have but deceived themselves, and others, when they have feigned a glory and beauty of the church in other things. And whatever any think

or say, where these gifts of the Holy Ghost, which are the ornaments of the church, *her cloathing of wrought gold, and her raiment of needle-work*, being neglected and lost, and they think to adorn her with the meretricious paint of pompous ceremonies, with outward grandure, wealth and power, she is utterly fallen from her chastity, purity and integrity. But it is evident that this is the state of many churches in the world, which are therefore worldly and carnal, not spiritual or evangelical. Power, and force, and wealth, the gifts in this case of another spirit, under various pretences and names, are their life and glory, indeed their death and shame. I deny not, but that it is lawful for ministers of the gospel to enjoy earthly possessions, which they do attain by any commendable way among other men. Neither are they required, unless in extraordinary cases, to part with the right and use of their temporal goods, because they are so, ministers of Christ; though those who are so indeed, will not deny but that they ought to use them in a peculiar manner unto the glory of Christ, and honour of the gospel, beyond other men. Neither shall I ever question, that wherein the scripture is so express, namely, that those who labour in the word and doctrine, should have a convenient, yea, an honourable subsistence provided for them according to the best ability of the church, for their work's sake. It is in like manner also granted, that the Lord Christ hath committed all that power, which, with respect unto the edification of the church, he will exercise in this world unto the church itself, as it cannot without a virtual renunciation of the gospel and faith in Christ Jesus, as the head and king of the church, be supposed that this power is any other but spiritual, over the souls and consciences of men. And therefore cannot this power be exercised, or be any ways made effectual, but by virtue of the spiritual gifts we treat of. But for men to turn this spiritual power, to be exercised only by virtue of spiritual gifts, into an external coercive power over the persons, bodies, liberties, and lives of men, to be



exercised by law-courts, in ways, forms, manners utterly foreign to the gospel, and all evangelical administrations, without the least pretence unto, or appearance of the exercise of the gifts of the Holy Ghost therein; yea, and by persons by whom they are hated and derided, acting with pride, scorn, and contempt of the disciples of Christ, and over them, being utterly ignorant of the true nature and use of all gospel-administrations, this is to disorder the church, and in stead of an house of spiritual worship, in some instances, to turn it into a den of thieves. Where hereunto there are moreover annexed earthly revenues, containing all food and fuel of corrupt lusts, with all things satisfactory unto the minds of worldly, sensual men, as a meet reward of these carnal administrations, as it is at this day in the church of Rome, there all use of the gifts of the Holy Ghost is excluded, and the church is brought into extreme desolation. And although these things are as contrary to the gospel as darkness to light, yet the world, for many reasons, not now to be insisted on, being willing to be deceived in this matter, it is generally apprehended that there is nothing so pernicious unto the church, so justly to be watched against, and rooted out, as a dislike of their horrible apostasies in the corrupt depravation of all evangelical administrations. This was not the state, this was not the condition of the primitive churches; their life consisted in the grace of the Spirit, and their glory in his gifts. None of their leaders once dreamed of that new kind of beauty, glory, and power, consisting in numberless superstitious ceremonies instead of religious worship; worldly grandeur instead of humility and self-denial; and open tyranny over the consciences and persons of men, in the room of spiritual authority, effectual in the power of Christ, and by virtue of the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

4. There are many sore divisions at this day in the world, among and between the professors of Christian religion, both about the doctrine and worship of the go-

spcl, as also the discipline thereof. That these divisions are evil in themselves, and the cause of great evils, hinderances of the gospel, and all the effects thereof in the world, is acknowledged by all; and it is a thing doubtless to be greatly lamented, that the generality of them who are called Christians, are departed from the great rule of *keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*. He who doth not pray always, who is not ready with his utmost endeavour to remedy this evil, to remove this great obstruction of the benefit of the gospel, is scarce worthy the name of a Christian. The common way insisted on unto this end, is, that those who have most force and power, should set up standards and measures of agreement, compelling others by all ways of severity and violence to a compliance therewith; judging them the highest offenders who shall refuse so to do; because the determining and settling of this matter is committed unto them. This is the way of Antichrist, and those who follow him therein. Others with more moderation and wisdom, but with as little success, do or have endeavoured the reconciliation of the parties at variance, some, more or all of them, by certain middle ways of mutual condescension which they have found out. Some things they blame, and some things they commend in all; some things they would have them do, and some things omit; all for the sake of peace and love. And this design carries with it so fair and pleadable a pretence, that those who are once engaged in it, are apt to think that they, alone, are the true lovers of Christianity in general, the only sober and indifferent persons, fit to umpire all the differences in the world, in a few propositions which they have framed. And so wedded are some wise and holy men unto these apprehensions of reconciling Christians by their conceived methods, that no experience of endless disappointments, and of increasing new differences and digladiations, of forming new parties, of reviving old animosities, all which roll in upon them continually, will discourage them in their design. What then, will some say, would I

you have these divisions and differences that are among us continued and perpetuated, when you acknowledge them so evil and pernicious? I say, God forbid: yea, we pray for, and always will endeavour their removal and taking away. But yet this, I say, on the other hand, whether men will hear, or they will forbear, there is but one way of effecting this so blessed and desireable a work, which, until it be engaged in, let men talk what they please of reconciliation, the worst of men will be reviling and persecuting those who are better than themselves unto the end of the world. And this way is, that all churches should endeavour to reduce themselves unto the primitive pattern. Let us all but consider what was the life and spirit of those churches, wherein their honour, glory, and order did consist, making it our joint design to walk in the principle of that grace of the Spirit wherein they walked, in the exercise and use of those gifts of the Spirit which were the spring of, and gave virtue unto all their administrations, renouncing whatever is foreign unto, and inconsistent with these things, and that grace and unity will quickly enter into professors, which Christ hath purchased for them. But these things are here only occasionally mentioned; and are not farther to be pursued.

5. These spiritual gifts the apostle calls *the powers of the world to come*, Heb. vi. 4, 5. that is, those effectual powerful principles and operations, which peculiarly belong unto the kingdom of Christ and administration of the gospel, whereby they were to be set up, planted, advanced, and propagated in the world. The Lord Christ came and wrought out the mighty work of our salvation in his own person, and thereon laid the foundation of his church on himself, by the confession of him as the Son of God. Concerning himself and his work, he preached, and caused to be preached, a doctrine that was opposed by all the world, because of its truth, mystery, and holiness; yet was it the design of God to break through all those oppositions, to cause this doctrine to be received



and submitted unto, and Jesus Christ to be believed in, unto the ruin and destruction of the kingdom of Satan in the world. Now, this was a work that could not be wrought without the putting forth and exercise of mighty power, concerning which nothing remains to be enquired into, but of what sort it ought to be. Now, the conquest that the Lord Christ aimed at was spiritual, over the souls and consciences of men; the enemies he had to conflict withal were spiritual, even principalities and powers, and spiritual wickednesses in high places; the god of this world, the prince of it, which ruled in the children of disobedience: the kingdom which he had to erect, was spiritual, and not of this world; all the laws and rules of it, with their administrations and ends, were spiritual and heavenly. The gospel, that was to be propagated, was a doctrine not concerning this world, nor the things of it, nor of any thing natural or political, but as they were merely subordinate unto other ends, but heavenly and mysterious, directing men only in a tendency according unto the mind of God unto the eternal enjoyment of him. Hereon it will easily appear what kind of power is necessary unto this work, and for the attaining of these ends. He, that at the speaking of one word could have engaged more than *twelve legions of angels* in his work, and unto his assistance, could have easily, by outward force and arms, have subdued the whole world into an external observance of him and his commands, and thereon have ruled men at his pleasure. As this he could have done, and may do when he pleaseth, so if he had done it, it had tended nothing unto the ends which he designed. He might indeed have had a glorious empire in the world, comprehensive of all dominions that ever were or can be on the earth; but yet it would have been of the same kind and nature with that which Nero had, the greatest monster of villany in nature. Neither had it been any great matter for the Son of God to have out-done the Romans or the Turks, or such like conspiracies of wicked oppressors. And all



those who yet think meet to use external force over the persons, lives, and bodies of men, in order unto the reducing of them unto the obedience of Christ and the gospel, do put the greatest dishonour upon him imaginable, and change the whole nature of his design and kingdom. He will neither own nor accept of any subject, but whose obedience is a free act of his own will, and who is so made willing by himself in the day of his power. His design, and his only design in this world, unto the glory of God, is to erect a kingdom, throne, and rule in the souls and consciences of men, to have an obedience from them in faith, love, and spiritual delight, proceeding from their own choice, understandings, wills, and affections; an obedience that should be internal, spiritual, mystical, heavenly, with respect solely unto things unseen and eternal, wherein himself and his laws should be infinitely preferred before all earthly things and considerations. Now, this is a matter that all earthly powers and empires could never desire, design, or put an hand unto, and that which renders the kingdom of Christ as of another nature, so more excellent and better than all earthly kingdoms, as liberty is better than bondage, the mind more excellent than the outward carcass, spiritual and eternal things, than things carnal and temporary, as the wisdom and holiness of God are more excellent than the folly and lusts of men.

6. Seeing therefore this was the design of Christ, this was the nature and work of the gospel which was to be propagated, wherein carnal power and outward force could be of no use, yea, whose exercise was inconsistent with, dishonourable unto, and destructive of the whole design; and wherein the work to be accomplished on the minds and souls of men is incomparably greater than the conquering of worlds with force and arms, it is enquired what power the Lord Christ did employ herein, what means and instruments he used for the accomplishment of his design, and the erecting of that kingdom or church-state, which being promised of old, was called the *world*

to come, or, the new world, the new heaven and earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness: and, I say, it was these gifts of the Holy Ghost whereof we have treated, which were those powers of this world to come. By them it was, or in their exercise, that the Lord Christ erected his empire over the souls and consciences of men; destroying both the work and kingdom of the devil. It is true, it is the word of the gospel itself that is the rod of his strength, which is sent out of Sion to erect and dispense his rule: but that hidden power which made the word effectual in the dispensation of it, consisted in these gifts of the Holy Ghost. Men may despise them, or make light of them whilst they please, they are those powers which the Lord Christ, in his wisdom, thought meet alone to engage in the propagation of the gospel, and setting up of his kingdom in the world.

7. The recovery and return of the people from the captivity of Babylon, was a type of the spiritual redemption of the church by Jesus Christ: and how God effected that as a type hereof, he declares, Zech. iv. 6. *Not by army, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts;* so much more was this work to be effected. So, after his resurrection, the Lord Christ tells his apostles, that they were to be his witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth, that is, all the world over, Acts i. 8. But how shall they be able so to bear testimony unto them, as that their witness shall be received and become effectual? Saith he, ye shall receive power for this end; I have given you authority to preach the word before, and now I will give you such an ability for it, as none shall be able to withstand or resist; and this is after the Holy Ghost is come upon you, that is, in the communication of these gifts whereby you may be enabled unto your work. In them consisted that mouth and wisdom which he promised he would give them, which all their adversaries were not able to gainsay or resist, Luke xxi. 15. Wherefore, that which I shall close this discourse withal, shall

be a brief endeavour to declare how these gifts were the spiritual powers of the gospel unto all the ends we have before mentioned, as designed by Jesus Christ; whence it will appear how little there was of the wisdom, skill, power, or authority of men in the whole work of propagating the gospel, and planting the church of Christ, as we shall afterwards manifest, how by the dispensation of the other more ordinary gifts of the Spirit, both the gospel and the church are continued and preserved in the world.

First, The persons whom the Lord Christ chose, called and designed unto this work, were by these gifts enabled thereunto. As no mortal men had of themselves any sufficiency for such a work, so the persons particularly called unto it by Jesus Christ, lay under all the disadvantages that any persons could possibly be liable unto in such an undertaking: For, (1.) They were all of them unlearned and ignorant, which the Jews took notice of, Acts iv. 13. and which the Gentiles despised them for. (2.) They were poor, and of no reputation in the world, which made them contemned by all sorts of persons. And, (3.) They seem, in many instances, to have been pusillanimous and fearful, which they all manifested when they so shamefully fled and left their Master in his distresses, the chief of them also swearing, that he knew him not. Now, it is easily understood what great disadvantages these were unto the undertaking of so great a work as they were called unto; yea, how impossible it was for them, under these qualifications, to do any thing in the pursuit of it. Wherefore, by the communication of these gifts unto them, all these impediments arising from themselves were removed, and they were furnished with endowments of quite another nature, whereby they were eminently fitted with that spiritual wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, which surpassed all the wisdom that was of the world, or in it, by what ways or means soever it were attained. They both had and declared a wisdom which none of the princes of this world were acquainted



withal, 1 Cor. ii. Those who during the abode of Christ in the flesh with them, could not understand a plain parable, and were ever and anon at no small loss about the sense and meaning of their matter, having very low and carnal apprehensions about his person, work, and office, were now filled with a knowledge of all heavenly mysteries, and with wisdom to declare, manage, and maintain them against all opposers. Kings, princes, rulers of synagogues, were now all one to them; they had a mouth and wisdom given them, which none of their adversaries could resist. Wherever they came in all nations, to all sorts of people, of all languages, they were now enabled, in their own tongue and speech, to declare and preach the gospel unto them, being always filled with a treasure of wisdom and spiritual mysteries, whence they could draw forth as every occasion did require. (2.) Whereas they were poor, the difficulties wherewith such a condition is attended were also by this means utterly taken away: for although they had neither silver nor gold by their work or employment, but their outward wants and distresses were rather increased thereby; yet their minds and souls were by this communication of the Spirit, so raised above the world, and filled with such a contempt of all the desirable things in it, and of all the pride of men upon their account, as that their want of possessions and outward enjoyments made them only the more ready and expedite for their work, whence also such of them as had possessions sold them, gave their price to the poor, that they might be no hinderance unto them in their design. And hence also it was that those who even after the resurrection of Christ were enquiring after a temporal kingdom, wherein no doubt a good part of its glory, power, and advantages would fall to their share, as most do who yet continue to dream of such a kingdom in this world, immediately upon the communication of these gifts, rejoiced that they were counted worthy of shame for the name of Christ, when they were imprisoned, whipt, and despitefully u-



sed, Acts iv. (3.) They had boldness, courage, and constancy given unto them, in the room of that pusillanimity and fear which before they had discovered. This the Jews took notice of, and were astonished at, Acts iv. 13. And they had reason so to be, if we consider the power and authority of that work wherein they were then assaulted, with the speech of Peter unto them, ver. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. which he spake as filled with the Holy Ghost. See also Acts v. 28, 29, 30, 31, 32. And in the whole course of their ministry throughout the world the like undaunted courage, resolution, and constancy, did always, and in all things, accompany them. Wherefore these gifts, in the first place, may be esteemed the powers of the world to come, in as much as by them those unto whom the work of preaching the gospel, propagating the mystery of it, the conversion of nations, the planting of churches, and in all the erection of the kingdom of Christ was committed, were enabled by them unto the utmost capacity of human nature to discharge, effect, and accomplish the work committed unto them. By virtue, and in the strength of these spiritual abilities, did they set upon the whole kingdom of Satan and darkness in the world, contending with the gates of hell, and all the powers of the earth, attempting the wisdom of the Greeks, and the religion of the Jews, with success against both. They went not forth with force and arms, or carnal power, they threatened no man, menaced no man with the carnal weapons of force or penalties, they had no baits or allurements of wealth, power or honour to inveigle the minds of corrupt and sensual men, but as was said in the warranty and power of these spiritual gifts they both attempted and accomplished this work. And things continue still in the same condition according unto their proportion. Such as is the furniture of men with spiritual abilities and gifts of the Holy Ghost, such is their fitness for the work of the ministry, and no other. And if any shall undertake this work without this provision of abilities for it, they will neither ever be

owned by Christ, nor be of the least use in the employment they take upon them. A ministry devoid of spiritual gifts is a sufficient evidence of a church under a degenerating apostacy. But these things will be farther spoken unto afterwards.

8. Secondly, By these gifts were all their administrations, especially their preaching the gospel, rendered effectual unto their proper end. The preaching of the word, which is the *sword of the Spirit*, was the great instrument whereby they wrought out and accomplished their designed work in the conviction and conversion of the souls of men. It may therefore be enquired, what it was that gave efficacy and success unto the word as preached or dispensed by them? Now this, as it should seem, must be either, that the subject-matter of it was so suited unto the reasons and understandings of men, as that they could not but admit of it upon its proposal; or that the manner whereby they declared it was with such persuasive artifices as were meet to prevail with the minds of men unto an assent, or to impose upon them against the best of their defences. But the apostle declares, that it was utterly otherwise in both these regards. For the matter of the doctrine of the gospel unto the minds of carnal men, such as all men are until renewed by the work of the gospel itself, is folly, and that which is every way meet to be despised, 1 Cor. i. And for the manner of its declaration, they did not therein, neither would they, use the enticing words of human wisdom, any arts of oratory, or dresses of rhetoric or eloquence, lest the effects which were wrought by the word should have seemed, in any measure, to have proceeded from them, 1 Cor. 2, 4, 5. Wherefore, not to mention that internal efficacious power of grace which God secretly puts forth for the conversion of his elect, the consideration whereof belongs not unto our present design, and I say that it was by virtue of those gifts that the administration of the gospel was so efficacious and successful: For, (1.) From them proceeded that autho-

rity over the minds of men wherewith the word was accompanied. When the Lord Christ was anointed by the Spirit to preach the gospel, it is said, *He taught us one having authority, and not as the Scribes*, Math. vii. 29. Whatever was his outward appearance in the flesh, the word, as administered by him, was attended with such an authority over the minds and consciences of men, as they could not but be sensible of. And so was it with the primitive dispensers of the gospel; by virtue of these spiritual gifts; they preached the word in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 1 Cor. ii. 4. There was accompanying of their preaching an evidence or demonstration of a power and authority that was from God and his Spirit. Men could not but conclude, that there was something in it which was over them or above them, and which they must yield or submit unto, as that which was not for them to contend withal. It is true, the power of the gospel was hid unto them that were to perish, whose minds the god of this world had effectually blinded, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine into them, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. Whence it came to pass, that the word was rejected by many; yet, wherever God was pleased to make it effectual, it was by a sense of a divine authority accompanying its administration by virtue of those spiritual gifts. And therefore our apostle shews, that when men prophesied or declared the mind of God from the word by the gift of prophecy, unbelievers did fall down, and worshipping God, reported that, *God was in them of a truth*, 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. They were sensible of a divine authority which they could not stand before or withstand. (2.) From hence also proceeded that life and power for conviction which the word was accompanied with in their dispensation of it. It became shortly to be the arrows of Christ, which were sharp in the hearts of men. As men found an authority in the dispensation of the word, so they felt and experienced an efficacy in the truth dispensed. By it were their minds enlightened, their consciences awakened,



their minds convinced, their lives judged, the secrets of their hearts made manifest, as 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. until they cried out in multitudes, *Men and brethren what shall we do?* Hereby did the Lord Christ, in his kingdom and majesty, ride prosperously, conquering, and to conquer, with the word of truth, meekness, and righteousness. subduing the souls of men unto his obedience, making them free, ready, willing in the day of his power. These were the forces and weapons that he used in the establishing of his kingdom, *which were mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down of imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ,* 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. So doth the apostle describe the success of these administrations as an absolute conquest, wherein all opposition is broken, all strong holds and fortifications are demolished, and the whole reduced unto due obedience. For by this means were all things effected; all the strong holds of sin in the minds of men in their natural darkness, blindness, and obstinacy, all the high fortifications of prejudices, and vain, proud, lofty imaginations raised in them by Satan, were all cast down by and before gospel administrations, managed by virtue and authority of these spiritual gifts which the Lord Christ ordained to be the powers of his kingdom.

9. Thirdly, Those of them which consisted in miraculous operations were suited to fill the world with an apprehension of a divine power accompanying the word, and them by whom it was administered. And sundry things unto the furtherance of the gospel depended hereon: As, (1.) The world, which was stupid, asleep in sin and security, satisfied with their lusts and idolatries, regardless of any thing but present enjoyments, was awakened hereby to an attendance unto, and enquiry into this new doctrine that was proposed unto them. They could not but take notice that there was something more than ordinary in that sermon which they were summoned unto



by a miracle. And this was the first and principal use of these miraculous operations. They awakened the dull, stupid world unto a consideration of the doctrine of the gospel, which otherwise they would have securely neglected and despised. (2.) They weakened and took off these mighty prejudices which their minds were possessed with by tradition and secular enjoyments; what these prejudices were I shall not here declare, I have done it elsewhere. It is enough to observe, that they were as great, as effectual, as human nature in any case is capable of. But although they were sufficiently of proof against all other means of conviction, yet they could not but sink and weaken before the manifest evidence of present divine power; such as these miraculous operations were accompanied withal. For although all the things which they cleaved unto, and intended to do so inseparably, were, as they thought, to be preferred above any thing that could be offered unto them; yet, when the divine power appeared against them, they were not able to give them defence. Hence, upon these operations, one of these two effects ensued: (1.) Those that were shut up under their obstinacy and unbelief, were filled with tormenting convictions, and knew not what to do to relieve themselves. The evidence of miracles they could not withstand, and yet would not admit of what they tendered and confirmed, whence they were filled with disquietments and perplexities. So the rulers of the Jews manifested themselves to have been upon the curing of the impotent person at the gate of the temple. *What shall we do (say they) to these men, for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them?* Acts iv. 16. (2.) The minds of others were exceedingly prepared for the reception of the truth; the advantages unto that purpose being too many to be here insisted on. (3.) They were a great means of taking off the scandal of the cross. That this was that which the world was principally offended at in the gospel, is sufficiently known. *Christ crucified was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and un-*

*to the Greeks foolishness.* Nothing could possibly be or have been a matter of so high offence unto the Jews, as to offer them a crucified Messiah, whom they expected as a glorious King to subdue all their enemies; nor ever will they receive him, in the mind wherein they are, upon any other terms. And it seemed a part of the extremest folly unto the Grecians, to propose such great and immortal things in the name of one that was himself crucified as a malefactor. And a shame, it was thought, on all hands, for any wise man to profess or own such a religion as came from the cross. But yet, after all this blustering of weakness and folly, when they saw this doctrine of the cross owned by God, and witnessed unto by manifest effects of divine power, they could not but begin to think, that men need not be much ashamed of that which God so openly avowed. And all these things made way to let in the word into the minds and consciences of men, where, by its own efficacy, it gave them satisfying experience of its truth and power.

10. From these few instances, whereunto many of an alike nature might be added, it is manifest how these spiritual gifts were the powers of the world to come, the means, weapons, arms, that the Lord Christ made use of for the subduing of the world, destruction of the kingdom of Satan and darkness, with the planting and establishment of his own church on the earth. And, as they were alone suited unto his design, so his accomplishment of it by them is a glorious evidence of his divine power and wisdom, as might easily be demonstrated.

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## Of Ordinary Gifts of the Spirit.



### C H A P. VI.

*The grant, institution, use, benefit, end, and continuance of the ministry.*

1. **T**HE consideration of those ordinary gifts of the Spirit, which are annexed unto the ordinary powers and duties of the church, doth, in the next place, lye before us. And they are called ORDINARY, not as if they were absolutely common unto all, or were not much to be esteemed, or as if that they were any way a diminishing term: but we call them so upon a double account: (1.) In distinction from those gifts which being absolutely extraordinary, did exceed the whole power and faculties of the souls of men, as healings, tongues, and miracles: for otherwise they are of the same nature with most of those gifts which were bestowed on the apostles and evangelists, differing only in degree. Every true gospel ministry hath now gifts of the same kind with the apostles, in a degree and measure sufficient to their work, excepting those mentioned. (2.) Because of their continuance in the ordinary state of the church, which also they shall do unto the consummation of all things. Now, my design is to treat peculiarly of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. But because there is a gift of Christ which is the foundation and subject of them, something must be spoken briefly unto that, in the first place:

And this gift of Christ is that of the ministry of the church, the nature of which office I shall not consider at large, but only speak unto it, as it is a gift of Christ. And this I shall do by some little illustration given unto that passage of the apostle, where this gift, and the communication of it, is declared, Eph. iv. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. *But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high he led captive captivity, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things,) and he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors, and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. That we henceforth be no more tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lye in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things which is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according unto the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love.*

2. There is no other place of scripture, wherein, at one view, the grant, institution, use, benefit, end, and continuance of the ministry, is so clearly and fully represented. And the end of this whole discourse is to declare, that the gift and grant of the ministry, and ministers, of the office, and the persons to discharge it, is an eminent, most useful fruit and effect of the mediatory power of Christ, with his love and care towards his church. And those of whom the apostle speaks (*unto every one of us*)



are the officers or ministers whom he doth afterwards enumerate, although the words may, in some sense, be extended unto all believers; but, principally, the ministry and ministers of the church are intended. And it is said, unto them, is *grace given*. It is evident, that by grace here, not sanctifying, saving grace is intended, but a participation of a gracious favour with respect to an especial end: so the word is frequently used in this case by our apostle, Rom. xv. 15. Gal. ii. 9. Eph. iii. 8. This gracious favour we are made partakers of; this trust is freely, in a way of grace, committed unto us. And that according to the *measure of the gift of Christ*, unto every one according as the Lord Christ doth measure the gift of it freely out unto them. Thus, in general was the ministry granted unto the church, the particular account whereof is given in the ensuing verses. And,

3. First, It is declared to be a gift of Christ. *ἡ ἀντιθεῖς ἑδωκε*, *And he himself gave*, ver. 11. It is the great fundamental of all church order, power, and worship, that the gift and grant of Christ is the original of the ministry. If it had not been so given of Christ, it had not been lawful for any of the sons of men to institute such an office, or appoint such officers. If any had attempted so to do, as there would have been a nullity in what they did, so their attempt would have been expressly against the headship of Christ, or his supreme authority over the church. Wherefore, that he would thus give ministers of the church was promised of old, Jer. iii. 15. as well as signally foretold in the psalm from whence these words are taken. And as his doing of it is an act of his mediatory power, as it is declared in this place, and Matth. xxviii. 18. so it was a fruit of his care, love, and bounty, 1 Cor. ii. 21, 22. And it will hence follow, not only, that offices in the church, which are not of Christ's giving by institution, and officers that are not of gift, grant, by provision and furnishment, have indeed no place therein, but also that they are set up in opposi-

tion unto his authority, and in contempt of his care and bounty: for the doing so ariseth out of an apprehension, that both men have a power in the church, which is not derived from Christ, and that to impose servants upon him in his house, without his consent, as also that they have more care of the church than he had, who made not such provision for them. And if an examination might be admitted by this rule, as it will, one day, come on whether men will or no, some great names now in the church would scarce be able to preserve their station; popes, cardinals, metropolitans, diocesan prelates, arch-deacons, commissaries, officials, and I know not what other monstrous products of an incestuous conjunction between secular pride and ecclesiastical degeneracy, would think themselves severely treated to be tried by this rule: but so it must be at last, and that unavoidably. Yea, and that no man shall be so hardy, as once to dare attempt the setting up of officers in the church without the authority of Christ; the eminency of this gift and grant of his is declared in sundry particular instances, wherein neither the wisdom, nor skill, nor power of any, or all of the sons of men, can have the least interest, or in any thing alike unto them.

4. And this appears, (1.) From the grandeur of its introduction, or the great and solemn preparation that was made for the giving out of this gift. It was given by Christ when *he ascended up on high, and led captivity captive*, ver. 8. The words are taken from Psalm lxxviii. 17, 18. *The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels, the Lord is among them as in Sinai in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.* In the first place, the glorious appearance of God on Mount Sinai in giving of the law, his descending and ascending unto that purpose, is intended. But they are applied here unto Christ, because all the glorious works of God in and towards the church of old, were either re-

presentatory, or gradually introductory of Christ and the gospel. Thus the glorious ascending of God from Mount Sinai after the giving of the law, was a representation of his ascending far above all heavens, *to fill all things*, as ver. 10. And as God then *led captivity captive* in the destruction of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, who had long held his people in captivity, and under cruel bondage: so dealt the Lord Christ now in the destruction and captivity of Satan and all his powers, Col. ii. 15. Only whereas it is said in the psalm, *that he received gifts for men*, here it is said, *that he gave gifts to men*, wherein no small mystery is couched: for, although Christ is God, and is so gloriously represented in the psalm, yet an intimation is given, that he should act what is here mentioned in a condition wherein he was capable to receive from another, as he did in this matter, Acts ii. 2, 3. And so the phrase in the original doth more than insinuate *לָקַח מִמְּנוֹת בְּאָדָם*, *Thou hast received gifts in Adam, in the man or human nature*. And *לָקַח* signifies as well to give as to receive, especially when any thing is received to be given. Christ received this gift in the human nature to give it unto others. Now, to what end is this glorious theatre, as it were, prepared, and all this preparation made, all men being called to the preparation of it? It was to set out the greatness of the gift he would bestow, and the glory of the work which he would effect. And this was to furnish the church with ministers, and ministers with gifts for the discharge of their office and duty. And it will one day appear, that there is more glory, more excellency, in giving one poor minister unto a congregation, by furnishing him with spiritual gifts for the discharge of his duty, than in the pompous instalment of a thousand popes, cardinals, or metropolitans. The worst of men, in the observance of a few outward rites and ceremonies, can do the latter; Christ only can do the former, and that as he is ascended up on high to that purpose.

5. *2dly*, It appears to be such an eminent gift from its



original acquisition. There was a power acquired by Christ for this great donation, which the apostle declares, ver. 9. *Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?* Having mentioned the ascension of Christ as the immediate cause or fountain of the communication of this gift, ver. 8. he found it necessary to trace it unto its first original. He doth not therefore make mention of the descending into the lower parts of the earth, occasionally, upon that of his ascending, as if he caught at an advantage of a word: nor doth he speak of the humiliation of Christ absolutely in itself, which he had no occasion for; but he introduceth it, to shew what respect this gift of the ministry and ministers, of the office, gifts, and persons, had thereunto. And Christ's descending into the lower parts of the earth may be taken two ways, according as that expression, the *lower parts of the earth*, may be diversly understood. For the *τα κατωτερα μερη της γης*, the *lower parts of the earth*, are either the whole earth, that is, those lower parts of the world, or some part of it. For the word *lower* includes a comparison either with the whole creation, or with some part of itself. In the first sense, Christ's state of humiliation is intended, wherein he came down from heaven into these lower parts of God's creation, conversing on the earth. In the latter, his grave and burial are intended; for the grave is the lowest part of the earth into which mankind doth descend. And both of these, or his humiliation, as it ended in his death and burial, may be respected in the words. And that which the apostle designs to manifest, is, that the deep humiliation, and the death of Christ, is the fountain and original of the ministry of the church, by way of acquisition and procurement. It is a fruit whose root is in the grave of Christ: for, in those things, in the humiliation and death of Christ lay the foundation of his mediatory authority, whereof the ministry is an effect, Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. And it was appointed by him to be the ministry of that peace between God and man, which was



made therein and thereby, Eph. ii. 14, 16, 17. For when he had made this peace by the blood of the cross, he preached it in the giving these gifts unto men for its solemn declaration. See 2 Cor. v. 18, 19, 20, 21. Wherefore, because the authority from whence this gift proceeded, was granted unto Christ upon his descending into the lower parts of the earth, and the end of the gift is to declare and preach the peace which he made between God and man by his so doing, this gift relates thereunto also. Hereon doth the honour and excellency of the ministry depend, with respect hereunto is it to be esteemed and valued, namely, its relation unto the spiritual humiliation of Christ, and not from the carnal or secular exaltation of those that take it upon them.

6. *3dly*, It appears to be an eminent and signal gift from the immediate cause of its actual communication, or the present qualification of the Lord Christ for the bestowing of it; and this was his glorious exaltation upon his ascension. A right unto it was acquired by him in his death, but his actual investiture with all glorious power, was to precede its communication, ver. 8, 10. He was first to ascend up on high, to triumph over all his and our adversaries, but now under him into absolute and eternal captivity, before he gave out this gift. And he is said here to *ascend far above all heavens*, that is, these visible and aspectable heavens, which he passed through when he went into the glorious presence of God, or unto the right hand of the Majesty on high. See Heb. iv. 14. with our Exposition thereon. It is also added, why he was thus gloriously exalted; and this was, that he might fill up all things, not *φυσικως*, but *εργατικως*; not in the essence of his nature, but in the exercise of his power. He had laid the foundation of his church on himself in his death and resurrection; but now the whole fabric of it was to be filled up with its utensils, and beautified with its ornaments. This he ascended to accomplish, and did it principally in the collation of this gift of the ministry upon it. This was the first exer-

cise of that glorious power, which the Lord Christ was vested withal upon his exaltation; the first effect of his wisdom and love, in filling all things unto the glory of God, and the salvation of his elect. And these things are mentioned, that in the contemplation of their greatness and order we may learn and judge how excellent this donation of Christ is. And it will also appear from hence, how contemptible a thing the most pompous ministry in the world is, which doth not proceed from this original.

7. *4thly*, The same is manifest from the nature of the gift itself: for this gift consisteth in gifts: *He gave gifts*. There is an active giving expressed; *he gave*: and the thing given, that is, *gifts*. Wherefore the ministry is a gift of Christ, not only because freely and bountifully given by him to the church; but also because spiritual gifts do essentially belong unto it, are indeed its life, and inseparable from its being. A ministry without gifts, is no ministry of Christ's giving; nor is of any other use in the church, but to deceive the souls of men. To set up such a ministry, is both to despise Christ, and utterly to frustrate the ends of the ministry; those for which Christ gave it, and which are here expressed: For, (1.) Ministerial gifts and graces are the great evidence that the Lord Christ takes care of his church, and provides for it, as called into the order and into the duties of a church. To set up a ministry which may be continued by outward forms and orders of men only, without any communication of gifts from Christ, is to despise his authority and care. Neither is it his mind that any church should continue in order any longer, or otherwise, than as he bestows these gifts for the ministry. (2.) That these gifts are the only means and instruments whereby the work of the ministry may be performed, and the end of the ministry attained, shall be farther declared immediately. The ends of the ministry here mentioned, called its work, are the perfecting of the saints, and the edifying of the body of Christ, until we all come unto a perfect man.

Hereof nothing at all can be done without these spiritual gifts. And therefore a ministry devoid of them, is a mock-ministry, and no ordinance of Christ.

8. *5thly*; The eminency of this gift appears in the variety and diversity of the offices and officers which Christ gave in giving of the ministry. He knew there would, and had appointed there should be a twofold estate of the church, ver. 10. (1.) Of its first election and foundation. (2.) Of its building and edification; and different both offices and gifts were necessary unto these different states: For, (1.) Two things were extraordinary in the first erection of his church. (1.) An extraordinary aggression was to be made upon the kingdom of Satan in the world, as upheld by all the potentates of the earth, the concurrent suffrage of mankind, with the interest of sin, and prejudices in them. (2.) The casting of men into a new order, under a new rule and law, for the worship of God, that is, the planting and erecting of churches all the world over. With respect unto these ends extraordinary officers with extraordinary authority, power, and abilities were requisite. Unto this end therefore he gave some apostles, some prophets, and some evangelists, of the nature of whose offices and their gifts we have spoken before. I shall here only add, that it was necessary that these officers should have their immediate call and authority from Christ, antecedent unto all order and power in the church: for the very being of the church depended on their power of office: but this without such an immediate power from Christ no man can pretend unto. And what was done originally by their persons, is now done by their word and doctrine: for the church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the *chief cornerstone*, Eph. ii. 20. (2dly,) There was a state of the church in its edification, which was to be carried on according to the rules and laws given by Christ in the ordinary administration of all the ordinances and institutions of the gospel. To this end Christ gives ordinary officers, pa-



stors, and teachers, who, by his direction, were ordained in every church, Acts xiv. 23, 24. And these are all the teaching officers that he hath given unto his church. Or, if any shall think, that in the enumeration of them in this place, as also, 1 Cor. xii. our apostle forgot popes and diocesan bishops, with some others, who certainly cannot but laugh to themselves, that they should be admitted in the world as church-officers, he must speak for himself.

9. But whereas the other sort of officers was given by Christ, by his immediate call and communication of power unto them, it doth not appear how he gives these ordinary officers or ministers unto it. I answer, he did it originally, and continueth to do it by the ways and means ensuing: (1.) He doth it by the law and rule of the gospel, wherein he hath appointed this office of the ministry in his church, and so always to be continued. Were there not such a standing ordinance and institution of his, it were not in the power of all the churches in the world to appoint any such among them, whatever appearance there may be of a necessity thereof. And if any should have attempted any such thing, no blessing from God would have accompanied their endeavour, so that they would but set up an idol of their own. Hereon we lay the continuance of the ministry in the church. If there be not an ordinance and institution of Christ unto this purpose; or if such being granted, yet the force of it be now expired, we must and will readily confess, that the whole office is a mere usurpation. But if he has given pastors and teachers unto his church to continue until all his saints in all ages come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the *fulness of Christ*, Eph. iv. 11, 12, 13. and hath promised to be with them, as such, unto the consummation of all things, Matth. xxviii. 18, 19, 20. If the apostles, by his authority, ordained elders in every church and city, Acts xiv. 23. Titus i. 5. and who therein were made overseers of the flocks by the Holy Ghost, Acts xx. 28.



having the charge of feeding and overseeing the flock that is among them always, until the chief Shepherd shall appear, 1 Peter v. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. If believers, or the disciples of Christ, are obliged by him always, to yield obedience unto them, Heb. xiii. 7, 17. with other such plain declarations of the will of the Lord Christ in the constitution and continuance of this office, this foundation standeth firm and unshaken, as the ordinances of heaven that shall not be changed. And whereas there is not in the scripture the least intimation of any such time, state, or condition of the church, as wherein the disciples of Christ may or ought to live from under the orderly conduct and guidance of the ministers, it is vain to imagine that any defect in other men, any apostacy of the greatest part of any, or all visible churches, should cast them into an incapacity of erecting a regular ministry among them, and over them. For, whereas the warranty and authority of the ministry depends on this institution of Christ, which is accompanied with a command for its observance, Matth xxviii. 18. all his disciples being obliged to yield obedience thereunto, their doing so in the order and manner also by him approved, is sufficient to constitute a lawful ministry among them. To suppose, that because the church of Rome, and those adhering unto it, have, by their apostacy, utterly lost an evangelical ministry among them, that therefore others unto whom the word of God is come, and hath been effectual unto their conversion, have not sufficient warranty from the word to yield obedience unto all the commands of Christ, (which when we have talked of power and authority whilst we please, is all that is left unto us in this world) or that in so doing he will not accept them, and approve of what they have done, is an assertion fit for men to maintain, who have a trade to drive in religion unto their own especial advantage.

10. *2dly*, The Lord Christ giveth and continueth this office, by giving spiritual gifts and abilities unto men, to enable them to discharge the duties, and perform the

work of it. This is that which I principally design to confirm in its proper place, which will immediately ensue. All I shall say at present is, that spiritual gifts of themselves make no man actually a minister, yet no man can be made a minister according to the mind of Christ, who is not a partaker of them. Wherefore, supposing the continuance of the law and institution mentioned, if the Lord Christ doth at any time, or in any place, cease to give out spiritual gifts unto men, enabling them in some good measure unto the discharge of the ministry, then, and in that place, the ministry itself must cease and come to an end. To erect a ministry, by virtue of outward order, rites, and ceremonies, without gifts for the edification of the church, is but to hew a block with axes, and smooth it with planes, and set it up for an image to be adored. To make a man a minister who can do nothing of the proper peculiar work of the ministry, nothing towards the only end of it in the church, is to set up a dead carcass, fastening it to a post, and expecting it should do you work and service.

11. *3dly*, He doth it, by giving power unto his church in all ages, to call and separate unto the work of the ministry such as he hath fitted and gifted for it. The things before mentioned are essentially constituent of the ministry, this belongs unto the outward order of their entrance into the ministry who are by him called thereunto. And concerning this, we may observe the things following: (1.) That this power in the church is not despotical or lordly, but consists in a faculty, right, and ability to act in this matter obedientially unto the commands of Christ. Hence all the acting of the church in this matter, is nothing but an instituted means of conveying authority and office from Christ unto persons called thereunto. The church doth not give them any authority of its own, or resident in itself, but only in a way of obedience unto Christ do transmit power from him unto them who are called. Hence do they become the ministers of Christ, and not of the bishops, or churches, or

men, holding their office and authority from Christ himself, by the law and rule of the gospel; so that whosoever despiseth them, despiseth him also in them. Some would have ministers of the gospel to receive all their authority from the people that chuse them, and some from the bishops who ordain them, and whence they have theirs I know not. But this is to make them ministers of men, and servants of men, and to constitute other masters between them and Christ. And whereas all church-power is originally and absolutely vested in Christ, and in him solely; so that none can be partaker of the least interest in it, or share of it, without a communication of it from him unto them, neither popes, nor prelates, nor people, are able to produce any such grant or concession of power unto them from him, as that they should have an authority residing in them, and in their power, to dispose unto others, as they may see cause, so as they should hold it from them, as a part or efflux of the power vested in them. It is obedience unto the law of Christ, and following the guidance of his previous communication of gifts, as a means to communicate his power unto them who are called to the ministry, that is the whole of what is committed unto any in this kind. (2.) The church hath no power to call any unto the office of the ministry, where the Lord Christ hath not gone before it in the designation of him by an endowment with spiritual gifts: for if the whole authority of the ministry be from Christ, and he never gives it, but where he bestows these gifts with it for its discharge, as in Eph. iv. 7, 8, &c. then to call any to the ministry whom he hath not so previously gifted, is to set him aside, and to act in our own names and authority. And by reason of these things the Holy Ghost is said to make men overseers of the flocks who are thus called thereunto, because both the communication of power in the constitution of the law, and of spiritual gifts by internal effectual operation, are from him alone, Acts xx. 28. (3.) The outward way and order whereby a church may call any person unto the office of the mini-



sary among them and over them, is by their joint solemn submission unto him in the Lord, as unto all the powers and duties of this office, testified by their choice and election of him. It is concerning this outward order that all the world is filled with disputes about the call of men unto the ministry, which yet in truth is of the least concernment therein: for whatever manner or order be observed herein, if the things before-mentioned be not premised thereunto, it is of no validity or authority. On the other hand, grant that the authority of the ministry dependeth on the law, ordinance, and institution of Christ, that he calls men unto this office by the collation of spiritual gifts unto them, and that the actings of the church herein is but an instituted moral means of communicating office-power from Christ himself unto any; and let but such other things be observed as the light and law of nature requireth in cases of an alike kind, and the outward mode of the church's acting herein need not much be contended about. It may be proved to be a beam of truth, from the light of nature, that no man should be imposed on a church for their minister against their wills, or without their express consent; considering that his whole work is to be conversant about their understandings, judgments, wills, and affections; and that this should be done by their choice and election, as the scripture doth manifestly declare, Numb. viii. 9, 10. Acts i. 23, 26. Acts vi. 35. Acts xiv. 23. so that it was for some ages observed sacredly in the primitive churches, cannot modestly be denied. But how far any people or church may commit over this power of declaring their consent and acquiescency unto others to act for them, and, as it were, in their stead, so as that the call to office should yet be valid, provided the former rules be observed, I will not much dispute with any, though I approve only of what maketh the nearest approaches to the primitive pattern that the circumstances of things are capable of. (4.) The Lord Christ continueth his bestowing of this gift, by the solemn ordinance of setting



apart those who are called in the manner declared, by *fasting and prayer, and imposition of hands*, Acts xiv. 23. chap. xiii. 2. 1 Tim. iv. 14. By these means, I say, doth the Lord Christ continue to declare, that he accounts men faithful, and puts them into the ministry, as the apostle speaks, 1 Tim. i. 12.

12. There are yet remaining sundry things in the passage of the apostle, which we now insist on, that declare the eminency of this gift of Christ, which may yet be farther briefly considered: As, (6.) The end why it is bestowed; and this is expressed, (1.) Positively, as to the good and advantage of the church thereby, ver. 12. (2.) Negatively, as to its prohibition and hinderance of evil, ver. 14. In the end of it, as positively expressed, three things may be considered: (1.) That it is *προς τον καταρτισμον των αγιων*, that is, for the gathering of the saints into complete church-order. The subject-matter of this part of their duty is the saints, that is, by calling and profession; such as are all the disciples of Christ. And that which is effected towards them is *καταρτισμος*, their coagmentation, jointing, or compacting into order. So the word signifies, Gal. vi. 1. And this effect is here declared, ver. 16. It is true, the saints mentioned may come together into some initial church-order, by their consent and agreement to walk together in all the ways of Christ, and in obedience unto all his institutions, and so become a church essentially before they have any ordinary pastor or teacher, either by the conduct of extraordinary officers, as at first, or through obedience unto their word; whence elders were ordained among those who were in church-state, that is, thus far before, Acts xiv. 23. but they cannot come to that perfection and completeness which is designed unto them. That which renders a church completely organical, the proper seat and subject of all gospel-worship and ordinances, is the gift of Christ in the ministry.

But it may be asked, whether a church before it come

unto this *καταρτισμος*, or completeness, before it hath any minister in office, or have by any means lost the ministry among them, may not delegate or appoint some one or more from among themselves for to administer all the ordinances of the gospel among them, and unto them, and by that means make up their own perfection?

13. Secondly, The church being so completed, these officers are given unto it for the work of the ministry. This expression is comprehensive, and the particulars included in it are not in this place to be enquired into. It may suffice unto our present purpose, to consider that it is a work, not a preferment; and a work they shall find it, who design to give up a comfortable account of what is committed unto them. It is usually observed, that all the words whereby the work of the ministry is expressed in the scripture, do denote a peculiar industrious kind of labour; though some have found out ways of honour and ease to be signified by them. And, (3.) Both these are directed unto one general issue. It is all *εις οικοδομην το σωματος το χριστου*, unto the edification of the body of Christ. Not to insist on the metaphors that are in this expression, the excellency of the ministry is declared in that, the object of its duty and work is no other but the body of Christ himself; and its end the edification of this body, or its increase in faith and obedience, in all the graces and gifts of the Spirit, until it comes unto conformity unto him, and the enjoyment of him. And a ministry which hath not this object and end, is not of the giving or grant of Christ.

14. The end of the ministry is expressed negatively, or with respect unto the evils which it is ordained for our deliverance from, ver. 14. The evil which we are hereby delivered from, is the danger of being perniciously and destructively deceived by false doctrines, errors, and heresies, which then began, and have ever since, in all ages, continued to infest the churches of God. These the apostle describes: (1.) From the de-

sign of their authors, which is, *to deceive*. (2.) Their diligence in that design, *They lay in wait to accomplish it*. (3.) The means they use to compass their end, which are, *sleights and cunning craftiness*, managed sometimes with impetuous violence, and thence called a *wind of doctrine*. And, (2.) The means hereof is our deliverance out of a child-like state, accompanied with, (1.) Weakness. (2.) Instability. And, (3.) Wilfulness. And sad is the condition of those churches, which either have such ministers as will themselves toss them up and down by false and pernicious doctrines, or are not able by sound instructions to deliver them from such a condition of weakness and instability, as wherein they are not able to preserve themselves from being in these things imposed on by the cunning sleights of men that *lie in wait to deceive*. And as this ministry is always to continue in the church, ver. 13. so it is the great means of influencing the whole body, and every member of it, into a due discharge of their duty, unto their edification in love, ver. 15, 16.

15. Designing to treat of the spiritual gifts bestowed on the ministry of the church, I have thus far diverted into the consideration of the ministry itself, as it is a gift of Christ, and shall shut it up with a few corollaries: As, (1.) Where there is any office erected in the church, that is not in particular of the gift and institution of Christ, there is a nullity in the whole office, and in all administrations by virtue of it. (2.) Where the office is appointed, but gifts are not communicated unto the person called unto it, there is a nullity as to his person, and a disorder in the church. (3.) It is the duty of the church to look on the ministry as an eminent grant of Christ, with valuation, thankfulness, and improvement. (4.) Those who are called unto this office in due order, labour to approve themselves as a gift of Christ; which it is a shameless impudence for some to own who go under that name. (5.) This they may do in labouring to

be furnished, (1.) With gracious qualifications. (2.) Useful endowments. (3.) Diligence and laborious travail in this work. (4.) By an exemplary conversation; in, 1. Love. 2. Meekness. 3. Self-denial 4. Readiness for the cross, &c.

## C H A P. VII.

*Of spiritual gifts enabling the ministry to the exercise and discharge of their trust and office.*

1. **U**NTO the ministry so given unto the church, as hath been declared, the Holy Ghost gives spiritual gifts enabling them unto the exercise and discharge of the power, trust, and office committed unto them. Now, although I am not thoroughly satisfied what men will grant or allow in these days, such uncouth and bold principles are continually advanced among us; yet, I suppose, it will not, in words at least, be denied by many, but that ministers have, or ought to have, gifts for the due discharge of their office. To some, indeed, the very name and word is a derision, because it is a name and notion peculiar to the scripture. Nothing is more contemptible unto them than the very mention of the gifts of the Holy Ghost; at present I deal not with such directly, though what we shall prove will be sufficient for their rebuke, though not for their conviction. Wherefore our enquiry is, whether the Spirit of God doth effectually collate on the ministers of the gospel, spiritual gifts, enabling them to perform and effect evangelical administrations, according to the power committed unto them, and duly required of them, unto the glory of Christ, and edification of the church? It is, moreover,



enquired, whether the endowing of men with these spiritual gifts in a degree and measure suited unto public edification, be not that which doth materially constitute them ministers of the gospel, as being antecedently necessary unto their call unto their office? These things, I say, are to be enquired into, because, in opposition unto the first, it is affirmed, that these supposed gifts are nothing but mere natural abilities attained by diligence, and improved by exercise, without any especial respect unto the working of the Holy Ghost, at least otherwise than what is necessary unto the attaining of skill and ability in any human art or science, which is the ordinary blessing of God on man's honest endeavours. And to the other it is opposed, that a lawful ordinary outward call is sufficient to constitute any man a lawful minister, whether he has received any such gifts as those enquired after or no. Wherefore, the substance of what we have to declare and confirm is, that there is an especial dispensation and work of the Holy Ghost, in providing able ministers of the New Testament for the edification of the church, wherein the continuance of the ministry, and being of the church, as to its outward order, doth depend; and that herein he doth exert his power, and exercise his authority, in the communication of spiritual gifts unto men, without a participation whereof no man hath, *de jure*, any lot or portion in this ministration. Herein consists no small part of that work of the Spirit which belongs unto his promised dispensation in all ages, which, to deny, is to renounce all faith in the promise of Christ, all regard unto his continued love and care towards the church in the world, or at least the principal pleadable testimony given thereunto, and under pretence of exalting and preserving the church, totally to overthrow it. Now, the evidence which we shall give unto this truth is contained in the ensuing assertions with their confirmation.

2. The Lord Jesus Christ hath faithfully promised to be present with his church unto the *end of the world*.

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It is his temple and his tabernacle, wherein he will dwell and walk continually. And this presence of Christ is that which makes the church to be what it is, a congregation essentially distinct from all other societies and assemblies of men. Let men be formed into what order you please, according unto any outward rules and measures that are either given in the scripture, or found out by themselves, let them derive power and authority by what claim soever they shall think fit, yet if Christ be not present with them, they are no church, nor can all the powers under heaven make them so to be. And where any church loseth the especial presence of Christ, it ceaseth so to be. It is, I suppose, confessed with, and among whom Christ is thus present. or it may be easily proved. See his promises to this purposes, Matth. xviii. 20. Rev. xxi. 3. And those churches do exceedingly mistake their interest who are solicitous about other things, but make little enquiry after the evidences of the presence of Christ among them. Some walk as if they supposed they had him sure enough, as it were immured in their walls, whilst they keep up the name of a church, and an outward order that pleaseth and advantageth themselves. But outward order, be what it will, is so far from being the only evidence of the presence of Christ in a church, that where it is alone, or when it is principally required, it is none at all. And therefore, whereas preaching of the word, and the right administration of the sacraments, are assigned as the notes of a true church, if the outward acts and order of them only be regarded, there is nothing of evidence unto this purpose in them.

3. *2dly.* This promised presence of Christ is by his Spirit. This I have sufficiently proved formerly, so that here I shall be brief in its rehearsal, though it be the next foundation of what we have farther to offer in this case. We speak not of the essential presence of Christ with respect unto the immensity of his divine nature, whereby he is equally present in, or equally indistant from all

places, manifesting his glory when, where, and how he pleaseth. Nor doth it respect his human nature; for, when he promised this his presence, he told his disciples, that therein he must leave and depart from them, John xvi. 5, 6, 7, 8. whereon they were filled with sorrow and trouble, until they knew how he would make good the promise of his presence with them; and who or what it was that should unto their advantage supply his bodily absence. And this he did in his visible ascension, when *he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight*, Acts. i. 9. when also it was given in charge unto them, not to expect his return until his *coming unto judgment*, ver. 11. And accordingly Peter tells us, that the *heavens must receive him unto the time of the restitution of all things*, Acts iii. 21. *when he will appear again in the glory of his Father*, Matth. xvi. 27. even that glory which the Father gave him upon his exaltation, 2 Peter i. 17. joined unto that glory which he had with him *before the world was*, John xvii. 5. In and upon this his departure from them, he taught his disciples how they should understand his promise of being present, and abiding *with them unto the end of the world*. And this was by sending of his Holy Spirit in his name, place, and stead, to do all to them, and for them, which he had yet to do with them, and for them. See John xiv. 16, 17, 18, 26, 27, 28. chap. xv. 26. chap. xvi. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. And other vicar in the church Christ hath none, nor doth stand in need of any; nor can any mortal man supply that charge and office; or was any such ever thought of in the world, until men grew weary of the conduct and rule of the Holy Spirit, by various ways taking his work out of his hand, leaving him nothing to do in that which they called the church. But I suppose I need not handle this principle as a thing in dispute or controversy. If I greatly mistake not, this presence of Christ in his church by his Spirit, is an article of faith unto the catholic church, and such a fundamental truth, as whoever denies it, overthrows the whole go-



spel. And I have so confirmed it in our former discourses concerning the dispensation and operations of the Holy Ghost, as that I fear not, nor expect any direct opposition thereunto. But yet I acknowledge, that some begin to talk, as if they owned no other presence of Christ but by the word and sacraments. Whatever else remains to be done lies wholly in ourselves. It is acknowledged, that the Lord Christ is present in and by his word and ordinances; but if he be no otherwise present, or be present only by their external administration, there will no more church-state among men ensue thereon, than there is among the Jews, who enjoy the letter of the Old Testament, and the institutions of Moses. But when men rise up in express contradiction unto the promises of Christ, and the faith of the catholic church in all ages, we shall not contend with them. But,

4. *3dly*, This presence of the Spirit is secured unto the church by an everlasting unchangeable covenant, Isa. lix. 21. *As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, my Spirit that is upon them, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.* This is God's covenant with the gospel church, to be erected then when the Redeemer should come out of Zion, and unto them that *turn from transgression in Jacob*, ver. 20. This is a part of the covenant that God hath made in Christ the Redeemer. And as the continuance of the word unto the church in all ages is by this promise secured, without which it would cease and come to nothing, seeing it is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Eph. ii. 20. so is the presence of the Spirit in like manner secured unto it, and that on the same terms with the word, so as that if he be not present with it, all covenant relation between God and it doth cease; where this promise doth not take place, there is no church, no ordinance, no acceptable worship, because no covenant-relation. In brief, then,



where there is no participation of the promise of Christ to send the Spirit to abide with us always, no interest in that covenant, wherein God engageth that his Spirit shall not depart from us for ever; and so no presence of Christ to make the word and ordinances of worship living, useful, effectual in their administration unto their proper ends, there is no church-state, whatever outward order there may be.

5. And hereon, (*athly*,) Is the gospel called the ministration of the Spirit, and the ministers of it the ministers of the Spirit, 2 Cor. iii. 6. *Who hath also made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; not the ministration of death, but that of the Spirit, which is glorious, ver. 7, 8.* There never was, nor ever shall be any, but these two ministrations in the church; that of the letter and of death; and that of the Spirit and of life. If there be a ministration in any church, it must belong to one of these, and all ministers must be so, either of the letter or of the Spirit. It there be a ministry pretended unto, that is neither of the letter nor of the Spirit, it is Antichristian. The ministry which was carnal, of the letter and death, was a true ministry, and in its place glorious, because it was appointed of God, and was efficacious as unto its proper end. That of the gospel is of the Spirit, and much more glorious. But if there be a ministration that hath the outward form of either, but indeed is neither of them, it is no ministration at all. And where it is so, there is really no ministration but that of the Bible; that is, God by his providence continuing the Bible among them, maketh use of it as he seeth good for the conviction and conversion of sinners, wherein there is a secret manifestation of the Spirit also. We may therefore enquire in what sense the ministration of the gospel is called the ministry of the Spirit. Now, this cannot be, because the laws, institutions, and ordinances of its worship were revealed by the Spirit; for so were all the ordinances and institutions of the Old Testament, as hath been proved be-

fore, and yet the ministration of them was the ministration of the letter and of death, in a worldly sanctuary by carnal ordinances. Wherefore it must be so called in one of these respects; either, (1.) Because it is the peculiar aid and assistance of the Spirit, whereby any are enabled to administer the gospel, and its institutions of worship according to the mind of God, unto the edification of the church. In this sense men are said to be made able ministers of the New Testament, that is, ministers able to administer the gospel in due order. Thus in that expression *ministers of the Spirit*; the Spirit denotes the efficient cause of the ministry, and he that quickeneth it, ver. 6, 7. Or, (2.) It may be said to be the ministration of the Spirit, because in and by the ministry of the gospel, the Spirit is in all ages administered and communicated unto the disciples of Christ, unto all the ends for which he is promised. So, Gal. iii. 2. the Spirit is received by the *preaching of faith*. Take it either way, and the whole of what we plead for is confirmed. That he alone enableth men unto the discharge of the work of the ministry, by the spiritual gifts which he communiceth unto them, is the first sense, and expressly that which we contend for; and if in, and by the ministration of the gospel, in all ages, the Spirit is communicated and administered unto men, then doth he abide with the church for ever; and for what ends we must further enquire.

6. *5thly*, The great end for which the Spirit is thus promised, administered, and communicated under the gospel, is, the continuance and preservation of the church in the world. God hath promised unto the Lord Christ, that his kingdom in this world should endure unto all generations with the course of the sun and moon, Psal. lxxii. 5. and that of the increase of his government there should be no end, Isa. ix. 7. And the Lord Christ himself hath declared his preservation of his church, so as that *the gates of hell should not prevail against it*, Matth. xvi. It may therefore be enquired

whereon the infallible accomplishment of these promises, and others innumerable unto the same end, doth depend? or what is that means whereby they shall be certainly executed? Now, this must be either some work of God or man. If it be of men, and it consist of their wills and obedience, then that which is said amounts hereunto, namely, that where men have once received the gospel, and professed subjection thereunto, they will infallibly abide therein in a succession from one generation to another. But, besides, that it must be granted, that what so depends on the wills of men can have no more certainty than the undetermined wills of men can give security of, which indeed is none at all; so there are confessed instances without number, of such persons and places, as have lost the gospel and the profession thereof. And what hath fallen out in one place may do so in another, and consequently in all places where the reasons and causes of things are the same. On this supposition therefore there is no security that the promises mentioned shall be infallibly accomplished. Wherefore the event must depend on some work of God and Christ. Now, this is no other but the dispensation and communication of the Spirit. Here alone doth the continuance of the church and of the kingdom of Christ in the world depend. And whereas the church falls under a double consideration, namely, of its internal and external form, of its internal spiritual union with Christ, and its outward profession of obedience unto him; the calling, gathering, preservation, and edification of it in both respects belong unto the Holy Spirit. The first he doth, as hath been proved at large, by his communicating effectual saving grace unto the elect; the latter by the communication of gifts unto the guides, rulers, officers, and ministers of it, with all its members according unto its place and capacity. Suppose then this communication of internal saving grace to cease, and the church must absolutely cease as to its internal form. For we are united unto the Lord Christ, as our mystical head, by the



Spirit, the one and self-same Spirit dwelling in him and them that do believe. Union unto Christ, without saving grace; or saving grace without the Holy Spirit, are strangers unto the gospel and Christian religion. So is it to have a church that is holy and catholic, which is not united unto Christ as a mystical head. Wherefore the very being of the church, as unto its internal form, depends on the Spirit in his dispensation of grace, which, if you suppose an intercession of the church, must cease. It hath the same dependence on him as to its outward form and profession upon his communication of gifts. For *no man can call Jesus Lord*, or profess subjection and obedience unto him in a due manner, *but by the Holy Ghost*, 1 Cor. xii. 3. Suppose this work of his to cease, and there can be no professing church. Let men mould and cast themselves into what order and form they please, and let them pretend that their right and title unto their church power and station is derived unto them from their progenitors or predecessors, if they are not furnished with the gifts of the Spirit to enable their guides unto gospel-administrations, they are no orderly gospel-church. Wherefore,

7. *Bibly*, The communication of such gifts unto the ordinary ministry of the church, in all ages, is plainly asserted in sundry places of scripture; some whereof may be briefly considered. The whole nature of this work is declared in the parable of the talents, Matth. xxv. from ver. 13. to 31. The state of the church from the ascension of Christ unto his coming again unto judgment, that is, in its whole course on the earth, is represented in this parable. In this season he hath servants whom he intrusteth in the affairs of his kingdom, in the care of his church, and the propagation of the gospel. That they may, in their several generations, places, and circumstances, be enabled hereunto, he giving them in various distributions talents to trade withal, the least whereof was sufficient to encourage them who received them unto their use and exercise. The trade they had to drive,



was that of the administration of the gospel, its doctrine, worship, and ordinances, to others. Talents are abilities to trade, which may also comprise opportunities and other advantages; but abilities are chiefly intended: These were the gifts whereof we speak. Nor did it ever enter into the minds of any to apprehend otherwise of them. And they are abilities which Christ, as the king and head of his church, giveth unto men in an especial manner, as they are employed under him in the service of his house and work of the gospel. The servants mentioned are such as are called, appointed, and employed in the service of the house of Christ, that is, all ministers of the gospel from first to last. And their talents are the gifts which he endows them withal by his own immediate power and authority for their work. And hence these three things follow: (1.) That wherever there is a ministry that the Lord Christ setteth up, appointeth, or owneth, he furnisheth all those whom he employs therein with gifts and abilities suitable to their work, which he doth by the Holy Spirit. He will never fail to own his institutions with gracious supplies to render them effectual. (2.) That where any have not received talents to trade withal, it is the highest presumption in them, and casts the greatest dishonour on the Lord Christ, as though he requires work where he gave no strength, or trade where he gave no stock, for any one to undertake the work of the ministry. Where the Lord Christ gives no gifts, he hath no work to do. He will require of none any especial duty where he doth not give an especial ability. And for any to think themselves meet for this work and service, in the strength of their own natural parts and endowments, however acquired, is to despise both his authority and his work. (3.) For those who have received of these talents, either not to trade at all, or to pretend the managing of their trade on another stock, that is, either not sedulously and duly to exercise their ministerial gifts, or to discharge their ministry by other helps and means, is to set up their own wisdom

in opposition unto his and his authority. In brief, that which the whole parable teacheth is, that wherever there is a ministry in the church that Christ owneth or regardeth, as used and employed by him, there persons are furnished with spiritual gifts from Christ by the Spirit, enabling them unto the discharge of that ministry; and where there are no such spiritual gifts dispensed by him, there is no ministry that he either accepteth or approveth.

8. Rom. xii. 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. *As we have many members in one body; and all members have not the same office; so we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having therefore gifts differing according to the grace that is given unto us, whether prophecy, &c.* It is indifferent as to our present purpose, whether the apostle treat here of offices or of duties only. The things ensuing, which are plain and obvious in the text, are sufficient unto the confirmation of what we plead for: (1.) It is the ordinary state of the church, its continuance being planted, its preservation and edification that the apostle discourseth about; wherefore what he speaks is necessary unto the church in all ages and conditions. To suppose a church devoid of the gifts here mentioned, is to overthrow the whole nature and end of a gospel-church. (2.) That the principle of all administrations in the church-state described, is gifts received from Jesus Christ by his Spirit. For declaring the way whereby the church may be edified, he layeth the foundation of it in this, that to every one of us is grace given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. For the apostle exhorts those unto whom he speaks, to attend unto those duties whereby the church may be edified, and that by virtue of the gifts which they had received. All the whole duty of any one in the church lies in this, that he act according to the *χαρισμα* that he is made partaker of. And what these *χαρισματα* are, as also by whom they are bestowed, hath been already fully declared. (3.) That these gifts give not only ability

for duty, but rule and measure unto all works of service that are to be performed in the church. Every one is to act therein according to his gift, and no otherwise. To say that this state of the church is now ceased, and that another state is introduced, wherein all gospel administrations may be managed without spiritual gifts, or not by virtue of them, is to say that which, *de facto*, is true in most places; but whether the true nature of the church is not overthrown thereby, is left unto consideration. 1 Peter iv. 10, 11. is a parallel testimony hereunto, and many others to the same purpose might be pleaded, together with that which is the foundation of this whole discourse, Eph. iv. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, &c. Only let it be remembered, that in this discourse, by gifts, I do understand those *χαρισματα πνευματικω*, those spiritual largesses which are neither absolutely natural endowments nor attainable by our own industry and diligence.

9. *7thly*, These gifts, as they are bestowed unto that end, so they are indispensibly necessary unto gospel administrations. For, as we have proved, they are spiritual, and not legal or carnal; and spiritual administrations cannot be exercised in a due manner without spiritual gifts: yea, one reason why they are spiritual, and so called, is, because they cannot be performed without the aid and assistance of the Holy Spirit in and by these gifts of his. Had the Lord Christ appointed administrations of another nature, such as were every way suited unto the reason of men, and to be exercised by the powers thereof, there had been no need of these spiritual gifts: for the spirit of a man knoweth the things of a man, and will both guide and actuate him therein. And whereas these administrations are in their nature, use, signification, and efficacy, spiritual, it is by spiritual gifts alone that they may be managed. Hence these things do live and die together. Where the one is not, there neither will the other be. Thus, when many, perhaps, the most who were outwardly called unto office in the church, be-



gan to be carnal in their hearts and lives, and to neglect the use of these gifts, neither applying themselves unto the attaining of them, nor endeavouring to excite or increase what they had received, by diligence or constant exercise, refusing to trade with the talent committed unto them, they quickly began to wax weary of spiritual administrations also. Hereon, in compliance with many corrupt affections, they betook themselves unto an outward, carnal, ceremonious worship and administration of ordinances, which they might discharge and perform without the least aid or assistance of the Holy Ghost, or supply of spiritual gifts. So in the neglect of these gifts, and the loss of them which ensued thereon, lay the beginning of the apostacy of the Christian church as to its outward profession, which was quickly completed by the neglect of the grace of the Spirit, whereby it lost both truth and holiness. Nor could it be otherwise: for, as we have proved, the outward form and being of the church, as to its visible profession, depends on the receipt and use of them: on their decay, therefore, the church must decay as to its profession, and in their loss is its ruin. And we have an instance in the church of Rome, what various, extravagant, and endless inventions the minds of men will put them upon to keep up a show of worship, when, by the loss of spiritual gifts, spiritual administrations are lost also. This is that which their innumerable forms, modes, sets of rites and ceremonies, seasons of worship are invented to supply, but to no purpose at all; but only the aggravation of their sin and folly.

10. In the last place, we plead the event even in the days wherein we live: for the Holy Ghost doth continue to dispense spiritual gifts for gospel administrations in great variety, unto those ministers of the gospel who are called unto their office according unto his mind and will. The opposition that is made hereunto by profane scoffers, is not to be valued. The experience of those who



are humble and wise, who, fearing God, do enquire into those things, is appealed unto. Have they not an experiment of this administration? Do they not find the presence of the Spirit himself by his various gifts in them by whom spiritual things are administered unto them? Have they not a proof of Christ speaking in them by the assistance of his Spirit, making the word mighty unto all its proper ends? And as the thing itself, so variety of his dispensations manifest themselves also unto the experience of believers. Who see not how different are the gifts of men, the Holy Ghost dividing unto every one as he will? And the experience which they have themselves who have received these gifts, of the especial assistance which they receive in the exercise of them, may also be pleaded. Indeed, the profaneness of a contrary apprehension, is intolerable among such as profess themselves to be Christians. For any to boast themselves, they are sufficient of themselves for the stewardly dispensation of the mysteries of the gospel, by their own endowments, natural or acquired, and the exercise of them, without a participation of any peculiar spiritual gift from the Holy Ghost, is a presumption which contains in it a renunciation of all or any interest in the promises of Christ made unto the church, or the continuance of his presence therein. Let men be never so well persuaded of their own abilities, let them pride themselves in their performances, in reflection of applauses from persons unacquainted with the mystery of these things; let them frame to themselves such a work of the ministry, as whose discharge stands in little or no need of these gifts, yet it will at length appear, that where the gifts of the Holy Ghost are excluded from their administration, the Lord Christ is so, and the Spirit himself is so, and all true edification of the church is so, and so are all the real concerns of the gospel: and so have we, as I hope, confirmed the second part of the work of the Holy Ghost, with respect unto spiritual gifts, namely,

his continuance to distribute and communicate unto the church to the end of the world, according unto the powers and duties which he hath erected in it, or required of it.

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## C H A P. VIII.

*Of the gifts of the Spirit, with respect unto doctrine, rule, and worship; how attained, and improved.*

1. **T**HERE remain yet two things to be spoken unto, with respect unto the gifts which the Holy Ghost bestows on the ministers of the gospel, to qualify them unto their office, and to enable them unto their work: and these are, (1.) What they are. (2.) How they are to be attained and improved. In our enquiry after the first; or what are the gifts whereby men are fitted and enabled for the ministry, we wholly set aside the consideration of all those gracious qualifications of faith, love, zeal, compassion, careful tender watchfulness, and the like, whereon the holy use of their ministry doth depend? For our enquiry is only after those gifts whereon depends the very being of the ministry. There may be a true ministry, in some cases, where there is no sanctifying grace; but where there are no spiritual gifts, there is no ministry at all. They are in general abilities for the due management of the spiritual administrations of the gospel in its doctrine, worship, and discipline, unto the edification of the church. It is not easy, nay, it may be unto us, it is not possible to enumerate, in particular, all the various gifts which the Holy Ghost endows the ministers of the gospel withal. But whereas all the concerns of the church may be referred unto these three

heads of doctrine, worship, and rule, we may enquire what are the principal spiritual gifts of the Holy Ghost with respect unto them distinctly?

2. The first great duty of the ministry with reference unto the church, is, the dispensation of the doctrine of the gospel unto it, for its edification. As this is the duty of the church continually to attend unto, Acts ii. 42. so it is the principal work of the ministry, the foundation of all other duties, which the apostles themselves gave themselves unto in an especial manner, Acts vi. 4. Hence it is given in charge unto all ministers of the gospel, Acts xx. 28. 1 Peter v. 2. 1 Tim. i. 3. chap. v. 17. chap. iv. 13, 14, 16. 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2, 3. For this is the principal means appointed by Christ for the edification of his church; that whereby spiritual life is begotten and preserved. Where this work is neglected, or carelessly attended unto, there the whole work of the ministry is despised. And with respect unto this ministerial duty, there are three spiritual gifts that the Holy Ghost endoweth men withal, which must be considered.

3. The first is wisdom, or knowledge, or understanding in the mysteries of the gospel, the revelation of the mystery of God in Christ, with his mind and will towards us therein. These things may be distinguished, and they seem to be so in the scripture sometimes. I put them together, as all of them denote that acquaintance with, and comprehension of the doctrine of the gospel, which is indispensibly necessary unto them who are called to preach it unto the church. This some imagine an easy matter to be attained; at least, that there is no more, nor the use of any other means required thereunto, than what is necessary to the acquisition of skill in any other art or science. And it were well if some, otherwise concerned in point of duty, would but lay out so much of their strength and time in the obtaining of this knowledge, as they do about other things that will not turn much unto their account. But the cursory perusal of a few books is thought sufficient to make any man wise e-

nough to be a minister. And not a few undertake ordinarily to be teachers of others, who would scarcely be admitted as tolerable disciples in a well-ordered church. But there belongeth more unto this wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, than most men are aware of. Were the nature of it duly considered, and withal the necessity of it unto the ministry of the gospel, probably some would not so rush on that work as they do, which they have no provision of ability for the performance of. It is in brief such a comprehension of the scope and end of the scripture, of the revelation of God therein, such an acquaintance with the system of particular doctrinal truths, in their rise, tendency, and use, such an habit of mind in judging of spiritual things, and comparing them one with another, such a distinct insight into the springs and course of the mystery of the love, grace, and will of God in Christ, as enables them, in whom it is, to declare the counsel of God, to make known the way of life, of faith and obedience unto others, and to instruct them in their whole duty to God and man thereon. This the apostle calls his knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which he manifested in his writings, Eph. iii. 4. For, as the gospel, the dispensation and declaration whereof is committed unto the ministers of the church, is the *wisdom of God in a mystery*, 1 Cor. ii. 7. so their principal duty is to become so wise and understanding in that mystery, as that they may be able to declare it unto others, without which they have no ministry committed unto them by Jesus Christ. See Eph. i. 9. chap. iii. 3, 6, 19. Col. iv. 3. The sole enquiry is, whence we may have this wisdom, seeing it is abundantly evident that we have it not of ourselves? That, in general, it is from God, that it is to be asked of him, the scripture every where declares. See Col. i. 9. chap. ii. 2. 2 Tim. ii. 7. James i. 5. 1 John v. 20. And, in particular, it is plainly affirmed to be the especial gift of the Holy Ghost. He gives the *word of wisdom*, 1 Cor. xii. 8. which place hath been opened before. And it is the first ministerial gift that he bestows on



any. Where this is not in some measure, to look for a ministry, is to look for the living among the dead. And they will deceive their own souls in the end, as they do those of others in the mean time, who, on any other grounds, do undertake to be preachers of the gospel. But I shall not here divert unto the full description of this spiritual gift, because I have discoursed concerning it elsewhere.

4. With respect unto the doctrine of the gospel, there is required unto the ministry of the church, skill to divide the word aright, which is also a peculiar gift of the Holy Ghost, 2 Tim. ii. 15. *Study to approve thyself unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* Both the former clauses depend on the latter. If a minister would be accepted with God in his work, if he would be found at the last day a workman that needs not to be ashamed, that is, such a builder of the house of God, as whose work is meet, proper, and useful, he must take care to divide the word of truth, which is committed unto his dispensation, aright, or in a due manner. Ministers are stewards in the house of God, and dispensers of the mysteries thereof. And therefore it is required of them, that they give unto all the servants that are in the house, or do belong unto it, a meet portion according unto their wants, occasions; and services, suitable unto the will and wisdom of their Lord and Master, Luke xii. 42, 43. *Who is that faithful and wise steward, whom his Master shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season.* For this giving of provision, and a portion of meat unto the household of Christ, consists principally in the right dividing and distribution of the word of truth. It is the taking out from those great stores of it in the scripture, and, as it were, cutting off a portion suitable unto the various conditions of those in the family. Herein consists the principal skill of a scribe furnished for the kingdom of heaven, with the wisdom before described. And, without this, a common course of

dispensing or preaching the word, without differencing of persons and truths, however it may be gilded over with a flourish of words and oratory, is shameful work in the house of God. Now, unto this skill, sundry things are required: (1.) A sound judgment, in general, concerning the state and condition of those unto whom any one is so dispensing the word. It is the duty of a shepherd to know the state of his flock; and unless he do so, he will never feed them profitably. He must know whether they are babes, or young men, or old; whether they need milk or strong meat; whether they are skilful or unskilful in the word of righteousness; whether they have their senses exercised to discern good and evil, or not; or whether their hearers are mixed with all these sorts. Whether, in the judgment of charity, they are converted unto God, or are yet in an unregenerate condition? What probably are their principal temptations, their hinderances and furtherances; what is their growth or decay in religion? He that is not able to make a competent judgment concerning these things, and the other circumstances of the flock, so as to be steered thereby in his work, will never evidence himself to be a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. (2.) An acquaintance with the ways and methods of the work of God's grace on the minds and hearts of men, that he may pursue and comply with its design in the ministry of the word. Nothing is by many more despised, than an understanding hereof; yet is nothing more necessary to the work of the ministry. The word of the gospel, as preached, is *vehiculum gratiæ*, and ought to be ordered so, as it may comply with its design in its whole work on the souls of men. He therefore who is unacquainted with the ordinary methods of the operation of grace, fights uncertainly in his preaching of the word, like a man beating of the air. It is true, God can, and often doth, direct a word of truth, spoken, as it were, at random, unto a proper effect of grace on some or other, as it was when the man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Is-

rael between the joints of the harness. But ordinarily a man is not like to hit a joint, who knows not how to take his aim. (3.) An acquaintance with the nature of temptation, with the especial hinderances of faith and obedience, which may befall those unto whom the word is dispensed, is in like manner required hereunto. Many things might be added on this head, seeing a principal part of ministerial skill doth consist herein. (4.) A right understanding of the nature of spiritual diseases, distempers, and sicknesses, with their proper cures and remedies, belongeth hereunto. For the want hereof the hearts of the wicked are oftentimes made glad in the preaching of the word, and those of the righteous filled with sorrow; the hands of sinners are strengthened, and those who are looking towards God are discouraged or turned out of the way. And where men either know not these things, or do not, or cannot apply themselves skilfully to distribute the word according to this variety of occasion, they cannot give the household its portion of meat in season. And he that wants this spiritual gift, will never divide the word aright unto its proper ends, 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. And it is lamentable to consider what shameful work is made for want hereof in the preaching of some men: yea, how the whole gift is lost, as to its power, use, and benefit.

5. Thirdly, The gift of utterance also belongeth unto this part of the ministerial duty in the dispensation of the doctrine of the gospel. This is particularly reckoned by the apostle among the gifts of the Spirit, 1 Cor. i. 5. 2 Cor. viii. 5. And he desires the prayers of the church, that the gift *may abide with himself, and abound in him*, Eph. vi. 19. And he there declares, that the nature of it consists in the opening of the mouth boldly *to make known the mysteries of the gospel*: As also, Col. iv. 3. Now, this utterance doth not consist in a natural volubility of speech, which, taken alone by itself, is so far from being a gift of the Spirit, or a thing to be so earnestly prayed for, as that it is usually a snare to them



that have it, and a trouble to them that hear them. Nor doth it consist in a rhetorical ability to set off discourses with a flourish of words, be they never so plausible or enticing; much less in a bold corrupting of the ordinance of preaching by a foolish affectation of words in supposed elegancies of speech, quaint expressions, and the like effects of wit, that is fancy and vanity. But four things do concur hereunto: (1.) Παρρησιζ, or *dicendi libertas*. The word we translate utterance is λογος, that is speech. But not that speech in general, but a certain kind of speech is intended, is evident from the places mentioned, and the application of them. And it is such a speech as is elsewhere called παρρησιζ, that is, a freedom and liberty in the declaration of the truth conceived. This a man hath when he is not from any internal defect, or from any outward consideration, straitened in the declaration of those things which he ought to speak. This frame and ability the apostle expresseth in himself, 2 Cor. vi. 11. *O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged.* A free enlarged spirit, attended with an ability of speech, suited unto the matter in hand, with its occasions, belong to this gift. (2.) So also doth boldness and holy confidence. So we often render παρρησιζ, wherein this utterance doth much consist. When the Spirit of God, in the midst of difficulties, oppositions, and discouragements, strengtheneth the minds of ministers, so as that they are not terrified with any amazement, but discharge their work freely, as considering whose word and message it is that they do deliver, belongs to this gift of utterance. (3.) So also doth gravity in expression, becoming the sacred majesty of Christ and his truths in the delivery of them. He that speaks, is to speak as the oracles of God, 1 Peter iv. 11. that is, not only as to truth, preaching the word of God, and nothing else, but doing it with that gravity and soundness of speech, which becomes them who speak the oracles of God. For, as we are to deliver sound doctrine, and nothing else, Titus i. 9. so we are to use



found speech that cannot be condemned, Titus ii. 7, 8.

(4.) Hereunto also belongs that authority which accompanieth the delivery of the word when preached in demonstration of those spiritual abilities. For all these things are necessary, that the hearers may receive the word, not as the word of man, but as it is, indeed, the word of God.

6. These are the principal spiritual gifts wherewith the Holy Ghost endows the ministers of the church, with respect unto the effectual dispensation of the word or the doctrine of the gospel which is committed unto them. And where they are communicated in any such degree as is necessary unto the due discharge of that office, they will evidence themselves to the consciences of them that do believe. The dispensation of the word by virtue of them, though under great variety, from the various degrees wherein they are communicated, and the different natural abilities of them that do receive them, will be sufficiently distinguished and remote from that empty, wordy, sapless way of discoursing spiritual things, which is the mere effect of the wit, fancy, invention, and projection of men destitute of the saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the mysteries of the gospel.

7. The second head of duties belonging unto the ministerial office, respects the worship of God. By the worship of God, here, I understand only that especial part thereof, whereof himself is the immediate object. For, absolutely, the preaching and hearing of the word is a part of sacred worship, as that wherein we act the obedience of faith unto the commands of God, and submit ourselves unto his institution. And, indeed, as unto those that hear, it is God declaring himself by his word that is the immediate object of their worship. But the dispensation of the word, which we have considered, is the acting of men upon the authority and command of God towards others. But, as was said by that part we enquire into, I intend that alone whereof God himself was the

immediate object. Such are all the remaining offices and duties of the church, those only excepted which belong to its rule. And this worship hath various acts according to the variety of Christ's institutions and the church's occasions. Yet, as to the manner of its performance, it is comprised in prayer; for, by prayer, we understand all confessions, supplications, thanksgivings, and praises that are made unto God in the church, whether absolutely, or in the administration of other ordinances, as the sacraments. Wherefore, in this duty, as comprehensive of all the sacred offices of public worship, as the glory of God is greatly concerned, so it is the principal act of obedience in the church. This, then, as to the performance of it, depends either on the natural abilities of men, or on the aids and operation of the Holy Ghost. By the natural abilities of men, I understand not only what they are able of themselves, in every instance, to perform, but also whatever assistance they may make use of, either of their own finding out, or of others. And, by the aids of the Holy Ghost, I intend an especial spiritual gift bestowed on men to this purpose. Now, to suppose that the whole duty of the church herein should consist in the doings of men in their own strength and power, without any especial assistance of the Holy Spirit, is to exclude the consideration of him from those things, with respect whereunto he is principally promised by our Lord Jesus Christ. But what concerneth this gift of the Holy Ghost hath been at large handled by itself already, and must not here be again insisted on. Taking for granted what is therein sufficiently confirmed, I shall only add, that those who have not received this gift are utterly unfit to undertake the office of the ministry, wherein it is their duty to go before the church in the administration of all ordinances by virtue of these abilities. In things civil or secular, it would be esteemed an intolerable solecism, to call and chuse a man to the discharge of an office or duty, whose execution depended solely on such a peculiar faculty or skill, as he who is so

called hath no interest in, or acquaintance with: and it will one day appear to be so also in all things sacred and religious, yea, much more.

8. Thirdly, The rule of the church belongeth unto the ministers of it. God hath established rule in the church, Rom. xii. 8. 1 Cor. xii. 28. 1 Tim. v. 17. 1 Theff. v. 12. Heb. xiii. 1. I dispute not now of what sort this ministry is, nor whether the rule belong unto one sort alone. It is enough unto my present design, that it is committed by Christ unto the ministers of the church, which are its guides, rulers, and overseers. Nor shall I at present enquire into the particular powers, acts, and duties of this rule. I have done it elsewhere. I am only now to consider it so far as its exercise requireth an especial ministerial gift to be communicated by the Holy Ghost. And, in order thereunto, the things ensuing must be premised: (1.) That this rule is spiritual, and hath nothing in common with the administration of the powers of the world. It hath, I say, no agreement with secular power and its exercise, unless it be in some natural circumstances that inseparably attend rulers and ruled in any kind. It belongs unto the kingdom of Christ, and the administration of it, which are not of this world. And, as this is well pleaded by some against those who would erect a kingdom for him in the world, and, as far I can understand, of this world, framed in their own imaginations unto a fancied interest of their own; so it is as pleadable against them who pretend to exercise the rule and power of his present kingdom after the manner of the potestative administrations of the world. When our Saviour forbade all rule unto unto his disciples, after the manner of the Gentiles, who then possessed all sovereign power in the world, and told them, that it should not be so with them, that some should be great and exercise dominion over others, but but that they should serve one another in love, the greatest condescension unto service being required of them who are otherwise most eminent; he did not intend to



take from them, or divest them of that spiritual power and authority in the government of the church which he intended to commit unto them. His design therefore was to declare, what that authority was not, and how it should not be exercised. A lordly or despotical power it was not to be, nor was it to be exercised by penal laws, courts, and coercive jurisdiction, which was the way of the administration of all power among the Gentiles. And if that kind of power and rule in the church, which is for the most part exercised in the world, be not forbidden by our Saviour, no man living can tell what is so. For, as to meekness, moderation, patience, equity, righteousness, they were more easy to be found in the legal administrations of power among the Gentiles, than in these used in many churches. But such a rule is signified unto them, the authority whereof from whence it proceedeth was spiritual, its object the minds and souls of men only, and the way of whose administration was to consist in an humble, holy, spiritual application of the word of God, or rules of the gospel unto them. (2.) The end of this rule is merely and solely the edification of the church. All the power the apostles themselves had either in or over the church, was but unto their edification, 2 Cor. x. 8. And the edification of the church consists in the increase of faith and obedience in all the members thereof, in the subduing and mortifying of sin, in fruitfulness in good works, in the confirmation and consolation of them that stand, in the raising up them that are fallen, and the recovery of them that wander, in the growth and flourishing of mutual love and peace; and whatever rule is exercised in the church unto any other end, is foreign to the gospel, and tends only to the destruction of the church itself. (3.) In the way and manner of the administration of this rule and government, two things may be considered: (1.) What is internal in the qualifications of the minds of them by whom it is to be exercised. Such are wisdom, diligence, love, meekness, patience, and the like evangelical endow-



ments. (2.) What is external, or what is the outward rule of it, and this is the word and law of Christ alone, as we have elsewhere declared.

9. From these things it may appear, what is the nature, in general, of that skill in the rule of the church, which we assert to be a peculiar gift of the Holy Ghost. If it were only an ability or skill in the canon or civil law, or rules of men; if only an acquaintance with the nature and course of some courts proceeding litigiously by citations, processes, legal pleadings, issuing in pecuniary mulcts, outward coercions, or imprisonments, I should willingly acknowledge that there is no peculiar gift of the Spirit of God required thereunto. But the nature of it being, as we have declared, it is impossible it should be exercised aright without the especial assistance of the Holy Ghost. Is any man of himself sufficient for these things? Will any man undertake of himself to know the mind of Christ in all occasions of the church, and to administer the power of Christ in them, and about them? Wherefore the apostle, in many places, teacheth that wisdom, skill, and understanding to administer the authority of Christ in the church unto its edification with faithfulness and diligence, are an especial gift of the Holy Ghost, Rom. xii. 6, 8. 1 Cor. xii. 28. It is the Holy Ghost which makes the elders of the church its bishops or overseers, by calling them to their office, Acts xx. 28. And what he calls any man unto, that he furnisheth him with abilities for the discharge of. And so have we given a brief account of these ordinary gifts which the Holy Ghost communicates unto the constant ministry of the church, and will do so unto the consummation of all things; having, moreover, in our passage manifested the dependence of the ministry on this work of his; so that we need no addition of pains to demonstrate, that where he goeth not before in the communication of them, no outward order, call, or constitution is sufficient to make any one a minister of the gospel.

10. There are gifts which respect duties only. Such

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are those which the Holy Ghost continues to communicate unto all the members of the church in a great variety of degrees, according to the places and conditions which they are in unto their own and the church's edification. There is no need that we should insist upon them in particular, seeing they are of the same nature with them which are continued unto the ministers of the church, who are required to excel in them, so as to be able to go before the whole church in their exercise. The Spirit of the gospel was promised by Christ unto all his disciples, unto all believers, unto the whole church, and not unto the guides of it only. To them he is so in an especial manner, with respect unto their office, power, and duty, but not absolutely or only. As he is the Spirit of grace, he quickens, animates, and unites the whole body of the church, and all the members of it, in and unto Christ Jesus, 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13. And, as he is the administrator of all supernatural gifts, he furnisheth the whole body, and all its members, with spiritual abilities unto its edification, Eph. iv. 15, 16. Col. ii. 19. And, without them in some measure or degree, ordinarily, we are not able to discharge our duty unto the glory of God. For,

11. (1.) These gifts are a great means and help to excite and exercise grace itself, without which it will be lifeless, and apt to decay. Men grow in grace by the due exercise of their own gifts and duties. Wherefore every individual person, on his own account, doth stand in need of them with respect to the exercise and improvement of grace, Zech. xii. 10: (2.) Most men have, it may be, such duties incumbent on them with respect unto others, as they cannot discharge aright without the especial aid of the Spirit of God in this kind. So is it with all them who have families to take care of and provide for. For, ordinarily, they are bound to instruct their children and servants in the knowledge of the Lord, and to go before them in that worship which God requires of them, as Abraham did, the father of the faithful. And hereunto

some spiritual abilities are requisite: for none can teach others more than they know themselves, nor perform spiritual worship without some spiritual gifts, unless they will betake themselves unto such shifts as we have before, on good grounds, rejected. (3.) Every member of a church, in order, according to the mind of Christ, possesseth some place, use, and office in the body, which it cannot fill up unto the benefit and ornament of the whole, without some spiritual gift. These places are various, some of greater use than others, and of more necessity unto the edification of the church, but all are useful in their kind. This our apostle disputes at large, 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, &c. All believers, in due order, do become one body by the participation of the same Spirit, and union unto the same head. Those who do not so partake of the one Spirit, who are not united unto the head, do not properly belong to the body, whatever place they seem to hold therein. Of those that do so, some are, as it were, an eye, some as an hand, and some as a foot: all these useful in their several places, and needful unto one another. None of them is so highly exalted as to have the least occasion of being lifted up, as tho' he had no need of the rest; for the Spirit distributeth unto every one severally as he will, not all unto any one, save only unto the head our Lord Jesus, from whom we all receive grace, according to the measure of his gift. Nor is any so depressed or useless, as to say, It is not of the body, nor that the body hath no need of it. But every one, in his place and station, concurs to the unity, strength, beauty, and growth of the body, which things our apostle disputes at large in the place mentioned. (4.) Hereby are supplies communicated unto the whole from the head, Eph. iv. 15, 16. Col. ii. 19. It is of the body, that is, of the church, under the conduct of its officers, that the apostle discourseth in those places. And the duty of the whole, is it to speak the truth in love, every one in his several place and station. And herein God hath so ordered the union of the whole



church in itself, unto, and in dependence on its head, as that through, and by, not only the supply of every joint, which may express either the officers, or more eminent members of it; but the effectual working of every part, in the exercise of the graces and gifts of the Spirit, doth impart to the whole, the body may edify itself, and be increased. Wherefore, (5.) The scripture is express, that the Holy Ghost doth communicate of those gifts unto private believers, and directs them in that duty wherein they are to be exercised, 1 Peter iv. 10. Every one, that is, every believer walking in the order and fellowship of the gospel, is to attend unto the discharge of his duty, according as he hath received spiritual ability. So was it in the church of Corinth, 1 Cor. i. 5, 6, 7. and in that of the Romans, chap. xv. 14. as they all of them knew that it was their duty to covet the best gifts, which they did with success, 1 Cor. xii. 31. And hereon depend the commands for the exercise of those duties, which, in the ability of these gifts received, they were to perform. So were they to admonish one another, to exhort one another, to build up one another in their most holy faith. And it is the loss of those spiritual gifts which hath introduced amongst many an utter neglect of these duties, so as they are scarce heard of among the generality of them that are called Christians. But, blessed be God, we have large and full experience of the continuance of this dispensation of the Spirit in the eminent abilities of a multitude of private Christians, however they may be despised by them who know them not. By some, I confess, they have been abused; some have presumed on them beyond the line and measure which they have received; some have been puffed up with them; some have used them disorderly in churches, and to their hurt; some have boasted of what they have not received; all which miscarriages also beset the primitive churches. And I had rather have the order, rule, spirit, and practice of those churches that were planted by the apostles, with all their troubles and disadvanta-



ges, than the carnal peace of others in their open degeneracy from all those things.

12. It remains only, that we enquire how men may come unto, or attain a participation of these gifts, whether ministerial or more private? And unto this end we may observe: (1.) That they are not communicated unto any by a sudden *afflatus*, or extraordinary infusion, as were the gifts of miracles and tongues, which were bestowed on the apostles, and many of the first converts. That dispensation of the Spirit is long since ceased, and where it is now pretended unto by any, it may justly be suspected as an enthusiastic delusion: for, as the ends of those gifts, which in their own nature exceed the whole power of all our faculties, is ceased, so is their communication, and the manner of it also. Yet this I must say, that the infusion of spiritual light into the mind, which is the foundation of all gifts, as hath been proved, being wrought sometimes suddenly, or in a short season, the concomitancy of gifts, in some good measure, is oftentimes sudden, with an appearance of something extraordinary, as might be manifested in instances of several sorts. (2.) These gifts are not absolutely attainable by our own diligence and endeavours in the use of means, without respect unto the sovereign will and pleasure of the Holy Ghost. Suppose there are such means of the attainment and improvement of them, and that several persons do with the same measures of natural abilities and diligence use those means for that end, yet it will not follow that all must be equally partakers of them. They are not the immediate product of our own endeavours, no, not as under an ordinary blessing upon them: for they are *χαρίσματα*, arbitrary largesses or gifts which the Holy Spirit worketh in all persons severally as he will. Hence we see the different events that are among them who are exercised in the same studies and endeavours; some are endowed with eminent gifts; some scarce attain unto any that are useful; and some despise them,

name and thing. There is therefore an immediate operation of the Spirit of God in the collation of these spiritual abilities, which is unaccountable by the measures of natural parts and industry. Yet, I say, (4.) That, ordinarily, they are both attained and increased by the due use of means suited thereunto, as grace is also, which none but Pelagians affirm to be absolutely in the power of our own wills. And the naming of these means shall put an issue unto this discourse. Among them, in the first place, it is required a due preparation of soul by humility, meekness, and teachableness. The Holy Spirit taketh no delight to impart of his especial gifts unto proud, self-conceited men, to men vainly puffed up in their own fleshly minds. The same must be said concerning other vicious and depraved habits of mind, by which, moreover, they are oft-times expelled and cast out after they have been, in some measure, received. And, in this case, I need not mention those by whom all these gifts are despised: it would be a wonder, indeed, if they should be made partakers of them, or, at least, if they should abide with them. (2.) Prayer is a principal means of their attainment. This the apostle directs unto, when he enjoins us earnestly to desire the best gifts: for this desire is to be acted by prayer, and no otherwise. (3.) Diligence in the things about which these gifts are conversant. Study and meditation on the word of God; by the due use of means for the attaining a right understanding of his mind and will therein, is that which I intend: for, in this course, conscientiously attended unto, it is, that, for the most part, the Holy Spirit comes in, and joins his aid and assistance for furnishing the mind with those spiritual endowments. (4.) The growth, increase, and improvement of these gifts depend on their faithful use according as our duty doth require. It is trade alone that increaseth talents, and exercise, in a way of duty, that improveth gifts. Without this, they will first wither, and then perish. And, by a neglect hereof, are

they lost every day, in some partially, in some totally, and in some to a contempt, hatred, and blasphemy of what themselves had received. Lastly, Mens natural endowments, with elocution, memory, judgment, and the like, improved by reading, learning, and diligent study, do enlarge, set off, and adorn these gifts, where they are received.

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