

# ANNOTATIONS UPON THE HOLY BIBLE;

BY MATTHEW POOLE

VOLUME 4

## ROMANS TO REVELATION

THE MORE DIFFICULT TERMS IN EACH VERSE ARE EXPLAINED, SEEMING CONTRADICTIONS RECONCILED, QUESTIONS AND DOUBTS RESOLVED, AND THE WHOLE TEXT OPENED.

They read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading – Neh. viii. 8.

Understandest thou what thou readest? How can I, except some man should guide me? – Acts viii. 30,31.



MATTHEW POOLE  
(1624-1679)

Matthew Poole was born in York in 1624. He graduated from Emmanuel College in Cambridge in 1645, and succeeded Anthony Tuckney in pasturing at St. Michael-le-Querne church. It was the only pastorate Poole ever held. A strict Presbyterian, he resigned his living rather than conform to the Act of Uniformity. At the suggestion of William Lloyd, who was to become Bishop of Worcester, Poole undertook his life's work, his *Synopsis*, which we know as his *Commentary on the Holy Bible*. He began this work in 1666 and labored at it for ten years.

Matthew Poole completed his *Synopsis Criticorum* (Synopsis of Interpreters) on the entire Bible in Latin. But he felt the need to supplement his magnum opus with a commentary on the Bible for English readers. He wrote his English Annotations on the Bible through Isaiah 58 before he died in Amsterdam. His friends decided to take up the remainder of the work and complete the English Annotations through Revelation. Following is a list of continuators.

John Jackson [Isaiah 59, 60]

John Collinges (1623-1691) [Isaiah 61-66; Jeremiah; Lamentations; Gospels; 1 and 2 Corinthians; Galatians; 1 and 2 Timothy; Titus; Philemon; Revelation]

Henry Hurst (1629-1690) [Ezekiel; Minor Prophets]

William Cooper [Daniel]

Peter Vinke (d. 1702) [Acts]

Richard Mayo (d. 1695) [Romans]

Edward Veale (d. 1708) [Ephesians; James; 1 and 2 Peter; Jude]

Richard Adams (c. 1626-1698) [Philippians; Colossians]

Matthew Barker (d. 1698) [1 and 2 Thessalonians]

Obadiah Hughes (d. 1704) [Hebrews]

John Howe (1630-1705) [1, 2, and 3 John]

## Romans 1:1

### THE ARGUMENT

The penman of this Epistle, viz. Paul, was so called (as some think) because he was little or low of stature. Others suppose he had this name first given him upon the converting of Sergius Paulus the deputy; of which see Ac 12:1-25, and Hierom. Com. in Ep. ad Philem. But others are of opinion, that his name was not changed at all, and that he had two names, as all those Jews had who were freemen of Rome. The text in Ac 13:9 doth favour this opinion; there you read of Saul, who was also called Paul. (So John was surnamed, or also called, Mark, Ac 12:12,25.) And because he was the apostle of the Gentiles, and his work lay mostly amongst them, he was called at last altogether by his surname, or Roman title.

As to the order of it: all are agreed, that it was not written as it is placed in our Bibles: that the Epistles to the Thessalonians, to the Corinthians, and other of his Epistles, were written before this; and the reason why it is placed before the other Epistles is, because of the dignity of the Romans, to whom it was directed; Rome being, at that time, the imperial city: or, because of the prolixity and largeness of it, this being the longest of all the Epistles: or, because of the excellency and fulness of it; so full and excellent is this Epistle, that some have called it "the marrow of divinity". Chrysostom had such an esteem of it, that he caused it to be read to him twice every week. Melancthon called it "the confession of the churches"; he is reported to have gone over it ten several times in his ordinary lectures. Mr. Perkins adviseth, in the reading of the Scriptures, to begin with the Gospel of John, and this Epistle to the Romans, as being the keys of the New Testament.

The subject matter of it seems to be much the same with the Epistle to the Galatians. The body of this Epistle (not to speak any thing of the preface, or conclusion) is partly doctrinal, and partly practical. In the doctrinal part, the apostle handles (and that purposely, and at large) that fundamental article of a sinner's justification in the sight of God: so that this Epistle (as one saith) is the proper seat of that doctrine; and from hence it is principally to be learned. Here we are taught the way and manner of our justification before God, that we are *justified by faith, without the deeds of the law*, by a righteousness which is imputed to us,

and not by any righteousness inherent in us. This is proved in the first four chapters, by many irrefragable arguments, and vindicated from all objections. And then it is amplified in the seven following chapters. The amplification is first from the glorious effects and sweetest privileges of justification by faith, viz. *peace with God*, which no tribulation can hinder or interrupt, Ro 5:1-10. Then there is rejoicing with God, as reconciled through Jesus Christ, the Second Adam, who doth abundantly transcend the first Adam in many particulars, Ro 5:11-21. Then there is sanctification, in both the parts of it, as mortification and death to sin; and vivification, or newness of life, Ro 6:1-23 throughout. The next is freedom from the law, as the first husband, now dead, Ro 7:1-25. And in the Ro 8:1-39 you have divers other privileges closely couched, as noncondemnation, adoption, the indwelling of the Spirit, the co-operations of all things for good, the certainty of the love of God, together with the triumph we have over all our enemies upon that account. Further, this doctrine of justification is amplified from the remote cause of it; and that is, God's predestination or eternal counsel. This is brought in to obviate an objection against this doctrine, as not true, because the Jewish nation (God's ancient people) received it not. Thereupon the apostle shows, that justification belonged not to the whole nation of the Jews, but only to the elect amongst them; the rest being rejected of God till the fulness of the Gentiles was come in; and then the Jews should more generally believe and be converted. This you have at large in Ro 9:1-11:36. The practical part of this Epistle follows, in which you have many useful exhortations, from Ro 12:1-15:14. These are either more general, or more particular, showing Christians how they should behave themselves with respect to the church of Christ, and the fellowship thereof, every one attending upon the calling and ministry wherein God hath placed him, Ro 12:1-21; with respect to the civil society, and the government which God had set over them in the world, yielding all subjection thereunto, Ro 13:1-14; and with respect to their brethren and neighbours, exercising Christian charity towards all, avoiding censoriousness on the one hand and offences on the other, Ro 14:1-15:33. These duties he largely presseth, interweaving now and then many ethical and theological aphorisms, of which in their proper place.

### Chapter Summary

Ro 1:1-7 Paul, commending to the Romans his calling,

greeted them,

Ro 1:8-15 and professes his concern for, and desire of coming to see them.

Ro 1:16,17 He shows that the gospel is for the justification of all mankind through faith.

Ro 1:18-32 And having premised that sinners in general are obnoxious to God's wrath, he describes at large the corruption of the Gentile world.

Ver. 1. *A servant of Jesus Christ*, is a higher title than monarch of the world: several great emperors styled themselves Christ's vassals. He so calls himself, either in respect of his condition, which was common with him to all true Christians; or else in respect of his office. Of old, they who were in great offices were called *the servants of God*: see Jos 1:1 Ne 1:6 Ps 132:10. Or else in respect of his singular and miraculous conversion: by reason of which, he thought himself so obliged to Christ, that he wholly addicted or devoted himself to his service.

*Called to be an apostle*; appointed to that high office by the immediate call of Christ himself: see Ga 1:1 Tit 1:3. The history of this call you have in Ac 9:15.

Two things are couched in this phrase:

1. That he did not take this honour to himself, but was thereunto appointed and called of God.
2. That this apostolical dignity was not by any desert of his, but by grace only, and the free gift of him that calleth.

It was formerly matter of admiration, and so it became a proverb in Israel: *Is Saul also among the prophets?* And we may say, with great astonishment, *Is Saul also among the apostles?* He that a little before had seen him doing what he is recorded to have done, Ac 26:10,11, would never have dreamed of any such thing.

*Separated*; either from his mother's womb, in the purpose of God, Ga 1:15; so Jeremiah of old, Jer 1:5. Or else it may have respect to Ac 13:2, where the Holy Ghost did actually order he should be separated for the

work to which he had called him. The Greek word, in both places, is the same. Or else it may respect the more immediate commission he had from Christ himself, Ac 9:15 26:16-18. Some think he alludes to the name of Pharisee, which is from separating: when he was a Pharisee, he was separated to the law of God; and now, being a Christian, he was separated to the gospel of God.

*Unto the gospel of God;* that is, to the preaching and publishing of it. The gospel is sometimes called *the gospel of God*, as in this place; and sometimes *the gospel of Christ*, as in Ro 1:16; it is said to be the gospel of God, because he is the author of it, it is not a human invention; and it is said to be the gospel of Christ, because he is the matter and subject of it.

### Romans 1:2

Ver. 2. *Which he had promised;* the meaning is not, that the history of the gospel was promised by the prophets, but that Jesus Christ, with all his benefits, (which is the direct subject of the gospel history and revelation), was promised or foreshown by them.

*Afore;* this word is added to prevent the imputation of novelty: q.d. Let none object and say, the gospel is a new and modern doctrine; for it was promised or foretold of old, by all the *prophets which have been since the world began*, Lu 1:70.

*By his prophets:* by *prophets* we may understand, not only those that were commonly dignified with that title, but all those also whom God condescended to converse with in a familiar manner, revealing his secrets to them: that such are called prophets, see Ge 20:7 Ps 105:15.

*In the holy Scriptures;* to wit, of the Old Testament; he hath respect to the oracles and promises therein contained, concerning Christ and his kingdom; chiefly to Ge 3:15 49:8,10 De 18:18 Ps 16:10 Ps 22:1-31 40:1-17 110:1 Isa 7:14 9:6 53:1-12; 63:1-3 Da 9:24-26 Mic 5:2 Zec 9:9 Mal 3:1, &c. He hereby intimates, that there is a great harmony and consent betwixt the prophets and apostles, the doctrine of the Old Testament and the New; see Lu 24:44 Joh 12:16 Ac 10:43. Our modern translators include this verse in a parenthesis; the ancients did not.

### Romans 1:3

Ver. 3. Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord: this phrase either respects the Holy Scriptures, mentioned immediately before in Ro 1:2; the sum and substance of them is, concerning the Messiah, the Son of God: or else it respects the gospel, that was spoken of in the Ro 1:1,2 being only a parenthesis, as was before hinted; then the meaning is, that the apostle Paul was separated to the gospel of God, which only or mainly concerns his Son Jesus Christ. And this seems to show the excellency of the gospel, that it doth not treat of vulgar and ordinary matters. as of the gods of the Gentiles, or the actions of Alexander, Caesar, the Scipios, or such like heroes; but of the Son of God himself.

*Which was made;* i.e. as he afterwards expresseth it, according to the flesh, or his human nature: in regard of his Divine subsistence, he was begotten and not made; in regard of his manhood, he was made and not begotten. When he says the Son of God *was made*, &c., it is undeniably implied, that he did exist before his incarnation, and was the Son of God before he was the Son of man. This place proves clearly these two truths:

1. That in the person of Jesus Christ there are two natures.
2. That there is between these a communication of properties; here the Son of God is said to be made of the seed of David; and elsewhere the Son of man is said to have come down from heaven: see Joh 3:13: cf. Joh 6:62 Ac 20:28 1Co 2:8.

*Of the seed of David;* i.e. of the virgin Mary, who was of David's lineage and posterity; the promise was expressly, that the Messiah should be *of the fruit of his loins*, Ac 2:30, compared saith Isa 11:1 Jer 23:5 Eze 34:24. Yea, this promise was so fully known to the Jews, that when they spake of the Messiah, they called him *the Son of David*: see Mt 21:9 22:42 Mr 10:47,48 Joh 7:42. Hence it is that the evangelists, Matthew and Luke, are so careful and industrious to prove, that the virgin Mary, and Joseph to whom she was espoused, did come of David's line and race.



## Romans 1:4

Ver. 4. Not made the Son of God, as he was said before to be *made of the seed of David*; but *declared*, or demonstrated, *to be the Son of God*.

*With power*: this refers either to the word declared, and then the meaning is, he was powerfully or miraculously declared to be the Son of God; the Greek word ordinarily signifies a miracle in the New Testament: or else it refers to the last words, *the Son of God*; and then the sense is, he was declared to be the powerful and omnipotent Son of God, of the same power and majesty with the Father.

*By the spirit of holiness*, some would understand the Third Person in the blessed Trinity, which is often called the Holy Spirit, and here the Spirit of holiness; but others, and they more rightly, do understand the Deity and Divine nature of Christ; this is called *the Spirit*, 1Ti 3:16 1Pe 3:18; and *the eternal Spirit*, Heb 9:14 and here it is called *the Spirit of holiness*, or the most Holy Spirit, and that, probably, because of its effects; for thereby he sanctified his natural body, and still sanctifies his mystical body, the church. That this is the meaning is evident, by the opposition between the flesh and the Spirit: *as according to the flesh*, in the former verse, did signify his human nature; so *according to the Spirit*, in this verse, doth signify his Divine nature. See the like antithesis in 1Ti 3:16 1Pe 3:18.

*By the resurrection from the dead*: because it is said, the resurrection of the dead, not *from* the dead, some would understand the words of Lazarus, and others, who by the power of Christ were raised from the dead; and others would understand the words of those who were raised with Christ, when he himself arose: see Mt 27:52,53. But in Scripture *the resurrection of the dead*, is put for the resurrection from the dead; see 1Co 15:42 Heb 6:2; and hereby is meant the resurrection of Christ himself: he rose again from the dead, and thereby declared or manifested himself to be the Son of God with power: see Joh 2:19,21 5:26 10:18 1Co 15:4. And though it be said in Scripture, that the Father raised him from the dead, Ac 2:24 13:30,33; yet that doth not hinder but by his own power he raised himself; seeing the Father and he were one, and the works of the Three Persons in one and the same Essence are undivided.

## Romans 1:5

Ver. 5. *By whom;* or of whom; by whom, as Mediator, or of whom, as Author and Giver.

*Grace and apostleship:* some make these two distinct gifts; the one common, which is grace; the other special, which is apostleship: others think, that, by an hendiadis, he means the grace of apostleship; which he so calls, because it was conferred upon him, not for any desert of his, but by the mere favour and free grace of God. It is his manner to call his apostleship by the name or style of *grace*: see Ro 15:15 Ga 2:9 Eph 3:2,8.

*For obedience to the faith;* you have the same phrase, Ro 16:26, and there it is rendered *for the obedience of faith*. By *faith* here some understand the gospel or doctrine of faith; it hath this sense, Ac 6:7 Jude 1:3, &c.; and then the meaning is, God, of his mere grace, hath given me this office, that I might bring the nations to believe, and work in them obedience to the doctrine of the gospel. Others understand the grace of faith; and then the meaning is, I have received this office, that I might bring the nations to believe, and so to obey the gospel. Therefore obedience is joined with faith, because by faith we obey the commands of God; and faith itself consists in obedience, and is the great command of the gospel.

*Among all nations;* according to the general commission, Mt 28:19, and a more special commission to this apostle; see Ac 9:15 Ga 2:7,8 1Ti 2:7 2Ti 1:11.

*For his name;* that the nations might believe in his name; so some: others suppose these words are added to declare the end of Paul's preaching and apostleship, which was to set forth the glory and praise of Christ: see 2Th 1:12.

## Romans 1:6

Ver. 6. *Among whom are ye also;* the Romans are in this number, and a part of the nations to whom I have a commission, and for whom I have received the grace of apostleship. He adds this, to show his warrant for writing to them, he did it by virtue of his office; as also to humble them;

for though they were Romans, and such as bore the greatest sway in the world, yet they were formerly pagans and idolaters.

*The called of Jesus Christ:* though such were some of you, to wit, heathen idolaters; yet now you are Christians, and *the called of Jesus Christ:* called outwardly by his word, and inwardly by his Spirit. By effectual calling you are become his disciples and followers.

### Romans 1:7

Ver. 7. *To all that be in Rome;* he doth not direct this Epistle to all that there inhabited, as to the emperor and senate, &c.; but to the church, and all the Christians there, as appears by the two following phrases. He wrote not to those only which were Romans by nation, but to all the faithful, whether Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, for they were all one and alike in Christ. They are deceived that think this Epistle, because directed to the Romans, was written in Latin. The Greek tongue was well understood in that city. Juvenal calls Rome a Greek city, because the inhabitants, as well natives as strangers, did some of them use, and most of them understand, that language.

*Called to be saints,* or, called saints; though there might be hypocrites amongst them, yet they were denominated from the better part. The Jews of old were only accounted a holy nation or people; and the Gentiles, common or unclean; but now that difference is taken away, faith in Jesus Christ, and effectual calling, makes the Gentiles holy as well as the Jews. The name *saint* doth not denote a perfection in holiness, but one that is devoted and consecrated to God, who is holy in heart and life, though he hath many imperfections.

*Grace to you, and peace:* under these two words, *grace* and *peace*, are comprehended all spiritual and temporal blessings. It is a usual salutation or benediction in the Epistles of this apostle: see 1Co 1:3 2Co 1:2 Gal 1:3 Eph 1:2 Php 1:2 Col 1:2 2Th 1:2 1Ti 1:2 Tit 1:4 Phm 1:3. See the like in the Epistles of Peter, 1Pe 1:2 2Pe 1:2. See also 2Jo 1:3 Re 1:4.

*From God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ:* why is there no mention made here of the Holy Ghost?

*Answer.* Because he is implied in his gifts: grace and peace are the fruits and gifts of the Holy Spirit. In other salutations the Holy Ghost is expressed; see 2Co 13:14; and here, when the Father and Son are named, he is plainly implied.

### Romans 1:8

Ver. 8. *First*, here, is not a word of order, for there follows no secondly, &c.; but it serves to show, that here the Epistle begins, for all before was but a preface or inscription: q.d. In the first place. See the like, 1Ti 2:1.

*Throughout the whole world*, that is, through many parts of it; it is a figurative speech: see the like, Joh 12:19. Or else, by *the whole world* may be understood the Roman empire, which ruled at that time over a great part of the known world. See the like, Lu 2:1. Besides, there was a resort to Rome from all parts of the world, and so this report might be diffused far and near. The faith of the gospel at Rome made it more famous than all its victories and triumphs. Oh, how is Rome degenerated! We may take up the complaint concerning her which we find, Isa 1:11,12. The Romanists urge this place to prove Rome the mother church; but without reason: the church of Thessalonica had as high a eulogy: see 1Th 1:8.

### Romans 1:9

Ver. 9. *God is my witness*; in these words there is the force, if not the form, of an oath. See the like, 2Co 1:18 11:31 Ga 1:20. His great love and care of them was a hidden thing, and known only to God; to him therefore he appeals for the truth thereof. Oaths, in certain cases, are allowable under the New Testament, as well as the Old.

*With my spirit*, i.e. sincerely, or with my whole heart: see Eph 6:6 2Ti 1:3.

*Without ceasing*, i.e. as often as he prayed. This was a great indication of his hearty affection to them.

### Romans 1:10

Ver. 10. *Making request;* this was one thing he requested of God, that what he had long desired and designed might happily (if it seemed good in God's sight) be at last accomplished, that he might come in person to them. This desire of Paul to see the Romans might be one cause of that appeal which he made to Rome, Ac 25:10,11,

*By the will of God;* he adds this, because, in publishing the gospel, he followed the order which God, by his Spirit, prescribed him: see Ac 16:7,9,10.

### Romans 1:11

Ver. 11. He declares his end in desiring to see them; it was not his own profit, but their edification.

*By some spiritual gift,* he means some one or other of those gifts of the Spirit, of which particular mention is made, 1Co 12:7-11.

*To the end ye may be established:* q.d. I do not intend to bring any new doctrine to you, but to confirm and establish you in that which you have already heard and received. Establishing grace is that which all Christians stand in need of. See Ro 16:25 1Th 3:8,13 2Th 2:15-17.

### Romans 1:12

Ver. 12. This is added to qualify what he had said before, lest he should seem to arrogate too much to himself; he tells them, he hoped not only to comfort them, but to be comforted by them. The meanest of Christ's members may contribute somewhat to the edifying even of an apostle. The apostle John did hope to be quickened and comforted by the graces of a woman and her children, 2Jo 1:12. Great is the benefit of the communion of saints.

*By the mutual faith both of you and me;* i.e. by the faith which you and I have in Jesus Christ; which he elsewhere calls *the common faith*, and *the*

*faith of God's elect.* All true comfort springs from faith.

### Romans 1:13

Ver. 13. He prevents a cavil; they might say, If Paul hath such a longing desire to see us, why doth he not come to us? To this he answers, it was not for want of will or affection; for he often intended and attempted it.

*But was let hitherto;* either by Satan, as 1Th 2:18; or by the Holy Spirit otherwise disposing of him, as Ac 16:6,7 Ro 15:22. It is possible that he might be hindered also by his own infirmities, or by others' necessities and entreaties, Ac 10:48 16:15 28:14.

*That I might have some fruit,* i.e. of my ministry and calling, as the apostle of the uncircumcision. He hoped the gospel he should preach among them would have good success, and bring forth fruit in them, as it had done in other churches of the Gentiles. See Col 1:6.

### Romans 1:14

Ver. 14. *I am debtor;* as being obliged by virtue of my calling, and as being intrusted by God with talents to that purpose. You are not beholden to me for this desire, as if it were an arbitrary favour, for it is my bounden duty.

*Both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians;* i.e. to all nations, which he divides into these two sorts, *Greeks* and *Barbarians*. The Jews he mentions not, because he was the doctor of the Gentiles.

*Both to the wise, and to the unwise;* by these he understands particular persons among the Greeks and Barbarians, for there were among either of them some wise, and some unwise. The gospel is adapted to all sorts of persons, whether wise or simple.

### Romans 1:15

Ver. 15. q.d. I have preached it at Antioch, at Athens, at Ephesus, at Corinth, &c.; and I: am ready (if God permit) to preach it in the most splendid city of Rome likewise. So the reason is not in myself, or in my own will, why I have not come to you all this while.

### Romans 1:16

Ver. 16. Though Rome be the head of the empire, and the Romans bear the name of wise and learned persons; and though the gospel hath the show of simplicity, and is foolishness to the wise men of this world; yet *I am not ashamed* to own and publish this *gospel of Christ*. I do not shrink back, and withdraw myself, as men do from these things whereof they are ashamed. Neither indeed need I, because, how mean soever it seems to be to carnal eyes, yet *it is the power of God unto salvation*, &c.; not the essential power of God, but the organical power. See the like, 1Co 1:18. The meaning is, it is a powerful means ordained of God for this purpose. Touching the efficacy and excellent power of the gospel for the conversion and salvation of the souls of men, see Isa 53:1 1Co 4:15 2Co 4:7 2Co 10:4,5 Heb 4:12 Jas 1:21.

*To every one that believed;* the gospel is offered unto all, but it profiteth unto salvation only those that believe; as a medicine is only effectual to those who receive or apply it.

*To the Jew first, and also to the Greek;* the gospel was first to be published to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles, whom he here calls Greeks: see Lu 24:47 Ac 1:8. This order the apostles accordingly kept and observed, Ac 13:46.

### Romans 1:17

Ver. 17. It will give light to this whole Epistle, to explain what is here meant by *the righteousness of God*. Some do thereby understand the whole doctrine of salvation and eternal life, which is revealed in the gospel; and they make it the same with *the faith of God*, Ro 3:3, and with *the truth of God*, Ro 3:7. Others, by *the righteousness of God*, do understand that righteousness whereby a man is justified, or stands just and righteous in

the sight of God: and it is called *the righteousness of God*, to distinguish it from our own righteousness, Ro 10:3, and because it is appointed, approved, and accepted by him, it being such as he himself can find no fault with. Further, it is called *the righteousness of God*, because it was performed by him, who is God as well as man, and imputed unto us: hence he is said to be *made righteousness* unto us, and we are said to be *made the righteousness of God in him*; we having his righteousness, as he had our sins, viz. by imputation. This is often called *the righteousness of faith*, because by faith it is apprehended and applied. And again, it is called *the law of righteousness*, Ro 9:31, in opposition to that law of righteousness whereby the unbelieving Jews sought to be justified.

*Revealed*; the law of God discovers no such way of justifying a sinner, nor is it taught by reason or philosophy: the gospel only makes a revelation of it; which occasioned the apostle's glorying in it.

*From faith to faith*: this apostle seems to delight in such repetitions, and there is an elegancy in them: see Ro 6:19 2Co 2:16 2Co 3:18. The words are variously interpreted: from the faith of the Old Testament to the faith of the New; so that no person ever was or shall be justified in any other way. Or, from a lesser faith to a greater; not noting two faiths, but one and the same faith increasing to perfection. He saith not, from faith to works, or from works to faith; but *from faith to faith*, i.e. only by faith. The words *to be* must be understood: q.d. The gospel reveals the righteousness of God *to be* from faith to faith. The beginning, the continuance, the accomplishment of our justification is wholly absolved by faith.

*The just shall live by faith*: some refer these words, *by faith*, to the subject of this proposition, *the just*; and thus they render it: *The just by faith shall live*; and so read, the foregoing proposition is the better proved thereby. There is some difficulty to understand the fitness of this testimony to prove the conclusion in hand; for it is evident, that the prophet Habakkuk, in whom these words are found, doth speak of a temporal preservation; and what is that to eternal life?

*Answer*. The Babylonian captivity figured out our spiritual bondage under sin and Satan; and deliverance from that calamity did shadow forth our deliverance from hell, to be procured by Christ: compare Isa 40:2-4, with Mt 3:3. Again, general sentences applied to particular cases, are not



thereby restrained to those particulars, but still retain the generality of their nature: see Mt 19:6. Again, one and the same faith apprehends and gives us interest in all the promises of God; and as by it we live in temporal dangers, so by it we are freed from eternal destruction.

### Romans 1:18

Ver. 18. He proceeds to prove the principal proposition laid down in the foregoing verse; the causal particle *for* implies as much. Men must be justified by the righteousness of God, because they have no righteousness of their own to justify them, they themselves are all unrighteous. This he proves both of the Gentiles and Jews. He begins with the Gentiles, and proves it upon them, from this verse to Ro 2:17; and then he proves it upon the Jews also, from thence to the end of the 3rd chapter (Ro 2:18-3:31).

*The wrath of God is revealed;* it is revealed in the word of God, or rather, by the judgments which he inflicteth. *From heaven;* i.e. from God in heaven. Plagues and judgments spring not out of the dust, proceed not originally from second causes, much less do they come by chance.

*Against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men:* the abstract is put for the concrete; he means unrighteous and ungodly men; but he chooseth this way of speaking, because God, when he punisheth, aims at the sins of men; and would not punish their persons, but for their sins. By *ungodliness*, understand sins against the first table, which are mentioned Ro 1:21,23; by *unrighteousness*, sins against the second, of which there is mention at large, from Ro 1:26 to the end of the chapter.

*Who hold the truth in unrighteousness:* by *truth*, understand all that light which is left in man since the fall. There are in all men some common notions of God, his nature and will; some common principles also of equity and charity towards men, which nature itself teacheth, and upon which the consciences of the Gentiles did accuse or excuse them. These natural notions concerning God and their neighbour they did not obey and follow, but wickedly suppressed them. They imprisoned the truth which they acknowledged, that they might sin the more securely. The metaphor is taken from tyrants, who oppress the innocent, and imprison them: so the Gentiles did by the truth which they had by nature, they kept it in and

under.

### Romans 1:19

Ver. 19. *That which may be known of God;* or, that which is knowable of God, viz. by the light of nature. The apostle, by a prolepsis, prevents an objection which some might make in excuse of the Gentiles: how could they suffocate or suppress the truth, seeing they wanted the Scripture, and were without the knowledge of it? To this he answers, that they were not wholly without knowledge, for that which might be known of God was manifest in them, and revealed to them.

*Is manifest in them,* i.e. in their heart and minds; see Ro 2:15: or, to and among them; as appears by many of their learned writers, who have left behind them many clear discourses, and wise essays and sayings, about this matter, though they themselves did act contrary thereunto.

*For God hath showed it unto them;* i.e. as before, by the light of nature in their consciences, or by the consideration of the creatures, as it follows in the next verse.

### Romans 1:20

Ver. 20. Because it might be further objected in behalf of the Gentiles, that the notions of God imprinted in their nature are so weak, that they may be well excused; therefore the apostle adds, that the certainty of them is further confirmed by the book of the creatures, which was written before them in capital letters, so that he that runs may read.

*The invisible things of him:* the apostle tells us afterwards himself what he means by the invisible things of God, viz. his being and his attributes, particularly his eternity and almighty power; to which we might add, his wisdom, goodness, &c. These, though invisible in themselves, yet are discernible by his works, and that ever since the creation of the world. By what they see created, they may easily collect or understand, that there is an eternal and almighty Creator; they may argue from the effects to the cause.

*So that they are without excuse:* some render it, that they may be without excuse; but it is better rendered in our translation: the meaning is not, that God gave them that knowledge for this end and purpose, that they might be inexcusable, for they might catch even at that for an excuse; but the plain sense is this, that God hath given all men such means of knowledge as sufficeth to leave them without excuse, there can be no pretence of ignorance.

### Romans 1:21

Ver. 21. *Because;* either this must be referred to the words immediately foregoing, and then it is a reason why the Gentiles are inexcusable, *because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, &c.;* or else it refers to Ro 1:18, and then it is a proof of their withholding the truth in unrighteousness, *because, &c.*

*They knew God;* they had a natural knowledge of God, it was taught them, as before, by the light of nature, and by the book of the creatures. Though this was not sufficient to save them, yet it was sufficient to save them without excuse.

*They glorified him not as God;* they did not conceive of him and worship him as became his Divine excellencies and perfections; see Ps 29:2.

*Neither were thankful;* they did not own God to be the Author and Giver of all the good things they enjoyed, and return him thanks accordingly; but referred all to chance and fortune, their own prudence and providence, the influence of the stars, &c.

*But became vain in their imaginations,* or reasonings. This hath chief respect to the conception and opinions that the heathen framed to themselves of the Divine Being. For though some denied there was a God, and others doubted thereof, yet generally it was acknowledged by them; yea, some owned a multiplicity of gods, and those either corporeal or incorporeal. Others acknowledged but one God, as Plato, Aristotle, &c.; but then they either denied his providence, as the Peripatetics, or tied him to second or inferior causes, as the Stoics. This is the vanity which the

apostle here speaketh of. Note also, that idols, the frame of idle brains, are called *vanities*: see De 32:21 Jer 10:15 Ac 14:15.

*And their foolish heart was darkened:* by the heart is meant the mind, their very understandings were darkened, the natural reason in them was obscured. This was a just judgment upon them for their abuse of knowledge, and pride, of which in the next verse (see Ro 1:22).

### Romans 1:22

Ver. 22. Some think, that all along this context the apostle hath reference to the Gnostics, a sort of heretics in the first age, (of which see Dr. Hammond *in locum*), and that the meaning of the words is this, That they, assuming the title of Gnostics, of knowing men, and of men wiser than others, have proved more sottish than any. Others think the words refer to the heathen philosophers, who though they were learned and wise in secular and natural things, yet they became fools in spiritual and heavenly matters; though they well understood the creature, yet they erred concerning the Creator. And as fools delight in toys, neglecting things of great value; so they set up puppets and idols of their own devising, in the room of the true God; which the apostle gives us in the next verse, as a demonstration of their folly. Socrates, who was accounted one of the wisest amongst them, desired his friends, when he was about to die, to offer for him a cock to Aesculapius, which he had vowed.

### Romans 1:23

Ver. 23. *Changed the glory of the uncorruptible God;* you have the same phrase, Ps 106:20 Jer 2:11; and from thence it is borrowed.

*Into an image made like to corruptible man, &c.:* the apostle proceedeth from the more worthy to the less worthy creatures, that the grossness of their idolatry might the better appear; and these four are put for all other kinds. This gross idolatry of the heathen in worshipping such images as are here spoken of, was practised by the Israelites; see Eze 8:10,11: and so it is by the Romanists to this day; nor doth it avail them to say, they do not worship images, but the true God in or before those images; for the same

plea was made by the idolaters of old. Symmachus, in a learned oration, wherein he craved of the emperors Valentinian and Theodosius the restitution of the Roman gods, affirms, that they had respect only to one God; but they had divers ways to bring them to that God: they did not hold such things as they worshipped to be God, but in them they said they worshipped the true God. That worship which is intended to God by an image, is not the worship of God, but of the image. Compare Ps 106:19,20, with Ex 32:4,5.

### Romans 1:24

Ver. 24. *Wherefore;* their impiety was the cause of what followed: this is repeated again, that it may be the better observed. The contempt of God and of religion is the cause of all wickedness.

*God also gave them up;* this phrase is thrice used in this context, viz. Ro 1:24,26,28: it seems to be taken out of Ps 81:12. Some think his giving them up, is only' his withdrawing his grace from them, and permitting them to sin; but there seems to be more in it than a bare subtraction or permission. He did not only leave them to themselves, but, in a judicial way, he put them, into the hands of Satan, and of their own lusts; as it is said, Ps 69:27, he added iniquity to their iniquity, making the latter iniquity a punishment of the former.

*Between themselves;* some read it, in themselves, and some read it, one among another; so the same word is rendered, Eph 4:32 Col 3:13. The apostle here speaks more generally of all kinds of pollution and uncleanness that was committed by them, whether natural or unnatural.

### Romans 1:25

Ver. 25. *Who changed the truth of God into a lie;* i.e. the God of truth, or the true God, into an idol, which is a lie, which seems to be that which it is not: or else, by *the truth of God*, understand those true sentiments and notions that they had of God, and were taught them, as before, by the light of nature, and the book of the creatures; these they changed into lying imaginations and conceits.

*And worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator;* or, besides the Creator: some understand it comparatively, they worshipped one more than the other; others exclusively, they worshipped one and not the other. They were guilty of two great errors; one was in their minds, they changed the truth of God into a lie; the other in their wills, they served the creature more than the Creator.

*Who is blessed for ever. Amen:* when the Hebrews of old made mention of the true God, they were wont to add these words: Let him be blessed for ever.

### Romans 1:26

Ver. 26. *For this cause;* i.e. for their idolatry and uncleanness both, for now their idolatry is aggravated by the uncleanness accompanying it.

*Vile affections;* Gr. affections of dishonour, i.e. the most dishonourable and shameful affections; for as we are exhorted, 1Th 4:4,5, to possess our vessels in honour, that is, to withhold our body from uncleanness; so they that give up themselves to uncleanness, dishonour themselves and their own bodies; see 1Co 6:18: if they, as this scripture tells us, that commit fornication dishonour their own bodies; then much more do they that practise the unnatural uncleanness hereafter mentioned.

*For even their women, &c.;* i.e. γυναικες ανδριζονται, so Clem. Alexandr. *Ad praeposteros et sodomiticos concubitus sese maribus prostituerunt.* See Paraeus: a filthy practice not to be named, Eph 5:3.

### Romans 1:27

Ver. 27. This was the sin of the Sodomites of old, for which they were destroyed, Ge 19:5: see Le 18:22. How meet was it that they who had forsaken the Author of nature, should be given up not to keep the order of nature; that they who had changed the glory of God into the similitude of beasts, should be left to do those things which beasts themselves abhorred! God only concurred as a just judge in punishing foregoing with following

sins: see Ro 1:25.

### Romans 1:28

Ver. 28. *To retain God in their knowledge;* or, to have God in acknowledgment. The apostle proceeds to show the analogy betwixt their sin and their punishment. The evil he here taxed them with is much the same with that in Ro 1:21; though they had some knowledge of God, yet they did not acknowledge him as God, by glorifying him, and giving thanks to him; it did not seem good to them so to do.

*God gave them over to a reprobate mind;* or, an injudicious mind, a mind void of judgment. It is just and equal, that he, who in his judgment disapproves of God, should be left either to be of a corrupt judgment, or of none at all. The word may be taken passively, for a mind disapproved of God; or actively, for a mind which disapproves of all good. They were not given up to this reprobate mind all at once, but by degrees. First, they were given up to *their own hearts' lusts*, Ro 1:24; then, to *vile affections*, Ro 1:26; and then, lastly, to a mind void of judgment; to such an evil habit, that they could do nothing but evil.

### Romans 1:29

Ver. 29. Now follow the sins against the second table, which reigned amongst the Gentiles; amongst which *unrighteousness* is as the fountain, from whence the rest as streams do flow. This is the genus that comprehends all the evils hereafter enumerated. It is not to be supposed that all the following vices were found in every individual person; but the meaning is, that all were guilty of some, and some were guilty of all of them.

*Fornication, wickedness;* in the Greek there is all elegant paronomasia, πορνεία, πονηρία. So there are two more in the following verses, φθονου, φονου, ασυνητοι, ασυνηθετοι. The design of the apostle is, to set down a particular vice; therefore, instead of *wickedness*, some read troublesomeness, or a desire to procure trouble and molestation to another. The devil is called ο πονηρος, the troublesome one.

*Maliciousness;* or, mischievousness, the better to distinguish it from envy.

*Malignity;* or, morosity and churlishness, taking all things in the worser part.

*Whisperers:* whisperers speak evil privily of others; backbiters, openly.

### Romans 1:30

Ver. 30. *Haters of God;* the original word hath a passive termination, and therefore some read it, hated of God. But words passive are sometimes actively taken: see 2Pe 1:3. And the apostle here intendeth a catalogue of the Gentiles' sins, whereof this was one: see Ps 81:15.

*Despiteful;* or, injurious.

*Inventors of evil things;* they were not contented with old usual evils, but they invented new; whether we refer this to evils of pain, or evils of sin, we may find examples thereof amongst the heathen. Phalaris propounded a reward to him that could devise a new torment; and Sardanapalus offered rewards to such as could find out new venereal pleasures.

*Disobedient to parents,* either natural or political.

### Romans 1:31

Ver. 31. *Without understanding;* or, without conscience;  $\sigma\upsilon\nu\epsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$ , or  $\sigma\upsilon\nu\epsilon\iota\delta\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$ , being much the same.

*Without natural affection;* this evil also reigned amongst the Gentiles, who sacrificed their very children to their idols, and otherwise exposed them to ruin: see 2Ti 3:3.

*Implacable;* or, irreconcilable and vindictive.



## Romans 1:32

Ver. 32. *Knowing the judgment of God;* i.e. his just law and statute, or his justice in punishing sin and sinners. This the Gentiles knew by the light of nature, and by the examples of God's justice in the world.

*That they which commit such things are worthy of death;* the barbarians of Melita judged murder worthy of death, Ac 28:4: see Ac 23:29 26:31. The heathen also had some knowledge of future and everlasting punishment, as appears by their writings: and were persuaded that the sins be dementioned, and such like, did really deserve it.

*Have pleasure in them that do them;* or, patronize and applaud such; see Ps 10:3. This is set last, as worst of all; it is the highest degree of wickedness: such come nearest the devil, who take pleasure in evil because it is evil.

## Romans 2:1

### Chapter Summary

Ro 2:1-5 They that condemn sin in others, and are guilty of the like themselves, cannot escape God's judgment,

Ro 2:6-13 which will be according to every man's deserts, without distinction of Jew or Gentile.

Ro 2:14-16 The Gentiles are not left without a rule of conduct.

Ro 2:17-24 The Jew, who boasteth of greater light, is doubly criminal in sinning against it,

Ro 2:25-29 nor will circumcision profit him, except he keep the law.

Ver. 1. It is much disputed to whom the apostle directs his discourse in the beginning of this chapter. Some think that having discovered the sins of the Gentiles in the former chapter, he here useth a transition, and turneth himself to the Jews, and lays open their more secret wickedness and hypocrisy. But the particle therefore in the front of the chapter, doth seem to intimate, that this is inferred from what went before, and is a

continuance of the same argument. It is of the Gentiles then that he is still discoursing, and he begins by name to deal with the Jews, Ro 2:17. Some think he speaks more particularly of such as were judges and magistrates amongst the Gentiles, who, though they made laws for to judge and punish others for such and such crimes, did yet commit the same themselves. Some think he intends more especially such as were philosophers, and men renowned for virtue, as Socrates, Aristides, Fabricius, Cato, Seneca, &c., which last, as is said, was well known to the apostle. These, in their speeches and writings, did censure the evil manners of others, and yet were as bad themselves. As Cato is said to have used extortion, prostituted his wife, and to have laid violent hands upon himself; and yet he was affirmed by Velleius to be *homo virtuti simillimus*, a most virtuous man. But the received opinion is, that the apostle in general doth tax all such as censure and find fault with others, and yet are guilty of the same things themselves.

*Thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest:* q.d. Thou art without all excuse, that dost assent and subscribe to the righteous judgment of God, that they who do such things as are mentioned in the foregoing chapter, are worthy of death, and yet doest the same thyself; if not openly, yet secretly and inwardly thou art guilty of the same or as great sins. Thou canst make no apology or pretence, why the sentence of death and condemnation, which is due to others, should not likewise pass upon thee.

*For wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself;* i.e. in that very thing, or by that very law, whereby thou censurest and condemnest others, thou pronouncest sentence against thyself; thy own mouth condemns thee in the person of another: see Mt 7:3 21:40,41,45 Joh 8:4,9.

### Romans 2:2

Ver. 2. We know assuredly, and it is evident, both from Scripture and reason, that God's judgment, both here and hereafter, is true and upright; see 1Sa 16:7. He judgeth righteous judgment; he judgeth of persons and things, not as they are in appearance, but as they are in reality.

*Against them which commit such things;* this indefinite manner of speaking includeth both those that judge others, and those who, for the

aforementioned sins, are subject to the censures of others.

### Romans 2:3

Ver. 3. When other men's facts escape not thy censure, who art but a man; what folly and madness is it to imagine, that thine own evil deeds should escape the judgment of God! See 1Jo 3:20.

### Romans 2:4

Ver. 4. Here he taxeth such as thought God approved of their persons and courses, at least that he would not regard or punish their evil actions, because he had hitherto forborne them, and heaped up abundance of worldly blessings upon them, as he did upon the Romans especially, above other people. It is common for men to grow secure, and promise themselves impunity, when God forbears them, and gives them outward prosperity: see Ps 50:21 55:19 Ec 8:11 Ho 12:8.

*Despisest thou?* the word signifies, to think amiss; he despiseth the goodness of God, who thinks otherwise of it than he should, that it is extended to him for other ends than it is: or, to despise the goodness of God, is, to turn it into wantonness.

*The riches of his goodness;* i.e. The abundance of his goodness: see Ro 9:23 Eph 1:7,18 2:4,7 3:8.

*Forbearance and long-suffering;* God's long-suffering is a further degree of his forbearance: the Scripture speaks much of this attribute of God, and of his abounding therein, Ex 34:6 Nu 14:11,18 Ps 86:15 Mt 23:37 Ro 9:22 1Ti 1:16 1Pe 3:20.

*The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance;* that is one great end of God's goodness and forbearance; see Ho 11:4 2Pe 3:9. God's goodness is abused when it is not used and improved to this end.

### Romans 2:5

Ver. 5. *Treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath;* this passage seems to respect De 32:34,35, or Job 36:13. You have a parallel place, Jas 5:3. The meaning is, Thou provokest more and more the wrath of God against thee; by heaping up sins, thou heapest up judgments of God upon thyself: just as men add to their treasure of wealth, so dost thou add to thy treasure of punishment.

*Revelation of the righteous judgment of God;* this is a periphrasis of the day of judgment, or of the last day: then will God visit for those sins that here escape punishment; then the justice and equity of his proceedings shall appear, and all shall have reason to approve thereof.

### Romans 2:6

Ver. 6. This proves what he had said, that the judgment of God, in that day, will be according to righteousness, or most righteous judgment. Parallel places you will find, Ps 62:12 Mt 16:27 2Co 5:10 Re 22:12. The papists from hence infer the merit of works; but the reward to the godly is a reward of grace, and not of debt. The word *αποδοῦναι* imports not only a just retribution, but a free gift, as in Mt 20:8, and elsewhere. Good works are the rule of his proceeding, not the cause of his retribution: see Lu 17:10.

### Romans 2:7

Ver. 7. What he had laid down in general, he amplifies more particularly.

*Patient continuance;* or perseverance *in well doing*, which implies patience: see Mt 10:22 24:13 Heb 10:36.

*Immortality;* or incorruption: he adds this to show, that the *glory and honour* he speaks of was not such as the Gentiles usually sought, who made worldly glory the scope of their actions; but it was eternal in the heavens, and such as never fades away.

*Eternal life*; i.e. God will render eternal life to such: the word *render* must be supplied out of the former verse.

### Romans 2:8

Ver. 8. *That are contentious*; or, that are of contention: so, *they of the circumcision*, for such as are circumcised, Ac 10:45 Ga 2:12. By *contentious*, understand such as are refractory and self-willed; that, from a spirit of contradiction, will not be persuaded; that strive and kick against the righteousness of God, from an opinion of their own righteousness, Ho 4:4.

*Do not obey the truth*: see Ro 1:18, and the note there.

*But obey unrighteousness*; that are the servants of sin, and of corruption, Ro 6:12 2Pe 2:19.

*Indignation and wrath*; these two differ only in degree: thereby understand the judgments of God upon the wicked, which are the effects of his anger: the cause is commonly put for the effect.

### Romans 2:9

Ver. 9. *Tribulation and anguish*; the word *render* is here again understood, he shall render tribulation and anguish. Some refer the former to the punishment of sin, the latter to the punishment of loss; or the one to the unquenchable fire, the other to the never dying worm: it seems to be a rhetorical exaggeration: see Ps 11:6 Mr 9:43-48.

*Every soul of man*; a double Hebraism: first, the soul is put for the person, as Ge 12:5 14:21 17:14 36:6 46:26. Secondly, *every soul of man*, is put for the soul of every man; as before, Ro 1:18, *all unrighteousness of men*, is put for the unrighteousness of all men. The soul of man shall not be punished only, but chiefly.

*Of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile*; the Jew is first placed in order of punishment, because he better knew God's will, and had more helps: see

Mt 11:22,24 Lu 12:47.

Romans 2:10

Ver. 10. *Peace*; what he called immortality, Ro 2:7, he now calls *peace*; which word, according to the usual acceptation of it amongst the Hebrews, is comprehensive of all good and happiness, both here and hereafter.

*To the Jew first, and also to the Gentile*; as the ungodly and unbelieving Jews shall have the first place in punishment, so those that believe and are godly amongst them shall have the first place in reward, though yet, for the reason mentioned in the next verse, the godly and believing Gentiles shall share with them therein.

Romans 2:11

Ver. 11. This seems to be borrowed from 2Ch 19:7, and De 10:17. You have the same again, Ac 10:34: see Job 34:19 Ga 2:6 3:28 Eph 6:9 1Pe 1:17. *Obj.* God loved Jacob, and hated Esau, when they were yet unborn, and had done neither good nor evil.

*Answer.* This was not properly a respecting of persons, because God did not this as a judge, but as an elector: so the apostle states it, Ro 9:11-13. God is gracious to whom he will be gracious, and may do what he will with his own.

Romans 2:12

Ver. 12. By the former he means the Gentiles, by the latter, the Jews; the like distribution he makes, 1Co 9:20,21.

*In the law*; i.e. under the law, or against it.

Romans 2:13

Ver. 13. This and the two following verses are included in a parenthesis, and they serve to obviate an objection against what was said, Ro 2:12. The Jews might plead, that they were superior to the Gentiles, and should be exempted or privileged, in judgment, forasmuch as they knew and professed the law of God, which the Gentiles did not. To this he says, that to know and learn the law was not sufficient, unless in all things they yielded obedience to it, which they neither did nor could. The scope of the apostle is not simply to show how sinners are now justified in the sight of God; but to show what is requisite to justification according to the tenor of the law, and that is, to do all that is written therein, and to continue so to do. And if there be any man that can bring such perfect and constant obedience of his own performing, he shall be justified by God; but inasmuch as no man, neither natural nor regenerate, can so fulfil the law, he must seek for justification in some other way. The text, thus expounded, doth no way militate with Ro 3:30, and Ga 3:11, which at first reading it seems to do. And it further shows, that the Jews are comprehended under the general curse, as well as the Gentiles, and are bound to have recourse to the righteousness of God by faith.

#### Romans 2:14

Ver. 14. Here he preoccupates the Gentiles' plea. They might object, that having not the law, they could not transgress, nor be culpable in judgment: see Ro 4:15. To this he says, that though they had not the law written in tables of stone, as the Jews had, yet they had a law written in their hearts, which was a copy or counterpart of the other, and had in a manner the effects of it; for thereby they were instructed to do well, and debarred from doing evil, which are the two properties of all laws.

*Do by nature;* nature is opposed to Scripture and special revelation: by the direction of the law, and light of nature, they did many things which the law of Moses commanded, and forbore many things which it forbade.

*Are a law unto themselves;* i.e. they have in themselves such principles of reason and rules of equity, as are to them instead of a law, prescribing what they ought to do and avoid.

## Romans 2:15

Ver. 15. By *the work of the law*, either understand the sum of the law, which is, To love God above all, and our neighbour as ourselves; or the office of the law, which consists in directing what to do, and what to leave undone; or the external actions which the law prescribes.

*Written in their hearts*; this seems to be a covenant promise and privilege, Jer 31:33; how then is it predicated of the Gentiles?

*Answer.* Jereremiah speaks there of a special and supernatural inscription or writing in the heart by grace; and the apostle here, of that which is common and natural.

*Their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another*; interchangeably, now one way, anon another. Not as though the thoughts did, at the same time, strive together about the same fact; nor is it meant of divers men, as if good men were excused, and bad men accused, by their own thoughts; but in the same persons there were accusing or excusing thoughts and consciences, as their actions were evil or good.

## Romans 2:16

Ver. 16. These words may be referred to Ro 2:12, and so they express the time when Jews and Gentiles shall be judged. Though some annex them to the words immediately preceding: q.d. Now the consciences of men do testify for or against them, and their thoughts accuse or excuse them; but in the day of judgment they will do it more especially. Shall judge the secrets of men; so that the most secret sins shall not escape the notice and censure of the Judge: see Ec 12:14 1Co 4:5. *My gospel*; i.e. the gospel which I preach. So, Joh 12:48, our Saviour calls his word, his disciples word. He calls it his gospel, not as the author, but as the publisher of it; it was not his in respect of revelation, but in regard of dispensation, Ro 16:25 1Co 9:17 2Co 5:18,19 2Ti 2:8. As for the fiction of a Gospel written by Paul, as was by Matthew, Mark, &c., the papists themselves begin to be ashamed of it.



### Romans 2:17

Ver. 17. He now comes to deal more particularly and expressly with the Jews, reciting their privileges, in which they trusted, and of which they boasted; and shows, that notwithstanding them, they stood in as much need of the righteousness of God as the Gentiles did.

*Thou;* he speaks in the singular number, that every one might make the readier application of what he said.

*Art called a Jew;* so called from Judah; as of old, Hebrews from Heber, and Israelites from Israel: the title was honourable in those days, and imported a confessor or worshipper of one God. Thou art so called, but art not so indeed: see Ro 2:28, and Re 2:9.

*Restest in the law;* putttest thy trust in it.

*Makest thy boast of God;* that he is thy God, and in covenant with thee; and that thou hast a peculiar interest in him: see Joh 8:41. The phrase seems to be borrowed from Isa 45:25.

### Romans 2:18

Ver. 18,19. *Art confident;* thou dost proudly arrogate all that follows to thyself, and conceitest that thou hast all the points of the law in thy breast, and full knowledge of all the secrets thereof.

### Romans 2:20

Ver. 20. *Babes;* such as have little or no knowledge. *The form of knowledge;* a scheme or system of notions, a compendious model or method, which is artificially composed; such as tutors and professors of arts and sciences, do read over again and again to their pupils and auditors.

### Romans 2:21

Ver. 21. *Teachest thou not thyself?* q.d. Dost not thou thyself do what thou pressest upon others? see Mt 23:3.

*Dost thou steal?* the Jews were infamous of old for this sin, Ps 50:18 Mt 23:14.

### Romans 2:22

Ver. 22. *Dost thou commit adultery?* to this sin also the Jews were greatly addicted: see Ps 50:18 Jer 5:8.

*Dost thou commit sacrilege?* Here he varies the crime; he does not say: Dost thou commit idolatry, but sacrilege. The Jews, after their return out of captivity, kept themselves free from idolatry; but it seems they were guilty of a sin that was near akin to it. Here it may be questioned, what the sacrilege was that the Jews were guilty of. Some think, their covetousness is here taxed, which is a kind of idolatry. The Jews took those things which were consecrated to idols, and which, by the law of God, should have been destroyed, and turned them to their private advantage. Others think, that their sacrilege consisted in withholding from God that which they should have consecrated and offered up to him; see 1Sa 2:13 Mal 3:8,9: they converted to their own use such things as were dedicated to God. Much to the same purpose is their opinion, that think it consisted in robbing God of his due. By the imperial law in the code, it is declared sacrilege to take from the emperor any thing that is his; it ought to be much more accounted sacrilege to deal so with God. Some think their sacrilege lay in polluting the worship of God, and making his commands of no effect, through their corrupt additions and traditions.

### Romans 2:23

Ver. 23. Dost thou bring a reproach upon religion, and give occasion to the Gentiles to blaspheme his name? So it follows in the next words (see Ro 2:24).

## Romans 2:24

Ver. 24. *Through you;* because of your and your forefathers' sins.

*As it is written:* the apostle doth not tell them where it was written; he supposeth they were not ignorant of it: see Isa 52:5 Eze 36:20,23.

## Romans 2:25

Ver. 25. The Jews might object: If the former privileges availed not to righteousness and salvation, yet circumcision at least might stand them in some stead. In answer whereunto you have,

1. A concession; circumcision indeed is profitable.
2. A limitation; *if thou keep the law;* which is illustrated by a large antithesis, Ro 2:26,27.
3. A distinction; circumcision is of two sorts, outward and literal; inward and spiritual; the latter stands in force, and hath acceptation with God, Ro 2:28,29.

*If thou keep the law;* if thou keep it perfectly, to which circumcision obligeth, Ga 5:3; or if thou use thy utmost care and endeavour so to do.

*But if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision;* i.e. if otherwise thou transgress the law, thy circumcision avails thee nothing, it gives thee no privilege above the uncircumcised. A wicked Jew is to God as an Ethiopian, Am 9:7. The apostle corrects the carnal confidence and hypocrisy of the Jews, who valued themselves upon the account of this outward ceremony, and thought it sufficient to be circumcised in the flesh. Some think the apostle hath respect in these words to the time of the law, whilst circumcision was an ordinary sacrament of the covenant; then indeed it was profitable and available; but now, in the times of the gospel, it is abrogated: see Ga 5:2,6.

### Romans 2:26

Ver. 26. *The uncircumcision;* i.e. the uncircumcised; a figurative and frequent way of speaking: see Ro 3:30 4:9.

*Keep the righteousness of the law;* which none of them ever did; but admit they could, or else, which some of them have done, in sincerity, though with manifold imperfections; such as the two centurions, one of which is mentioned in the Gospel of Luke, the other in the Acts: if in this sense the uncircumcised keep the righteousness of the law, shall they not be all one in the account of God as if they were circumcised? See Ro 4:10.

### Romans 2:27

Ver. 27. *Uncircumcision which is by nature;* a periphrasis of the Gentiles, who want circumcision, or are by nature without it.

*Fulfil the law;* here is another word; before it was *keep*, but now it is *fulfil the law*: though the word be varied, yet the sense is the same: see Jas 2:8.

*Judge thee;* i.e. rise up in judgment against thee; or else, shall he not do it by his example? as in Mt 12:41,42, the men of Nineveh, and the queen of Sheba, shall judge the Israelites. The meaning is, the obedient Gentile shall condemn the disobedient Jew.

*By the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law;* i.e. the outward literal circumcision; or, by the *letter* understand the law; see 2Co 3:6. The sense is, by means of the law and circumcision, and resting in them, as pledges of the love of God, (so Ro 2:17), they are the more secure and bold in sinning against God; it is to them an occasion of transgression.

### Romans 2:28

Ver. 28. *He is not a Jew;* a right or true Jew, who is heir of the promises made to the fathers.

*That is one outwardly;* the word *only* is to be understood: see 1Co 1:17.

*Neither is that circumcision; the right and true circumcision, which God principally requires, and is available unto salvation: that circumcision is not much to be accounted of which is only the cutting off an outward skin.*

### Romans 2:29

Ver. 29. He is a right and true Jew, an Israelite indeed, that hath taken away the foreskin of his heart, Jer 4:4; that is cleansed from all corrupt affections, and hath laid aside all superfluity of naughtiness; that worshippeth God in the Spirit, rejoiceth in Christ Jesus, and hath no confidence in the flesh. Such are the circumcision and Jews indeed: see Php 3:3.

### Romans 3:1

#### Chapter Summary

Ro 3:1,2 The Jew's prerogative,  
Ro 3:3,4 which is not vacated by the unbelief of some,  
Ro 3:5-8 nor is God's justice impeached in punishing their sinfulness.  
Ro 3:9-19 The law itself convinceth the Jews also universally of sin,  
Ro 3:20 so that no flesh is justified by the deeds of the law,  
Ro 3:21-30 but all indiscriminately by God's grace through faith in Christ,  
Ro 3:31 yet without annulling the obligations of the law.

Ver. 1. *What advantage then hath the Jew?* An elegant prolepsis or anticipation of what might be objected against the apostle's assertion in the foregoing words. If the Jews (might some object) lie equally exposed to condemnation with the Gentiles, then they have no excellency above them. Or thus, If external things do not commend us to God, (as it is affirmed,

Ro 2:28,29), but the Gentiles are brought into the church without them, then the Jews have no prerogative above the Gentiles, though God hath owned them so long for his peculiar people.

*What profit is there of circumcision?* i.e. what is the use of it, or for what end was it instituted, seeing the uncircumcised are brought in and accepted, as being circumcised notwithstanding, and clean in heart?

### Romans 3:2

Ver. 2. He answers the before mentioned objection by a liberal and free concession. The answer doth particularly relate to the first member of the objection, though comprehending the other.

*Chiefly;* this word is not to be referred to the order of speech, as Ro 1:8, for he doth not begin any discourse here; nor to the number of privileges and advantages, for he names but one in all; but to the quality, and so the excellency, of this privilege here spoken of; q.d. It is the chief of all.

*Unto them were committed the oracles of God:* profane writers make this word to signify the answer that was given by the demons, or heathen gods; and yet the Holy Ghost doth not disdain to make use of this word, (as well as divers others), though abused to heathenish superstition. The sense is, To the Jews were credited, or given in custody, the Holy Scriptures, containing all the books of the Old Testament, in particular the legal covenant, or law of God, given on Mount Sinai, which Stephen calls *the lively oracles*, Ac 7:38; more especially yet the fundamental articles of religion, and doctrines of grace, and salvation by the Messiah, called *the oracles of God*, Heb 5:12, though more hid, it is true, in types, promises, and predictions.

### Romans 3:3

Ver. 3. *If some did not believe;* if some did remain in infidelity, Ac 28:24, if they would give no credit to the oracle, and to the promise of a Messiah.

*The faith of God;* i.e. the truth and faithfulness of God, Ps 33:4. The

whole verse is another prolepsis. The implied objection is this, That the Jews are nothing the better for these oracles, or have no advantage by them, if by unbelief they have rendered themselves unworthy or incapable of benefit by them. The answer to this is anticipated by propounding another question; Can the infidelity of some be any hinderance of God's performing his promise to others, to his chosen ones? The interrogation is a negation, q.d. It cannot be, as the following words show: see 2Ti 2:13.

### Romans 3:4

Ver. 4. *God forbid;* the negation that was closely couched in the former verse, is in this expressed by a note of indignation, and of the greatest detestation.

*Let God be true;* let him remain or appear faithful to his promises and covenant; or, let him be acknowledged to be so, according to the frequent testimonies of Scripture: see Nu 23:19 Tit 1:2 Heb 6:17,18.

*But every man a liar;* or, although every man should be a liar; or, whatsoever we say of men, who are all mutable creatures, who are liable to mistakes in their own natures, and so may easily deceive others: see Ps 116:11.

*That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings;* that thou mightest be acknowledged just in thy promises and threatenings; in which sense the word is used in divers places, Mt 11:19 Lu 7:29,35 Lu 10:29.

*Mightest overcome;* that thou mightest be clear or pure, so it is in the Psalm. The apostle honours the Seventy, which was the common translation, and minds the sense rather than the words. He that is clear, is like to overcome in a just judgment.

*When thou art judged;* or, when thou judgest: the word may be taken actively or passively; i.e. when thou dost execute judgment upon any, or, when any do presume to censure you.

### Romans 3:5

Ver. 5. *But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God;* an anticipation of another objection, which might be made upon the preceding words: that if the faithfulness of God, in keeping his promises, doth appear in and notwithstanding the unfaithfulness of men, then we gather thus much, that the fidelity of God is rendered a great deal more commendable by the perfidiousness of man.

*What shall we say?* Thus we object, or this will be the inconvenience.

*Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?* i.e. then God is unjust in punishing the Jews, or any other wicked men, for that which tends to his own glory, and the commendations of his veracity.

*I speak as a man;* this is the language of carnal men, and such blasphemy they speak; I recite the objection of some men, and speak after their carnal manner.

### Romans 3:6

Ver. 6. *God forbid;* he rejects the cavil with his usual note of detestation, as not thinking it worthy of answer.

*For then how shall God judge the world?* q.d. If God were in the least unrighteous, how could he govern the world at present, and judge it at last in righteousness? Which is affirmed, Ps 96:13 98:9. Or, how could he be God and supreme, if he were not just by his nature and essence, and his will the very rule of righteousness: see Ge 18:25 Job 34:12.

### Romans 3:7

Ver. 7. By *truth* he means the faithfulness and veracity of God; as by *lie*, the perfidiousness and inconstancy of man; *ut supra et alibi*.

*Why yet am I also judged as a sinner?* q.d. If more glory accrues to the name of God by my wickedness, what reason is there that I should be



punished, and proceeded against as an offender, who have occasioned this further glory to God? The apostle doth plainly personate in this place a wicked objector, or he speaks in the name and person of such a one. This way of speaking and writing is very frequent among all authors; and it is found sometimes with the penmen of the Holy Scriptures: see Ec 3:19-22 1Co 15:32. The apostle tells the Corinthians, 1Co 4:6, that in a figure he transferred some things to himself and to Apollos for their sakes, that they might not be puffed up; he, counted such schemes and figures as these to be most profitable and efficacious to the reader.

### Romans 3:8

Ver. 8. The placing of these words makes them sound harshly, and consequently causeth obscurity. Critics make a great stir about them, some including them in a parenthesis, others affirming there is a transposition in them. They seem to be a refutation to the former cavil, and must be accommodated to that sense. It is as if the apostle should have said, If sinners deserve no punishment, because God reaps glory to himself by their sins; then that is a good proverb, or saying, which is in some men's mouths, and we ourselves are slandered with it, as if it were our opinion and doctrine, That we may do evil, that good may come of it. But this saying is generally exploded; none dare to vouch it, and therefore the former cavil is of no force.

*Whose damnation is just;* i.e. their damnation is just, who teach such doctrine, and practise accordingly; who *do evil, that good may come* of it. The apostle doth not vouchsafe to refute this absurd saying, but simply condemns it, and those that put it in practice. Or else his meaning in these words is this, that they justly deserve damnation, who calumniate the apostles and publishers of the gospel, and raise false reports and slanders of them: their damnation is just, who affirm we say or hold, That evil may be done, that good may come thereof.

### Romans 3:9

Ver. 9. *What then? are we better than they?* the apostle here returns to the argument that he had been handling in the beginning of the chapter. He

brings in the Jews propounding a question, Seeing it was confessed that the oracles of God were committed to them, then it followed, that they excelled the Gentiles, and stood upon better ground than they.

*No, in no wise;* he doth not contradict himself as to what he had said of the Jews' prerogative, Ro 3:2. They did indeed excel the Gentiles as to some external benefits, of which you have a larger account, Ro 9:4,5, but not upon the account of any evangelical righteousness, or their own supposed merit.

*We have before proved;* viz. separately and apart, in the foregoing chapters; and the same is now to be asserted of *both Jews and Gentiles*, conjunctly and together; that notwithstanding the Jews boasted of their law, and the Gentiles of their philosophy, yet as to the evangelical faith and righteousness, they were both in the same case.

*Under sin;* under the power of sin, but chiefly under the guilt of sin: see Ro 3:19.

### Romans 3:10

Ver. 10. *As it is written;* viz. in several places of Scripture, which he quotes in the following verses, giving us the sense, though not so strictly tying himself to the words; and this is a proper proof, to the Jews at least, whom he had called a little before the keepers of these oracles.

*There is none righteous, no, not one:* the more general proof with which he begins, is taken out of Ps 14:3, and Ps 53:1, upon which places see the annotations.

### Romans 3:11

Ver. 11. *There is none that understandeth;* a more particular proof of the corruption of the soul, and the faculties thereof; and first of the mind, taken out of the forecited Psalms, which may be compared with the scriptures which speak of the ignorance and blindness of the mind, De 32:29 Job 32:9 Isa 1:3 Jer 4:22 10:14.

*There is none that seeketh after God;* a proof of the corruption of the will, which follows also in the forecited Psalms.

### Romans 3:12

Ver. 12. *They are all gone out of the way:* viz. of truth, or life: see Ps 14:3 36:4 58:3. This doth illustrate thee former charge.

*They are together become unprofitable;* unuseful, and, which is more noisome, fit only for the dunghill, as the word signifies: this follows also in Ps 14:1-7 see Job 15:16.

*There is none that doeth good, no, not one;* the same as Ro 3:10, though more exactly according to the words of the Psalm, where also it is twice repeated: see Ps 14:1,3.

### Romans 3:13

Ver. 13. *Their throat is an open sepulchre;* he proceeds to instance in the corruption of man with respect to the members of his body; and he mentions the organs of speech in four several expressions, much to the same purpose: the first is allegorical, taken out of Ps 5:9, upon which see the annotations.

*With their tongues they have used deceit;* this text doth plainly express the corruption of the tongue, because of lies, calumnies, perjuries, flatteries; and it is taken out of Jer 9:3-5.

*The poison of asps is under their lips:* the third expression is allegorical, as the first, taken out of Ps 140:3, upon which see the annotations.

### Romans 3:14

Ver. 14. This last and very plain expression of the corruption of the tongue, is taken out of Ps 10:7: See Poole on "Ps 10:7".

### Romans 3:15

Ver. 15. If we consider this member also, we may see the corruption of man; witness that testimony, Pr 1:16, and Isa 59:7; on both which see annotations.

### Romans 3:16

Ver. 16,17. Both which assertions lie together, and follow in that Isa 59:7,8.

### Romans 3:18

Ver. 18. This last assertion gives us one true cause of all the aforesaid evils, taken out of Ps 36:1: See Poole on "Ps 36:1".

### Romans 3:19

Ver. 19. Another anticipation of an objection, to this purpose: All these testimonies (might the Jews say) do not concern us, they concern the impure and Gentile world only, unless possibly some profane wretches amongst ourselves also. But to this the apostle says; We know (which some think hath the force of an asseveration) that whatsoever the law of God, more especially the Mosaical law, or more generally all that is contained in the Scripture, saith of the wickedness and defection of mankind, it saith to the Jews more particularly, to whom the law was given, and who are under the conduct of it; much the same with that phrase, Ro 2:12: see Ro 6:15 1Co 9:20.

*That every mouth may be stopped;* i.e. hindered from boasting, to which the Jews were so prone; or rather, that conscience might so press them, that they should silently, or as it were speechless, expect their own damnation. without being able to frame any excuse: see Ps 63:11 Eze

16:63 Mt 22:12.

*And all the world may become guilty before God;* that Jews and Gentiles and all mankind, as depraved, might be obnoxious to the judgment and condemnation of God: see Ro 3:9, and Joh 3:18.

Romans 3:20

Ver. 20. *Therefore;* i.e. Seeing the Gentiles, by the law of nature, and the Jews, by the written law, are thus subject to the judgment of God; and seeing no one is able to fulfil the law, and satisfy for the breach of it; *therefore, &c.*

*By the deeds of the law;* he means the moral law, and not the ceremonial law only or chiefly; even that law that forbids theft and adultery, as Ro 2:21,22, and concupiscence, as Ro 7:1-25; and by which, as this text says, *is the knowledge of sin;* to which Gentiles as well as Jews are obliged, and by which therefore they are condemned.

*No flesh;* a common synecdoche: see Ge 6:3,12, and elsewhere. The same with *no man living*, in the psalmist; especially being depraved with original corruption, which is called *flesh* in Scripture.

*Be justified in his sight;* or be discharged in the court of heaven: the phrase is taken from Ps 143:2, see annotations there.

*For by the law is the knowledge of sin:* lest any should think that the law hereupon is useless, he goes on to show its use, but a quite contrary one to what they intended. It convinceth us of our guilt, and therefore is far from being our righteousness, Ro 7:7 1Co 15:56.

Romans 3:21

Ver. 21. *But now:* q.d. Though justification be not by the law, yet it is to be obtained in another way, as follows.

*The righteousness of God:* see Ro 1:17.

*Without the law;* inasmuch as the law, pressing obedience to be performed by us in our own persons, seems plainly ignorant of the righteousness of another imputed to us.

*Is manifested;* this righteousness nevertheless is revealed plainly, now since the coming of Christ, and in the gospel, as in Ro 1:17.

*Being witnessed by the law and the prophets;* that there may be no suspicion of novelty: see Joh 5:46,47. The testimonies he refers to are very numerous: see Ge 3:15 15:6 22:17,18 Isa 53 Jer 31:31,33 Da 9:24,25. See the same argument used, Ac 24:14 26:22 28:23.

### Romans 3:22

Ver. 22. He mentions *the righteousness of God* again, that he may further explain it, by the means or instrument by which it is received, viz. *faith*; see Ro 4:11,12 9:30 Php 3:9; where there are several expressions to the same purpose, that this righteousness is without the law indeed, but it is by the hand of that faith by which we believe in Jesus, called therefore here, the *faith of Jesus Christ*.

*Unto all and upon all them that believe;* whether they be Jews or Gentiles, if they believe, excluding the self-justiciaries amongst the one, and the philosophers amongst the other.

*For there is no difference;* they are not justified two several ways: see Ro 3:9.

### Romans 3:23

Ver. 23. *For all have sinned:* q.d. No wonder there is no difference, when both the one and the other have the guilt of Adam's transgression imputed to them, and have original corruption inherent in them, from whence proceed very many actual transgressions.

*And come short of the glory of God;* i.e. of the glorious image of God, in

which man was at first created; or, of communion with God, in which the glory of a rational creature doth consist; or rather, of the eternal glory, which they come short of, as men that run a race are weary, and fall short of the mark.

### Romans 3:24

Ver. 24. *Being justified freely by his grace;* i.e. Being in this case, they can by no means be acquitted and freed from the accusation and condemnation of the law, but in the way and manner that follows. He mentions the great moving cause of justification first, (which doth comprehend also the principal efficient), that it is without any cause or merit in us; and by the free favour of God to undeserving, ill-deserving creatures, Eph 1:6,7 2:8 Tit 3:7.

*Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:* the meritorious cause is expressed by a metaphor taken from military proceedings, where captives taken in war, and under the power of another, are redeemed upon a valuable price laid down: see Mt 20:28 Mr 10:45 1Ti 2:6 Heb 9:12.

### Romans 3:25

Ver. 25. *Whom God hath set forth;* i.e. God the Father hath proposed this *Jesus*, in the eternal counsel, and covenant of redemption, Eph 1:9 1Pe 1:20,21; or in the types and shadows of the old tabernacle; and hath now at last shown him openly to the world.

*To be a propitiation,* or atonement, 1Jo 2:2. He alludes to the mercy seat sprinkled with blood, which was typical of this great atonement; and from whence God showed himself so propitious and favourable to sinners, Le 16:2 Nu 7:89.

*Through faith in his blood:* he goes on to show the instrumental cause of justification, to wit, *faith;* i.e. the close adherence and most submissive dependence of the sinner; together with the peculiarity of the object of faith, viz. the *blood,* i.e. the death and sacrifice, of Christ; in contradistinction to his dominion, (with which yet on other accounts faith is so

much concerned), and in opposition to the blood of beasts slain and sacrificed.

*To declare his righteousness;* i.e. for the showing forth either of his goodness and mercy; see 1Sam 12:7,8,10 Ps 36:10; or of his faithfulness in his promises, and fulfilling all types and prophecies; or else of his vindictive justice, in the just proceedings of God against sin, which he hath condemned in his Son, though he justify the sinner. Or further, it may be understood of the righteousness of faith, of which Ro 3:22, which is hereby shown to be his; and to manifest itself in the forgiveness of sins, which is so declared as to be exhibited.

*For the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;* he means, either the sins committed before justification, while God bore so patiently with the sinner, and did not presently take the forfeiture; or else the sins committed under the Old Testament, before the proposed propitiation was exposed to the world, when God so indulged our fathers, as to pardon them upon the account of what was to come: see Heb 9:15-18.

### Romans 3:26

Ver. 26. *To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness;* he repeats the final cause of justification, viz. the making the after said declaration of the righteousness of God, in the time of the gospel, and dispensation and ministry thereof, 2Co 6:2, which is taken out of Isa 49:8.

*That he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus;* i.e. that no wrong might be done to the essential purity of his nature, or rectitude of his will; nor yet to his immediate justice, by which he cannot but hate sin, and abhor the sinner as such; though in the mean time he gives a discharge to him that is of the faith of Jesus, (as it is in the original), or of the number of those that believe, and cast themselves upon a Saviour.

### Romans 3:27

Ver. 27. *Where is boasting then?* the apostle doth, as it were, insult over



them: q.d. Where is now the former boasting of the Jews, as if they were so much better than the Gentiles? Or what is become of the ground of boasting, that they, or either of them, might think they had in the law, or philosophy, or any moral performances? See Jer 9:23,24.

*It is excluded. By what law? of works?* If it be inquired upon what account this boasting is excluded, we answer plainly, It cannot be by that law that commands works, as the condition of acceptance and justification, and tells us nothing by whom that condition should be fulfilled; the law being become weak to us, for such a purpose. by reason of sin, Ro 8:3.

*Nay: but by the law of faith;* i.e. the gospel law which requires faith, by which the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, and attained by us. And this is called a *law of faith*, as some think, in condescension to the Jews' custom of speaking, who are so much delighted with the name of the law; and so that he might not be suspected of novelty: but, as most, it is a Hebraism, denoting no more than the doctrine or prescript of faith.

### Romans 3:28

Ver. 28. Here is the conclusion of the whole matter that he had been discoursing of, from Ro 1:17 to this very place. When he says, *we conclude*, he means, we have reasoned or argued well, as logicians do; or this is the full account that we have taken, and summed up, after the manner of arithmeticians.

*A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law;* a phrase equivalent to that which is so much spoken against, that we are justified by faith only; as if we should say, That God is to be worshipped, excluding angels, idols, images, &c., it would be as much as to say, God is to be worshipped only.

### Romans 3:29

Ver. 29. By answering his own proposed questions, he plainly shows us, that the covenant of grace, by which God is God of his people, does not belong to the Jews only, that they only should have justification and bliss,

but to the Gentiles also, according to the promise, Ge 17:5 22:18 Ps 2:8 Isa 11:10,12, and many others; which promises are more especially to be accomplished, now the wall of partition is broken down, as Eph 2:13,14.

### Romans 3:30

Ver. 30. That it may not be thought that God is variable in the action of justifying sinners, but that it might be known that he is one, i.e. unchangeable, he shows, that both the circumcised Jews and uncircumcised Gentiles are justified by the same God in Christ, and by the same way and manner, viz. by and through faith, with no more difference than there is betwixt these two phrases, (*by faith* and *through faith*), which cannot be distinguished the one from the other.

### Romans 3:31

Ver. 31. *Do we then make void the law through faith?* A very material objection is here to be anticipated and answered, viz. that by establishing justification by faith alone the law is rendered useless, and the obligation thereto destroyed.

*God forbid: yea, we establish the law:* having rejected this objection, by his usual note of abhorrency, he proceeds to show, that nothing more establishes the law, inasmuch as by faith we attain a perfect righteousness, we are interested in the most complete obedience of Christ to the moral law; and that hereby every type, promise, and prophecy is fulfilled; see Mt 5:17 Lu 16:17: and we ourselves also being enabled thereunto by a gospel spirit, have a more exact conformity to the law, though we cannot reach to a fulfilling of it.

### Romans 4:1

#### Chapter Summary

Ro 4:1-8 Abraham himself was justified by faith,  
Ro 4:9-12 which was imputed to him for righteousness before circumcision, that he might be the common father

of believers, whether circumcised or not.

Ro 4:13-17 The promise was not given him through the law, else had it been void from the very nature of the law; but being of faith by grace is sure to all the destined seed, and not to those of the law only.

Ro 4:18-22 The acceptableness of Abraham's faith, Ro 4:23-25 which stands recorded not for his sake only, but for the sake of all who shall profess a like faith in God through Christ.

Ver. 1. The apostle proceeds to prove his main conclusion, Ro 3:28, which is, that a sinner is justified by faith without works, from the example of Abraham. He was a man that had faith and works both, yet he was justified by faith, and not by works; and who doubts but the children are justified after the same manner that their father was: there is but one way of justification; this is the connexion.

*As pertaining to the flesh:* these words may either be referred to *father*; and then they import no more but that Abraham was their father according to the flesh, Ro 9:5. Or else they may be referred to the following word *found*; and then the question is, What hath Abraham found, i.e. got or attained, according to the flesh? The sense is, What hath he got by his righteousness, which stands in works, and are done in the flesh? Abraham obtained not righteousness by any works, ceremonial or moral. So the word *flesh* is taken, (see Php 3:3,4), when under the word *flesh* came circumcision, our own righteousness, which is by the law, or whatsoever is or may be opposed to that righteousness which is by the faith of Christ.

## Romans 4:2

Ver. 2. *He hath whereof to glory;* he hath cause or matter of glorying and boasting; he hath something from whence he may take occasion of so doing.

*But not before God;* something must be supplied to fill up the sense, i.e. he hath nothing whereof to glory before God. The argument of the apostle might be thus formed: If Abraham had obtained justification by works, he should have had somewhat whereof he might glory before God: but he had

nothing whereof to glory before God; therefore he was not justified by works. God's way of justifying sinners is such, as shuts out all glorying and boasting, as he had before laid down, Ro 3:27.

### Romans 4:3

Ver. 3. The scripture referred to is in Ge 15:6. The apostle a little varies the words; in Genesis it is *he believed in God*, but here *he believed God*: again, in Genesis it is expressed actively, *he counted it to him for righteousness*; but here passively, *it was counted to him for righteousness*. The answer is, That the apostle in both followed the Septuagint, which was then more in use than the Hebrew text; and both are capable of an easy reconciliation, the difference being more in sound than in sense.

*Abraham believed God*; i.e. the promises of God: that he would be his *shield and exceeding great reward*, Ge 15:1; that he would give him an heir of his body, Ge 15:4; that he would multiply his seed, Ge 15:5, whereby he understood not only his fleshly seed, but also the Messiah, the Saviour of the world, which was come of his loins; *He took on him the seed of Abraham*, Heb 2:16. And besides these promises in Ge 15:1-21, he believed that promise which was made him, Ge 12:3, That in him and his seed all families of the earth should be blessed. That in these promises the Messiah is understood, is evident from Ga 3:8,16; and that Abraham had an eye to him is evident, without exception, from Joh 8:56.

*It was counted unto him for righteousness*; i.e. he was justified thereby: to have faith imputed for righteousness, and to be justified by faith, is the same thing. Faith is not our righteousness materially, but objectively and organically, as it apprehends and implies the righteousness of Christ, which is the matter of our justification. Our adversaries the papists oppose the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us; they cavil at the very word, and call it putative righteousness: and yet the apostle useth the word ten times in this chapter, and in the same sense that word ten times in this chapter, and in the same sense that we take it. But how shall we reconcile our apostle with St. James, about the manner of Abraham's justification: he says expressly, Jas 2:21, that *Abraham our father was justified by works, when he offered his son Isaac*; and thence he infers, Ro 4:24, that *by works a man is justified, and not by faith only*. They are easily

reconciled, forasmuch as the one discourseth of the cause of our justification before God; the other, of the signs of justification before men. The one speaks of the imputation of righteousness; the other, of the declaration of righteousness. The one speaks of the office of faith; the other, of the quality of faith. The one speaks of the justification of the person; the other, of the faith of that person. The one speaks of Abraham to be justified; the other, of Abraham already justified.

#### Romans 4:4

Ver. 4. He proceeds to prove, that Abraham was not justified by works, but by faith, and free grace, and so had no cause of boasting. This he illustrates by a comparison betwixt one that *worketh*, and one that *worketh not, but believeth*. *To him that worketh*; i.e. to him that worketh with a design or intent to obtain or merit justification by his works, for else he that believeth also worketh; only he is said not to work, *secundum quid*, after a sort, to the end or intent that he might merit by it.

*Is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt*; he speaks this by way of supposition, in case he should have fulfilled the condition of perfect obedience: and yet, to speak properly, there is no reward, as a due debt from God to him that worketh, Ro 11:35; only he speaks after the manner of men, and useth a civil maxim, taken from human affairs.

#### Romans 4:5

Ver. 5. *To him that worketh not*; i.e. to him that worketh not to the end or intent before mentioned, or with respect to justification, but takes the other way to be justified and saved, and that is, the way of believing.

*That justifieth the ungodly*; that makes him, who is wicked in himself, just and righteous in Christ; or justifies him that was ungodly, but after justification is made godly. By *ungodly*, some would understand such as want that perfection of godliness, as they may build the hopes of justification upon; because the proposition is drawn from the instance of Abraham, a man not void of godliness.

*His faith is counted for righteousness; not considered in itself as a work, but in relation to Christ, the object of it, and as an act of receiving and applying him; as eating nourisheth, though it be the meat that doth it.*

#### Romans 4:6

Ver. 6. To the example of Abraham taken from Moses, he adjoins the testimony of David, that so he might more fully prove what he had asserted, Ro 3:21: both the one and the other were of great authority amongst the Jews. Here it may be objected, that David no where says, that he is blessed *unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works.*

*Answer.* Though the words be no where extant in David, yet the sense is, as appears in what follows (see Ro 4:7).

#### Romans 4:7

Ver. 7. This testimony is taken out of Ps 32:1, and it is well enough accommodated to the occasion, for those two, to remit sin, and to impute righteousness, are inseparable. The one is put here figuratively for the other. They mistake, who take occasion from hence to make justification to consist only in remission of sin: the text will not bear it. The apostle's design is, not hereby to declare the full nature of justification, which he had done before; but only to prove the freedom of it from any respect to works, in the instance of this principal and essential part of it. Remission of sin and the imputation of righteousness differ, as the cause and the effect. Remission of sin presupposeth imputation of righteousness; and he that hath his sins remitted, hath Christ's righteousness first imputed, that so they may be remitted and forgiven to sinners.

#### Romans 4:8

Ver. 8. The same thing is expressed three several ways; there are three things in sin to be considered:

1. There is an offence against God, which is said to be *forgiven*.

2. There is a filthiness in sin, which is said to be *covered*.

3. There is guilt in it, which is said not to be *imputed*.

### Romans 4:9

Ver. 9. This word *cometh* is not in the original, but it is aptly inserted by our translators.

*Circumcision* again is put for the circumcised, and *uncircumcision* for the uncircumcised: see Ro 2:28.

*For we say;* q.d. This we have proved, and it is on all hands confessed, *that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness:* now, therefore, the question is, whether this blessedness of justification belongs to the circumcised only, or to the uncircumcised also.

### Romans 4:10

Ver. 10. And if this be the question, the way to resolve it, is, to consider in what circumstances Abraham was when his faith was thus reckoned to him for righteousness; it was a long time before he was circumcised. The promise to which Abraham's faith had respect, was made to him fourteen years, at least, before his circumcision: compare Ge 15:2, and Ge 17:24,25: also see Ge 16:16. If the blessedness, therefore, of justification was not annexed to circumcision, the Gentiles are no less capable of it than the Jews.

### Romans 4:11

Ver. 11. *The sign of circumcision;* or, circumcision, which is a sign. Two things are here affirmed of circumcision:

1. That it was a *sign*. Of what? Of the circumcision of the heart, of original sin and its cure.

2. That it was a *seal*. Of what?

*Of the righteousness of faith:* of the meaning of which, See Poole on "Ro 1:17".

This is a periphrasis of the covenant of grace, wherein righteousness is promised, and made over to us in a way of believing: and this is not the only place where *the righteousness of faith* is put for the new covenant; see Ro 10:6, and the notes there. Circumcision is called a *seal*, because it was a confirmation of the covenant of grace, and the righteousness therein promised. The common use of a seal amongst men is to confirm and ratify a matter, and make it more firm and sure: it is joined often with an earnest, which is for the same end and purpose. The Corinthians' conversion is said to be the seal of Paul's apostleship; i.e. it was a confirmation of it, and made it more evident that he was sent of God. What the apostle says of an oath, that we may say of a seal; it is for confirmation, and for putting things out of controversy. When God made a promise to Abraham, he confirmed it with an oath; and when he made a covenant with him, and with his seed, he confirmed it by a seal, and that was circumcision, which he calls in Genesis the *covenant* of God, and here, the *seal* thereof. And what is said of circumcision is not spoken of it barely as circumcision, but as a sacrament; and it shows the nature and use of all sacraments, both of the Old Testament and New, that they are seals of the new covenant. That which the apostle mentions here of circumcision, hath nothing proper and peculiar in it to circumcision as such; but it may, with equal reason, be applied to any other sacrament: it belongs as well to the passover, yea, to baptism, and the Lord's supper: e.g. The apostle first calls circumcision a *sign*; so was the passover, so is baptism, and the Lord's supper. Again, he calls it *a seal of the righteousness of faith*, or of the new covenant, as before; and so is each of the other sacraments: take, for instance, the Lord's supper; our Saviour calls the *cup* therein *the new testament*, or covenant, that is, it is a seal and confirmation thereof. And what is here affirmed of Abraham, may be affirmed as well of the eunuch, or the jailer, or any baptized person; he received the sign of baptism, a seal of the righteousness of faith, and of remission of sins, &c.

*That he might be the father of all them that believe;* i.e. that he might be known or declared to be the father of such: see the like phrase, Mt 5:45.



Though many of the fathers did believe before Abraham, yet none of them are said to be the fathers of the faithful, as Abraham was, because God made to none of them the like promise, concerning their posterity, as he did to Abraham. See the next verse.

#### Romans 4:12

Ver. 12. The former verse tells you he was the father of the believing Gentiles, for the covenant was made with him, for all his believing seed, when he was uncircumcised, which shows, that righteousness is and may be imputed to them also without any outward circumcision: and then he is the father of the believing Jews; especially of as many of them as unto circumcision do add the imitation of his faith; who, besides circumcision, which they derived from him, do also transcribe his divine copy, and follow his example of faith and obedience; who leave their sins, as he did his country; who believe all God's promises, and adhere to him against all temptations to the contrary.

#### Romans 4:13

Ver. 13. Some by *the world* do understand, the world of the faithful, or believers dispersed over all the world: and so in effect it is the same which he said before, that Abraham should be the father of all that believe, whether of the circumcision or uncircumcision. Others by *the world* do understand the land of Canaan, under which also heaven was typically promised and comprehended: see Heb 4:3 Heb 11:9,10,16. This, by a synecdoche, is put for all the world; and so also Tabor and Hermon are put for the east and west of the whole world, Ps 89:12. This was promised to Abraham and to his seed, Ge 12:7 15:18.

*Was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith;* i.e. it was not made to Abraham because he had merited it by keeping the law; but because he had believed God, and obtained the righteousness of faith. In the whole verse is couched an argument for justification by faith without works, which is the apostle's drift; and it may be thus formed: If the promise of inheritance to Abraham and his seed was to be accomplished not by legal obedience, but by the

righteousness of faith; then it follows, that we are justified by faith, and not by works; but the promise of inheritance to Abraham and his seed was to be accomplished, not by the law, but by the righteousness of faith.

#### Romans 4:14

Ver. 14. i.e. If they that trust to the fulfilling of the law, be heirs of the promise of God, and so the inheritance come by works; then faith is to no purpose, neither is there any use of it; and so also the promises which are made to believers are vain and useless. This is the sun, of this verse; a more particular explication follows.

*If they which are of the law:* compare this with Ga 3:9,10. There the apostle sorts them that seek righteousness and salvation into two kinds. First, some are *of faith*, and they are such as seek salvation in that way. Again, others are *of the works of the law*, and they are such as seek salvation by means thereof. These phrases, *of the law*, and *of the works of the law*, are all one.

*Be heirs;* that is, of the promises of God; of the heavenly rest, of which, as before, Canaan was a type.

*Faith is made void;* i.e. if they which seek the inheritance of the law can by the law obtain it, then there is no use of faith: to what end should we by faith go out of ourselves to seek righteousness and salvation in Christ, if we could obtain it by the legal obedience? See the like, Gal 5:4.

*And the promise made of none effect;* i.e. the promise itself, which was made to Abraham and his seed, that also is ineffectual, and brought to nought; no man shall be saved by it; forasmuch as the law can bring no man to the obtaining of what is promised.

#### Romans 4:15

Ver. 15. *The law worketh wrath;* i.e. the wrath of God: and this it doth not of itself, but occasionally, in respect of our disobedience. This is a confirmation of what was said in the foregoing verse, that the inheritance

is not by the law, and the works thereof; he proves it from the effect and work of the law, such as it hath in all men since the fall; it worketh wrath; it is so far from entitling men to the promised blessing, that it exposeth men to the curse and wrath of God, Ga 3:10.

*For where no law is, there is no transgression:* q.d. And that it worketh wrath is evident, because it discovers and occasions transgressions, between which and God's wrath there is an inseparable connection. This assertion is simply true of things indifferent, as were all ceremonial observations before the law required them, for then before the law it was no sin to omit them: but of things which are evil in their own nature, it must be understood respectively, and after a sort; that is, there was no such great transgression before the law was given, as afterwards. The reasons are; Because we are naturally bent to do that which is forbidden us; and so by the reproofs of the law, the stubbornness of man's heart is increased. As also, because by the law comes the clear knowledge of man's duty; and so the servant that knows his master's will, and doth it not, is worthy of the more stripes.

#### Romans 4:16

Ver. 16. Here are two new arguments to prove that the inheritance is not of the law, but of faith.

*It is of faith, that it might be by grace;* for to be justified by faith and by grace are all one with the apostle. Again, that *the promise might be sure to all the seed;* whereas if it were of the law, it would be usury and uncertain, because of man's weakness, who is not able to perform it. Abraham's seed is of two sorts. One sort is of the law, to wit, the Jews. Another sort is of such as walk in the steps of Abraham's faith, whether Jews or Gentiles. To all these the promise must be sure; which cannot be, if the law be made the condition or the means of the inheritance.

#### Romans 4:17

Ver. 17. *Before him whom he believed;* i.e. in the sight or esteem of God. He was not the *father of many nations* by carnal generation in the sight of

men, but by spiritual cognation in the sight of God. Or, as it may be read, like unto God, after his example; and then the meaning is, that God so honoured Abraham's faith, that he made him a father, in some respects like himself. As God is a universal Father, not of one, but of all nations, so was Abraham. Again, as God is their spiritual Father, not by carnal generation, so was Abraham also.

*Even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were;* i.e. Abraham believed in him as omnipotent. His omnipotency is described by two great effects of it. The one in making that to have a being again, which had ceased to be, as in the resurrection. The other, in causing that to be which never was; or to make all things of nothing, as in the creation: he expresseth this by calling things, to intimate the great facility of this work to God: he only spoke, and it was done; he commanded, and all was created. And as Abraham thus generally believed the power of God, so it is likely he made a particular application of it to his own state at present; as he believed that God could raise the dead, so, that he could raise him seed out of his own dead body, and Sarah's dead womb. And as he believed that God could create things out of nothing, so, that he could give him seed that had none; yea, and make the Gentiles a people that were not a people.

#### Romans 4:18

Ver. 18. Here the apostle digresseth a little from his principal argument, and falls into a commendation of Abraham's faith.

*Who against hope believed in hope:* Abraham, when he had no natural or rational grounds of hope, either in respect of himself or Sarah his wife, did yet believe and hope he should have a son; and so be a root or stock, from whence many nations should spring: and this faith and hope of his was grounded upon the power and faithfulness of God.

*So shall thy seed be;* so as the stars of heaven for multitude, which must be supplied out of the promise, in Ge 15:5.

## Romans 4:19

Ver. 19. He regarded not the impotency of his own body, which was as it were dead, because of his age, in respect of any desires or powers of generation. Abraham several years after married Keturah, by whom he had divers children; how then doth the apostle say his body was now dead, or unable for generation? Some say that the deadness of Abraham's body was only in his own opinion. Augustine hath two answers:

1. That his body was not dead simply, but in respect of Sarah; he might be able to beget children of a younger woman.
2. His body was revived, and he received a new generative faculty of God. Another question may be moved, and that is, how the apostle could say that Abraham *considered not his own body, being dead*; seeing we read, Ge 17:17, that Abraham, upon the promise of a son, *fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old?* &c. Some answer, that Abraham at first doubted, but afterwards he recollected himself, and got over that unbelief; his faith overcame all difficulties. Others say, that he doubted not at all of the truth of God's promise, but was uncertain only how it should be understood, whether properly or figuratively: see Ge 17:19. Others say, that these words of Abraham are not words of doubting, but inquiring; they proceed from a desire to be further instructed how that thing should be. It was a question like that of the virgin Mary's, How shall these things be? Augustine says, that Abraham's laughter was not like Sarah's. Hers proceeded from distrust; his, from joy and admiration.

## Romans 4:20

Ver. 20. *The promise of God*; viz. in Ge 15:5, and Ge 17:16.

*Giving glory to God*; as all do that rely upon the power and promise of God, setting to their seals that he is true.

### Romans 4:21

Ver. 21. He looked upon God as one that was perfectly able to do whatever he had promised, and as one that was most faithful, and sure never to fail in the performance; collecting nothing else from the difficulty and improbability of the matter, but that it was the fitter for an Almighty power to effect.

### Romans 4:22

Ver. 22. See Ro 2:3. By reason of his faith he was as sufficiently disposed and qualified for the obtaining of the promise, as if he had had all the righteousness required by the law.

### Romans 4:23

Ver. 23,24. Here it may be inquired, If Abraham's faith did justify him, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, what doth this concern us? The apostle answers, it was recorded of him for our sakes; see Ro 15:4; and to us there shall be the like imputation, if we believe in God, *that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead*. This a greater act of faith than Abraham's was. And the nature of justifying faith lies rather in affiance, or in putttag trust in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, than in assent, or in giving credit, to the truth of his promise.

*Question.* Why doth the apostle single out this act of raising Christ from the dead to describe the Father by?

*Answer.* To maintain the proportion betwixt the faith of Abraham and the faith of his seed; that as his respected the power of God, in raising, as it were, the dead, so in like sort should ours. So some. But the apostle speaks as if there were some special reason and ground for confidence in God for justification in this act of raising Christ from the dead; and indeed nothing is more fit to establish our faith in persuasion of our justification than this; for when God raised up our Lord Jesus Christ, having loosed the pains of death, he gave full assurance that his justice is fully satisfied for our sins. Had not Christ Jesus, our surety, paid the utmost farthing that was due for

our sins, he had still continued in prison, and under the power of death. Hence it is that the apostle Peter tells us, 1Pe 1:3, that God *hath begotten us to a lively hope* of the heavenly inheritance *by the resurrection of Christ from the dead*; there being no more effectual means to persuade us of the pardon of sin, of reconciliation with God, and of acceptance to eternal life, than that Jesus Christ, our surety and sponsor, is risen from the dead.

### Romans 4:25

Ver. 25. *Who was delivered*; he saith *delivered* rather than crucified, to lead us by the hand to the first cause thereof, the determinate counsel of the blessed Trinity: see Ac 2:23 4:27,28 Ro 8:32.

*For our offences*; i.e. for the expiating of them, Isa 53:10.

*And was raised again for our justification*; not that his death had no hand in our justification; see Ro 3:24; but because our justification, which was begun in his death, was perfected in his resurrection. Christ did meritoriously work our justification and salvation by his death and passion, but the efficacy and perfection thereof with respect to us depend on his resurrection. By his death he paid our debt, in his resurrection he received our acquittance, Isa 53:8; when he was discharged, we in him, and together with him, received our discharge from the guilt and punishment of all our sins. This one verse is an abridgement of the whole gospel.

### Romans 5:1

#### Chapter Summary

Ro 5:1 Being justified by faith, we have peace with God,

Ro 5:2 we glory in our hopes,

Ro 5:3-5 and in present afflictions,

Ro 5:6-10 from the best experience of God's love, looking with more assurance for final salvation.

Ro 5:11 we glory in God also, to whom we are

reconciled by Christ.

Ro 5:12-19 As sin and death came upon all men by Adam, so the grace of God, which justifieth unto life, cometh more abundantly unto all mankind through Christ.

Ro 5:20,21 Under the law sin abounded unto death; but grace hath much more abounded unto life.

Ver. 1. Hitherto of the cause and manner of our justification; now follow the benefits and effects.

*Being justified by faith;* as he had before asserted and proved particularly, in Ro 3:28 4:24.

*We have peace with God;* i.e. we have reconciliation with God, who before were utter enemies to him, Col 1:21; he is now become our Friend, as he was Abraham's.

*Through our Lord Jesus Christ,* who is the only Mediator of reconciliation: see 2Co 5:19 Eph 2:14-16 Col 1:20 1Ti 2:5.

### Romans 5:2

Ver. 2. We have not only reconciliation with God by Jesus Christ, but also by faith in him we are admitted to his presence, his grace and favour. One may be reconciled to his prince, and yet not to be brought into his presence: witness Absalom, &c. See Eph 2:18 3:12 1Pe 3:18.

*This grace* is either that whereof he spake, Ro 3:24; or else rather it may be understood of that excellent state of reconciliation, friendship, and favour with God, which God hath graciously bestowed upon us.

*Wherein we stand;* or, in which we stand or abide, not stirring a foot for any temptation or persecution: a metaphor from soldiers keeping their station in fight. A man may obtain his prince's favour, and lose it again; but, &c.

*And rejoice in hope of the glory of God;* in the glory hoped for, a Hebraism; see Lu 10:20 1Pe 1:8,9; even in that glory which God hath



promised, and which consists in the enjoyment of him.

### Romans 5:3

Ver. 3. *We glory in tribulations also;* as old soldiers do in their scars of honour: see Ga 6:17 2Co 12:9-11. Believers do not only glory in their future happiness, but in their present sufferings and afflictions: yet not so much in affliction itself, as in the issue and fruitful effects thereof, of which he speaks in what follows.

*Knowing, finding by experience, that tribulation worketh patience;* not as if affliction of itself and in its own nature did this, for in many it hath a contrary operation; but God, who is the author and giver of patience, Ro 5:15, doth make use of it for this purpose; it is a means sanctified of God for the exercising, obtaining, and increasing thereof.

### Romans 5:4

Ver. 4. *And patience, experience;* viz. of God's sustentation and care of us, and of his faithfulness in fulfilling his promises, Ps 91:15 Isa 43:2 2Co 1:4,5; as also of our own sincerity, and strength to endure and persevere, Mt 13:21.

*And experience, hope;* i.e. of the glory of God, as before in Ro 3:2, or hope of further mercy and seasonable deliverance. Believers find and feel that God hath delivered them, and doth deliver them, and in him they trust and hope that he will still deliver them.

### Romans 5:5

Ver. 5. *And hope maketh not ashamed;* it doth not disappoint or deceive us. Frustrated hopes fill men with shame and confusion, Job 6:19,20. This passage seems to be taken out of Ps 22:5.

*Because, &c.;* this is either rendered as the reason of all that went before; Therefore the justified by faith have peace with God, access to him by

faith, hope of glory, joy in tribulation, &c., because the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts: or else it is a reason of what immediately preceded; Therefore hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad, &c.

*The love of God;* understand it either actively, of our love to God, or rather passively, of his love to us, (of which he speaks, Ro 5:8), and of the sense thereof.

*Is shed abroad in our hearts;* is greatly manifested, or abundantly poured forth: a frequent metaphor, both in the Old and New Testament: see Isa 44:3 Joe 2:28 Zec 12:10 Joh 7:38 Ac 2:17.

*By the Holy Ghost which is given unto us;* not excluding the Father and Son; it is the more proper work of the Spirit, both to make us feel the love of God, and to fill our hearts with love to God.

### Romans 5:6

Ver. 6. *Without strength;* utterly unable to help or redeem ourselves.

*In due time;* some read it, according to the time, and refer this clause to the foregoing words, making this to be the sense: When we were weak in time past, or in the time of the law, before grace appeared, then Christ died, &c. Others rather refer it to the following words, and so our translation carries it, that in due time, i.e. *in the fulness of time*, as Ga 4:4, or in the time that was before decreed and prefixed by the Father. The Scripture every where speaks of a certain season or hour assigned for the death of Christ: see Mt 26:45 Joh 8:20 12:27 17:1.

*Christ died for the ungodly;* i.e. for the sake, or instead of, such as were enemies to God, (as Ro 5:10), and so could deserve no such favour from him.

### Romans 5:7

Ver. 7. He amplifies the love of Christ in dying for the ungodly, and shows

that it is unparalleled and without example. By *a good man* you must understand one that is very kind and bountiful, or one that is very useful and profitable; that is, a public and common good. Instances may be given of those that have sacrificed their lives for such. Lilloe stepped between the murderer and king Edward his master. Nicholas Ribische lost his life to preserve Prince Maurice at the siege of Pista.

### Romans 5:8

Ver. 8. *God commendeth his love toward us;* i.e. he declareth or confirmeth it by this, as a most certain sign, he makes it most conspicuous or illustrious: see Joh 3:16 1Jo 4:9,10.

*In that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us;* i.e. in a state of sin, and under the guilt and power of sin. Believers in some sense are still sinners, 1Jo 1:8, but their sins being pardoned and subdued, they go no longer under that denomination. Sinners in Scripture are said to be those in whom sin dwells and reigns; see Joh 9:31. Such we were by nature. Yea, we were not only sinners, but enemies to God, which further commendeth the love of Christ in dying for us: there is no greater love amongst men, than when one layeth down his life for his friends; but herein Christ's love excelled, that he gave his life for his enemies.

### Romans 5:9

Ver. 9. The apostle's arguing is cogent, for it is more to justify and reconcile sinners, than to save them being justified; Christ therefore having done the former, he will much more do the latter.

*By his blood;* i.e. by faith in his blood or sufferings.

*From wrath;* the Greek reads it with an article, from that wrath, whereby is meant the wrath to come, or eternal punishment.

### Romans 5:10

Ver. 10. *We were reconciled to God;* put into a capacity of reconciliation, God being by Christ's death made reconcilable, and also actually reconciled, when we believe, through the merits of the death of Christ.

*We shall be saved by his life;* i.e. by the resurrection to life. Salvation is ascribed to the resurrection and life of Christ, because he thereby doth perfect our salvation, he ever living to make intercession for us, Heb 12:25; and because by his resurrection and life we shall be raised to eternal life at that day.

### Romans 5:11

Ver. 11. *And not only so, &c.:* q.d. We do not only rejoice in the hope of glory, and in tribulation, of which he had spoken, Ro 5:2,3, (all that fell in between being a long parenthesis), but we rejoice and glory in God himself, who is become our God and merciful Father in Jesus Christ.

*By whom we have now received the atonement;* this is rendered as the reason why we should rejoice in God through Jesus Christ; for by him God is atoned or reconciled, satisfaction being made for our sins in his blood. The particle *now* hath its emphasis, to show the privilege of those who live in these times of the gospel.

### Romans 5:12

Ver. 12. From this verse to the end of the chapter, the apostle makes a large comparison between the first and Second Adam, which he joins to what he had said by the causal particle *wherefore*: q.d. Seeing things are as I have already said, it is evident, that what was lost by Adam is restored by Christ. This verse seems to be lame and imperfect; the reddition is wanting in the comparison; for unto this, *as by one man sin entered into the world*, there should be added, so by Christ, &c. But the reddition, or second part of the comparison, is suspended, by reason of a long parenthesis intervening to Ro 5:18,19, where the apostle sets down both parts of the comparison.

*By one man:* viz. Adam. *Objection.* Eve first sinned, 1Ti 2:14.

*Answer.* He is not showing the order how sin first entered into the world, but how it was propagated to mankind. Therefore he mentions the man, because he is the head of the woman, and the covenant was made with him: or, *man* may be used collectively, both for man and woman; as when God said: *Let us make man, &c.*

*Sin;* it is to be understood of our first parents' actual sin, in eating the forbidden fruit; this alone was it that affected their posterity, and made them sinners, Ro 5:19.

*Entered into the world;* understand the inhabitants of the world; the thing containing, by a usual metonymy, is put for the thing contained.

*And death by sin;* as the due reward thereof.

*Death* here may be taken in its full latitude, for temporal, spiritual, and eternal death.

*And so death passed upon all men;* seized upon all, of all sorts, infants as well as others.

*For that all have sinned;* others read it thus, in which all have sinned, i.e. in which one man; and so it is a full proof that Adam was a public person, and that in him all his posterity sinned and fell. He was our representative, and we were all in him, as a town or county in a parliament man; and although we chose him not, yet God chose for us.

The words εφ' ω are rendered *in which*, in other places, and the preposition επι is put for εν; see Mr 2:4 Heb 9:10; and if our translation be retained, it is much to the same sense; for if such die as never committed any actual sin themselves, (as infants do), then it will follow that they sinned in this one man, in whose loins they were: as Levi is said to have paid tithes in Abraham's loins, Heb 7:9.

### Romans 5:13

Ver. 13. *For until the law sin was in the world:* q.d. It appears that all have

sinned, because sin was always in the world, not only after the law was given by Moses, but also before, even from the beginning of the world till that time.

*But sin is not imputed when there is no law:* q.d. It appears there was a law before the law of Moses, for if there had been no law all that while, then sin would not have been imputed to men, so as to make them liable to punishment or death; but sin was imputed or charged upon men before the law of Moses, and death passed upon all. Therefore there must have been a law, by the transgression of which men were sinners, before that time. And that was either the law of nature, or the positive law which God gave to Adam, the transgression whereof is imputed to all, as we shall see, Ro 5:19. Some think the apostle doth here obviate a cavil: q.d. Let no man think that sin began to have its being together with the law, for there was sin before there was any written law to forbid it. The same acts that were forbidden afterwards by the law, were before committed, and were really sinful in the sight of God. But sin was not so well known, nor so strictly charged upon the sinner, as it is since the law was given. It was not imputed comparatively, though absolutely it was, as may appear by many instances, as the drowning of the world, the destruction of Sodom, &c.

#### Romans 5:14

Ver. 14. He proceeds to prove his assertion in the foregoing verse, that sin was in the world before the law, because *death*, which is the wages of sin, *did reign*, and had power over all mankind, *from Adam to Moses*, which was about two thousand five hundred years.

*Even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression;* i.e. over very infants, that had not actually sinned as Adam did. But though infants did not sin like Adam, yet they sinned in Adam; the guilt of his sin was imputed to them, else death could have had no power over them. Infants (as one saith) are not altogether innocents; the very first sheet or blanket wherewith they are covered is woven of sin and shame, of blood and filth, Eze 16:4,6.

*Who is the figure of him that was to come;* of his offspring, (so some), which came of him in after times; his posterity (as before) was represented

in his person: but others better expound it of Christ, who is the Second Adam; and of whom Adam was a figure or type, not in respect of such things as were personal to either of them, but of that which by them redounded to others. The first Adam was the original of man's natural and earthly being; the Second Adam, of his spiritual and heavenly. By the first, sin and death came into the world; by the Second, righteousness and life.

### Romans 5:15

Ver. 15. *But not as the offence, so also is the free gift:* q.d. But yet the resemblance betwixt the first and Second Adam is not so exact as to admit of no difference; differences there are, but they are to great advantage on Christ's part: e.g. Compare Adam's sin and Christ's obedience, in respect of their efficacy and virtue, and you will find a great difference.

*For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many:* the obedience of Christ (which is the product of his grace and favour) is much more powerful to justification and salvation, than the sin of Adam was to condemnation. If the transgression of mere man was able to pull down death and wrath upon all his natural seed, then the obedience of one, which is God as well as man, will much more abundantly avail to procure pardon and life for all his spiritual seed. He doth not give the pre-eminence unto the grace of Christ in respect of the number, but of the more powerful efficacy and virtue.

### Romans 5:16

Ver. 16. q.d. As there is a difference between Adam and Christ in respect of their persons, so also in respect of their acts, and the extent thereof; for one sin of Adam did condemn us; the mischief arose from one offence; but the free gift and grace of Christ doth absolve us not only from that one fault, but from all other faults and offences; it reacheth to the pardon, not only of original sin, but of all other personal and actual sins.

### Romans 5:17

Ver. 17. Here he shows the difference in respect of the effects and consequents of their acts. If by means of one man and his one offence death had power over all mankind, then much more shall the grace and gift of righteousness, which is by Jesus Christ alone, obtain eternal life for all that have received abundant grace and mercy from him.

### Romans 5:18

Ver. 18. Here, after a long parenthesis, the apostle returns to what he had begun to say in Ro 5:12; and now he makes the comparison full in both members, which there, by reason of intervening matter, was left imperfect, as I before hinted.

*Judgment;* guilt, which exposeth to judgment.

*Came upon all men;* all the posterity, or natural seed, of the first Adam.

*The free gift;* that which all along he calls *the free gift*, seems to be the benefit believers have by Christ's obedience.

*Came upon all men;* not all universally, but all sorts of men indifferently, Gentiles as well as Jews; or all that are his spiritual seed. Or *all men* here is put for many men; see elsewhere, Lu 6:26 Ac 22:15.

*Many* is sometimes put for *all*, as Da 12:2, and again *all* for *many*; and indeed these two words, *all* and *many*, seem to be used reciprocally by this context in particular, Ro 5:15,19.

### Romans 5:19

Ver. 19. *One man's;* i.e. Adam's: see the notes on Ro 5:12.

*Many;* i.e. all, as before; many is here opposed to one, or a few; the meaning is: Though Adam was but one, yet he infected many others, his sin rested not in his own person.



*Were made sinners;* brought into a state of sin. This is more than when all the world were said to sin in him. The word is used to signify great and heinous sinners. The apostle here informs us of that which all philosophy was ignorant of, viz. the imputation of Adam's sin, and our natural pollution flowing from it. Yea, this was more than the naked history of man's fall by Moses did discover; there indeed we see the cause of death, how that came upon all mankind; but that Adam's sin was accounted to us, that by his disobedience we are involved in sin and misery, that is not clearly revealed in the books of Moses. We are beholden to the gospel, and particularly to this text and context, for the more full discovery hereof.

*By the obedience of one;* i.e. of Christ. He leaves out the word man, either for brevity sake, or because Christ was not a mere man, as Adam was. Here the apostle concludes the collation he had made between Adam and Christ, whom he had all along represented as two public persons, or as two common roots or fountains, the one of sin and death, the other of righteousness and life. And indeed there are throughout the context (as one observes) several textual and grammatical obscurities, as also redundant and defective expressions, which are not unusual with this apostle, whose matter runneth from him like a torrent, and cannot be so well bounded by words. Another saith, upon the consideration of the difficulties in this context: We do not need Theseus's twine of thread, but the Holy Ghost, and that light by which this Epistle was wrote, to guide us into the understanding of it.

### Romans 5:20

Ver. 20. Here he shows the reason why the law was given; although (as it is in Ro 5:13) before that time sin was in the world, it was *that the offence might abound;* either strictly, the offence of that one man, or rather largely, the offence of every man. The particle *ὅτι* (rendered *that*), is to be taken either causally, and so it is interpreted by Ga 3:19, where it is said, *the law was added because of transgressions*, that thereby the guilt and punishment of sin being more fully discovered, the riches of God's free grace and mercy might be the more admired; or else eventually, it so falls out by accident, or by reason of man's corruption, that sin is thereby increased or augmented.

*The law is holy, just, and good, ( as Ro 7:12), how then doth that increase sin? Either as it irritates the sinner, Ro 3:20; and Ro 7:8,11, or makes manifest the sin, Ro 7:7,13; thereby sin is known to be, as indeed it is, out of measure sinful.*

*But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: this is added by way of correction, to mitigate the former assertion, and it lays down a second end of giving the law; the former was the increase and manifestation of sin, the latter is the abounding or superabounding of God's grace. There is this difference to be observed; that the first end is universal, for in all men, both good and bad, the law worketh the increase and knowledge of sin; but tho other is particular, and peculiar to the elect: to them only the grace of God is superabundant after that they have abounded in sin, and by how much the greater is their guilt, by so much the greater is the grace of God in the free forgiveness thereof.*

### Romans 5:21

Ver. 5. Before he ascribed dominion and reign to death, now to sin; the reason is evident, because death indeed reigneth by sin. Before also he had made the comparison between Adam and Christ, here it is between sin and grace, the power of one and of the other. The sum is, that as sin hath prevailed over all mankind to bring death upon man, not only a temporal but eternal death, so the grace of Christ prevails, and becomes effectual, to confer upon us eternal life.

*Righteousness;* i.e. imputed or imparted.

*By Jesus Christ our Lord:* see how sweetly the end answers the beginning of this chapter, and how Jesus Christ is both the Author and Finisher of all.

### Romans 6:1

#### Chapter Summary

Ro 6:1-13 Though justified by grace, we may not live in sin; since the very figure of baptism requireth us

to die with Christ unto sin, that we may lead a new life of holiness unto God.

Ro 6:14-20 The dispensation of grace freeth us from the dominion of sin; but we are still the servants of sin, if we obey it; therefore being freed from sin, we are bound unto holiness.

Ro 6:21-23 The end and wages of sin is death; but the fruit of holiness through God's grace is eternal life.

Ver. 1. Another anticipation; this Epistle abounds therewith. The apostle here prevents an objection, which might be occasioned, either by the foregoing doctrine in general, concerning justification by the free grace of God, and by a righteousness imputed to us; or by what he said more particularly in the close of the foregoing chapter, that *where sin abounded, grace did much more abound*. Some might hence infer, that there was no need then of inherent righteousness, that persons might abide and abound in sin, that so grace might be the more exalted in the forgiveness thereof. The apostle Jude speaks, Jude 1:4, of some that made this ill improvement of the grace of God. Those that draw such inferences from the premises, they put a false construction upon the apostle's doctrine, and a paralogism or fallacy upon themselves. They make the apostle's words more general than he meant or intended them: for the abounding of sin is not the occasion of the abounding of grace in all, but only in some, even in those who confess and forsake their sins. And they apply that to the time to come which the apostle only uttered of the time past. The abounding of sin in men before their conversion and calling, doth commend and exalt the abundant grace of God, in the forgiveness thereof; but not so if sin abound in them after they are converted and called. He propounds this objection by way of interrogation, partly to show his dislike that his doctrine should be so perverted, and partly to show the peace of his own conscience, that he was far from such a thought.

### Romans 6:2

Ver. 2. *God forbid;* be it not, or far be it; he rejects any such inference or consequence, as unworthy of an answer: q.d. Away with all such doctrines, as, under pretence of advancing grace, do promote sin, or obstruct a godly life. This phrase is frequent with the apostle, when he is speaking of any

absurdity: see Ro 3:4,6,31.

*How:* by this particle he shows the impossibility, or the incongruity, of the thing: see Mt 6:28 Ga 4:9. The following argument is very convincing, and may be thus formed: They whose property it is to be dead to sin, cannot any longer live therein; but the justified by faith are *dead to sin*. They are said to be dead to sin, who do not live under the power and dominion of it; who mortify sin, and suffer it (so far as they can) to have no life or power in it. Fall into it they may, but live and lie in it they cannot. It is not falling into the water that drowns a man, but it is his lying in it; so it is not falling into sin that damns a man, but it is his living in it.

### Romans 6:3

Ver. 3. *Know ye not?* q.d. This is a truth which you ought not to be ignorant of and which confirms what I say.

*Baptized into Jesus Christ:* to be baptized into Christ, is either to be baptized in the name of Christ; see Ac 10:48, and Ac 19:5; or else it is, incorporated, ingrafted, or planted into Christ, and so to be made members of his mystical body by baptism.

*Baptized into his death:* to be baptized into the death of Christ, is to have fellowship with him in his death, or to have the efficacy of his death sealed up to us; and that is the blessed privilege of as many as are baptized or planted into Christ; they are not only partakers of the merit of his death for justification, but of the efficacy of his death for mortification. See a parallel place, Ga 3:27.

### Romans 6:4

Ver. 4. *Therefore:* q.d. Because we are thus dead with Christ, *therefore,* &c.

*We are buried with him;* i.e. we have communion with him in his burial also, which represents a farther degree of the destruction of sin, by putting it, as it were, out of our sight, Ge 23:4, and having no more to do with it.

*By baptism into death:* he seems here to allude to the manner of baptizing in those warm Eastern countries, which was to dip or plunge the party baptized, and as it were to bury him for a while under water. See the like phrase, Col 2:12. Baptism doth not only represent our mortification and death to sin, but our progress and perseverance therein. Burial implies a continuing under death; so is mortification a continual dying unto sin.

*That like as Christ was raised up from the dead;* look as, after the death and burial of Christ, there followed his resurrection, so it must be with us; we must have communion with, and conformity to, the Lord Jesus Christ in his resurrection as well as in his death; both these are represented and sealed to us by the sacrament of baptism.

*By the glory of the Father;* i.e. by the power of the Father, which is called, Col 1:11, *his glorious power*. God is said elsewhere to have raised him *by his power*, 1Co 6:14; and in 2Co 13:4, he is said to live *by the power of God*. Some read it thus, he was raised from the dead, to the glory of the Father.

The preposition  $\delta\tau\alpha$  is sometimes rendered *to*: see 1Pe 1:3.

*Walk in newness of life;* i.e. live a new life, being actuated by new principles, aiming at new ends, and bringing forth new fruits of holiness: see Ro 7:6.

### Romans 6:5

Ver. 5. He prosecutes what he had before propounded, and illustrates it by an apt similitude, which is taken from grafting or planting. He takes it for granted, that believers are *planted together in the likeness of Christ's death*, i.e. are made conformable to him in his death: see Php 3:10. Christ died, and believers die; the one a natural, the other a spiritual death: the one by way of expiation, suffering, and satisfying for the sins of others; the other by way of mortification, killing and crucifying their own sins.

*We shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:* in the original the sentence is elliptical and imperfect, the words running thus, *we shall be of*

*his resurrection*; our translation therefore fills up the sense with a word borrowed from the preceding clause. See the like, Joh 5:36, *I have a greater witness than of John*, i.e. than that witness of John. The sense of the whole is this, That believers are not only dead, but risen with Christ, Col 3:1. They partake of such a resurrection as resembles his; as Christ arose from the dead to a new life, so we rise from dead works to *walk in newness of life*, Ro 6:4. Moreover, they are raised and quickened by a power and virtue that flows from Christ and his resurrection: this is that virtue which the apostle Paul so earnestly desired to be made a partaker of, Php 3:10. The graft revives with the stock in the spring, and that by a virtue which it receives from the stock; so as a believer is raised to newness of life, by virtue flowing from Christ, into whom he is ingrafted.

*Question.* Why doth he say believers *shall be* planted, &c.? Are they not so already, upon their believing in Christ?

*Answer.* The apostle rather chooseth to speak in the future, than in the present tense; rather *we shall be*, than we are, or have been; because the work is only begun; it daily increaseth more and more, until it comes to a full perfection in heaven.

### Romans 6:6

Ver. 6. By the *old man* is meant, that corrupt and polluted nature which we derive from Adam, the first man: see Eph 4:22 Col 3:9,10. The old and new man are opposites; as then the new man is the image of God repaired in us; so the old man is a depravation of that image of God, and a universal pollution of the whole man.

*Is crucified with him*; by virtue of our union with him, and by means of his death and crucifixion: see Ga 2:20.

*The body of sin* is the very same that he called before the old man. The corrupt nature is sometimes called *the body*, Ro 8:13, sometimes a *body of death*, Ro 7:24, and here *the body of sin*. It is indeed a mere mass and lump of sin; it is not one sin, but all sin seminally. It is with respect to this body of sin, that particular lusts and corruptions are called *members*, Col 3:5.

*Might be destroyed;* weakened more and more, till at last it be destroyed.

*That henceforth we should not serve sin;* as we did before regeneration, and as they still do who voluntarily commit it, Joh 8:34. They do not only act sin, but are acted by it, having as many lords as lusts, Tit 3:3. See more of this, Ro 6:16.

### Romans 6:7

Ver. 7. *He that is dead,* i.e. to *sin, is freed from* it; not only in respect of the guilt thereof, which sense the marginal reading of the word seems to respect, but also in regard of the service of it. This agrees best with the context; look, as he that is dead is freed and discharged from the authority of, those who had dominion over him in his lifetime, so it is with those that are dead to sin. There is a parallel place, 1Pe 4:1.

### Romans 6:8

Ver. 8. i.e. If we have fellowship with Christ in his death, we have reason to believe we shall have fellowship with him also in his resurrection and life: see Ro 6:5. Though everlasting be not excluded, yet a spiritual life is principally intended; we shall so live with Christ, as no more to return to dead works. The next words show this to be the sense.

### Romans 6:9

Ver. 9. q.d. Of this you know you have an example or copy in Christ himself; he so rose again, as never more to come under the power of death.

### Romans 6:10

Ver. 10. For when *he died unto sin,* i.e. to take away sin, he died but once; see Heb 9:28, and Ro 10:10,14; but when he rose again from the dead, he lived with God for ever an immortal, endless life. By this phrase is

expressed that eternal and indissoluble union which the Son hath with the Father.

### Romans 6:11

Ver. 11. So we in like manner must make account, that by virtue of his death we are dead to sin, and by virtue of his resurrection are alive to God, and so alive as never to resume our former courses, or return again to our former sins.

*Through Jesus Christ our Lord;* or, in Jesus Christ our Lord; i.e. after the similitude of Jesus Christ, who so lives as to die no more. Or else this phrase imports that Jesus Christ is the root of our spiritual life; even as the scion lives in the stock. so believers are alive unto God in Jesus Christ, receiving from him that virtue whereby their spiritual life is begun, maintained, and perfected.

### Romans 6:12

Ver. 12. *Let not sin therefore:* q.d. Seeing this is the case, that you are dead to sin, baptized into Christ, are planted together into the likeness of his death, &c., therefore the rather hearken to and obey the following exhortation. By *sin* he means the sin or corruption of our nature, the same that before he called the *old man*, and the *body of sin*. There are remainders thereof in the regenerate; in them it is mortified, but not eradicated; therefore to them this exhortation is not unnecessary.

*Reign;* he doth not say, let it not be or reside, but let it not reign or preside; let it not bear sway or have dominion in you; let it not have the upper hand of the motions of the Spirit of God.

*In your mortal body;* the body (called here a *mortal* or frail *body*) is put by a synecdoche for the whole man; and he the rather makes mention of the body, because the parts and members thereof are the usual instruments of sin. Therefore it follows in the next verse, *Neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness.*



*That ye should obey it in the lusts thereof;* i.e. that you should obey sin in the lust of the body. The gender of the relative article of the Greek, requires it should be so read and understood. The meaning is not as if lusts were in the body alone, for Christ teacheth the contrary, Mt 15:19,20; but because all sinful lusts do mostly show and manifest themselves in and through the body, Ga 5:19.

### Romans 6:13

Ver. 13. He fitly compares our bodily members to tools that artificers work, or weapons that soldiers fight withal; for as those, so these, may be used well or ill: e.g. With the hand one man giveth an alms, another stealeth; with the tongue one man blesseth, another curseth. By members here we are not only to understand the parts of the body, as the hands, eyes, ears, &c.; but also the faculties of the soul, as the understanding, will, affections, &c. These bear some proportion to the bodily members, as the understanding to the eye, &c. All of them must be employed by us as weapons to fight, not under the command of Satan for sin, but under the command of God for righteousness.

*As those that are alive from the dead:* these words contain a reason why we should not serve sin and Satan, but bequeath and dedicate ourselves to the service of God, because we are endued with a spiritual life, after a spiritual death; or because we have received so great a benefit as to be raised in Christ from the death and power of sin.

### Romans 6:14

Ver. 14. In the Ro 6:12 it was an exhortation, but in this it is a promise, that sin shall not reign in and over us. Rebel it may, but reign it shall not in the regenerate. It hath lost its absolute and uncontrolled power. It fares with sin in such as with those beasts in Da 7:12, who, though their lives were prolonged for a season, had their dominion taken away. It is an encouragement to fight, when we are sure of victory.

*For ye are not under the law, but under grace:* he adds this as a reason of that he had asserted and promised: you are not under a legal, but gospel

dispensation; so some expound the words; *grace* is often put for the gospel: or, you are not under the old but the new covenant.

*The law and grace* thus differ; the one condemns the sinner, the other absolves him; the one requires perfect, the other accepts sincere, obedience; the one prescribes what we must do, the other assists us in the doing of our duty. This last seems to be the genuine sense: q.d. You may be sure sin shall have no dominion over you; for you are not under the law, which forbids sin, but gives no power against it, or which requires obedience, and gives no strength to perform it (like the Egyptian taskmasters, who required bricks but gave no straw); but under the gospel or covenant of grace, where sin is not only forbidden, but the sinner is enabled to resist and overcome it.

*Question.* But what shall be said of the godly in the times of the law; were not they under grace?

*Answer.* They were, Ac 15:11 Heb 4:2; but not in the same degree. The godly had help and assistance under the law, but they had it not by the law. How believers are said not to be under the law: see Ro 7:4.

### Romans 6:15

Ver. 15. *What then?* doth it follow from hence that we are lawless, and may live as we list?

*God forbid:* q.d. No, by no means, the premises afford no such conclusion; though we are not under the curse and rigour of the law, yet we are under its directions and discipline: the gospel allows of sin no more than the law. The apostle is careful, both here and elsewhere, to prevent licentiousness, or the abuse of Christian liberty: see Ga 5:13 1Pe 2:16: see Ro 6:1, and See Poole on "Ro 6:1".

### Romans 6:16

Ver. 16. He refutes the aforementioned cavil by a common axiom, that every one knows and apprehends.

*Of obedience unto righteousness;* which will be rewarded with eternal life. But why doth he not say of obedience unto life? Then the antithesis had been more plain and full. Because though sin be the cause of death, yet obedience is not the cause of life, (as Ro 6:23), but only the way to it.

### Romans 6:17

Ver. 17. *But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin:* q.d. But as for you, God be thanked, that though once you were the servants of sin, viz. when you were ignorant and unregenerate, yet now you are freed from that bondage, and set at liberty from the power and dominion of sin.

*But ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you:* this phrase expresses the efficacy of Divine doctrine in the hearts of believers; it changeth and fashioneth their hearts according to its likeness, 2Co 3:18. Hence in Jas 1:21, it is called an *ingrafted word*; it turns the heart and life of the hearer into its own nature, as the stock doth the scion that is ingrafted into it. The doctrine of the gospel is the mould, and the hearer is the metal, which, when it is melted and cast into the mould, receives its form and figure.

### Romans 6:18

Ver. 18. *Made free from sin;* i.e. the servitude of sin; having received a manumission from that hard and evil master, you have given tap yourselves to a better and more ingenuous service.

### Romans 6:19

Ver. 19. *I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh:* q.d. I accommodate myself to your capacity, because of the weakness of your understanding in spiritual things; therefore I use this familiar similitude of service and freedom, that by these secular and civil things you might the better understand such as are spiritual: see Joh 3:12.

*For as ye have yielded, &c.:* q.d. The great thing that I desire of you (and it is most reasonable) is this, that you would be as sedulous and careful now to obey God, as you have formerly been to obey and serve sin; to do good, as you have been to do evil.

*To uncleanness;* to fleshly lusts, which defile you.

*To iniquity unto iniquity;* i.e. adding one sin to another; or else by the former you may understand original, by the latter actual sin. He useth three words about the service of sin, and but two about the service of God; wicked men take great pains for hell; oh that we would take the same for heaven.

### Romans 6:20

Ver. 20. q.d. When you served sin, you knew that God and righteousness had no whit of your service; why then should sin have any of your service now, when ye have delivered up yourselves to righteousness, or godliness, to be the observant followers thereof? Why should not ye now abstain as strictly from all sin, as then ye did from all good?

### Romans 6:21

Ver. 21. q.d. And this will be much more equal and reasonable, if you consider these three things:

1. How little fruit and satisfaction your former sins have afforded you in the very time of committing them.
2. How nothing but shame and sorrow doth follow upon the remembrance of them.
3. How death, yea, eternal death and damnation, (unless pardoning grace and mercy prevent it), will be the certain conclusion of them. And whether these things are true or not, I appeal to yourselves.

### Romans 6:22

Ver. 22. q.d. But now, on the contrary, being set at liberty from the service of sin, and admitted to be the servants of God, you plainly perceive a difference: for:

1. In your lifetime you increase in grace and holiness, and that is no small fruit or advantage; and then,
2. At your death you shall have everlasting life.

### Romans 6:23

Ver. 23. q.d. Now therefore compare the office of both these services together, and you shall easily see which master is best to serve and obey; the wages that sin will pay you, in the end is death; but the reward that God will freely bestow upon you (if you be his servants) *is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*Wages;* the word properly signifies victuals. The Romans of old paid their soldiers with provision and victuals in recompence of their service; afterward they gave them money, but still the old term was retained, and now it is used to signify any reward or stipend whatsoever.

*Is death:* by *death* here we must understand not only temporal, but also and more especially eternal death, as appears by the opposition it hath to *eternal life*: this is the just and true hire of sin.

*The gift of God is eternal life;* he doth not say that eternal life is the wages of righteousness, but that it is the gracious or free gift of God. He varies the phrase on purpose, to show that we attain not eternal life by our own merits, our own works or worthiness, but by the gift or grace of God; for which cause he also addeth, *through Jesus Christ our Lord.* See Aug. lib. de Gratia et Libero Arbitrio,

c. 9. Let the papists (if they can) reconcile this text to their distinction of mortal and venial sins, and to their doctrine of the meritoriousness of good works.

## Romans 7:1

### Chapter Summary

Ro 7:1-3 No law having power over a person longer than he lives,

Ro 7:4 we therefore, being become dead to the law by the body of Christ, are left free to place ourselves under a happier dispensation.

Ro 7:5-13 For the law, through the prevalency of corrupt passions, could only serve as an instrument of sin unto death; although it be in itself holy, and just, and good.

Ro 7:14-23 As is manifest by our reason approving the precepts of it, whilst our depraved nature is unable to put them in practice.

Ro 7:24,25 The wretchedness of man in such a situation, and God's mercy in his deliverance from it through Christ.

Ver. 1. The apostle, having showed in a former chapter how believers are freed from the dominion of sin, proceeds in this chapter to declare, that they are free also from the yoke of the Mosaical law, because that was dead to them, and they to it. This he illustrates, and proceeds by the familiar allegory of a husband and his wife: Look, as a wife is free from her husband when he is dead, and may then marry another, and be no adulteress; so believers are dead to the law, and are free to be married to another, even to Christ, that is raised from the dead, that upon their marriage they may bring forth fruit unto God.

By *the law* here he means the law of wedlock, or the law of Moses about that matter, as appears by the instance given in the next verse.

The word *man* here is common to both sexes, and may be applied to either, for both are subject to the aforementioned law.

## Romans 7:2

Ver. 2. He here exemplifies and illustrates the foregoing assertion.

*The woman is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth:* see a parallel place, 1Co 7:39. This is the general rule, yet there is an exception in the case of fornication or desertion: see Mt 5:32 1Co 7:15.

*From the law of her husband;* from the obligation of the law of marriage.

### Romans 7:3

Ver. 3,4. *Ye also are become dead to the law;* i.e. ye are taken off from all hopes of justification by it, and from your confidence in obedience to it, Ga 2:19. The opposition seems to require that he should have said, the law is dead to us; but these two phrases are much the same.

*Question.* What law does he mean?

*Answer.* Not only the ceremonial, but the moral law, for in that he instances, Ro 7:7. The moral law is in force still; Christ came to confirm, and not to destroy it; but believers are freed from the malediction, from the rigid exaction, and from the irritation thereof. Of this last he speaks, Ro 7:8,9, and from it we are freed but in part.

*By the body of Christ;* i.e. by the sacrifice of Christ's body upon the cross; thereby he delivered us from the law, in the sense before mentioned.

*Fruit unto God;* i.e. fruits of holiness and good works, to the glory and praise of God.

### Romans 7:5

Ver. 5. *For:* q.d. For bringing forth of which fruit unto God, we have now better helps than formerly we had; or we are in much better circumstances than formerly we were: and so he proceeds to show how our present state does differ from the former.

*When we were in the flesh;* i.e. in our carnal, fleshly state, before we were regenerated, or under the carnal pedagogy of the law; for in the next verse he speaks of our being *now delivered from the law*.

*The motions of sins which were by the law;* i.e. the corrupt inclinations to sin, which are drawn forth by the law, as ill vapours are raised out of a dunghill by the sun; or which are irritated by the law; of which by and by.

*Did work in, our members:* see [Ro 6:13,16](#).

*To bring forth fruit unto death;* i.e. such ill fruit as ends in death, [Ro 6:21](#).

### Romans 7:6

Ver. 6. *But now;* i.e. being brought out of our fleshly state.

*We are delivered from the law:* see the notes on [Ro 7:4](#).

*That being dead wherein we were held;* the relative is not in the Greek text, but it is well supplied to fill up the sense. The antecedent must be either sin or the law; by both of these we were held or detained whilst unregenerate; but now neither of these have any power to hold us with. Some read it, he being dead; the old man, of which he spake in the foregoing chapter.

*That we should serve in newness of spirit;* i.e. that we should serve God, or Jesus Christ, our new husband, in true holiness, which is wrought in us by the renewing of the spirit; or serve him in a new spiritual manner.

*And not in the oldness of the letter;* i.e. not in an outward and ceremonial manner, according to the letter of the law; which service, or way of worship, is now antiquated, and grown out of date. The word *oldness* insinuates the abolishing thereof, because of insufficiency, [Heb 8:13](#).

### Romans 7:7

Ver. 7. *Is the law sin? God forbid:* here is another anticipation of an



objection, which might arise from what the apostle had said, Ro 7:5, that sin was powerful in us by the law. Some might object and say, that the law then was sin, i.e. that it was the cause of it, and a factor for it. To this he answers, by his usual note of detestation, *God forbid*.

*Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law;* i.e. I had not known it so clearly and effectually, so as to humble and drive me to Christ; for otherwise, nature itself teaches a difference of good and evil in many things. He adds this as a reason why the law cannot be the cause of sin, because it discovers and reproveth sin, it detects and damns it; and that it so doth, he proves from his own experience.

*For had not known lust;* i.e. I had not known it to be sin. By *lust* here some understand that concupiscence which the school men call unformed concupiscence, which hath not the consent of the will: for the concupiscence to which we consent, the heathens themselves know to be sinful; but that which hath not the consent of the will, or the first motions to sin, they held to be no sin; as neither did the Pharisees, amongst whom Paul lived; nor do the papists to this very day. Some by *lust* understand original sin, which is the fountain from whence all particular lusts flow; the hot furnace from which all sinful motions, as so many sparks, continually arise: this is called *lust*, likewise, in Jas 1:14; and this is forbidden in every commandment; for where any of sin is prohibited, there the root also is prohibited; but more particularly it is forbidden in the tenth commandment.

*Except the law that said, Thou shalt not covet:* some understand the law in general; but the article used in the Greek seems to restrain it to a particular precept. Besides, they are the very words of the tenth commandment. But why doth he not mention the objects that are specified in that commandment, as, *thy neighbour's house, wife, &c.?* The answer is: That that was not material; for the apostle speaking of inward concupiscence, which without the law is latent and undiscovered, it was enough to name the sin itself, seeing the objects about which it is conversant are of all sorts, and can hardly be numbered.

Romans 7:8

Ver. 8. *But sin;* i.e. the corruption of our nature, the depraved bent and bias of the soul, called before *lust*.

*Taking occasion by the commandment;* i.e. being stirred up or drawn forth by the prohibition of the law. The law did not properly give occasion, but sin took it. The law (as before) is not the cause of sin, though by accident it is the occasion of it. In a dropsy, it is not the drink that is to be blamed for increasing the disease, but the ill habit of body. Such is the depravedness of man's nature, that the things which are forbidden are the more desired: the more the law would dam up the torrent of sinful lusts, the higher do they swell. The law was given to restrain sin, but through our corruption it falls out contrarily. The law inhibiting sin, and not giving power to avoid it, our impetuous lusts take occasion or advantage from thence, the more eagerly to pursue it.

*Wrought in me all manner of concupiscence;* i.e. inordinate affections and inclinations of all sorts.

*For without the law;* i.e. without the knowledge of the law.

*Sin was dead;* i.e. comparatively dead. Sin hath not so much power, either to terrify the conscience, or to stir up inordinate affections; it is like a sleepy lion, that stirs not.

### Romans 7:9

Ver. 9. *For I was alive without the law once:* q.d. Take me, if you please, for an instance. Before I knew the law aright, and understood the Divine and spiritual meaning of it, or whilst the law stood afar off, and was not brought home to my conscience, *I was alive*, that is, in my own conceit; I thought myself in as good condition as any man living; my conscience never gave me any trouble. So it was with me once, or heretofore, when I was a Pharisee, or in an unregenerate state.

*But when the commandment came;* i.e. when it came nearer to my conscience; when I came to know and understand the spiritual meaning and extent of it, that it condemned sinful lusts, affections, and inclinations.

*Sin revived;* i.e. its sinfulness and guilt appeared, and I had a lively sense thereof imprinted upon my soul; or my corruptions began to gather head, and seemed, as it were, to receive new vigour and life.

*And I died;* i.e. in my own opinion and feeling. I felt my conscience deadly wounded. I was convinced I was in a state of death and damnation. I lost the confidence I formerly had of my good estate.

### Romans 7:10

Ver. 10. q.d. So it came to pass, that the commandment, which was ordained to be a rule of life, and, if I could have kept it, a means of life also, Ro 10:5 Ga 3:12, I found it to be to me (through my corruption and transgression) an occasion of death; it bound me over to punishment; and so, by accident, it tendeth to death. Some by *life* and *death*, here, understand peace and perturbation of spirit.

### Romans 7:11

Ver. 11. *For sin, taking occasion by the commandment:* see the notes on Ro 7:8.

*Deceived me;* i.e. seduced and drew me aside, Heb 3:13 Jas 1:14.

*And by it slew me;* i.e. it drove me into despair, or delivered me over to death and damnation, and made me obnoxious thereunto.

### Romans 7:12

Ver. 12. *Wherefore the law is holy;* and so the objection, Ro 7:7, was a groundless objection: for though the law were the occasion of sin, or were made advantage of by sin, as Ro 7:8, yet it was not the cause of it; that, on all hands, is acknowledged to be holy, &c.

*The law;* the law in all the branches of it.

*The commandment;* particularly the precepture part of the law, and every particular precept.

*Holy, and just, and good:* the three epithets here given the law of God may be thus distinguished; it is *holy* in respect of the ceremonial part, it is *just* in respect of the judicial part, and *good* in respect of the moral part of it. Or else the law is *holy*, as it teacheth us our duty unto God; *just*, as it showeth us our duty to our neighbour; *good*, in regard of the effect and end, as it works goodness in the observer thereof, and is conducive to his temporal and eternal good.

### Romans 7:13

Ver. 13. *Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid:* another anticipation. The apostle denies that the holy law was in its own nature deadly, or the cause of death to him; the fault was not in the law, but in his own depraved nature: but the plain case is this that follows.

*But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good;* that sin, that so it might appear every way like itself, wrought death in him, by occasion of that law, which yet itself is holy, just, and good.

*That sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful;* so as hereupon sin, which in the time of his ignorance and unregeneracy seemed not worthy of any notice, appeared to be exceeding foul and sinful. Sin is so evil, that he cannot call it by a worse name than its own. Jerome thinks, that the apostle here commits a solecism, by joining an adjective of the masculine gender with a substantive of the feminine; but Beza and Erasmus have observed, that this is usual in the Attic dialect. See the like, Ro 1:20. Some read sinner for *sinful*, and make the apostle to speak of sin as of a certain person; and therefore all along the context sin is said to work, to be dead, to revive, to deceive, to kill, &c., which is properly attributed to persons, and not to things.

### Romans 7:14

Ver. 14. He goes on to clear the law, and excuse it, giving it another

commendation, that it is *spiritual*; i.e. it requires such obedience as is not only outward, but inward and spiritual; it forbids spiritual as well as fleshly sins. Read Christ's exposition of it, in Mt 5:1-48.

*I am carnal*; i.e. in part, because of the remainders of sin and of the flesh that are still in me; in respect of which, those who are regenerated are said to be carnal. Compare 1Co 1:2, with 1Co 3:1.

*Sold under sin*: he did not actively sell himself to sin, or to commit sin, which is said of Ahab, 1Ki 21:20,25, and of the idolatrous Israelites, 2Ki 17:17. He was not sin's servant or slave; but many times he was sin's captive against his will; see Ro 7:23. Against his will and consent, he was still subject to the violent lusts and assaults of sin, and not able wholly to free himself: though he always made stout resistance, yet many times he was overcome. Hitherto the apostle hath spoken of the power of the law and sin in unregenerate persons, even as he himself had experienced whilst he was yet in such a state; but now he cometh to speak of himself as he then was, and to declare what power the remainders of sinful flesh had still in him, though regenerated, and in part renewed. That the following part of this chapter is to be applied to a regenerate person, is evident, because the apostle (speaking of himself in the former verses) uses the preter-perfect tense, or speaks of that which was past; but here he changeth the tense, and speaks of the present time. From Ro 7:7-14, he tells us how it had been with him formerly; and then from Ro 7:14-25, he relates how it was with him now; *I was* so and so, *I am* thus and thus. The changing of the tense and time doth plainly argue a change in the person. They that list to be further satisfied in this point, may find it fully discussed in our own language, by Mr. Anthony Burgess, in his excellent discourse of Original Sin, part iv. c. 3, and by Dr. Willet, in his *Hexalta in locum*; and they that understand the Latin tongue, may find it argued *pro* and *con*, in *Synops. Critic. &c.*, and by Aug. *Retractat. lib. i. c. 23*; *Contra Julian. lib. v. c. 11*.

### Romans 7:15

Ver. 15. *For that which I do*; i.e. what I do contrary to the command of God.

*I allow not*: in the Greek it is, I know not: q.d. Many times I am surprised

and overtaken, not knowing or considering what I do. Or when he says, I know not, his meaning is, (as our translation renders it), *I allow* or approve *not*. So the word is used, Mt 7:23, and elsewhere: q.d. Even now, in my converted and regenerate state, I am many times greatly divided, and feel a strife or combat in myself; so that the good I would do upon the motions of God's Spirit in me, I do not; and the evil that I hate, and am utterly averse to, so far as I am regenerated, that I do. See a parallel place, Ga 5:17.

*But what I hate, that do I:* he doth not speak here so much of outward actions, as of inward motions and affections: he doth not speak of gross sins, as drunkenness, uncleanness, &c., but of such infirmities as flow from the polluted nature, and from which we can never be thoroughly cleansed in this life.

#### Romans 7:16

Ver. 16. This very thing is an argument, that the law is such as I have before asserted, Ro 7:12,14. This shows my consent to the holiness and goodness of the law; I vote with it, and for it, as the only rule of right or righteousness.

#### Romans 7:17

Ver. 17. *It is no more I that do it;* i.e. it is not I as spiritual or renewed, it is not my whole self, *but it is sin that dwelleth in me,* that inhabits in me as a troublesome inmate, that I cannot get rid of, that will not out so long as the house stands; as the fretting leprosy in the walls of a house would not out till the house itself were demolished. It is such an inhabitant as is never from home; it is not in us as a stranger for a season, but it makes its constant abode with us.

#### Romans 7:18

Ver. 18. *In my flesh;* i.e. in my fleshly part, or my nature in and of itself.

*No good thing;* no goodness at all, or no spiritual good.

*For to will is present with me;* i.e. I can, so long and so far as I follow the motions of God's Spirit, will that which is good; *but how to perform the good* that I would, *I find no* power or might, at least to perform it in that manner that I desire: the meaning is not that he never did the good he desired; but it often so fell out, he began many good things, but he could not go thorough-stitch with them.

### Romans 7:19

Ver. 19,20. These two verses are a repetition of what he had said, Ro 7:15,17. Every new man is two men; there is in him an I and an I. The apostle in his unregenerate state, could make no such distinction as now he doth.

### Romans 7:21

Ver. 21. This verse hath greatly vexed interpreters. The apostle speaking simply and abstractly of *a law*, the question is: What law he means? Some take the word improperly, for a decree or condition, which was imposed upon him, and to which he was necessarily subject, that when he would do good, evil should be present with him. Others by *law* here do understand the law of sin; of which he speaks afterwards, Ro 7:23,25. Sin is like a law, and so powerful and imperious in its commands and dictates, that we have much ado, the best of us, to resist it, and shake off its yoke. q.d. I find by sad experience such a forcible power in sin, that when I would do good, I am hindered, and cannot do it so freely and fully as I desire. Others by *law* here do understand the law of God; and those that so understand it, have given no less than eight interpretations, to make the grammatical connexion: the best is of those that say the preposition  $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha$  is understood, a frequent ellipsis in the Greek tongue, (see Jas 1:26), and then the sense is this; I find that when, according to the law or command of God, I would do good, evil is present with me.

*Evil is present with me;* another periphrasis of original sin, of which there are many in this chapter. Just now it was the sin that dwelleth in us, and

here it is the evil that is present with us: it inheres and adheres, or hangs upon us continually. It is adjacent, so the Greek word signifies, and always at hand; we carry it about with us at all times, and into all places; whithersoever we go, it follows us; or, as it is here, in our doing of good it is a very great impediment to us.

### Romans 7:22

Ver. 22. This shows yet more expressly that the apostle speaketh in the person of a regenerate man, or of himself as regenerate. Certainly, to *delight in the law of God* is an inseparable property of such a one: see Ps 1:2, and Ps 119:77,111.

*The inward man;* i.e. the new man, or regenerate part within me: this is called *the hidden man of the heart*, 1Pe 3:4; see Ro 2:29 2Co 4:16.

### Romans 7:23

Ver. 23. *Another law in my members;* i.e. a law quite different from *the law of God*, mentioned in the foregoing verse. By the *law in the members* understand natural corruption, which, like a law, commandeth and inclineth by sensual rewards and punishments; and by the *law in the mind* understand a principle of grace, which, as a law, as well as the other, commandeth and inclineth to that which is good. The *law in the members* and the *law in the mind*, are the same that are called *flesh* and *Spirit*, Ga 5:17. These two laws and principles are in all regenerate persons, and are directly contrary to one another; hence there is continual warring and combating betwixt them; as is expressed in both these places, as also in Jas 4:1 1Pe 2:11.

*Bringing me into captivity to the law of sin;* i.e. drawing and hurrying me to the commission of sin, against my will and consent. He pursues the metaphor; the flesh doth not only war in the regenerate, but many times it overcomes and hath success: see Ro 7:15.

*To the law of sin which is in my members;* i.e. to itself. The antecedent is put in the room of the relative: see Ge 9:16, and elsewhere. The *law in the*



*members and the law of sin in the members are the same.*

### Romans 7:24

Ver. 24. *O wretched man that I am!* The word signifies one wearied out with continual combats.

*Who shall deliver me?* It is not the voice of one desponding or doubting, but of one breathing and panting after deliverance: the like pathetic exclamations are frequent: see Ps 55:6. One calls this verse, *gemitus sanctorum*, the groan of the godly.

*From the body of this death;* or, from this body of death; or, by a Hebraism, from this dead body, this carcass of sin, to which I am inseparably fastened, as noisome every whit to my soul as a dead carcass to my senses. This is another circumlocution, or denomination of original sin. It is called *the body of sin*, Ro 6:6, and here *the body of death*; it tends and binds over to death.

### Romans 7:25

Ver. 25. *I thank God;* who hath already delivered me from the slavery and dominion of sin; so that though it wars against me, I still resist it, and, by the strength of Christ, do frequently overcome it, 1Co 15:57.

*So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin:* this is the conclusion the apostle maketh of this experimental discourse. q.d. So far as I am renewed, I yield obedience to the law of God; and so far as I am unregenerate, I obey the dictates and suggestions of the law of sin.

*Objection.* No man can serve two contrary masters.

*Answer.* The apostle did not serve these two in the same part, or the same renewed faculty; nor did he do it at the same time, ordinarily; and for the most part he served the law of God, though sometimes, through the power of temptation and indwelling corruption, he was enforced, against his will,

to serve the law of sin.

## Romans 8:1

### Chapter Summary

Ro 8:1-4 Under the gospel we are free from condemnation, walking after the Spirit.

Ro 8:5-8 The evil of being carnally minded, and the good of being spiritually minded.

Ro 8:9-11 Christians have God's Spirit to guide and assist them,

Ro 8:12,13 by which if they mortify the flesh, they shall live.

Ro 8:14-18 For they that are led by the Spirit are sons of God, and heirs of glory,

Ro 8:19-22 whose manifestation the world hath long earnestly looked for, hoping to be rescued thereby from the bondage of corruption.

Ro 8:23 And even they who have the first fruits of the Spirit do still long after it,

Ro 8:24,25 being hitherto saved by hope only,

Ro 8:26,27 the Spirit in the mean time aiding their infirmities in prayer.

Ro 8:28-30 Nevertheless the final good of them that fear God is all along pursued, being fore-ordained of God, and brought about according to the course of his providence.

Ro 8:31-39 The ground and assurance of the Christian's hope.

Ver. 1. *There is therefore now;* seeing things are so as I have said, since believers do not allow themselves in sin, Ro 7:15, and are in part delivered from it, as Ro 8:25, therefore it follows as it is here.

*No condemnation;* or no one condemnation. He doth not say, there is no matter of condemnation, or nothing damnable in them that are in Christ, there is enough and enough of that; but he says, there is no actual condemnation to such: see Joh 3:18 5:24. There is a meiosis in the words, more is understood than is expressed; he means, that justification and

eternal salvation is the portion of such. The positive is included in the negative; it is God's condemnation only, from which such as are in Christ are exempted; they are nevertheless condemned and censured by men, and sometimes by their own consciences too.

*To them which are in Christ Jesus;* so we fill it up, but in the original it is only, to them in Christ Jesus. The phrase imports, that there is a mystical and spiritual union between Christ and believers. This is sometimes expressed by Christ's being in them, Ro 8:10; 2Co 13:5 Col 1:17; and here by their being in Christ: see 1Co 1:30 1Jo 5:20. Christ is in believers by his Spirit, and believers are in Christ by faith.

*Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit:* this clause describes the persons who are united to Christ, or who are exempted from condemnation; they are such as *walk not*, &c. By *flesh* understand the corrupt nature that is in man: see Ro 7:18,25 Joh 3:6 Ga 5:17: to *walk after* it, is to be led and guided by the motions of it. That is, it is not their principle and guide, there is another nature or principle in them, by which they are guided and acted; and what that is the next words tell you.

By *the Spirit* some understand the person of the Spirit; others, the grace of the Spirit, the new or divine nature (as it is called) which is implanted in the soul in the work of regeneration: this is called *the Spirit*, Mt 26:41 Joh 3:6 Ga 5:17. To *walk after the Spirit*, is to be led and guided by the counsels and motions thereof. It is to regulate and order the whole conversation according to the rule of the new creature, or according to the line and square of God's word and Spirit. You have the same phrase, Ga 5:16,25. To *walk after the Spirit*, is not only now and then to have some good motions, or to do some good actions, but it is to persevere and go forward therein; walking is a continued and progressive motion. The connexion of these two shows that negative holiness is not enough; we must not only abstain from evil, but do good.

## Romans 8:2

Ver. 2. *The law of the Spirit of life;* some understand hereby the doctrine of the gospel, which is called *the law of the Spirit of life*, because it is the

ministry of the Spirit and of life. Others understand the efficacy and power of that grace and holiness, wherewith the living and quickening Spirit of God hath filled the human nature of Christ. Others rather understand a regenerating and working the new and heavenly life in the soul, with great power and efficacy.

*In Christ Jesus;* i.e. which was poured out upon him, and doth still reside in him after a very eminent manner: see Isa 11:2 Lu 4:1. Or, *in Christ Jesus,* is as much as by Christ Jesus, it is he that gives and conveys this Spirit, how, when and to whom he pleases.

*Hath made me free from the law of sin:* by sin here he aims chiefly at original sin; he doth not say, that those who are in Christ are simply and absolutely delivered from sin, but *from the law of sin;* i.e. the power, dominion, and tyranny thereof.

*And death;* i.e. from sin that is deadly, or of a deadly nature; as *the Spirit of life* is the living Spirit, so *sin and death* is no more, say some, than deadly sin. Others take *death* to be distinct from *sin,* and think he speaks of a double deliverance; and then by *death* they understand eternal or *the second death:* see Re 20:6. The sense of the whole is this: That the mighty power of the renewing and quickening Spirit did free the apostle, and does free all believers, from the command and rule of sin, so that it does not reign over them, as formerly it did; and being thus freed from the power of sin, they are also freed from the power of death and eternal condemnation. So it seems as a proof of the foregoing proposition, That *there is no condemnation to them, &c.*

### Romans 8:3

Ver. 3. In this verse is a further proof of the main proposition in Ro 8:1. There are two things in sin that may endanger us as to condemnation, the power and the guilt of it. As to the freeing us from the former, viz. the power of sin, of that he had spoken in the foregoing verse; as to taking away the guilt of sin, of that he speaks in this verse.

*For what the law could not do:* by *the law* here he means the moral law, *the righteousness* whereof is to *be fulfilled in us,* Ro 8:4. What is it the

law cannot do? There are several answers; but this is principally meant, it cannot justify us before God. It can condemn us, but it cannot exempt us from condemnation: see Ac 13:38,39 Ga 3:21 Heb 7:18,19.

*In that it was weak through the flesh:* by *flesh*, as before, we must understand the corrupt nature; that is, every man since the fall. This is that which puts a weakness and inability upon the law. The impotency of the law is not from itself, but from the condition of the subject with whom it hath to do. The law is weak to us, because we are weak to it: the sun cannot give light to a blind eye, not from any impotency in itself, but merely from the incapacity of the subject it shines upon.

*God sending his own Son:* to justify and save fallen man, was impossible for the law to do; therefore God will find out another way, that shall do it effectually. What his own law cannot do, his own Son can; and therefore him he will send.

*In the likeness of sinful flesh;* i.e. such flesh as sin hath made now to be subject to many infirmities and weaknesses. Flesh in this clause carries quite another sense than it did in the first verse; and in the former part of this verse, than it doth in the following verse; there it is taken morally for the corrupt nature of man, here physically for the human nature of Christ. The word *likeness* is to be linked, not with flesh, but with sinful flesh; he had true and real flesh, but he had only the appearance and likeness of sinful flesh: see 2Co 5:21 Heb 4:15 7:26 1Pe 1:19.

*And for sin;* either this clause is to be joined to what goes before, and then the sense is, that God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, that he might take away sin. Or else it is joined to what follows, and then there is an ellipsis in it; something is cut off, or left out, which must be understood. The margin of our common Bibles insert the word sacrifice: q.d. By a sacrifice for sin, or by a sin-offering, he *condemned sin*. &c. This ellipsis is usual in Scripture. Isa 53:10, *When thou shalt make his soul sin;* that is, (as our translation renders it), *an offering for sin*.

Eze 45:19, *The priest shall take of the blood of the sin;* we read it, *of the sin-offering*. See the like in Hos 4:8 2Co 5:21 Heb 10:6.

*Condemned sin in the flesh;* the Syriac reads it, in his flesh. The meaning

is, that God severely punished sin, and inflicted the curse and penalty of it, that was due to us, in and upon the person of his own Son; God laid on him the iniquities of us all, and he bore them in his body upon a tree: see Ga 3:13 1Pe 2:24.

#### Romans 8:4

Ver. 4. *That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us:* here is another end of God's sending his Son, as before; it was that he might perfectly fulfil the righteousness of the law in or for us, which for us ourselves to do in our own persons was utterly impossible; and yet upon which (as being imputed unto them, and accepted of God on our behalf) we shall be accounted just and righteous, as if we had done it ourselves. Christ's being a sacrifice for sin was not sufficient to answer all the ends and demands of the law; there must be doing of what it commanded, as well as suffering of what it threatened: therefore Christ was sent for both, and both were accomplished by him; and what he did and suffered is accounted unto us as if we had done and suffered it. This is the imputed righteousness which was so often spoken of, Ro 4:1-25; and in reference to this he is said to be *made righteousness* for us, 1Co 1:30, and we are said to be *made the righteousness of God in him*, Ro 5:19 2Co 5:21.

*Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit:* this was the description before of those that had union with Christ, and exemption from condemnation; and it is again set down, as the description of those who partake of the righteousness of Christ in this way of imputation; and it is added here again, to stave off all others from laying claim to this grace. None but holy walkers can warrantably apply Christ's fulfilling or satisfying the law to themselves: because Christ hath fulfilled the righteousness of the law for us, none may infer there is nothing for us to do, we may live as we list; for though Christ hath fulfilled the law in all respects, yet all those for whom he hath so done, or have benefit thereby, are, and must be, such as *walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit:* for the opening of which terms, see Ro 8:1.

#### Romans 8:5

Ver. 5. *For they that are after the flesh;* i.e. that are carnal and unregenerate persons, in a mere natural state.

*Do mind the things of the flesh;* either such things as are absolutely evil, and are called, *the works of the flesh*, Ga 5:19-21; or else such things as are occasionally evil, as riches, honours, pleasures, &c. These are also called *the things of the flesh*, and are such as carnal persons mind; i.e. they savour, affect, and take delight in them.

*But they that are after the Spirit;* i.e. that are spiritual and regenerate, in whom the Spirit dwells.

*The things of the Spirit;* i.e. they mind spiritual and heavenly things, they relish them most of all; see Ps 4:7 73:25.

### Romans 8:6

Ver. 6. In this verse we have an account of the different end of those that are carnal and spiritual, as in the former we had a description of their different carriage and disposition.

*For to be carnally minded is death;* i.e. to be of that temper before described, Ro 8:5; to mind and affect *the things of the flesh*, doth cause death, or will end in it: the second or eternal death is chiefly intended.

*But to be spiritually minded;* i.e. to mind and savour the things of the Spirit, to find a sweetness and excellency therein, so as that the bent and inclination of the mind shall be thereto.

*Is life and peace;* it is the way to eternal life hereafter, and to a sound peace here, Ps 119:165 Pr 3:17 Ga 6:16.

### Romans 8:7

Ver. 7. Neither can the carnal man look for any better issue, *because the carnal mind is enmity against God*. He doth not say it is an enemy, but in the abstract, it is *enmity*, which heightens and intends the sense: an enemy

may be reconciled, as Esau was to Jacob; but enmity cannot be reconciled; as black may be made white, but blackness cannot.

*For it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be:* this is rendered as a reason of the foregoing assertion, and it is taken from the property of enmity. Those that are at enmity, cross each other's wills, and will not submit to one another: and the carnal mind is rebellious in the highest degree against the will of God, unless it be changed and renewed; it is impossible it should be otherwise; there is in it a moral impotency to obedience: see Joh 8:43 1Co 2:14.

### Romans 8:8

Ver. 8. *So then;* this verse is a consequtary, or it follows from that which went before.

*They that are in the flesh;* not they which are married, as a pope once expounded it; the next verse refels such an absurd conception; but they that are carnal and unregenerate; the same with those who, in Ro 8:5, are said to be *after the flesh*.

*Cannot please God;* neither they, nor any thing they do, is pleasing unto him; their best works are dead works, and silken sins (as one expreseth it): it must be understood with this limitation, so long as they continue in such a state: see Ps 5:4,5 Heb 11:6.

### Romans 8:9

Ver. 9. Here he applies what he had laid down more generally to the believing Romans in particular.

*Not in the flesh, but in the Spirit;* i.e. not *after the flesh*, but *after the Spirit*, ( as in Ro 8:5), or not carnally, but spiritually minded.

*If so be that;* the conjunction here is causal, not conditional; it may be rendered, seeing that, or forasmuch as: see Ro 8:17,31 2Th 1:6.



*The Spirit of God dwell in you;* the Spirit of God dwells in the regenerate, not only by the immensity of his presence, so he is every where and in all things; but by the presence and efficacy of his grace. The indwelling of the Spirit in believers denotes two things:

1. His ruling in them: where a man dwells as Lord, there he doth command and bear rule.
2. His abiding in them, and that for ever, Joh 14:16.

*If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his;* if he has not the same Spirit which in the former part of the verse is called *the Spirit of God*: it is called *the Spirit of Christ*, because it proceeds from him, and is procured by him, Joh 14:26 Joh 16:7 Ga 4:6. When he saith such a one is none of Christ's, he means, that he doth not peculiarly belong to Christ, he hath no special interest in him, is no true member of him. As a merchant sets his seal upon his goods, so doth Christ his Spirit upon his followers, Eph 1:13.

### Romans 8:10

Ver. 10. *If Christ be in you;* before he said, the Spirit of God and Christ dwelt in them; here, Christ himself. Christ dwells in believers by his Spirit.

*The body is dead because of sin:* by *body* some understand the corrupt and unregenerate part in the godly, as if that were as good as dead in them. But others take the word in its proper signification, and think no more is meant thereby than that the bodies, even of believers, are mortal bodies; so they are called in the next verse: they are subject to death as the bodies of other men.

*But the Spirit is life:* some by *Spirit* here do understand the Spirit of God; and he *is life*, that is, he will quicken and raise up your bodies again to an immortal life.

Others by *Spirit* do understand the soul, yet not simply and absolutely considered, but as renewed by grace; that is life, or that doth live; it lives a life of grace here, and it shall live a life of glory hereafter.

*Because of righteousness; by righteousness here understand, either imputed righteousness, which gives us a right and title to salvation; or inherent righteousness, which is a necessary condition required in every person that shall indeed be saved. The sum is: If you be Christians indeed, though your bodies die, ye; your souls shall live, and that for ever; and your dead bodies shall not finally perish, but shall certainly be raised again; so it follows in the next verse.*

### Romans 8:11

Ver. 11. *Him that raised up Jesus from the dead;* a periphrasis of God the Father. The Son raised himself, Joh 2:19 10:18; and yet the Father is said here to raise him from the dead: see notes on Ro 1:4.

*Quicken your mortal bodies;* raise them from a state of mortality, and all the attendants, to a glorious immortal life.

*By his Spirit that dwelleth in you:* q. d. If you are sanctified by the Spirit, you shall be raised up by the Spirit also, as Christ was. The wicked also shall be raised at the last day. But the righteous shall be raised after a peculiar manner; they shall be raised, as by the almighty power of God, so by virtue of their union with Christ as his members, and by virtue of their relation to the Spirit as his temples. They only shall partake of a resurrection that is desirable and beneficial to them. Therefore it is called emphatically *the resurrection of the just*, Lu 14:14; and these two are joined together, as belonging one to the other; *the children of God*, and *the children of the resurrection*, Lu 20:36.

### Romans 8:12

Ver. 12. *Therefore;* this illative particle sends us to the things before delivered: q. d. Seeing we are not in the flesh, but have the Spirit of God dwelling in us; not only sanctifying and enlivening our souls for the present, but raising and quickening our bodies for the time to come; *therefore we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh;* i.e. we are not debtors to sin, or the corrupt and sinful nature that is in us; we owe it

no service, there is nothing due to it from believers, but blows, and the blue eye that the apostle gave it. The antithesis is omitted, but it is necessarily implied and understood; and that is, that we are debtors to the Spirit, to live and walk after it.

### Romans 8:13

Ver. 13. *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die;* viz. eternally, and never partake of the glorious resurrection before spoken of. The godly themselves need this caution; they must not think, that because they are elected and justified, &c., that therefore they may do and live as they list.

*Through the Spirit;* i.e. by the grace and assistance of the Spirit.

*Mortify;* i.e. kill and put to death. It is not enough to forbear the actings of sin, but we must kill and crucify it. Sin may be left upon many considerations, and yet not mortified.

Evil deeds are called *the deeds of the body*, because the body is so instrumental in the doing thereof. There are some, that by *body* here do understand the corrupt nature, the same that before in many places he calls the flesh: this was called, Ro 8:6, *the body of sin*, and here it is called *the body*.

*Ye shall live;* viz. eternally. See a parallel place, Ro 6:22 Ga 6:8: see Ro 8:6.

### Romans 8:14

Ver. 14. This proves the latter part of the foregoing verse: Such as by the Spirit do mortify sin, shall live, for *they are the sons of God;* and that appears, because they *are led by the Spirit of God*. He doth not say, as many as live by the Spirit, but, *as are led by the Spirit;* to show (says one) that the Spirit must be the guide and ruler of our life, as the pilot is of the ship, and as a rider is of his horse. The phrase is borrowed (says another) either from those who are guided and directed as a blind man in his way; or from those who, wanting strength of their own, are borne and carried of

others: so we are both ways led by the Spirit, for we can neither see our way, unless the Spirit direct us; nor have we strength to walk in it, unless the Spirit assist and draw us along. The Spirit leads and draws us irresistibly and necessarily, and yet not violently or against our wills; though we were unwilling before, yet we are made willing afterwards; so willing, that we desire and pray to be led by the Spirit. See Ps 25:5 143:10 So 1:4.

### Romans 8:15

Ver. 15. This verse proves the former, that we *are led by the Spirit of God*, and are his children, and that by an effect of the Spirit in them, which is to enable them to call God *Father*. He doth not here speak of two distinct Spirits, but one and the same Spirit of God, in different persons and at different times, is both *the spirit of bondage* and *the Spirit of adoption*.

*The spirit of bondage* seems to respect either that state of servitude, which the people of God were under in the time of the ceremonial law; see Ga 4:3,9; or it respects the publishing of the moral law upon Mount Sinai, which was with horror and fear. Compare Ex 19:16, with Heb 12:18-21: see Ga 4:24. Or else it respects that horror and slavish fear, which the Spirit of God doth work in men's hearts and consciences, by the ministry of the law, when he opens the eyes of men to see they are in bondage and slavery to sin and Satan, and that they are subject and obnoxious to the wrath and vengeance of God; this is many times preparatory and introductory to their conversion; but when they are regenerated they are delivered from it: see Lu 1:74 Heb 2:15 1Jo 4:18.

*Objection.* Many of God's children are full of doubts and fears.

*Answer.* These are not always from the suggestions of God's Spirit, but the misgivings of their own spirits. Some distinguish between the spirit of bondage and desertion; the children of God are delivered from the former, but exercised with the latter. The Spirit of God is called *the Spirit of adoption*, both because he works and effects it in us, and because he testifies and assures it to us. He might have said, the Spirit of liberty; the antithesis required it; but he said as much, when he called him *the Spirit of adoption*, for children are free.

*Whereby we cry, Abba, Father;* or, by whom we cry. Acceptable prayer is wrought in us by the Spirit, Ro 8:26. *Abba* is a Hebrew or Syriac word, signifying Father; why then is the word Father added in the Greek? To signify, that God is the Father both of Jews and Gentiles, Ro 3:29 10:12; or to show the double paternity that is in God, he is the Father of all men by creation, of believers only by grace and regeneration: or, rather, to denote the importunity and earnestness which ought to be in prayer; and so it agrees with the former word, crying. Ingeminations carry an earnestness with them. There are two places more where these two words are repeated or used together, Mr 14:36 Ga 4:6.

#### Romans 8:16

Ver. 16. The Spirit of adoption doth not only excite us to call upon God as our Father, but it doth ascertain and assure us (as before) that we are his children. And this it doth not by an outward voice, as God the Father to Jesus Christ; nor by an angel, as to Daniel, and the virgin Mary; but by an inward and secret suggestion, whereby he raiseth our hearts to this persuasion, that God is our Father, and we are his children. This is not the testimony of the graces and operations of the Spirit, but of the Spirit itself. Conceive it thus; A man's own spirit doth witness to him his adoption, he finds in himself, upon diligent search and examination, the manifest signs and tokens thereof. But this testimony of itself is weak, and Satan hath many ways and wiles to invalidate it; therefore, for more assurance, it is confirmed by another and greater testimony, and that is of the Spirit himself; he witnesses with our spirits, and seals it up unto us; he first works grace in our hearts, and then witnesseth to it. This testimony is not alike in all believers, nor in any one of them at all times; it is better felt than expressed. He witnesseth to our spirit (so some read) by a distinct and immediate testimony, and witnesses with our spirit (so the word properly signifies) by a conjunctive and concurrent testimony.

#### Romans 8:17

Ver. 17. *And if children, then heirs;* there is a parallel text in Ga 4:7. It is not so with the children of earthly princes: see 2Ch 21:3.

*Joint-heirs with Christ;* or co-heirs with Christ; he is our elder Brother, and is not ashamed to call us brethren: the inheritance is his by nature, ours by grace.

*If so be that we suffer with him;* the cross of Christ is the condition of our heavenly inheritance. The pronoun *him* is not in the original, but fitly supplied in our translation. Suffering *with him*, is much the same with suffering for him: suffering believers do but pledge Christ in the cup that he began to them.

*That we may be also glorified together;* or, glorified with him, not with equal glory, but according to our proportion; he was glorified in this way, Lu 24:26, and so must we. Three things are implied in our being *glorified together*:

1. Conformity; we shall in some measure be like him in glory: see Joh 17:22 Php 3:21.
2. Concomitancy; we shall be present with him in glory, Joh 17:24 1Th 4:17.
3. Conveyance; our glory will be from him; his glory will reflect on us, and we shall shine in his beams.

### Romans 8:18

Ver. 18. *For I reckon;* i.e. I make account, I certainly conclude: see Ro 3:28. The word is borrowed either from arithmeticians, who by casting their accounts do find the true and total sum; or from logicians, who by considering the premises do draw the conclusion.

*Not worthy to be compared;* the word properly signifieth that part of the balance which goeth down: q.d. If the sufferings of this life be weighed with the glory to come, they will be light in comparison. These words, *to be compared*, are supplied in our translation to make up the sense.

*Revealed in us;* it is revealed to us, and it shall be revealed in us. This text

is a confutation of the popish doctrine of merit and human satisfaction.

### Romans 8:19

Ver. 19. The apostle Peter, speaking of the Epistles of our apostle, in 2Pe 3:16, saith, that there are *some things* in them *hard to be understood*; and some think, by reflecting upon some particular passages in that chapter, he doth more especially respect this context; there is indeed a great deal of obscurity in it.

*The creature*: this word is four times used in this and the three following verses, only in Ro 8:22 it is rendered *creation*; that is the subject of which all that followeth is predicated. One main question therefore is this: Of what creature the apostle here speaks? Divers answers are or may be given; I will fix upon two only.

1. By *the creature*, or *the creation*, ( and, Ro 8:22, *the whole creation*, or every creature), is meant all mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, and especially the latter: see Mr 16:15; there Christ gives it in commission to *preach the gospel to every creature*; it is the same word. And in 1Pe 2:13, they are commanded to *submit themselves to every ordinance of man*: in the original it is, to every human creature, the same word which is in the text before us: he means the Gentile or heathen magistrates in authority over them. In the Scripture the Gentiles are sometimes called *the world*, Ro 11:12,15, and sometimes *the creature*, or *the creation*.
2. By *the creature* is meant the whole world with all the creatures therein, or the whole frame and body of the creation.

*The creature* in this sense, by a prosopopoeia, is here spoken of as a rational person; it is usual with the Spirit of God, in Scripture, to fasten upon unreasonable creatures such expressions as are proper only to those that are reasonable: see Ps 96:11,12 Heb 2:11 Jas 5:4. So here *the creature* (in this sense) is said to expect, wait, &c.

*Waiteth*; the expectation of the creature expecteth: a Hebrew pleonasm: it expecteth with the head lift up or stretched out, Php 1:20.

*The manifestation of the sons of God;* i.e. the time when the sons of God shall be manifested. The Arabic interpreter puts the word *glory* into the text, and reads the word thus, *The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the glory of the sons of God;* their glory for the present is hidden, but it shall be discovered and manifested, 2Co 3:18.

*The creature*, in the sense of the word as above, *waiteth* for this, because then it shall be restored to its primitive liberty and lustre, at that time there will be a *restitution of all things*, Ac 3:21. But those who understand *the creature* in the first sense, do put a quite different interpretation upon this last clause; and that is, that the Gentile world are now earnestly expecting and waiting to see what the Jews will do, whether they will discover themselves to be *the sons of God*, or not, by their receiving or rejecting Christ.

#### Romans 8:20

Ver. 20. If these words be understood of the world, and all the creatures therein contained, then they show the creature's present condition; it is *subject to vanity*, and that, either in regard of its insufficiency, it falling short of that for which it was first created and ordained; then a thing is said to be vain, when it doth not answer or reach its proper end: or in respect of its transitoriness and uncertainty, of which see 1Co 7:31 Heb 1:11,12 1Jo 2:17. The next verse tells us it is subject to *the bondage of corruption* as well as vanity. Now this must needs be an unwilling subjection, therefore it is here said it is *not* subject *willingly*, i.e. of its own accord, or of its proper instinct and inclination. What the will is in those that are rational, the inclination is in those things that are natural; how comes it then into this condition? The next clause tells us, it is *by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope*: i.e. God, for the sin of man, hath cursed the creature, and subjected it to vanity and corruption: see Ge 3:17 4:12 Le 26:19,20. And though he hath done this, yet there is ground to expect and hope that the creature shall return again to its former estate wherein it was created; that it shall be delivered and restored into a better condition, as in the next verse. Those that by *the creature* understand the Gentile world, give a different interpretation of these words; they say that the Gentiles are *made subject to vanity*, i.e. to idolatry, or a vain, superstitious worship,



(idols are called *vanities*, Ac 14:15), or to a miserable, wretched estate; that (as Hesychius notes) is the import of the word *vanity*. And this not so much of their own accord, or by their own free choice, but by the power and malice of Satan, to whom they are justly given up of God; he rules in their hearts, carries them captive at his will, subjects them to all villany and misery. And it is reasonable to suppose of these poor heathens, that they are willing to be rescued (at least some, and a considerable number of them) from under this vanity and slavery, as it is said, Ro 8:22.

*Question.* But if he that thus subjects them be the devil, how is he said to do this *in hope*?

*Answer.* These words, *in hope*, belong to the end of the former verse; all the rest of this verse being read or included in a parenthesis: q.d. The creature attends the manifestations of the sons of God in hope: meanwhile it is subject to vanity, &c.

### Romans 8:21

Ver. 21. If this verse be understood of the heavens and the earth, and the things therein, the meaning is, that *the creatures*, in their kind, and according to their capacity, shall be partakers of that liberty and freedom, which in the children of God is accompanied with unspeakable glory; they shall not partake with the saints in glory, but of that liberty, which in the saints hath great glory attending it, and superadded to it. The creature, at the day of judgment, shall be restored (as before) to that condition of liberty which it had in its first creation; as, when it was made at first, it was free from all vanity, bondage, and corruption, so it shall be again at the time of the general resurrection: see Ac 3:19,21 2Pe 3:13. Those that by *the creature* would understand the Gentile world, give the sense of this verse: That the very heathens also shall, by the gospel and grace of Christ, be rescued from those courses of sin and corruption, to which they have been long enslaved, into that glorious condition not only of free-men, redeemed by Christ out of their bondage to sin and Satan, but even of the sons of God, to have right to his favour, and that never fading inheritance.

### Romans 8:22

Ver. 22. If here again the heavens and the earth, with what is therein, be understood, then the apostle further enlargeth upon their present state and condition; before they waited and expected deliverance, now they groan and travail in pain. They also are metaphorical expressions; one is taken for a man who hath upon him a heavy burden, another from a woman that is near her delivery. And this they do *until now*; i.e. from the fall of Adam to this present day. They that understand the words of the Gentile world, thus interpret them: We, the apostles and ministers of Jesus Christ, do find by experience, that the Gentiles are very forward to receive the gospel when they hear it, whilst the Jews generally reject it. The Gentile world is, as it were, in pangs of travail ever since Christ's time till now, ready to bring forth sons and daughters to God.

### Romans 8:23

Ver. 23. The apostle had asserted and concluded, Ro 8:18, that there is a future glory to be revealed hereafter in the saints, such as infinitely transcends their sufferings now; and this he had confirmed from the earnest expectation of the creature, (the pronoun *they* is not in the original), and now he further confirms it from the expectation which is in believers themselves.

*The first-fruits of the Spirit;* hereby he means that righteousness, joy, and peace, which believers have in this life; these are the fruits of the Spirit, and called *first-fruits* in regard of their order; and in regard of their quantity, they are but a handful in comparison of the whole, little in regard of the fulness which they shall have in heaven; and in regard also of their signification, the grace and comforts of the Spirit of God in this life are pledges to us of that abundance and fulness of joy, which we shall partake of in the life to come, as the first-fruits of the Jews were an evidence to them of the ensuing crop.

*Groan within ourselves;* among ourselves, say some, but it is better read in our translation, *within ourselves*. It expresses the manner of the saints groaning under sin and affliction; it is inward, and from the heart.

*Waiting for the adoption:* now we are the sons of God; why then should we wait for what we have already?

*Answer.* We have the right, but not the full possession, of our inheritance: the apostle himself explains his meaning in the next words.

*The redemption of our body;* i.e. our perfect deliverance from sin and misery; this phrase is used in other places; see Lu 21:28 Eph 4:30.

But why *of our body*, and not of our souls? Because their souls would be in actual possession of the inheritance before that day, or because the miseries and troubles of this life are conveyed to the whole man by the body, so that the redemption of the body is in effect the redemption of the whole man.

#### Romans 8:24

Ver. 24. Though we certainly believe there is such a redemption or salvation belonging to us, according to the promise of God, yet for the present we have no possession of it; all the salvation we have at present is in *hope*, which, according to the nature of it, is of things not yet enjoyed, for vision or possession puts an end to hope; no man hopes for what he sees and enjoys.

#### Romans 8:25

Ver. 25. q. d. If we indeed hope for redemption and salvation, which is out of sight, then it is meet that we do with patience digest and bear all our present evils and sufferings; true hope is accompanied always with a patient waiting for the things hoped for; therefore you read of the *patience of hope*, 1Th 1:3; see Heb 6:12 10:36.

#### Romans 8:26

Ver. 26. *Likewise:* this referreth us, either to the work of the Spirit, before noted, Ro 8:11; he quickeneth, and he likewise helpeth: or rather, to *hope*,

in the foregoing verse; hope helpeth to patience, so also the Spirit.

*Helpeth our infirmities;* the word imports such help, as when another of greater strength steps in, and sustains the burden that lies too heavy upon our shoulders; or it is borrowed from nurses, that help their little children that are unable to go, upholding them by their hands or sleeves.

*For we know not what we should pray for as we ought:* one way whereby the Spirit helps us, is by teaching us to pray. Prayer doth greatly relieve us under the cross, and is a great refuge in trouble: but we knowing not how to pray *as we ought*, either in regard, of matter or manner, herein therefore the Spirit aids or helps us, as it follows. But how is it said *we know not what to pray for*, when we have the Lord's prayer, which contains a perfect rule and summary of all things meet to be prayed for? Though the Lord's prayer be a rule in general, yet we may be to seek in particulars: God's own children many times ask they know not what; see Job 6:8 Jon 4:3 Mr 10:38 2Co 12:8.

*But the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us:* there is a twofold intercession, one of Christ, of which we read, Ro 8:34; the other of the Spirit, of which this place speaks. How doth the Spirit make intercession for us?

*Answer.* By making intercession in us, or by helping us to pray. The Spirit is called, Zec 12:10, *the Spirit of supplications*. It is by him, Ro 8:15, that we cry, *Abba, Father*: he cries so in our hearts; Ga 4:6, *God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father*. The Spirit of our Father speaketh in us, Mt 10:20: he suggests to us what we should pray for; he helps us to suitable dispositions, and many times to suitable expressions in prayer: see Eph 6:18 Jude 1:20.

*With groanings which cannot be uttered;* with inward sighs and groans, which cannot be expressed by words. There may be prayer, where there is no speech or vocal expression. A man may cry, and that mightily to God, when he uttereth never a word: see Ex 14:15 1Sa 1:13.

Romans 8:27

Ver. 27. *He that searcheth the hearts;* this phrase is a periphrasis of God, and is spoken of him after the manner of men. God doth not properly search or inquire into any thing; but because amongst men knowledge comes by searching, therefore, by way of resemblance, this is attributed to God, though that which is intended by it is only this, that God knoweth the heart, Jer 17:10 Ac 1:24.

*Knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit,* both with the knowledge of apprehension and approbation.

*Maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God:* our prayers shall be sure to speed, if they are of this sort, 1Jo 5:14,15. Praying according to the will of God, respects;

1. The matter of our prayers.
2. The manner of our praying.
3. The end thereof, Jas 4:3.

### Romans 8:28

Ver. 28. Another argument to comfort us under the cross, from the benefits of it; *We know that all things, &c.* It is not matter of guess only and conjecture, but of certainty and assurance. How is this known?

1. By the testimony of God; the Scripture tells us as much, Ps 128:1,2 Isa 3:10.
2. By our own experience; we are assured of it by the event and effects of all things, both upon ourselves and others.

*All things,* even sin itself; because from their falls, God's children arise more humble and careful. Afflictions are chiefly intended; the worst and crossest providences, those things that are evil in themselves, they *work for good* to the children of God.

*Work together;* here is their operation, and their co-operation: First, they *work together* with God. What the apostle says of himself and others in the ministry, 2Co 6:1, that may be said of other things, especially of

afflictions; they are *workers together* with God. Some read the words thus, God co-operates all to good. Again, they *work together* with us; we ourselves must concur, and be active herein; we must labour and endeavour to get good out of every providence. Once more, they *work together* amongst themselves, or one with another. Take this or that providence singly, or by itself, and you shall not see the good it doth; but take it in its conjunction and connexion with others, and then you may perceive it. One exemplifies it thus: As in matter of physic, if you take such and such simples alone, they may poison rather than cure; but then take them in their composition, as they are made up by the direction of a skilful physician, and so they prove an excellent medicine.

*For good*; sometimes for temporal good, Ge 1:20; always for spiritual and eternal good, which is best of all. All occurrences of providence shall serve to bring them nearer to God here, and to heaven hereafter.

*According to his purpose*: these words are added to show the ground and reason of God's calling us; which is nothing else but his own *purpose* and good pleasure; it is not according to our worthiness, but *his purpose*: see 2Ti 1:9.

### Romans 8:29

Ver. 29. Having let fall a word in the former verse concerning the *purpose* of God, he thinks good, in what follows, to pursue that subject, and a little to enlarge upon it.

*Whom he did foreknow*; i.e. with a knowledge of approbation; for otherwise, he foreknew all persons and things: or, whom he did foreknow for his own, Joh 10:14,27 Ro 11:2 2Ti 2:19. This *foreknowledge of God* is the ground of our election: see 1Pe 1:2.

*He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son*; whom he was pleased to approve of, and to pitch his free love and favour upon, he severed from the common lump and mass of mankind, and did appoint them *to be conformed to the image of his Son*; i.e. to be conformed to him in holiness and sufferings here, and in glory hereafter: see 1Co 15:49 2Co 3:18 Eph 1:4-6 Php 3:20,21 1Jo 3:2.

*That he might be the first-born among many brethren;* this is the limitation of the forementioned conformity; though there be a likeness in us unto Christ, yet there is not an equality; he still retaineth the dignity of the first-born, and hath a double, yea, a far greater portion; he is Head and Ruler of all the family in heaven and in earth, Ps 45:7,8.

### Romans 8:30

Ver. 30. He hath already given them the beginning and pledge thereof in grace; and will in due time bring them to the possession of eternal life and glory. Some, under this term of glorification would have sanctification included; because, otherwise, they think there is a great defect in this chain of salvation, here set down by the apostle, of which sanctification is one special link; but this is rather to be couched and included in effectual calling, which is the third link, and already spoken of.

### Romans 8:31

Ver. 31. *What shall we then say to these things?* Some refer this question to what is said in the verses immediately preceding; others, to what he had said, Ro 8:28; and others go higher, and refer it to all that he said before. Some by *these things* understand afflictions and sufferings more especially; What shall we say to these, or what need we be disheartened by these? For if God, &c.

*If God be for us;* i.e. seeing God is for us; it is a note of certainty, not of ambiguity; see Ro 8:9. He takes it for granted, as that which cannot be denied; see Ps 46:7,11 118:6,7.

*Who can be against us?* i.e. none can; none can be against us successfully, none can be against us safely; such will harm themselves more than us: see Ps 56:1. Maximilian, the emperor, so admired this sentence, that he caused it to be written over the table where he used to dine and sup; that having it often in his eye, he might have it also in his mind.

### Romans 8:32

Ver. 32. *He that spared not his own Son:* this phrase either shows the bounty of God, that he did not withhold Christ; or the severity of God, that he did not favour, but afflict and punish him, Isa 53:4,5,11.

*But delivered him up:* see Ac 2:23. This doth not excuse Judas, no, nor Pilate and the Jews; though they executed God's purpose, yet they acted their own malice and wickedness.

*For us all;* this plainly refers to such persons as he had before mentioned, such as God foreknew, predestinated, called, &c., which is not all men in general, but a set number of persons in particular: it is an expression both of latitude and restriction; of latitude, in the word all; of restriction, in the word *us*.

*How shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* q.d. Without question he will; it may be confidently inferred and concluded: He that hath given the greater, will not stick to give the less. Christ is more than all the world, or than all other gifts and blessings whatsoever.

### Romans 8:33

Ver. 33. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* Who can implead such, or put in any accusation against them? There is nothing to accuse them of, they are justified; and there is none to accuse them: *It is God that justifieth;* the Supreme Judge hath absolved them. This seems to be taken out of Isa 50:8,9. They were Christ's words there, and spoken of God's justifying him; they are every believer's words here, and intended of God's justifying them. Here seems to be two reasons of their indemnity; one is implied, i.e. God's electing them: the other expressed, i.e. God's justifying and acquitting of them.

### Romans 8:34

Ver. 34. *Who is he that condemneth?* As none can accuse the elect of God, so much less can any condemn them, see Ro 8:1.



*It is Christ that died;* and it is he that is the Judge, and must condemn them, if they be condemned. His death frees them from condemnation; thereby he hath made a sufficient atonement and satisfaction for all their sins; and that which hath long ago satisfied in heaven for the sins of all the elect, may very well serve to satisfy the heart and conscience of a believing sinner here on earth. Such a one may throw down the gauntlet, as the apostle doth, and challenge all the world. Let conscience, carnal reason, law, sin, hell, and devils, bring forth all they can, it will not be sufficient to condemnation; and that because of Christ's death and satisfaction.

*Yea rather, that is risen again:* the resurrection of Christ hath a special influence upon our justification; and therefore the apostle puts a *rather* upon it, and that comparatively to the death of Christ: see Ro 4:25, and; See Poole on "Ro 4:25".

*Who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us:* faith finds matter of triumph, not only from Christ's death and resurrection, but from his session at the right hand of God, and intercession for us.

### Romans 8:35

Ver. 35. *Who shall separate us?* He continues his triumph: he does not say what, but *who*; though he instanceth in things, and not in persons, yet it is expressed personally, because that these things do commonly do us hurt in the improvement of persons, whether of Satan or wicked men, who are instrumental thereunto.

*From the love of Christ;* understand it either actively, from our love of him; or passively, from his love of us. The latter seems to be chiefly intended;

*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ,* or from the sense and manifestation thereof?

*Shall tribulation, &c.* He makes an enumeration of particular evils, of

seven in number; and he begins with the lesser, and rises to the greater; placing them in order, not casually, but by choice. The word *tribulation* signifies any thing that presseth or pincheth us.

*Or distress?* The word properly signifies straitness of place, and is transferred from the body to the mind, to point out the anguish or perplexity thereof.

*Or persecution;* the word properly signifies a driving from place to place; banishment is implied therein, if not chiefly intended: see Mt 10:23.

*Or peril;* any danger or hazard of life, in any kind whatsoever: see 2Co 11:26.

*Or sword;* this is put figuratively for death itself, especially violent death.

### Romans 8:36

Ver. 36. He cites this testimony to prove that none of the forementioned evils, no, not death itself, can separate believers from the love of Christ: it is taken out of Ps 44:22. The argument seems to be this: The saints of old have endured all manner of sufferings, and yet were not separated from the love of God; therefore such sufferings cannot separate them now.

*For thy sake;* not for our sins' sake, but for Christ's, or *for righteousness' sake*, Mt 5:10 10:18,39 1Pe 3:14.

*We are killed:* how could they say this? Killing takes away all complaining, and makes the parties so dealt with incapable of saying how it is with them. This expression notes the danger and desperateness of their condition. It is usual in Scripture to set forth an eminent danger under the notion of death: see 1Co 15:31 2Co 1:10 4:11.

*All the day long;* i.e. continually, without ceasing: see Ps 38:6,12; 71:24 73:14 Pr 23:17 Ro 10:21.

*We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter;* i.e. we are designed for destruction. Our enemies make account they can destroy us, as men do

sheep, that they have by them in the slaughter-house. They reckon they have us at command, and can cut us off when they list. Or rather thus, they make no reckoning of our destruction; they make no more of killing us, than butchers do of killing sheep: our death is very cheap in their account, Ps 44:11,12. Here let me insert a tragical story of the Christians of Calabria, that suffered persecution, A.D. 1560. They were all shut up in one house together, as in a sheepfold: an executioner comes in, and among them takes one, and blindfolds him with a muffler about his eyes, and so leadeth him forth to a larger place, where he commandeth him to kneel down; which being done, he cutteth his throat, and so leaveth him half dead; and taking his butcher's knife and muffler, all of gore blood, he cometh again to the rest, and so leading them one after another, he despatcheth them, to the number of eighty-eight, no otherwise than a butcher doth his sheep. *Fox's Acts and Monuments*.

### Romans 8:37

Ver. 37. *Nay, in all these things; i.e. in tribulation, distress, &c. as before, Ro 8:35.*

*We are more than conquerors; or, we overcome. We conquer when we ourselves are conquered; we conquer by those which are wont to conquer others; we beat our enemies with their own weapons. The meaning seems to be this: The devil aims, in all the sufferings of God's children, to draw them off from Christ, to make them murmur, despair, &c.; but in this he is defeated and disappointed, for God inspires his children with such a generous and noble spirit, that sufferings abate not their zeal and patience, but rather increase them. "We Christians laugh at your cruelty, and grow the more resolute", said one of Julian's nobles to him.*

*Through him that loved us: a short description of Christ, together with a reason of a Christian's success. The conquest he hath over sin, and over sufferings also, is not from himself, or his own strength, but from Christ, &c.: see Ro 7:24,25 1Co 15:57 2Co 2:14 2Ti 4:17.*

### Romans 8:38

Ver. 38. *For I am persuaded;* or, I am fully assured, not by any special revelation, but by *the same spirit of faith*, which is common to all believers, 2Co 4:13.

*Neither death, nor life;* i.e. neither fear of death, nor hope of life.

*Nor angels.*

1. The evil angels; for the good angels would not attempt the separating us from the love of Christ.
2. There are some, that think the good angels to be also here intended; and they understand it by way of supposition: q.d.

If they should endeavour such a thing, they would never effect it: and thus they make the apostle here to argue, as he doth in another place, Ga 1:8.

*Nor principalities, nor powers;* some would have the evil angels to be here intended, and the good angels in what went before; in Col 2:15, they are thus termed: but others, by *principalities and powers*, do rather understand persecuting princes and potentates.

*Nor things present, nor things to come;* i.e. the evils and pressures that are upon us now, or that shall be upon us hereafter. He makes no mention of the things past, for they are overcome already.

### Romans 8:39

Ver. 39. *Nor height, nor depth;* i.e. neither the height of honour and worldly advancement, nor the depth of disgrace and worldly abasement. Some take *height* and *depth* for a comprehensive expression, which the Scripture uses, when he takes in all, and leaves nothing out.

*Nor any other creature;* this is added to the rest, as an &c. at the end of a sentence; and to supply whatever our fancies might in this case, frame to themselves. Or the apostle here makes an end of his induction; and because it had been endless to reckon up all the creatures, he closeth in this manner: If there be any other creature.

*Shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord;* which he bears to us, as members of Christ, and by faith united to him: see Ro 8:35, and the notes there.

## Romans 9:1

### Chapter Summary

Ro 9:1-5 Paul professeth an unfeigned sorrow for the Jewish nation,

Ro 9:6-13 but proveth by instance from Scripture that the promise to Abraham did not necessarily include all his descendants,

Ro 9:14-18 asserting that there is no unrighteousness in God's bestowing his unmerited bounty on whom he pleaseth,

Ro 9:19-24 and that he was unquestionably free to suspend his judgments, where deserved, either for the more signal display of his power in taking vengeance on some, or of his mercy in calling others to glory.

Ro 9:26-29 The calling of the Gentiles, and rejection of the Jews, foretold.

Ro 9:30,31 Accordingly, the Gentiles have attained the righteousness of faith, which the Jews refused.

Ro 9:32,33 The cause of such refusal.

Ver. 1. The apostle being about to treat of the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles, before he enters upon it, he premiseth a preface, to prepare the minds of the Jews to a patient reading or hearing the same; and in this preface, he solemnly protesteth his love to his nation, and his hearty grief for their rejection, that so it might the better appear, that these things were not written out of any spleen or malice, but out of conscience towards God and the truth.

*I say truth in Christ;* or, by Christ: so the word *in* is taken, Mt 5:34-36. This is the form of an oath, which the Scripture elsewhere useth in matters of importance: see Ge 22:16 Da 12:7 Eph 4:17.

*I lie not;* this is added for confirmation, or to gain the greater credit to what he said or swore. It was the manner of the Hebrews, to an affirmative to add a negative: see 1Sa 3:18 Joh 1:20.

*My conscience also bearing me witness;* as being for this purpose placed in man by God, and is instead of a thousand witnesses.

*In the Holy Ghost;* i.e. in the presence of the Holy Ghost, who is privy to what I say, and who is a witness also to the truth thereof: or, as some, by the guidance of the Holy Ghost, who cannot lie.

### Romans 9:2

Ver. 2. His grief for his nation and people he expresseth,

1. By the greatness of it; it was such as a woman hath in travail so the word imports.
2. By the continuance of it; it was *continual*, or without intermission.
3. By the seat of it; it was in his *heart*, and not outward in his face. The cause he doth not here set down, but it is easily gathered from what follows, viz. the obstinacy and infidelity, together with the rejection, of the Jews.

### Romans 9:3

Ver. 3. *I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ;* or, separated from Christ. This verse hath greatly vexed interpreters. Some read it, I did wish myself accursed from Christ: q.d. Before my conversion, I was willing to be accursed from Christ, to be a violent persecutor of the Christians, and so to be held of them as accursed for my brethren's sake. The vulgar Latin, and many Romanists, thus render the word  $\eta\sigma\chi\omicron\mu\eta\nu$ , in the text; but the generality of interpreters read it as we do, not indicatively, but potentially; and they make an ellipsis in the words,  $\eta\sigma\chi\omicron\mu\eta\nu$  *pro*  $\eta\sigma\chi\omicron\mu\eta\nu$   $\alpha\nu$ ; the like is frequent; see Ac 25:22 1Co 2:8 2Co 11:1. But then still the difficulty is, how, and in what sense, the apostle wished

himself *accursed*, or separated *from Christ*. The received opinion is, that out of zeal to the glory of God, and love to his brethren, he was willing to be damned, that they all might be saved. Many of the ancients did thus expound this place: "Christ became a curse for us; and what marvel is it" (says one) "if the Lord would be made a curse for the servants, that a servant should be willing to become an anathema for the brethren." "He doth not wish" (says another) "for his brethren's sake to be separated from the love and grace of Christ, but from the comforts of Christ, and the future happiness that we have by him: he is content to lose his part in the heavenly glory, if that might promote the glory of Christ, which would be more illustrated by the saving a whole nation, than a particular person: q.d. If this might be the fruit of it, if it would gain this end, I could, methinks, be content to part with all my hopes in Christ, even my eternal happiness, upon condition my brethren might be partakers thereof; so passionate and abundant love have I to and for them." This exposition is not satisfactory; therefore so, he think the apostle here speaks of being accursed only for a season, or of being an anathema in this world. An anathema sometimes signifieth corporal death and destruction: of old, in times of common calamity, they were wont to sacrifice men to their idols and infernal gods, for the pacifying of their anger; such a sacrifice they called *anathema*, which is the word here used: q. d. For my brethren's sake, that so they might be saved, I could be content to be cut off, to be made a sacrifice, to die the worst of deaths. But if this be admitted, how then is that clause to be understood, *from Christ*? It is not, I could wish myself an anathema, but an anathema from Christ. To this they answer that favour this interpretation, That instead of *from Christ*, you may read, by Christ: q.d. I could be content to be cut off or destroyed by Christ, that my brethren might be saved. This sense of the words suits well with the zeal and kindness of Moses to his brethren, Ex 32:32; rather than they should not be pardoned and spared, he prays, that God would blot him out of the book that he had written: see annotations there. There is yet another, and a more probable, interpretation of this wish of the apostle. It is as if he had said, I could be willing to be separated or excommunicated from the church of Christ, for the sake and salvation of my country and nation. Anathema (says Hesychius) signifies ακοινωνητος, excommunicate; 1Co 16:22: *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema*; let him be removed from the Christian assemblies, deprived of those Christian privileges that are afforded there. Ga 1:8,9, Let him be an anathema that teacheth another gospel; i.e. turned out of the church of Christ, and

avoided by all true Christians. If this sense be admitted, then *from Christ* must signify, from the body of Christ; and so the word *Christ* is used, 1Co 12:12 Ga 3:27. Christ being the Head of the body, he that is cut off from the body may be truly enough said to be cut off from Christ. Thus the apostle Paul, who was accused and persecuted by the Jews, for having made a defection from the law of Moses, and setting up Christian assemblies in opposition to their Judaical service, doth fitly express his kindness and love to them, in wishing himself deprived of those most valuable privileges, on condition they might be partakers thereof. To this it may be added, that in the primitive times, this anathematizing, or excommunicating, was attended with delivering up to Satan, and that with destruction of the flesh, with very sharp and severe punishments upon the bodies of men. And so *anathema*, in this notion, may be taken with this improvement, and may contain all those temporal calamities that he was willing to endure and undergo for their good: see D.H. in loc.

*My kinsmen according to the flesh;* so the Jews were by natural descent: see Ge 29:14.

#### Romans 9:4

Ver. 4. In this and the following verse, he rehearseth the privileges and advantages the Jews had from God, above all other nations of the earth; and this he doth to show, that he had good reason to make such a wish, as in the foregoing verse; as also, that what he should declare concerning the Jews, and their ejection, did not proceed from any disrespect or disesteem of them.

*Israelites;* i.e. the offspring of that holy patriarch Israel: this was the Jews' first title of honour, that they descended from him, who by God himself was surnamed Israel, or *a prince that had power with God, and prevailed*, Ge 32:28.

*The adoption;* adoption is not here to be understood as before, in Ro 8:15, or as in Eph 1:5, and elsewhere. But thereby we must understand the peculiar privilege of the seed of Jacob; that they, of all the nations of the earth, were pitched upon to be nearly related to God, to be his *children* (as they are called) and his *firstborn*: see Ex 4:22 De 14:1 Jer 31:9,20 Mt



15:26.

*The glory;* the ark and the temple; so called, because in them God did manifest his glorious presence, 1Sa 4:21,22 Ps 26:8 78:61.

*The covenants;* some understand by covenants, the tables of the law: see Heb 9:4. Others rather understand the covenant made with Abraham, Ge 15:8 17:2,7; and with the Jewish nation, Ex 24:7,8 Ex 34:27, &c. Circumcision also may be intended, for that is called God's covenant, Ge 17:10.

*The giving of the law;* the judicial, ceremonial, but especially the moral law. This is spoken of as a great privilege, De 4:8,32. It may refer both to the law itself, and to the circumstances, also, with which the law was given.

*The service of God;* the true manner of worshipping God, which was a great privilege. Other nations knew there was a God, and that he must be worshipped, but they knew not how; and so they ran into superstition and idolatry.

*The promises;* of this life, and that to come; particularly of the Messiah, and of the benefits and blessings by him. These are found in Moses and the prophets, and were entailed upon the Jews and their children, Ac 2:39 Eph 2:12, till God at last cut off the entail.

### Romans 9:5

Ver. 5. *Whose are the fathers;* who are lineally descended of the holy patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with other holy fathers and prophets, and of the same blood. This was also a great privilege, of which the Jews boasted.

*Of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came;* or out of whom; understand the people of the Jews, not the fathers. The meaning is, Christ took his human nature of their stock. It is the great honour of mankind, that Christ took not the nature of angels, but of man; and it is a great honour to the nation of the Jews, that he took the seed of Abraham their father.

*Who is over all, God blessed for ever;* this is the fullest place to express the two natures that are in the person of our Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ; he was God as well as man: yea, this is the title by which the one and supreme God was known amongst the Jews.

#### Romans 9:6

Ver. 6. An objection is here obviated: the Jews might object and say: If they were cast off and rejected, then God is unfaithful, and all his promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their seed, are ineffectual. To this he answers by a distinction of Israelites. Some are Israelites only in respect of their carnal generation; and others, again, are true Israelites, children of the promise, and of the faith of Abraham: see Ro 2:28,29. Now the promises of God were made to the true Israelites, and in all such it is effectual: and under the name of Israel, or true Israelites, all those are comprehended, who imitate the faith of Abraham, and walk in his steps, whether they descended from him by fleshly generation or not. This he further asserts in the following verse.

#### Romans 9:7

Ver. 7. He had before made a difference of Israelites, and now he makes a difference of the seed of Abraham. This was ever and anon in the mouths of the Jews: *We are Abraham's seed*, Joh 8:33. But here he tells them, that all Abraham's seed were not the children of the promise; for it was said to Sarah, Ge 21:12, that the promised seed should be confined to Isaac's line, of his issue should the Messiah come, and all the true seed of Abraham, who are born after the manner of Isaac, by the word and promise of God. And as Ishmael, though Abraham's natural seed, was cast out, and therein was a type of those who are born only according to the flesh; so Isaac is a type of Abraham's spiritual seed, who are born not of the power of nature, but by virtue of the promise of God.

#### Romans 9:8

Ver. 8. q. d. That I may speak more plainly, all those that are the children of Abraham according to the flesh, are not therefore the adopted children of God; it is not their blood, but their faith, must make them such. There are some of Abraham's seed, that are selected from the rest, to whom the promise was made, who are therefore called *children of the promise*; and of this sort are all they who are *born after the Spirit*, ( as Isaac is said to be, Ga 4:29), whether Jews or Gentiles. The sense of this verse is fully expressed, Ga 3:8,14,29: see Ga 4:28.

### Romans 9:9

Ver. 9. The birth of Isaac was a thing extraordinary; for which, neither Abraham nor Sarah had any ground to hope, but only that promise made, Ge 18:10, in these words: *At this time*, or according to this time, i.e. the time of bearing children after conception, *will I come, and Sarah shall have a son*; i.e. I will manifest my power in fulfilling my promise of giving thee a son. By which it is clear, that the birth of Isaac was an effect of God's promise, and nothing else. So that they to whom the promise belong, (whosoever they be), they are the seed of Abraham, and, upon the obedience of faith, shall be accepted for the children of God. The apostle Peter tells women, (whether Jews or Gentiles, it matters not), that by well-doing they become the daughters of Sarah.

### Romans 9:10

Ver. 10. *And not only this*; some read it, *And not only she*; the particle *this* is not in the Greek.

*When Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac*: this instance is added, because there might be some objection against the former; as if there were some reason why God chose Isaac, and refused Ishmael. Isaac was born of a free-woman, and when Abraham was uncircumcised: besides, Ishmael no sooner came to years, but he showed some tokens of perverseness, and of a wicked spirit. Therefore, in this and the three following verses, he gives another, which was beyond all exception; and that is in Esau and Jacob, betwixt whom there was no disparity, either in birth or in works: they had both one and the same

mother; Rebecca conceived with them at one and the same time, and that by no other person than our father Isaac; and yet the one of these is chosen, and the other refused. Till now was an undeniable proof, that the promise belongs not to all the children of Abraham, or of Isaac, according to the flesh; all the seed of neither are the children of the promise.

### Romans 9:11

Ver. 11. *For the children being not yet born:* q. d. As there was nothing in the birth of those twins, so neither in their works, that occasioned the difference that God made between them; for when God spake of what should happen to them, they were unborn, and had done neither good nor evil.

*Neither having done any good or evil;* he means, actual good or evil, such as might difference them one from another. As for original sin, they were both alike tainted therewith.

*That the purpose of God;* this purpose of God is to be understood about reprobation, or (if you will) rejection, or preterition, as well as about election.

*Might stand;* be firm or stable.

*Not of works,* either done or foreseen.

*But of him that calleth;* i.e. of the good pleasure and undeserved favour of God, who also effectually calleth those that he hath elected, as Ro 8:30. See a parallel place, 2Ti 1:9.

### Romans 9:12

Ver. 12. This verse is to be read with Ro 9:10,11 being a parenthesis. Then when she resorted to the Lord for counsel, about the struggling of the children in her womb, it was told her, or revealed to her of God, that *the elder should serve the younger:* of the sense of which words, see annotations on Ge 25:23, where they are recorded.

### Romans 9:13

Ver. 13. The foregoing oracle is expounded by another, taken out of Mal 1:2,3; see the annotations there. Because the foregoing passage of Esau's serving Jacob doth not seem so full and clear, to betoken the election of Jacob, and the rejection of Esau, in the purpose of God, therefore the apostle brings this place to explain the former; and proves that the service or subjection of Esau to Jacob, was accompanied with God's eternal and undeserved love of the one, and his just and righteous hatred of the other. There are some, that by Esau and Jacob do understand their posterity, and not their persons; that say, the love and hatred of God, in the forecited text, doth only or chiefly respect temporal things; God loved Jacob, i.e. he gave him the Land of Promise; but hated Esau, i.e. he gave him a dry and barren country, and made his mountain waste: that by God's hating Esau, is only meant he loved him less than Jacob, &c. Such should consider, that the scope of the apostle is to show, that some are the children of God, and of the promise, and not others; and they must not make him cite testimonies out of the Old Testament impertinently. Much is written *pro* and *con* upon this argument. But I remember, he that writes a commentary must not too far involve himself in controversy.

### Romans 9:14

Ver. 14. Another anticipation of an objection. Some might object and say: If God elect some, and reject others, their case being the same, or their persons being in themselves equal and alike, then he is unjust and partial. To this he answers,

1. More generally, with his repeated note of detestation: *God forbid*; the Syriac translator reads it, God forgive; noting thereby the heinousness of such a thought and then he answers this cavil more particularly; showing:

1. That God is not unjust in electing some, Ro 9:15,16. And,
2. That he is not unjust in rejecting others, Ro 9:17.

### Romans 9:15

Ver. 15. q.d. God is not chargeable with any injustice in electing some, and not others; for this is an act of mere mercy and compassion, and that can be no violation of justice. To prove this, he cites a testimony out of Ex 33:19, which see. There he tells Moses, that the good pleasure of his will was the only rule of all his favourable and merciful dealings with the children of men. The same thing is intended and expressed in two several phrases: and the ingemination imports the freeness of God's mercy; nothing moves him thereunto, but his own gracious inclination; and also the arbitrariness thereof; it depends only upon his good will and pleasure. The sum is, if God show mercy to some, and not to others, he cannot be accused of injustice, because he injures none; nor is he obliged or indebted to any.

### Romans 9:16

Ver. 16. q.d. God's election is not of Jacob's, or of any other man's, willing or running; i.e. it is not from his good desires or deeds, his good inclinations or actions, or from the foresight thereof; but it is of God's mere mercy and good pleasure. This text wounds Pelagianism under the fifth rib. *Nec volenti, nec volanti*, was the motto of a noble personage.

### Romans 9:17

Ver. 17. This verse shows, that God is not unjust in rejecting others of equal condition with the elect; for the proof of which, he cites a testimony out of Ex 9:16. This verse must be joined with Ro 9:14.

*God forbid; for the Scripture saith, i.e. God saith in the Scripture: Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up; i.e. I have created or promoted thee to be king in Egypt. Or, (as some), I have raised or stirred thee up to oppress my people. Or, I have hardened thee, as it follows in the next verse, and given thee up to thy own rebellious and obstinate mind.*

*That I might show my power in thee, it &c.:* I have done what I have done for this very end, that the whole world may ring of my power and glory. And this shows, that it is not unjust in God to reject sinners of the children of men, because thereby he furthers his own glory. For this end all things are made, and all things are accordingly ordered and disposed, Pr 16:4.

### Romans 9:18

Ver. 18. This verse is a short repetition of the foregoing argument.

*Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy:* see Ro 9:15, and the notes there.

*And whom he will he hardeneth;* i.e. in a judicial way. Besides natural hardness, which is in all men, and is hereditary to them; and habitual hardness, which is contracted by a custom in sin, as a path is hardened by the continual trampling of passengers; there is judicial or judiciary hardness, which is inflicted by God as a punishment. Men harden their own hearts sinfully, (so it is thrice said of Pharaoh in Exodus, that he hardened his own heart, Ex 8:15,32 9:34), and then God hardens their hearts judicially: so it is often said of God in Exodus, that he hardened Pharaoh's heart, Ex 7:13 Ex 9:12 10:1,20,27 14:8. God is not said properly to harden the hearts of men; i.e. he doth not make their soft hearts hard, nor doth he put hardness into the hearts of men, (as our adversaries slanderously report us to affirm), nor doth he barely permit or suffer them to be hardened (which is the opinion of the papists about this matter); but two ways may he be said to harden sinners:

1. By forsaking them, and not softening their hearts: as darkness follows upon the sun's withdrawing of his light, so doth hardness upon God's withholding his softening influence.
2. By punishing them; he inflicts further hardness, as a punishment of former hardness; and this he infuseth not, but it is effected either:
  - a) By Satan, to whom hardened sinners are delivered up; or,
  - b) By themselves, they being given over to their own hearts' lusts; or,

- c) By God's word and works, which accidentally harden the hearts of men, as might be shown (see Ro 9:19).

See Poole on "Ro 9:19".

### Romans 9:19

Ver. 19. Here he obviates a third objection or cavil. The first was, that God is unfaithful, Ro 9:6; the second, that God is unjust, Ro 9:14; now the third is, that God is severe and cruel. Some might object and say, If God, in those courses which he takes with men and sinners, doth follow only his own will and pleasure, and all things are done thereafter; why then doth he complain of sinners, and find fault with them? It seems it is his will to reject them; and who hath resisted, or can make resistance thereunto? It seems to be a common saying amongst the Hebrews, that None can withstand God: Ro 9:2 2Ch 20:6, and elsewhere.

### Romans 9:20

Ver. 20. Here follows the answer to this cavil; which is either personal to the caviller, in this and the next verse, or real to the cavil, in the two following verses.

*Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?* The apostle seems to speak these words with some warmth, as if his spirit and zeal was stirred at the sauciness of the caviller: q.d. Dost thou consider what thou art? Thou art but a man, a piece of living clay, a little breathing dust, a contemptible worm in comparison; and darest thou to word it with God, to dispute with thy Maker, to question or call him to an account? You may argue matters with your fellow creatures, but not with your Creator: see Isa 45:9,10, from whence this seems to be borrowed, and Job 40:2.

*Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?* q. d. Shall the wood quarrel with the carpenter, the iron with the smith; or, as it is in the next verse, the clay with the potter?



### Romans 9:21

Ver. 21. He argueth from the less to the greater, that if a potter hath power over his clay, to form it as he pleaseth, then God hath much more power over his creatures, to form them or order them as he listeth. God's authority over his creature, is greater than that of a potter over his clay. The potter made not his clay; but both clay and potter are made by God. Here is something implied, that as there is no difference in the matter or lump out of which the potter frameth diversity of vessels, so there is no difference in mankind; all men are alike by nature, and in the same corrupt state; both those who are elected, and those who are rejected, that are made vessels of mercy, or vessels of wrath. And here is this expressed, that as the potter maketh vessels of honour or dishonour, of nobler or viler use, out of the same lump, as he listeth, and is not bound to give a reason of his so doing to his pots; so God may choose some, and reject others, and give no account thereof unto his creatures. The potter takes nothing from the clay, of what form soever he makes it; and the Creator doth no wrong to the creature, however he doth dispose of it.

### Romans 9:22

Ver. 22. In this and in the next verse, is a real answer to the cavil in Ro 9:19. The apostle having spoken before of God's absolute right and power over his creatures, to dispose of them at his pleasure, as the potter doth his clay; lest any should tax God with tyranny and partiality towards his creatures, he subjoineth the reasons of his different proceedings with the one and with the other. q.d. What hast thou to answer or object against God, if he take a severe course with some? Seeing:

1. He thereby manifesteth his great displeasure against sin, and his power to take vengeance of sinners. Seeing:
2. He bears long with them in their sins; exerciseth great patience towards them in the midst of their provocations, giving them space to repent, if they call or will. And seeing:
3. They are *vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction*; partly by themselves,

and their own sensual courses; partly by God's righteous judgment, who gives them up thereunto.

### Romans 9:23

Ver. 23. q. d. Again, on the other side, what hast thou to say, if he proceed more mercifully with others? Seeing:

1. He thereby manifesteth *the riches of his glory*, or his glorious grace; and seeing:
2. They are *vessels of merey, which he had afore prepared unto glory*; i.e. he had done it by election from eternity, and by regeneration and sanctification of the Spirit in time. He speaks here of two sorts of *vessels*, some of *wrath*, and some of *mercy*, as he had before spoken of *vessels of honour*, and of *dishonour*. Concerning the latter, he speaks passively, that they are *fitted to destruction*: see Ro 9:22. Concerning the former, he speaks actively, that God hath *prepared them unto glory*.

### Romans 9:24

Ver. 24. Hitherto he hath been showing, that the promise was never made or meant to the carnal seed of Abraham. This argument he began, Ro 9:6,7, and he continues it (using several apostrophes and amplifications, which were to his purpose) till he comes to these words; and here he tells you plainly who are the true seed of Abraham, and the children of the promise, even the called of God of all nations, whether Jews or Gentiles. And he takes occasion to fall into it, by speaking of some in the foregoing verse, that were *vessels of mercy, afore prepared unto glory*: now here, in this verse, he tells you, who these are; (and to be sure they are the persons he is inquiring after, viz. the spiritual seed of Abraham, and the children of the promise:) he says, they are such as God called; i.e. effectually called, *not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles*; and that this is so, he further proves in the following verse.

### Romans 9:25

Ver. 25. Here the apostle proves, that the Gentiles were children of the Promise, or that the promise belonged to them, as well as to the Jews: and because the Jews could not endure to hear of this, he cites two testimonies out of Hosea, to convince them: one is in this verse, and it is taken out of Ho 2:23; the other is in the following verse.

### Romans 9:26

Ver. 26. This testimony is taken out of Ho 1:10; and it is as if he had said: This that I affirm concerning the conversion and calling of the Gentiles, is nothing else but what the prophet Hosea long ago did preach to our fathers. Some think, these places in Hosea do speak primarily of the Jews, and but secondarily, or by consequence, of the Gentiles. Others think, that they speak chiefly of the Gentiles; those terms (*not beloved, and not a people*) being in Scripture mostly used of them.

### Romans 9:27

Ver. 27. In this and the two next verses he proves, that it was foretold of old, by Esaias the prophet, that God should pass by the greatest part of the Jews, and save only a remnant, or a few of them.

*Crieth;* hereby is noted the prophet's zeal, or his openness and plainness. The testimony recorded, is found in Isa 10:22,23.

*As the sand of the sea;* for number or multitude, for so the promise was to Abraham, Ge 22:17 32:12.

*Shall be saved:* Isaiah saith, *shall return;* i.e. from the captivity, or from sin, as it is, Isa 10:21. This shows, none can be saved but they who return and repent.

### Romans 9:28

Ver. 28. This verse is also found in that forecited place, Isa 10:22,23. The apostle in this, and in the other citations, follows the Seventy, which was a received translation, and had been in request about three hundred years, though in this, and in other places, it is very different from the Hebrew text. That which God is said to *finish*, and *cut short*, is his *work*; the Greek is λογος, which signifies his word, or the account, as some read it. This is brought in as a reason why a remnant only should be saved; because God would shorten the account, or (as we read it) make *a short work*, in the Jewish World. He would bring a sudden destruction upon that people. Sennacherib and the Assyrians, or Titus Vespasian and the Romans, shall make a complete and speedy conquest of them; few of them shall remain, the greater part being involved, first in infidelity, then in destruction. The apostle makes those few to be a type of God's elect among that people, that should be saved by faith in Jesus Christ.

#### Romans 9:29

Ver. 29. *As Esaias said before; in Isa 1:9.*

*The Lord of sabaoth; or, of hosts: the mighty God, whose hosts all creatures are, which execute his will, as soldiers the will of their commander.*

*Had left us a seed: he means by a seed, the same that he meant before by a remnant, a small number. These were left as a little seed, out of a great heap of corn: that which is chosen, and left for seed, is little in comparison of the whole crop.*

*We had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha; i.e. utterly wasted and destroyed as they were, Jer 50:40.*

#### Romans 9:30

Ver. 30. This is the conclusion of the apostle's discourse about the election of some and the rejection of others; as also about the calling of the Gentiles and the casting off the Jews.

*Which followed not after righteousness; that never minded or regarded it; instead of following after it, they fled from it. They were full of all unrighteousness, Ro 1:18, to the end; Eph 2:2,3.*

*The righteousness which is of faith; viz. gospel righteousness, or the righteousness of Christ, which is received by true faith.*

### Romans 9:31

Ver. 31. *Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness; i.e. the unbelieving Jews, who paid great reverence to the law of God, regarding and observing the outward precepts and ceremonies thereof.*

*Hath not attained to the law of righteousness; they came short of that righteousness which the law requires, which God will accept, and which is to be attained, not by works, but by faith, as it follows in the next verse (see Ro 9:32).*

### Romans 9:32

Ver. 32. *Here is the reason of the foregoing seeming paradox; why they, who followed after the law of righteousness, should not attain it, rather than other.*

*Because they sought it not aright; they sought it not in a way of believing, but of working. These two are opposed in the business of justification, as before at large, in Ro 9:3,4.*

*As it were by the works of the law; i.e. as if they could have attained righteousness or justification in that way, which it was impossible to do.*

*They stumbled at that stumbling-stone; i.e. the true Messiah: q.d. So far were they from seeking righteousness by Christ, that, on the contrary, they took offence at him, to their own destruction, Mr 6:3; 1Co 1:23. They thought it impossible that he should give them a righteousness better than their own. This happened to them according to the prophecy that went before them: so it followeth;*

## Romans 9:33

Ver. 33. *As it is written;* viz. in Isa 8:14, and Isa 28:16; to which prophecy also the apostle Peter refers, in 1Pe 2:6-8.

*A stumbling stone;* Jesus Christ is properly a corner-stone, elect and precious; but accidentally and eventually a stumbling-stone, Lu 2:34.

*Ashamed;* or confounded. Isaiah saith, *he that believeth;* the apostle, *whosoever believeth;* which is much the same: an indefinite proposition is equivalent to a universal. The prophet saith: *He that believeth shall not make haste;* the apostle, *he shall not be ashamed.* He that is rash and hasty will at last be ashamed and confounded.

## Romans 10:1

### Chapter Summary

Ro 10:1-3 Paul's prayer for Israel, who were misled by blind zeal.

Ro 10:4-10 The difference between justification by the law and by faith explained from Scripture.

Ro 10:11-13 Salvation open to all that believe, both Jews and Gentiles.

Ro 10:14-18 The necessity of preaching to the Gentiles inferred.

Ro 10:19,20 God's acceptance of the Gentiles known before to the Jews,

Ro 10:21 as also their own refusal of his offered mercy.

Ver. 1. The apostle begins this chapter with another prolepsis, or rhetorical insinuation, professing his unfeigned love of his nation, and his hearty desire of their salvation: q.d. As before, (c.g.) so now again I declare openly, (O ye Christian Jews, my brethren), that whatever the generality of the Jews do think of me, as if I hated them, or were their enemy; yet there is none more passionately and tenderly affected to them than I am: and

from hence it is, that I do so heartily desire and pray to God, for all that people, that they might be saved.

*That they might be saved;* that they may obtain eternal salvation, and escape that deluge of wrath and destruction that hangs over their heads.

### Romans 10:2

Ver. 2. *For I bear them record,* i.e. I must testify this of them, or of many of them, *that they have a zeal of God;* that they have a fervent desire to maintain the law of God, with all the Mosaical rites and ceremonies, as thinking thereby to promote the glory of God.

*But not according to knowledge;* i.e. true and right knowledge. Though it be a warm, yet it is a blind zeal. They know not the will of God, or what that righteousness is which he will accept. They know not for what end the law and worship of God, under the Old Testament, was instituted. They knew not that Christ, in, and by whom, that law is fulfilled.

### Romans 10:3

Ver. 3. *They being ignorant of God's righteousness:* here he shows more particularly what knowledge the Jews wanted. They knew not *the righteousness of God;* of which see Ro 1:17, with the notes there. This was abundantly *manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, Ro 3:21;* and a thing very needful to be known, as being that wherein man's happiness consisted; but they were ignorant of it.

*Going about to establish their own righteousness;* their personal and inherent righteousness, a home-made righteousness, which is of their own spinning; this they designed to set up in the room of God's righteousness.

*Have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God;* this notes the pride that accompanied their ignorance, and that is in the hearts of men by nature. They will not go abroad for that which they think they have, or may have, at home. They will not be beholden to another for that which they suppose they have in themselves. They have righteousness enough of

their own working; and therefore they reject and withdraw themselves from that which is of God's appointing.

#### Romans 10:4

Ver. 4. He proves that the Jews were ignorant of the righteousness of God, because they were ignorant of Christ, the true *end of the law*. *Christ is the end of the law*: q. d. The law was given for this end, that sinners being thereby brought to the knowledge of their sins, and their lost and damned estate, by reason thereof, should fly to Christ and his righteousness for refuge; see Ga 3:19,24. Or else: *Christ is the end of the law*; i.e. the perfection and consummation thereof. The word is taken in this sense, 1Ti 1:5. He perfected the ceremonial law, as being the substance whereof all the ceremonies of the law were shadows; they all referred to him as their scope and end. He perfected also the moral law, partly by his active obedience, fulfilling all the righteousness thereof, partly by his passive obedience, bearing the curse and punishment of the law, which was due to us. Whatever the law required that we should do or suffer, he hath perfected it on our behalf: see Ro 8:4.

#### Romans 10:5

Ver. 5. In this and the following verses, he shows the great difference that is between the righteousness of the law and the righteousness of faith; and this difference is taught us in the books of Moses himself. As for the righteousness of the law, that is plainly described by Moses, Le 18:5; and it tells us expressly: That the man who doth personally, perfectly, and constantly observe and do whatsoever the law requires, shall be rewarded with eternal life: see Ro 2:13, and the notes there. And on the contrary, it implies thus much: That whoso fails, or falls short, shall incur death and damnation. This also it declares in other places, De 27:26 Ga 3:10. This is a hard saying; who can hear it? It shuts us all out of heaven, it turns us into hell, it lays upon us impossible conditions. Let us hearken therefore to the righteousness of faith; of which in the next, (see Ro 10:5).



## Romans 10:6

Ver. 6. *The righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise:* by a prosopopoeia (a frequent figure in Scripture) he puts the person of a reasonable creature upon the righteousness of faith, and bringeth it in speaking and declaring itself as followeth; or else the meaning is, that the Scripture, or Moses, speaketh thus of the righteousness of faith. These words are taken out of De 30:12,13. The question is, Whether Paul doth properly allege this place in Deuteronomy, or only allude to it? Some think the latter, that Moses directly speaks of the law, and that the apostle, by an allusion, or by way of accommodation, applies it unto faith; hence it is, that he doth not cite the very words of Moses, but alters and adds to them, as best served his purpose. But others think, that this would extenuate the force of St. Paul's argument, if he should only allude unto this testimony of Moses, and not confirm that which he intended by the same. Therefore their opinion is, that these words are properly cited; and that Moses himself, in that place, doth speak (though very obscurely) of the righteousness of faith; yea, the foregoing words in De 30:12,13 do belong to the times of the gospel. Some of the Jewish rabbis have confessed, that Moses in that chapter, especially the beginning of it, hath reference to the days of the Messiah. He speaks there of the Israelites being driven among all nations, and unto the utmost parts of heaven, which chiefly happened to them a little after the ascension of Christ, and will abide upon them till their conversion, of which see Ro 11:1-36; and then God will restore them again to the Land of Promise, to that Jerusalem which is from above, the true church of Jesus Christ; then he will circumcise their hearts, and the hearts of their seed, to love the Lord with all their heart, and with all their soul; then will the Lord rejoice over them to do them good, as he rejoiced over their fathers; then, according to God's covenant promise, the law of God shall be written in their hearts; it shall not be hidden, or afar off, but nigh them, in their mouths, and in their hearts. Thus the apostle convinceth the Jews by a testimony out of Moses, in whom they trusted.

*Say not in thine heart;* i.e. think not anxiously and despondingly within thyself.

*Who shall ascend into heaven?* i.e. to learn the will of God there concerning our righteousness and salvation, and then teach it to us; or, to see if there be any admission or room for such as I am there, and to carry

me thither.

*That is, to bring Christ down from above;* this is in effect to deny that Christ has already come down from heaven to reveal it to us; and that he must now come to do it: or else, this is as much as to deny that Christ hath already descended from heaven, to procure and purchase salvation for us; and that he must come down again for that purpose. It were to deny the ascension of Christ into heaven; for he is gone thither, not as a private, but as a public person: he is gone thither as our Head, and thither he will bring all his members; he is there as our forerunner, as one that is gone before to prepare a place for us. For Christians to distrust their going to heaven, is to doubt whether Christ be in heaven; he had never gone thither if he had not perfected our redemption and salvation here.

#### Romans 10:7

Ver. 7. *Who shall descend into the deep?* By *the deep*, here, understand hell: see Lu 8:31 Re 9:1 20:1,3. q. d. Do not inquire distrustfully, and despairingly, whether thou shalt go to hell, or who shall go thither, to see, and bring thee word, if such as thou are there.

*That is, to bring up Christ again from the dead;* this were in effect to frustrate and make void the death of Christ; it is as much as to say, he never died for us, or he must come again, and suffer, and shed his blood for the remission of our sins. He died to deliver us from death and damnation; he endured the wrath of God, that we may escape it. The sense of the whole is this, That the doctrine of justification by faith, doth not propose such difficult and impossible terms, as the doctrine of justification by works. The righteousness of the law, that speaks terror, and puts us into a continual fear of hell, and despair of heaven; but the righteousness of faith, that speaks comfort, and forbids all amazing fear and troubles about our salvation or damnation.

#### Romans 10:8

Ver. 8. *But what saith it?* i.e. what saith the text in De 30:14? or what saith the righteousness of faith? What is its style and language? In the Ro 10:6,7

he did but tell us what it said not, but here he tells us what it saith.

*The word is nigh thee;* i.e. the matter required of thee, in order to life and salvation. He seems in these words to declare the readiness and easiness of the way of salvation, as taught us in the gospel, and by the righteousness of faith. God requires no hard thing of us, to cross the seas, to climb the mountains, to take long and painful journeys, to find it out. The way of salvation under the gospel hath but a short cut; it requires not so much the labour of the hand, as the confession of the mouth, and the belief of the heart: or, *The word* that teacheth it is at hand, it is as if it were *in thy mouth and heart*: a proverbial speech, (as some think), to show the readiness of it.

*That is, the word of faith, which we preach:* by *the word of faith*, he means the gospel, and the doctrine of it: and the gospel is so called, either effectually, because it works faith; or objectively, because it is a received faith, and is the proper object of it.

#### Romans 10:9

Ver. 9. q. d. There are but these two things, which the gospel principally requires in order to our salvation: the one is, the confession of Christ with our mouths, and that in spite of all persecution and danger, to own him for our Lord, and for our Jesus; and to declare, that we are and will be ruled and saved by him, and by him only. The other is, to believe in our hearts, *that God hath raised him from the dead*. This article of the resurrection of Christ presupposeth all the rest, and fasteneth together, as by a link, all the antecedents and consequents of it; his ascension, session at the right hand of God, and intercession, which followed after. This article therefore, by a figure, is put for all the rest; and this is mentioned, because the death and passion of Christ had availed us nothing, unless he had risen again; for thereby he obtained a perfect victory over sin, death, and damnation, for all the elect. This is the principal ground of our justification, as hath been said, Ro 4:25.

#### Romans 10:10

Ver. 10. *With the heart man believeth;* in the former verse confession was

set first; in this, believing. Faith indeed goes before confession; *I believed*, says the psalmist, and the apostle after him, *therefore have I spoken*; yet our faith is discerned and known by our confession.

*Unto righteousness*; i.e. unto justification. This phrase may be expounded by Ro 4:5, or Ro 9:30.

*With the mouth confession is made unto salvation*: our adversaries the papists make great use of this text, to prove that good works, as confession, &c., are the cause of salvation; whereas confession is required here, not as the cause, but as the means thereof. The apostle makes faith here to be the cause, as well of salvation, as justification; because confession of the mouth, to which salvation is here ascribed, is itself an effect or fruit of faith; and so, according to that known rule in logic, the cause of the cause, is the cause of that which is caused thereby.

### Romans 10:11

Ver. 11. The saving effect of faith and confession, spoken of immediately before, is here proved by Scripture. Either he refers to Isa 28:16, or Ps 25:3; or else he means, that this is the general doctrine of the Scripture. See notes on Ro 9:33.

### Romans 10:12

Ver. 12. *For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek*: he gives a reason for that universal term, *whosoever*, which he had added in the precedent verse, and is not found in Isaiah, as was noted before, in Ro 9:33.

*The same Lord over all*; these words are a reason why there is no difference now between Jew and Greek. This title is to be referred more especially to Jesus Christ, who was called *Lord*, Ro 10:9, and is called: *Lord of all*, Ac 10:36. He is Head of all the elect, in all nations of the world.

*Is rich unto all*; i.e. is bountiful unto all. So that the Jews need not envy

the calling or coming of the Gentiles; they have never the less themselves; the Lord hath an inexhaustible store of grace and mercy. The fountain is above our thirst.

*That call upon him;* not to all, hand over head, but to such as call upon him in faith.

### Romans 10:13

Ver. 13. That *the Lord is rich unto all that call upon him*, is confirmed here by a testimony out of Joe 2:32, which is also cited by St. Peter, Ac 2:21. The apostle's argument may be thus formed: If whosoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved, then the Lord is rich to all that call upon him; for no riches are comparable to salvation; but the former is true, therefore the latter.

*Whosoever*, whether Jew or Gentile, *shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved;* i.e. on him whose name is the Lord. Jesus Christ is principally meant, as appears by many passages in the prophet. Compare this with 1Co 1:2.

### Romans 10:14

Ver. 14. The connexion of this verse and the following verses of this chapter is very obscure. Some connect these words with Ro 10:12. There he said: *There is no difference between Jew and Greek*, &c. And this he proves, because the means to attain salvation by the true invocation of God hath been made common to all; and consequently faith, and so, from time to time, the hearing and preaching the word of God, according as the one is occasioned by the other. Others make this the coherence: Seeing the righteousness of faith is the only true righteousness, and doth, in common, by the promise of God, belong to Jew and Gentile (as hath been said); it was therefore necessary, that some must be sent of God to both people, which is the ordinary way and means to beget faith, and to bring men to Christ. His way of arguing is such, as logicians call *sortes*; rhetoricians, a gradation; and it is very forcible and demonstrative: q. d. God hath, by his prophets, promised salvation indifferently to Jew and Gentile; but without

calling on him, there is no salvation; and without faith, there is no prayer; and without hearing, there is no faith; and without a preacher, there is no hearing; and without solemn mission, there can be no preacher. His manner of speaking all along is by way of interrogation, which is the more convincing, because it carries in it a kind of an appeal to the persons spoken to; every interrogation is equivalent to a negation.

*How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?* There is no foundation then for the popish doctrine of invoking saints and angels.

*How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?* Amongst the elect of God, there may be some that are born deaf; and in these, God doth supply the want of outward means in an extraordinary way: but ordinarily, hearing is as necessary to faith, as faith is to prayer, or prayer to salvation.

### Romans 10:15

Ver. 15. *How shall they preach, except they be sent?* viz. immediately, by God or Christ, as the prophets and the apostles: see Ga 1:1. Or mediately, by men; i.e. by such as have authority from Christ to separate and ordain others to this work. Without this orderly mission, or ordination, how can they preach? Saith the apostle; i.e. how can they do it duly or profitably, or in the name and by the authority of Christ? For otherwise, there were, and still are, those that run before they are sent, Jer 23:21.

*How beautiful are the feet of them!* Their arrival or approach. The persons of such are meant, though their feet be named, because they carried them up and down to do this work. The scripture referred to is found in Isa 52:7. The apostle here leaveth the Septuagint, and followeth the Hebrew text; yet he doth not cite the place in all points as the prophet hath it. He leaveth out some words, as *upon the mountains*, which had respect to the situation of Jerusalem; and he changeth the number, turning the singular into the plural.

*Objection.* But the text in Isaiah speaks of such a messenger as was sent to publish the deliverance of the Jews from the bondage of the Assyrians.

*Answer.* Though that be granted, it is applied and accommodated aptly enough to the preaching of peace and salvation by Christ; because that deliverance (as all other temporal deliverances) had its foundation in the redemption purchased by Christ.

### Romans 10:16

Ver. 16. *But they have not all obeyed the gospel:* he here preventeth a cavil of the Jews. Thus they might reason: If the apostles and preachers of the gospel are sent with so great authority from God, and bring such a welcome message, how comes it to pass that so few receive it, and yield obedience thereunto? To this he answers, that it need not seem strange, because it was foretold long ago by the prophet, Isa 53:1. It is not to be understood as if this was the cause of their unbelief, because Isaiah said thus. The particle *for* doth not show the cause, but the consequence: it was not because the prophet so said, that they did not believe; but because they believed not, the prophet so foretold.

*Lord;* this is added by the Seventy for explanation.

*Who hath believed our report?* i.e. Very few, none in comparison. Compare this with Joh 3:32.

### Romans 10:17

Ver. 17. This is the conclusion of the former gradation, Ro 10:14. He speaketh here of the ordinary means whereby faith is wrought; not confining or limiting the Spirit of God, who worketh, or may work, by extraordinary means, yea, without any means at all. See Poole on "Ro 10:14".

*By the word of God;* by the command of God: q.d. The gospel could not be lawfully preached to them, for them to hear it, but by God's command; and therefore the apostles and others, in preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, had good authority for what they did.

### Romans 10:18

Ver. 18. He answers an objection, that some one might make in behalf of the Jews, to excuse them; that they could not believe, because they had not heard; and faith, as in the foregoing verse, comes by hearing. To this he answers, that the gospel was published to the whole world; therefore the Jews must needs have heard it. That the gospel had been preached all the world over, he proves by a testimony taken out of Ps 19:4: q. d. David tells you, that all have heard, or might hear; for the sound of the gospel is gone out into all the earth.

*Objection.* But David speaks of the works of God, as the heavens, the firmament, &c.

*Answer.* Some think the apostle only alludes to this place, (Ps 19:4), and doth not allege it. Others think that the psalmist doth literally and historically speak of the heavens, &c.; and prophetically of the apostles, and preachers of the gospel. By *all the earth*, in this verse, you may understand the greatest part of it; and by *the ends of the world*, the remote parts thereof.

### Romans 10:19

Ver. 19. Here he proves by three testimonies out of the Old Testament, that the Jews must needs have heard the sound of the gospel, together with the Gentiles; only they rejected it, when the other embraced it. And so he layeth the ground of what he was purposed to handle in the following chapter, concerning the receiving of the Gentiles, and the casting off, and after calling, of the Jews.

*Did not Israel know;* here something must be supplied to make up the sense neither God, or the gospel, or the righteousness of faith, or the conversion of the Gentiles. The Israelites could not well pretend ignorance, considering what Moses and Isaiah had said, in whom, or in whose writings, they were conversant.

*Moses saith;* viz. in De 32:21. Still he follows the translation of the Seventy.



*I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you;* here God threateneth the Jews, that he would punish them with *jealousy* and *anger*, by preferring the Gentiles before them; at the sight whereof, their hearts should be sore vexed; to behold all their privileges taken from them, and given to a people whom they accounted most vile and despicable, to be *no people* in regard of them, to be dogs and beasts rather than men: see [Ac 13:45](#). Read the cited place in Deuteronomy [De 32:21](#) and you will find that God speaks of this as a fit punishment upon the Jews for their idolatry. They had chosen to themselves such as were no gods; and therefore, to requite them, God would take to him such as were no people: they had chosen to themselves (as it were) another husband; and God, to be even with them, had chosen another wife.

#### Romans 10:20

Ver. 20. *Esaias is very bold;* i.e. he speaks more boldly concerning the calling of the Gentiles, and the casting off the Jews. He used a holy freedom, though it cost him dear; Jerome saith, he was sawn asunder with a wooden saw. This is a commendable property in a preacher: see [Ac 4:13 28:31](#).

*And saith:* viz. in [Isa 65:1](#). The apostle in this citation differs in some words, both from the Hebrew text and the Seventy, as may appear to him that will compare them together.

*I was found of them that sought me not;* compare this with [Ro 9:30](#), and see the notes there.

*I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me;* compare this with [Eph 2:2](#). The advantage and advancement of the Gentiles was altogether of free grace, and an effect of God's free election.

#### Romans 10:21

Ver. 21. *But to Israel he saith;* viz. in [Isa 65:2](#). In the former verse there is

a consolatory prophecy, foretelling the vocation of ignorant and profane Gentiles; and in this, there is a menacing prophecy, threatening the rejecting of the rebellious and stubborn Jews.

*All day long;* from the time of their first calling to their dissipation.

*I have stretched forth my hands;* as a father holds forth his arms to receive a rebellious son. Compare this with Mt 23:37.

*Unto a disobedient and gainsaying people;* the prophet Isaiah hath but one word, *rebellious*, and the apostle renders it by these two words, *disobedient and gainsaying*: they were disobedient in heart, and gainsaying with their tongues, contrary to those two gracious qualifications, mentioned Ro 10:9,10, belief in the heart, and the confession of the mouth. Compare this with Ac 7:51,52 Ac 13:45 19:9.

## Romans 11:1

### Chapter Summary

Ro 11:1-6 God hath not so far cast off all Israel, but that a remnant is saved by grace, not by works.

Ro 11:7-10 The judicial blindness of the rest is prophesied of in Scripture.

Ro 11:11-16 The consequence both of their fall and conversion with regard to the Gentile world.

Ro 11:17-22 The Gentiles are cautioned not to insult the Jews, but to make a proper use of the example both of God's goodness and severity.

Ro 11:23-32 The Jews may, and shall in time, believe and be saved.

Ro 11:33-36 God's judgments and ways are unsearchable.

Ver. 1. The apostle having shown, in the end of the foregoing chapter, that the Jews were for their obstinacy rejected, and the Gentiles called, he here prevents or answers an objection. Some might be ready to say: If this be so, then God hath cast away his covenant people, which he hath promised not to do; see Ps 94:14. To this he answers, first, by his accustomed form of denial: *God forbid*; and then he proceeds to show, that the rejection of

the Jews was neither total nor final. That it was not total, he proves, first, by a particular instance in the following words.

*I also am an Israelite;* i.e. I am a Jew by descent, of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, and yet am not cast off by God.

*Of the tribe of Benjamin:* some think this is added to intimate, that he was born of an honourable tribe, out of which king Saul sprang, 1Sa 9:1, and Esther the queen, Es 2:5. Others think this is added for a contrary reason; lest his calling should be ascribed to the dignity of his tribe, he says, he was of Benjamin, the last and least of all the tribes. And others rather think, that this particular recital of his genealogy is only to show, that he was a Jew by nature and nation, and not a proselyte converted to the faith: see Php 3:5.

### Romans 11:2

Ver. 2. *God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew:* here he makes a further answer to the forementioned objection: by way of distinction, he distinguishes the people of God into such as are foreknown, and such as are not foreknown: and as for the former of these, he says, they are not rejected of God. By such as are foreknown of God, he means those that are elected and predestinated to eternal life, Ro 8:29: a foreknowledge with approbation is implied and intended, Joh 10:14 2Ti 2:19.

*Wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias?* Here is a third answer to the objection in Ro 11:1, and it is taken from an instance in Elias, which the Jews were well acquainted with. He cites or brings a book case for it. And he the rather brings this instance, lest the Jews should accuse him of insolency, for that he had spoken before only of himself; and therefore he gives them to understand, that there were many other believing Israelites, as well as himself, though possibly they were unknown to them. You know (saith he) *what the Scripture saith of Elias*, 1Ki 19:1-21.

*How he maketh intercession to God against Israel.* i.e. against the ten tribes, who were generally revolted from God, and fallen to idolatry: against those he complained, or those he impeached, ripping up their

impieties, as in the following words.

### Romans 11:3

Ver. 3. See 1Ki 19:10,14.

*Digged down thine altars:* these were not the altars of the high places, for they are commended that cast them down; nor the altars in the temple at Jerusalem, for they were out of the reach of the ten tribes, against whom Elias complains: but such altars (say some) as the godly of the ten tribes did build to serve God with, when they were not permitted to go up to Jerusalem; in which case the building of private altars (as some learned Jews have affirmed) was allowed. Or else by *altars* you may understand such altars as Elias himself, by the special commandment of God, had erected. Others, by digging down God's altars, do understand their corrupting and destroying the true worship of God; and the words are to be taken synecdochically, or metonymically, the sign being put for the thing signified.

*I am left alone;* so it was, for aught he knew; for few, if any, did publicly own the true worship of God: so general was the defection of the ten tribes in those days.

### Romans 11:4

Ver. 4. *The answer of God;* the word properly signifieth the oracle, or answer of God given in the tabernacle from the mercy-seat; but it is generally taken for any Divine answer, or direction received from God: see Mt 2:12 Heb 11:7, where the same word is used. The apostle doth not repeat the whole *answer of God*, as it is recorded in 1Ki 19:15-18, but so much only as was pertinent to his purpose.

*I have reserved to myself;* he saith not: They have reserved themselves, but, *I have reserved* them: q.d. Of my own free grace I have kept them from idolatry and apostacy.

*Seven thousand men;* a certain number for an uncertain. There were

doubtless women amongst them; but they are noted by the more worthy sex.

*Who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal;* the word *image* is not in the Greek; but the article being of the feminine gender, it was necessarily understood.

### Romans 11:5

Ver. 5. q. d. As it was in the times of Elias, so it is now; *there is a remnant* of the Jews, which God hath graciously elected; therefore their rejection is not total, which was the thing to be proved. Though those that believe are few in respect of those that believe not, as a remnant is but little in respect of the whole piece, yet there are many thousands of them, as James said to Paul, Ac 21:20: *Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe.*

### Romans 11:6

Ver. 6. This verse depends upon the former; and though it doth not seem to appertain to the argument the apostle had in hand, yet, by the direction of the Spirit, he takes the little occasion that is offered, to show, that election and vocation are only by grace, and not by works. This he had spoken to before, Ro 4:4,5 9:11; but he toucheth upon it again: and here he delivers a truth, which the Jews of old either could not, or would not, understand; i.e. that there is no mixing of the merit of good works and the free grace of God, but one of these doth exclude and destroy the nature of the other; for if election and calling were both of grace and works, (as some that call themselves Christians, as well as the Jews, affirm), then grace is no grace, and works are no works. For whatsoever proceedeth of grace, that cometh freely, and not of debt; but what cometh by merit of works, that cometh by debt; but now debt and no debt, or that which is free, and by desert, are quite contrary things. Therefore to say, that men are elected and called, partly of grace and partly of the merit of foreseen works, that were to put things together that cannot agree, to make debt no debt, merit no merit, works no works, grace no grace; and so, to affirm and deny one and the same thing.

### Romans 11:7

Ver. 7. *What then?* q. d. My discourse comes to this, or this is the sum of it.

*Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for;* i.e. the body of the Jewish nation, seeking righteousness and life by the works of the law, have not obtained it, or they have not hit the mark; they aimed at it, but they shot wide; they took a great deal of pains to little or no purpose: see Ro 9:31.

*The election;* i.e. the elect; the abstract for the concrete: so before, *circumcision* for the circumcised.

*The rest were blinded;* i.e. those who are not elected; they are left, by God's just judgment, to their own ignorance and obdurateness; as also to Satan, who doth increase it in them, 2Co 4:4. The antithesis requires that he should have said: The rest have not obtained; but he speaks this of purpose to show the cause of their not obtaining, i.e. their own blindness of mind and hardness of heart.

### Romans 11:8

Ver. 8. *It is written;* viz. in Isa 6:9 29:10.

*The spirit of slumber;* the word signifieth, such a dead sleep, as those have, who are pricked or stung with venomous beasts, out of which they hardly or never awake.

*Unto this day:* q.d. So it was of old, and so it is still. Or else these words (the former being included in a parenthesis) may be joined with the last words of the foregoing verse, thus, *the rest were blinded unto this day*.

### Romans 11:9

Ver. 9,10. *David saith;* viz. in Ps 69:22,23. The apostle tieth not himself to the very words of the psalmist, but being guided by the same Spirit by which David wrote, he adds and alters some words, without diminishing the sense.

*Let their table be made a snare, &c.:* some take these words for a prayer; others, a prophecy. David, in the person of Christ, (of whom he was a type), doth complain and prophesy of the extreme injuries and oppressions wherewith the Jews (his own people) should vex him; as that they should give him *gall for meat*, and in his thirst, give him *vinegar to drink*, Ro 11:21. Therefore, by way of imprecation, he prayeth down the wrath of God upon them: particularly, he prophesies or prays, that all their most pleasant things might be turned to their destruction; that their understandings might be darkened, so as they shall discern nothing of heavenly things; that they might savour nothing but earthly things, and be unable to lift up their heads and hearts to God, and to his gospel. Now David having, by the Spirit of prophecy, prayed down such miseries upon the Jews, they must be fulfilled; therefore the general unbelief and hardness of heart that is amongst that people is not to be wondered at.

### Romans 11:11

Ver. 11. Hitherto he hath showed that the rejection of the Jews is not total. Now he comes to prove that it is not final; that before the end of the world they shall be generally called and converted; that they, together with the Gentiles that believe, shall make one sheepfold, and one flock under one Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ. And for the proving of this, divers arguments are brought by the apostle, (who alone plainly handles this secret), on which he insisteth the longer, for the comfort of the poor Jews, as also for the administration and information of the Gentiles.

*Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid:* here is another prolepsis or anticipation. The Jews might say: If the case be thus, that these holy prophets, Isaiah and David, have foretold our blindness and stumbling, then we are in a hopeless condition, and that for ever. To this he answers, that they have not so stumbled as that they should finally fall, so as never to rise again; far be it from me to affirm any such things: God

hath revealed the contrary to me; that he will one day call the Jews again, and restore them to his favour.

*Through they fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles:* q. d. Out of the forementioned evil there ariseth this good, that the gospel (being rejected by the Jews) is preached to the Gentiles, and they are thereby called and brought to salvation: see Ac 13:42,46. Because now at first a few Jews only, and a multitude of Gentiles, are converted, it hath so fallen out, that the ceremonial law is the more easily abrogated, and the doctrine of the gospel and the grace of God is the better established.

*To provoke them to jealousy;* i.e. the Jews who embrace not the gospel: q. d. This grace that God hath bestowed upon the Gentiles, he will make use of in his appointed time, as a prick of holy jealousy to the Jews; he will by means thereof stir them up to a holy indignation and emulation, to see themselves so far outstripped by those whom they contemned, and thereupon to embrace the gospel, and become the people of God again. Thus, as God hath ordered that the casting away of the Jews should be an occasion of the calling of the Gentiles; so again, on the other hand, the calling of the Gentiles shall be an occasion of the restoring of the Jews.

### Romans 11:12

Ver. 12. Another anticipation. The apostle having showed, that the falling away of the Jews was an occasion of the coming in of the Gentiles, it might be objected, that the conversion of the Jews might likewise be an occasion of the falling away of the Gentiles. To this he answers negatively, and confirms his answer by an argument from the less to the greater; that if their fall and diminution were the riches of the Gentiles, their calling again would be so much more: q. d. If God hath made use of the fall and rejection of the Jews, for an occasion of pouring out the riches or abundance of his grace upon the nations; and if the number of believing Jews, being so very small, (which is meant by their *diminishing*), hath occasioned the conversion of such a multitude of Gentiles; then how much more will their fulness have the effect!

*How much more their fulness!* i.e. their general conversion, the coming in of the Jews, shall so fill the world with wonder, and the gospel with lustre,



that a much further accession will be made even to the number of the believing Gentiles.

### Romans 11:13

Ver. 13. i.e. *I speak to you* of being rich in the faith above the Jews, because I challenge a special interest in you, *inasmuch as I am* appointed to be *the apostle of the Gentiles*, and am sent chiefly unto them: see Ro 15:16 Ac 9:15 13:2 22:21 26:17 Ga 1:16 2:7 Eph 3:8 2Ti 1:11. And therefore, in thus setting forth your privileges and blessings: *I magnify mine office*.

### Romans 11:14

Ver. 14. q. d. And I thus extol God's favour and mercy to you, that it may be a means (if God please) to provoke the Jews, that are my own flesh and blood, to a holy emulation or jealousy, (see Ro 11:11), when they shall see the Gentiles possess what was promised to them.

*Question.* How doth he say, that he may save some of them? Is not God the author of salvation?

*Answer.* Yes; but he hath given his ministers to be instruments therein, and called them fellow workers with himself, 1Co 6:1: see 1Ti 4:16.

### Romans 11:15

Ver. 15. This verse contains an argument to prove the calling of the Jews; not a new one, but that repeated which you had before, Ro 11:12; the substance is the same, only the terms differ: there he spake of the fall and diminishing of the Jews, here, of their casting away; there it was the riches, here it is the reconciling of the world: q. d. If the rejection of the Jews brought great profit to the Gentiles, their reception and restoration will bring abundantly more.

*Be the reconciling of the world;* i.e. an occasion of preaching the gospel to

the Gentiles, by means of which they were reconciled to God. The gospel is *the ministry of reconciliation*, 2Co 5:18-20.

*The receiving of them*, into the favour of God and the bosom of the church.

*Life from the dead*; a proverbial speech, to signify a great change for the better. The conversion of that people and nation, will strengthen the things that are languishing and like to die in the Christian church. It will confirm the faith of the Gentiles, and reconcile all their differences in religion, and occasion a more thorough reformation amongst them: there will be a much more happy and flourishing estate of the church, even such as shall be in the end of the world, at the resurrection of the dead.

### Romans 11:16

Ver. 16. Here is another argument to prove the Jews are not finally rejected, because of the covenant made with their fathers.

*If the first-fruit be holy*: some make a difference between *the first-fruit*, and *the root*, in the latter part of the verse. By *the first-fruit* they understand the apostles and other godly Jews, that were at first converted to the Christian faith; and by *the root* they understand Abraham and the patriarchs. Others take them for the same, and understand Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with the rest of the patriarchs, to be both *the first-fruit* and *the root*.

*The lump is also holy*; by *lump*, and *branches*, he means the people of the Jews that descended of these holy patriarchs, and spring from them, as branches from a root. The great question is, In what sense they are said to be *holy*? Or of what holiness doth he speak? It is not meant of inherent, but of federal, or covenant holiness; all in all outward and visible covenant with God, were called *holy*: see Ex 9:6 Da 8:24. Many common things are called *holy* in Scripture, because dedicated to God and to his service; yea, Jerusalem, though a place of great wickedness, is called a *holy city*, Mt 27:53. In such a sense as this, the Jews are still a holy people; they have an hereditary kind of dedication to God; they have a federal holiness, and relation to God, as being for ever separated to him, in the loins of their

progenitors; this can never be wholly forfeited, as being granted to all the posterity of the holy patriarchs: therefore they are called *the children of the covenant, which God made with their fathers*, Ac 3:25: see Ac 2:39. So then God will remember in his own time, his covenant with the Jews, the posterity of Abraham, &c., who are *beloved for the fathers' sakes*, Ro 11:28. Therefore, in the mean time, they should not look on themselves with desperation; nor should the Gentiles look on them with disdain, as it follows in the next words.

### Romans 11:17

Ver. 17. In this, and some following verses, the apostle digresses a little, and takes occasion to prevent the insulting of the Gentiles over the Jews; as also to persuade them to take warning by their example.

*If some of the branches be broken off;* the unbelieving Jews.

*And thou;* a believing Gentile: though he speaks as to a particular person, yet he means the whole body of the believing Gentiles.

*Being a wild olive tree;* a scion taken from a wild olive tree; i.e. from the heathenish and unbelieving world.

*Wert grafted in among them;* the believing Jews. Some read, for them, or in the place of the branches that are broken off.

*And with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree:* by *the root* he means Abraham, &c. as before: by *the olive tree* he means the church of Christ; by *the root*, or sap of the root, and by *the fatness of the olive tree*, he means, all the promises and privileges, the graces and ordinances, the spiritual blessings and benefits, which belonged to Abraham and his seed, or to the true church of God.

### Romans 11:18

Ver. 18. *Boast not against the branches;* i.e. against the Jews, who, because of their unbelief, are broken off; as if by nature thou wert better

than they, or more worthy of that grace which is bestowed on thee. The word signifies: Throw not up thy neck, do not carry thyself scornfully and insultingly.

*But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee:*

q. d. If any will needs be so insolent, let them know and consider, that as the root is not beholden to the branches, but the branches to the root; so the good things that the Gentiles have, they received from the Jews, and not the Jews from them: the Gentile church is incorporated into the Jewish, and not the Jewish into the Gentile. Or else the meaning is: Despise not the Jews, for they are the natural branches of the root that bears them. If thou insultest over the branches, thou dost in a manner lift up thyself against the root, that once bore them, and now bears thee; even Abraham, who is the father of all them that believe. Abraham is not the root, simply and absolutely, but relatively, or by way of relation to his posterity and offspring.

### Romans 11:19

Ver. 19,20. Here he brings in the Gentiles, alleging a reason for their insulting over the Jews; because the Jews were broken off, that they might give place, or make way, for them; and the less worthy do always give place to the more worthy. To this he answers, first, by way of concession: Well, (saith he), it is true, and I do not deny it, that the Jews *were broken off*, that the Gentiles *might be grafted in*. But then he further adds, by way of correction or negation, that the worthiness of the Gentiles was not the cause why the Jews were broken off; but it was *because of* their own *unbelief*; they would not accept of Christ, Joh 1:11; they went *about to establish their own righteousness*, and would *not submit themselves to the righteousness of God*, as it is in Ro 10:3. Therefore, if you Gentiles shall reason after this manner, you plainly put a fallacy upon yourselves, and take that for a cause which is none: you do not distinguish between the cause and the event; it fell out, indeed, that the Jews, being cast off, the Gentiles were received in, but this was not the cause of that.

*And thou standest by faith:* q. d. Neither is thy worthiness the cause of thy present standing in the room of the Jews, or of having thy station in the church of Christ; but it is Lily believing in that Christ whom the Jews

rejected. By *faith* thou wast first ingrafted, and still continuest in the good olive tree.

*Be not high-minded, but fear:* q.d. Be advised, and take heed of being self-conceited and secure; if thou fall into their fault, thou mayst expect the same fate. Therefore stand in awe, and sin not; thou art subject to unbelief and apostacy, as well as they.

### Romans 11:21

Ver. 21. This verse is a reason of the forementioned admonition: q. d. If God proceeded with so much severity against his ancient people the Jews, you Gentiles may in reason expect as great severity, if you take not heed to yourselves, and to your standing.

### Romans 11:22

Ver. 22. In this verse, he further persuades the Gentiles to humility and godly fear, and suggesteth several reasons for it. The first is taken from the example of God's *severity* to the Jews; they falling into apostacy and unbelief, are generally cut off and cast away. A second reason is taken from the free grace and undeserved goodness of God to the poor Gentiles, who were mercifully planted or grafted in the room of the Jews. A third reason is taken from the condition of their present standing, which is, if they *continue in his goodness*; i.e. if they continue in that state wherein his goodness hath set them. Some think the cause is here put for the effect, the *goodness* of God for faith, which was wrought in them by the goodness or grace of God. The antithesis, in the next verse, shows this to be the sense; for there he speaks of the Jews not continuing or abiding still in unbelief. A fourth reason is from the danger that would follow; if, through pride and security, they should fall and miscarry, they would be cut off, as the Jews, the natural branches, are. Some observe the change of the word; the Jews are said to be *broken off*, but the Gentiles would be *cut off*; they would, as it were, be stocked up by the roots: but that seems too critical and curious.

### Romans 11:23

Ver. 23. Here he adds another argument, to repress the arrogance and insulting of the Gentiles; and it is taken from the hope of the Jews' restoration. Though for the present they seem to be in a desperate and forlorn condition, yet the restoring and re-ingrafting of them into the church is not impossible. The great obstacle is their unbelief, which God is able to remove. The same God that rejected them is able to restore them; to him all things are possible, he can cause dead and dry bones to live. An argument from the power of God (and that in the very words of this text) is frequently made use of in Scripture, to excite hope and assurance. Ro 4:21 14:4 2Co 9:8 2Ti 1:12 Heb 2:18 11:19.

### Romans 11:24

Ver. 24. He here shows the probability, as well as possibility, of the Jews' conversion, because God hath done that which is more unlikely: q. d. If the Gentiles, which were a kind of wild olive branches, were grafted into a good olive tree, the church of God, which is contrary to nature, seeing men use to graft a good scion into a wild stock, (as an apple into a crab), and not a wild scion into a good stock; how much more shall the Jews, which are the natural branches, yea, branches of that olive tree into which the Gentiles are now ingrafted, be grafted into their own olive tree, to which formerly they did belong! According to the custom of grafting which was common amongst them, to graft one tree upon another of the same kind; and grounded on Le 19:19.

### Romans 11:25

Ver. 25. Here he shows there is not only a possibility and probability, but a certainly of the Jews' conversion and calling. This he calleth a *mystery*, or a secret; though it was revealed in the Scripture, (as you will hear), yet it was not understood; nay, the manner, the number, and the time of their conversion, is still concealed and hid from us. The calling of the Gentiles was a mystery, and a great secret; see Eph 3:3; and so is the calling and restoration of the Jews. There are three particulars of this *mystery*, which

he makes known to the Gentiles (and he doth it the rather, lest they should swell with a high conceit of themselves, and proudly despise the Jews): two of them are in this verse; and the first is, *that blindness is happened to Israel in part* only; i.e. they were not all blinded or hardened; or this blindness should not last always, but for a time. The latter sense agrees best with the word *mystery*; for it was no secret that some of the Jews believed; this was told them before, Ro 11:2,5,7. Secondly, another part of this *mystery* was, that this blindness of the Jews should continue till *the fulness of the Gentiles came in*. By *fulness* here, (as in Ro 11:12), understand a great number or multitude of the Gentiles; greater, by far, than was in the apostles' days. There is another exposition of this clause, which I submit to consideration: by *the Gentiles*, here, you may understand the Romans, or the Roman monarchy and power; (see Ac 4:27 21:11;) and by the coming in of their fulness may be understood, the full time of their reign and continuance; after which their ruin follows. And so here is foretold the time of the calling of the Jews, which will be soon after the destruction of antichrist and the Roman monarchy. *Query*: Whether this doth not agree with the prediction of our Saviour? Lu 21:24.

### Romans 11:26

Ver. 26. Here is a third and chief part of the aforementioned *mystery*, that in the end, *all Israel shall be saved*. By *Israel* is not meant the whole church of God, consisting of Jews and Gentiles; so that word is used, Ga 6:16, and elsewhere; for then, what he spake would have been no mystery at all: but by *Israel* here (as in the precedent verse) you must understand, the nation and people of the Jews. And by *all Israel* is not meant every individual Israelite, but many, or (it may be) the greatest part of them. So *all* is to be taken in Scripture: see Joh 6:45 1Ti 2:6, and elsewhere. Look, as when he speaks of the conversion of the Gentiles, and the coming in of their fulness, there are many (too many of them) still unconverted; so, notwithstanding the general calling of the Jews, a great many of them may remain uncalled.

*As it is written*; the apostle had this by revelation, but he proves it also by Scripture. All are not agreed from whence these testimonies are taken; the former is found (with some little variation) in Isa 59:20: as for the latter, some think it is taken from Jer 31:33. Others think, that he joineth two

places in Isaiah together, (as he did before, [Ro 11:8](#)), and the last words are taken out of [Isa 27:9](#). The Seventy have the very words used by the apostle. These prophecies and promises, though they were in part fulfilled when Christ came in the flesh, (see [Ac 3:26](#)), yet there will be a more full and complete accomplishment thereof upon the Jewish nation and people towards the end of the world.

### Romans 11:27

Ver. 27,28. Here an objection is obviated: the Gentiles might object and say, The Jews can never return and be saved, forasmuch as they have rejected the gospel, and are therefore hated of God. To this he answers by way of concession, that it was true indeed, they had rejected the gospel, and for this they were rejected and hated of God; but this happened well to the Gentiles, and was to their advantage. for the Jews' refusal of the gospel brought it sooner to them: see [Ro 11:11](#). Or else the meaning is: They are enemies of God, and of his gospel; and the rather reject it, because you Gentiles embrace it; they think the worse of the gospel because you believe and profess it. Then he adds by way of correction, that they were not yet in such desperate circumstances; but in regard of *election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes*. By *election* he means, either God's choosing them to eternal life; or rather, his choosing that nation and people, above all other nations and people of the world, to be his peculiar people: see [De 7:6](#) [Ps 135:4](#) [Ac 13:46](#). And by God's love to them, he means his love of good will which he had to that people still, for their fathers' sakes: not because of the merit of their fathers, but because of the covenant made with their fathers; because they are descended of those fathers, to whom God had promised, that he would be their God, and the God of their seed after them; aye, and of their seed's seed for ever; which promises of God, the infidelity of many of them cannot wholly frustrate.

### Romans 11:29

Ver. 29. These words, considered simply and abstractedly, afford this truth; That the special gifts of God, his election, justification, adoption, and in particular effectual calling, are irrevocable. God never repents of



giving, nor we of receiving them. It is otherwise with common gifts and graces, 1Sa 15:11. But if you consider these words relatively, as you respect what went before, the sense seems to be this; That *the gifts and calling of God*, whereby he was pleased to adopt the posterity of Abraham, and to engage himself by covenant to them, are inviolable, and are such as shall never be reversed or repented of.

### Romans 11:30

Ver. 30,31. This is the last argument, to prove the conversion and calling of the Jews, which is further confirmed, Ro 11:32. The argument is taken from the like dealing of God with the Gentiles; after a long time of infidelity, he received them to mercy; therefore he will also at last receive the Jews. He argues from the less to the greater; If the infidelity of the Jews was the occasion of mercy to the Gentiles, much more shall the mercy showed to the Gentiles be an occasion of showing mercy to the Jews: q. d. There is more force in that which is good, to produce a good effect, than in that which is evil, to have a good event: therefore, if the unbelief of the Jews had so good an event, as to occasion the conversion of the Gentiles, why may we not think, that the calling of the Gentiles will contribute to the conversion of the Jews? See Ro 11:11,14. When the Jews shall see the Gentiles' mercy, i.e. God's mercy to them; how the whole world flourisheth under the profession of Christianity; how the Messiah is in vain expected by them; how their nation is dispersed, &c.; then they shall at last come in and cleave to Christ, and be mercifully received by him.

### Romans 11:32

Ver. 32. q.d. God hath, in just judgment, shut up both Jews and Gentiles, equally and successively, in unbelief, as in a prison, that so, in his own time, he might fulfil the counsel of his will, in showing undeserved mercy unto all: i.e. unto both Jews and Gentiles; first the Jews, and then the Gentiles; and then at last, both to Jews and Gentiles. By *all* here he means, those that shall believe, whether of one sort or of the other, as appears from that parallel place, Ga 3:22. Luther, in a very great conflict, had

much support from this text.

### Romans 11:33

Ver. 33. In this and the following verses is the conclusion of all that he had delivered, especially in this and the two preceding chapters. He had spoken of many profound mysteries, and answered many critical questions; and here he makes a pause, and falls into an admiration of God, his abundant wisdom and knowledge. He seems here to be like a man that wades into the waters, till he begins to feel no bottom, and then he cries out: *Oh the depth!* and goes no farther.

*Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!* i.e. the unmeasurable, inconceivable abundance of his *wisdom and knowledge*. Some distinguish these two; others take them for the same: see Col 2:3.

*How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!* Some distinguish betwixt the *judgments* and *ways* of God; by the former, understanding his decrees and purposes concerning nations or persons; by the latter, the methods of his providence in his dealings with them: others think the same thing is meant, by an ingemination, which is familiar amongst the Hebrews. He says of God's *judgments*, that they are *unsearchable*; therefore not to be complained of, censured, or to be narrowly pried into; and of his *ways*, that they are *past finding out*; the same in sense with *unsearchable*: it is a metaphor from hounds, that have no footstep or scent of the game which they pursue: nor can men trace the Lord, or find out the reason of his doings; as none can line out the way of a ship in the sea, or an eagle in the air, &c. Some restrain the sense to the ways of God in disposing and ordering the election and rejection of men.

### Romans 11:34

Ver. 34. i.e. Who knoweth what God is about to do? Or who hath given his advice about the doing of it? This is taken out of Isa 40:13,14.

## Romans 11:35

Ver. 35. q. d. If any man hath obliged God, by any thing he hath done for him, he shall have an ample reward: alluding (as some think) to Job 41:11. But seeing this cannot be, and that God is indebted unto none, therefore the salvation of all is of mere grace and mercy; and there is no cause of complaining, if he deal more bountifully with some than with others.

## Romans 11:36

Ver. 36. *For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things;* i.e. *all things are of him,* as the efficient cause; *through him,* as the disposing cause; *to him,* as the final cause. They are *of him,* without any other motive; *through him,* without any assistance; and *to him,* without any other end, i.e. for his sake alone.

*To whom be glory for ever. Amen:* a usual doxology in Scripture: see Gal 1:5 2Ti 4:18 Heb 13:21 1Pe 5:11.

## Romans 12:1

### Chapter Summary

Ro 12:1-3 Paul exhorteth to holiness and conformity to God's will; and to think soberly of the gifts allotted every man respectively.

Ro 12:4,5 We are all members of one body in Christ,  
Ro 12:6-8 and should diligently exercise our several gifts for the common benefit.

Ro 12:9-18 Sundry practical duties recommended,  
Ro 12:19-21 Revenge is specially forbidden, and to do good for evil enjoined.

Ver. 1. Hitherto the apostle hath discoursed of matters of faith; in this and the following chapters he sets down precepts of holy life.

*By the mercies of God:* he useth the word in the plural number, to amplify

and set forth the manifold mercies of God, in election, justification, adoption, &c.: q. d. Seeing you Gentiles have received so many and so great mercies from God; seeing he hath preferred you to his ancient people the Jews, and hath chosen and called you, when he hath rejected them; as you value these mercies, let the consideration of them engage you to all manner of holiness and new obedience.

*That ye present;* that you give, dedicate, and offer up, as spiritual priests.

*Your bodies;* yourselves, or, your whole man; a part is put for the whole; the body is named, because it is the soul's instrument in the service of God.

*A living sacrifice;* the sacrifices of old were presented alive to God, and their blood was shed at the feet of the altar: a beast that died of itself, or was torn by wild beasts, was not so much as to be eaten, Ex 22:31 Le 22:8. Conformable hereunto, God will have us offer up ourselves *a living sacrifice;* i.e. we must be quickened and alive to God, and not dead in sins and trespasses.

*Holy;* as the sacrifices under the law were to be without blemish or defect, Ex 12:5 Le 1:10 De 15:21.

*Acceptable unto God;* or, well pleasing unto God. So were the appointed sacrifices under the law, Le 1:9; so was the sacrifice of Christ the Lamb of God, Eph 5:2; and so are all spiritual sacrifices under the gospel, Php 4:18 Heb 13:16.

*Which is your reasonable service;* or, which is agreeable to reason; nothing is more reasonable, than that you should devote yourselves to God in this manner. Some think this is added, to show a difference between the sacrifice here required, and that of the Jews, which was of unreasonable beasts. Others, by *reasonable service*, understand spiritual service, and expound this place by 1Pe 2:5, where you read of *spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*. Others think, that by *reasonable* you must understand such service as is according to the word of God; and this suits best with the Greek phrase in the text, λογικην λατρειαν. The same word is used, 1Pe 2:2, and there it is rendered the *milk of the word*, and not reasonable milk. And so the service or worship here spoken of is

opposed to that *will worship*, of which you read in Col 2:23.

### Romans 12:2

Ver. 2. *Be not conformed to this world;* do not fashion or accommodate yourselves to the corrupt principles, customs, or courses of worldly and wicked men; and what they are, you will find in Ro 13:13 Eph 4:18,19 1Pe 4:3. You have somewhat the like counsel, Ex 23:2 1Pe 1:14.

*Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind:* q. d. Be you regenerated, and changed in your whole man; beginning at the mind, by which the Spirit of God worketh upon the inferior faculties of the soul: see Eph 4:23.

*That ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God:* by *prove*, understand discerning: by the *will of God*, his revealed will in his word; and so it best accords with the *reasonable service*, spoken of Ro 12:1, and with the scope of the text itself; which is, to exhort unto holiness and obedience, which is according to the rule of the word. He annexeth three adjuncts to the will or word of God: it is *good*; revealed only for our benefit. It is *acceptable*; i.e. by obedience thereunto we shall be accepted. It is *perfect*, and the observance thereof will make us so too, 2Ti 3:17. There are different readings of these words, but all to the same sense. Some thus, that you may prove the will of God, which to do, is good, acceptable, and perfect. Others thus, that you may prove what the will of God is, and what is good, acceptable, and perfect.

### Romans 12:3

Ver. 3. Before he exhorted to a holy life in general, now he comes to more particular exhortations.

*I say;* i.e. I enjoin and command; see Gal 5:16. I do not only beseech you, as Ro 12:1, but I also require you, as one that hath authority.

*Through the grace given unto me:* (see Ro 1:5). See Poole on "Ro 1:5".

*To every man that is among you;* more particularly, to him that hath any

particular gift or office in the church.

*Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think;* i.e. not to be drunk with a proud and overweening conceit of himself, his own wisdom, ability, &c.

*But to think soberly,* or modestly; let him contain himself within bounds, and not take upon him what doth not belong to him; let him not contemn others, and pretend to more than he hath. There is an elegant paronomasia in the Greek, which our language cannot reach.

*According as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith:* *faith* here is put for the knowledge of God and Christ, and all other spiritual gifts and graces bestowed upon the faithful; these are called *faith*, because they are given with faith, and exercised by faith: of these, God deals to every man his *measure* or portion; not all gifts to one, nor the same gift to every one in the same measure or proportion: see Ro 12:6 Eph 4:7.

#### Romans 12:4

Ver. 4,5. These verses are a reason against arrogancy. All Christians are *members of one* and the same *body*; therefore, they should not pride themselves in their gifts, but employ them for the common good. It is with the church, the mystical body of Christ, as with a natural body that hath many members, and all these *have not the same office*, or the same action or operation (as the word signifieth); the eye hath one office, the ear another, the hand a third, &c. So the church of Christ, though one body in him who is the Head, hath many members; many in regard of their persons, and many in regard of their offices, which are various and diverse; and which is more, the members are every one *members one of another*; i.e. they are joint and fellow members; as they have a common relation to the same Head, so a mutual relation to one another. Therefore Christians, especially church officers. should not contemn one another, or intrude upon the office of each other; but all should use their gifts to the good and edification of others.

## Romans 12:6

Ver. 6. *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us;* or, seeing we have different gifts and offices, according as the grace of God hath bestowed them upon us, let us use them aright. This is added to prevent pride and envy: none should be proud of that he hath himself or envy what another hath, seeing all is of grace.

*Whether prophecy, let us prophesy;* the words, *let us prophesy,* are not in the text; but they are put in by our translators, to fill up the sense. There is an ellipsis in the words, and something must be inserted. Some make the supply from the last words in the foregoing verse: Let us be one another's members in prophesying, teaching, exhorting, &c. Others think it ought to be supplied out of Ro 12:3:

q. d. Whether we have prophecy, let us be wise unto sobriety in prophesying; and so in all the rest that follow: in all the several gifts and offices, he showeth how they should behave themselves. The Greek scholiast will have supplied in them all, *let us persevere.* By prophesying, in this place, you may understand an extraordinary gift that some had in understanding Divine mysteries and Old Testament prophecies, with a wonderful dexterity in applying the same; to which was joined sometimes the revelation of secret and future things: see Ac 11:27 21:9.

*According to the proportion of faith;* i.e. they that have this gift of prophesying, must exercise it according to the measure of knowledge, in heavenly mysteries, that God hath given them; or else, in their prophesying they must have regard to the articles of Christian faith, and see that they regulate themselves according thereunto. Some think he calls the Holy Scripture in general, an analogy or proportion of faith; by these, the false prophets of old were discerned, if they delivered anything contrary thereunto, De 13:1, &c. Others think he speaks of certain principles, or heads of Christian religion, (see Heb 6:1), from which the prophets and others were not to swerve; yea, some think he aims at the symbol and creed, called the Apostles', which, from the beginning, was called the analogy of faith.

## Romans 12:7

Ver. 7. Ministry; under this word are comprehended all ordinary ecclesiastical functions, which afterwards divideth into two sorts; the first relating to the word; the second, to other pious works.

*Let us wait on our ministering:* the words, *let us wait*, are not in the text, but fitly supplied: q. d. Let all that be called to the office of the ministry be diligent in it, and attend to it: see Ac 20:28 1Pe 5:2.

*Teaching*, in the latter end of this verse, and *exhortation*, in the beginning of the next, are mentioned as the two great works of those that minister and labour in the word and doctrine. Some think they are distinct offices; see Eph 4:11; and that in the primitive church, where they had variety of ministers, some had the office of teachers, and chiefly exercised themselves in instructing their hearers in the principles of religion, in laying down sound doctrine and confuting of errors: others had the office of pastors, and attended chiefly to exhortation and admonition; pressing points of practice, and making application thereof. Others think that they are distinct gifts, but not diverse offices; some have a gift to teach that have none to exhort, and *e contra*. The apostle, Ro 12:6, calls them *differing gifts*: sometimes these two are found in the same persons, and they are excellently gifted both for teaching and exhorting.

### Romans 12:8

Ver. 8. Exhortation: see the notes on the foregoing verse.

*He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity;* i.e. he that hath the office of collecting and distributing the church alms, (which was the deacons' work or charge, Ac 6:1, &c.), let him discharge it *with simplicity*, or with *singleness of heart*; ( so the word is rendered, Eph 6:5); let him do it faithfully and impartially, and without favour or affection.

*He that ruleth;* or he that is a president, and set over others. There is great difference amongst expositors, who is meant by this ruler. It is not meant of state rulers, (of them he treats in the next chapter), but of church rulers. Some understand, all church officers in general. Others think, such are meant as were not properly pastors and teachers, put together with them had the oversight of the church, to rule the same; to regulate



misdemeanors, to pacify differences, to administer discipline in admonition and censures: these they call seniors or elders, or the censors of manners; and are the same the apostle calls *governments*, or governors, 1Co 12:28; see 1Ti 5:17.

*He that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness*: some understand this generally of all Christians, that they should be charitable, and that with cheerfulness. But the apostle is yet speaking of the special offices of the church. It cannot be meant of deacons, forasmuch as he had spoken of them before in this very verse. Such therefore may be intended, as had the care assigned them of the sick and impotent, of prisoners and strangers, &c.; see 1Ti 5:10; the same, it may be, that he calleth *helps* in 1Co 12:28. This charge he directeth them to discharge with cheerfulness; without being weary of that troublesome work, or being sour and froward to those they had to do with.

### Romans 12:9

Ver. 9. The former exhortations respect church officers in particular; those that follow concern all Christians in general. He begins with *love*, because that is a radical grace; other graces, and gracious actions, do spring from it, and must be accompanied with it. By *love* here, you may understand the love of God, or of our neighbour: the latter seems chiefly to be intended. The great requisite in love is this, that it be *without dissimulation*, or (as the word is) without hypocrisy; i.e. that it be sincere and unfeigned, 2Co 6:6 1Pe 1:22. It must not be *in word* and *in tongue* only, *but in deed and in truth*, 1Jo 3:18.

*Abhor that which is evil*; do not only avoid it, but hate it, and that as hell itself. The simple verb imports extreme detestation, and it is aggravated by the composition: see Ps 119:104 Am 5:15.

*Cleave to that which is good*; be glued to it; so the word signifieth. Things that are glued together are hardly disjoined. The same word is used of the union and conjunction between man and wife: see Mt 19:5 Eph 5:31.

## Romans 12:10

Ver. 10. *Be kindly affectioned one to another;* Christians ought to have such affection one to another, as parents have to their children, and as all creatures have to their young: so much the word here used imports.

*In honour preferring one another:* this clause is expounded by Php 2:3. It is exemplified in Abraham, Ge 13:9. Most desire preference and honour before others, which is contrary to the good counsel in this text. Some read it, prevent one another; do not tarry till others honour you, but do you go before them in this expression of *brotherly love*, and be examples to them.

## Romans 12:11

Ver. 11. *Not slothful in business;* this clause may be expounded by Ec 9:10: q. d. In all the duties of thy particular and general calling, in every thing that respects the glory of God, thine own or neighbours' good, take heed of slothfulness: see Mt 25:26,27 Heb 6:12.

*Fervent in spirit;* this is added to the former, as the cure of it. Zeal and fervency will drive away sloth. This spiritual warmth is often recommended to us in Scripture; see Gal 4:18 Re 3:19. See examples of it in Ps 69:9 Joh 2:17 4:34 Ac 18:25.

*Serving the Lord;* i.e. diligently performing all things that are required to his service and honour: see Ps 2:11 Eph 6:7. Some copies read it, serving the times, in such a sense as it is in Eph 5:16, and Col 4:5.

## Romans 12:12

Ver. 12. *Rejoicing in hope;* i.e. in hope of deliverance here in due time, and of eternal salvation hereafter: See Poole on "Ro 5:2".

*Continuing instant in prayer;* be instant and constant in the duty. A metaphor from hounds, that give not over the game till they have got it: see Lu 18:1 Eph 6:18 Col 4:2 1Th 5:17.

### Romans 12:13

Ver. 13. *Necessity*; the word signifies uses. The saints must be succoured in things useful, as well as necessary. This apostle, in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, spends two whole chapters about this sort of charity, in relieving the poor saints; viz. 2Co 8:1-9:15: see also Ga 6:10 Heb 13:16.

*Given to hospitality*; or, as the word may be rendered, pursue hospitality; hunt after it, as Abraham and Lot did, Ge 18:1,2 Ge 19:1,2. Concerning this duty of accommodating strangers, (which is here meant by hospitality), see De 10:18,19 Isa 58:7 1Ti 3:2 Tit 1:8 Heb 13:2 1Pe 4:9.

### Romans 12:14

Ver. 14. *Bless them which persecute you*; i.e. pray for them, and wish well to them. This is borrowed from Mt 5:44 Lu 6:28: see the like in 1Pe 3:9. This is commended to us by the example of Christ himself, Isa 53:12 Lu 23:34 1Pe 2:23; of Stephen, Ac 7:60; of Paul, and the primitive Christians, 1Co 4:12.

*Bless, and curse not*: his doubling the exhortation shows the difficulty of the duty; it is contrary to corrupt nature: and it denotes the constancy of it; we must persevere therein. When he saith, *curse not*, he means, wish no evil to your enemies.

*Objection.* The prophets and apostles went contrary to this: see 2Ki 2:24 Ps 69:22,23 Ac 8:20 13:10,11 23:3.

*Answer.* These did it by a special vocation and instinct of the Spirit.

### Romans 12:15

Ver. 15. i.e. Be touched with your neighbour's good or evil, as if it were your own. The reason of this sympathy, or fellow feeling, is rendered by the apostle, 1Co 12:26,27; Because we are members one of another, therefore, if *one member suffer, all the members suffer with it*; and if one

member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Examples hereof we have in Lu 1:58 2Co 11:29: see Heb 13:3.

### Romans 12:16

Ver. 16. *Be of the same mind one toward another*: this exhortation respects not so much unity in judgment, as in affection:

q. d. Bear the same good respect to others, as others bear to thee; let there be a mutual agreement in your desires and good wishes one for another: see Ro 15:5 Php 2:2 1Pe 3:8.

*Mind not high things*; i.e. things above your capacities and callings. Take heed of ambitious aspirings: remember what David said (one every way above you) in Ps 131:1.

*Condescend to men of low estate*: the word *low* only is in the Greek; the other words are put in by our translators: and it may be referred, either to things, and so it answers to *high things*, in the foregoing clause; or it may be referred to persons, according to our translation; and then the sense is, that we should not despise our poor brethren, but stoop to the lowest offices of Christian kindness.

*Be not wise in your own conceits*; this seems to be taken from Pr 3:7: see Ro 12:3.

### Romans 12:17

Ver. 17. *Recompense to no man evil for evil*; our Saviour teacheth the same doctrine in other words, Mt 5:39,40: see parallel places in Pr 20:22 1Th 5:15 1Pe 3:9. See more against retaliating injuries and private revenge in the three last verses of this chapter. Revenge is so sweet to flesh and blood, that men are very hardly dissuaded from it.

*Provide things honest in the sight of all men*: q. d. Look carefully, as to your conscience before God, so to your honour and reputation with men. Let all your words and actions be justifiable, and unexceptionable, that evil men may have no occasion to reproach you as evil-doers. See a parallel

place, 2Co 8:21. See also Php 4:8 1Pe 3:16.

### Romans 12:18

Ver. 18. The duty to which he exhorts in this verse, is a peaceable and quiet behaviour towards all men, as well infidels as Christians; those who are bad, as well as those who are good. The like exhortations we have, Heb 12:14. And to the discharge of this duty he annexeth a double limitation; first: *If it be possible*; secondly: *As much as lieth in you*: q. d. It may so fall out, that some men are of such froward and unpeaceable tempers, that it is impossible to live peaceably with them, or by them: or such conditions of peace may be offered as are not lawful for you to accept; it will not stand with the truth and glory of God, and with a good conscience, to agree with them. But, however, do your part, let there be no default in you why you should not live in peace with all men whatsoever.

### Romans 12:19

Ver. 19. *Dearly beloved*; he useth this friendly compellation, the better to persuade to the following duty, which is so hard to flesh and blood.

*Avenge not yourselves*: you had an exhortation to this purpose, Ro 12:17; but considering the proneness of corrupt nature to private and personal revenge, he renews his exhortation, and enlargeth upon it. This seems to be borrowed from Le 19:18.

*But rather give place unto wrath*; i.e. say some, your own wrath: q.d. Be not angry, or suffer not your anger to hurry you to revenge; give way a little, and walk aside, as Ahasuerus did, when his wrath kindled against Haman. Others refer it to the wrath of those who wrong us; decline their wrath, as David did Saul's; put up wrongs and injuries. But it is better referred to the wrath of God, which they seem to prevent who seek revenge: q. d. Suffer God to vindicate and right you, to avenge you of your adversaries; commit your cause to him, and do not take his work out of his hand. This sense agrees well with what follows.

*For it is written*; viz. in De 32:35. This is cited also, Ps 94:1 Na 1:2 Heb

10:30.

Romans 12:20

Ver. 20. *If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink:* q.d. Instead of rendering evil for evil to thine adversary, do him good for evil: see following verse.

*Thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head;* i.e. either make him relent, or bring down the greater vengeance from God upon him. This is taken out of Pr 25:21,22; See Poole on "Pr 25:21". See Poole on "Pr 25:22".

Romans 12:21

Ver. 21. This verse is a Divine aphorism: therein the apostle anticipates an objection. Some might be ready to say, If we should follow this advice we should be counted cowards and dastards, &c. To this he answers, that it is the ready way to be triumphers and conquerors. By *evil*, here, he means, the wrongs and injuries of men; and to be *overcome of evil*, is to be moved and provoked thereby to impatience or malice. When it is thus with a man, he is overcome, or conquered: in revenge of injuries, he is a loser that gets the better. Therefore he exhorts us, rather to *overcome evil with good*; that is a noble victory indeed: this is the way, not to be even with him that wrongs us, but to be above him. Thus David overcame Saul, and Elisha the bands of Syria. This is the way to overcome ourselves, and our adversaries too: ourselves, in denying our lusts that egg us on to revenge; our adversaries, in winning them to relent and acknowledge their miscarriages.

Romans 13:1

Chapter Summary

Ro 13:1-6 Subjection to magistrates enforced.

Ro 13:7 We must render to all their dues,

Ro 13:8-10 only love is a debt we must always owe, and virtually containeth the whole law.

Ro 13:11-14 Rioting, drunkenness, and other works of

darkness must be put away, as much out of season under the gospel.

Ver. 1. The former chapter is called by some St. Paul's ethics, and this his politics. He having said, in the latter end of the foregoing chapter, that Christians must not avenge themselves, but refer all to God, who says, that vengeance is his, and he will repay it; some might infer from hence, that it was not lawful for magistrates to right the wronged, and avenge them of their adversaries; or for Christians to make use of them to such a purpose; therefore, to set us right in this matter, he falls into the following discourse. Others think, that the apostle having spoken in several places concerning Christians' liberty, lest what he had said should be misconstrued, as if he meant that Christians were freed from subjection to the powers that were over them, he seasonably insists upon the doctrine and duty of obedience to authority; which point is more fully handled in this context than in any other place besides.

*Let every soul;* i.e. every person. In the first verse of the foregoing chapter the body was put for the whole man; here, the soul; and when he says every person, it is plain that ecclesiastical persons are not exempted.

*Be subject:* he doth not say, be obedient, but be subject; which is a general word, (as some have noted), comprehending all other duties and services. This subjection must be limited only to lawful things; otherwise, we must answer as they did, Ac 4:19: or as Polycarpus did; when he was required to blaspheme Christ, and swear by the fortune of Caesar, he peremptorily refused, and said: We are taught to give honour to princes and potentates, but such honour as is not contrary to true religion.

*Unto the higher powers:* though he speaks of things, he means persons; and he calls them *rulers* in Ro 13:3, whom he calls *powers* in this verse. So in Lu 12:11, Christ tells his disciples, they should be brought before *magistrates and powers*; it is the same word, and it is plain he means persons in power. Chrysostom notes, that he rather speaks of our subjection to powers, than persons in power; because, that howsoever their power be abused, their authority must be acknowledged and obeyed. He speaks of *powers*, in the plural number, because there are divers sorts and kinds thereof, as monarchy, aristocracy, democracy: under which soever of these we live, we must be subject thereunto. By *higher powers*, he means

the supreme powers; so the word is rendered, 1Pe 2:13. To them, and to those that are authorized by them, we must submit, for that is all one as if we did it to themselves, 1Ti 2:2 1Pe 2:14. There are other inferior powers, which are also of God, as parents, masters, &c.; but of these he doth not speak in this place.

*For there is no power but of God:* this is a reason of the foregoing injunction: q. d. That which hath God for its author, is to be acknowledged and submitted to; but magistracy hath God for its author: *ergo*. He speaketh not here of the person, nor of the abuse, nor of the manner of getting into power, but of the thing itself, viz. magistracy and authority: and he says, it is of God; he instituted the office, and he appointeth or permitteth the person that executes it. This clause is attested and illustrated by Pr 8:15 Da 4:32 Joh 19:11.

*The powers that be are ordained of God:* this passage is an exemplification of the former. Erasmus thinks it was inserted by some interpreter, by way of explanation; but it is found in all ancient copies, therefore that conceit of his is without foundation. The emphasis of this sentence seems to lie in the word *ordained*; power and civil authority is not simply from God, as all other things are, but it is ordained by him. This word (as one observes) implieth two things; invention, and ratification. God invented and devised this order, that some should rule, and others obey; and he maintaineth and upholdeth it.

### Romans 13:2

Ver. 2. *Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God:* these words are, either an argument to enforce the subjection enjoined in the former part of the foregoing verse; q. d. You may not resist; therefore, you must be subject: or else, they are an inference from the latter part of it; q. d. Seeing the civil power is of God, and of his ordination; therefore, it must not be resisted or opposed. To resist authority, is to wage war against God himself.

*Damnation;* the word properly signifieth judgment, and it is applied in Scripture, either to human and temporal punishment, as Lu 23:40 1Co 6:7 1Pe 4:17; or else to Divine and eternal punishment, as Lu 20:47 Heb 6:2



2Pe 2:3. Accordingly, it may be understood of eternal punishment, that the resister of authority shall receive from God; or of temporal punishment, that he shall receive from the magistrate.

### Romans 13:3

Ver. 3. This verse contains a further argument for subjection to the higher powers, and it is taken from the benefit thereof, or from the end of magistracy, which is for the punishment of evil, and the encouragement of good works: see 1Pe 2:14. When he says, that *rulers are not a terror to good works*, he means, they are not so ordinarily; or they were not ordained for that end, but the contrary. Or else, by *are not* understand they ought not, so to be.

*Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:* q. d. Wouldst thou be free from fear of being punished by the magistrate? Do that which is good, and thou shalt not only be free from fear, but sure of praise and reward: see Pr 14:35 16:13.

By *good* he means, not that which is so theologically. but morally: q. d. Live honestly, hurt no man in word or deed, give to every man his due, &c. This is good in the sight of all men, of heathens themselves.

### Romans 13:4

Ver. 4. *For he is the minister of God to thee for good:* q. d. That is the end of his office, and for this reason God hath invested him with his authority. The Scripture applieth the same title to him that preacheth the word, and to him that beareth the sword; both are God's ministers, and there is one common end of their ministry, which is the good and welfare of mankind.

*But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain:* this is the reason why he that transgresseth the moral law of God, or the wholesome laws of the country where he lives, should be afraid of the magistrate, because *he beareth not the sword in vain*. The *sword* is figuratively put for power and authority: he alludes to the custom of

princes, who had certain officers going before them, bearing the ensigns of their authority: q. d. The magistrate hath not his authority for nothing, or for no purpose; but that he may punish the evil, as well as defend the good.

*For he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil:* here is another reason why evil-doers (as before) should be afraid of the magistrate; or rather, the same reason in other and plainer words; because he is God's officer to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil; he is in God's room upon earth, and doth the work which primarily belongeth unto him: see Ro 12:19. By *wrath*, here, understand punishment: so in Lu 21:23 Ro 2:8. The word *execute* is not in the text, but aptly enough supplied by our translators.

### Romans 13:5

Ver. 5. q. d. Seeing things are so as I have said; that magistracy is of God, that it is his ordinance, that it is for the benefit of mankind, and that it is armed with the sword; therefore there is a necessity of subjection, and that for a double reason: first, from fear of wrath, or punishment from the magistrate. Secondly, and more especially, from the obligation of conscience, because God hath so commanded; and to err in this particular, is to offend God, and to wound our own consciences: see 1Sa 24:5 Ec 8:2 1Pe 2:13.

### Romans 13:6

Ver. 6. *For this cause*, i.e. in token, or in testimony, of that subjection you owe to magistracy, *pay ye tribute*: the word is plural in the original, and thereby is intended all taxes and burdens, which are legally and customarily imposed.

*For they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing:* this is a reason why tribute should be paid to rulers; but it is for the support of their authority, and a due recompence for their great care and industry. When he says, they attend *continually upon this very thing*, the meaning is not, they attend always upon the receiving of tribute; but it is to be understood of the duty of magistrates, which is, to be continually

promoting the good and welfare of their subjects; to encourage the good, and punish the evil-doer, which is the very thing he had been before speaking of.

### Romans 13:7

Ver. 7. This verse concludes his discourse about the civil powers. When he saith: *Render to all their dues*, he doth not mean all men, but all magistrates, whatever they be for quality, either good or bad; or whatever they be for degree, either supreme or subordinate. Render to them their dues; i.e. whatever of right belongs to them: see Mt 22:21. There are two things that more especially belong to rulers, and are due from those that are under them: the one is maintenance; the other is reverence. The first is expressed here by *tribute* and *custom*; if these two differ, then the former is a tax laid upon the substance, the latter upon the person. The second, by *fear* and *honour*; *fear* notes inward, and *honour* outward, reverence and respect.

*Fear* is the magistrate's due by reason of his authority; *honour*, by reason of his dignity.

### Romans 13:8

Ver. 8. Having treated of special duties belonging to superiors, he now comes to that which is more general, and belongs to all.

*Owe no man any thing*; neither your superiors, nor your equals and inferiors; render and pay to every person what is due to him, let his rank and quality be what it will.

*But to love one another*: q. d. Only there is one debt that you can never fully discharge; that you must be ever paying, yet ever owing; and that is *love*.

*For he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law*: this is a reason why we should love one another, and be still paying that debt; and it is taken from the excellency of love: *he that loveth another* (i.e. he that doth it in deed

and in truth) *hath fulfilled the law*; he means, the second table of the law, as the next verse showeth; he hath done what is required therein.

### Romans 13:9

Ver. 9. This verse proves. that love is the fulfilling of the law. It is done by an induction or enumeration of the particular precepts of the second table. The fifth is not mentioned, because the Jews made that commandment a part of the first table; so some: or because he had treated before of duty to the higher powers and superiors, under which parents are comprehended; so others. It may be, he would only mention the negative precepts, as being most contrary to love. But, why doth he mention the seventh commandment before the sixth? Because of the commonness of adultery amongst the Romans; so some: because of the odiousness of it; so others. Hence *adultery* is first named amongst *the works of the flesh*, Ga 5:19. Possibly it is, because the Seventy, in Exodus, rehearse the commandments in this very order. The tenth commandment is summed up in one word: *Thou shalt not covet*; it seems, then, it is but one commandment, and their opinion is ridiculous who divide it into two. When he says, *if there be any other commandment*? He means a commandment of the same nature, requiring us to pay what we owe one to another; *ergo*, to honour our parents; or he means, any other in the Scripture, though not expressed in the decalogue. All commandments respecting our neighbour are summed up in this one: *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*: see Mt 22:39 Ga 5:14 1Ti 1:5.

### Romans 13:10

Ver. 10. This verse is an argument to prove what was proposed, ver. 8. It may thus be formed: That which *worketh no ill*, or doth no hurt to our *neighbour*, fulfilleth the law: but *love worketh no ill to his neighbour*; *ergo*. That this is the property of love, see 1Co 13:4,5. When he saith, Love doth no hurt, this is implied, that it doth good to his neighbour. Where only negatives are mentioned, the affirmative also is included; and the negative only is set down in this place, that it may the better correspond with the foregoing verse.

### Romans 13:11

Ver. 11. *And that;* or, moreover; the speech is elliptical, something must be understood, as, I say, or add: q. d. Unto this exhortation to Christian love, I further add what follows.

*Knowing the time;* i.e. considering it is a time of great trial, or time of gospel light.

*Now it is high time to awake out of sleep;* i.e. to shake off slothfulness, security, and all former sinful courses. See the like, 1Co 15:34 Eph 5:14 1Th 5:6-8. q. d. Consider, now it is the hour or season to awake or rise up, to lay aside your night clothes, as it is in the following verse.

*Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed;* or, salvation is nearer to us than when we first began to believe. Some would understand it of temporal salvation, and deliverance from those persecutions which befell the Christians in the infancy of the church; from these they were saved and delivered by the destruction of the Jews their persecutors. This was foretold by Christ, and expected by the Christians; and it was nigher at hand than when they first embraced the Christian faith. But most understand it of eternal salvation, which he says was nearer than when they first believed. In which words is couched another argument to awaken or stir up the believing Romans; the first was taken from the consideration of the time or season; the second, from the nearness of the word. Therefore it should be with them as with those that run in a race; the nearer they come to the goal, the faster they run, lest others should get before them.

### Romans 13:12

Ver. 12. *The night is far spent, the day is at hand:* some, by *night* and *day*, do understand the night of Jewish persecution and the day of deliverance and salvation; see Heb 10:25. Others, by *night*, understand the time of ignorance and infidelity; this, he says, *is far spent*, or for the greatest part it is past and gone: darkness is not perfectly done away in this life amongst believers themselves, 1Co 13:9,10. By *day*, they understand the time of gospel light and saving knowledge: so in the next verse, and in 1Th 5:5.

This, he says, *is at hand*, or is come nigh; it was dawning upon the world, and would shine brighter and brighter, till it were perfect day.

*Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness;* i.e. all our former sins, which are called *works of darkness*, here, and in Eph 5:11. They are so called, because they are usually committed by those that are in ignorance and darkness; and because some sins, such as he speaks of in the next verse, were wont to be committed in the darkness of the night, men being ashamed of them in the day time: see Job 24:15 1Th 5:7. These he exhorts the believing Romans to *cast off*: the word implieth, haste and hatred, Isa 30:22 31:7.

*And let us put on the armour of light;* i.e. all Christian graces, which are bright and shining in the eyes of the world, Mt 5:16; and which will be as so much Christian armour, to defend us against sin, and all the assaults of Satan.

### Romans 13:13

Ver. 13. *Let us walk honestly, as in the day:* q.d. Let us behave ourselves decently, and with a holy shamefacedness, as becomes those to whom the grace of God, and the glorious light of the gospel, hath appeared. This honest walking is expressed by three adverbs in Tit 2:12; i.e. *soberly, righteously, godly*. He enumerates divers vices, which are contrary to this honest walking, and he sets them down by pairs. He makes three pairs of them: the first is *rioting and drunkenness*; by which he means intemperance, or excess in eating and drinking: see Lu 21:34. The second is *chambering and wantonness*; by which he means actual uncleanness, and all lustful and lascivious dalliances: see Ga 5:19 Eph 5:3 Col 3:5 1Th 4:3-5,7 1Pe 4:3. The third pair is *strife and envying*. All these vices are twisted and connected: intemperance causeth uncleanness, and both cause contention and emulation, Pr 23:29,30. The famous St. Augustine confesseth, that he was converted by reading and pondering this text.

### Romans 13:14

Ver. 14. *Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ;* he exhorted, Ro 13:12, to *put on*

*the armour of light; now, to put on Jesus Christ.* This is necessary, for though grace may help to defend, yet it is Christ and his righteousness only that can cover us (as a garment doth our nakedness) in the sight of God. To put on Christ, is to receive him and rest upon him by faith; as also to profess and imitate him. You have the same phrase, Ga 3:27.

*Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof:* by *flesh*, here, some understand the corrupt nature; others, the body. When he says, *make not provision for the flesh*, he doth not mean, that they should not provide things necessary for the body; this is allowed, Eph 5:29 1Ti 5:23; we are no where commanded to neglect or macerate our bodies; but he means, that we should not gratify it in its sinful lusts or lustings: see 1Co 11:27. Sustain it we may, but pamper it we may not: we must not care, cater, or make projects for the flesh, to fulfil its inordinacics and cravings.

## Romans 14:1

### Chapter Summary

Ro 16:1-6 Directions to treat a weak brother kindly, and not to despise or censure one another in matters of indifference.

Ro 16:6-9 Christ's right to our best services, whether we live or die.

Ro 16:10-12 We must all be answerable for our respective conduct at his judgment-seat.

Ro 16:13-23 We must be careful not to use our Christian liberty to the hurt or offence of tender consciences.

Ver. 1. In this chapter and part of the next, the apostle treats of some lesser matters of religion, about which there were great contentions in the church of Rome. Some of the Jews, though they embraced the gospel, did stiffly adhere still to the Mosaical ceremonies; and though a difference in meats and days should be conscientiously observed, yet they were ready to censure those that were contrary-minded, as profane persons, and contemners of the law of God. On the other side, the believing Gentiles, being better instructed about their Christiall liberty, when they saw the Jews insisting upon such things as these, that had never any real goodness

in them, and were now abrogated by Christ, they were ready to despise them as ignorant and superstitious, and to deny communion with them. The apostle therefore doth seasonably endeavour to arbitrate this matter, and make peace amongst them.

*Him that is weak in the faith;* that is, wavering and unsettled in some lesser points of faith, particularly in the doctrine of Christian liberty, and freedom from the ceremonial law: he means, the scrupulous and erroneous Judaizer, though yet, in proportion, it may be applied to other scrupulous and doubting Christians.

*Receive ye;* or, receive him to you, take him into your bosoms, admit him to communion with you, bear with his weakness, better instruct him with the spirit of meekness: see Ro 15:1 Php 3:15,16. Bucer received all, though differing from him in some opinions, in whom he found, *aliquid Christi*, any thing of Christ.

*But not to doubtful disputations:* q. d. Do not entertain him with disputes and vain janglings, which will not edify, but perplex and prejudice him. Do not make him question sick, as it is in 1Ti 6:4. This passage may be expounded by Tit 3:9. The marginal reading would make this to be the sense, that a scrupulous Christian should be received unto communion; yet not so as to encourage him to judge and condemn the thoughts of those that differ from him.

### Romans 14:2

Ver. 2. *One believeth that he may eat all things;* i.e. one that is informed aright of his Christian liberty, is fully persuaded, and that upon good grounds, that he may eat any thing that is wholesome, though forbidden by the ceremonial law; that there is now no difference of clean and unclean meats: see Mt 15:11 Ac 10:12-15.

*Another, who is weak, eateth herbs;* i.e. *he that* (as before) *is weak in faith*, and not so well informed, such a one, for fear of offending God by eating any thing that is forbidden, will rather content himself with the meanest diet. The meaning is not, as if any, in those times, thought it lawful only to eat herbs, and so abstained altogether from other meats; but



they would rather satisfy themselves with herbs, and other fruits of the earth, in which the law of Moses made no difference, than eat meats that were forbidden, or not cleansed from blood, or offered to idols, &c.: see Da 1:8.

### Romans 14:3

Ver. 3. *Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not;*

i. e. Let not him that makes use of his liberty in eating any thing indifferently, vilify or contemn him that is of a contrary mind, as one that is ignorant and over scrupulous; and let not him that forbears such meats as were of old forbidden, judge and condemn him that is contrary-minded, as profane and over-venturous; notwithstanding such little difference in opinion, let one Christian love and communicate with another.

*For God hath received him:* it is disputed, whether this be meant of the weak or strong Christian; the word *judge*, which immediately goes before and follows after, carries it rather for the latter. But some think it is meant of both. He that eateth, and he that eateth not, is received by God into his church and family, and indifferently accepted with him, upon another and a higher account.

### Romans 14:4

Ver. 4. *Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth:* a sharp reprehension of the forementioned evil. You have the like: Jas 4:12. q. d. This phrase is repugnant not only to the law of God, but to the very law of nature, which tells us, that one man must not condemn the servant of another, over whom he hath no right or power; much less may any man condemn him that is the Lord's servant. Every Christian hath Christ alone for his own or his proper Master; and it is his judgment by which he must abide; it is to him that he standeth or falleth, that he doth well or ill.

*Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand:*

q. d. If (as thou thinkest) he be fallen or falling, he shall be upheld and supported; *for God is able*, &c. But how doth this follow, because God

can make him stand, therefore he shall be holden up?

*Answer.* It is a rule in divinity, that in all God's promises, his power is joined with his will; so that where the latter is once revealed, there is no question of the former: now of the word of God in this matter, there was no doubt; for he had said, Ro 14:3, that God had *received him*. You had the like way of arguing, Ro 11:23, where the apostle proves the calling of the Jews by an argument taken from the power of God, because he is able to graft them in again: see Ro 4:21 Heb 10:23.

#### Romans 14:5

Ver. 5. *One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike:* there were differences in the church of Rome about the observation of days, as well as the choice of meats; and in this he endeavours an accommodation as well as in the other. The converted Jew was of opinion, that the festival days appointed in Moses's law, were holier than other days, and that they should still be observed: see Ga 4:10 Col 2:16. On the other side, the believing Gentile was of opinion, that the difference in days under the Old Testament was now ceased, and he (the text says) esteemed or approved of all days. The word *alike* is not in the original, but it is aptly supplied by our translators.

*Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind;* i.e. Let every man be satisfied as to the grounds of his practice; let him act by his own and not another man's, judgment and conscience; let him be so fully assured in his own mind of the lawfulness of what he doth, as to find no doubting or scrupulous hesitations in the doing of it; let him be able to say as the apostle himself doth, Ro 14:14. The reason of this counsel you have, Ro 14:23. He that doth what he thinks is a sin, is an offender against God, whether it be a sin or no. And yet a man may sin in that wherein he is fully persuaded he sinneth not. A full persuasion must be had, but it is not sufficient to make an action good or lawful.

#### Romans 14:6

Ver. 6. In this verse you have a reason why Christians should not censure

one another, upon an account of different opinions and practices, because they have all the same end and scope, which is the pleasing and glorifying of God. It is with regard to him that they eat, or eat not; that they observe those festival days, or observe them not; and so far they are on both sides to be commended; for that indeed should be our end, in all our actions, to glorify and please the Lord: see 1Co 10:31 Col 3:17.

*He giveth God thanks;* i.e. he is thankful unto God for the bountiful and free use of his creatures. Some would ground that laudable practice of giving thanks at meals upon this text, but it hath a clearer warrant from Mt 14:19 15:36 26:26 Ac 27:35.

*He eateth not, and giveth God thanks;* because he hath meat enough besides, which he is not forbidden, 1Co 10:28.

#### Romans 14:7

Ver. 7,8. Here he proves what he had before asserted, that Christians have regard to God and his glory in their particular actions; and that from their general end and design, which is to devote themselves, and their whole life, and death, to God. He tells them first, in the negative, that *none of us*, i.e. that none of us Christians and believers, do live or die to ourselves; we are not our own lords, nor at our own disposal: and then, in the affirmative, he shows, that we live or die to the Lord; we spend our lives in his service, and part with them at his appointment. His glory is the white, at which we aim, living or dying: he is the centre, in which all the lines in the whole circumference of our lives do meet, 2Co 5:9 Php 1:21.

*Whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's:* this is an inference from what he had said before: q. d. At all times, and in all estates, whether of health or sickness, abundance or poverty, life or death, we are the Lord's property, and at his disposal; he hath an absolute dominion over us, living or dying; in this world, or in the next.

#### Romans 14:9

Ver. 9. *To this end Christ both died, and rose:* q. d. This is the fruit that accrues to Christ, by his death and resurrection, *that he might, &c.*

*And revived:* the Vulgar Latin leaves out this word. Chrysostom left out the former word, he *arose*. Ambrose inverts the order of the words, and reads them thus: To this end he lived, and died, and rose again. Some think the preter tense is here put for the present tense: he *revived*, i.e. he still lives, to intercede for us, and to exercise dominion over us. Others think that Christ's reviving here doth denote that new state of life which he had after his resurrection.

*That he might be Lord both of the dead and living;* or, that he may govern and lord it (τῷ κυριεῦσῃ) over all his, whether dead or alive; that he might obtain dominion, or rather the exercise of his dominion, over them. As God, he hath a universal dominion over all; but as Mediator, he hath a more special dominion over all the Father gave to him: this dominion he purchased at his death, and he had the full exercise of it when he rose again, Mt 28:18 Php 2:9,10.

#### Romans 14:10

Ver. 10. He goes on to persuade them to a mutual forbearance, to dehort them from condemning or contemning one another about indifferent things. He suggests two arguments against it in this verse; one (which is more implied) is taken from the relation they bore one to another; they were brethren, not by natural generation, but by regeneration and adoption; they had the same Father, even God. The second argument is more plainly expressed; and it is taken from the consideration of the day of judgment, when all shall stand before Christ's judgment seat; see 2Co 5:10; *all*, both the strong and the weak; and then he will determine who hath done well or ill. In the mean while, who art thou that dardest to usurp his place or office? The interrogation hath the force of a strong denial; q. d. Have you no more grace, charity, or wisdom, than so to do.

#### Romans 14:11

Ver. 11. This verse proves what was before asserted, that all must *stand*

*before the judgment-seat of Christ.* The proof is from Isa 45:23. The prophet speaks only of God's swearing; the apostle sets down the form of his oath; which form is frequently mentioned in Scripture: see Nu 14:21,28 Jer 22:24 Eze 5:11 14:16,18 20:3. And instead of *every tongue shall swear*; the apostle, following the Seventy, saith, *every tongue shall confess*; and we are told, Php 2:2, what it shall confess, viz. *that Jesus Christ is Lord*. That which is generally spoken of Jehovah being here in a peculiar manner applied to Christ, it evidently showeth, that he is supreme Judge, and sovereign Lord, unto whom all knees must bow in token of subjection; and before whose tribunal all persons, will they, or will they not, must appear.

#### Romans 14:12

Ver. 12. Here you have the end of our standing before the judgment-seat of Christ, which is to give account: see Mt 12:36 1Pe 4:5. He saith: *Every one of us shall give account*, whether he be great or small, strong or weak; and that he *shall give account of himself*; i.e. of his own actions, and not another's. He shall give account of himself in his natural capacity, as a man; and in his capacity, as a rich or great man; and in his religious capacity, as one that hath enjoyed such education, such means of grace, &c.

*Objection.* Pastors must give account for their flock, Heb 13:17.

*Answer.* Pastors shall give account of their negligence, and want of care, whereby they suffered their sheep or flock to miscarry; but every particular sheep also shall give account of his own personal wanderings.

#### Romans 14:13

Ver. 13. *Let us not therefore judge one another any more:* q. d. Seeing all must be judged by Christ, let us no more judge one another, but mend this fault for time to come.

*But judge this rather:* hitherto his counsel was more general, respecting both the strong and the weak. Here he begins, in a more particular manner,

to apply himself to the more strong and knowing Christians; counselling them to take heed, lest, by the abuse of their Christian liberty, they should be an offence to them that were weak and more ignorant. He entereth upon this with an elegant transition, making use of the same word in a different sense; for he doth not speak contraries, when he says, *judge not, but judge*; for the word in the former part of the verse signifies, to condemn and censure; but here, in the following part, to deliberate or consider: q. d. Instead of judging others, let us look upon this as a rule for ourselves, and our own deportment, that we put no stumblingblock, &c.

*That no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way:* q. d. Take heed of offending your brethren in any kind; do not, by an unseasonable use of your liberty, either drive them from their Christian profession, or provoke them to imitate you, and so to sin against their consciences. You have a parallel text, 1Co 8:9. There he speaks only of a stumblingblock; here he adds an occasion of falling, or, as it is in the original, a scandal. Though these two words do differ in their etymologies, yet they have one and the same signification. The latter word, as Stephanus observes, is peculiar to Holy Scripture, and seldom, if ever, used in any common author: it signifieth, properly, the bridge in a trap, which, by its falling down, catcheth a creature in a snare, and so occasions its ruin; and from thence it is used to denote any thing which is an occasion to others of stumbling or falling; any thing whereby we so offend another, as that he is hindered from good, drawn into or confirmed in evil. Scandal, or offence, is either passive or active. Passive scandal is, when that which is good is, by reason of man's corruption, an occasion of filling to him. So Christ himself, and his doctrine, was a scandal to the Jews: see 1Co 1:23 1Pe 2:8. Active scandal is, when any thing is done or said which gives occasion of offence to others, when it is an occasion of grief, or of sin to them, Ro 14:15,21. This occasion may be administered, either by evil counsel, Mt 16:23 Re 2:14; or by evil example, Isa 9:16 Mt 15:14; or by the abuse of Christian liberty in things indifferent, 1Co 8:9.

#### Romans 14:14

Ver. 14. Here he obviates an objection. Some might say, they were thoroughly persuaded, that no meat was unclean in itself, and therefore they might, and would, use their liberty in eating any thing that was before

them. To this the apostle answers, first, by way of concession; he grants what they say is true, and tells them, that for his own part he knew it full well, and was himself assured of it; and that he had this assurance from *the Lord Jesus*; i.e. that he was instructed therein by his word and Spirit.

*That there is nothing unclean of itself;* i.e. that no meat was unclean in itself; it was not so in its own nature: see Ge 1:31 9:3. Some creatures might be unwholesome, but none were in themselves unclean: to the Jews they were not unclean by nature, but by a positive law, which law was now antiquated and out of doors: see Col 2:16,17 1Ti 4:3,4.

*But to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean:* this he adds by way of restriction, that though no meat was unclean in itself, yet it was so to him that thought it to be unclean. If a man shall believe that there is yet a difference in meats, that some are still unclean, and that by virtue of God's prohibition, it would be evil in him to eat such meats, because he therein acts against his conscience, and doth that which he himself thinks to be a sin: see Ro 14:23.

### Romans 14:15

Ver. 15. In this verse you have two reasons to induce the strong not to offend the weak: First, it is contrary to charity; to grieve a brother upon the score of meats, is to walk uncharitably; it is a violation of the royal law of love, which is against the grieving or offending others, 1Co 13:4. Two ways are weak Christians grieved, when others do unseasonably use their liberty.

1. They think such do offend God in eating that which he hath forbidden; and this is matter of grief to those that fear God, to see others transgress his laws.
2. They may be drawn by their example to do the like, against their own light and conscience; and this afterwards causeth grief and trouble; their consciences hereby are galled and wounded, 1Co 8:12.

*Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died:* this is the second reason why Christians should not use their liberty to the offence of others;

it may occasion their ruin and destruction: q. d. Hereby, as much as in you lies, you take a course to destroy them for whom Christ died. You will alienate and estrange them from the Christian religion, or you will draw them into sin, and induce them (as before) to act against their consciences, and so hazard their salvation. See a parallel place, 1Co 8:11. Here a question may arise, whether any can perish for whom Christ died? The answer is, They cannot; and for this the Scripture is express, in Joh 10:28. See also Mt 24:24 Joh 6:39 1Pe 1:5. How then is this text to be understood? The apostle doth not speak of those for whom Christ indeed did die, but of such as, in the judgment of charity, are held to be of that number. We must account all those who confess the faith of Christ, for such as he hath redeemed by his death.

#### Romans 14:16

Ver. 16. Here is another argument against offences; it will cause our *good* to be blasphemed, or *evil spoken of*. Some, by *good* here, would understand the Christian faith, or the gospel in general; but others do rather understand it of our Christian liberty in particular: q. d. Give none occasion for this great privilege of your Christian liberty to be traduced; use it so, as that neither the weak Christian nor the infidel may reproach or accuse you as licentious or contentious: see 1Co 10:29,30.

#### Romans 14:17

Ver. 17. This verse contains a new argument to persuade Christians not to strive about meats, or such like things; and that is, that the *kingdom of God* doth not consist in these, but in weightier matters. By the *kingdom of God*, you may understand the gospel, or true religion and godliness; that kingdom which God erects in the hearts of men, Lu 17:21 1Co 4:20. When he saith, *the kingdom of God is not meat and drink*, he means, that it doth not stand or consist therein.

*Meat and drink* are put by a synecdoche for all things of an indifferent or middle nature; such things as, the apostle elsewhere says, *commend us not to God*, 1Co 8:8: they are no part of his worship and service; the kingdom of God, or godliness, is not promoted, either by the use or the forbearance



thereof: see Ga 5:6 1Ti 4:8.

*But righteousness, and peace, and joy:* here he tells you positively wherein the kingdom of God consisteth; not in outward observations, but in inward graces and gracious dispositions. He doth not reckon up all, but contents himself with these three, *righteousness, peace, and joy*. By *righteousness*, some understand that which is imputed, of which you read, Ro 4:1-25: others, rather, that which is implanted and inherent; it is the same with holiness, both the habit of it in the heart, and the exercise of it in the life. By *peace*, some think, he means peace with God, or peace of conscience; others, that he rather means peace with men; or, if you will, peaceableness, or Christian concord and unity. This suits best with what follows, Ro 14:19, and it is often commended to us in Scripture. By *joy* may be understood that spiritual comfort. which ariseth from a present feeling of the favour of God, or from a well grounded hope of future salvation; as also, the comfort and delight which Christians take in the good allld welfare of each other. He that loveth his brother, rejoiceth in his welfare, 1Co 13:6; and therefore will not offend, or occasion him to sin.

*In the Holy Ghost;* this is added, to show the efficient cause of these graces, which is the Spirit of God; and to distinguish this righteousness, peace, and joy, from that which is merely civil and carnal.

### Romans 14:18

Ver. 18. This proves the foregoing assertion, that *the kingdom of God* consisteth in *righteousness, peace, and joy*, because *he that serveth Christ in and by these things, is accepted of God, and approved of men;* this cannot be affirmed of meat and drink, &c. When he says that the serving of Christ in these things is approved of men, he means of such as are godly, and of sound judgment; for of others they are often hated and reviled for the exercise of these very graces: and yet righteousness and peaceableness have oftentimes their praise from the wicked themselves: see 1Sa 2:26 Pr 3:4 Lu 2:52 Ac 2:47.

### Romans 14:19

Ver. 19. This verse is the application of the foregoing discourse, in which you have an exhortation to the practice of two great duties. The one is peace, or peaceableness; the other is mutual edification. He had persuaded before to peace with all men, Ro 12:18; and here he speaks more especially of peace and concord amongst brethren: see 2Co 13:11 Eph 4:3 Col 3:15 1Th 5:13 Heb 12:14. This peace is very necessary, and Christians should endeavour all things that will promote it, and avoid all things that will obstruct it. And they must not only live peaceably, but profitably one with another. They should build one another up in grace and knowledge.

### Romans 14:20

Ver. 20. *For meat destroy not the work of God:* here you have a further argument against scandals: q. d. For so inconsiderable a matter as eating a little meat, or for the use of an indifferent thing, do not destroy the work of God. By *the work of God*, some understand the soul of a brother; that is styled God's work by way of eminency: it was one of the chiefest works of the creation, and made, as it were, with the consultation of the whole Trinity; the image of God, after a sort, was engraven therein: and if this be the sense, it is a repetition of the argument in Ro 14:15. But by *the work of God*, in this place, other things may be understood; e.g. the unity and peace which God worketh amongst believers of different persuasions in in different things; or else the work of grace, or faith, which God hath wrought by his mighty power in the hearts of men: see Joh 6:29 1Th 1:3.

*The work of God*, in either of these senses, may be disturbed or hindered by the abuse of Christian liberty; and he that scandalizeth his brother, goes about, as much as in him lieth, to dissolve and demolish that which hath God alone for its author and worker.

*All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence:* here you have a concession and an exception: he granteth, that *all things are pure* and clean; i.e. in themselves, or in their own nature; see Ro 14:14 1Co 6:12 Tit 1:15: but then he addeth, that *it is evil for*, or to, *that man who eateth with offence*, or that offends another with his eating: it is not evil simply in itself, but accidentally, by reason of scandal.

## Romans 14:21

Ver. 21. The apostle proceedeth to enlarge his doctrine touching this particular, beyond the controversy that occasioned this his discourse; for he showeth, that to avoid the scandal or offence of our brethren, we are to abstain, not only from things prohibited by the law, but also from things that are not prohibited thereby; as from *flesh* or *wine*, or any indifferent thing whatsoever. These words, *any thing*, are not in the original, but they are understood, and well supplied in our translation. Thus to do, he says, *is good*, as the contrary, in the foregoing verse, was said to be *evil*: it is good in regard of God, to whom it is acceptable and pleasing; and in regard of our brethren, to whom it is profitable and advantageous; the positive (it may be) is pnt for the comparative; it is good, for it is better: so Mt 18:8,9.

*Whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak*: some distinguish these three words, *stumbleth*, *is offended*, *made weak*, making the first to be the greater, and the last the lesser injury: others will have the first to be the lesser, and the last the greater injury. But there are those that think they all three do signify the same thing; and the Syriac interpreter renders them all by one word, viz. is offended: and the same thing may be expressed by divers words, to insinuate the great care we should take, that we do not *put a stumblingblock* (as it is Ro 14:13) or an occasion of falling into our brother's way. The apostle seems to practise what he here prescribeth, in 1Co 8:13.

## Romans 14:22

Ver. 22. *Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God*: some read the first clause without an interrogation, thou hast faith; either way the sense is the same. The apostle here anticipates an objection. The stronger Christian might be ready to say, as it is in Ro 14:14: *I know and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean of itself*; I firmly believe, that now, under the gospel, all meats are lawful, and that I have liberty to use or eat what I please; and is it not fit that my practice should be agreeable to my belief, that I should act according to my judgment? To this he answereth, that if a man hath such a faith or persuasion, he should not unseasonably discover it to the offence of his brother, but rather conceal it. He doth not speak of faith in the fundamentals of religion, this must be professed and

acknowledged, let who will be offended; but of faith in indifferent things (which are the subject matter he is treating of): our belief or persuasion therein is not to be unseasonably uttered or declared, so as to occasion scandal or contention.

*Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth;* an excellent aphorism respecting all, especially the stronger and more knowing Christian: the sense is: He is a happy man, that, when he knoweth a thing to be lawful, he doth so manage the practice of it, that he hath therein no reason to accuse or condemn himself: or else, that doth not inwardly condemn himself, for doing that against his conscience. which he openly alloweth or practiseth: such a one is happy in this respect, because he is free from those terrors that torment those who act against their consciences.

### Romans 14:23

Ver. 23. In this verse is another aphorism, respecting especially the weaker Christian.

*He that doubteth of the lawfulness of any meat, whether he may or may not eat it, is damned if he eat,* i.e. His own conscience condemns him, or he makes himself liable to damnation, *because he eateth not of faith.* The word *eateth* is not in the original, but it is aptly inserted by our translators. What a man doth doubtingly, he doth sinfully: he showeth a wicked heart, that is not afraid of sin, but in great readiness to commit it.

*For whatsoever is not of faith is sin;* this is a confirmation of the foregoing assertion. By *faith* here is meant knowledge, or full persuasion, as Ro 14:22: q. d. Whatever a man doth with a wavering mind, without being persuaded that it is pleasing to God, and warranted by his word, he sinneth in the doing of it. Though we may not nourish doubts and scruples, yet we must not act against them. An erring conscience binds us to act nothing contrary to it: he sins that doth any thing against it, though the fact or thing done should not be sinful. Nature itself teacheth as much: that is a known saying of Cicero: *Quod dubitas, aequum sit an iniquum, ne feceris:* If thou doubttest whether a thing be lawful, or not lawful, thou shalt not do it. See Heb 11:6.

## Romans 15:1

### Chapter Summary

Ro 15:1-3 We ought, in condescension to the weak, to give up our own will for our neighbour's good, after the example of Christ.

Ro 15:4 The intent of the Scriptures.

Ro 15:5,6 Paul prayeth for unanimity among Christians.

Ro 15:6-12 Exhorteth to receive one the other, as Christ did all, both Jews and Gentiles,

Ro 15:13 and wisheth them all joy, peace, and hope.

Ro 15:14-16 He apologizeth for his freedom in admonishing them, as he was the apostle of the Gentiles,

Ro 15:17-21 and showeth the success and extensiveness of his labours.

Ro 15:23-29 He excuseth his not coming to them before, and promiseth them, a visit on his return from Jerusalem.

Ro 15:30-33 He requesteth their prayers.

Ver. 1. *We then that are strong:* the particle *then* showeth, that what followeth is inferred from what went before. By the *strong*, he means those who have attained to a good measure of knowledge and understanding, that are instructed in the Christian faith, and particularly in the doctrine of Christian liberty. He putteth himself in the number, not out of ambition, but that he may propose himself an example of the following duty.

*Ought;* i.e. we are obliged and bound both by the law of God and nature.

*To bear the infirmities of the weak:* by *the weak*, he means those who are weak in faith and knowledge, Ro 14:1. By their *infirmities*, he means their ignorance, frowardness, consorinousness, &c. He doth not speak of heresies and manifest enormities; but of such errors in doctrine and life, which proceed from ignorance or common infirmity. When he says, we must

*bear* their infirmities, his meaning is, that we must bear with them, as we do with children or sick persons in their waywardness: though it a great burden to us, yet we must bear it; we must not impatiently contradict them, but prudently instruct them: see Ex 23:5 1Co 9:22 Ga 6:2.

*And not to please ourselves:* q. d. We ought not to do what we please in indifferent thing's, and to act according to our own sentiments without any regard to others; we should not please ourselves in a proud reflecting upon our own knowledge, and in contemning of others because of their ignorance; we should not stand upon the terms of our liberty and contentment, but rather, for the sake of others, depart a little from our own right.

### Romans 15:2

Ver. 2. Having said we must not please ourselves, he immediately subjoins, we must please others, viz. *every one his neighbour*: he means, that we should condescend and accommodate ourselves to others, and give them satisfaction in all things; at least so far as may tend to their good and edification. You had a like passage, Ro 14:19. The apostle exhorts the Corinthians to a practice some what like this, 1Co 10:24; and he leads them the way by is own example, 1Co 9:19 1Co 10:33. There is a pleasing of men which is sinful, and there is a pleasing of men which is lawful; and that is, when it is limited, as in this text.

### Romans 15:3

Ver. 3. *For even Christ pleased not himself:* he backs his exhortation in Ro 14:1, with an argument taken from the practice of our Lord himself, who is our perfect pattern, and hath left us an example, that we should follow his steps: see Joh 13:15,34 1Pe 2:21 1Jo 2:6 4:17. By Christ's not pleasing himself, is meant his not indulging or sparing himself; he did not seek his own ease, nor to satisfy inclination of the human nature, which abhorreth pain, and the destruction of itself. He took such a course all along as sufficiently demonstrated that he respected our benefit, and not his own.

*But;* here is an ellipsis, something must he supplied to fill up the sense:

either the meaning is, he pleased not himself, but others; or, he pleased not himself, but bore our infirmities and reproaches: or else, he pleased not himself, but it happened to him; or he so carried himself that it might be truly applied to him, which is written, &c.

*As it is written;* viz. in Ps 69:9. That David uttered these words in the person of Christ, or as a type of him, may appear from Joh 2:17. Interpreters are divided about accommodating this testimony to the occasion for which it is brought. Either the meaning is, that Christ did willingly expose himself to all the reproaches and contumelies of men, in obedience to his Father's will; or else, that he and the same concerns with God the Father, so that what befell God did also befall him; he was as tender of the Father's honour as of his own: or else, that the sins of men, which are things that cast reproach upon God, were taken by Christ upon himself, and he bore them in his body upon a tree. Seeing then that Christ hath done so much for our sakes, and hath not sought his own ease and benefit, we ought also to seek the good of others, and to deny ourselves: see Php 2:6-8.

#### Romans 15:4

Ver. 4. Lest any should think, that the testimony before alleged concerneth only David or Christ, he showeth that it belongeth also unto us; that we may learn by their example to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Yea, he takes occasion from hence to inform us of the general use of the Scriptures, that whatsoever is written, in this or any other place, is written for our learning and instruction; we are concerned not only by all the precepts, but in all the promises, Heb 13:5, menaces, Ac 13:40,41, rewards, Ro 4:24, and punishments, 1Co 10:11, therein mentioned and declared: and though this passage is more especially to be understood of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, yet it is true also of the Scriptures of the New Testament; they, being written by the same Spirit, are profitable for the same ends: see 2Ti 3:16.

*That we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope;* he proceeds to show more particularly the use and benefit of the Holy Scripture, which is, to confirm our hope and assurance of eternal life; see 1Jo 5:13. He saith, *the patience and comfort of the Scriptures*, because

they are both wrought in us by means thereof: see Re 3:10. We are armed with patience, and finished with consolations, from the examples and promises contained therein. It may be, the *hope* he here speaks of is to be understood not only of eternal life, but of salvation and deliverance in this life: q. d. One principal use of the Scriptures is this, that by the examples we find there of the patience of holy men, and of God's relieving and comforting them in their distresses, we might be confident that God will relieve and comfort us also in due time.

### Romans 15:5

Ver. 5. *Now the God of patience and consolation:* he is called, *the God of all grace*, 1Pe 5:10, *the God of hope*, Ro 15:13, *the God of peace*, Ro 15:33, *the God of love and peace*, 2Co 13:11, and here, *the God of patience and consolation:* the meaning is, he is the author and worker thereof. You read in the former verse of the *patience and comfort of the Scriptures*; and here he showeth that the Scriptures do not work these of themselves, but God doth it in and by them.

*Grant you to be like-minded one towards another;* this is that to which he had exhorted them, Ro 12:16. See the like, 1Co 1:10 2Co 13:11 Eph 4:3 Php 2:2. God is the author, as of patience and consolation, so of peace and concord: the grace of unity and charity is his gift; he maketh men of one mind and of one heart, and for this he should be inquired of by his saints and people to do it for them.

*According to Christ Jesus;* i.e. according to his doctrine, command, or example.

### Romans 15:6

Ver. 6. *That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God:*

q. d. I further pray, that you may not only be like-minded one towards another, but *that ye may with one mouth glorify God*; that whether you be Gentiles or Jews, strong or weak in the faith, you may agree and be unanimous in his worship and service; that not only *with one mind*, but *with one mouth*, or as if you had all but one mouth. you may pray unto



God and praise him: that is one way of glorifying God, Ps 50:23, and it seems to be chiefly intended in this place. See Ac 4:32, what accord and unanimity there was among the primitive Christians.

*Even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;* a usual periphrasis of God in the New Testament: see 2Co 1:3 11:31 Eph 1:3 Col 1:3 1Pe 1:3. God is the Father of Christ, first, as he is the Son of God; so he begat him by an eternal and ineffable generation, Joh 3:16 1Jo 4:9. Secondly, as he is man: so he created him, Lu 1:35. Thirdly, as he is Mediator; so he appointed him to and qualified him for that office, Ps 40:8 Joh 20:17. This compellation of God includes all our comfort and happiness, for he is our Father because he is the Father of Jesus Christ. It is added here by way of limitation, to distinguish the true God from the false gods of the earth; and by way of explanation, to show how God will be glorified and worshipped under the gospel, viz. as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### Romans 15:7

Ver. 7. *Wherefore receive ye one another:* see Ro 14:1,3. He ends this discourse with the same terms in which he began it. Before, the strong only were charged to receive the weak, but here both are charged alike; the strong must receive the weak, and the weak the strong; they must all have communion one with another, continuing in brotherly love, accounting one another for brethren, exercising mutual forbearance and long-suffering.

*As Christ also received us;* i.e. after the example of Christ, who beareth with the infirmities of his followers, putting no difference betwixt Jews and Gentiles. The particle *as* noteth quality, not equality; there is no proportion betwixt the infinite love of Christ and the scanty charity of man. See the like, Mt 5:48 Eph 5:2.

*To the glory of God;* some join this with the former clause, that we should *receive one another to the glory of God:* God is glorified by that brotherly love and concord that is amongst his people. Others join it with the latter clause, that *Christ hath received us to the glory of God;* i.e. to make us partakers of the glory of God, or to declare and manifest the glory of God's truth to the Jews, and mercy to the Gentiles, as he showeth in the following verses.

### Romans 15:8

Ver. 8. He explains himself, and declares more at large, how Christ received both Jews and Gentiles, thereby to admonish them to receive one another. As for the Jews, whom he calls here *the circumcision*, see Ro 3:30 4:9,12, he saith, Christ became *a minister* unto them; see Mt 20:28. He exercised his ministry in the days of his flesh amongst them only, Mt 15:24. He went indeed now and then into the coasts of Samaria to make way for the calling of the Gentiles, but his chief abode was in Jewry.

*For the truth of God;* or, because of the truth of God, that his truth or faithfulness might not fail.

*To confirm the promises made to the fathers;* i.e. the promises of the Messiah, made first to Adam, then to Abraham and to David, that the Messiah should come of their loins, that in their seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed.

### Romans 15:9

Ver. 9. Here he proves the second part, that Christ hath also received the Gentiles. There is a plain ellipsis in the words; this is understood, that there were promises made of or to the Gentiles, and Christ came to confirm them also. The sum of these promises was this, *that the Gentiles should glorify God for his mercy*. Some have observed how the truth of God is spoken of in the foregoing verse with respect to the Jews, and the mercy of God with respect to the Gentiles; not that the one was without the other; for the salvation of the Jews, as it was of truth, so of mercy also, Mic 7:20; and the vocation of the Gentiles, as it was of mercy, so also of truth; for there were many promises of God concerning that matter, but mercy is predicated of the Gentiles, because that attribute of God appeared more eminently in their conversion and calling. You had the like distribution and difference in Ro 4:25 10:10.

*As it is written:* because the Jews were hardly persuaded of the mercy of God to the Gentiles, therefore he proves it by divers Scripture testimonies.

This first is taken out of Ps 18:49: See Poole on "Ps 18:49". David speaks this in the person of Christ. In the Psalm it is: *I will give thanks to thee*; but here, according to the LXX., *I will confess to thee*, or celebrate thee *among the Gentiles*. They then are received to mercy, forasmuch as it was foretold they should celebrate or praise God for his mercy.

### Romans 15:10

Ver. 10. This is taken out of De 32:43. Here it is evidently implied, that the Gentiles should become the people of God, and join with the Jews in his worship and service, and rejoice in the sense of his goodness and mercy to them. The partition wall is now taken away, and they both became one sheepfold under one Shepherd.

### Romans 15:11

Ver. 11. This is found in Ps 117:1. There the Gentiles are willed to praise God, which they could not do unless they knew him aright, and had obtained mercy from him.

### Romans 15:12

Ver. 12. *And again, Esaias saith; viz. in Isa 11:10*: see the notes there. This is a plain prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles; their being received to mercy is implied in the former testimonies, but here it is expressed. The Son of David (the Saviour) shall rise and spring out of Jesse's root, and reign over the Gentiles by his word and Spirit. He shall gather them by the preaching of his cross, as by an ensign, and they, as it is in the prophet, shall *seek* to him; or, as it is here, shall *trust* or hope in him. The apostle, as he is wont, doth follow the LXX., which makes some little variation from the Hebrew text; but it is rather in sound than in sense. You have other prophecies and promises of the Gentiles' mercy, as Isa 42:1,6 Isa 49:22 60:3,5; but the apostle thought, that these he had mentioned were sufficient for his purpose.

### Romans 15:13

Ver. 13. He finisheth here his long discourse about brotherly love and concord with a short and pithy prayer. Having said before, that the Gentiles should hope in God, he takes occasion from hence to style him, *The God of hope*. He is so, both objective, as being the only object of our hope, see Ps 146:5 Jer 17:7 1Ti 6:17; and effective, as being the only author of it, 1Pe 1:3.

*With all joy and peace in believing;* i.e. with much inward joy and peace, which riseth in the heart through a lively faith in Christ; or else, with all comfort and concord in the Christian faith. In this he prays they may *abound*; instead of those contentions that had been amongst them, he desires they may be filled with those things, wherein he told them, Ro 14:17, *the kingdom of God* consisted.

*That ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost;* he doth not say, that you may have hope, but that you may abound therein, that you may arrive to a plerophory or *full assurance of hope*, as it is in Heb 6:11. Such hope as may be like an anchor to the soul, to keep it safe and steady in the midst of storms and tempests. This hope is wrought in us by no less power and virtue than that of the Holy Ghost. See before.

### Romans 15:14

Ver. 14. Here begins the epilogue or conclusion of this excellent Epistle, wherein the apostle makes an apology, first for his manner of writing to them, and then for his not coming to them himself. His first apology is ushered in with a singular commendation of the Christians at Rome; he began with their commendation, Ro 1:8, and he ends with the same. There are three things which he commends them for. The first is their *goodness*; thus it is numbered among *the fruits of the Spirit*, Ga 5:22. It may be taken more largely, and so it comprehends all grace and virtue; or else more strictly, and so it is put for kindness, gentleness, and charity, in forbearing and forgiving others. The second is *all knowledge*; i.e. in things necessary, or in matters relating to Christian liberly; or, by *all knowledge*, he means a large measure and proportion of it. The third is ability *to admonish one another*, to inform others in things about which they were ignorant, or it

reprehend others for things about which they were negligent. Though there were many weak and ignorant persons among them, yet there were others of whom he was persuaded and fully assured they were thus qualified: see 1Co 1:5.

### Romans 15:15

Ver. 15. q. d. Though I am thus persuaded of you, or of many of you, yet I thought good to write to you *in some sort*, or in part, or a little the more boldly and freely, that I may stir you up to the practise of that which you know already: see 2Pe 1:12,13 3:1. This he speaks to allay the sharpness of his former reprehensions, and that what he had written might be the better digested; for all men more easily endure to be noted of negligence, than of malice or ignorance. And further he tells them, he could do no less, *because of the grace that was given him of God*; i.e. because of his apostolical office and authority: see Ro 1:5 12:3.

### Romans 15:16

Ver. 16. He proceeds to speak more particularly of his office and calling, which he had mentioned more generally in the foregoing words.

*The minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles:* see the notes on Ro 11:13. See also Ga 2:7,8 2Ti 1:11.

*Ministering the gospel of God;* i.e. preaching of it. Some read it consecrating, or working, in the holy service of the gospel of God. It is an allusion to the work or office of the priests under the law. The Jews and Gentiles, they both boasted of their priesthood and sacrifices: the apostle therefore showeth, that its ministry was far more excellent, being not occupied in sacrificing of beasts, but in offering up living men to be a holy sacrifice to God.

*That the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable:* some understand it actively, that the Gentiles might, offer up themselves, as it is in Ro 12:1; or that they might offer up acceptable sacrifices to God, according to Mal 1:11. But it is better understood passively, that the apostle, converting

them by his ministry, might present or offer them to God, as an acceptable oblation: see Isa 66:20.

*Being sanctified by the Holy Ghost;* not by any priest on earth, but even by the Holy Ghost himself; as the oblations of old had their external and legal purifyings, so this oblation is purified or *sanctified by the Holy Ghost*.

### Romans 15:17

Ver. 17. q. d. Having received this grace of apostleship, and having had great success in my labours, multitudes being converted by my ministry: *I have whereof to glory,* or, I have matter of glorying and rejoicing. But then he adds, that this glorying of his was not in himself, but in and *through Jesus Christ,* by whose grace he did what he did: see 1Co 15:10. And also, that it was not in any thing that concerned himself, but in things pertaining to God, which concerned his worship and service, and wherein his ministry consisted. In the foregoing verse he described his apostleship in terms that were borrowed from the Levitical priesthood: and here, contriving the same metaphor, he calleth the execution of his function, a performing of things pertaining to God. which is that for which the priests of old were ordained, Heb 5:1.

### Romans 15:18

Ver. 18. q. d. I dare not speak of more than is true, or of any thing that was not really done by me: or else the meaning is, I dare not speak of any thing that I have done of myself, I acknowledge that, whatever good hath come to the Gentiles by my means, it was wrought by Christ, whose instrument I have only been: see 1Co 3:5.

*By word and deed:* some join these words to the obedience of the Gentiles; by the preaching of the gospel they were made obedient in word and deed. But they are better joined with the former words; Christ wrought in and by the apostle Paul, believed word and deed. By *word* is understood his public preaching, and private instruction; and by *deed*, the example of his good works, or godly life: or else, by *deed* ye may understand the miracles that

he wrought, and the labour and travail that he underwent; of which in the following verse.

Romans 15:19

Ver. 19. *Through mighty signs and wonders;* or, by the power of signs and wonders, which served to confirm my commission from God, and the truth of what I preached, and so helped forward the obedience and conversion of the Gentiles: see 2Co 12:12. If there be any difference betwixt *signs and wonders*, it is only gradual. I find them often conjoined in Scripture, Mt 24:24 Joh 4:48 Ac 2:43 5:12 Ac 7:36 14:3.

*By the power of the Spirit of God;* which blessed the words, deeds, and miracles of the apostle, and wrought effectually by them in the Gentiles. The word  $\delta\upsilon\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$ , *power*, or *virtue*, is twice used in this verse; it is first applied to signs and wonders, to show their efficacy; and then to the Spirit of God, to show that he was the efficient cause of that efficacy.

*So that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum:* this showeth the pains and travail of the apostle, to bring the Gentiles to the obedience of faith. Illyricum is said to be in the utmost parts of Greece, bordering upon the sea, which is thereupon called Illyricum Mare. It is thought to be the country now called Sclavonia, and that is distant from Jerusalem about three hundred and fifty German miles, which make above a thousand English miles; yet it seems he did not travel in a direct and straight line, but round about, or in a circle, as the word imports, fetching a circuit. Some writers have given us out of the Acts a particular history of his peregrination from Damascus, where he began his ministry: he went into Arabia, and after three years returned to Damascus, and from thence to Jerusalem; from Jerusalem he went to Caesarea, and so to Tarsus; from Tarsus Barnabas brought him to Antioch, and from thence to Jerusalem, to carry relief to the Jews. From Jerusalem they returned to Antioch; from Antioch he and Barnabas went to Seleucia, then to Cyprus, and to some cities of Pamphylia, and so to another Antioch in Pisidia; from thence to Lycaonia, and then returned to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended by the church. From Antioch they were sent to Jerusalem about the question of the circumcision, and returned to Antioch with the apostles' decree. From thence he went through Syria and Cilicia, visiting

the churches. Then he went through Phrygia, Galatia, and Mysia; then to Troas, where by a vision he was called unto Macedonia, and so came into the parts of Europe; first to Philippi in Macedonia, then to Thessalonica; from thence to Athens, and then to Corinth; from thence to Ephesus; and going to visit the churches of Galatia and Phrygia, returned to Ephesus. From Ephesus he went again to Macedonia; from thence to Troas and Miletus; and thence, by Tyrus and Caesarea, and other cities, he came to Jerusalem, where he was taken and put in bonds. Thus you have an account of the apostle's travels, which he abridgeth here, when he says, that it was *from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum*.

*I have fully preached the gospel of Christ;* i.e. I have filled all these countries with the gospel of Christ. The word signifieth to fulfil; see Col 4:17. This he calleth the finishing his ministry, Ac 20:24.

#### Romans 15:20

Ver. 20,21. He gives a reason why he chose to preach the gospel in these places, because Christ had not been named or preached there before; this, he saith, was his ambition, and a thing that he greatly coveted; he was unwilling to *build upon another man's foundation*, to put his sickle into another's harvest, to derive the glory to himself which would be due to others, 2Co 10:15,16. Again, another reason why he preached the gospel where Christ had not been named, was this, that so by him, as an apostle of Christ, and in his ministry, that scriptre might be fulfilled, which you have in Isa 52:15, *To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see, &c.* See Poole on "Isa 52:15".

#### Romans 15:22

Ver. 22. Hitherto he hath excused his manner of writing, now he makes an apology for his not coming unto them. They at Rome might be ready to say: If he had travelled into so many countries, why could he not all this while give us a visit? To this he answers, it was not from any want of respect or good will to them, but for another cause, which he had already assigned, and that was, the preaching of Christ where he had not been



named; for this cause, he says, he had been much hindered: he looked upon that as the more necessary work; the planting of churches is more than the watering of them. He told them, Ro 1:13, of his being hindered from coming to them, and now he acquaints them (more particularly with the reason, which he concealed before. The word (τα πολλά) rendered *much*, signifieth many; and it implies that he was many times hindered, and many ways; but this was the chief.

### Romans 15:23

Ver. 23. Having given the reason why he came not to them hitherto, in the following words he assures them he would do it hereafter. And here he saith he was the more inclined so to do, first: Because he had no more place in those parts, i.e. as before, in those places where Christ had not been named, or his gospel preached, he had no new churches there to found, and he had ordained elders in every city to build upon his foundation. The word rendered *parts*, signifies climates; i.e. places which he on divers elevations of the pole. And then, secondly: Because he had long longed so to do, he had desired it for many years, Ro 1:10,11.

### Romans 15:24

Ver. 24. Here he sets down the time when he would visit them, i.e. when he took his journey into Spain. He saith, he trusted he should see them then; he was not assured of it, he had no revelation from God concerning it, he could make no absolute promise. See Ro 15:28.

*And to be brought on my way thitherward by you;* i.e. by some of you; this he did promise himself from them, and indeed it was usually done by the churches he visited; see Ac 17:15: not that he affected any train or pomp, but it was done for his guidance and safety, as he travelled through unknown and dangerous ways.

*If first I be somewhat filled with your company:* this he adds, lest they should think he meant to make no stay with them; he gives them to understand, that he did not intend to leave them, till they were mutually filled and satisfied with one another's company and society.

### Romans 15:25

Ver. 25. Some might be ready to say: If Paul hath no more place in those parts where he is, and hath such a longing desire to see us, why then doth he not presently come to us? To this he answers, that for the present he could not come, because he had a weighty affair upon his hands, which was to go up to Jerusalem to minister to the saints; i.e. to carry thither certain collections and contributions from the Gentile churches for their relief. He useth a participle of the present tense in the original, to show that this work is now in hand, and it would not stay or hold him long. Though indeed his work was to preach the gospel, and not to serve tables; yet it seems likely that the churches of the Gentiles, who were moved by him to this contribution, had committed the same to his care, 2Co 8:4.

### Romans 15:26

Ver. 26. For the understanding of these words, you need only to read 2Co 8:1, and 2Co 9:2. When he saith, *it hath pleased them*, it is implied, that it was not extorted or squeezed out of them; but that it proceeded from a ready and willing mind, and that they took delight therein. The word here rendered *contribution*, properly signifieth communication, which implieth a mutual exchange or intercourse between the givers and the receivers; the one contributing alms, the other prayers and intercessions to God. He speaks elsewhere of communicating *concerning giving and receiving*, Php 4:15.

### Romans 15:27

Ver. 27. *It hath pleased them verily*; he makes this repetition, as to commend the Grecians, so also to admonish the Romans to the like benevolence.

*And their debtors they are*; i.e. the Gentiles are debtors to the Jews; though what they sent them was a gift, yet it was also a debt, it was due by the law of charity, Ro 13:8, and by the law of gratitude and equity; they

had received from them, and they were obliged in some sort to make returns to them.

*For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things:* by the spiritual things of the Jews, of which the Gentiles were *made partakers*, you may understand all those things of which mention is made, Ro 9:4,5; more particularly, the gospel, with the ministry and ordinances thereof: the gospel was first preached to the Jews, and from Jerusalem it was spread abroad among the Gentiles: see Lu 24:47 Ac 1:4,8. By the *carnal things* of the Gentiles, you may understand their gold and silver, with all things needful for the sustentation of the body: you have a parallel place in 1Co 9:7.

#### Romans 15:28

Ver. 28. *When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit;* i.e. After that I have despatched this business, and safely delivered the alms of the Greek churches to the Jews, wherewith I am intrusted; it is put into my hands as a treasure sealed in a bag or chest, that it may not be diminished or embezzled: he calls it *fruit*, because it proceeded from their faith and love, and because it would abound to their account, Php 4:17; it would benefit them that received it, but much more them that gave it.

*I will come by you into Spain;* i.e. I will take you, or your city, in my way thither. He told them as much before, Ro 15:24. This he really intended, but it is generally concluded that he was prevented, that he never went this journey into Spain. The purposes of men are ruled and overruled by the providence of God, Pr 16:9.

#### Romans 15:29

Ver. 29. i.e. As some expound it, I shall find you furnished with all spiritual and gospel blessings: this sense agrees with Ro 15:14. But others rather think, that he speaks of what he should bring with him, and not of what he should find there: therefore it may better be expounded by Ro

1:11,12. He assures himself he should impart unto them much knowledge, grace, and comfort; that he should enrich and fill them with all *the blessings of the gospel of Christ*.

### Romans 15:30

Ver. 30. In the conclusion, he commends himself to their prayers. This is usual with him in his other Epistles: see Eph 6:18-20 Col 4:3 2Th 3:1 Heb 13:18.

*I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake:* q. d. If not for my sake, yet for his sake, who is most dear to you.

*And for the love of the Spirit:* q. d. If you love the Spirit of God; or rather, if the grace of love be wrought in you by the Spirit, show it in this thing. This pathetic way of speaking is frequent with this apostle: see Ro 12:1 Php 2:1.

*That ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;* that you strive as those that be in an agony; it is a military word: he bespeaks their earnest and importunate prayers in his behalf. Jacob prayed after this manner; so did Elijah, and Epaphras, Col 4:12. He prayed himself, and he desired them to join with him, and help him, as Aaron and Hur helped Moses.

### Romans 15:31

Ver. 31. Here are two things more particularly, which he desires them to beg of God in his behalf.

First: That ye may be delivered from them that did not believe, or were disobedient and refractory, in Judea. He knew the Jews were incensed against him; that troubles did abide him or wait for him in Judea, thither he was going; see Ac 20:23. And it happened accordingly, for the Jews went about to kill him, Ac 21:31. Therefore it is that he desires their prayers, that he might be *delivered from them*; see 2Th 3:2.

Secondly: That the alms he brought the poor saints at Jerusalem might be taken by them in good part; that they might be reconciled, both to the Gentile churches that sent it, and to him that brought it. It detracts greatly from a gift, when it comes, either from one, or by one, against whom we are prejudiced.

### Romans 15:32

Ver. 32. *That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God:*

q. d. This would be a means to make me come unto you with the more comfort, if God will, or if God grant it to our prayers. This condition, if God will, he had before inserted upon this very occasion, Ro 1:10. See the like, 1Co 4:19 Jas 4:13,15. This he did to free himself from the suspicion of inconstancy, in case it should fall out otherwise; as also to show, that always, and in all things, he referred himself to the good pleasure and providence of God.

*And may with you be refreshed;* i.e. with your company and converse. This hath the same sense with Ro 1:12: see the notes there.

### Romans 15:33

Ver. 33. *The God of peace;* this is a frequent title of God in Scripture; he is called *the God of peace*, Ro 16:20 2Co 13:11 Php 4:9 1Th 5:23 2Th 3:16 Heb 13:20. Here it fits his great argument, which was to persuade the believing Romans to be at peace amongst themselves, and not to contend about indifferent things.

*Be with you all:* three times in this chapter doth the apostle lift up a prayer for the believing Romans; see Ro 16:5,13; and this is more comprehensive than the other two. If God be with us, no good thing can be wanting to us. God's presence is inclusive of all good, and exclusive of all evil.

*Amen:* see Ro 16:27.

## Romans 16:1

### Chapter Summary

Ro 16:1,2 Paul commendeth Phebe to the Christians at Rome,

Ro 16:3-16 and sendeth salutations to many by name.

Ro 16:17-20 He warneth them to take heed of those who cause divisions and offences.

Ro 16:21-24 After sundry salutations,

Ro 16:25-27 he concludes with praise to God.

Ver. 1. This chapter is in the nature of a postscript. The apostle begins it with the recommendation of a certain woman to them. She went upon some occasion to Rome, and by her (as some have supposed) this Epistle was sent to the church there.

*Phebe*: the poets called the moon Phoebe, as they did the sun Phoebus. This name is likely to have been imposed by her parents, being Gentiles.

*Our sister*; i.e. in Christ, and by the profession of the same faith: see Jas 2:16.

*Cenchrea*; a port or haven belonging to Corinth, on the east side towards Asia: there was another on the west side towards Italy, called Lechea. By reason of this double haven, Corinth was called by the poets, *Bi maris*. Here Paul paid a vow, which he had made, Ac 18:18. Here also he preached and converted many, amongst whom this Phebe (as is probable) was one. When he saith, she was *servant of the church*, it is not meant she was a deaconness, or one of the college of widows, of whom he speaketh, 1Ti 5:9. But she served the church, in harbouring and succouring the saints that were driven out of their country; yea, as appears by the next verse, she was a succourer of the ministers of the gospel, and of the apostle himself. We read, Lu 8:3, of some that *ministered unto* the Lord *of their substance*; there the same word is used. And this Phebe seems to have been employed in the same works; she ministered unto Paul as Onesiphorus did, 2Ti 1:18; there the same word is used again.

## Romans 16:2

Ver. 2. *Receive her in the Lord;* i.e. in the Lord's name, or for the Lord's sake: see Mt 18:5. Or else it is as if he had said: Receive her Christianly.

*As becometh saints;* as it is fit that saints should be received, or as it is fit for them, who profess themselves to be saints, to receive one another.

*That ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you;* that you stand by her, and afford her your counsel, or any other assistance. She might have some business in the emperor's court, by reason of fraud, oppression, or some unjust vexations; and there might be those amongst them that could stand her in some stead. There were Christians of Caesar's household, Php 4:22.

*For she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also:* the word signifieth a patroness. She had been hospitable to many, and in particular, to the apostle himself. This showeth she was a woman of some account: it was but equal that the saints at Rome should assist her, who had been assistant unto so many others.

## Romans 16:3

Ver. 3. In the next place, he saluteth several persons by name; the first are *Priscilla and Aquila*. Sometimes she is called *Prisca*, 2Ti 4:19; and by a diminutive, *Priscilla*. This was usual amongst the Romans. So Livia was called Livilla; Tullia, Tulliola; Petrona, Petronella, &c. The wife is named before her husband; so she is, Ac 18:18 2Ti 4:19. Some think she was first called; others, that she was most renowned for her zeal and charity. We need not to be curious in our inquiry after the reason; we find in other places Aquila is set before Priscilla, Ac 18:2,26 1Co 16:19. Hence it may appear how weakly the papists argue for Peter's primacy, because he was placed first on the catalogue of the apostles; for by the same argument, the wife should be preferred before her husband. This Aquila was a Jew of Pontus, and by occupation a tent-maker: with him the apostle Paul abode and wrought at Corinth, Ac 18:2,3. Though Claudius the emperor had commanded the Jews to depart from Rome, yet now, it seems, they were returned thither again; possibly, because Claudius was dead, or because

that severe edict was relaxed.

*My helpers in Christ Jesus;* in propagating the gospel in their place and calling, and as they had opportunity. Though they preached not publicly, yet they furthered the gospel many ways privately: see [Ac 18:26](#).

#### Romans 16:4

Ver. 4. *Who have for my life laid down their own necks;* i.e. they hazarded their own lives to save mine. The Scripture speaks of this as the duty of Christians, [1Jo 3:16](#). He refers (it may be) to that uproar that was at Corinth, of which see [Ac 18:12](#); or that in Asia, of which see [Ac 19:23](#).

*Unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;* because he was the apostle of the Gentiles, and his preservation redounded to the benefit of them all.

#### Romans 16:5

Ver. 5. *Likewise greet the church that is in their house;* the word greet is supplied to fill up the sense: q. d. Declare my goodwill to them, and desires of their welfare. You have the same salutations, [1Co 16:19](#); and the like in [Col 4:15](#) [Phm 1:2](#). By *the church in their house*, is generally understood, their family or household; which he calls a church, because of the godly order and religious worship that was exercised amongst them. May Aquila and Priscilia be a pattern unto other housekeepers; may the families of Christians be every where as little churches. The house of George, prince of Anhalt, for the good and godly order therein observed, was said to be, as well a church as a court. There are some that think, that by *the church in their house*, is meant the Christians that were wont to assemble there for solemn worship; but this is not likely, because of the particular salutations of so many in the following verses.

*Salute my well-beloved Epenetus: Epenetus,* in the Greek tongue, is laudable and praise-worthy; so was this person, both in name and in deed.

*Who is the first-fruits, of Achaia unto Christ:* the same is affirmed of *the*



*house of Stephanas*, 1Co 16:15. The meaning may be this, Epenetus was the first person, and Stephana's family was the first family, that embraced the faith of Christ in the region of Achaia. This is a singular commendation; God's soul desires such first-ripe fruits, Mic 7:1.

### Romans 16:6

Ver. 6. *Greet Mary*: this was a common name, but the person here meant was of special note. Ignatius highly commends one of this name, giving her an ample character for wisdom and godliness.

*Who bestowed much labour on us*; this is the commendation the apostle gives of this woman: it is to be understood of her labour and service in providing food and other necessaries for the entertainment of the faithful, especially the preachers of the gospel; which he acknowledgeth as done to himself, though he had not been at Rome, because of the communion of saints. Some think this woman dwelt before at Corinth, or Antioch, or in some other places, where she had ministered unto the apostle Paul himself.

### Romans 16:7

Ver. 7. *Salute Andronicus and Junia*; it may be rendered Junius. Some think this Junia was a woman, and the wife of Andronicus; others take them both for men.

*My kinsmen*; so he calls them, either because they were Jews, Ro 9:3; or because they were of the same tribe; or because they were more nearly related to him by consanguinity and affinity.

*My fellow prisoners*; i.e. they had been imprisoned for the gospel, as well as he: the apostle had been often in prison himself, 2Co 11:23. We read, Ac 16:23, of his being imprisoned at Philippi, and it may be these two were his fellow prisoners, for we read of other prisoners there besides Paul and Silas, Ro 16:25,26.

*Who are of note among the apostles*; i.e. they were well known to the apostles, and were in good esteem with them: not only the twelve, together

with Paul and Barnabas, but other teachers are sometimes called *apostles*, or *messengers*; see 2Co 8:23 Php 2:25. Some have thought these two, Andronicus and Junia, were of the number of the seventy disciples, who are mentioned Lu 10:1. Others, that they were of the one hundred and twenty, who are mentioned in Ac 1:15; or of those that were converted by the first preaching of Peter, and the rest, Ac 2:41 4:4. By what follows, it appeareth they were of considerable standing in Christianity.

*Who also were in Christ before me*: there are three things for which he commends these two persons: the first is, their sufferings for Christ; the second is, their fame among the apostles; and the third is, their forwardness in conversion. This was Mnason's commendation, Ac 21:16. When he saith, they *were in Christ*, he intimates the virtue and power of faith to incorporate us into Christ, as branches into a vine.

#### Romans 16:8

Ver. 8. Some translations call him Ampliatus; it is a Roman name.

*My beloved in the Lord*; this is added, to show that he did not love him for his riches, or any outward respect, but for the Lord's sake; for the grace of Christ, which appeared in him.

#### Romans 16:9

Ver. 9. *Urbane*; this also is a Roman name; it was coveted afterwards by many bishops of Rome.

*Our helper in Christ*; the same that was said of Aquila and Priscilla, Ro 16:3. Possibly he might be one of their teachers.

*Stachys my beloved*; this is a Greek name, which signifieth an ear of corn. Some have reported, he was the first bishop of Constantinople: he was doubtless a person eminent in grace and gifts, or else the apostle would never have dignified him with this additional commendation, that he was *beloved* of him, or dear to him.

### Romans 16:10

Ver. 10. Origen supposeth this *Apelles* to be Apollos, of whom you read, Ac 18:24, and in other places. Epiphanius saith, he was teacher in the churches of Smyrna, before Polycarpus.

*Approved in Christ;* one who hath showed himself a faithful and sincere Christian, who hath given many proofs of his sincerity, zeal, and constancy. This is a high encomium; to be *in Christ* is much, to be *approved in Christ* is more: tried gold is most precious. In a time of trial, to stand fast, and hold his own, is a Christian's greatest praise.

*Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household;* the word *household* is not in the Greek, but is added to fill up the sense; you have the like in the next verse, and in 1Co 1:11. Aristobulus himself is not saluted; either he was dead, or as yet unconverted to the faith of Christ; but it seems there were several Christians in or belonging to his family, whom the apostle here salutes. See the next verse.

### Romans 16:11

Ver. 11. *Salute Herodion my kinsman:* see Ro 16:7.

*Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus:* this *Narcissus* is reported by Suetonius to have been in great favour with Claudius the emperor, and to have abounded in wealth, so that he was worth ten millions. He was a wicked man himself, yet it seems he had divers good Christians in his family. So we read that there were saints in Nero's house or court, Php 4:22. To what a degree of wickedness are they arrived, who will not suffer a religious person to dwell in their houses! This shows, that good Christians may serve wicked masters with a good conscience.

*Which are in the Lord;* this may be added, because that all in Narcissus's family were not Christians, or members of the church of Christ.

### Romans 16:12

Ver. 12. He salutes several women as well as men: you read before of Priscilla, Ro 16:3; of Mary, Ro 16:6; and now he adds three more in this verse. He saith of the two first, that they *laboured in the Lord*; i.e. in the service of Christ and his church, according to their place and power. See the notes on Ro 16:6.

*Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord*; he gives this woman a higher commendation, calling her *the beloved Persis*; see Ro 16:8. He saith of the other two, that they *laboured*; but of this, that she hath *laboured much in the Lord*, noting some special favour or service for which she is here commended.

### Romans 16:13

Ver. 13. *Salute Rufus*; the same (it may be) of whom you may read, Mr 15:21.

*Chosen in the Lord*; a choice Christian, one eminent for gifts and graces. So, 2Jo 1:1, you read of an *elect lady*: he is supposed not to speak here of eternal election.

*And his mother and mine*; *his mother* by nature, *mine* by affection: she hath tendered me as a mother her son: see 1Ti 5:2.

### Romans 16:14

Ver. 14. i.e. The Christians that are their domestics, or that dwell with them.

### Romans 16:15

Ver. 15. *Julia*; probably the wife of *Philologus*.

*Olympas*; this is thought to be the name of a man, rather than of a woman.

*All the saints which are with them;* that are in their several families: see Ro 16:14. There were, doubtless, many more Christians in the church of Rome, but either they were of no great note, or else not known to the apostle: and indeed it is matter of admiration, that he, who was never at Rome, should know the name and proper characters of so many there. And because he sendeth salutations to so many brethren at Rome, and makes no mention of Peter, it may be rationally inferred, that Peter was not there at the writing of this Epistle. It is questionable whether ever he were there at all; but it is without question, that he came not thither in the beginning of Claudius's reign, and in the forty-fifth year of our Lord, as the Romanists report; nor was he bishop there for the space of five and twenty years, as they affirm.

### Romans 16:16

Ver. 16. From greeting them himself, he proceeds to exhort them to greet or *salute one another*: this he adviseth them to do *with an holy kiss*. You have the same exhortation, in 1Co 16:20 2Co 13:12 1Th 5:26. This the apostle Peter calls *a kiss of charity*, 1Pe 5:14. Kissing is accounted a great symbol of love and concord: q. d. You have been much troubled with dissensions, about meats and days, &c.; therefore I beseech you that, forgetting all former offences, you would manifest for the future all signs of love to and peace with one another. Kissing was an old custom amongst the Hebrews; we find it used by the patriarchs, Ge 27:26 29:11. It is still retained more or less in all countries. The primitive Christians did use it in their assemblies; so Tertullian testifieth, Lib. Dec.; and they did it especially in receiving the eucharist. So Chrysostom witnesseth, Hom. 77. in John 16. "We do well", saith he, "to kiss in the mysteries, that we may become one." This custom, for good reasons, is laid down, and the Romanists, in room of it, keep up a foolish and superstitious ceremony, which is to kiss the pax in the mass.

*The churches of Christ salute you:* he sends, besides his own, the salutations of others also to the Christians at Rome; and that, first, of whole churches, and by and by of particular persons, Ro 16:21-23. By *churches*, here, he principally means, the churches in Greece, where he then was, of whose good affection to the Christian Romans he was well

assured.

### Romans 16:17

Ver. 17. He shuts up the Epistle with a seasonable admonition, which he reserved to the last, that it might be the better remembered: it is, to beware of those that *cause divisions and offences*. By the former, some understand those that corrupt the doctrine of the church; by the latter, those that violate the discipline thereof: others refer *divisions* to faith, and *offences* to manners. There are that like neither of these distinctions, but, think he only cautions them against church dividers; and mentions scandal or offences as the effect or fruit of church divisions. He seems to aim more especially at those who, together with the Christian faith, did obtrude upon believers the ceremonies of the law, as necessary to salvation; of these he often complains as enemies to the gospel and cross of Christ: see Gal 1:7 Php 3:2,18,19 Tit 1:10.

*Contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned;* i.e. that you have learned from those that first taught you and converted you to Christ:

q. d. You have been instructed in the true doctrine of Christ; and there are some that would innovate and teach another doctrine, that broach opinions that are contrary, or, at least, beside the doctrine which is pure and apostolical, and so make divisions and factions amongst you: of such as those he speaks what follows.

*And avoid them;* here are two precepts with respect to innovators and church dividers. The first is, that they should be marked. The word signifies such a marking, as a watchman useth that standeth on a tower to descry enemies; he marketh diligently all comers, and giveth notice accordingly, for the safety of the place. The second is, that they should be avoided, or declined: the like counsel is given, 2Th 3:6,14 1Ti 6:3-5 2Ti 3:5 Tit 3:10 2Jo 1:10. The sum is, the church should excommunicate them, and all sound Christians should turn away from them, and shun their society, that they may be ashamed.

### Romans 16:18

Ver. 18. In this verse you have a reason of the foregoing admonition, together with a description of the seducers, whom they should mark and avoid. He says, they are such as *serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly*; i.e. they serve themselves rather than Christ. Though they pretend to be the servants of Jesus Christ, and give themselves out for his ministers, yet they aim at nothing but their own commodity and advantage. A further account you have of such persons in Php 3:19 1Ti 6:5 Tit 1:11 2Pe 2:3.

*By good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple:*  
q. d. As Satan insinuated into Eve, by pretending he wished her good; so these seducers pretend they aim at nothing but the good and benefit of those with whom they have to do: with smooth and flattering words, they praise both the persons and doings of those whom they would insnare, (so much the word *εὐλογία*, here used, imports), and by this means they impose upon *the simple*, i.e. the over credulous and unwary, who do not mistrust any deceit or hurt. The word here rendered *simple*, properly signifies such as are not evil, or that are incautious, and not suspicious.

### Romans 16:19

Ver. 19. *For your obedience is come abroad unto all men:* q. d. As for you, your ready embracing of the gospel, and conformity thereunto, is generally taken notice of by all that mind such things: see the like, Ro 1:8 1Th 1:8.

*I am glad therefore on your behalf;* I rejoice to hear of your soundness and teachablehess; I do not therefore speak this to accuse, but to caution you.

*But yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil:* q. d. Take heed that you be not cheated by seducers, that they do not abuse your tractableness to draw you into errors. He exhorts them to join prudence with simplicity; to be so harmless and simple as not to invent false doctrine, and yet to be so wise and skilful as to be able to discern truth from falsehood; to be so innocent as not to deceive, and so prudent as not to be deceived: see Mt 10:16. He prays for the Philippians, that they may have this discretion, Php 1:9,10, and exhorts the

Thessalonians thereunto, 1Th 5:21.

Romans 16:20

Ver. 20. *And, &c.:* q. d. And to encourage you to be watchful, I dare promise you shall be successful.

*The God of peace;* so he is called, Ro 15:33.

*Shall bruise Satan under your feet:* the word signifies to bruise by treading; it imports the conquest that the Lord gives his people over Satan and all his wicked instruments, that divide, seduce, or oppress his people; the promise is that they shall overcome him and them; they shall deal by Satan and his agents, as Joshua and his captains did by those five kings, Jos 10:24; see Re 22:11. This promise plainly bears upon the first grand promise, in Ge 3:15, that Jesus Christ, the Seed of the woman, should bruise the head of the serpent; for it is by virtue of his bruising the head of Satan, that he is subdued and brought under our feet. The seed of the woman, in their own persons, as well as in their representative, shall bruise the serpent's head.

*Shortly,* or suddenly; though now he rage, yet ere long he shall be thrown down. Some refer this to the day of judgment: others, to the time of Constantine, who overthrew idolatry; and that it is not only a promise, but a prophecy also of the conversion of the Roman empire. There are that think that the apostle doth comfort here the believing Romans, by telling them, that the dissensions raised amongst them by means of Satan's malice and subtlety, should be shortly quenched and reconciled; and that it was effected partly by this Epistle, and partly by the apostle's labours afterwards amongst them.

*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you:* as he began this Epistle with wishing them *grace and peace*, so he ends it. He had said, Ro 15:33,

*The God of peace be with you;* and here he saith: *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.* He was once and again shutting up his Epistle, but having more room and time, he makes some short additions and supplements, as it is usual with those that write epistles. This salutation he



was wont in the end of every Epistle to write with his own hand, 2Th 3:17. It is repeated, Ro 16:24. Hereby he intimates the necessity of the grace of Christ, therefore he prayeth for it again and again. See Poole on "Ro 1:7".

### Romans 16:21

Ver. 21. As before he saluted divers persons himself, so now he sendeth the salutation of others to the church of Rome. This he doth to show the mutual amity and love that is and ought to be between Christians; though they are divided in respect of place, yet not in respect of affection and goodwill. He begins with *Timotheus*, or Timothy, whom he calls his *work-fellow*, or fellow helper, viz. in preaching and propagating the gospel of Christ. This shows the humility of the apostle, that he dignifies so young a man with this title. This is he to whom he wrote afterwards two Epistles; you may read more of him, Ac 16:1-7, and elsewhere.

*Lucius*: Origen and some others are of opinion that this was Luke the evangelist, who was the inseparable companion of the apostle Paul, and was with him about this very time, as appears by Ac 20:5; and here he is called Lucius, according to the Roman inflexion. Others think that this was Lucius of Cyrene, of whom you read, Ac 23:1.

*Jason*; this was Paul's host at Thessalonica, Ac 17:5,7; the same, as some think, that is called Secundus, Ac 20:4, the one being his Hebrew, the other his Roman name.

*Sosipater*; the same that is called Sopater of Berea, in Ac 20:4.

*My kinsmen*: see Ro 16:7.

### Romans 16:22

Ver. 22. *Tertius*; this was the apostle's scribe or amanuensis, *who wrote this Epistle*, either from his mouth, or from his papers: he put in this salutation by the apostle's licence.

*Salute you in the Lord*; i.e. I wish you safety from the Lord.

### Romans 16:23

Ver. 23. *Gaius*: we read of more than one that bore this name; there was Gaius of Macedonia, of whom you read, in Ac 19:29; there was Gaius of Derbe, of whom you read, Ac 20:4; he is most likely the person here meant. There was one of this name whom Paul baptized at Corinth, 1Co 1:14; and there was another Gaius, to whom St. John wrote his Third Epistle: whether any of those were the same, or whether they were all different persons, is uncertain.

*Mine host, and of the whole church*; i.e. he entertained the apostle, and all Christian strangers that passed that way. That Gaius to whom the apostle John wrote, is commended for the like hospitality, 3Jo 1:5,6.

*Erastus the chamberlain of the city*; or the receiver or steward of the city; one that had the management of the city's stock or public treasure. The city was Corinth, from whence the apostle wrote this Epistle. There *Erastus* is said to abide, 2Ti 4:20, possibly to attend upon his office. Yet we find, Ac 19:22, that he was one of them that ministered to the apostle, and was sent by him hither and thither, as he had occasion, which would not well consist with his being chamberlain or steward of so great a city; therefore some are of opinion, that he is so called, because that had been his office in time past. So *Abigail* is called *the wife of Nabal*, 2Sa 3:3, because she formerly stood in that relation to him.

*Quartus*; this is no word of number, but it was his name: we had Tertius in the foregoing verse; and we read of Secundus, Ac 20:4. Histories also speak of the name of Quintus, and Sextus, &c.

### Romans 16:24

Ver. 24. These words are the very same which you had, Ro 16:20, only the word *all* is added. Some have thought, that the former was written with the hand of Tertius, the scribe or notary, and this with the apostle's own hand. He seems to be like a loving and tender father, who bids his children farewell once and again; and being loth to leave them, returns a second and

a third time to discourse with them.

### Romans 16:25

Ver. 25. He concludes all with an excellent doxology; wherein, first, he describes God, and then he ascribes eternal glory to him. He describes him by two of his attributes or perfections: the first is his *power*; He is able to establish you; i.e. in grace and in truth; to keep you from falling into sin and into error. The Scripture often attributes our establishment unto God: see 1Th 3:13 2Th 2:17 2Th 3:3 1Pe 5:10. Our own weakness and Satan's power are such, that unless God did establish us, we should soon totter and fall: see Ro 14:4, and the notes there. Our establishment is further amplified by the instrumental cause thereof, which is the *gospel*; touching which, several things are here to be noted. First, he calls it *my gospel*, because he was the preacher and publisher thereof: see Ro 2:16, and the notes there. Secondly, he calls it *the preaching of Jesus Christ*: which may be taken actively, for the preaching of our Lord himself; so the doctrine of salvation is called, the word that was *spoken by the Lord*, Heb 2:3: see Mt 4:23 Mt 9:35. Or rather passively, for the gospel which was preached concerning Jesus Christ: see Ro 1:1,3, and the notes there. Thirdly: He calls it a *mystery*, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest: see parallel places, 1Co 2:7 Eph 3:9 Col 1:26. Some restrain this to the calling of the Gentiles; but it is better understood of the whole doctrine of the gospel, concerning the Trinity, the incarnation of the Son of God, &c., which, although it was in some sort made known under the Old Testament, yet, in respect of the present light and revelation, it was a hidden *mystery*.

### Romans 16:26

Ver. 26. Concerning the *revelation* of this *mystery*, four things are further recorded:

1. The means whereby it was made known; viz. *the Scriptures of the prophets*; see Ac 10:43 16:32 28:23.
2. The authority by which it was made known; *the commandment of the*

*everlasting God.*

3. The persons to whom it was made known; the Gentiles, or the inhabitants of *all nations*.
4. The end for which it was made known; viz. *for the obedience of faith*; i.e. that it may be believed and obeyed: see Ro 1:5 15:18.

### Romans 16:27

Ver. 27. The second attribute in the description of God, is his wisdom; he is said to be *wise*, and *only wise*. See the like, 1Ti 1:17 Jude 1:25. So he is said to be *only true*, Joh 17:3, and to be *the only Potentate*, 1Ti 6:15, and *only* to have *immortality*, 1Ti 6:16. And this doth not exclude the wisdom of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, but the wisdom of the creatures. He is said to be *only wise*, because none is as wise as he, and all the wisdom of others is from him; the wisdom of men and angels is but a ray from his light. Again, he is said to be *only wise*, because he is originally wise; his wisdom is of himself; yea, his wisdom is himself.

*Be glory through Jesus Christ for ever:* here he ascribes eternal glory to God. You had the same before, Ro 11:36. Only here is added, *through Jesus Christ*, to show that our praise and thanksgiving is accepted of God through him: see Ro 1:7 Eph 3:20,21.

*Amen:* this word is six times before used in this Epistle; Ro 1:25 Ro 9:5 11:36 15:33 16:20,24. It is a Hebrew word, but retained in all languages. It cannot be translated without losing much of its weight. It may be taken three ways:

1. As a name, and so it is a name of Christ, Re 3:14.
2. As an adverb: so it is used in the beginning of speech, and signifies verily; or in the end of speech, and so it notes assent. Therefore it was used of old by the Jews, not only at prayer, but at all the sermons and expositions of their rabbins, to testify that they assented and agreed to all that they taught: see 1Co 14:16.

3. As a verb; and so it is as much as: So be it, having the nature of a prayer: hence Jeremiah said *Amen* to the prophecy of Hananiah, though false, concerning the sudden return from the Babylonish captivity, to show how earnestly he desired it might be so, Jer 28:6.

*Written to the Romans from Corinthus, (and sent) by Phebe servant of the church at Cenchrea.*

This was not added by the apostle Paul, nor by Tertius his amanuensis, but by a later and unknown hand; yet there is nothing in the Epistle itself, nor in any ancient or modern writer, that may induce us to question the verity thereof.

## 1 Corinthians 1:1

### THE ARGUMENT

Corinth (the inhabitants of which are called Corinthians) was an eminent city of Achaia, (that Achaia which is now called the Morea), and was situated on an isthmus, or neck of land, betwixt the Aegean and Ionian Seas; so was very convenient for merchandise, and by merchandise came to great riches, which gave them great temptations to luxury, drunkenness, whoredom, &c. They were very infamous for the latter, as we read in writers, and grown to that impudence, that they made the increase of harlots a part of their prayers to their idols, and made the bringing of harlots into the city a part of their vows. Lais was a harlot amongst them, very famous in civil history. And as pride usually attendeth wealth, so they also were a people very proud and puffed up. They were also anciently famous for pagan learning, and had amongst them Stoicks and Epicureans, who laughed at the resurrection of the body, and looked upon incest, adultery, and fornication, as very venial things, if at all unlawful. We read of Paul's first coming thither from Athens, Ac 18:1, where, Ac 16:11, he continued eighteen months; there he converted Crispus, 1Co 1:8, and Sosthenes, and many believed and were baptized. Paul went from thence to Ephesus, 1Co 16:18,19. To the church thus planted at Corinth Paul writeth this Epistle, at what time is not certain; but he is thought to have written it from Ephesus, whither he came, Ac 19:1, the second time, and, as appears from 1Co 1:10, was going and coming to and from that city between two and three years. The occasion of his writing this Epistle will appear to any who consideringly reads it. He had heard from some who were *of the house of Chloe*, 1Co 1:11, of factions and contentions that were amongst them, and had heard it reported that they suffered an incestuous person to abide in their communion, 1Co 5:1. They had also written to him for his resolution in several cases and questions about marriage, divorce, &c. He had also heard of several disorders amongst them relating to their communion in the Lord's supper, and of some amongst them who denied the resurrection. For the allaying of these heats, and quieting their divisions, and for the direction of them in those cases about which they wrote to him, and the setting them right in the doctrine of the resurrection, and directing them in the true and profitable use of their gifts, and in the right celebration of the Lord's supper, and the quickening the exercise of their charity, he writes this Epistle; which is supposed to be

placed in our Bibles next to the Epistle to the Romans, (though plainly written in order of time before), because that as that Epistle most fully discourseth the doctrine of justification, so this most fully resolves questions concerning church order and government. It is a book of holy writ concerning the Divine authority of which there was never any doubt, nor hath any portion of holy writ (for the quantity of it) a greater variety of matter, nor more of those *δοσνοητα*, *things hard to be understood*, which St. Peter (2Pe 3:16) tells us are in this apostle's Epistles; the difficulty of which much ariseth from our ignorance of some rites used in the primitive church, but long since disused, and the usages of that country different from ours.

### Chapter Summary

1Co 1:1-3 After saluting the church at Corinth,  
1Co 1:4-9 and thanking God for his grace toward them,  
1Co 1:10 Paul exhorteth them to unity,  
1Co 1:11-16 and reproveth their dissensions.  
1Co 1:17-25 The plain doctrine of the gospel, how foolish soever in the eyes of the world, is the power and wisdom of God to the salvation of believers.  
1Co 1:26-29 God, to take away human boasting, hath not called the wise, the mighty, the noble; but the foolish, the weak, the despised among men.  
1Co 1:30,31 Christ is our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

Ver. 1. *Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ:* our common custom is to subscribe our name to the bottom of our letters; it seems by the apostolical Epistles, that their fashion was otherwise: he elsewhere telleth us, that it was his *token in every epistle*, which makes some doubt, whether that to the Hebrews was wrote by him; but others think it is there concealed, for the particular spite the Jews had to him. He had the name of Saul as well as Paul, as we read, Ac 7:58 9:1: whether he had two names, (as many of the Jews had), or Saul was the name by which he was called before his conversion, and Paul his name after he was converted, or after he was made a citizen of Rome, (for Paul is a Roman name, nor do we read that after his conversion he was ever called by the name of Saul), is not worth our disputing. He was a man of Tarsus in Cilicia, by his nation a Jew, both by father and mother; an Hebrew of the Hebrews, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Pharisee, bred up at the feet of Gamaliel, one of their great doctors; he was, also citizen of Rome, as himself tells us, Ac 21:39 22:3,27 Php 3:5; by his trade a tent

maker, Ac 18:3; a great zealot for the Jewish ceremonies and law, and upon that score a great persecutor, consenting to the death of Stephen, and breathing out threatenings against Christians. Of his miraculous conversion we read, in Ac 9:1-43, as also of his being called to be an apostle, not one of those first sent out by Christ, but yet called: he gives king Agrippa a full account of his calling, Ac 26:12-19. *Through the will of God;* so as he was an apostle by the will of God, God's special revelation from heaven: he did not thrust himself into the employment, but was sent of God in an extraordinary manner; not only mediately, (as all ministers are), but by an immediate call and mission. *And Sosthenes our brother:* in the salutation prefixed to this Epistle, he joineth *Sosthenes*, whom he calls his brother. Of this Sosthenes we read, Ac 18:17; he was a *chief ruler of the synagogue*, but converted to Christianity; Paul disdaineth not to call him his *brother*.

## 1 Corinthians 1:2

Ver. 2. *Unto the church of God which is at Corinth;* unto those in Corinth who having received the doctrine of the gospel, and owned Jesus Christ as their Saviour, were united in one ecclesiastical body for the worship of God, and communion one with another. Corinth was a famous city in Achaia, (which Achaia was joined to Greece by a neck of land betwixt the Aegean and Ionian Seas), it grew the most famous mart of all Greece. Paul came thither from Athens, Ac 18:1.

*Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue there, believed,* upon Paul's preaching; so did *many Corinthians, and were baptized,* 1Co 1:9. He stayed there eighteen months, 1Co 1:11; there Sosthenes (mentioned 1Co 1:1) was converted; from thence Paul went to Ephesus, 1Co 1:19. These believers were those here called *the church of God at Corinth*, to whom he writes this Epistle (as it should seem from 1Co 16:8) from Ephesus, where Paul stayed three years, Ac 20:31. The members of this church the apostle calleth such as *are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints*: whether by the term the apostle meaneth only such as by the preaching of the gospel were separated from the heathens at Corinth, and professed faith in Christ, (as, Ac 15:9, the apostle saith the Gentiles' hearts were purified by faith), or such in Corinth as were really regenerated, and had their hearts renewed and changed, is not easy to determine: both of them are saints by calling; the former are called externally by the preaching of the gospel, the other internally and effectually by the operation of the Spirit of grace. It is most probable, that St. Paul intended this Epistle for the whole body of those that professed the Christian religion in Corinth, though in writing of it he had a more special respect to those who were truly sanctified in Christ by the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Nor doth Paul only respect those that lived in Corinth, but he directs his Epistle to all those



who in any place of Achaia called *upon the name of Jesus Christ*, whom he calleth their Lord, and our Lord: which is an eminent place to prove the Divine nature of Christ; he is not only called *our Lord*, our common Lord, but he is made the object of invocation and Divine worship: and it teacheth us, that none but such as call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, are fit matter for a gospel church; which both excludes such as deny the Godhead of Christ, and such as live without God in the world, without performance of religious homage to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, and owning him as their Lord.

### 1 Corinthians 1:3

Ver. 3. This is the common salutation in all Paul's Epistles, only in one or two *mercy* is also added.

*Grace* signifies free love.

*Peace* signifies either a reconciliation with God, or brotherly love and unity each with other: See Poole on "Ro 1:7". The apostle wisheth them spiritual blessings, and the greatest spiritual blessings, *grace and peace*, and that not from and with men, but *from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ*.

### 1 Corinthians 1:4

Ver. 4. Lest his former salutation should be misapprehended by them, as signifying that he thought they were without grace, he here clearth his meaning by blessing God for that grace which they had received: but no man hath so much grace, but he is still capable of more, and stands in need of further influences; therefore, as he here blesseth God for the grace of God, which they by Jesus Christ received; so he before prayed for *grace and peace* for them, *from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ*. Christ is both the Author and Finisher of our faith, he giveth both to will and to do. The beginnings, increases, and finishings of grace are all from him. Grace is indeed from God the Father, but by Jesus Christ; it floweth from him who is Love, but it is through his Well-beloved. No man hath the love of God, but by and through Jesus Christ.

### 1 Corinthians 1:5

Ver. 5. *In every thing*; in every grace and in every good gift, (for he is manifestly speaking of spiritual things), so as this general particle must not be extended to the things of this life, but restrained either to spiritual gifts, or spiritual, sanctifying

habits. Thus we read of *the riches of grace*, Eph 1:7, and of *the riches of Christ*, Eph 3:8: nor is the metaphor improper, whether we consider *riches* as signifying plenty or abundance, or that which accommodateth a man in this life, and is fitted to men's wants, to give them a supply.

*In all utterance*; the word may be translated, in everything, or, in all speech; but the first having been said before, it seems more proper here to translate it, in all word or speech, or *in all utterance*, as we translate it. If it be taken in the first sense, the gospel is by it understood, the doctrine of the gospel preached amongst them by Paul and Apollos, who *preached among the Gentiles the riches of Christ*, Eph 3:8. If we interpret it *utterance*, which our translators prefer, it signifies an ability to utter that knowledge which God hath given us, to the glory of God and the good of others, either in prayer or spiritual discourses.

*And in all knowledge*: some by *knowledge* here understand the gift of prophecy; but it more properly signifies the ability God had given them to comprehend in their understanding the mysteries of the gospel, the great and deep things of God. The apostle blesseth God both for the illumination of their minds by the ministry of the gospel, so as they knew the things of God, and also for the ability which God had given them to communicate this their knowledge to others.

### 1 Corinthians 1:6

Ver. 6. By which *knowledge* and *utterance the testimony of Christ*, that is, the gospel, which containeth both the testimony which Christ had given of himself, and which the apostles had given concerning Christ; (the gospel is called *the testimony of God*, Ro 2:1; 2Ti 1:8;) others understand the gifts of, the Spirit (for the Spirit is one of the witnesses upon earth, 1Jo 5:8); *was confirmed in you*; by the miraculous operations wrought by the apostles, as some think; but the way of confirmation here spoken of by the apostle seemeth rather to be understood of their *knowledge* and *utterance*. The gospel, and the doctrine of it, and the mission of the Holy Spirit, were confirmed to them and to the world by the knowledge which God had given the apostles, and these Corinthians, of the great things of God; and their ability to communicate this knowledge unto others, for the honour of God, and the good of others.

### 1 Corinthians 1:7

Ver. 7. Not that every one of them was filled with all the gifts of the blessed Spirit; but one excelled in one gift, another excelled in another, as the apostle expounds himself, 1Co 12:7,8; neither doth the apostle assert them perfect in their

gifts, but saith that they came behind-hand, or were defective, in no gift; but were all *waiting for the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ* to judgment, of which he mindeth them, to encourage them to go on as they had began.

### 1 Corinthians 1:8

Ver. 8. Which *Lord Jesus Christ*, ( mentioned immediately before), or which *God who is faithful*, ( mentioned immediately after, 1Co 1:9), *shall confirm* your habits of grace *unto the end*, approving himself the finisher of your faith, (you being not wanting in your duty and endeavour): so as either you shall not fall, or at least not totally and finally, but so as you shall rise again, and appear in the day of our Lord Jesus without blame, so as he will accept you as if you had never sinned against him.

### 1 Corinthians 1:9

Ver. 9. *God is faithful*: faithfulness is the same with veracity or truth to a man's word, which renders a person fit to be credited. It is a great attribute of God, 1Co 10:13 1Th 5:24. This implieth promises of God for the perseverance of believers, of which there are many to be found in holy writ. But these promises concern not all, but such only whom God hath chosen out of the world, calling them to a communion with Christ, which necessarily supposeth union with him. So as here is another argument to confirm them that God would keep them to the end, so as they should be blameless in the day of Christ; because God had called them into that state of grace wherein they were, and would not leave his work in them imperfect; he had called them *unto the fellowship of Jesus Christ*; see 1Jo 1:3; into a state of friendship with Christ, and into a state of union with him, into such a state as he would daily by his Spirit be communicating the blessed influences of his grace unto them.

### 1 Corinthians 1:10

Ver. 10. *By the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*, is as much as, by Christ, by the authority of Christ, for this is his will; or, by the love which you bear to the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath so often recommended to you peace with, and brotherly love towards, one another.

*That ye all speak the same thing*; that in matters of doctrine you all *speak the same thing* (for it is capable of no other sense); and that you neither be divided in sentiments or opinions, nor yet in affection, *that there may be no divisions among*

*you*; which is also further evidenced by the last phrase, being *joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment*. A union in affection is the necessary and indispensable duty of all those that are the disciples of Christ, and such a duty as not only concerns Christians of the same nation, with relation one to another, but also Christians of all nations, and may be attained, if by our lusts we do not hinder it. A union in opinion, as to the fundamental truths of religion, is (though not so easy, yet) what the church of God hath in a great measure arrived at. But for a union in every particular proposition of truth, is not a thing to be expected, though we all are to labour for it: God hath neither given unto all the same means, nor the same natural capacities.

### 1 Corinthians 1:11

Ver. 11. The apostle cometh to show one reason, as why he wrote to them, so also why in the preceding verse he so zealously pressed unity upon them, because of an information he had received from some of the family of Chloe; for it is far more probable that Chloe was the name of a person, head of a family in Corinth, than of a city or town.

*There are contentions among you:* what their divisions were about, the next verses will tell us.

### 1 Corinthians 1:12

Ver. 12. *Every one* here signifieth no more than many of you, or several of you; so 1Co 14:26: from whence, those that think they have such a mighty argument from Heb 2:9, where is the same particle to prove Christ's dying for all individuals, may undeceive themselves, and find that they have need of better arguments to prove their assertion.

*I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ:* we may from hence observe, that the divisions amongst the Corinthians were not in matters of faith, but occasioned from their having men's persons in admiration. This was probably caused either from God's making of *Paul* the instrument of some of their conversion, *Apollos* the instrument of others' conversion, and *Peter* the instrument of others', or else from the difference of their gifts. Of this Apollos we read, Ac 18:24; he was a *Jew of Alexandria*, who (as may be seen there, 1Co 1:28) *mightily convinced them, and that publicly*, and probably was as useful to the Corinthians. One minister of Christ may be justly preferred to another. We ought to honour those most whom God most honoureth, either by a more plentiful giving out of his Spirit, or by a more plentiful success upon their labours; but we ought

not so far to appropriate any ministers to ourselves, as for them to despise others. We are not bound to make every minister our pastor, but we are bound to have a just respect for every minister, who by his doctrine and holy life answereth his profession and holy calling.

### 1 Corinthians 1:13

Ver. 13. How came these parties? There is but one Christ, but one that was crucified for you, but one into whose name, into a faith in whom, and a profession of whom, you were baptized. Peter baptized you into the name of Christ, so did I; I did not list those whom I baptized under any banner of my own, but under Christ's banner. The Head is but one, and the body ought not to be divided.

### 1 Corinthians 1:14

Ver. 14. Concerning the apostle's baptizing Crispus we read, Ac 18:8; he was *the chief ruler of the synagogue* of the Jews: why Paul thanks God that he baptized not many, he tells us, 1Co 1:15.

### 1 Corinthians 1:15

Ver. 15. Because by that providence of God it so fell out, that very few of them could pretend any such thing, as that he had baptized any in his own name.

### 1 Corinthians 1:16

Ver. 16. He correcteth himself, remembering that he also *baptized the household of Stephanas*, which (1Co 16:15) he calleth *the first-fruits of Achaia*, a family that had *addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints*. Besides, I know not whether I baptized any other; he did not remember that he had baptized any more at Corinth, though it is very probable he had baptized many more in other parts of the world, where he had been travelling.

### 1 Corinthians 1:17

Ver. 17. *For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel*; baptism was not his principal work, not the main business for which Paul was sent; it was his work, otherwise he would not have baptized Crispus, or Gaius, or the household

of Stephanas, but preaching was his principal work. It is very probable others (besides the apostles) baptized. It is hard to conceive how three thousand should in a day be added to the church, if Peter had baptized them all, Ac 2:41. The apostle goes on, telling us how he preached the gospel, and thereby instructing all faithful ministers how they ought to preach.

*Not with wisdom of words, or speech. Wisdom of words* must signify either what we call rhetoric, or logic, delivering the mysteries of the gospel in lofty, tunable expressions, or going about to evidence them from rational demonstrations and arguments. This was the way (he saith) to have taken away all authority from the doctrine of the cross of Christ: Divine faith being nothing else but the soul's assent to the Divine revelation because it is such, is not furthered, but hindered, by the arguing the object of it from the principles of reason, and the colouring of it with high-flown words and trim phrases. There is a decent expression to be used in the communicating the will of God unto men; but we must take heed that we do not diminish the authority of God's revealed will, either by puerile flourishings of words, or philosophical argumentation.

### 1 Corinthians 1:18

Ver. 18. *For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness:* I know (saith the apostle) that plain discourses about a Christ crucified are to some persons foolish things, and accounted canting; but to whom are they so? To those who, if they be not some that shall perish eternally, yet are some of those who at present are in a perishing estate; these indeed count sermons of Christ silly, foolish things.

*But unto us which are saved it is the power of God;* but to those who shall be eternally saved, and are at present in the true road to eternal life and salvation, it is, that is, the preaching of the gospel is, that institution of God by which he showeth his power in the salvation of those who shall be saved. The apostle saith the same, Ro 1:16.

### 1 Corinthians 1:19

Ver. 19. What Isaiah said of the wise men among the Jews in his time, is applicable to the wise men among the heathen, God will destroy their wisdom, and make their understanding appear to be no better than foolishness. So as it is not at all to be admired, if the philosophers of this world count the gospel, and the preaching of it, foolishness; the taking away the wisdom and understanding of men worldly wise, is but an ordinary dispensation of God's providence, no more

than God threatened to do in Isaiah's time to the men of that generation.

### 1 Corinthians 1:20

Ver. 20. *Where is the wise? where is the scribe?* He alludeth again to that, Isa 33:18: *Where is the scribe? where is the receiver?* Where are the wise men amongst the heathens? Where are the scribes, the learned men in the law, amongst the Jews?

*Where is the disputer of this world?* Where are those amongst Jews or Gentiles that are the great inquirers into the reasons and natures of things, and manage debates and disputes about them? They understand nothing of the mysteries of the gospel, or the way of salvation, which God holds out to the world in and through Jesus Christ. Or, where are they? What have they done by all their philosophy and moral doctrine, as to the turning of men from sin unto God, from ways of iniquity unto ways of righteousness, in comparison of what we, the ministers of Christ, have done by preaching the doctrine of the gospel, and the cross of Christ?

*Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?* Do not you see how God hath fooled the wisdom of the world? Making it to appear vain and contemptible, and of no use, as to the saving of men's souls; making choice of none of their doctors and great rabbis, to carry that doctrine abroad in the world; and convincing men that, without faith in Christ, all that can be learned from them will be of no avail to the soul.

### 1 Corinthians 1:21

Ver. 21. *For after that in the wisdom of God:* some here, by *the wisdom of God*, understand Jesus Christ, and make the sense thus: When he who is the Wisdom of God came and preached to the world. Others understand the gospel, which is so called, 1Co 1:24, and 1Co 2:7. But I take *the wisdom of God* in this text to signify the wise administrations of Divine Providence in the government of the world to his wise ends.

*The world by wisdom knew not God;* the unregenerate part of the world would not come to a knowledge of and an acquaintance with God, in that way whereby he chose to reveal himself in and through Jesus Christ, as to which they were hindered by their own reasonings and knowledge, and apprehended skill in things, and capacity to comprehend them.

*It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe;* it

pleased God to institute the great ordinance of preaching the gospel, which they count *foolishness*, as the sacred means by which he would bring all those that give credit to the revelation of it, and receive Christ held forth in it, to eternal life and salvation.

### 1 Corinthians 1:22

Ver. 22. *The Jews* were not without some true Divine revelation, and owned the true God, and only desired some miraculous operation from Christ, Mt 12:38 Joh 4:48, to confirm them that Christ was sent from God: without signs and wonders they would not believe; giving no credit at all to the words of Christ. And *the Greeks*, (by whom the apostle understands the Gentiles), especially the more learned part of them, (for Greece was at this time very famous for human literature), they sought after the demonstration of all things from natural causes and rational arguments, and despised every thing which could not so be made out unto them.

### 1 Corinthians 1:23

Ver. 23. *But we preach Christ crucified*; we that are the ministers of Christ, come and preach to them, that there was one hanged upon a cross at Jerusalem, who is the Saviour of the world, and was not cut off for his own sins, but for the sins of his people.

*Unto the Jews a stumblingblock*; the Jews are stumbled at this, looking for a Messiah that should be a great temporal Prince; and besides, accounting it an ignominious thing to believe in one as their Saviour whom they had caused to be crucified.

*And unto the Greeks foolishness*; and the Greeks, the most learned among the Gentiles, look upon it as a foolish, idle story, that one who was and is God blessed for ever, should be crucified.

### 1 Corinthians 1:24

Ver. 24. Blessed be God, Christ is not to all the Jews a stumblingblock, nor to all the Greeks is he foolishness; for to so many of them as *are called*, (not by the external call of the gospel, but only by the internal call and effectual operation of the Spirit), let them be of one nation or another, by their country, Jews or pagans, Christ is so far from being foolishness, that Christ, and the doctrine of the gospel,



appear to them *the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*

### 1 Corinthians 1:25

Ver. 25. *The foolishness of God is wiser than men;* the least things that are the products of the wisdom of God, or the contrivance of God for man's salvation, which the sinful and silly world calls *foolishness*, are infinitely more wise, and have more wisdom in them, than the wisest imaginations, counsels, and contrivances of men.

*And the weakness of God is stronger than men;* and those things and means which God hath instituted in order to an end, have in them more virtue, power, and efficacy in order to the production of God's intended effects, than any such means as appear to men's eyes of reason to have the greatest strength, virtue, and efficacy. Whence we may observe, that the efficacy of preaching for the changing and converging souls, dependeth upon the efficacy of God working in and by that holy institution, which usually attendeth the ministry of those who are not only called and sent out by men, but by God, being fitted for their work, and faithfully discharging of it.

### 1 Corinthians 1:26

Ver. 26. To prove that this is the method of Divine Providence, to make use of seemingly infirm and weak means to produce his great effects, you need not look further than yourselves; look upon the whole body of your church at Corinth, it is not made up of many that have a reputation for the wise men or the noble men of your city. Some indeed were such; Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, was converted, and Sosthenes; but the generality were men of very ordinary repute.

### 1 Corinthians 1:27

Ver. 27. God hath even amongst you chosen persons that are in the account of the world as foolish things, to put the wise to shame; and persons of weak esteem, to confound those that are mighty in the repute of the world.

### 1 Corinthians 1:28

Ver. 28. *Things which are not in the world's account, to bring to nought things which are in high esteem.*

## 1 Corinthians 1:29

Ver. 29. And God doth this in infinite wisdom, consulting his own honour and glory, that none might say, that God hath chosen them because they were nobler born, or in higher repute and esteem in the world, than others, but that the freeness of Divine grace might be seen in all God's acts of grace.

## 1 Corinthians 1:30

Ver. 30. *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus;* of his grace ye are implanted into Christ, and believe in him. You are *of him*, not by creation only, as all creatures are, but by redemption and regeneration, which is *in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom;* the principal means by which we come to the knowledge of God, and an acquaintance with his will; for he *is the image of the invisible God, Col 1:15. The brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, Heb 1:3. God hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, 2Co 4:6.* So that he who hath seen him, hath seen the Father, Joh 14:9. *All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in him, Col 2:3.* And no man knoweth the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him, Mt 11:27. Thus, though God destroyed the wisdom of the wise, yet the Corinthians were not without wisdom; for God had made Christ to them *wisdom*, both causally, being the author of wisdom to them; and objectively, their wisdom lay in their knowledge of him, and in a fellowship and communion with him. And whereas they wanted a righteousness in which they might stand before God justified and accepted, God had also made Christ to them *righteousness: Sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, Ro 8:3,4.*

*And sanctification* also, believers being renewed and sanctified by his Spirit.

*And he is also made redemption:* where by *redemption* is meant *the redemption of the body*, mentioned Ro 8:23; so as *redemption* here signifies the same with resurrection of the body. Christ is *the resurrection, and the life, Joh 11:25.*

## 1 Corinthians 1:31

Ver. 31. God doth this, or hath done this, for this end, that man should have nothing to glory in, neither wisdom, nor righteousness, nor sanctification, nor

redemption, but should *glory in the Lord*; acknowledging that whatsoever wisdom, righteousness, or holiness he hath, it is all from God, in and through the Lord Jesus Christ.

## 1 Corinthians 2:1

### Chapter Summary

1Co 2:1-5 Paul declareth that he used not human learning and eloquence in preaching the gospel to his converts, that their faith, being built on the testimony of the Spirit, and on miracles, might be solely ascribed to God.

1Co 2:6-13 The gospel doth contain God's wise, but secret, counsel for bringing men to glory; which no natural abilities could discover, but the Spirit of God only, by which it was revealed to the apostles.

1Co 2:14-16 Upon this account, both the doctrine and its teachers are held in disesteem by the mere natural man, who is not duly qualified to judge of and discern them.

Ver. 1. It should seem by the apostle's so often declaring against that vanity, that even that age much admired a style, and ministers in sacred things delivering their minds, not in a mere decent, but in a lofty, high-flown phrase; and that they vilified St. Paul, because his phrase did not so tickle their ears. The apostle had declared against this, 1Co 1:17; there he called it the *wisdom of words*; here he calls it an *excellency of speech*: 1Co 1:4, the *enticing words of man's wisdom*: 1Co 4:19, the *speech of them which are puffed up*; puffed up with conceits of their own parts and abilities. St. Paul declares, that this was not his way of preaching, he came to declare to them the gospel, which he calleth *the testimony of God*: this needed no fine words, and excellent phrase and language, to set it forth.

## 1 Corinthians 2:2

Ver. 2. I did not value myself upon any piece of knowledge I had attained, saving only that of *Christ, and him crucified*; or, I determined with myself

to carry myself amongst you, as if I knew nothing of arts, or sciences, or languages, but only *Christ, and him crucified*; not to make any thing else the subject of my public discourses. I was acquainted with the Jewish law, rites, and traditions, with the heathen poets and philosophers; I troubled you with none of these in my pulpit discourses; my whole business was to open to you the mysteries of the gospel, and to bring you to a knowledge of and an acquaintance with Jesus Christ; this was my end, and the means I used were proportionable to it.

### 1 Corinthians 2:3

Ver. 3. Either in a weakness of style, I used a plain, low, intelligible style, studying rather to be understood by all than admired by any. Or in weakness of state, in a mean and low condition; for we read, Ac 18:3, that he wrought with his hands at Corinth; so Ac 20:34. Or it may be, in a weak state of body; or it may be he means humbleness of mind and modesty, which to worldly eyes looks like a weakness of mind. And in much fear and trembling, either with respect to the Jews, and the danger he was exposed to from them, or with respect to the greatness of his work, lest they should refuse the grace of the gospel, by him brought and offered to them. So as (saith he) you might see that all the work was God's, I but a poor instrument, contemptible with respect to my outward quality, appearing poor and mean, in my phrase and style, and whole behaviour amongst you.

### 1 Corinthians 2:4

Ver. 4. Either here Paul's *speech and preaching* signify the same thing, (expressed by two words), or else *speech* referreth to his more private conferences and discourses with them, and *preaching* signifieth the more public acts of his ministry; neither of them was *with* the persuasive or *enticing words of man's wisdom*. What these persuasive words of man's wisdom are, will quickly appear to any that considers there are but two human arts that pretend to any thing of persuading; rhetoric, and logic, or the art of reasoning. Rhetoric persuadeth more weakly, working more upon the affections than upon the understanding and judgment. Logic, or the art of reasoning, more strongly, working upon the understanding and

judgment, and teaching men to conclude from connate natural principles. Now, saith Paul, my preaching was neither of these ways, I neither studied neat and fine words and phrases, nor did I make it my work to demonstrate gospel propositions to you from principles of natural reason.

*Object.* Ought not then ministers now to use such words?

*Answer.* A learned popish writer saith, that "at that time it was the will of God that his ministers should use plain speech; but it is otherwise now; the using of words studiously composed and ordered, being now the ordinary way to persuade others." But:

1. After this rate any thing of the will of God may be evaded; it is but saying, that it was the will of God indeed then, but not now.
2. The thing is false. It was then, as much as now, the ordinary way of persuading to use rhetorical phrases and rational demonstrations.
3. Although now this be the ordinary method of persuading men of learning and capacities, yet for the generality of people it is not so.
4. The apostle's reason holds now as much as ever. It is the way to make Christians' faith stand *in the wisdom of men*, not *in the power of God*.

*Object.* Ought then ministers to use no study, but talk whatever comes at their tongue's end, and to use no reason to prove what they say?

*Answer.* By no means.

1. It is one thing to study matter, another thing to study words.
2. Nay, it is one thing to study a decency in words, another to study a gaudery of phrase. It is an old and true saying, *Verba sequuntur res*: Words will follow matter, if the preacher be but of ordinary parts. In the study of words we have but two things to attend:
  - (1) That we speak intelligibly, so as all the people may understand.
  - (2) That we speak gravely and decently. All other study of words and phrases in a divine is but folly and vanity.

3. We ought to use our reason in our preaching; but reason works two ways:

(1) Either making conclusions from natural and philosophical principles;

(2) Or, from Scriptural principles. We ought to study to conclude as strongly as we can what we say from principles of revelation, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, but not from all natural and philosophical principles; for so we shall conclude, there is no Trinity in the Unity of the Divine Being, because, according to natural principles, three cannot be one, nor one three; and against the resurrection, because there can be no regress from a privation to a habit, &c.

4. Again, it is one thing to use our natural reason, *ex abundantia*, as an auxiliary help to illustrate and confirm what is first confirmed by Divine revelation; another thing to use it as a foundation upon which we build a spiritual conclusion, or as the main proof of it. Paul's preaching was in words intelligible to his hearers, and decent enough, and with reason enough, but not concluding upon natural principles, nor making any proofs of that nature the foundation upon which he built his gospel conclusions.

*But in demonstration of the Spirit;* by which Grotius and some others understand miracles, by which the doctrine of the gospel was at first confirmed; but Vorstius and many others better understand by it the Holy Ghost's powerful and inward persuasion of men's minds, of the truth of what was preached by Paul. All ministers' preaching makes propositions of gospel truth appear no more than probable; the Spirit only demonstrates them, working in souls such a persuasion and confirmation of the truth of them, as the soul can no longer deny or dispute, or withstand the conviction of them.

*And of power:* by this term also some understand the power of working miracles; but it is much better by others interpreted of that authority, which the word of God preached by Paul had, and preached by faithful ministers still hath, upon the souls and consciences of those that hear it. As it is said, Mt 7:29, *Christ taught them as one having authority*. And it is said of Stephen, Ac 6:10, *They were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake*. So the gospel preached by Paul came to people, *not in*

*word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, 1Th 1:5: and was quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, Heb 4:12. Ver. 4. And thus every faithful minister, with whose labours God goeth along in the conversion of souls, yet preacheth *in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power*. Nor indeed call those miracles, by which Christ and his apostles confirmed the truth of the doctrine of the gospel, though they were a mighty proof, be, in any propriety of speech, called a *demonstration*; which, properly, is a proof in which the mind fully acquiesceth, so that it no longer denieth or disputeth the thing so proved, but gives a firm and full assent to it: the miracles wrought by Christ himself never had that effect; the Pharisees and the generality of the Jews believed not that Christ was the true Messiah and the Son of God, notwithstanding his miracles. Nothing but the inward powerful impression of the Spirit of God, persuading the heart of the truth of gospel principles, can possibly amount to a *demonstration*, bringing the minds of men, though never so judicious and prepared, to a certainty of the thing revealed, and a rest, so as they can no longer deny, resist, dispute, or contradict it. With this Paul's preaching was attended, not to every individual person to whom he preached, but to many, even as many as should be saved: he delivered the doctrine of the gospel freely, plainly, and boldly, not resting upon the force of his rhetoric and persuasive words, nor yet upon the natural force of his reasoning and argumentation; but leaving the demonstration and evidencing of the truth of what he said to the powerful internal impression and persuasion of the holy and blessed Spirit of God, who worketh powerfully.*

### 1 Corinthians 2:5

Ver. 5. *Faith* properly signifieth our assent to a thing that is told us, and because it is told us. If the revelation be from man, it is no more than a human faith. If it be from God, and we believe the thing because God hath revealed it to us, this is a Divine faith. So as indeed it is impossible that a Divine faith should rest in the wisdom of men. If we could make gospel propositions evident to the outward senses, or evident to such principles of reason as are connatural to us, or upon such conclusions as we make upon such principles, yet no assent of this nature could be faith, which is an

assent given to a Divine revelation purely because of such revelation. An assent other ways given may be sensible demonstration, or rational demonstration, or knowledge, or opinion; but Divine faith it cannot be, that must be bottomed in the power of God. Nor ought any thing more to be the care of the ministers of the gospel than this, as to call men to believe, so to endeavour that their faith may *not stand in the wisdom of men*: nothing but a human faith can do so. This will show every conscientious minister the vanity of not proving what he saith from holy writ: all other preaching is but either dictating, as if men were to believe what the preacher saith upon his authority; or philosophizing, acting the part of a philosopher or orator at Athens, not the part of a minister of the gospel.

### 1 Corinthians 2:6

Ver. 6. Lest what the apostle had seemed to speak before in defamation of wisdom, should reflect upon the gospel, and give some people occasion to justify against it their impious charge of folly, the apostle here something corrects himself, affirming that he and the rest of the apostles spake *wisdom*, and what would be so judged by such as were *perfect*; not absolutely, for so there is no man perfect, but comparatively, that is, persons who *have their senses exercised to discern betwixt good and evil*, Heb 5:14, or such as are of a true, sound judgment, and are able to discern what is true wisdom. To such, saith the apostle, *we speak wisdom*; and it needs must be so; for wisdom being a habit directing men to use the best means in order to the best end, the salvation of men's souls being the best end, that doctrine which directs the best means in order to it, must necessarily be wisdom, and the purest and highest wisdom.

*Yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought*; but, saith he, not what the philosophers, or cunning men, or politicians of the world count wisdom; for all their wisdom is of no significancy at all, in order to the best end, the salvation of men's souls, and it will all vanish, and come to nothing at last.

### 1 Corinthians 2:7

Ver. 7. *But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery*; we preach the



gospel, where the righteousness in which alone men can another day appear, and be accepted before God, is revealed from faith to faith. It is indeed a sacred secret, a mystery to many men, but it is *the wisdom of God*, a doctrine directing the best means to the best end of man.

*Even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: it is hidden wisdom: it was ordained of God before the world unto our glory, the way of salvation for man, which he had from all eternity ordained and decreed; but it lay hidden in the secret counsels of God till the latter ages of the world, when it pleased God to send forth his Son into the world to publish it, and after him to appoint us to be the preachers and publishers of it.*

### 1 Corinthians 2:8

Ver. 8. *Which none of the princes of this world knew; which Divine wisdom neither Caiaphas, nor Pontius Pilate, nor any considerable number of the rulers of this age, whether amongst the Jews or amongst the heathens, understood, though they heard of it.*

*For had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; for if they had so known it, as to have believed and been persuaded of it, they would never have nailed to the cross that person, who was the Head and Fountain of it, and the Lord of glory; both with respect to his Divine nature, as to which he was God blessed for ever, and also as Mediator, being the Author of glory to those who believe. Nor would this ignorance at all excuse their crucifying of Christ, because it was not invincible, they had means sufficient by which they might have come to the knowledge of him, and have understood what he was; so as their ignorance was affected and voluntary.*

### 1 Corinthians 2:9

Ver. 9. The place where this is written is by all agreed to be Isa 64:4, where the words are, *For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.* It is so usual

with the penmen of holy writ to quote the sense of texts in the Old Testament, not tying themselves to letters and syllables, that it is mightily vain for any to object against this quotation, as no where written in the Old Testament, but taken out of some apocryphal writings. The sense of what is written, Isa 64:4, is plainly the same with what he speaketh in this place; the greatest difference is, the apostle saith, *them that love him*; the prophet, *him that waiteth for him* (which is the certain product and effect of love). The whole 64th chapter of Isaiah (Isa 64:1-12), and some chapters following, treat concerning Christ; so doth this text. Christ and his benefits are to be understood here, by *the things which God hath prepared for them that love him*; which are set out as things not obvious to sense, nor to be comprehended by reason. It could never have entered into the heart of men to conceive, that God should give his only begotten Son out of his own bosom, to take upon him our nature, and to die upon the cross; or, that Christ should so far humble himself, and become obedient unto death.

### 1 Corinthians 2:10

Ver. 10. *God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit*; God by his Spirit hath opened our understandings to understand the Holy Scriptures, the types and prophecies of Christ, and what the holy prophets have spoken of him both as to his person and offices.

*For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God*; for the Holy Spirit being the third person in the blessed Trinity, and so equal with the Father and the Son, *searcheth the deep things of God*, and so is able to reveal to us all the counsels of God, whatsoever God would have men to understand concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. So as this text is an evident proof of the Deity of the Holy Spirit, he searching the deep things of God, and being alone able to reveal them unto men, so as they shall acknowledge, comprehend, and believe them.

### 1 Corinthians 2:11

Ver. 11. Look, as it is with a man, no man knoweth his secret thoughts, and counsels, and meanings, save only his own soul that is within him; so

it is as to the things of God, until God by his Spirit hath revealed them to men, none knoweth them but the Holy Spirit of God. It is true as it is with man; when he hath by his tongue discovered his mind to others, they know it so far as he hath so delivered it; but there is no man that discovereth all his thoughts and counsels: so God having in his word revealed his will so far as he hath plainly revealed it men may know it; but there are *deep things of God*, mysteries in Scripture, which, till the Spirit of God hath revealed to men, they know not nor understand; for none knoweth them originally, *but the Spirit of God*, who is himself God, and *searcheth the deep things of God*.

### 1 Corinthians 2:12

Ver. 12. By *the spirit of the world* some understand the devil, that evil spirit which is in the world, and ruleth those that are worldly, carnal men: others understand a mere human spirit, by which men understand and comprehend mere worldly things. The sense certainly is, we have not a mere worldly instruction and tutoring, we are not taught and instructed from the world; (so *the spirit* is put for the effects of the spirit of the world); but we are taught and instructed by the Holy Spirit, by which we are taught and *know the things that are freely given to us of God*, whether they be Divine mysteries, or Divine benefits, both what God hath done for us, and what God hath wrought in us.

### 1 Corinthians 2:13

Ver. 13. Reason and all practice directeth men to speak and write of subjects in a style and phrase fitted to the matter about which they write or discourse. Our subjects, saith the apostle, were sublime, spiritual subjects; therefore I did not discourse them like an orator, with an *excellency of speech or of wisdom*, ( as 1Co 2:1), or with the *enticing* or persuasive *words of man's wisdom*, ( as he had said, 1Co 2:4), nor with *words which man's wisdom teacheth*, (which is his phrase here), but with words which the Holy Ghost hath taught us, either in holy writ, or by its impressions upon our minds, where they are first formed.

*Comparing spiritual things with spiritual;* fitting spiritual things to

spiritual persons who are able to understand them, or fitting spiritual language to spiritual matter, speaking the oracles of God *as the oracles of God*, 1Pe 4:11; not declaiming like an orator, nor arguing philosophically like an Athenian philosopher, but using a familiar, plain, spiritual style, giving you the naked truths of God without any paint or gaudery of phrase.

### 1 Corinthians 2:14

Ver. 14. There are great disputes here, who is meant by *the natural man*, ψυχικός άνθρωπος. Some think that by *the natural man* here is meant the carnal man: thus, 1Co 15:44, the *natural body* is opposed to the *spiritual body*; besides, they say, that in the constant phrase of holy writ, man, who is made up of flesh and spirit, as his essential parts, hath constantly his denomination from one of them, and all men in the world are either carnal or spiritual, and that the Greek word ψυχή signifies that soul and life which is common to all men, from whence all common motions and affections are, and is opposed to the Holy Spirit, which dwells in the souls of them that are sanctified, by which they are led and guided, &c. Thus, say they, the natural man is one who is a servant to his lusts and corruption, under the perfect government of his soul considered merely as natural, all whose motions in that estate of sin and corruption are inordinate. Others think that the apostle here speaks of such as are weak in the faith, little ones, babes in Christ, who had need of milk, not of strong meat, and are natural men in comparison of those more spiritual and perfect. In this sense indeed the apostle, 1Co 3:4, calleth them *carnal*. But there is nothing more plain, than that the apostle, under the notion of ψυχικός άνθρωπος (which we translate *natural man*) here, understands all such as were not perfect and spiritual, such to whom God hath not by his Spirit revealed the deep things of God, 1Co 2:10; such as had only received *the spirit of the world*, not *the spirit of God*, by which alone men come to *know the things that are freely given them of God*, as 1Co 2:12.

*Receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God:* all these, though some of them are much better than others, having their minds more cultivated and adorned with worldly knowledge and wisdom, yet do not in their hearts (though they may with their ears) receive, that is, believe, embrace, and close with or approve of, spiritual and Divine mysteries, such doctrines as are purely matters of faith, standing upon a Divine revelation.

*For they are foolishness unto him; for men of wit and reason count them all foolishness, being neither demonstrable by sense or natural reason.*

*Neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned; neither can any man, no otherwise taught and instructed, so comprehend them, as to give a firm and fixed assent to them, or in heart approve them, because they are only to be seen and discerned in a spiritual light, the Holy Spirit of God, which is *the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ*, enlightening their understandings, that they may *know the hope of his calling, and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to them that believe, according to the working of his mighty power, &c., Eph 1:17-19.* Thus the apostle gives a reason of what he had said, 1Co 2:8, that *none of the princes of the world knew the wisdom of God.**

### 1 Corinthians 2:15

Ver. 15. *He that is spiritual*, in this verse, is opposed to *the natural man*, in the former verse, πνευματικός to ψυχικός. So that by *spiritual* here is understood, he that is taught by the Spirit of God, and is by him specially and savingly enlightened.

*Judgeth* or discerneth *all things*, that is, of this nature, the mysteries of God, which concern man's eternal life and salvation; not that every good Christian hath any such perfect judgment or power of discerning, but according to the measure of illumination which he hath received.

*Yet he himself is judged of no man;* it may as well be translated, of nothing; and the term *judged* might as well have been translated *examined*, or *searched*, as it is in Ac 4:9 12:19 17:11 24:8; or condemned. The wisdom that is of God is not to be subjected to the wisdom of men, nor to be judged of any man, but only the spiritual man. The truth, which the spiritual man owneth and professeth, dependeth only upon God and his word, and is not subjected to the authority and judgment of men, nor the dictates of human reason: so as the spiritual man, so far forth as he is spiritual, is neither judged by any man nor by any thing. There are some that by *he himself* understand the Spirit of God; he indeed *is judged of no*

*man*, nor of any thing; but that seemeth a much more strained sense.

### 1 Corinthians 2:16

Ver. 16. *For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him?* This phrase is taken out of Isa 40:13, and was quoted by our apostle before, Ro 11:34: the sense of it, as here used, is: For what natural man, that never was taught and enlightened by the Spirit of God, could ever know the secret counsels of God, and the Divine mysteries of man's salvation? Nor can any instruct him what to do. It is by some observed, that συμβιβασει signifies, by arguments to bring one over to be of his mind, which indeed is a kind of instruction.

*But* (saith the apostle) *we*, who have the Spirit of God given to us, dwelling and working in us, and instructing us, we *have the mind of Christ*; for the Spirit of Christ, which is our teacher, knoweth his mind, and hath revealed it unto us.

### 1 Corinthians 3:1

#### Chapter Summary

1Co 3:1,2 Paul showeth that he could not instruct the Corinthians in the higher doctrines of Christianity because of their carnal mind,

1Co 3:3,4 which temper discovered itself in their factions.

1Co 3:5-9 The most eminent preachers of the gospel are but instruments employed by God in building his church.

1Co 3:10-15 Paul hath laid the only true foundation, Christ Jesus; and others must take heed what they build thereon.

1Co 3:16,17 Christians are God's temple, not to be defiled.

1Co 3:18-20 Worldly wisdom is foolishness with God.

1Co 3:21-23 They that are Christ's must not glory in men.

Ver. 1. The apostle plainly returneth in this chapter to reprove them for their divisions and factions, for which he had begun to reprove them, 1Co 1:11; and (as some think) here he anticipateth an objection, which they might have made against him, against his reprovng and judging of them, whereas *he that is spiritual* (as he had now said) *is judged of no man. I,* (saith he), *brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual,* that is, as to Christians who had made any great proficiency in the ways of God, and had arrived to any just degrees of spiritual perfection; *but as unto carnal,* that is, persons who, though you axe not under the full conduct and government of your flesh and sensitive appetite, yet are far from being perfect, either in faith or holiness.

*In Christ,* but not as grown men, but *as babes,* as the apostle fully explaineth this term, Heb 5:12,13, such as had need be taught again *which are the first principles of the oracles of God; and have need of milk, and not of strong meat: for every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe.*

### 1 Corinthians 3:2

Ver. 2. *Milk* signifies what the apostle to the Hebrews calls *the first principles of the oracles of God,* and so is opposed to sublime spiritual doctrines, here set out under the notion of *meat;* called *strong meat,* Heb 5:14, fit for those of *full age:* as young children's stomachs will not endure strong meat, so neither are sublime spiritual mysteries fit for new converts, until they have *senses exercised to discern good and evil;* and therefore the apostle gives this as a reason, why he had not communicated the deep things of God to them, because as yet they had not been able to bear the notion of them, nor indeed were they yet able: it should seem that there were many in the church of Corinth, who though they were true Christians, yet were not grown and judicious Christians, but had great imperfections, as indeed it will further appear in this Epistle.

### 1 Corinthians 3:3

Ver. 3. *For ye are yet carnal;* not wholly carnal, but in a great measure so,

not having your lusts and corrupt affections entirely subdued to the will of God, nor yet so much subdued as some other Christians have, and you ought to have. As an evidence of this he mindeth them of the *envying, strifes, and divisions* that were amongst them.

*Strife* and *envyings* are reckoned amongst *the works of the flesh*, Ga 5:19-21; they are all opposite to love, in which the perfection of a Christian lieth. He told us before what strifes and contentions he meant, and tells us it again in the next verse.

### 1 Corinthians 3:4

Ver. 4. Not that Christians so large a city as Corinth might not put themselves under several pastors, or, as to themselves, prefer one before another, either in respect of the more eminent gifts of God bestowed upon one, (as doubtless Paul was preferable to Apollos), or in respect of the more suitableness of one man's gifts to their capacities than another: but their adherence so to one minister of the gospel, that for his sake they vilified and despised all others, that were also true and faithful servants of God in the work of his gospel, this was their sin, and spake them to have vicious and corrupt affections, and to walk more like men than like saints, not having a true notion of the ministers of Christ, nor behaving themselves towards them as they ought to do.

### 1 Corinthians 3:5

Ver. 5. Neither Paul, nor yet Apollos, are authors of faith to you, but only instruments; it is the Lord that giveth to every man a power to believe; or else that latter phrase, *as the Lord gave to every man*, may be understood of ministers, whose abilities to the work of the ministry, and success in it, both depend upon God. The sense of the words is this, then: God giveth unto his ministers variety of gifts, and different success; but yet neither one nor the other of them are more than the servants of Christ in their ministry, persons whom God maketh use of to call upon and to prevail with men, to give credit to the doctrine of the gospel, and to receive and accept of Christ. The work is the Lord's, not theirs.



### 1 Corinthians 3:6

Ver. 6. God honoured me first to preach the gospel amongst you, Ac 18:1-28 &c., and blessed my preaching to convert you unto Christ; then I left you: Apollos stayed behind, and he *watered* what I had *planted*, daily preaching amongst you; see Ac 18:24-26; he was a further means to build you up in faith and holiness; but God increased, or *gave the increase*, God gave the power by which you brought forth any fruit. The similitude is drawn from planters, whether husbandmen or gardeners; they plant, they water, but the growing, the budding, the bringing forth flowers or fruit by the plant, doth much more depend upon the soil in which it stands, the influence of heaven upon it, by the beams of the sun, and the drops of the dew and rain, and the internal virtue which the God of nature hath created in the plant, than upon the hand of him that planteth, or him who useth his watering pot to water it. So it is with souls; one minister is used for conversion, or the first changing of souls; another is used for edification, or further building up of souls; but both conversion and edification are infinitely more from the new heart and new nature, which God giveth to souls, and from the influence of the Sun of righteousness by the Spirit of grace, working in and upon the soul, than from any minister, who is but God's instrument in those works.

### 1 Corinthians 3:7

Ver. 7. So that, look as it is in earthly plantations, God hath the greatest influence upon the growth and fruitfulness of the plant, and the husbandman or gardener is nothing in comparison with God, who hath given to the plant planted its life and nature, by which it shooteth up, buddeth, and bringeth forth fruit, and maketh his sun to shine and his rain to fall upon it: so it is in the spiritual plantation, God is the principal efficient Cause, we are little instrumental causes in God's hand, nothing in comparison with God. *I have planted, Apollos hath watered;* but if we see a soul changed, or grow, and make any spiritual proficiency, we must say, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name* be given the *glory*: God hath done the main work; we have not done any thing in comparison with him. These words do no more tend to vilify the ministry of the gospel, or make it useless, than, taking them in their native sense, as they respect

earthly plantations, they would prove, that there is no need of the husbandman's or gardener's hand to plant or to water plants, because all that he doth of that nature is to no purpose, unless God first gives to the plant its proper nature and virtue, and then followeth the planting with the influence of the sun, dew, and rain. But yet it is observable, that the apostle doth not say, the man himself gives the increase, from the good use of the power that is naturally in his own will, but *God giveth the increase*; which argues the necessity of special grace both to conversion and edification, superadded to the best preaching of his ministers. Though Paul himself by preaching plants, and Apollos watereth, yet God must make the soul to increase with the increase of God. Hence the apostle argueth their unreasonableness, in adoring one minister, and magnifying him above another, when indeed neither the one nor the other had any principal efficiency in the production of the blessed effect, but a mere instrumental causation, the effect of which depended upon the sole blessing of God, in comparison with whom, in this working, neither the one nor the other minister was any thing.

### 1 Corinthians 3:8

Ver. 8. The ministers of Christ, though one be used in planting and another in watering, one in laying the foundation and another in building thereupon, yet *are one*; one in their office and work, one in their ministry, being all servants to Christ, who is one; all serving one and the same Lord, all doing the same business, proposing the same end, and with all their might labouring towards it; and therefore, as they ought not to divide into parties and factions, so you ought not for their sakes to be so divided. Yet they are not so one, but that one may labour more than another, and be honoured by God with more success than another, and every one shall receive a reward proportioned to his labour: the apostle saith not, according to the success of his labour, (that is not in his power), but, *according to his labour*.

### 1 Corinthians 3:9

Ver. 9. Though compared with God we are nothing, yet our station is no mean station; God works as the principal efficient Cause, we work with

God as his instruments; God worketh one way, by his secret influence upon the heart, we another way, by publication of the gospel in people's ears, but the scope and end of the work is the same. The Lord is said to work with his ministers, Mr 16:20, and they are here said to work with him. Hence he proveth what he had before said, that they should be rewarded; God will not suffer those who work with him to be without their reward: as also that they were *one*, for they are all *labourers together with God*. Yet do not think yourselves our husbandry, for you are *God's husbandry*: thus God's people, Isa 61:3, are called *the planting of the Lord*.

*God's building*: thus the church is called *the house of God*, 1Ti 3:15. Still the apostle minds them, that they were God's, not their minister's; it was God to whom they were beholden for their conversion, for their edification, &c.

### 1 Corinthians 3:10

Ver. 10. *According to the grace of God which is given unto me: χαριτι* here signifies either the ability which God hath given Paul to preach the gospel, or the apostolical office, to which God had called him; he maketh both to proceed from God, and to be the effects of his free love and favour to him. According to this he saith: Look, *as a wise master-builder* first laveth the foundation, then buildeth upon the foundation which he hath laid; so *I*, being the first whom God pleased to employ in this his work at Corinth, *have laid the foundation*, that is, have first preached the gospel in this famous city: thus the first preaching of the gospel is called, *a laying the foundation*, Ro 15:20 Heb 6:1.

*Another buildeth thereon*; afterwards Apollos and other ministers further carried on that work of preaching the gospel amongst them.

*But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon*; but (saith he whoever cometh to preach after me had need take heed what he buildeth; for, Ga 1:8, *though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed*).

### 1 Corinthians 3:11

Ver. 11. *Can* in this text doth not signify a mere natural power, but a rightful power: No man by any just right or authority can lay any other foundation, can preach any other doctrine of salvation, than that which I have already preached, which is the doctrine of salvation by Jesus Christ.

*Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, Ac 4:12.*

### 1 Corinthians 3:12

Ver. 12. The apostle is discoursing metaphorically, he had compared the church of Corinth to a building, 1Co 3:9, and called them there *God's building*; they were built upon the doctrine of the gospel, the doctrine of the apostles and prophets, who had preached Christ to them, this was the foundation; and had told us, that none, by any pretence of right, could lay any other foundation. But there was to be a superstructure upon this foundation, which might be of various materials: he names six; three very good and excellent, *gold, silver, and precious stones*; three others vile and invaluable, *wood, hay, stubble*. By these he either means good or bad works, or rather, good or bad doctrines. Good doctrine is signified by the *gold, silver, and precious stones* mentioned; bad doctrine by the *wood, hay, and stubble* mentioned; by which may be understood various degrees of bad doctrine, as some doctrines are more pernicious and damnable than others, though the others also be false, unprofitable, trivial, and of no significancy to the good of souls, but bad, as they are unprofitable.

### 1 Corinthians 3:13

Ver. 13. Now, saith he, there will come a time when *every man's*, that is, every teacher's, *work, or doctrine, shall be made manifest*. As the metal is brought to the touchstone to be tried, whether it be gold or silver, or some baser metal; so there will come a time, when all doctrines shall be tried and made manifest, whether they be of God or no.

*For the day shall declare it: what day shall declare it is not so steadily*

agreed by interpreters. Some by a *day* here understand a long time, in process of time it shall be declared; as indeed erroneous doctrines have not used to obtain or prevail long: Dagon falls before the ark. Others understand it of a day of adversity and great affliction, the day of God's vengeance; and indeed thus it is often seen, a false faith, or a lie believed, will not carry a man through the difficulties which he meeteth with in an evil day: the truths of the gospel are of that nature, that they will give a soul relief and support in a day of affliction and under God's severest dispensations, but errors and falsehoods will not do it. Others understand by *the day* here mentioned, the day of judgment, which is indeed often called *the day* of the Lord, 1Co 1:8, and described by fire, Joe 2:3, 2Th 1:8 2Pe 3:10; but this text saith not *the day of the Lord*, but only *the day*. It seemeth, therefore, rather to signify the bright shining out of the gospel; for the text seemeth to speak of such a manifestation as shall be in this life, not in the day of judgment.

*Because it shall be revealed by fire;* the same thing is also to be understood.

*The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is:* by *the fire* here mentioned, not the fire of God's wrath, or the fire of affliction and adversity, nor the fire of the last judgment, but the truth of the gospel shining forth in the world, and burning up the dross and stubble of corrupt, false doctrine, that shall bring all the doctrines which men teach, to the trial.

### 1 Corinthians 3:14

Ver. 14. If any preacher keeps the foundation, and the doctrine which he hath built upon the true foundation prove consonant to the will of Christ, God will reward him for his labour: he shall hear the voice saying: *Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.*

### 1 Corinthians 3:15

Ver. 15. But if his work do not abide, if it shall appear upon the more clear and bright shining out of the truth of the gospel, that though he hath held

the foundation right, yet he hath built upon it wood, hay, and stubble, mixed fables, and idle stories, and corrupt doctrine with the doctrine of the gospel, *he shall suffer loss* by it, either by the afflicting hand of God, or by a loss of his reputation, or some other way. But yet God will not cast off a soul for every such error, if he keeps to the main foundation, Jesus Christ; *he shall be saved*, though it be *as by fire*, that is, with difficulty; which certainly is a more natural sense of this text, than those give, who interpret *as by fire*, of the fire of the gospel, or the fire of purgatory, of which the papists understand it. For:

1. It is, and always hath been, a proverbial form of speech to express a thing obtained by difficulty; we say: It is got out of the fire, &c.
2. For the fire of purgatory, it is a fiction, and mere imaginary thing, and of no further significancy than to make the pope's chimney smoke.
3. That pretended fire only purgeth venial sins; this fire trieth every man's work, the gold as well as the stubble.

### 1 Corinthians 3:16

Ver. 16. The apostle, 1Co 3:9, had called the church of Corinth, and the particular members of it, *God's building*; after this he had enlarged in a discourse concerning the builders, and the foundation and superstructure upon that foundation; now he returns again to speak of the whole church, whom he here calleth *the temple of God*, with a manifest allusion to that noble and splendid house which Solomon first built, and was afterwards rebuilt by Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah at Jerusalem, as the public place for the Jewish church to meet in to worship God according to the prescript of the Levitical law: in which house God was said to dwell, because there he met his people, and blessed them, and there he gave answers to them from the mercy-seat. He calls them *the temple of God*, because they were built, that is, effectually called, for this very end, that they might be *to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved*, Eph 1:6: and, as the apostle Peter further expoundeth this text, 1Pe 2:5, the people of God are *a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*. And God by his Spirit dwelt in them, both by his person, and by his

gifts and graces, which is a far more noble dwelling in them than the dwelling of God was in the Jewish temple. From this text may be fetched an evident proof of the Divine nature, of the Third Person in the blessed Trinity; for he is not only called here *the Spirit of God*, but he is said to dwell in the saints: which dwelling of God in his people, is that very thing which maketh them the temple of God; and those who are here called *the temple of God*, are, 1Co 6:19, called *the temple of the Holy Ghost*.

### 1 Corinthians 3:17

Ver. 17. *If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy;* the word which we translate *defile* and *destroy* (for the Greek word is the same for both) signifieth to violate, *corrupt*, or destroy. Our translators generally render it corrupt, 1Co 15:33 2Co 7:2 1Co 11:3 Eph 4:22 Jude 1:10 Re 19:2. The people of God, who are here called *the temple of God*, are defiled, either by imbibing false doctrine, or being tempted to any looseness of life and conversation. Now, (saith the apostle), if any one goes about to do this, which all preachers do who teach any false doctrine, or any principles that lead to a liberty for the flesh, or lead to an ill and scandalous life, God shall destroy those men.

*For the temple of God is holy;* for as the temple of God of old was a place built and set apart for holy uses, and therefore not without great peril to be abused and profaned; so those that are the people of God, are by God called and set apart in a more immediate, eminent manner for the honour and glory of God, and therefore cannot be debauched or defiled by any as instruments in that action, without exceeding great peril and hazard to them that endeavour and attempt any such thing.

### 1 Corinthians 3:18

Ver. 18. *Let not man deceive himself:* there are some that, with their eloquence and flourishes of words, or with their philosophical notions and reasonings, (which, Col 2:8, the apostle calls *vain deceit*), or with their traditions *after the rudiments of the world*, ( as the apostle addeth in that place), would cheat and deceive your souls, under a pretence of making you wonderfully wise: *the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God*.

*If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world; if any of you seemeth unto others, or seemeth unto himself, that is, thinketh that he is endued with what the world calleth wisdom.*

*Let him become a fool, that he may be wise; if ever he would be truly wise, wise unto God, and to eternal life and salvation, let him be contented, by the wise men and philosophers of this world, to be looked upon as a fool; and let him be willing to deny himself in any notions or opinions of his own, which he hath taken up upon the credit of his natural reason and philosophical principles, which agree not with the Divine revelation, that so he may be truly and spiritually wise, truly understanding, savouring, and believing what God hath in his word revealed, and is alone able to make the man of God wise to salvation, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.*

### 1 Corinthians 3:19

Ver. 19. *For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God; God accounteth that folly which the world calleth wisdom, and indeed it is so (for God cannot err, nor be mistaken in his judgment): the philosophers and wise men of the world propose the happiness of man as their end, which indeed is the true end which all men aim at, and do propound to themselves; true wisdom directeth the best means in order to the best end. Whatsoever directeth not to the best end, or to what is not the best means in order to that end, is not wisdom, but real folly; worldly wisdom neither directeth to the best end, for it looks at no further happiness than that of this life, nor yet to the best means, and therefore is truly, what God accounts it, foolishness.*

*For it is written: He taketh the wise in their own craftiness; and to see the wise and learned men of the world thus err both in their judgment and practice, is no wonder at all; for God is set out of old by Eliphaz, as one that taketh the wise in their own craftiness, Job 5:13.*

### 1 Corinthians 3:20



Ver. 20. And again, it was said by the psalmist, Ps 94:11, that: *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity*: man's counsels, imaginations, reasonings, they are all vanity; they propose to themselves ends which they cannot attain, and pursue them by means that are inefficacious with reference to their ends.

### 1 Corinthians 3:21

Ver. 21. Seeing, therefore, that Christ is but one, his ministers but one, and no more than *ministers by whom ye believed*, 1Co 3:5; and the principal efficiency of any saving work begun, or carried on in your souls to any degree of perfection, is from God, and the minister's work in that effect nothing compared with his; seeing you are *God's husbandry, God's building*, not merely man's, and *the temple of God*, not men's temple; leave your glorying *in men*, and saying *I am of Paul*, or *I am of Apollos*; glory only in this, that *ye are Christ's*: besides, *all things are yours*; why do you glory in a particular minister, when all is yours? As if two joint-heirs in an estate should glory in this or that particular house or enclosure, when the whole estate is jointly theirs, all theirs.

### 1 Corinthians 3:22

Ver. 22. Here are in these two verses three things asserted:

1. The believer's title to *all things*.
2. The specialty of their title.
3. The force of the apostle's argument from hence, why they should not *glory in men*.

He had said before: *All things are yours*, which he repeats again, in 1Co 3:22: they have a right and title to all things, and all things are for their good, use, and advantage. Amongst these he first reckons ministers: every one of them might lay a claim to Paul, to Apollos, to Peter; for they were all servants of Christ for the use of the church, a part of which they were. Then he goes on, and saith, *the world*, that is, the things of the world, are

theirs; that is, whatsoever portion of them the providence of God orderly disposed to them, they had a true title to it, and it was for their use and advantage; so were the lives and deaths of God's ministers, their own lives and deaths, all *things present*, and all *things* that were *to come*, they were all theirs by a just title; if the providence of God gave them to them in an orderly way, they might comfortably use them. They themselves were *Christ's*; they were not of Paul, nor of Apollos, nor of Peter. He that had the bride was the bridegroom; these ministers were but the friends of their bridegroom.

*And Christ is God's*, the Son of God by an eternal generation; the servant of God as man, and born under the law, so yielding obedience to his Father; the Messiah or Anointed, and sent of God as Mediator. All things are God's, by God given to Christ, by Christ given to and sanctified for you; that makes the believers' special title to all things. The men of the world derive their title to what they have from God alone, as Creator; they derive not from Christ, as being ingrafted and implanted into him. Hence the apostle rightly concludes their vanity, in glorying in their relation to this or that special apostle or minister, whereas they had a true and just right to the labours of all ministers, and ought to look upon all faithful ministers as God's gifts to his whole church, and for the advantage and benefit of all: yet this hindereth not, but that people ought to have their particular pastors and teachers, to whom they ought ordinarily to attend in their ministry; but they ought not to have their own persons in such admiration, as for them to despise or slight any other faithful ministers, nor to make parties and factions in the church of God.

## 1 Corinthians 4:1

### Chapter Summary

1Co 4:1-5 Paul showeth in what account such as he should be held, of whose fidelity it should be left to God to judge.

1Co 4:6,7 He dissuadeth the Corinthians from valuing themselves in one teacher above another, since all had their respective distinctions from God.

1Co 4:8-13 To their self-sufficient vanity he opposeth

his own despised and afflicted state,  
1Co 4:14-16 warning them, as their only father in Christ, and urging them to follow him.  
1Co 4:17-21 For the same cause he sent Timotheus, and meant soon to follow in person, when he would inquire into the authority of such as opposed him.

Ver. 1. The apostle here gives us the right notion of the preachers of the gospel; they are but *ministers*, that is, servants, so as the honour that is proper to their Master, for a principal efficiency in the conversion and building up of souls, belongeth not to them; they are *ministers of Christ*, so have their primary relation to him, and only a secondary relation to the church to which they are ministers; they are *ministers of Christ* and so in that ministration can only execute what are originally his commands, though those commands of Christ may also be enforced by men: ministers of the gospel, not of the law, upon whom lies a primary obligation to preach Christ and his gospel unto people. They are also *stewards of the mysteries of God*, such to whom God hath committed his word and sacraments to dispense out unto his church. The word *mystery* signifieth any thing that is secret, but more especially it signifieth a Divine secret, represented by signs and figures; or a religious secret, not obvious to every capacity or understanding. Thus we read of the *mysteries of the kingdom of heaven*, Mt 13:11; the *mystery of godliness*, 1Ti 3:16; the *mystery of Christ*, Eph 3:4. The *wisdom of God*, Col 2:2; the incarnation of Christ, 1Ti 3:16; the calling of the Gentiles, Eph 3:4; the *resurrection from the dead*, 1Co 15:21; Christ's mystical union and communion with his church, Eph 5:32; the sublime counsels of God, 1Co 13:2, are all called *mysteries*. Ministers are the stewards of the mysterious doctrines and institutions of Christ, which we usually comprehend under the terms of the word and sacraments.

### 1 Corinthians 4:2

Ver. 2. It is required of all servants, but especially of chief servants, such as stewards are, who are intrusted with their masters' goods, to be dispensed out to others. The faithfulness of a steward in dispensing out his master's goods lies in his giving them out according to his master's order, giving to every one their portion, not detaining any thing from others

which it is his master's will they should have; as Paul gloried, Ac 20:20,27, that he had *kept back* from the Ephesians *nothing that was profitable* for them, nor *shunned to declare* to them *all the counsel of God*; not giving holy things to dogs, or casting pearls before swine, contrary to Christ's direction, Mt 7:6.

### 1 Corinthians 4:3

Ver. 3. Those who said, *I am of Apollos, and I am of Cephas*, did at least tacitly judge Paul, and prefer Apollos and Cephas before him; and it is probable, and will appear also from other parts of these Epistles, that they passed very indecent censures concerning Paul: he therefore tells them, that he valued very little what they or any other men said of him. In the Greek it is, *of man's day*; but it is generally thought that our translators have given us the true sense, in translating it *man's judgment*, *day* being put for *judgment*; as Jer 17:16, where *woeful day* signifies woeful judgment.

So *the day of the Lord* in Scripture often signifieth the Lord's judgment: the reason of that form of speech seems to be, because persons cited to a court of judgment use to be cited to appear on a certain day.

*Yea, I judge not mine own self*; yea, saith the apostle, I pronounce no sentence for myself, I leave myself to the judgment of God. I may be deceived in my judgment concerning myself, and therefore I will affirm nothing as to myself.

### 1 Corinthians 4:4

Ver. 4. *I know nothing by myself*; nothing amiss, nothing that is evil; yet this must not be interpreted universally, as if St. Paul knew nothing that was evil and sinful by himself; himself, Ro 7:1-25, tells us the contrary; but it must be understood with respect to his discharge of his ministerial office: I do not know any thing wherein I have wilfully failed in the discharge of my ministry; yet even as to that I durst not stand upon my own righteousness and justification before God, I may have sinned ignorantly, or have forgotten some things wherein I did offend.

*But he that judgeth me is the Lord;* God knoweth more of me than I know of myself, and it is he that judgeth, and must judge me. Though in this text Paul doth not speak of his whole life and conversation, but only of his conversation with respect to his ministry; yet the conclusion from hence, that no man can be justified from his own works, is good; for if a man cannot be justified from his conscience not rebuking him for his errors in one part of his conversation, he cannot be justified from his conscience not rebuking him for his whole conversation. For he that keepeth the whole law, if he offendeth but in one point, must be guilty of all, because the law curseth him who continueth not in every point of the law to do it.

#### 1 Corinthians 4:5

*Ver. 5. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come;* seeing that the judgment of secret things belongs to God, *judge nothing before the time,* which God hath set to judge all things. The works of the flesh are manifest, and men may judge of them; but for secret things, of which it is impossible that those who do not know the hearts of men should make up a judgment, do not judge of them before the time, when God will certainly come to judge all men.

*Who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts:* if men cloak *the hidden things of darkness* with the cover of hypocrisy and fair pretences, they will at that day be most certainly uncovered, and the secret thoughts, counsels, and imaginations of men's hearts shall in that day be made manifest.

*And then shall every man have praise of God;* and then those that have done well, every of them *shall have praise of God;* as, on the contrary, (which is understood, though not here expressed), those that are hypocrites, and whose hearts have been full of evil thoughts and counsels, shall by God be put to shame and exposed to contempt.

#### 1 Corinthians 4:6

*Ver. 6. And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself*

*and to Apollos for your sakes:* by these words the apostle lets us know, that though he had said, 1Co 1:12, that some of them said: We are of Paul, and others: We are of Apollos; yet the names of Paul and of Apollos were but used to represent other of their teachers, which were the heads of those factions which were amongst them. In very deed there were none of them that said, We are of Paul or of Apollos, (for those that were the disciples of Paul and Apollos were better taught), but they had other teachers amongst them as to whom they made factions, whom Paul had a mind to reprove, with their followers; and to avoid all odium, that both they and their hearers might take no offence at his free reproving of them, he makes use of his own name, and that of Apollos, and speaketh to the hearers of these teachers, as if they were his own and Apollos's disciples; that those whom the reproof and admonition concerned properly, might be reproved under the reproof of others.

*That you might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written;* and that (as the apostle saith) all the church of Corinth, as well ministers as people, might learn to have humble opinions and thoughts of themselves, not to think of themselves above what, by the rules of God's word, was written in the Old Testament they ought to think; or above what he had before written in this Epistle, or to the Romans, Ro 12:3.

*That no one of you be puffed up for one against another;* and that none of them, whether ministers or private Christians, might be *puffed up*. The word signifieth to be swelled or blown up as a bladder or a pair of bellows, which is extended with wind: it is used in 1Co 4:18,19 8:1 Col 2:18.

### 1 Corinthians 4:7

Ver. 7. It is apparent that pride was the reigning sin of many in this church of Corinth; pride, by reason of those parts and gifts wherein they excelled, whether they were natural or acquired habits, or common gifts of the Spirit which were infused: to abate this tumour, the apostle minds them to consider, whence they had these gifts from which they took occasion so to exalt and prefer themselves; whether they were the authors of them to themselves, or did receive them from God.

*Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not*

*received it?* It became none of them to glory in what they had received from another, and were beholden to another for. What the apostle here speaketh concerning natural or spiritual abilities, is applicable to all good things; and the consideration here prompted, is a potent consideration to abate the pride and swelling of a man's heart upon any account whatsoever; for there is nothing wherein a man differeth or is distinguished from another, or wherein he excelleth another, but it is given him from God; be it riches, honour, natural or spiritual gifts and abilities, they are all received from the gift of God, who gives a man *power to get wealth*, De 8:18; who *putteth down one and setteth up another*, Ps 75:7; and, as the apostle saith in this Epistle, 1Co 12:7-9, gives *the manifestation of the Spirit to every man to profit withal: to one by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge; to another faith; to another the gifts of healing, &c., all by the same Spirit.*

#### 1 Corinthians 4:8

Ver. 8. *Now ye are full, now ye are rich;* you that are the teachers at Corinth, or you that are the members of the church there, think yourselves full of knowledge and wisdom, so as you stand in need of no further learning or instruction.

*Ye have reigned as kings without us;* ye think now you have got a kingdom, and are arrived at the top of felicity.

*And I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you;* I am so far from envying you, that I wish it were so, and we might have a share with you. The apostle speaketh this ironically, not that he indeed thought they were so, but reflecting on their vain and too good an opinion of themselves.

#### 1 Corinthians 4:9

Ver. 9. *For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death;* the lot of us who are the apostles of Christ is not so externally happy, but a lot of poverty and misery, as if we were the worst of men, men *appointed to death.*

*For we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men; to be a mere sight or gazingstock to the world, angels, or men. Some think that the apostle here hath a reference to the barbarous practice of the Romans, who first exposed and carried about for a sight those persons that were condemned to fight with wild beasts, that by them they might be torn in pieces. You are happy men, saith the apostle, if you can own Christ, and profess Christianity, and yet be in such credit and favour with the world, so full, and so rich, and so like princes: we are those whom God hath honoured to be his apostles and the first ministers of the gospel; our lot and portion is far otherwise.*

#### 1 Corinthians 4:10

Ver. 10. *We are accounted fools for Christ's sake by the wise men of the world, and we are willing to be so accounted; but you think yourselves wise, and yet in Christ.*

*We are weak in the opinion of men, we suffer evil, and do not resist; but ye account yourselves, and are by the world accounted, strong: ye are accounted noble and honourable, but we are despised and contemptible.*

#### 1 Corinthians 4:11

Ver. 11. Our state in the world is low and mean; though you be full, we are hungry and thirsty; though you be richly clothed, yet we *are* next to *naked*, clothed with rags; though you be hugged and embraced by the men of the world, yet we *are buffeted*; though you have rich and famous houses, yet we *have no certain dwelling-place*. Thus it hath been with us from the beginning of our profession of Christ, and thus it is with us at this day, saith the apostle: from whence he gives these Corinthians and their false teachers a just reason to suspect themselves, whether they were true and sincere professors, yea or no, and to consider how it came to pass, that their lot in the world was so different from the lot of those whom the Lord had dignified with the title and office of his apostles. The condition of the most faithful and able ministers and the most sincere Christians that have been in the world, hath always been a mean and afflicted state and



condition.

### 1 Corinthians 4:12

Ver. 12. *And labour, working with our hands;* we do not only labour in the word and doctrine, but we labour with our hands, that we might not be burdensome to the church, our hands ministering to our necessities, Ac 20:34; though, as he saith, 1Co 9:4, they had a *power to eat and drink*, that is, a right to have demanded meat and drink of them, and might have forbore *working*; for *who goeth a warfare at his own charges?* 1Co 3:6,7. Whence we may observe, that though the ministers of Christ ought to be maintained by the churches to which they relate, and they sin if they neglect it; yet where this either is not done through men's sinful neglect of them, or cannot be done through the poverty of the members of such churches, it is lawful for them to labour with their hands.

*Being reviled, we bless;* we are reviled and spoken ill of, but we do not revile others, but speak well of them, and wish well to them.

*Being persecuted, we suffer it;* though we be hunted and pursued to the endangering of our lives and liberties, yet we do make no resistance, but patiently suffer it. By this the apostle showeth them the duty of Christians, as well as their lot and portion in this life; and also tacitly reflecteth on them and their teachers, who were some of those that thus reviled the apostles; and though they did not, it may be, smite them with their hands, yet they persecuted them with their tongues; and leaves it to their consideration, whether the apostles or they lived more up to the rule of Christianity given by Christ, Mt 5:39-41.

### 1 Corinthians 4:13

Ver. 13. *Being defamed, we entreat:* we are blasphemed, Gr. that is, spoken evil of, which is the same with *defamed* in our language, men speak all manner of evil of us to take away our reputation; but *we entreat* God for them: the word signifieth to exhort, entreat, comfort, we exercise ourselves in all pious and charitable offices toward them, who are most uncharitable toward us.

*We are made as the filth of the earth, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day:* here are two words used, which signify the most vile, abject, contemptible things in the world, excrements, sweepings of houses. The apostle by these two words signifies, that no persons could be more base, vile, and contemptible than they were, nothing more despised, or in less esteem: he speaketh not this as complaining, or in any discontent at what he saw was the will of God concerning them; but to show them the difference betwixt the apostles, and them and their teachers, and possibly reflecting upon them, as being in some degree guilty of this scorn and contempt of them, or at least, more than they ought, neglecting them under these mean and afflictive circumstances.

#### 1 Corinthians 4:14

Ver. 14. I tell you not of this to make you blush, as having had any hand in these indignities which are put upon us, nor yet *to shame you* (though possibly you have reason to be ashamed, either for your neglect of us, or for your adding to our affliction); I look upon you as my *sons*, and sons whom I love: I only write to warn you, both of your duty, to have some respect for us, and of, your sin, if you have neglected us beyond what was your duty to have done.

#### 1 Corinthians 4:15

Ver. 15. The great lesson of this text is: That people ought to have a tender respect for those ministers whom God hath honoured with their first conversion, and bringing them home to Christ. God may make use of a multitude of ministers to instruct Christians, and carry on his work in their souls to perfection; but he maketh use of some particular minister at first to convince them, and be an instrument in the changing of their hearts; such they ought to have a great value for, they are their spiritual *fathers* in a proper sense.

*For*, saith the apostle, *in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel:* where we have regeneration (as it signifieth a new state) set out in its causes. The principal efficient cause is *Christ Jesus*; the instrumental

cause is the minister of the gospel; the means is the doctrine of the gospel, or the preaching of the gospel.

*In Christ Jesus* signifieth here by the grace of Christ Jesus; those who are born again, are not born of flesh or of blood, but of the will of God, Joh 1:13, and by the influence of Christ upon their hearts; though God makes use of the minister of the gospel as his instrument, and the minister makes use of the word and the preaching of the gospel, as the sacred means which God hath appointed to that end, 1Pe 1:23. All these causes unite and concur in the work of regeneration.

#### 1 Corinthians 4:16

Ver. 16. I might as a father command you, but *I beseech you, be ye followers of me*, in preserving the unity and promoting the holiness of the church. He expounds this, 1Co 11:1: *Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ*. Holiness of life and conversation is necessary to a true minister of Christ; for their people ought not only to be their hearers, but their followers; they are *ensamples to the flock*, 1Pe 5:3, and ought to be examples of believers, *in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity*, 1Ti 4:12; in all things showing themselves patterns of good works; *in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, &c.*, Tit 2:7. Those who teach well and live ill, are no good ministers of Christ; they cannot say unto people: *Be ye followers of me*.

#### 1 Corinthians 4:17

Ver. 17. This Timothy Paul found at Lystra, Ac 16:1. *His father was a Greek, his mother a Jewess*, therefore Paul circumcised him; her name was Eunice, the daughter of Lois, 2Ti 1:5. Paul took him along with him in his travels. He was ordained by the imposition of the hands of the presbytery, 1Ti 4:14 2Ti 1:6. Paul calls him his *beloved son*, either because he was his spiritual son, or because he was by him instructed in the gospel: he calls him his *own son in the faith*, 1Ti 1:2.

*Faithful in the Lord*, because he was faithful in the work of the Lord, in the business of the ministry.

*Who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church; he (saith the apostle) shall bring to your remembrance my ways in the Lord, he shall acquaint you with both what doctrine I have preached and what course of life I have lived; how I have preached to every church, what rules I have given for the ordering of every church, and how I have walked before and toward them.*

### 1 Corinthians 4:18

Ver. 18. I hear that some of your teachers, and some of your members, are so conceited of themselves, that they would persuade you that I durst not see their faces, or come to discourse with them face to face, and therefore *would not come unto you.*

### 1 Corinthians 4:19

Ver. 19. *But I will come to you shortly:* Paul intended in his journey to Rome to pass through Macedonia and Achaia, but he knew that God could hinder him, and therefore he adds, *if the Lord will:* neither did Paul go to them so soon as he intended, but had time before he went to write another Epistle, as we shall afterwards find. All Christians are bound, when they promise or resolve upon any journeys, to understand, *if God will,* and to have in their thoughts the power of God to hinder them, and to speak with submission to his pleasure, who counteth their steps and telleth their wanderings, and ordereth their steps; though they be not strictly bound at all times to use this form of speech.

*And will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power:* and when I come, then I shall understand these teachers of yours, who so vilify me; I shall not regard so much their fine words and philosophical reasonings, as what there is of spiritual life and power in them; either in their doctrine or life, how conducive it is to the ends of the gospel, and how consonant to the truth of the gospel, what good they do amongst you, what manner of lives they live: these are the things that my eyes shall be upon, and which I shall regard.

## 1 Corinthians 4:20

Ver. 20. *The kingdom of God* in the church, or *the kingdom of God* in the particular soul. God hath not sent his ministers to subdue souls to himself by fine, florid words and phrases, but by a lively preaching the gospel, while his power attends their plain preaching; and the power and efficacy of the preachers' doctrine appeareth in their holy life and conversation, so as their people cannot say to them: *Physician, heal thyself*, as to those spiritual diseases which thou wouldst cure us of. So the kingdom of God in particular souls doth not appear in words, but in the power which the word of God hath upon men's hearts, in subduing their lusts and corruptions, and bringing their hearts into a subjection to his will.

## 1 Corinthians 4:21

Ver. 21. Which will ye rather choose? That I should come unto you as a father cometh to his child under some guilt for which he must punish and correct him, or as a father cometh to his child that hath done nothing provoking his displeasure, in love, and meekly? I am not willing to come to you to correct and punish any of you by ecclesiastical censures, which are a rod which Christ hath intrusted to me; I had rather come in love and meekness, that we might mutually rejoice in each other's society.

## 1 Corinthians 5:1

### Chapter Summary

1Co 5:1,2 Paul reproveth a scandalous incest committed and protected from censure in the church at Corinth, 1Co 5:3-5 and by his authority in Christ excommunicateth the offender.

1Co 5:6-8 The necessity of purging out the old leaven. 1Co 5:9-13 Christians guilty of notorious crimes are not to beconsorted with.

Ver. 1. The apostle here giveth a reason of the question which he

propounded in the former chapter, whether they would be willing that, when he came to them, he should come unto them with a rod? Because such horrid wickedness was committed amongst them, as he, being an apostle to whom Christ had intrusted the government of his church, could not pass over without correction: he instanceth here in one, which he calleth *fornication*; by which word is often in Scripture to be understood all species of uncleanness, though, in strict speaking, we by *fornication* understand the uncleanness of a single person, as by *adultery* we understand the uncleanness of a person married, and by *incest* the uncleanness of a person with some near relation, as a mother, a sister: in strict speaking, the sin here reflected on was incest; but the Scripture by this word comprehends all species of unlawful mixtures.

*Such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles*: this sin he aggravates by saying, that the Gentiles by the light of nature discerned and declined such an abomination; by whom is not to be understood the more brutish part, but the more civilized part of the heathen, such as the Romans, &c. were.

*That one should have his father's wife*: by having *his father's wife*, in this place, is not to be understood, the marrying of his father's wife, his father being dead; but the using of his father's wife as his wife while his father was yet alive, (as some judicious interpreters think), because hardly any nation would have endured a son openly to have married the widow of his father. And in 2Co 7:12, there is mention made not only of one *that had done*, but of another *that had suffered the wrong*; which latter must be the father himself: so as there was both incest and whoredom in this fact.

### 1 Corinthians 5:2

Ver. 2. *And ye are puffed up*; you are so conceited of your own parts and gifts, and are so full of your contentions about the preference of ministers, and things of little concernment to your souls and the interest of the church, that you have not been able to find leisure to deal with this scandalous person, as a church of Christ ought to have done. This seemeth rather the reason of their not mourning, than any rejoicing in iniquity, as if they had thought the gospel had opened that door against this licentiousness which the law had shut, or triumphed in this incestuous

person, being one of their teachers (which can hardly be thought).

*And have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you:* they ought rather to have mourned, keeping times of fasting and prayer, on the behalf of this scandalous member amongst them, that his sin might (upon his due sense of it, and repentance for it) have been forgiven him, and the blot upon their church, by their having such a one in their fellowship, might be washed out, by his being cast out of their fellowship and communion. It was no time for them to glory in their gifts, and be puffed up with the parts of their teachers or members, when they had such a blot upon them by a putrid member that was amongst them. They had a great deal more cause for humiliation, than for pride and glorying.

### 1 Corinthians 5:3

Ver. 3. Though I be absent as to my bodily presence, yet God having intrusted me with a superintendency and care over his church amongst you, out of the care and solicitude which I have for you, as well as the other churches of Christ, and in discharge of that trust which God hath reposed in me, I do determine, and have determined as much as if I were present amongst you, what ought to be done by you concerning this person so notoriously scandalous.

### 1 Corinthians 5:4

Ver. 4. *In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;* either having solemnly called upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for his counsel and direction, or blessing your action, that it may be of spiritual advantage to the party concerned; or according to the command of Christ, or by his authority, or for his glory. It may be referred either to what went before, I have judged or determined by the authority of Christ; or to what follows after.

*When ye are gathered together, and my spirit;* when you are gathered together by the authority, or according to the institution, of Jesus Christ, and my spirit with you, you having my judgment in the case. With the

power of our Lord Jesus Christ; and the power and authority of Christ committed to me, and to you, as a church of Christ.

### 1 Corinthians 5:5

Ver. 5. What this delivering to Satan is, (of which also we read, 1Ti 1:20), is something doubted by interpreters. That by it is to be understood excommunication, or casting out of the communion of the church, can hardly be doubted by any that considereth:

1. That the apostle speaketh of an action which might be, and ought to have been, done by the church of Corinth when they met together, and for the not doing of which the apostle blameth them.
2. That the end of the action was, taking away the scandalous person from the midst amongst them, 1Co 5:2; purging out the old leaven, that they might become a new lump, 1Co 5:7.
3. It was a punishment inflicted by many. Those, therefore, who interpret the phrase of an extraordinary power given the apostles or primitive churches, miraculously to give up the scandalous person to the power of the devil, to be afflicted, tormented, or vexed by him, (though not unto death), seem not to have considered, that the apostle would not have blamed the church of Corinth for not working a miracle, and that we nowhere read of any such power committed to any church of Christ; and one would in reason think, that persons under such circumstances should rather be pitied and helped, than shunned and avoided.

The only question therefore is: Why the apostle expresseth excommunication under the notion of being delivered to Satan? Some have thought that the reason is, because God was so pleased to ratify the just censures of his church, delivering such persons as were cast out of it into the hands of Satan, to be vexed and tormented by him; and that this might be in some particular cases, none can deny, but that this was an ordinary dispensation of Providence as to all excommunicated persons, wants better proof than any have yet showed us. It appears to me a more probable account of this phrase which others have given us, telling us, that Satan is called the god of the world, and the prince of the world, as world is taken



in opposition to the church of God; so as delivering to Satan, is no more than our Saviour's—*If he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican, Mt 18:17*. Only for the further terror of it, the apostle expresseth it by this phrase of delivering up to Satan; thereby letting us know, how dreadful a thing it is to be out of God's special protection, and shut out from the ordinary means of grace and salvation, and exposed to the temptations of our grand adversary the devil, which is the state of all those who are out of the church, either having never been members of it, or, according to the rules of Christ, cast out of the communion of it.

*For the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus:* the end of excommunication is not for the destruction of the person of him who is cast out, but for the destruction of his flesh, that is, his lusts, which are often in Scripture called flesh, or the maceration and affliction of his body through grief and sorrow; for a determination of his fleshly being cannot be here understood by the destruction of the flesh, for that is no effect of excommunication; and those who interpret the delivery to Satan, of an extraordinary punishment, which the apostles or church in the primitive times had a power to inflict, make it to terminate not in the death, but in the torments only, of the person so punished. Again, the apostle mentioneth this punishment as a means to the eternal salvation of this person's soul in the day of Christ. There is no text in Scripture which more clearly asserts and opens the ordinance and nature of excommunication, than this text doth. As to those who are to inflict it, it lets us know, that it is to be done by the church, *when gathered together*; though the elders of the church may put the church upon it, and decree it, yet the consent and approbation of the whole church must be to it; and indeed it is vain for the officers of a church to cast any out of a communion, when the members of that communion will yet have communion with him or them so cast out. It also lets us know, that it is a censure by which men are not shut out of the fellowship of men as men, but of men as Christians, as a church of Christ, in such religious actions and duties as concern them, considered as such a body: excommunication doth not make it unlawful for persons to buy and sell with the persons excommunicated, but to eat and drink at the Lord's table with them, or have communion with them in acts proper to a church as the church of Christ. The excommunicated person is in something a better condition than a heathen, for he is not to be counted *as an enemy*, but admonished *as a*

*brother*, 2Th 3:15. Heathens also may hear the word; he is only to be avoided in acts of church fellowship; and as to intimate communion, though it be not religious, as appeareth from 1Co 5:11, and from 2Th 3:14. Further, we are taught from hence, that none ought to be excommunicated but for notorious, scandalous sins, nor without a solemn invocation on the name of Christ, inquiring his will in the case. We are further taught, that the person that is duly excommunicated is in a miserable state, he is delivered up to Satan, cast out of God's special protection, which is peculiar to his church, and oftentimes exposed to formidable temptations. Finally, we are from this text instructed, that excommunication ought to be so administered, as may best tend to the saving of the soul of him that falls under that censure: men's end in excommunications should not be the ruin of persons in their health or estates, only the humbling of them, and bringing them to a sense of their sins, and a true repentance; and all means in order to that end should be used, even to such as are cast out of any church, such are repeated admonitions, the prayers of the church for them, &c.

### 1 Corinthians 5:6

Ver. 6. You boast and glory because you have men of parts amongst you, persons whom the world count wise; *your glorying is not good*; what do you glory for, when you have such a scandalous person amongst you, and take no care to cast him out? Can you be ignorant, that as *a little leaven* taken into the midst of the meal, and there kept, presently soureth the whole mass, and leaveneth the whole lump; so one notorious, scandalous sinner detained in the bosom of a church, casts a blot upon the whole church?

### 1 Corinthians 5:7

Ver. 7. *Purge out therefore the old leaven*: if the article  $\tau\eta\nu$  in this place be emphatical (as some think) it ought to have been translated this old leaven, that is, the incestuous person, whose communion with you influenceth your whole communion, which is defiled by it, through your church's neglect of their duty with reference to him. If the article be not to be taken emphatically, these words may be understood as spoken to every

individual member of this church, and is no more than *put off the old man*; the lusts and corruptions of our hearts, as well as false doctrine, being compared to leaven, which influence our whole man, as leaven doth the whole mass of meal. The first seemeth to be most proper to this place, if we consider what went before, and that the apostle is speaking to the whole church, and had been before speaking of an act to be done by them not singly, but when they should be gathered together in a church assembly; these he commands to purge out the old leaven, that is, this incestuous person.

*That ye may be a new lump*; that they might be truly a Christian church, reformed from such things as no way agreed with the doctrine and profession of the gospel.

*As ye are unleavened*; as you are or should be unleavened, like the Jews, who at the passover kept the feast of unleavened bread, when for seven days together they might have no leavened bread in any of their houses, Le 23:6.

*For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us*; for though the feast of the Jewish passover be ceased, and you be tied to none of those Levitical observations, yet you are under as high an obligation; for Christ, who is the true paschal Lamb, is slain or sacrificed for us, and your old man should be crucified with him, and you no longer serve sin.

### 1 Corinthians 5:8

Ver. 8. *Therefore let us keep the feast*: here is a manifest allusion to the feast of the Jewish passover, which was immediately followed with the feast of unleavened bread for seven days. As the passover prefigured Christ, who is our paschal Lamb, whose flesh we eat and whose blood we drink by believing, and sacramentally in the Lord's supper; so the Jewish subsequent feast of unleavened bread prefigured all the days of a Christian's life, which are to be spent, *not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth*: which may be either understood of those evil and good habits which they signify, and so let us know the duty of every particular Christian to take heed of any malice or wickedness; or else (which seemeth

most proper to this place) the abstract is put for the concrete, *malice and wickedness* for wicked and malicious men, and *sincerity and truth* for persons that are true and sincere. So that we are from hence taught, both the duty of every particular Christian, considering that Christ hath died as a sacrifice for his sin, to live up to the rule which he hath given us, abhorring malice and all wickedness, and acting truth and sincerity; and also the duty of every true church of Christ, to keep their communion pure from the society of wicked and malicious men, and made up of men of truth and sincerity. The latter seemeth to be principally intended.

### 1 Corinthians 5:9

Ver. 9. It should seem that Paul had wrote so in some former epistle which he had directed to this church, which is lost; for we must think that Paul wrote more epistles to the several churches than those left us upon record in holy writ (yet so as not to undermine the perfection of the Holy Scriptures). By *fornicators* are meant any sorts of unclean persons known to them; and the keeping company with them, which the apostle had prohibited to the Corinthians, was not a mere fellowship with them in their works of darkness, but any intimacy of communion with any such persons.

### 1 Corinthians 5:10

Ver. 10. *Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world;* I did not intend that admonition as to such persons as were no Christians, no members of the church (so this term *world* is used, Joh 15:19 17:14; and so it is to be interpreted here). He extendeth this admonition to other scandalous sinners, such as covetous persons, by which he understandeth such as by any open and scandalous acts discover their too great love of money, whether by oppression, or by cheating and defrauding, &c.; *or extortioners,* such as exact more than their due; *or with idolaters,* by which he understandeth such as worship images: and under these few species of scandalous sinners here mentioned, the apostle understands all others alike scandalous.

*For then must ye needs go out of the world;* for (saith he) you could have no commerce nor trading with men in the world, if you might keep no

company with such as these. Which is true at this day, when the world is much more Christianized than it was at that time.

### 1 Corinthians 5:11

Ver. 11. Of late there have been some disputes what eating is here intended, whether at the Lord's table, or at our common tables. Intimacy of communion is that which undoubtedly is here signified by eating; and the apostle's meaning is, that the members of this church should forbear any unnecessary fellowship and communion with any persons that went under the name of Christians, and yet indulged themselves in any notorious and scandalous courses of life; of which he reckoneth up several sorts.

1. Unclean persons, noted for any kind of uncleanness.
2. Covetous persons; by which he understands all such as, out of their too great love of money, either scandalously sought to add to their heap, or to detain what was others' just due.
3. Idolaters; by which he understands such as out of fear, or to gain favour with the heathen amongst whom they lived, would frequent and perform Divine worship in the idol's temple.
4. Railers, such as used their tongues intemperately and scandalously, to the prejudice of others' reputation.
5. Drunkards; under which notion he comprehends all such as drank hot liquors intemperately, whether they had such an effect upon them as to deprive them of the use of their reason or not.
6. Extortioners, viz. such as, being in any place, exacted more than was their due of those that were under their power.

But yet by this interpretation the argument is not lost against eating with such at the table of the Lord, which is no more necessary communion with them, than civil eating is; for neither hath God spread that table for any such, neither ought any church to endure any such persons in its communion: nor are any Christians bound for ever to abide in the

communion of that church, which shall wilfully neglect the purging out of such old leaven. Admitting this precept prohibitive of a civil intimacy with scandalous persons, though they be called brethren, it holds *a fortiori*, as a stronger argument against religious communion with such, in ordinances to which, apparently, they have no proximate right.

### 1 Corinthians 5:12

Ver. 12. *For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? My jurisdiction extendeth not to heathens; God hath intrusted to me not the government of the world, but the government of his church.*

*Do not ye judge them that are within?* Nor would I have you concern yourselves further, than in judging your own members, those that are within the pale of your church, and who, by a voluntary joining with you, have given you a power over them.

### 1 Corinthians 5:13

Ver. 13. *But them that are without God judgeth;* for heathens that live brutish and scandalous lives, God will judge them; the church hath nothing to do with them, they never gave up themselves to them, and are only under the justice of God in the administrations of his providence.

*Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person:* do you, therefore, what belongs to you to do. This incestuous person, besides his subjection to God's judgment, who is the Judge of all, whether within or without the church, is subjected also to your judicature; therefore use that power which God hath given you, and put away from amongst you that evil person. The conclusion of this discourse helps us clearly to understand those former precepts, *Purge out the old leaven, 1Co 5:7*, and: *Let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, 1Co 5:8*; that they are not so properly to be interpreted of particular Christians' purging out their lusts and corruptions, (though that be every good Christian's duty), as of every Christian church's duty to purge themselves of flagitious and scandalous persons.

## 1 Corinthians 6:1

### Chapter Summary

1Co 6:1-6 The Corinthians are reprov'd for bringing their controversies before heathen judges, which they ought to decide among themselves.

1Co 6:7-11 There would be no occasion for lawsuits, if men acted up to the principles of the gospel, which exclude from the kingdom of God all notorious transgressors of the moral law.

1Co 6:12-14 All lawful things are not expedient,

1Co 6:15-20 but fornication is a gross offer we against our bodies, which are members of Christ, temples of the Holy Ghost, and not our own to dispose of otherwise than to God's glory.

Ver. 1. The apostle having already sharply reflected upon this church for their pride, and contentions, and divisions, (which were branches from that root), and for their vilifying him who was their spiritual father, and magnifying their instructors above him, as also for their looseness in their church discipline; he cometh in this chapter to another thing, viz. their going to law before pagan judges; for such was the misery of those times, that they had no other, though some think that they might have had, the pagan persecutions being as yet not begun. The apostle speaks of this as a thing which he wondered that they durst be guilty of, that they should be no more tender of the glory of God in the reputation of the Christian religion, and should not rather choose arbitrators amongst the members of their church, to hear and determine such differences as arose amongst them, than give pagans an occasion to reproach the Christian religion for the contentions and feuds of Christians. The reputation of the gospel and the professors of it being the thing for which Paul was here concerned, and upon the account of which he thus speaketh; it becometh Christians yet to consider, whether what he saith concerneth not them, where either the judges, or the generality of the auditors in such judgments, may probably reproach religion, or that way of God which they own, for their trivial and uncharitable contentions.

## 1 Corinthians 6:2

Ver. 2. If indeed the Corinthians had had no other competent judges, they might have been excused in making use of infidel judges; but, saith the apostle, you have other persons competent enough, whom you may (by your submission to them) make judges; for you *know that the saints shall judge the world;* in the same sense (as some think) as Christ saith the Ninevites and the queen of the south should rise up in judgment against the Jews, and condemn them; but certainly there is something more than that in it; when the apostle said, the saints should judge the world, he intended to say something of them which was not common to some heathens with them. Others therefore think, that the saints in the day of judgment shall judge the world, approving the sentence of Christ pronounced against the world, and as being assessors with Christ, which indeed is what Christ said of the apostles, Mt 19:28 Lu 22:39. Others think, that the phrase only signifieth a great honour and dignity, to which the saints shall be advanced. A late learned and very critical author hath another notion of the saints' judging the world here spoken of, interpreting it of a time when the secular judgment of the world should be given to the saints, which was prophesied by Daniel, Da 7:18,27, and therefore might be known by them. If this be the sense, it is either a prophecy of God's giving the government of the world into the hands of Christians, (which fell out after this in Constantine's time), or else it signifies such a time towards the end of the world, as those that expect a fifth monarchy speak of, when those that are true saints, in the strictest sense, shall have the government of the world; which seemeth not probable, considering what the Scripture speaks of persecutions, and wars, and disorders, rather increasing than abating towards the end of the world. The apostle therefore here seemeth rather to speak of the saints judging the world in the last day, approving the sentence of Christ the Judge of the quick and the dead; or else to prophesy of that time, when Christianity should so far obtain in the world, that the government either of the whole world, or of a great part of it, should be in the hands of Christians. From whence the apostle strongly concludeth the competency of Christians to arbitrate and determine little matters of difference amongst Christians, in their commerce and civil dealings one with another.



### 1 Corinthians 6:3

Ver. 3. That the saints shall judge angels, is here so plainly asserted, as a thing within their knowledge, that none can doubt it; but how, or when, or what angels, is not so easily determined. The best interpreters understand it of the evil angels, that is, the devils, whom the saints shall judge at the last day, agreeing with the Judge of the whole earth in the sentence which he shall then give against the evil angels, confining them to the bottomless pit, who, while this world lasteth, have a greater liberty as princes of the air, to rove abroad in the air, and to work mightily in the children of disobedience. Others understand the judging of angels here mentioned, of the spoiling of the devils of the kingdom that they exercise in the world, in the places where the gospel hath not prevailed, by lying oracles, and seducing men to idolatry, and the worshipping of devils: in which sense Christ said: *Now shall the prince of this world be cast out*, Jo 12:31. From hence the apostle argues the competency of their brethren to judge of and to determine those little matters which were in difference between them, being but *things concerning this life*, and so of far less consequence than the judging of the world and the evil angels at the last day.

### 1 Corinthians 6:4

Ver. 4. *If then ye have judgment of things pertaining to this life*, that is, if you have any cause of suing or impleading one another for things that pertain to this life, be they of what nature they will, *set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church*; rather commit the umpirage and determination of such little differences to the meanest members of your church, than go to contend before pagans and infidels: or do not employ your teachers about them, who have higher work to be employed in; but employ those who are of a lower order in the church, and whose business and concerns lie in secular affairs.

### 1 Corinthians 6:5

Ver. 5,6. I do not speak this, as if I would have you make choice of the meanest persons among you to arbitrate and determine all matters that may be in difference between you; but it would be a shame to you if, amongst

you all, there could not be found one man whom you can judge wise enough to determine differences between you about things of this life, without bringing one another into pagan courts, to the reproach and scandal of the religion which you profess: make use of any, yea, the meanest Christians, in such judgments, rather than infidels and unbelievers, who will make use of your differences to the reproaching of the holy name of God.

### 1 Corinthians 6:6

Ver. 6,7. *Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another;* not that it is simply unlawful for men to make use of human laws, and courts, and methods of judicature; for even the laws of men are good, if they be lawfully used: and the word here used by the apostle is  $\eta\tau\tau\eta\mu\alpha$ , which signifieth rather an impotency or weakness of mind and affections, a defect or diminution from perfection, than any scandalous sin. Going to law with brethren (though lawful in itself) may be made unlawful by circumstances:

1. When it is before judges that are unbelievers, so as men's going to law before them tends to the reproach of religion, the credit and reputation of the gospel ought to be dearer to us than any little secular concern. This was the case in this place.
2. When it is for little matters, such as a coat or a cloak. It is against the law of charity to do another a great wrong to recover to ourselves a little that is our right.
3. When we cannot do it without wrath, anger, impatience, covetousness, or desire of revenge. It is a thing possible to go to law without sin, but what very few do, through that corruption which cleaveth to corrupt nature.

*Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?* It is therefore far more becoming conscientious Christians to take a little wrong, and to suffer themselves to be cheated of their right, especially under such circumstances, where the credit of the gospel and religion must lose more than they can get. And to do otherwise

speaks ἡττημα, a defect or imperfection in Christians, and is not without its guilt. If, by their contentiousness, they do not show themselves so bad as some would make them, who hold all contendings at law amongst Christians unlawful, yet they do not show themselves so good as the rule of Christianity requireth them to be, Mt 5:39,40 Lu 6:29 Ro 12:19.

### 1 Corinthians 6:8

Ver. 8. The apostle riseth higher in his charge against them; he had before only charged them for want of self-denial, that they could not bear or suffer wrong; he now chargeth them for doing wrong and defrauding, and that not heathens, (which yet had been bad enough), but Christians that were their brethren, whom they had the highest obligations upon them imaginable to love, and to do good to. And indeed this charge followeth directly upon the other: for as in war, one army always are murderers, or guilty of the blood which they spill; so in suing at law, (which is a civil war between the two parties), either the one or the other party suing must do wrong, either putting his brother to trouble and expense, to recover of him what is not his right, or that he might withhold from him what is truly and indeed his right, either of which is indeed a doing of wrong or defrauding.

### 1 Corinthians 6:9

Ver. 9. That by *the kingdom of God* is here meant the kingdom of glory, the happiness of another life, is plain, because he speaketh in the future tense; this kingdom, he saith, *the unrighteous*, that is, those who so live and die, *shall not inherit*. If we take the term *unrighteous* here to be a generical term, the species, or some of the principal species, of which are afterwards enumerated, it signifieth here the same with notoriously wicked men. But if we take it to signify persons guilty of acts of injustice towards themselves or others, it cannot be here understood as a general term, relating to all those species of sinners after enumerated; for so *idolaters* cannot properly be called unrighteous, but ungodly men.

*Be not deceived,* ( saith the apostle), either by any false teachers, or by the

many ill examples of such sinners that you daily have, nor by magistrates' connivance at these sins.

*Neither fornicators;* neither such as, being single persons, commit uncleanness with others (for here the apostle distinguisheth these sinners from adulterers, whom he mentioneth afterward).

*Nor idolaters;* nor such as either worship the creature instead of God, or worship the true God before images.

*Nor adulterers;* nor such as, being married persons, break their marriage covenant, and commit uncleanness with such as are not their yokefellows.

*Nor effeminate persons;* nor persons that give up themselves to lasciviousness, burning continually in lusts.

*Nor abusers of themselves with mankind;* nor such as are guilty of the sin of Sodom, a sin not to be named amongst Christians or men.

### 1 Corinthians 6:10

Ver. 10. *Nor thieves;* nor such as take away the goods of their neighbours clandestinely, or by violence, without their consent or any just authority.

*Nor covetous;* nor persons who discover themselves excessively to love money, by their endeavours to get it into their hands any way, by oppression, cheating, or defrauding others.

*Nor drunkards;* nor persons that make drinking their business, and use it excessively, without regard to the law and rules of temperance and sobriety.

*Nor revilers;* nor persons that use their tongues intemperately, railing at others, and reviling them with reproachful and opprobrious names.

*Nor extortioners;* nor any such as by violence wring out of people's hands what is not their due. None of these, not repenting of these sinful courses, and turning from them into a contrary course of life, shall ever come into

heaven.

### 1 Corinthians 6:11

Ver. 11. In the two last verses the apostle had pronounced a terrible sentence, especially to the Corinthians, who, having been heathens lately, had wallowed in a great deal of this guilt; he therefore here, that they might be humbled, and have low thoughts of themselves, and not be puffed up, (as he had before charged them), mindeth them, that some of them had been guilty of some of these enormous sins, some of them of one or some of them, and others of other of them. But, that they might not despair in their reflections upon that guilt, he tells them, they were *washed*, not only with the baptism of water, but with the baptism of the blood of Christ, and with the baptism of the Holy Ghost, *born again of water and of the Spirit, Joh 3:5*; yea, and not only washed, but *sanctified*, filled with new, spiritual habits, through the renewing of the Holy Ghost: having obtained a true righteousness, in which they might stand and appear before God, even the righteousness of Christ, reckoned unto them for righteousness; *justified* through the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, and *sanctified* through the Spirit of holiness. So that the washing, first mentioned in this verse, seemeth to be a generical term, comprehending both justification, remission of sin, and deliverance from the guilt of it; and also regeneration and sanctification, which is the proper effect of the Spirit of grace, creating in the soul new habits and dispositions, by which it is enabled and inclined, as to die unto sin, so to live unto God. This the apostle doth not say of them all, (for it is very probable there were in this church some hypocrites), but of some of them.

### 1 Corinthians 6:12

Ver. 12. The words of this text are not so difficult in themselves, as it is to make out the connection they have with, and the dependence they have upon, what went before and what followeth after. Some, thinking that they refer unto what the apostle had said before about their going to law before infidels in the first seven verses, lest any should say: Is it not then lawful for men to sue at law for their just dues and rights? The apostle answers: Admit it be, yet Christians ought not only to consider what is strictly

lawful and just, but they ought to consider circumstances; for: *Quicquid non expedit, in quantum non expedit non licet*, is an old and good rule; An action that is in itself lawful, may be by circumstances made sinful and unlawful; and that was the case as to the Christians going to law before infidels. But others, and those the most, think that the apostle here begins a new head of discourse to dissuade from the sin of fornication, and from an intemperate use of meat and drink, as being provocative of lust, and disposing them to that sin. Now, lest they should say, Is it not lawful then to eat and drink liberally, must we eat and drink for bare necessity? He answereth: *All things are lawful for me*; that is, all things which are not forbidden by the law of God may be used, may be done, under fair circumstances; but circumstances may alter the case, *all things* may not be *expedient* to be used or done by all persons, or at all times. The Corinthians might possibly conclude too much from what he had told them, that they were *washed, justified, and sanctified*, viz. that now all things were lawful to them, at least all things not simply and absolutely condemned in the word of God: the apostle correcteth their mistake, by telling them they were to have a regard to expedience, and the profit of others, the neglect of which might make things that were in themselves lawful to become unlawful. Besides that, they must take heed that they did not make such a use, even of lawful things, as to *be brought under the power* of them; which men are, when they become potent temptations to them to sin against God any way.

### 1 Corinthians 6:13

Ver. 13. The beginning of this verse seemeth to give a great light to our true understanding of the former verse, and maketh it very probable that the apostle spake with reference to the free use of meats and drinks, when he said: *All things are lawful for me*. Though God hath ordained *meats* for the filling of *the belly*, and hath made *the belly* for the receptacle of *meats*, for the nourishment of the body, so as the use of meats and drinks is lawful; yet when we see that the free use of them proveth inexpedient, as too much pampering the body, and disposing it to wantonness, so far as they do so they are to be avoided. Others make the connection thus: All your contests are but for things which concern the belly, for meats and drinks, for perishing things; now, in things of this nature, all things that are lawful are not expedient. Others say, that the apostle here answereth or

obviateth what the Nicolaitanes or the Epicureans held, that all sorts of meats and drinks were lawful, yea, fornication itself. The apostle grants the first, but denieth the second, there being not a parity of reason for the lawfulness of meats and drinks, and of fornication. He tells them, God had ordained meats for the belly of man, and had created the stomach and belly for the reception of meats for the nourishment of man's body, and the preservation of his life; yet they ought to use them lawfully, and to consider expedience in the use of them, and not too eagerly to contend for them, for *God shall destroy both* the belly, and the use of meats as to the belly. In the resurrection, as men shall not marry, nor give in marriage, so they shall hunger and thirst no more. But God had not created *the body* of a man *for fornication*, but for himself, that men by and with it might glorify his name, by doing his will. And *the Lord* is *for the body*, as the Head of it, to guide and direct the use of the several members of it; and as the Saviour of it, to raise it up at the last day, as he further declareth in the next words (see 1Co 6:14).

#### 1 Corinthians 6:14

Ver. 14. *And God hath both raised up the Lord;* the Lord Jesus Christ, as the first-fruits of those that sleep, from whose resurrection the apostle largely proveth our resurrection, 1Co 15:1-58.

*And will also raise up us by his own power:* God will raise up his saints by his own Almighty power.

#### 1 Corinthians 6:15

Ver. 15. Christ is united to the person of the believer, and he is the Head of the church, which is his mystical body; so that the bodies of believers are in a sense the members of Christ, and should be used by us as the members of Christ, which we should not rend from him: but he that doth commit fornication, rends his body from Christ, and maketh it *the member of an harlot*; for as the man and wife are one flesh by Divine ordination, Ge 2:24, so the fornicater and the harlot are one flesh by an impure conjunction.

### 1 Corinthians 6:16

Ver. 16. The conjunction of the husband and wife, mentioned Ge 2:24, and the conjunction of the fornicator and the harlot, differ not as to the species of the act, only as to the morality of it; the former is an honest and lawful act, the other a dishonest and filthy act. So that he that is wickedly joined to a harlot, maketh himself one flesh with her with whom he committeth that folly and lewdness, and he must needs by it separate his body from its membership with Christ, whose holiness will admit no such union.

### 1 Corinthians 6:17

Ver. 17. This phrase *joined unto the Lord*, is thought to be taken out of De 10:20: *To him shalt thou cleave*. He that hath attained to that mystical union which is between Christ and every one that is a true believer, is not essentially, but spiritually and mystically, *one spirit* with Christ; his spirit is united to the Spirit of Christ, and he is one by him in faith and love, and by obedience, Christ and he have one will, and he is ruled and governed by Christ: therefore you must take heed what you do in making your bodies the members of harlots, which they cannot be, and the members of Christ also.

### 1 Corinthians 6:18

Ver. 18. The apostle cometh to a new argument, by which he presseth them to flee the sin of uncleanness. It is observed by some, that this sin is peculiarly to be resisted, not so much by resisting it, and pondering arguments against it, as by flying from it, avoiding all occasions of it, and not suffering our thoughts to feed upon it; but the apostle's argument is, because other sins are *without the body*, that is, the body hath not such a blemish and note or mark of infamy laid upon it by any other sin as by this: in drunkenness the liquor, in gluttony the meat, in other sins something without a man's self is that which is abused, but the body itself is the thing which is abused in this filthy sin. So he that is guilty of it, *sinneth* not only against his wife, with whom he is one flesh, but *against his body*, which he abuseth in this vile and sinful act, and upon which he



imprints a mark of infamy and disgrace, a blot not to be washed out but with the blood of Christ. So as though by other sins men may sin against their own bodies, yet by no sin so eminently as by this sin. Other sins have their seat in the mind and soul; the body, and commonly some particular member of the body, is but the servant of the soul in the execution and committing of them; but lust, though indeed it ariseth from the heart, yet it is committed more in the body than any other sin is.

### 1 Corinthians 6:19

Ver. 19. The apostle, 1Co 3:16, had called the church of Corinth, *the temple of God*, and there made use of it to dissuade them from dissensions and divisions, because by them they defiled and destroyed the temple of God; here he calls the members of that church, *the temple of the Holy Ghost*, which strongly proveth the Holy Ghost to be God: he makes use of it here as an argument to dissuade them from the sin of fornication. God's temple was built for his habitation upon earth, the place which he chose most to manifest himself in to his people, and for a place wherein his people were to pay him that external homage and worship, which he required of them under the law. So as the apostle's calling them *the temple of the Holy Ghost*, both minded them of the favour God had bestowed on them, and also of that homage and duty which they with their bodies were to pay unto God; the latter they could not perform, nor hope for the former, while they lived in the practice of a sin so contrary to the will of God. Besides, he mindeth them, that their bodies were not their own, they had them of God: they had them from God by creation, and they were upheld by the daily workings of his providence in their upholding and preservation; God had not given them their bodies for this use, the body was not for fornication, as he had told them, 1Co 6:13. So as in abusing their bodies, they abused what was not their own, nor in their own power to use, as they listed to use them; but to be used only for those ends, and in that manner, that he who had given them had prescribed and directed: and in these abuses there was a kind of sacrilege; as God of old charged the Jews, Eze 16:17-19, that they had taken the *jewels of his gold and his silver*, to make *images, and commit spiritual whoredom with them*; and they had taken his *meat, his fine flour, his oil, and incense to set before them, &c.*

## 1 Corinthians 6:20

Ver. 20. *For ye are bought with a price; what price this is that is here mentioned Peter tells us, both negatively and positively, 1Pe 1:18,19: Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.* So he argueth with them against this sin from their redemption, it being suitable to reason, that those who are redeemed out of any slavery or captivity, should be the servants of him who redeemed them, not of those tyrants from whom they are redeemed; such are our lusts and corruptions, from which we are redeemed, as well as from that curse and wrath, which is the consequent of them.

*Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's; therefore, (saith the apostle), you who are redeemed with a price, and with such a price, are bound to glorify God, as by speaking well of his name, so by obeying his will, Mt 5:16. And this you are bound to do, not with your bodies or your spirits only, but in or with your bodies and spirits also, that is, with your whole man; for both of them are God's, by a manifold right, not that of creation and providence only, but that of redemption also: with which exhortation the apostle finisheth this discourse, and cometh to give them an answer to some questions about which they had wrote unto him.*

## 1 Corinthians 7:1

### Chapter Summary

1Co 7:1-9 Marriage is to be used as a remedy against fornication.

1Co 7:10,11 Christ hath forbidden to dissolve the bond thereof.

1Co 7:12-16 Directions how to act where one of the parties is an unbeliever.

1Co 7:17-24 Every man must abide in and fulfil the duties of the state wherein he was called.

1Co 7:25-38 Directions concerning the marriage of virgins, respecting the distress of the times,

1Co 7:39,40 and concerning the second marriage of

widows .

Ver. 1. It seemeth, that though this church was very much corrupted, yet some of them retained a reverence for this great apostle, and had wrote one or more letters to him about some points, to which he returneth answer. It seemeth that one thing they had wrote to him about, was about marriage; not about the lawfulness of marrying, (that *doctrine of devils* was not broached so early in the world), but concerning the advisableness of marriage, and men's use of their wives, in that afflicted state of the church. The apostle answereth, that *it is good for a man not to touch a woman*. When he saith: *It is good*, he means only more convenient, or better, with respect to the troubled state of the church, or that persons might be more at liberty for the service of God and the duties of religion. Upon these accounts it were more convenient for a man not to marry, for that he meaneth by touching a woman.

### 1 Corinthians 7:2

Ver. 2. *Nevertheless, to avoid fornication;* in the Greek it is, Because of fornications; the sense of which can be no other than this which our translators give. The word is in the plural number, to signify that that which he meaneth by this term, is all sorts of impurities and uncleannesses, which are the products of the lusts of the flesh. These are sins of that nature and species, that if we cannot choose what in respect of some circumstances would be more convenient, we must balk it, rather than run into such a guilt. The apostle doth therefore determine, that in this case it was every man's duty to marry, and every woman's likewise; the reason of which must be, because God had ordained marriage as a means to bridle men, and restrain them from extravagant lusts.

*His own wife, her own husband;* a clear place against polygamy.

### 1 Corinthians 7:3

Ver. 3. The word translated *due benevolence*, signifieth due goodwill or kindness, but from 1Co 7:5, it appeareth what the apostle meaneth: Moses, Ex 21:10, calleth it, the *duty of marriage*; both of them using a modest

term in expressing the conjugal act, as we shall observe the Scripture always doing, when there is occasion to mention what men of profane hearts are ready to make a scoff at. The apostle maketh this the mutual duty both of husband and wife, under due circumstances, therefore useth the word *render*, which implieth the thing required to be an act of justice.

#### 1 Corinthians 7:4

Ver. 4. He gives the reason of it; because marriage takes away from each married person the power over his or her own body, and giveth it to their correlate. The apostle seemeth here to answer a question propounded to him by some members of this church: Whether, though they were married, the husband and wife might not forbear each other's bed, and make us of their society each with other merely for helps in other things, such as getting an estate, looking after the affairs of a family, &c.? Which the apostle doth by no means judge advisable.

#### 1 Corinthians 7:5

Ver. 5. *Defraud not one the other;* that is: Withhold not yourselves one from another; which he rightly calls defrauding one another, because he had before declared it a debt; and further declared, that neither the husband nor the wife had a power over their own bodies, but the power of either of their bodies was in their correlate. He adds, *except it be with consent*, mutual consent, and then it is indeed no defrauding; and *for a time*, for a religious end, *that they might give themselves to fasting and prayer:* not that this abstinence is necessary to us by any Divine precept, to prepare us for solemn prayer, (for such only is here spoken of), for then the apostle would not have made consent necessary in this case; but the Jews were commanded it, Ex 19:15, as a preparation to their hearing of the law; and it was a piece of the legal purification, as appeareth from 1Sa 21:4, as to which Christians were at liberty, and might observe or not observe it, as they agreed.

*And come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency:* then he requires, that they should return to their former course, not defrauding one another, lest the devil, observing their abstinence, should

tempt them to unlawful mixtures, seeing their inability to contain themselves within the bounds of temperance and chastity.

### 1 Corinthians 7:6

Ver. 6. Some refer these words to all that had gone before in this chapter; but the best interpreters rather refer them to what went immediately before in the preceding verse, declaring, that he had no express command from God, as to those things of abstaining for a time for fasting and prayer, and then coming together again, but he spake what he judged equitable and reasonable; but as to particular persons, they ought to judge and govern themselves according to their particular circumstances.

### 1 Corinthians 7:7

Ver. 7. *I would that all men were even as I myself: I would,* in this place, can signify no more than, I could wish or desire, (if it were the will of God), that all Christians had the gift of continency, which God (blessed be his name) hath given me: that this is meant, is plain by the next words, and 1Co 7:9: it is apparent that Paul did not will this absolutely, for that had been to have willed the dissolution of the world, as well as the church, within the compass of that age.

*But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that:* But, saith the apostle, every one hath not the gift of continency, one hath it, another hath it not; which is the same thing which our Saviour said in reply to his disciples, saying: *If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given,* Mt 19:10.

### 1 Corinthians 7:8

Ver. 8. *By the unmarried and widows,* it is apparent that Paul means virgins that were never married, and such as, having been once married, had lost their husbands: though the first word, in the Greek, had been significative enough of persons in both these states; yet the apostle's using

of two words, makes it past dispute; when he saith, it is good for such to be as he was, his meaning is, that it was better with respect to the present circumstances of Christians, or it was convenient, in which notion *good* is often taken, not for what is absolutely good; and indeed the nature of all good lieth in the conveniency or suitableness of the thing so called to us; and though in the Divine precepts there is always such a suitableness, so as they must be always good, yet in other things, which God hath left to our liberty, (such as is this of marriage), a thing may be good or evil, as the circumstances of several persons, yea, of the same person, may vary. St. Paul considereth only the circumstances of the world common to all Christians, and upon them, determines this goodness, supposing the circumstances of the particular person not to rule otherwise. His not saying, it is good for them not to marry, but to be as he was, hath bred a question of no great import to be determined: Whether Paul was ever married or not? In the determination of which the ancients could not agree; but it is not worth spending our time about, considering that all agree he was at this time unmarried, which is all he doth here mean: if St. Paul was never married, we are sure Peter was, for we read of his *wife's mother sick of a fever*, Mr 1:30.

### 1 Corinthians 7:9

Ver. 9. That St. Paul's saying: *It is good*, &c. did not signify, it is the will of God, or, (as the papists would have it), it is my counsel in order to your further perfection, is plain by his precept for them to marry if they could not contain; and this likewise lets us see that second marriages are not only lawful, but may be an incumbent duty, that is, if they who are concerned as to them cannot contain themselves within the bounds and rule of chastity, which must not only be interpreted with reference to acts of uncleanness. This is contradicted by the reason given by the apostle, determining that marriage was much more eligible than burning, which term signifies the inward fervour and eager inclinations of the mind, not the acts only of the outward man.

### 1 Corinthians 7:10

Ver. 10. The apostle had spoke to the married before, but in another case,

he now returneth in his discourse to them again, speaking to another case, which it should seem they had put to him; what it was is not plainly expressed, but it may easily be gathered from 1Co 7:12,13, as also from the apostle's determination in this verse: or it was this: Whether it was lawful for the husband to depart from his wife, or the wife from her husband, unless it were in the case of adultery; for though here be nothing spoken as to that case, yet it plainly must be excepted, as determined before by our Saviour; but as the Jews, so the heathens amongst whom these Corinthians lived, had entertained much too mean thoughts about the marriage bond, indulging themselves in a liberty to break it for every slight cause; and it should seem by 1Co 7:12,13, it was judged by them a sufficient cause, if one of them were not converted to the faith of Christ. Now in this case, saith the apostle, *I command*, and what I tell you is the will of God; it is not I alone who command it, but you are to look upon it as the will of God concerning you, though revealed to you by me that am the minister of God to you.

*Let not the wife depart from her husband;* she may be divorced from her husband in case of fornication, but let her not for any other cause make a voluntary secession.

### 1 Corinthians 7:11

Ver. 11. How our translators came to translate χωρισθη, which is manifestly a verb passive, *if she depart*, I cannot tell. It signifieth, if she be departed, and so is as well significative of a being parted from her husband by a judicial act of divorce, as of a voluntary departing. The Jews were wont to give bills of divorce to their wives for any trivial cause. The word is to be interpreted as well of any legal divorce, not according to the true meaning of the Divine law, as concerning a voluntary secession; in which case the apostle commandeth that she should marry to no other: the reason is plain, because no such cause of divorce broke the bond of marriage; she was yet the wife of her former husband in God's eye and account, and committed adultery if she married to another, as our Saviour had determined, Mt 5:32 19:9. But he gives her a liberty to *be reconciled to her husband*. In case that a woman put away by her husband became another man's wife, by the law, De 24:4, she might not (though that latter husband died) return to her former husband; but in case she remained

unmarried, she might be reconciled to him.

*And let not the husband put away his wife;* the apostle giveth the same precept concerning husbands.

### 1 Corinthians 7:12

Ver. 12. *But to the rest speak I, not the Lord;* either as to the other part of your Epistle, or as to the cases of the rest mentioned in your Epistle, I shall give you my advice so far as I am instructed by the Holy Spirit of God, though our Lord Jesus Christ hath set no certain rule concerning them.

*If any brother hath a wife that believeth not: that believeth not,* both here and 1Co 7:13, signifieth, that hath not embraced the Christian faith, but still remaineth a pagan.

*And she be pleased to dwell with him;* if there be no other matter of difference between such persons, save only in matter of religion, *let him not* for that *put her away*. If a Christian man or woman had their choice to make, it were unlawful for either of them to make choice of a pagan for their yoke-fellow; but if, after marriage, either the husband or the wife embraceth the Christian faith, the other correlate still abiding a pagan, their difference in religion is not a sufficient ground for a separation: this seemeth to be the apostle's meaning. The case seemeth a little different in the opinion of some divines, when the idolater or idolatress blasphemeth God and the true religion, and is continually tempting the correlate to apostacy: but it is hard to determine against the plain precept of so great an apostle, especially considering the reason by which he backeth his precept.

### 1 Corinthians 7:14

Ver. 13,14. Sanctifying, in holy writ, generally signifieth the separation or setting apart of a person or thing from a common, to and for a holy use, whether it be by some external rites and ceremonies, or by the infusing of some inward spiritual habits. In this place it seemeth to have a different sense from what it usually hath in holy writ; for it can neither signify the



sanctification of the person by infused habits of grace; for neither is the unbelieving husband thus sanctified by the believing wife, neither is the unbelieving wife thus sanctified by the believing husband; nor are either of them thus set apart for the service of God by any legal rites: which hath made a great difference in the notions of interpreters, how *the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife, or the unbelieving wife, by the believing husband*. Some think it signifies no more than prepared for God, as *sanctified* signifies, Isa 13:3. Others think they are sanctified by a moral denomination. I rather think it signifies, brought into such a state, that the believer, without offence to the law of God, may continue in a married estate with such a yoke-fellow; and the state of marriage is a holy state, notwithstanding the disparity with reference to religion.

*Else were your children unclean;* otherwise, he saith, the children begotten and born of such parents would be unclean, in the same state that the children of pagan parents are without the church, not within the covenant, not under the promise. In one sense all children are unclean, i.e. children of wrath, born in sin, and brought forth in iniquity; but all are not in this sense unclean, some are within the covenant of grace, within the church, capable of baptism.

*But now are they holy;* these are those that are called *holy*; not as inwardly renewed and sanctified, but relatively, in the same sense that all the Jewish nation are called *a holy people*: and possibly this may give us a further light to understand the term *sanctified*, in the former part of the verse. The unbelieving husband is so far sanctified by the believing wife, and the unbelieving wife so far sanctified by the believing husband, that as they may lawfully continue in their married relation, and live together as man and wife, so the issue coming from them both shall be by God counted in covenant with him, and have a right to baptism, which is one of the seals of that covenant, as well as those children both whose parents are believers.

### 1 Corinthians 7:15

Ver. 15. If the unbelieving husband or the unbelieving wife will leave his or her correlate, that is, so leave them as to return no more to live as a husband or as a wife with her or him that is Christian, *let him depart*. Such

a person hath broken the bond of marriage, and in such cases Christians are *not under bondage*, they are not tied by law to fetch them again, nor by the laws of God to keep themselves unmarried for their perverseness. But it may be objected, that nothing but adultery, by the Divine law, breaketh that bond.

*Answer.* That is denied. Nothing but adultery is a justifiable cause of divorce: no man may put away his wife, nor any wife put away her husband, but for adultery. But the husband's voluntary leaving his wife, or the wife's voluntary leaving her husband, with a resolution to return no more to them, breaks also the bond of marriage, frustrating it as to the ends for which God hath appointed it; and, after all due means used to bring again the party departing to their duty, doth certainly free the correlate. So that although nothing can justify repudiation, or putting away a wife or a husband, and marrying another, but the adultery of the person so divorced and repudiated; yet the departure either of husband or wife without the other's consent for a long time, and refusal to return after all due means used, especially if the party so going away doth it out of a hatred and abomination of the other's religion, will justify the persons so deserted, after due waiting and use of means to reduce him or her to their duty, wholly to cast off the person deserting; for no Christian in such a case, by God's law, is under bondage.

*But God hath called us to peace;* for God hath called Christians unto peace, and in his ordinance of marriage aimed at the quiet and peace of his people in their service of him in their families and relations; and therefore as Christians ought not to disturb the peace of their own consciences, turning away their relations, though they be unbelievers; yet neither are they bound, if such will leave them, to court their own continual trouble and disturbance.

### 1 Corinthians 7:16

Ver. 16. The apostle having before determined the lawfulness of a Christian husband's or wife's abiding in a state of marriage with a wife or husband that was an infidel, if she or he were willing to abide with the believer, now argues the great advantage which might be from it, for the glory of God, and the good of the soul of such husband or wife.

*What knowest thou, O wife?* saith he; it is not certain that God will so far bless thy converse with thy husband or wife, as that thou shalt, by thy instruction, admonition, or example, be an occasion or instrument to bring them to Christ; but it is neither impossible nor improbable, and their willingness (notwithstanding their difference from thee in religion) yet to abide with thee, may give thee some hopes that they will hearken to thee. They are often (in the language of holy writ) said to save others, who are instrumental to bring them to Christ, 1Co 9:22 1Ti 4:16 Jas 5:20. We ought to bear with many inconveniences to ourselves, where our bearing with them may any way promote the glory of God or the good of souls.

### 1 Corinthians 7:17

Ver. 17. Calling in this place signifieth that station and course of life, wherein by the providence of God any man is set. Some think, that this precept hath a special reference to what went before, as if the sense were this: If God by his providence hath so ordered it that thy heart be changed, thy wife's or thy husband's heart being not yet changed, but he or she remaining pagans, yet let not this cause any separation between you, but, unless the unbeliever will depart, live yet as man and wife together, mutually performing conjugal offices each to other. But the following verses, (1Co 7:21,22), where the apostle speaks of *called being a servant*, show this interpretation to be too narrow. The sense of the text is, that the profession of Christianity is consistent with any honest calling or course of life, and it is the will of God that Christians should not pretend their profession of religion, to excuse them from the duties of any relation wherein they are set.

*And so ordain I in all churches;* this is a universal rule, and concerned not the church of Corinth only, but all other churches of Christ, being an apostolical constitution.

### 1 Corinthians 7:18

Ver. 18. Is any one who was a native Jew, and so circumcised according to the Jewish law, converted (while he is in that state) to the faith of Christ?

Let him not affect the state of him that, having been formerly a Gentile, was never circumcised. On the other side, is any, being a native Gentile, and so not circumcised, converted to Christianity? Let not him affect the state of one converted from Judaism, who was circumcised. This is, doubtless, the sense of the verse, not, (as some would have it), let him not endeavour by art to make himself uncircumcised, which was the wicked practice of some, (for a better compliance with the Gentiles), of whom we read, Apc 1Mac 1:15.

### 1 Corinthians 7:19

Ver. 19. Circumcision was an ordinance of God, a sign of God's covenant, as necessary to salvation in its time, as the fulfilling of any precept of the law contained in ordinances: and uncircumcision also was something; for by the law relating to that ordinance, the uncircumcised male is determined to have broken God's covenant, and determined to a cutting off, Ge 17:10-14. But in the present state of the church, circumcision was of no value or moment in the business of salvation: *In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love,* Ga 5:6.

### 1 Corinthians 7:20

Ver. 20. Let every man abide in the same state and condition of life in which he was when he was first converted to the faith of Christ, that is, supposing that he was in an honest course of life; for we read in the Acts that the conjurers burnt their books, and unlawful courses of life must not be adhered to after men have once given up their names to Christ. The apostle's design is only to show, that the profession of Christianity maketh no state of life unlawful, which was before that profession lawful, nor dischargeth any from such as were before the duties of persons in their circumstances and relations. They too far strain this text, who interpret it into an obligation upon all men, not to alter that particular way and course of life and trading to which they were educated, and in which they formerly have been engaged; though such a thing be of too great moment and consequence for any to do without just advice and deliberation. The world is a mutable thing, and trades and particular courses of life wear out,

and what will now bring in a due livelihood, possibly seven years hence will not furnish any with bread; and it is unreasonable in such a case to think, that the rule of Christian profession ties up a man under these changes of providence to such a particular course of life, as he cannot, in it, in the sweat of his face eat his bread.

### 1 Corinthians 7:21

Ver. 21. *Art thou called being a servant? care not for it:* If while thou art a servant to another in any honest employment, thou art converted to the Christian religion, let it not trouble thee, mind it not. A man may be the servant of Christ, and yet a servant to men in any honest employment.

*But if thou mayest be made free,* by the favour of thy friends, with the consent of thy master, *use it rather;* that is, (say some), rather choose to be a servant still, (which indeed in some cases may be the duty of a good Christian), that is, if thou seest, that in that station thou canst better serve God and the interest of thy master's or other souls. But it is more probable the sense is, make use of thy liberty rather; for certain it is, that the free-man is ordinarily at more advantage for the service of God than he that is a servant.

### 1 Corinthians 7:22

Ver. 22. For the state of a servant to men no way prejudiceth a man as to his spiritual liberty; a servant and a free-man, considered with reference to Christ, are both one; a servant may be as near the kingdom of heaven as a free-man; and let a man be in never so good a state of civil liberty, yet, if he be a Christian, he is still a servant of Christ, and bound in all things to obey him. As to the new man, *there is neither bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all.*

### 1 Corinthians 7:23

Ver. 23. What *price we are bought with,* we heard, 1Co 6:20: the apostle there pressed it upon us as our duty to glorify God with our bodies and our

spirits; here he presseth upon us another duty, viz. upon that consideration not to be *the servants of men*; by which some think he forbiddeth the selling themselves as slaves to infidels; others think that he only forbiddeth *eye-service*, as the apostle calls it, Eph 6:6; while in the mean time they might be the servants of men, if they served them *as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men*. But the most probable interpretation is: Be not servants to the lusts of men: wherein you can serve men, and in the same actions also serve God, and be obedient to his will, you may be the servants of men; but be not servants of men in such actions wherein, to serve them, you must disobey God.

#### 1 Corinthians 7:24

Ver. 24. In whatsoever state or condition, whether he be married or unmarried, whether he be a master or a servant, whether he were before circumcised or uncircumcised, let him not think Christianity obligeth him to alter it; he may abide in it, only he must *abide* in it *with God*, as one who remembereth God's eye is upon him, and seeth him, and that he is bound to approve himself in it unto God, and to keep a good conscience towards him, as one that is a member of the church of God, and under the laws of it.

#### 1 Corinthians 7:25

Ver. 25. He had before spoken to married persons and widows, now he comes to speak *concerning virgins*; and though he mentions only the female sex, yet the following words show that his advice extended to both. As to them he saith, he had no special direction from Christ, none that would suit the case of every virgin; but yet he would give his advice, what seemed to him best. And he would have them look upon him *as one that himself had received mercy from the Lord*, and as he desired to be faithful in the discharge of his trust, so might and ought to have credit given him in what he said. In which sense we read in Scripture of *a faithful saying, a faithful Creator, a faithful man, &c.*

### 1 Corinthians 7:26

Ver. 26. *Good* here signifieth convenient, (as before), if other circumstances of particular persons make it not sinful; or better with respect to *the present distress* or necessity: by which, without doubt, the apostle meaneth, not the common necessities of all men that are born once to die, (which is the more easy the fewer relations we have to part from), nor yet of family troubles and concerns, for there is none who hath a family in this world to look after, but will have trouble in the flesh; but the continual troubles with which the church of God was disquieted, as the ark upon the waters, and the more special troubles of the primitive church; for though their great persecutions from the heathen were not, possibly, at that time begun, yet Christ had foretold them, and the apostles had them in a very near prospect (Paul is thought to have died the tenth or eleventh year of Nero). For this present necessity or distress, the apostle gives his opinion, that it was convenient and better, for those that could honestly abstain from marriage, to keep themselves in their single and unmarried condition.

### 1 Corinthians 7:27

Ver. 27. Art thou bound by marriage, or bound by contract, do not use any sinful ways to be loosed from that bond, either by divorce or by a voluntary departure: if the unbeliever will depart, he or she may, you are not obliged to court their stay, but do not you put him or her away. Are you free from a wife, either as yet unmarried, or by the hand of God separated, in case you can without sin, abstain. If your circumstances be such as they do not oblige you to marriage, do not seek a wife; the times are like to be full of trouble and difficulty. Our Master said, *Woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!* Mt 24:19.

### 1 Corinthians 7:28

Ver. 28. I would not have you mistake me, as if I judged marriage sinful for persons in any state or condition, or of any sex; but those that are married in any time, will find troubles about the things of this life, and those that marry in such times as these are, and you are like further to see,

will meet with more than ordinary troubles of this nature: I only would spare you, and have you keep yourselves as free as you can: or: *I spare you* any further discourse of that nature, not willing to torment you before the time cometh.

### 1 Corinthians 7:29

Ver. 29. He had before spoken to what concerned some, now he comes to what concerneth all.

*The time* (saith he) *is short*; furled up, like sails when the mariner comes near his port. He either meaneth the time of this life, or the time of the world's duration; we often find the apostles speaking of their times as the last times (and in these senses all are concerned): or the time of the church's rest and tranquillity, which they had hitherto enjoyed in a far more perfect degree than they enjoyed them soon after this, when ten persecutions followed immediately one upon the neck of another.

*It remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none*; therefore (saith the apostle) it is the concernment of all Christians, not to indulge themselves too much in the pleasures and contentments of this life; but if ye be married, or shall marry, you will be concerned to keep your hearts as loose from the contentment and satisfaction men use to take in their wives, as if you had no wives at all.

### 1 Corinthians 7:30

Ver. 30. *And they that weep, as though they wept not*; this consideration also should weigh with those who have a more afflicted portion in this life, and are mourners for the loss of their near relations; they have but lost what they could not long have kept, and for the time they kept them must have enjoyed them, probably, with a great deal of sorrow and bitterness.

*And they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not*; and so for any of those who rejoiced in any worldly enjoyments, the shortness of the time they are like to have them to rejoice in, should admonish them to govern and moderate their joy, for it is like to be but like the crackling of thorns under



a pot.

*And that they buy as though they possessed not; and those that have liberal possessions of good things in this life, they should look upon them as none of theirs, and use them as not like to be their possessions long.*

### 1 Corinthians 7:31

Ver. 31. *And they that use this world, as not abusing it:* while you have any thing of this world's goods you may use them, yea, you must use them, without them you cannot live in the world; but the consideration how little the time is you are like to have them to use, should govern you in the use of them, so as you ought to take heed you do not use them to any other purpose, or for any other end, than that for which God hath appointed and given them to you.

*For the fashion of this world passeth away;* for this world is like a stage or theatre where are diversities of scenes, and the present scene abideih but for a little time, then passeth, and another scene or figure of things appeareth: those who appear this day in the form of princes and nobles, tomorrow appear as beggars, and persons of a low estate and degree.

### 1 Corinthians 7:32

Ver. 32. *But I would have you without carefulness;* the reason why I have advised (during the present distressed estate of the church) a single rather than a married life, for those to whom God hath given the gift of continency, is, that those who are Christians might live as free from such cares as divide and distract men's and women's minds, as they possibly can.

*He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord:* the single person that hath a spiritual heart, disposed to pious performances, being free from other distractions and cares, caused by worldly occasions, will spend all his thoughts about his duty toward God, and how to please him.

### 1 Corinthians 7:33

Ver. 33. But he that is married hath other things which he must take care about; for besides that he is obliged to provide for his family, husbands and wives are under some obligations to please each other by divertisements, which, though not in themselves sinful, yet take up time, which those free from such relations may spend more religiously.

### 1 Corinthians 7:34

Ver. 34. There is the same difference between a married woman and a single woman, as there is between a married man and a single man. If a woman be unmarried, and be piously disposed, she hath leisure and opportunity enough to mind the things of God; but if she be married, she will then be obliged to attend secular affairs, to take care for her family, and to please her husband. It is the same thing that was before said of the man. The sense is, that a conjugal relation draws along with it many diversions, from which a single life is free.

### 1 Corinthians 7:35

Ver. 35. *And this I speak for your own profit;* for your advantage both as to your converse in the world, and also for your religious conversation, and the performance of those duties which you owe unto God; for those that are married must meet with more troubles and cares in this life, and cannot have so much time and leisure for religious duties, as others have that are not entangled in the domestic cares of a family.

*Not that I may cast a snare upon you;* yet I would not bring you under a snare, imposing what God hath not imposed, and obliging you where God hath not obliged you.

*But for that which is comely;* the word here is εὐσχημον, it strictly signifies a thing of a good figure, and is translated in Scripture *honourable*, Mr 15:43 Ac 13:50 17:11; where it signifies what is of a fair and good

repute in the eye of the world; which is also the sense of it, 1Co 12:24, where we read of the *comely parts* of man's body; but in this place the word signifies most largely, the same with profitable and convenient. For marriage is a state which neither is in itself indecent, nor ever was so reputed in the world by any nation, and the Scripture tells us, that *marriage is honourable amongst all*, Heb 13:4. The word therefore here is of the same significancy with συμφερον, which in the beginning of the verse is translated *profit*, and 1Co 6:12, is translated *expedient*. *And that you may attend upon the Lord without distraction*; the phrase in the Greek is very difficult to be translated properly into our English language, word for word it is, to sit well to the Lord without distraction; our translators render it, *attend upon the Lord*. We have something like it in our language, when we express our diligent attendance to a thing, under the notion of sitting close to a business; which is opposed to such an attendance to business as we give when we have many avocations and callings away, so as we cannot sit close to it. The apostle saith, that this was the end of his advising those who could contain not to marry under that state of things in the world referring to the church, that they might with more ease and conveniency attend to the great concerns of their souls, without those distracting and dividing thoughts which they must have who were entangled with domestic businesses and relations.

### 1 Corinthians 7:36

Ver. 36. *But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely*: there is a general and a particular uncomeliness; some things are uncomely with respect to all persons; of such things the apostle doth not here speak; but of a particular uncomeliness with respect to the circumstances of particular persons. Neither doth *uncomely* here signify a mere indecency and unhandsomeness, but such a behaviour as suiteth not the general rules of the gospel, which judgment is to be ruled by the circumstances of persons, as they more or less desire marriage.

*If she pass the flower of her age*; if she be of marriageable years, or rather, if she beginneth to grow old, *and need so require*, and be desirous of marriage, so as the parent seeth reason to fear that, if he gives her not in marriage, she will so dispose of herself without asking her father's advice or leave, or be exposed, possibly, to worse temptations: which two things

seem to interpret that term, *if need so require*.

*Let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry;* in such a case as this a Christian parent shall not sin, if he disposeth her in marriage let her marry to such a person as she loveth, and her parent seeth proper for her. He speaks in the plural number because marriage is between two persons. The reason of this determination is, because the apostle, in his former discourse, had no where condemned a married estate during the present distress of things, as sinful or unlawful, but only as inexpedient, or not so expedient as a single life during the present distress; he had before determined, 1Co 7:9, that it was *better to marry than to burn*. Now no inexpediency of a thing can balance what is plainly sinful. If therefore the case be such, that a man or woman must marry, or sin, through marriage brings with it more care and trouble, yet it is to be preferred before plain sinning.

### 1 Corinthians 7:37

Ver. 37. *Nevertheless he that standeth stedfast in his heart;* if a man be resolved to keep his daughter a virgin, not uncertain in his own mind, and wavering what he should do, upon a just consideration of circumstances; *having no necessity;* and doth not see a necessity to dispose of her, either for the avoiding some sin against God, or for the better providing for himself and the rest of his family; *but hath power over his own will;* but hath a perfect freedom in his own will, so that his will be not contradicted by his daughter's fondness of a married life; for in such a case the father, though he would willingly not dispose of his daughter in marriage, yet ought to be overruled by the will of his daughter, and so hath not a power over his own will, being forced by the rules of religion to take care of the soul and spiritual welfare of his child; for though the parent hath a great power over his child, and ought to consent to the marriage of his child, yet he hath no such power as wholly to hinder them from marriage.

*And hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin;* if he be fully resolved, upon a due consideration of all circumstances, and the virgin be satisfied, and yields up herself in the case to her father's pleasure, in such a case, if the father doth not put her upon marriage, but resolves to keep her unmarried, he *doeth well;* that is, not only he shall not sin against God, but

he doth that which is more eligible, considering the present circumstances of things, and better than if he did find out a husband for her, and give her to him (as it is expounded in the next verse).

### 1 Corinthians 7:38

Ver. 38. *So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well:* there is no general rule for all parents in this case, where the duty or sin of parents may arise from their or their children's different circumstances. But supposing that a parent, having duly weighed all circumstances, be fully resolved, and he finds the child's will concurring, that she can forbear, and is willing to do in the case what her parent desires; in such a case as this, if the parent disposeth her in marriage, I cannot say he sinneth, but he doth what he may do.

*But he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better;* but with reference to the present state of things in the church and in the world, and with reference to the young woman's liberty for the service of God, he doth better, if he doth not so dispose her. The thing is in itself indifferent, and Christians must be in it ruled and inclined one way or another from circumstances.

### 1 Corinthians 7:39

Ver. 39. The apostle all along this chapter hath been speaking to several cases, which the church of Corinth had put to him concerning marriage; some that concerned persons already married, others that concerned such as were single, having been never married; he shutteth up his discourse with advice which relateth to such as had lost their husbands, with reference to second marriages. As to this he determineth, that no woman might marry again while her first husband lived; that is, unless her husband, be legally divorced from her for adultery, or unless her husband, being a heathen, had voluntarily deserted her: but if her husband were dead, she might marry to whom she would; yet she was not at such liberty, as that she might marry an unbeliever. Unbelievers are either heathens, or Christians in name, but such as are idolaters, or profane persons, or heretics, who hold such tenets as are inconsistent with any true faith in

Jesus Christ. This phrase, *only in the Lord*, seemeth to oblige godly women, not only to avoid marrying with heathens, but with nominal Christians; that is, such who, although they have been baptized, and own Christ with their tongues, yet hold such damnable opinions, or live such profane lives, or worship God in such an idolatrous manner, as is inconsistent with any true faith in Christ. The reason of the precept holds as well to the latter as to the former.

### 1 Corinthians 7:40

Ver. 40. But if other circumstances concur, that a widow can abide without marriage without waxing wanton, and running into temptation, and so as to manage her outward concerns without the help of a husband, my opinion is, that she is more happy if she keeps herself a widow, and doth not marry again; not more happy because more holy, or in a fairer road to the kingdom of heaven, but upon the two accounts before mentioned; more happy because free from troubles and distractions, and because she will be more free and at liberty to mind heavenly things.

*And I think also that I have the Spirit of God;* and, saith he, I think I know as much of the mind of the Holy Spirit of God, as either those who teach you otherwise, or who may have opinions contrary to mine in this case.

### 1 Corinthians 8:1

#### Chapter Summary

1Co 8:1-3 The preference of charity to knowledge.

1Co 8:4-6 An idol is nothing in the esteem of those who have right notions of one God, and of one Lord Jesus Christ.

1Co 8:7-13 But it is sin in those, who by an indiscreet use of their knowledge, in eating meats offered to idols, tempt weaker consciences to offend.

Ver. 1. The apostle proceedeth to a new argument, about which the Corinthians had wrote to him, viz. about the eating of meat *offered to*

*idols.* Of this meat offered to idols we have this account given us: Feasts upon sacrifices were very usual amongst the heathens; they first offered oxen, sheep, or other cattle to the idol; then the priest offered a part, burning it upon the idol's altar; other part they restored to the offerers, or took it to themselves. The priests made a feast in the idol's temple of their parts, and invited friends to it. The offerers either so feasted with the part restored to them in the idol's temple, or carried it home, and there feasted their neighbours with it; or else carried it into the market, and sold it (as other meat) in the shambles. The question was: Whether it was lawful for Christians, being invited to these feasts by those amongst whom they lived, to go to them, and to eat of such meat, whether it were in the idol's temple, or at the pagans' houses; or if any such meat were bought in the shambles, whether they might eat of that? Some amongst the Christians at Corinth thought any of these were lawful, because they knew an idol was nothing but a block, or piece of wood or stone, so could not defile any thing. The apostle tells them, that he knew very many of them had good degrees of *knowledge*, and every one understood that an idol was nothing; but yet he warneth them to take heed they were not puffed up with their knowledge, that is, swelled in such a confident opinion of it, that they thought they could not be mistaken, and be betrayed, by their conceit of it, to do that which is sinful; for *charity edifieth*. Charity signifieth either love to God, or love to our neighbour; here the latter seemeth to be intended, and the sense is: That they were not only concerned in the good of their own souls, but of their neighbours' also, and to do that which might tend to their profit and edification, not to their ruin and destruction.

### 1 Corinthians 8:2

Ver. 2. Let it be in this or any other matter, if any man be proud of his knowledge, and be conceited that he knoweth enough, and needeth none to instruct him, he may indeed have a notion of things, but it will do him no good; a man ought to use his knowledge for the glory of God, and the edification of others. Let a man have never so large a notion of things, if he be not humble, if he useth not his knowledge to the honour of God and the advantage of others, *he knoweth nothing as he ought to know it*. Knowledge is a talent not to be laid up in a napkin.

### 1 Corinthians 8:3

Ver. 3. It is of much more advantage to a soul to be known of God, that is, owned, acknowledged, and approved, than to comprehend much of the things of God in its notion. A man may know much of God, and yet be one to whom God will one day say: Depart from me, I know you not, you workers of iniquity: but if any man love God, that man is beloved of God, and shall be owned and acknowledged by him. In this sense *know* is taken in a multitude of scriptures: see Joh 17:3. Our translators render this word *allow*, Ro 7:15.

### 1 Corinthians 8:4

Ver. 4. *Those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols;* meat which is part of that sacrifice which hath been offered to an idol, whether it be to be eaten in the idol's temple, or in a private house.

*We know that an idol is nothing in the world;* we know that an image, or an idol, the representation of some other thing, though in respect of the matter it be something, either wood, stone, or earth, and in respect of form it be something, yet it is nothing formally, or representatively; though it is set up to represent to us a Deity, there is nothing of a Divine nature, or the representation of a Divine nature, in it. It *is nothing* of what the poor blind heathen take it to be, and therefore in the Hebrew it hath its name from a word לֵאָמֹר that signifieth nothing; Job 13:14 Zec 11:17: or it *is nothing*, that can either sanctify or pollute any meat that is set before it. And we know *that there is none other God but one*: the apostle may be conceived to have spoken these words as from himself, granting what those said who took themselves to be men of knowledge; or else in the language of those who thus spake, repeating their words.

### 1 Corinthians 8:5

Ver. 5. There are many whom heathens call gods, and whom God himself calleth gods: the angels that are in heaven are called *God's host*, Ge 32:2; the heavenly host, Lu 2:13; *the sons of God*, Job 1:6 2:1. Magistrates are also called *gods*, Ps 82:6, because God hath committed a great part of his



power unto them. Thus there are many gods and many lords.

### 1 Corinthians 8:6

Ver. 6. Whatever the idolatrous heathens think or believe, to us (who are Christians) *there is but one* who is truly and essentially *God*, ( though indeed there be more than one person in the Deity), *the Father*, who is the Fountain of the Deity, communicating his Divine nature to the other two persons, and *of whom are all things*. It is a term which signifieth the primary Cause and Author of all things: we subsist in him, according to that of the apostle, Ac 17:28:

*In him we live, and move, and have our being*; and we are for him, created for his honour and glory, as the phrase may also be translated.

*And one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things*. He is the second person in the holy Trinity. It is the observation of a learned author: That though the name of God be often given to Christ, yet no where by Paul where he maketh mention of God the Father; from whence he concludes, that the term of *Lord* given to Christ, signifieth his pre-eminence above all things, (the Father excepted), according to what the apostle speaks, 1Co 15:27. By this Christ, saith the apostle, *are all things: All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made*, Joh 1:3; yet the difference of the phrase is observable, to denote to us the order of working in the holy Trinity. All things are of the Father by the Son.

*And we by him*; and we (saith the apostle) are by the Son created, redeemed, &c.

### 1 Corinthians 8:7

Ver. 7. Though some of you know that there is but one living and true God, and that an idol is nothing in the world, and meat is neither sanctified nor polluted by being set before it; yet every one doth not know so much: and though the gospel have been a long time preached amongst them, yet to this day they may have some superstitions opinion of the idol, and then their conscience will be defiled or polluted. It is much the same case at this

day as to the business of image worship, or veneration of images, and invocation of saints, amongst the papists. The wisest and most knowing of them will declaim against giving Divine adoration to the image, or to the saint, and tell us that they worship the true and living God upon the sight of the image only, and make use of the name of the saint only to desire him, or her, to pray to God for them. Now not to meddle with that question: Whether in our worshipping the true God, it be lawful to set a creature before us as our motive or incitement to worship, or use any Mediator but Christ? Yet the things are unlawful, upon the same account that the apostle here determines it unlawful for stronger Christians to eat meat offered to idols, though they knew and professed that an idol was nothing; for all people that come so to worship have not that knowledge; there are, without doubt, multitudes of simple people amongst the papists, that, plainly, in this kind of veneration and adoration venerate and adore the creature; and so their consciences are defiled by idolatry, because they have not such knowledge as others have, supposing that what those others did were lawful as to their practice, which indeed it is not.

### 1 Corinthians 8:8

Ver. 8. The apostle here speaketh in the person either of those teachers amongst them, or those more private persons amongst them, who made no difficulty of eating meat offered to idols; they objected, that meat, or the eating of meat, was not the thing which commended any man to God; they were not the better if they did eat, or the worse if they did not eat. The apostle himself had asserted this, Ro 14:17, that *the kingdom of God was not meat or drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*

### 1 Corinthians 8:9

Ver. 9. The word ἐξουσία is here well translated *liberty*, though it also signifieth right, and seems in either sense rather to signify a supposed than a real liberty or right; for we shall see in the next verse, that the apostle is here speaking of their eating in the idol's temple, which, 1Co 10:21, he determineth to be a having a communion with devils, and therefore could not be lawful; the apostle therefore seemeth here only to suppose (as they

pretended) that in their eating simply in the idol's temple they did not sin, because by eating men are not made the worse; yet, as we shall see afterwards, he declareth their action was not free from guilt, as it was a violation of that brotherly love which they were obliged to show to their neighbour.

### 1 Corinthians 8:10

Ver. 10. Here the apostle showeth how they sinned in eating meat in the idol's temple, which had been before offered to the idol, admitting the thing in itself lawful, (which indeed it was not), viz. accidentally, by laying a stumblingblock before their brethren, who either were really weak in their knowledge, or, at least, they were looked upon as such. For (saith he) if any see thee, who, they think, hast knowledge, or who boastest of thy knowledge, sit at meat in the idol's temple, will not he by it be encouraged to do the same, though possibly he judgeth it is not lawful? The word translated *emboldened*, is the same which is elsewhere often in the New Testament translated edified: it metaphorically signifies to make a progress or proficiency either in good or evil (though this be the only text in the New Testament where it is taken in an ill sense). This the apostle determines sinful; which lets us know the obligation that lieth upon every good Christian, not to use his liberty to the prejudice of others' souls, by doing any actions which we may do or let alone, which done by us may probably become a snare to them.

### 1 Corinthians 8:11

Ver. 11. *Through thy knowledge*, in this place, is, by occasion of thy knowledge. God hath not given people knowledge that they thereby should be a means to harm and to destroy, but to do good, and to save others; it is a most absurd thing for any to use their knowledge, therefore, to the destruction of others.

*Shall the weak brother perish?* By *perish* is here meant, be led into sin, by acting contrary to the judgment of his own conscience; for, (as the apostle saith, Ro 14:23): *He that doubteth is damned if he eat, for whatsoever is not of faith*, that is, done out of a firm persuasion in the party doing that it

is lawful, *is sin*.

*For whom Christ died;* though he be weak, yet if he be a true believer, Christ died for him, and there can be nothing more contrary to the duty of a charitable Christian, than to be a means to damn him whom Christ came down from heaven and died for, that he might save him.

### 1 Corinthians 8:12

Ver. 12. *But when ye sin so against the brethren:* sin is properly against God, for it is a breach of the Divine law; but the violations of that part of the Divine law which concerneth our duty to our neighbour, are called sins against our brethren, that is, sins against God in matters which concern our duty towards our brethren.

*And wound their weak conscience;* the giving the weak judgments of others, by your examples, an occasion of sin, by venturing upon actions which they think sinful, is that which is here called a beating, or a wounding, their weak consciences, because it is indeed a hurting and defiling of them.

*Ye sin against Christ;* this the apostle determineth to be a sinning against Christ; both against the law of Christ, concerning loving one another, and against the love of Christ, who, in dying for the weakest believers, hath showed the highest degree of love imaginable to them; whom they are far from following, who will not abate themselves a small matter of liberty, where the use of it this or that way may very probably be an occasion of sin and ruin to their brethren's souls.

### 1 Corinthians 8:13

Ver. 13. *If meat make my brother to offend;* suppose therefore it were lawful for me to eat flesh offered to idols, yet if I cannot do it but I shall make my brother sin, I will forbear. Others understand it more generally, not of the meat before mentioned, but of all flesh: I will rather live upon bread and herbs; by which expression the apostle doth not suppose, that there can ever be such a case when there shall be any such need, but only

declares how much a good Christian should do, to prevent his brother's sinning against God.

*I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend:* those expressions, Mr 5:29, of plucking out the right eye, and cutting off the right hand, are much of the same nature; both those phrases and this phrase signify only, that we ought to do any thing, and to deny ourselves in any thing, rather than ourselves to sin, or be wilful occasions to others of sin.

From this discourse of the apostle it is very plain, that it is the duty of Christians, in any matters where they are by the law of God at liberty whether they will do a thing or not, to take that part which they see will give least occasion of sin unto their brethren, and to avoid that part which, if they will take, they see they shall by taking it give occasion to others to sin, though they be themselves never so well satisfied as to the lawfulness of their action (provided the action be only lawful, not necessary, and what by the law of God they are bound to do, or to avoid). But here two grave questions arise:

1. Whether the command of superiors doth not here alter the case? Admit a thing be in itself by us judged lawful, what by God's law we may do, or let alone; and our superiors command us to do, or to avoid that thing: we on the other side see, that if we do it, or avoid it, we shall very probably be occasion to make our brethren sin, who doubt of the lawfulness of the thing. The question is: What is to be done in this case? That the law of God commanding love to our brethren equally concerneth high and low, is out of doubt; so that no superior ought more to command any to do what it is evident he cannot do without making his brother to offend, than the inferior ought to do it: but the question is: What is the inferior's duty, if commanded?
2. A second question is: Suppose that, in such a case, I am commanded to do what I judge I may lawfully do, were it not for making my brother, by my example, to offend, and by the command of men I am obliged to do it, or to ruin myself and family; what is my duty in this case? In both these cases there seems to be a collision of precepts. In the first case the precept of loving our neighbours seems to dash against the many precepts for obeying superiors; in the other case, it seems to dash

against the precept for providing for ourselves and families; so as the question is: Which precepts lay here the greatest obligation, where both cannot be obeyed? But we leave these questions to casuists. The determination of what is the will of God in either of them, will require a great many more words than what is fit to encumber annotations with, especially considering that neither of them properly falls into the explication of this text, where it is certain that the Corinthians were at a perfect liberty, and had no superiors that commanded them so to eat, (had the thing been in itself lawful), neither were they under any necessity, either to eat that meat, or to starve themselves or families; they had other flesh besides that to eat. In this case the duty of Christians is plainly determined by the apostle.

## 1 Corinthians 9:1

### Chapter Summary

1Co 9:1,2 Paul vindicateth his apostolical character, 1Co 9:3-14 and right to a maintenance from the churches,

1Co 9:15-18 though he relinquished that right for the furtherance of the gospel, not content with doing only his indispensable duty,

1Co 9:19-23 but voluntarily subjecting himself in many points, where he was otherwise free, in order thereby to win over more converts to Christ.

1Co 9:24,25 Those who contend for a corruptible crown use much labour and abstinence.

1Co 9:26,27 So doth the apostle strive for one that is incorruptible.

### Chapter Introduction

In the greater part of this chapter, the apostle proceedeth in his former discourse, not speaking particularly to the case of eating meat offered to idols, but to the general point, viz. That it is our duty to abate of our liberty, when we see we cannot use it without harm to other Christians. And here he proposeth to them his own example, who had restrained himself in three things, to two of which he had a liberty, and yet avoided it,

and that not to prevent their sinning, but only their suffering, and that, too, only by being by him over-burdened:

1. As to eating and drinking.
2. Abstaining from marriage, by which he might have been more chargeable to them.
3. Requiring maintenance of them for his labour amongst them. As to both which he declares he had from God's law a liberty, but had forbore to use that part from which the church in that state might be prejudiced.

Ver. 1. *Am I not an apostle?* Some that are puffed up or seduced, will, it may be, deny that I am an apostle, a preacher of the gospel of the greatest eminency, immediately sent out by Christ to preach his gospel; but will any of you deny it?

*Am I not free?* Have I not the same liberty that any of you have in things wherein the law of God hath no more determined me than you? What charter of liberty hath God given to any of you more than he hath to me?

*Have I not seen Jesus Christ?* Did not I see Christ in my going to Damascus? Ac 9:5 22:13,14; and when I was in my ecstasy, when I was rapt into the third heavens? 2Co 12:2-4; in prison? Ac 23:11. He was the only apostle we read of, who saw Christ after his ascension.

*Are not ye my work in the Lord?* If others will not look upon me as an apostle: God having wrought nothing upon their souls by my ministry, yet you, whose faith is my work, though in the Lord, as the principal efficient Cause, yet by me as God's instrument, cannot deny me to be so: if my having seen Jesus Christ, and being immediately sent out by him, be not enough to prove me so to you, yet the effects of my ministry upon you puts it past your denial.

### 1 Corinthians 9:2

Ver. 2. He had, 1Co 9:1, told them they were his work in the Lord, from whence he concludes here, that he was an apostle, that is, one sent of

Christ to them for the good of their souls, whatever he was to others. You, saith he, as to yourselves at least, are *the seal* of my apostolical office; it hath a confirmation in you by the effect, as the writing is confirmed by the seal. For how can you think, that the blessing of the Lord should go along with my preaching, to turn you from pagan idolatry, and your lewd courses of life, to the true Christian religion, and to a holy life and conversation, if God had not send me. There is no such argument to prove a minister sent of Christ, as the success of his ministry in the conversion of souls unto God. It is true, we cannot conclude, that a minister is no true minister if he be able to produce no such seals of his calling; for the spiritual seed may for a time lie under the clods, and changes may be wrought in hearts, which are not published to the world; and even Isaiah may be sent to make the hearts of people fat. But where those seals can be produced, it is a most certain sign that the minister is a true minister, that is, one sent of God; for he could be no instrument to do such works if God were not with him; and if God had not sent him, he would not be with him so blessing his ministry. Yet it is possible the man may have his personal errors; for though some men doubt, whether an instance can be given of one openly and scandalously wicked, whom God ever honoured to be his instrument to convert souls, yet it would be rashly affirmed by any to say, that Judas (though a son of perdition, but not scandalous till the last) was an instrument to convert none.

### 1 Corinthians 9:3

Ver. 3. These words may be understood in a double reference: either to what went before; then the sense is this: To those that examine me about my apostleship, this is my answer; That I have seen the Lord, that you are my work in the Lord, and the seal of my ministry. Or with reference to the words that follow; then the sense is this: If any man examine me, how I myself practise the doctrine which I preach to others, and determine myself as to my liberty for the good and profit of others, I give them the following answer.

### 1 Corinthians 9:4

Ver. 4. Could I not eat and drink of such things offered to idols as well as



you? Have not I as great a knowledge, and as much liberty? Yet, you see, I forbear. But the generality of interpreters rather incline to interpret it by what followeth: then, though it be here shortly expressed, and more fully opened afterward, yet the sense is: Have not I power to ask a maintenance of you, by which I should be enabled to eat and drink?

### 1 Corinthians 9:5

Ver. 5. *Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife?* Those that by those terms, ἀδελφην, γυναικα, understand, not (as we translate it) *a sister, a wife*, but a woman, that should out of her estate have contributed to the apostle's maintenance, (as *Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others*, followed Christ, and *ministered to him of their substance*, Lu 8:3), seem not to consider:

1. That such women would have been no burden, but a help to the church (which is quite contrary to the apostle's sense).
2. That the term *lead about*, imports a conjugal relation to the woman.
3. That if this had been the sense, it had been enough to have said, to lead about a woman; he should not need have said, *a sister, a woman*.
4. That such leading about a woman, not their wife, had been scandalous.
5. That the very phrase, *a sister, a wife*, answers the phrase, Ac 23:1, *Men, brethren*, which signifies no more than, O ye Christian men; as *a sister, a wife*, signifies here a Christian wife.
6. That we nowhere read, that Peter, James, John, Judas, (here called *the brethren of the Lord*), or any of the other apostles, ever in their travels carried about with them any such rich matrons, not their wives, who (as those, Lu 8:3) ministered to them of their substance. Our interpreters have therefore justly translated it, *a sister, a wife*; and the sense is: Have I not power to marry? Yet the phrase teaches us two things:
  - a) That Christians have no power, that is, no lawful power, to marry such as are no Christians, their wives must be their sisters also in

Christ.

- b) That husbands and wives ought to be undivided companions one to another.

*As well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas: he instanceth in several apostles that were married, Peter, (called *Cephas*), James, John, and Judas the son of Alpheus, Christ's kinsmen. Whence we may observe, that ministers may lawfully marry, no law of God hath restrained them more than others. The popish doctrine *forbidding to marry*, is by the apostle determined to be a *doctrine of devils*, 1Ti 4:1,3.*

### 1 Corinthians 9:6

Ver. 6. Are I and Barnabas the only apostles who are obliged for our livelihood to work with our hands? As Paul did, Ac 18:3, making tents. We certainly, as well as the rest of the apostles, if we would run out to the utmost end of the line of our liberty in things, without having any regard to the circumstances of our brethren, might forbear working with our hands, and expect that those amongst whom we labour should maintain us.

### 1 Corinthians 9:7

Ver. 7. *Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges?* The work of the ministry is a *warfare*, the minister's work in that age was so in a more eminent manner, as the opposition to those first ministers of the gospel, both from the Jews and from the heathens, was greater than what ministers have in later ages met with. Now, saith the apostle, none that lists an army, expects that his soldiers should maintain themselves without any pay.

*Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof?* It is like the planting of a vineyard. The church, in Scripture, is called a vineyard, Isa 5:1,2. The plants are the Lord's, but he useth ministers' hands in the planting of them: none planteth a vineyard, but in expectation of some fruit; none employeth servants to plant a vineyard, but he resolveth to uphold them with food and raiment, while they are in his work.

*Or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?* The church is compared to a flock: saith the apostle: No man feeds a flock, either personally, or by his servants, but he eateth, or alloweth his servants to eat, *of the milk of the flock.* By these three instances, commonly known amongst men, the apostle showeth the reasonableness, that the ministers of the gospel should be maintained by the people, to whom they are ministers.

### 1 Corinthians 9:8

Ver. 8. That is, I do not speak this only rationally, or by a fallible spirit, nor do I build this assertion alone upon instances known and familiar amongst men. As this is highly reasonable, and conformable to what the very light of nature showeth, and the law of nature obligeth men to in other cases, where men take others off their own work to attend theirs; so it is according to the will of God, which is the highest reason.

### 1 Corinthians 9:9

Ver. 9. Art being not so improved formerly as now, nor in all places as in some places; they were wont anciently, both in the land of Judea, and since in Greece, and (as is said) at this day in some places of France, to tread out their corn by the feet of oxen: and by the law of Moses, De 25:4, it should seem that some too covetous persons would muzzle the mouths of their oxen, that while they trod out the corn, they might eat none of it; which God, looking upon as an act of cruelty or unmercifulness, forbade his ancient people the Jews. Now, saith the apostle: *Doth God take care for oxen?* That is, more for oxen than for ministers or men? For God doth take care for oxen, he preserveth both man and beast; he takes care, as our Saviour elsewhere teacheth us, for the sparrows, for the fowls of the air, for the grass of the field, and therefore for oxen, which are a degree of creatures more noble: but by the same reason we must conclude, that he taketh a greater care for men, especially such as he employeth in his more immediate service.

## 1 Corinthians 9:10

Ver. 10. Not that the law, De 25:4, did primarily reveal God's will for the maintenance of ministers; for undoubtedly it did primarily oblige them, according to the letter of it, not to deal cruelly and unmercifully with the beasts they made use of; but as they took them off from getting their food, by taking them up to tread out corn for them; so, while they did it, they should not starve them, but give them leave moderately to eat of it. But (saith the apostle) the reason of it doth much more oblige with respect to men, especially such men as are employed in a ministry for your souls.

*That he that plougheth should plough in hope; that as he who plougheth for another, plougheth in hope to get bread for himself, from the wages for which he covenanteth; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope:* and so also doth the thresher thresh in hope: so we that are the Lord's ploughmen, working together with him (though in a far inferior degree of causation) in the ploughing up the fallow grounds of men's hearts, and sowing the seed of righteousness in men's souls; and the Lord's threshers, by our labours, exhortations, arguments, &c., beating the fruits of good works, to the glory of God, out of those amongst whom we labour; might also labour in some hope of a livelihood for ourselves, while we are doing the Lord's work and his people's.

## 1 Corinthians 9:11

Ver. 11. By *spiritual things* the apostle meaneth the doctrine and sacraments of the gospel; which are called *spiritual things*, because they come from heaven, they affect the soul and spirit of a man, they tend to make men spiritual, they prepare the soul for heaven. By *carnal things* he means things which only serve our bodies, which are our carnal, fleshly part. From the inequality of these things, and the excellency of the former above the latter, the apostle argueth the reasonableness of ministers' maintenance from their people, they giving them *quid pro quo*, a just compensation for such allowance, yea, what was of much more value; for there is a great disproportion between things spiritual and things carnal, the former much excelling the latter: so as the minister of the gospel had the odds of them, giving people things of a much greater and more excellent value, for things of a much less and inferior value.

## 1 Corinthians 9:12

Ver. 12. *If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather?* Those false apostles or teachers, which were amongst the Corinthians, did (as it seemeth) exercise this power, that is, required maintenance of the people; saith the apostle: Are not we by the same right possessed of such a power? Might not we as reasonably expect such a maintenance?

*Objection.* But might not they have said: No, you are not; they are constantly residing amongst us, and instructing us, &c.?

*Answer.* This arguing of the apostle lets us know, that the primitive churches were not only obliged to maintain their own pastors, but those also who were general officers to the church, and by the appointment of God were not to fix and abide in any one place, but had the care of all the churches upon them. And it may also teach us, that though Christians be in the first place obliged to take care of their own pastors, yet they are not to limit their charity to them, but also to take what care their ability will allow them of others, whose labours have at any time been useful to them, or may be useful to any other part of the church of God.

*Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ:* Yet, saith the apostle, though we have this power or liberty, neither I nor Barnabas have made use of it, but suffer all those evils that come upon our not using it, hunger, thirst, labour, lest we should hinder the progress of the gospel, while some might for the charge decline hearing us, or others might charge us with covetousness, &c.

## 1 Corinthians 9:13

Ver. 13. You may understand what is the mind and will of God under the New Testament, by reflecting upon what appeareth to you to have been his mind and will under the Old Testament: God had a ministry under the Old Testament, the tribe of Levi was it; and God there ordained and appointed a livelihood for them, Nu 18:20 De 10:9 18:1, so as they needed not (as

other men) to labour with their hands to get bread to eat.

#### 1 Corinthians 9:14

Ver. 14. God's will is the same under the New Testament that it was under the Old; it is not as to the people a matter of liberty, so as men may choose whether they will maintain their ministers or not, there is an ordinance of God in the case: it is the will of God, that those who are taken off from worldly employments, and spend their time in the study and preaching of the gospel, should have a livelihood from their labour.

#### 1 Corinthians 9:15

Ver. 15. Though I have such a liberty to marry as well as others, and a liberty to demand a maintenance of those to whom I preach the gospel, yet I have done neither. Nor do I now write to that purpose, that I would now impose a burden upon you to raise me a maintenance. I know I am calumniated by some, as if by preaching the gospel I only sought' my own profit and advantage: I have gloried in the contrary, Ac 20:33,34; so 1Co 9:18; and I look upon it as my great honour, that I can preach the gospel freely, and I had rather die by starving than lose this advantage of glorying. And if I for your profit, and for the advantage of the gospel, abate of my liberty, should not you abate of yours, to keep your weak brethren from destroying their souls by sinning against God?

#### 1 Corinthians 9:16

Ver. 16. *For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of; though I do preach the gospel, yet I have no reason at all to glory; all that I have to glory in is, that I have preached it freely (which your false apostles and teachers do not); for the preaching of the gospel, considered without that circumstance, I have no reason to glory in that, for I am in it but a servant.*

*For necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!* I am under the necessity of a Divine precept to do that, and

exposed to dreadful penalties and woes if I do not do that; there is therefore no thanks I can claim upon that account; all that I can glory in is, that I do it without charge to those to whom I preach it. Some make a doubt, whether there lieth the same necessity upon ministers now to preach the gospel, and they be liable to the same dangers and penalties, if they do it not. I see no reason at all to doubt it; for what necessity lay upon Paul, or any of the apostles, but a necessity of precept, that is, they were obliged to obey the command of God in the case, and liable to such penalties in case of neglect, as men are subject to that obey not the command of God, in fulfilling the duties of their relations? The same necessity, the same danger, is yet incumbent upon every minister; or else we must say, that the precepts commanding ministers to preach concerned the apostles only, or that there is now no such order of men as ministers (both which are indeed said by Socinians). If there be such an ordinance of God as the ministry, ministers are under the precepts given to ministers, one of which is to preach: if they be under the same precepts, there is the same necessity upon them of obeying them, that was upon Paul, and they are, in case of disobedience, subjected to the same woes and penalties. Indeed, every minister is not bound to go up and down the world to preach, his relation is to a particular flock; that travelling to carry the gospel about the world was peculiar to the apostles, for the first plantation of the gospel; but so was not preaching; if it had: Timothy and Titus would have had no such charge as to that work. It is true, ministers are not bound to preach in others' houses without their leave; therefore we read very little of the apostles preaching in the temple and synagogues, nor without the leave of the Jews. But Paul judged himself bound to preach *in the school of Tyrannus*, Ac 19:9, and *in his own hired house* at Rome, Ac 28:30,31. For the circumstance of numbers, to which they are bound to preach, the Holy Scripture hath no where determined, and ministers are left to be guided by their own prudence according to circumstances; but preach they must, if they be called of God; he hath sent them to it, fitted them for the work, and they have taken it upon them, and woe will be to every minister, so called and sent of God, if he doth not fulfil his ministry, as he hath opportunity and wisdom, considering circumstances, in order to the end which he is to aim at and to act for.

1 Corinthians 9:17

Ver. 17. *For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward;* if I who have a liberty to take a maintenance for my labour in the gospel, yet notwithstanding preach it freely, out of a free and cheerful mind, desirous to promote the honour and glory of Christ, I then may expect a reward: *but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me;* but if I only preach the gospel because there is a necessity laid upon me, all that can be said of me is, that there is such a dispensation committed to me. The strength of the apostle's argument seems to lie here: That no man can reasonably expect thanks, or any extraordinary reward, for doing what he is obliged by his superior's command under a great penalty to do. The apostle was obliged by such a precept, and under such penalties, to preach the gospel; therefore he desired not only to do it, but to do it willingly and readily, a greater testimony of which could not be, than for him to do it without desiring or expecting any reward for his pains, but what God of his free grace should give him; this made this matter of glorying to him, which he desired might not be in vain. So that though the word *εκων* here be truly translated *willingly*, and opposed to *ακων*, which is as truly translated *unwillingly*, yet it seems to comprehend without charge, and taking nothing for his pains, as a demonstration of his willingness to and cheerful performance of his work; which being a thing as to which God had laid him under no necessity by any precept, was matter of glorying to him against the false apostles, who did otherwise; and also a ground for him to expect a greater reward from God, than those who, though they did the same work, yet did it not from the like free and cheerful spirit.

### 1 Corinthians 9:18

Ver. 18. *What is my reward then?* What then is the ground of my expectation of a greater reward? Or wherein is the glorying I before mentioned? Not in the performance of the work, for as to that, I am under a necessity to do it, and under a penalty if I neglect it: but it lieth here, *that when I preach the gospel, I do it freely, and make it without charge;* a thing which, as to the substance of the work, he was not by any law of God bound to do, yet was not this in Paul a work of supererogation; for circumstances might so rule, and, doubtless, Paul apprehended they did so, that it might be his duty so to do. For though the minister may lawfully take maintenance from the people, where he cannot support himself without their assistance; yet if the case be such, that he can subsist without



it, and the people be so poor that they are not able to give it; or if he seeth it will hinder the gospel, keeping many from coming within the sound of what must be chargeable to them, and open the mouths of enemies; it is matter of duty to him, under such circumstances, to preach freely. Though, considering the thing in itself, separately from such circumstances, the minister may lawfully enough require and expect such maintenance.

*That (saith the apostle) I abuse not my power in the gospel.* Some think that the word here translated *abuse*, might better have been translated *use*, as it signified, 1Co 7:31. But it generally signifies abuse, so as there is no reason to vary from the common usage of it; according to which it teaches us this remarkable lesson, that so to use a liberty which God hath left us as to actions, as that by our use of it the glory of God or the good of others is hindered, is to abuse it, that is, not to use it to that true end for which God hath intrusted us with it. For this is certain, that God hath intrusted us with no power or liberty to be used to the prejudice of his glory, which is the great end of our lives, or to the prejudice of the spiritual good and advantage of others. All such use of our liberty in any thing is indeed an abuse of it.

### 1 Corinthians 9:19

Ver. 19. *For though I be free from all men;* the word *men* is not in the Greek, but is supplied by our interpreters. Some make *things* the substantive, and restrain it to the things of the ceremonial law. It may be understood both of men and things; he was born no man's servant, nor by God's law made a servant to any men's humours, and as free as to many other things, as he was to have taken maintenance of the churches, for the pains he bestowed amongst them.

*Yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more;* yet (saith he) observe my practice, that I might gain men to Christ, (so the apostle several times calleth converting souls, bringing them in love with the gospel, and into a road that may bring them to heaven, which we ought to account the greatest gain in the world, as it appeareth from Da 12:3), I have become, or made myself, the servant of all; not the servants of their lusts and corruptions, (that is the way to lose men's souls, and destroy them, not to gain them), but a servant to their weaknesses and infirmities,

so far as they were not sinful: I have denied myself in my liberty, and determined myself to that part in my actions, which I saw would most oblige, profit, and endear them to me, and to bring them more in love with the gospel.

### 1 Corinthians 9:20

Ver. 20. The ceremonial law died with Christ, Eph 2:15,16, wherefore Christians were not obliged to the performance and observation of it after the death of Christ; but it pleased God for a time to indulge the Jews in the observance of those rites, until they could clearly see, and be fully persuaded of, their liberty from it, with which Christ had made them free; and it was some good time before all those, who from Judaism had turned to Christianity, could be thus persuaded, as we may learn from Ga 4:21, they desired to be under the law. To such, saith the apostle, *I became as a Jew*, that is, I observed some rites which the ceremonial law (peculiar to the Jews) required; an instance of which we have, Ac 21:23-26, where we find Paul purifying himself (according to the rites of the ceremonial law) with four men which had a vow upon them. The Jews before Christ's death were *under the law*; many of them, though converted to the Christian religion after the death of Christ, apprehended themselves under the law, not as yet seeing the liberty with which Christ had made them free: saith the apostle, I, knowing the will of God, for a time, that the Jews should be indulged as to their weakness, *became as one of them under the law, that I might gain them*, that is, reconcile them to the Christian religion, and in some measure prepare them for the receiving the gospel. We have an instance of this in Paul's practice, Ac 16:3, where he circumcised Timothy, because his mother was a Jewess, that he might not irritate the Jews in those quarters, nor estrange them from the doctrine of the gospel. In all this Paul did nothing that was sinful, but only determined himself as to the liberty which God had given him, when he might do or forbear, either doing or forbearing to do, as he saw the one or the other made most for the honour and glory of God in the winning of souls.

### 1 Corinthians 9:21

Ver. 21. It is manifest by the opposition of *them that are without law*,

mentioned in this verse, to *them under the law*, mentioned in the former verse, that as by the latter the Jews are understood, so by the former the Gentiles are to be understood, who were under no obligation to the observance either of the ceremonial law or judicial law, given to the Jews; the one to guide that nation in the matters of worship till Christ should come; the other to guide them in matters of civil justice, as well as criminal causes, as matters of plea and trespass: so that the term *ανομους* here signifieth differently from what it signifieth in many other scriptures; where it signifieth men that live as they list, without any regard to any laws of God or men, as Mr 15:28 Lu 22:37 Ac 2:23 2Th 2:8 1Ti 1:9, &c. This the apostle makes appear by the next words, where he tells us, he was *not without law to God, but under the law to Christ*: though to the Gentiles he behaved himself as if he himself had been a Gentile, that is, forbearing the observances of the Levitical law, to which the Gentiles had never any obligation at all, yet he did not behave himself as one that had no regard to the law of God, that was yet in force and obligatory, but acknowledged himself to be under that, though a servant of Christ's; so that he abated nothing of his necessary duty, only denied himself in some things as to which the law of God had left him a liberty, both to the Jews and Gentiles, propounding to himself the same end as to both, that is, the gaining of their souls to Christ.

### 1 Corinthians 9:22

Ver. 22. *To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak;* to those that I observed weak in knowledge and faith, who had not such a firm persuasion of the lawfulness of some things, (suppose circumcision, purifyings required by the law of Moses, &c.), *I became as weak*, that is, I yielded to them; and the things being to me matters of liberty, which I knew I might do, or not do, and be no transgressor of God's law, they being not able to comply with me, I complied with them, abating my liberty to gratify their consciences; though I knew that it was weakness in them, yet I indulged it, and made my more knowledge serve them in their weakness, so that I might not lose them.

*I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some;* thus, that I might be an instrument in any degree to save them, according to the various persuasions of several Christians I behaved myself towards them;

doing nothing to gratify them, by doing of which I knew, or had the least jealousy, I should offend God; but not refusing any thing, either as to doing or forbearing, (which by the law of God I saw I might do or forbear), where I saw the least hopes, by such doing or forbearing, to do the souls of those good, in order to their eternal salvation, with whom I was, and for whose sake I so did, or forbore any thing. Oh the humility and charity of this great apostle! What an example hath he set to all! For none can pretend to a greater superiority over men, as to spiritual things, than he unquestionably had.

### 1 Corinthians 9:23

Ver. 23. Paul had two great ends which he aimed at in this denial of himself in these points of liberty; the one was the doing good to the souls both of Jews and Gentiles, this he had before instanced in; the other was the glory of God, which is that which itc here meaneth by this phrase, *for the gospel's sake*, which he before expounded, 1Co 9:12, *lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ*. By Paul's tenacious adhering to one part in a thing wherein he had liberty, the gospel, that is, the progress or success of the gospel, might have been hindered, both by the reproaches of enemies, and also by the alienation and estrangement of the hearts of weaker Christians, or laying stumblingblocks before them, at which they might fall, being imboldened by the examples of their guides, to do what, though lawful in itself, yet they judged unlawful.

*That I might be partaker thereof with you;* I did it, saith he, that I might bring you into the fellowship of the gospel: I had rather so interpret it, than of the reward of the gospel, as it pleaseth some. The humility of the great apostle is very remarkable; he disdaineth not to be *συγκοινωνος*, a *partaker* in the gospel with the meanest members of the church; he is not ashamed to call those brethren whom his Lord and Master is not ashamed so to call.

### 1 Corinthians 9:24

Ver. 24. The apostle presseth all his former discourse by minding them of the difficulty of getting to heaven, and of the obligation that lay upon them

to be the first in the spiritual race. To this purpose he fetcheth a similitude from what they saw daily, in the practice of those who frequented those games by which the Romans and Corinthians were wont to divert themselves. They had several, known by the names of the Olympian, Pythian, Nemean, and Isthmian games, the latter of which were most proper to Greece. At these games there were several that ran races, either on foot or on horseback: and several that wrestled. The reward was a crown, or garland: and for those that ran, we read that the crown or garland was hung up at the end of the race, and those who, running on foot or on horseback, could first lay hold upon it, and take it down, had it, so as though many ran, yet but one had the crown. So, he saith, it is as to getting to heaven; men might think it was a light matter, but they who would have the crown of glory must run for it, and it was a work which required so much striving and labour, that not many would have that crown: which is the same with that which our Saviour saith, Lu 13:24. *For many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.* 2Ti 2:5, *If a man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.* Therefore, saith the apostle, make it your business, *so to run, that you may obtain;* not only to do things in themselves lawful or good, but which are so clothed with all their circumstances, and in the best manner, for the glory of God, and the good of others.

### 1 Corinthians 9:25

Ver. 25. This is not all that is required of men that would go to heaven, that they do not make an ill use of their liberty, using it to the dishonour of God, or to the prejudice of others; but look as it is with wrestlers in those games in practice amongst you, they are *temperate in all things;* in the use of meats and drinks, or any pleasures, though in themselves lawful, they will so use them, as may best serve their end, upholding the strength of their body for the motion they are to use, and yet not clogging them, or so using them, that they shall indispose them to, or hinder them in, that motion which they are to use. We, that are Christians, and striving for heaven, should also do the like, so behaving ourselves in the use of meats, drinks, apparel, pleasures, as the things, so used by us, may serve us in our business for heaven, and be no clog or hinderance to us. And we have reason so to do, or we shall be shamed by those gamesters; for they in that manner deny, restrain, and govern themselves to get a crown, which, when

they have, is a pitiful, corruptible, perishing thing; we do it for a crown that is *incorruptible: An inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,* as the apostle speaketh, 1Pe 1:4.

### 1 Corinthians 9:26

Ver. 26. The apostle proposeth his own example. As it is observed in country work, he that only bids his servants do work, and puts not his own hand to it, or at least doth not attend and overlook them in their work, hath little done: so it is as observable in spiritual work, that a minister of the gospel, who only, in the pulpit, dictates duty to others, but, out of it, doth nothing of himself, seldom doth any good by his preaching. People not naturally inclined to any spiritual duty, have the old proverb: *Physician, cure thyself,* at their tongue's end, and are hard to believe that teacher, who doth not in some measure live up to his own doctrine. Therefore, saith the apostle: *I run;* I am in the same race with you, and running to the same mark and for the same prize. I give you no other counsel than I myself take; I endeavour so to live, so in all things to behave myself, as I may not be at uncertainties whether I please God by my actions, or shall get to heaven, yea or not. I am a fellow soldier with you, fighting against sin; I make it my great business, not so to fight, so to resist sin, as if I did *beat the air;* that is, get no more fruit, profit, or advantage by it, than if I threw stones against the wind, or with a staff did beat the air. It is not every running, or every fighting, that will bring a man to heaven; it must be a running with all our might, and continuing our motion till we come to the end of our race; a fighting with all our might, and that against all sin.

### 1 Corinthians 9:27

Ver. 27. Here the apostle informs us how he ran, that he might not run uncertainly; how he fought, so as he might not be like one beating the air: *I* (saith he) *keep under my body; and bring it into subjection.* By *body,* here, we must not understand only the apostle's fleshly part (which we usually call our body); no, nor only our more gross and filthy affections and lusts (as some of the schoolmen have thought); but what the apostle elsewhere calleth the *old man,* under which notion cometh the sinful inclinations of

our will, and corrupt dictates of reason, as it is in man since the fall. All this, as it cometh under the notion of *the flesh* in many other places of Scripture, and of our *members which are upon the earth*, Col 3:5; so it cometh here under the notion of the *body*; and, indeed, is that which our apostle calleth *the body of death*, Ro 7:24. This was the object of the apostle's action; the object about which he was exercised. For his action, or exercise about this object, is expressed by two words,  $\upsilon\pi\omega\pi\iota\alpha\zeta\omega$  and  $\delta\omicron\upsilon\lambda\alpha\gamma\omega\gamma\omega$  the former word (as some think) is borrowed from the practice of those that fought in the afore-mentioned games, who knocked and beat one another till they were black and blue, and forced to yield themselves conquered. The second word signifieth to make one a servant, to bring one under command, so as he will do what another would have him do. By these two words the apostle expresseth that mortification, which he declareth himself to have lived in the practice of, that he might not in his race for heaven run uncertainly, nor in his spiritual fight lose his labour, and reap no more profit than one should reap that spends his time in beating the air. Their sense, who think that this duty of Paul was discharged by acts of mere external discipline, such as fasting, wearing sackcloth, beating themselves, &c., is much too short; these things reach not to the mind of man, his corrupt affections and lusts, which give life to the extravagancy of the bodily members, though indeed they may some of them be good means in order to the greater work. Paul's meaning was, that he made it his work to deny his sensitive appetite such gratifyings as it would have; to resist the extravagant motions of his will, yea, of his own corrupt reason, so far as they were in any thing contrary to the holy will of God; though, in order to this, he also used fasting and prayer, and such acts of external discipline as his wisdom taught him were any way proper to this end. And this he tells us that he did, *lest*, while he *preached to others*, he himself *should be a castaway*: from whence we may observe, that Paul thought such a thing possible, that one who all his life had been preaching to others, to bring them to heaven, might himself be thrown into hell at last; and if it had not, our Saviour would never have told us, that he would at the last day say to some: Depart from me, I know you not, you workers of iniquity; who for their admittance had pleaded: We have prophesied in thy name, Mt 7:22,23. Nor must we question but Judas, whom our Saviour calls a *son of perdition*, was a lost man as to eternity, though it be certain that he, as well as the other apostles, was a preacher of the gospel: yea, so far is this from being impossible, that it was the opinion of Chrysostom, that few ministers would be saved. We may also further observe, that such

ministers as indulge their body, giving themselves liberties, either more externally in meats, drinks, apparel, pleasures; or more internally, indulging themselves in sinful speculations, notions, affections, inclinations; take a quite contrary road to heaven than Paul took, and think they have a great deal more liberty to the flesh than St. Paul thought he had, or than he durst use.

## 1 Corinthians 10:1

### Chapter Summary

1Co 10:1-5 The Jews who came out of Egypt had all sacraments typical of ours, yet many of them perished through sin.

1Co 10:6-12 Their examples should serve, as they were intended, for our admonition.

1Co 10:13 God will not suffer his servants to be tempted beyond their strength.

1Co 10:14-22 Christians must flee idolatry, and not by partaking of idol sacrifices own fellowship with devils.

1Co 10:23-30 Even in the use of things lawful we should consult the good of others,

1Co 10:31 and refer all we do to God's glory,

1Co 10:32,33 careful to give none offence, after the apostle's own example.

Ver. 1. The apostle saw that many in this church of Corinth were puffed up with their knowledge, and other gifts and great privileges with which God had blessed them; as also with the opinion of their being a gospel church, and some of the first-fruits of the Gentiles unto Christ, and might therefore think, that they needed not to be pressed to such degrees of strictness and watchfulness; therefore, to beat them off from this confidence and vain presumption, the apostle here sets before them the example of the church of the Jews: when he tells them, he would not have them ignorant, his meaning is, he would have them know and remember, he would have them well acquainted with and to reflect upon this, that all the Jews in Moses's time, whom he calls their fathers, not according to the flesh, for the Corinthians were not descended from Jews, but with respect to the



covenant, and their relation they stood unto God, as they were the only people God had on earth; these, he saith, were all of them (the whole camp of Israel) under very great privileges, of which he reckoneth divers: they were under the conduct of the cloud, Ex 13:21; and they all obtained the favour of God so far for them, as to divide the Red Sea, so as they passed through it upon dry ground.

### 1 Corinthians 10:2

Ver. 2. There are two great difficulties in this verse:

1. What is meant by *Moses*.
2. How and why the Israelites are said to be *baptized unto Moses*.

Some understand by *Moses* the person of Moses; others, the law or doctrine of Moses. Those who by *Moses* understand the person of Moses, are divided in their opinions, whether the preposition εἰς, which signifieth divers things: Were better translated *by*, or *into*, or *unto*, or *together with*. Some think it were better translated *by*, and thus all the Jews were baptized by Moses in the cloud and in the sea, that is, by his ministry; and thus this very particle is translated, Ac 7:53 19:3. Some think it were better translated *in Moses*; that is, Moses going before them, when they were under the conduct of the cloud, and when they passed through the Red Sea. Others judge it better translated *into Moses*; that is, either Moses going before them; or, as Moses was a type of Christ, Ga 3:19. Some would have the particle here to signify *together with*. Others, *even unto Moses*, Moses himself not being excepted from that baptism in the cloud and in the sea. Others by *Moses* here understand the doctrine and law of Moses: thus the term *Moses* is used, Lu 16:29 Ac 15:21. So they say, that to be *baptized unto Moses*, is to believe Moses so far, as to follow his conduct through the sea, and under the cloud.

The second difficulty is, to resolve what is meant by being baptized. The word signifieth, in the common acceptation of it, a being washed: in the ecclesiastical acceptation, it signifies a holy institution of the New Testament, according to which Christians are initiated into the church of God, by washing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Now how could the Jews be said either to be washed (that is, baptized) either in Moses, or by Moses, or with Moses, or into Moses; whenas the history of the Old Testament tells us, that both Moses and all the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, and we do not read that the cloud, under the conduct of which the Israelites journeyed, ever poured down any water with which the Jews, or Moses their leader, could be washed.

*Answer.* Some think, that the cloud which, passing over the Israelites, was all darkness to their enemies, yet poured down water for the refreshing of the Israelites, as it passed over their heads, and that this is hinted to us by the psalmist, Ps 68:7-9. Others think, that the apostle applieth the term of baptism to a privilege of which the old Israelites had as much reason to glory, as the Corinthians had of their baptism, properly so called. Others say, that the Israelites' walking under the cloud and through the sea, which was darkness and destruction to their adversaries, was a figure of baptism, the seal of the New Testament, by which Christ's victory over our spiritual enemies is confirmed to us, and in that respect the apostle maketh use of this term *baptized*. Others, most probably, think, that the apostle useth this term, in regard of the great analogy between baptism, as it was then used, the persons going down into the waters, and being dipped in them; and the Israelites going down into the sea, the great receptacle of water; though the waters at that time were gathered on heaps on either side of them, yet they seemed buried in the waters, as persons in that age were when they were baptized; and for being baptized in the cloud, there is a great probability that the cloud did shower down rain, according to what is quoted out of the psalmist.

### 1 Corinthians 10:3

Ver. 3. Those of the Jews that perished in the wilderness, did all eat the same manna which Caleb and Joshua ate of, who went into Canaan; or, those Jews that so perished in the wilderness did eat the same spiritual meat that we do, they in the type, we in the antitype. Manna is called *spiritual meat*:

1. Because it was bread which came down from heaven, the habitation of spiritual beings, Joh 6:31.

2. It was miraculously produced.
3. Because it was angels' food, given out by their ministry.
4. But principally, because it signified Christ, who was *the true bread from heaven*, Joh 6:32.

#### 1 Corinthians 10:4

Ver. 4. And all the Jews, as well those that perished in the wilderness, as those that were preserved to go into Canaan, they drank of the water which came out of the rock, of which we read, Ex 17:6 Nu 20:11; which water was *spiritual drink* in the same respects that the manna was *spiritual meat*, being miraculously produced, and being a figure of Christ. For, saith the apostle, *that rock was Christ*; that is, that rock did signify or prefigure Christ; the rock was Christ in the same sense that the bread in the Lord's supper is the body of Christ, that is, a sign which by Divine institution did signify Christ. Here ariseth a question in what sense it is said, that the *rock followed them*? That by the rock is to be understood the water that God made to flow out of the rock, is evident; but though we read of water twice fetched out of the rock upon Moses smiting of it; once at Rephidim, before they came so far as Mount Sinai, Ex 17:6; another time at Kadesh, Nu 20:7,8; yet we no where read in the history of the Jewish journeyings to Canaan, that the rock followed them. But this is not the only thing that we read in the New Testament relating to the history of the Old Testament, with some circumstances which we do not find recorded there; it is enough that it is plainly asserted here, and it must be presumed, or how can we imagine that the Israelites were supplied with water for forty years together? Whereas some object, that if the water, which came out of the rock at Rephidim, had followed them, there would have been no need of Moses striking the rock at Kadesh; it is answered, that God, to try them, probably caused the water to stop. For the analogy between the rock and Christ, divines make it to lie in these particulars:

1. That Christ is the firm and unmovable foundation of his church, called therefore a stone, a tried stone, Isa 28:16 Ro 9:33 1Pe 2:6.
2. As this rock sent out no water for the refreshment of the Israelites, till

Moses had struck it; so all the benefit we have from Christ as Mediator, floweth from him as *smitten of God*, and *afflicted*.

3. As the water of the rock served both for cleansing, and upholding life in satisfying thirst; so the blood of Christ is useful to the soul, both for washing from the guilt of sin, and the upholding spiritual life in a soul.
4. As the rock that followed the Israelites afforded water not only to that generation that were alive and present when the rock was smitten, but to all the succeeding generations, until the Israelites came into Canaan; so the blood of Christ is useful not only to his people in this or that place or age, but to all that shall believe in him, and that till they shall come into the heavenly Canaan.

#### 1 Corinthians 10:5

Ver. 5. *But with many of them God was not well pleased;* these *many* were no less than that whole generation, which were at that time twenty years old and upward, according to the threatening, Nu 14:28,29; of the accomplishment of which we read, Nu 26:64,65.

*For they were over thrown in the wilderness;* as an instance of God's being displeased with them, he giveth their falling in the wilderness. It is very possible, that many of these were the objects of God's eternal and special love, and eternally saved, notwithstanding their joining with worse men in their rebellion and murmuring; but that signal judgment of God upon them was enough to prove, that their being *baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea*, and being made partakers of those great privileges of eating *spiritual meat*, and drinking *spiritual drink*, typifying Christ, did not set them out of the danger of God's judgments, which is the use the apostle maketh of it.

#### 1 Corinthians 10:6

Ver. 6. *Our examples;* our types or patterns (as the Greek word signifies): we may, by God's dispensations to them, learn what God will be to us: as they were patterns to us, of persons enjoying great spiritual privileges; so

they are also examples or patterns to show us what we may expect from God, and to deter us from such practices, as brought the vengeance of God upon them; which were their sinful lustings or desirings of things which God had forbidden, as they did the flesh-pots, and onions, and garlic of Egypt, and to return thither again, Nu 11:4,5,33 14:2-4.

### 1 Corinthians 10:7

Ver. 7. *Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them;* the people of Israel, being first enticed to whoredom with the daughters of Moab, were after that invited *to the sacrifices of their gods, and did eat, and bowed down to their gods.* Nu 25:2; so, either worshipped the creature instead of the Creator, or worshipped the Creator in and by the creature.

*As it is written: The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play;* thus it is written in Ex 32:6; which history mentioneth another idolatry they were guilty of, in worshipping the golden calf. They were wont to have feasts after their sacrifices, and pastimes and diversions after such feasts; and particularly we are told in the history concerning the golden calf, that they danced before it. Stephen saith, Ac 7:41, *they rejoiced in the works of their own hands.*

### 1 Corinthians 10:8

Ver. 8. The story to which this verse relates is that, Nu 25:1-9. When Balaam could not curse the Israelites, he advised the debauching of them by the Moabitish women, first enticing them to fornication and adultery, then to idolatry: and they were enticed, which caused a plague amongst them, which destroyed amongst them *in one day three and twenty thousand*, saith our apostle: Moses saith, that there died *twenty and four thousand*. There are many guesses for the clearing of that seeming contradiction. Some say, that Moses mentioneth not *one day*, there might in all die twenty-four thousand, but not all the same day, nor possibly by the same death. But nothing is in Scripture more ordinary, than to speak of things or persons in round numbers, though something over or under; and also to speak according to the common reckoning of people, who also may talk variously. Some might report twenty-three, some twenty-four

thousand: or possibly Paul chose to mention the lesser rather than the greater round number. The sense of Moses might be, about twenty-four thousand, or near up to that number, all of which probably had not been guilty of adultery or fornication. Paul saith, there died twenty-three thousand. If there did die twenty-four thousand, there must needs die twenty-three thousand.

### 1 Corinthians 10:9

Ver. 9. To *tempt*, in the general notion of the term, signifies to make a trial; applied unto God, it signifieth to make a trial of God, either with reference to his power, Ps 78:18-20, or to his truth and goodness: not to be satisfied with God's word, but to challenge him to a sensible demonstration, is to tempt God. Or else to *tempt* may signify more generally, to provoke God; for indeed all notorious sinning against God is a tempting of God, not believing the wrath of God, which he hath revealed in his word against sin, till men feel it. The term *Christ* here is very remarkable to prove Christ's Divine nature and existence before he was incarnate; for the same person who is here called *Christ*, is called *God*, Ps 106:14, and Jehovah also in the same Psalm; neither could they have tempted Christ at that time, if at that time he had not been existent.

*Were destroyed of serpents;* by *serpents* he meaneth the fiery serpents; we have the history, Nu 21:6-9.

### 1 Corinthians 10:10

Ver. 10. Murmuring signifies the speaking against a person or thing, out of dislike, impatience, or discontent. It was a sin the Jews were very much guilty of, as may be read, Ex 15:24 16:7,8 17:3 Nu 14:27 16:11,41. The apostle may either refer to all their murmurings, when he saith they *were* (as the punishment of their sin) *destroyed of the destroyer*, or to that more universal murmuring upon the ill report the spies brought up of the land of Canaan, of which we read, Nu 14:1-45.

## 1 Corinthians 10:11

Ver. 11. *Now all these things happened to them for ensamples;* all these dispensations of Divine providence in the revelations of Divine wrath against several sorts of sinners, happened to the Jews, who were God's first and ancient people, and enjoyed those great privileges which were before mentioned, not only as just punishments upon them for their sins, but as examples or types, to let the succeeding world know what they should find God towards such kind of sinners.

*And they are written for our admonition;* and God in his wise providence hath ordered the record of them in holy writ, that others who should live afterward might read, and hear, and fear, and take warning, and beware of such wicked actions, as pulled down such vengeance upon a people, than which none can plead a nearer relation to God, or the receiving of greater favours and privileges from him.

*Upon whom the ends of the world are come:* the apostles ordinarily in their epistles speak of the world as nigh to an end in their age, though it hath since continued more than sixteen hundred years; which would incline one to think, that they thought it would have been at an end before this time, but had no such revelation from God. So true is that of our Saviour, that *of that day and hour knoweth no man;* and it should teach us to beware of too particular determinations in the case, which the apostles did not make, though they spake of theirs as the last times, and themselves as such upon whom the ends of the world were come.

## 1 Corinthians 10:12

Ver. 12. *Let him that thinketh he standeth,* either in a right and sound judgment and opinion of things, or in a state of favour with God, or confirmed in a holy course of life and conversation; standeth in grace, Ro 5:2. A man may stand in these things, and he may but think that he standeth: be it as it will, he is concerned to *take heed lest he fall*. He may but think he standeth, and if so, he will fall: he may really stand in a right judgment and opinion of things, and be a member of the church of Christ, and yet may fall into errors and some loose practices, so as to bring down Divine vengeance upon himself; he may have God's favour so far as

concerns external privileges, and yet perish, as many of the Jews did in the instances before mentioned: nay, he may really stand in a state of justification and regeneration, and yet may fall, though not totally and finally, yet foully, so as to lose his peace, and bring God's severe judgments upon him. Therefore he that thinketh that he standeth, whether his apprehensions be false or true, had need use all means and caution that he may not fall, and that because, if he keepeth his standing, it must be by the use of due means, which God hath appointed in order to that end, though he be also *kept by the power of God unto salvation*, 1Pe 1:5.

### 1 Corinthians 10:13

Ver. 13. *There hath no temptation taken you: temptation* (as hath been said before) signifieth in the general notion of it no more than trials, and is often so used in holy writ. Now, in regard we are tried either by afflictive providences, or by motions made to us, either from God, or our own lusts, or the devil, or men of the world; temptations, in Scripture, sometimes signify afflictions, as Jas 1:2 1Pe 1:6; sometimes, motions made to us by God, Ge 22:1,2; both which sorts of temptations are good in themselves. Sometimes the term signifies motions made by the lusts and unrenewed part of our own souls, or by the devil, or by sinful men in the world; these are sinful temptations, and what we most ordinarily call by that name. Whether the apostle here means all or some of these, cannot certainly be determined; what he saith is true of all, and therefore that is the safest interpretation of the term in this place. Though he had not been before speaking indeed of afflictive temptations, he had before affrighted them with minding them of the possibility of their falling, though they did stand, or thought they stood, and cautioned them to take heed: here he comforteth them, by minding them, that no temptation had befallen them, *but what was incident and common to man*, ἀντηρωπινος, and they could not expect to be freed from the common fate of mankind: then he minds them, that that God who had promised strength and assistance to his people, Mt 7:11 Lu 11:13 2Co 1:18 1Th 5:4 2Th 3:3, was one that would be as good as his word, being *faithful*, and would not suffer them to be tempted above their strength, and ability to oppose and resist; yea, and would *make a way to escape*, both the evil of the temptation, that it should not overbear them to a total ruin of their souls, and likewise the burdensome and afflictive evil, that it should not continually lie upon them, provided they used their



just endeavours, and (as he had said before) took heed lest they fell.

#### 1 Corinthians 10:14

Ver. 14. The apostle would have them avoid all sin, but *idolatry* more especially, keeping at the utmost distance imaginable from that, being of all sins in its kind the greatest transgression; upon which account it is often in Scripture compared to whoredom. Though we ought to be afraid of and to decline all sin; yet as God hath revealed his wrath against any particular sin more than other, so every good Christian is obliged more to detest and abhor that sin. How the Corinthians were concerned in this caution, we shall read afterwards, 1Co 10:20. For though idolatry be properly where the failure is in the ultimate or mediate object of our worship, and the creature is made either the ultimate term of our worship, or the medium in and by which we worship the Creator; yet there are many other ways by which we may be partakers of the sins of others, and this sin of idolatry in particular: and idolatry being a sin of the greatest magnitude, from which they were bound to keep the furthest distance, they were bound to take heed of being partakers of other men's sins of this kind.

#### 1 Corinthians 10:15

Ver. 15. As to the present case, you are persons that understand the principles of Christian religion, I will make you judges in this case.

#### 1 Corinthians 10:16

Ver. 16. It is on all hands agreed, that the apostle is here speaking of believers communicating in the sacrament of the Lord's supper. By *the cup of blessing*, he meaneth the cup there, which he so calleth, because we in the taking of it bless the Lord, who gave his Son to die for us, and Christ, for that great love which he showed in dying for us: we are said to *bless* it, because we, by solemn prayer in the consecration of it, set it apart for that sacred use, and beg of God to bless it to us. This *cup* (saith the apostle) *is the communion of the blood of Christ*.

*The cup* is put for the wine in the cup (which is very ordinary). *The cup*, or wine, *of blessing*, signifieth that cup of wine to which the blessing is added, or with which in that holy institution we thankfully remember the death of Christ, and bless his name for that great mercy; and the wine or *cup of blessing*, also, here signifieth our religious action in drinking of that cup of wine so blessed. This, saith he, is *the communion of the blood of Christ*; that is, it is an action whereby and wherein Christ communicates himself and his grace to us, and we communicate our souls to him; so that Christ and believers in that action have a mutual communion one with another. And as it is with the one element in that holy sacrament, so it is also with the other.

*The bread* which the minister breaketh (according to the institution and example of Christ) for the church to make use of in the celebration of the Lord's supper, that is, their action in eating of that bread so broken and divided amongst them, is *the communion of the body of Christ*; an action wherein Christians have a fellowship and communion with Christ.

### 1 Corinthians 10:17

Ver. 17. Believers, though *many*, yet *are one body*, and declare themselves to be one body mystical, by their fellowship together in the ordinance of the Lord's supper; as the bread they there eat is *one bread*, though it be made up of many grains of corn, which come into the composition of that loaf or piece of bread which is so broken, distributed, and eaten; and the wine they drink is one cup, one body of wine, though it be made up of many particular grapes. And they declare themselves to be one body, by their joint partaking *of that one bread*. Some have from hence fetched an argument to prove the unlawfulness of communicating with scandalous sinners at the Lord's table, because we declare ourselves one body with those that communicate: but whether it will (if examined) be cogent enough, I doubt; for *one body* signifieth no more than one church, and that not invisible, but visible. So as we only declare ourselves to be fellow members of the visible church with those with whom we partake in that ordinance, and the visible church may consist of persons that are bad mixed with the good. So as though, undoubtedly, scandalously wicked persons ought to be excluded from the holy table, yea, and no unbeliever hath a right to it; yet it may reasonably be doubted, whether

those that partake with unbelievers, do by it own themselves to be unbelievers; they only own themselves members of that church wherein there are some unbelievers. But the scope of the apostle is from hence to argue, that by a parity of reason, those that communicated with an idolatrous assembly in their sacrifices, declared themselves by that action to be one body with those idolaters.

### 1 Corinthians 10:18

Ver. 18. *Israel after the flesh* was the whole seed of Jacob, the whole body of the Jewish church; for believers only were Israelites after the Spirit, Ro 11:6, called *the Israel of God*, Ga 6:16.

*Are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?* If in the Jewish church any persons ate of the flesh of sacrifices offered upon God's altar, did they not by that act manifest that they were members of the Jewish church, and owned that God to whom those sacrifices were offered, and that way of worship by which God was so worshipped? By the same reason these Corinthians eating of the flesh of those beasts in the idol's temple, which had been offered unto idols, did by that act declare their owning of the idol, and that idolatrous worship which had been there performed, and were really partakers of the idolatrous altar.

### 1 Corinthians 10:19

Ver. 19. I do not by this contradict what I before said, nor now affirm that an idol is any thing, or the sacrifices offered to it any thing. An idol hath nothing in it of a Deity, nor can it either sanctify or pollute any thing that is set before it; the error is in your action, as you communicate with such as are idolaters; it is your own action that polluteth you, not the idol, nor yet the meat set before it.

### 1 Corinthians 10:20

Ver. 20. The heathens might not intentionally offer sacrifices to devils, (such a thing can hardly be supposed of men), but actually they offered

sacrifices to devils; for they were devils, that is, evil angels, which deluded the poor heathen, and gave answers from the images and statues which they worshipped, believing the true God to be in them: which answers they accounted for oracles. Besides, the apostle saith, they sacrificed to devils, because in God's esteem it was so, though not in their intention; God judgeth of men's acts of worship and homage pretendedly done unto him, not according to their intention, but according to the truth and reality of the thing: now, really the heathen in their sacrifices paid a homage to devils, though such a thing was far from their intention; and this deserves the consideration, both of the papists, who worship images, and also of those protestants (if any such be) who would excuse the papists in their idolatries from their intentions. The nature of idolatry doth not lie in men's intending to worship the creature instead of the Creator, (there were hardly every any such idolaters in the world), but in their actual doing of the thing; and except they can find a direct rule in holy writ ordering the adoration of the Creator in the creature, or before the creature, it is much to be feared, that in the last day God will judge their homage performed to the creature, not to him. Now, saith the apostle, you had need take heed that, by this action, you prove not yourselves to have *fellowship with devils*, instead of Christ and the true and living God.

### 1 Corinthians 10:21

Ver. 21. *The cup of the Lord*: we may either take the phrase as signifying all religious communion under one great act of religion, or as particularly signifying having a communion with Christ in the ordinance of the Lord's supper, which is called *the cup of the Lord*, either because God hath instituted and appointed the drinking of it, or because it is done for the honour, glory, and remembrance of our Lord Christ, to remember his death until he come, as the apostle speaketh, 1Co 11:26. This the apostle tells them they could not drink of, that is, not rightly, and with a good conscience; or not really; no man that is an idolater, or hath communion with idolaters in their idolatrous acts, can have communion with Christ. The same is meant by *the Lord's table*, and *the table of devils*. So as I cannot see how either an idolatrous church can be a true church, or an idolater a true Christian, unless we will assert, that a body of people may be a true church, that can have no communion with Christ; or a man may be a true Christian, and yet have no communion with Christ. Idolatry,

doubtless, both divides the soul from Christ, as he is the Head of a believer, and as he is the Head of the church. To call any body of idolaters a true church, either morally, or metaphysically, is to say to those: Ammi, You are the Lord's people, to whom God hath said, Lo-ammi. Let them be what they will, the name of a church belongeth not to them, if (as the apostle affirmeth) they can have no communion with Christ.

### 1 Corinthians 10:22

Ver. 22. *Jealousy* is a violent passion in a man, not bearing a companion or a rival as to a thing or person which he loveth. It is in holy writ applied unto God, not to signify any such extravagancy, excess, or vehemence, as attendeth that passion in men, but only his just displeasure at the giving that homage to any creature which is due to him alone. It is most applied to God to express his anger against those who give Divine homage to idols; the worship of God being a great piece of his *glory* which he hath said he *will not give to another, nor his praise to graven images*, Isa 42:8. Hence divines observe, that jealousy is attributed to God in the second commandment, which concerns the more external worship of God, to deter men from the violation of it, Ex 20:5. So Ex 34:14 De 4:24 5:9 6:16, and in many other texts, it signifieth, that the worship of God is a thing that he is very tender of, and that his will is to endure no creature to share with him in it; and that his wrath shall flame against that man that offers to make any creature such a sharer. So that it is not safe for any to do any thing of that nature, unless he could fancy himself to be *stronger* than God; for he that doth it, must expect the power and strength of God to be engaged against him. Thus the apostle had dissuaded them from eating meat sacrificed to idols in the idol's temple, from the impiety of it, it being a species of idolatry, against which God hath signally revealed his wrath. He returns in the following verses to an argument, by which he had before dissuaded it, 1Co 8:1-13, as it was against charity, and the duty of love, in which they were indebted to their brethren.

### 1 Corinthians 10:23

Ver. 23. *All things* here must necessarily signify many things, or, at least, (as some think), all those things I have spoken of, to eat meat offered to

idols, &c. But if we interpret it in the latter sense, it is not true without limitations; for the apostle had but now determined, that to eat meat offered to idols in the idol's temple, was to have communion with devils. I had rather therefore interpret *all* by many, as that universal particle must be interpreted in a great multitude of scriptures. So as the sense is: There are many things that are lawful which are not expedient; that is, considered in themselves, under due circumstances, they are lawful, but considered in such and such circumstances, are not so, because they are not for the profit or good, but the hurt and disadvantage, of others. Thus the apostle himself expounds it in the latter clause of the verse, where he saith, they *edify not*, that is, they tend not to promote the gospel, or the faith and holiness of particular Christians.

#### 1 Corinthians 10:24

Ver. 24. It is the duty of every one who is a disciple of Christ, not merely to look at his own pleasure or profit, but the profit and advantage of others.

*Charity seeketh not her own*, ( saith the apostle, 1Co 13:5), that is, it seeketh not its own with the prejudice of another. So as admit that in this practice there were nothing looked like idolatry and impiety towards God, yet charity or love to your brethren ought to deter you.

#### 1 Corinthians 10:25

Ver. 25. It is possible that butchers, before they brought their meat into the market, might offer some part of it to the idol; or it is possible that the priests, who had a share in the beasts offered to idols, or the people that had offered such beasts, who, also had a share returned them, might out of covetousness come and bring' it to be sold in the market. The apostle directeth the Corinthians in such cases to make no scruple, but eat of it, if it were commonly sold in the shambles; which argued, that the thing in itself, considered nakedly, was not sinful. But yet he would have them in that case ask no questions, whence it came? Or whether it had not been offered to an idol? For the sake of other men's consciences, lest some others standing by should take notice that they bought and ate such meat. Or their own consciences, lest, though the thing in itself, so separated from

a sacred use, and returned to its common use, might be lawfully eaten, yet their consciences should afterwards reflect upon them for the doing of it.

### 1 Corinthians 10:26

Ver. 26. This sentence is taken out of Ps 24:1. The earth is God's, or the Lord Christ's, who hath sanctified all things for the use of man, and all the variety of creatures that are in it are sanctified by him. An idol cannot pollute any kind of meat, it hath no such malign influence upon any thing; you may pollute yourselves by your action, eating it in the idol's temple, at an idolater's feast immediately upon his sacrifice, but the idol itself is no operative thing, nor can cause an ill quality in the meat; let the meat be once returned to its common use, (the idolater's sacred mysteries being over), it is the Lord's, what he hath appointed for the use of man. In the idol's temple they took the meat out of the devil's hand, that was indeed unlawful; but if it were once returned to its common use, and sold in the market, they took it out of the hand of God's common providence, and *every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving, 1Ti 4:4.*

### 1 Corinthians 10:27

Ver. 27. The apostle puts another case, in which they might lawfully enough eat of meat offered to an idol; that was in case any of their neighbours, that were heathens, invited them to dinner or supper in a private house (some add, or in the idol's temple, if it were a feast of friendship, not a feast upon a sacrifice; but I doubt that, and also whether in the idol-temples there were any feasts but upon sacrifices): he determineth it lawful for them to go and eat whatsoever was set before them; but in this case he would also have them *ask no questions for conscience sake.*

### 1 Corinthians 10:28

Ver. 28. The meat being out of the idol's temple, and returned to a common use, there could be no impiety in eating it, no communion with

devils, and partaking of the table of devils, in and by such an action; but yet there might be a breach of charity in the action, that is, in case one were there present, who knew that it had been so offered to the idol, and declared his offence, by telling the Christian that was about to eat, that that meat had been so offered: in that case the apostle commandeth Christians not to eat, and that partly *for his sake that showed it*, lest they should lay a stumbling block before him, and by their example imbolden him that showed it to do the like, though he doubted the lawfulness of it; and likewise *for conscience sake*, that is, for their own conscience sake, which through weakness might afterward trouble them for it, though without just cause. He gives them as a reason for it, because *the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof*, that is, because there was other meat enough to eat. This passage, taken out of the psalmist, had a something different application, 1Co 10:26; there the apostle used it to justify the lawfulness of their eating such meat, returned again to a common use, and exposed to sale in the shambles; here he useth it to dissuade them from eating, if any let them know it had been offered to the idol.

### 1 Corinthians 10:29

Ver. 29. By reason of what we had, 1Co 10:28, (where the apostle forbade eating these meats, in case any at the feast told them they had been offered to idols, both for his sake that told him so, and also for conscience sake), it is most reasonable to interpret those words *not thine own* in this verse, not thine own only, there being frequent instances in Scripture where the negative particle must be so restrained, as Joh 4:42 6:27,38.

*For why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?* For why should my practice in a thing wherein I have a liberty, be censured or condemned by the conscience of another, he being persuaded that what I do, and judge that I have a liberty to do, and may do lawfully, is done by me sinfully, and I by him accounted a transgressor for it; so as though I do a thing that is honest, yet it is not honest in the sight of all men, or of good report; whereas Christians are obliged, Ro 12:17, to *provide things honest in the sight of all men*, not in their own sight merely, end to do those things that are *lovely* and of *good report*, Php 3:8.



### 1 Corinthians 10:30

Ver. 30. *If I by grace be a partaker;* if I by the goodness of God, whose the earth is, and the fulness thereof; or by the grace of knowledge, by which God hath given me to understand that I may do that, as to which others less knowing stumble; can eat such meat (out of the idol's temple) as part of it hath been offered to the idol, or with thanksgiving partake of such meat, (for so  $\chi\alpha\rho\iota\varsigma$  signifies, Lu 6:32 17:9), *why am I blasphemed, or evil spoken of, for that for which I can give God thanks?* That is, I ought not to cause another to speak evil of me for using of meat, but rather than run that danger, to abstain from such meat which I could otherwise eat of, and give God thanks: for in so doing I should but abuse my liberty, and instead of giving God thanks, I should grievously offend God, not at all consulting his glory.

### 1 Corinthians 10:31

Ver. 31. The apostle, in these three last verses, layeth down three rules, to direct Christians how to use their liberty as to things that are of an indifferent nature, neither in themselves commanded nor forbidden in the word of God. His first rule is in this verse, to do whatsoever we do *to the glory of God*. This is a general rule, not to be restrained to the eating of meat offered to idols, of which the former discourse had been. It is a general rule, not applicable alone to eating and drinking, but to all other human actions. The reasonableness of this rule appeareth from our consideration, that the glory of God was the end of our creation; *The Lord hath made all things for himself*, Pr 16:4: and indeed it is impossible it should be otherwise; for whereas every reasonable agent both propounds to himself some end of his actions, and the best end he can imagine, it is impossible but that God also, in creating man, should propound to himself some end, and there being no better end than his own glory, he could propound no other unto himself. The glory of God being the end which he propounded to himself in creating man, it must needs follow, that that must be the chief and greatest end which any man can propound to himself in his actions. God is then glorified by us, when by our means, or by occasion of us, he is well spoken of in the world, or by our obedience to his will: this our Saviour hath taught us, Joh 17:4,6. No man in any of his actions hath a liberty from this rule; so as though a man, as to many things, hath a

liberty to marry or not to marry, to eat meats or not to eat them, to wear this apparel or not to wear it; yet he is not even in such things as these so at liberty, but he ought to look about, and to consider circumstances, which will be most for the honour of God, the credit of the gospel, and reputation of religion. And the judgment of this is to be made from circumstances, the difference of which may make that unlawful which otherwise would be lawful, and that lawful which under other circumstances would be unlawful.

### 1 Corinthians 10:32

Ver. 32. We use to say, that men are offended when they are grieved or angered; but these offences are not here meant, (as appears by the Greek phrase, ἵνα προσκοποι γινεσθε) but give no occasion of sin or stumbling. This care he commands us, with reference to all men; for at that time all the world fell under one of these denominations, they were either *Jews*, or *Gentiles*, (that is, heathens), or *the church of God* (that is, Christians). It was always a hard matter, if not a thing impossible, for Christians to carry themselves so as not to anger those that were no Christians; but it was not impossible for them so to behave themselves, as not to be to them any just occasion of sin. Much less ought conscientious Christians to give offence to Christians, that made up the church of God, and were with them members of the same mystical body, of which Christ is the Head.

### 1 Corinthians 10:33

Ver. 33. *Even as I please all men in all things;* that is, in all things wherein the law of God hath left me a liberty; for Paul pleased no man, either in the omission of any thing which God had commanded him to do, or in the doing of any thing which God had forbidden him to do.

*Not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved;* not seeking my own advantage, either the satisfaction of my own mind or humour, or my own gain, but the advantage of others, especially in matters that may any way affect them as to their eternal salvation. Thus Paul, like a good shepherd, goeth out before the sheep, and leadeth them, and, as every true minister should be, is himself an example to the flock of

Christ. And this is a third rule to be observed by Christians, as to the use of the liberty which God's law hath left them as to any particular actions; notwithstanding that liberty, yet they ought to have respect to the spiritual good and salvation of others, and to do that part which their judgments inform them will be, as least to the spiritual damage and detriment, so most to the spiritual good and profit, of the souls of others with whom they converse.

## 1 Corinthians 11:1

### Chapter Summary

1Co 11:3-16 Paul exhorteth the Corinthians to follow him, as he did Christ:

1. He praiseth them for observing the rules he had given them.

2. And forbiddeth men to pray or prophesy with heads covered, and women with heads uncovered; the covering of the head being a token of subjection.

1Co 11:17-19 He blameth them for abuses in their religious assemblies, particularly for their divisions,

1Co 11:20-22 and profanation of the Lord's supper.

1Co 11:23-34 He remindeth them of the first institution thereof, and showeth the danger of partaking of it unworthily.

Ver. 1. Interpreters judge, that these words do properly belong to the foregoing chapter, in the last verse of which he had propounded his own example to them; but whether they be applied to that chapter or this, is not much material. They teach us, that the examples of the apostles are part of our rule; yet the modesty of the apostle is remarkable, who requires of his people no further to follow him than as he followed Christ: nor indeed ought any man to require more of those that are under his charge, than to follow him so far forth as he imitates the Lord Jesus Christ.

## 1 Corinthians 11:2

Ver. 2. *That ye remember me in all things;* that you remember my doctrine, the precepts and instructions that I gave you; *and keep the ordinances:* so we translate it; the Greek word is παραδοσεις. The word signifieth any thing that is doctrinally delivered, or taught men, whether it concerns faith or manners. It is thought, that in this text it doth not signify what the apostle had delivered to them with respect to faith, or their moral conversation, but with respect to matters of order, because such is the next instance which the apostle mentioneth, about *praying or prophesying with the head covered, or uncovered;* and undoubtedly any precepts of that nature from one guided by an infallible Spirit ought to be observed. The apostle doth not command them to keep any traditions, which others should to the end of the world deliver to them, he only praiseth them for keeping those which he had delivered. There is a great question between us and the papists, about the obligation that lieth upon Christians to observe unwritten traditions; that is, such rites and observances as they tell us were apostolical, and the traditions of the primitive church, though they can show us no Scripture for them; but no Christian disputes his obligation to keep apostolical traditions; only we are at a loss to know how to prove those traditions apostolical, of which we find nothing in the writings of the apostles: it is praiseworthy to keep apostolical traditions; but for others, or such as do not appear to us to be so, it is but a work of supererogation: where hath God required any such thing at people's hands?

## 1 Corinthians 11:3

Ver. 3. The abuse which the apostle is reflecting upon in this and the following verses, is women's praying or prophesying with their heads uncovered, against which the apostle strongly argues. His argument seems to be this: That the woman in religious services ought to behave herself as a person in subjection to her husband, and accordingly to use such a gesture, as, according to the guise and custom of that country, testified such a subjection; to this purpose he tells us in this verse, *that the head of every man is Christ.* Christ, considered as God according to his Divine nature, is the Head of all men and women too in the world; but the text seemeth rather to speak of Christ as Mediator: so the apostle tells us, Eph 5:23, he is *the Head of the church;* and the New Testament often speaks

of Christ in that notion, and of believers as his members: in this sense, by *every man*, we must understand no more than every Christian, *every member* of the church.

*The head of the woman is the man;* the man is called the head of the woman, because by God's ordinance he is to rule over her, Ge 3:16; he hath an excellency above the woman, and a power over her.

*The head of Christ is God;* and God is the Head of Christ, not in respect of his essence and Divine nature, but in respect of his office as Mediator; as the man is the head of the woman, not in respect of a different and more excellent essence and nature, (for they are both of the same nature), but in respect of office and place, as God hath set him over the woman. Nor indeed could those who deny the Divine nature of Christ, easily have brought a text more against their own assertion, than this, which rather proveth, that God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ are equal in nature and essence, than different; for surely the head is not of a different, but the same nature and essence with the members. Nor doth Christ's subjection to his Father at all argue an inequality, or difference from him in nature and essence, more than the subjection of subjects to a prince argue any such thing. The apostle then determines this to be the order which God hath set: God is the Head of Christ; Christ is the Head of his church, and every one that is a member of it; and man is the head of the woman, he to whom the woman ought to be subject. as the church is subject to Christ, and Christ is subject to his Father; and from hence he argues as follows.

#### 1 Corinthians 11:4

Ver. 4. By *every man praying or prophesying*, some (amongst whom the learned Beza) understand not only he that ministereth in prayer, or in opening and applying the Scriptures, whether from a previous meditation and study of them, or from the extraordinary revelation of the Holy Spirit, which they had in those primitive times; but also all those that were present at those actions. The reason they give is: Because the reason given by the apostle for his assertion, is such as is common to the people, as well as to him that ministereth; and the woman was forbidden to speak in the church, 1Ti 2:12. But our learned Bishop Hall assures us, he cannot agree with those of this mind. And indeed it is an unreasonable interpretation;

for though those who join with others in prayer may be said to pray, yet those that hear one preaching or expounding Scripture, can in no propriety of speech be said to prophesy. Nor is any such usage of the term to be paralleled, neither are the reasons they bring cogent; for though the reason of the precept may concern the people as well as the minister, yet it doth not follow that the rule or precept must necessarily do so too. And although the woman be forbidden to teach in ordinary cases, yet it did not concern those who were immediately and extraordinarily inspired, according to the prophecy, Joe 2:28, applied, Ac 2:17.

*Having his head covered;* i.e. with a hat or cap, or such covering of the head as is in use in the country wherein he liveth. It is not to be understood of the natural covering of the head, which is our hair; nor yet of any other covering which is necessary for the preservation of life and health; but such a covering as he might spare, and is ornamental to him according to the fashion of the country.

*Dishonoureth his head;* either dishonoureth Christ who is his Head, and whom he ought to represent, and doth as it were make the church the head to Christ, which is subject to him, while by covering his head he declares a subjection in his ministration. Or he dishonoureth his own head, (so many interpret it), to wit, he betrayeth his superiority, lesseneth himself as to that power and dignity which God hath clothed him with, by using a posture which is a token of inferiority and subjection. Interpreters rightly agree, that this and the following verses are to be interpreted from the customs of countries; and all that can be concluded from this verse is, that it is the duty of men employed in Divine ministrations, to look to behave themselves as those who are to represent the Lord Jesus Christ, behaving themselves with a just authority and gravity that becometh his ambassadors, which decent gravity is to be judged from the common opinion and account of the country wherein they live. So as all which this text requires of Christian ministers, is authority and gravity, and what are external indications of it. Our learned Dr. Lightfoot observeth, that the Jewish priests were wont in the worship of God to veil their heads; so that Christian ministers praying or prophesying with their heads covered, Judaized, which he judgeth the reason of the apostle's assertion. The heathens also, both Romans and Grecians, were wont to minister in their sacred things with their heads covered. Some think this was the reason why the Christians used the contrary gesture; but the apostle's arguing

from the man's headship, seemeth to import that the reason of this assertion of the apostle was, because in Corinth the uncovered head was a sign of authority. At this day the Mahometans (or Turks) speak to their superiors covered, and so are covered also in their religious performances. The custom with us in these western parts is quite otherwise; the uncovering of the head is a sign or token of subjection: hence ministers pray and preach with their heads uncovered, to denote their subjection to God and Christ: but yet this custom is not uniform, for in France the Reformed ministers preach with their heads covered; as they pray uncovered, to express their reverence and subjection to God, so they preach covered, as representing Christ, the great Teacher, from whom they derive, and whom they represent. Nothing in this is a further rule to Christians, than that it is the duty of ministers, in praying and preaching, to use postures and habits that are not naturally, nor according to the custom of the place where they live, uncomely and irreverent, and so looked upon. It is only the general observation of decency (which cannot by any be created, but ariseth either from nature, or custom, and prescription) which this text of the apostle maketh to be the duty of all Christians; though as to the Corinthians, he particularly required the man's ministering in sacred things with his head uncovered, either to avoid the habit or posture used by Jews and pagans; or for the showing of his dignity and superiority over the woman, (whom we shall by and by find commanded to pray or prophesy covered), or that he represented Christ who was the Head of the church. The uncovering of the head being with them as much a sign of subjection, as it is with us of superiority and pre-eminence.

### 1 Corinthians 11:5

Ver. 5. *But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth:* though the woman be forbidden *to teach*, and commanded *to be in silence*, 1Ti 2:12; yet that text must be understood of ordinary women, and in ordinary cases, not concerning such as prophesied from an extraordinary impulse or motion of the Spirit. We read of women prophetesses both in the Old and New Testament; such was Huldah in Josiah's time, and Anna, of whom we read Lu 2:36; and we read that Philip *had four daughters that did prophesy*, Ac 21:9.

*With her head uncovered:* the uncovered head here (as before) must

signify not covered with some artificial covering, such as our quoifs, hats, hoods, or veils, &c., or with her own hair, not hanging loose, but artificially used so as to be a covering.

*Dishonoureth her head;* dishonoureth either her husband, who is her political or economical head, for by that habit she behaveth herself as if she were not one in subjection, and seemeth to usurp an undue authority over the man; or her natural head, it being in those places accounted an immodest thing for a woman to appear in public uncovered. It is observed of Rebekah, when she met Isaac, Ge 24:65: *She took a veil, and covered herself. For that is even all one as if she were shaven;* for, saith the apostle, yourselves would judge it an uncomely thing for a woman to be shaven; now to pray or to prophesy with the head uncovered, is all one. This last clause will incline us to think, that by the uncovered head in this verse, is not only to be understood uncovered with some other covering besides her hair, but with her hair dishevelled, hanging loose at its length, for else it is not all one to have the head uncovered with a hat, or hood, or quoif, and to be shaven; for the apostle afterward saith, 1Co 11:15, her hair is given to her for a covering or a veil: so that possibly that which the apostle here reflecteth upon, is women's coming into the public assemblies with their hair hanging loosely down, and not decently wound up so as to make a covering for the head; which, we are told, was the practice of those beastly she-priests of Bacchus, who, like frantic persons, performed those pretendedly religious rites with their hair so hanging loose, and were called *manades*, because they behaved themselves more like mad persons than such as were in the actual use of their reason: something like which, it is most probable, some women in the Christian church at Corinth affected, against which the apostle here argueth.

### 1 Corinthians 11:6

Ver. 6. *For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn:* nature itself teacheth, that it is a shameful sight to see a woman revealing the mind and will of God, by an extraordinary pretended revelation, in so indecent a manner, as with her hair all hanging down; let her hair be either shaven off, or at least cut after the manner of men's hair, if she will neither tie it up artificially, so as to make it a covering for her head, nor put on a veil to cover her: for though a woman prophesying from an extraordinary



impulse, be not under the common law of women not speaking in the public assembly, but keeping silence; yet she is under the law of nature to do no such grave and solemn actions in such a rude manner, that from the light of nature, or the common account of all that live in that place, she should be judged to be irreverent and brutish in her religious action. From this text a question hath been started: Whether Christian women may lawfully go without any other covering upon their heads than their hair? I must confess, I see not how such a question can have any bottom in this text, where the apostle is not speaking of women's ordinary habiting themselves, but only when they prayed and prophesied, and (if I mistake not) when they ministered in prayer and prophecy (as was said before). We now have no such prophetesses; so as I think that question about the lawfulness of women's going without any other covering upon their heads than their hair, must be determined from other texts, not this, and is best determined from circumstances; for God having given to the woman her hair for a covering and an ornament, I cannot see how it should be simply unlawful; accidentally it may, from the circumstances of pride in her heart that so dresseth herself, or lust and wantonness in others' hearts; or other circumstances of ill designs and intentions in the woman so dressing herself.

*But if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered;* if nature teacheth us that it is a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, it also teacheth us that it is a shame for her to be uncovered, either with her hair, or some artificial covering; which latter seemeth rather to be meant in this place, because divines think, that the face is that part of the head which the apostle here intendeth should be covered in their religious actions, which is not covered with the hair, but with a veil, &c.

### 1 Corinthians 11:7

Ver. 7. *For a man indeed ought not to cover his head;* covering the head being in those countries a token of subjection, a man ought to uphold the power, pre-eminence, and authority with which God hath invested him, and not to cover his head, further than it is naturally covered with hair.

*Forasmuch as he is the image and glory, of God;* because he hath a peculiar cause of glorying in God, as he to whom alone he is subject, and

therefore ought by no habits or postures to show himself in subjection to others: or because God glorieth in him, as a most excellent piece of his workmanship: God is represented in man. Paul useth to call that one's glory wherein he glorieth, 2Co 1:12,14 1Th 2:20. So David ealleth God his glory; and Solomon tells us, Pr 17:6, that *the glory of children are their fathers*. So as the apostle here useth a double argument for the man's not covering of his head:

1. Because the man is immediately subject to God, and therefore ought not by any habits, or civil rites, to show his natural subjection to men, that are not by nature his superiors (for we must not think, that the apostle by this argument forbiddeth subjection to natural, economical, or political superiors).
2. Because God glorieth in man.

*But the woman is the glory of the man*, created for the honour of the man, and for his help and assistance, and originally made out of man, so as man may glory of her, as Adam did of Eve, Ge 2:23,

*This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh*. The glory of God ought to be revealed and uncovered, manifested to all: the glory of the man ought to be hidden and concealed.

### 1 Corinthians 11:8

Ver. 8. Here the apostle openeth or proveth what he had before said of the woman's being *the glory of the man*; the woman was made of the man; the man was not made of a rib taken out of the woman, but the woman was made of a rib taken out of the man; we have the history, Ge 2:21,22; and from hence the apostle argueth her subjection to the man.

### 1 Corinthians 11:9

Ver. 9. We have this expounded, Ge 2:18, where God said: *It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him*. God did not first create the woman, and then make man a meet help for her; but he

first made the man, and then the woman, that she might be a meet help for him. Now it is a rule in reason: That whosoever or whatsoever is made for another person or thing, is less excellent than that person or thing for which the other is made.

*For the man,* signifies to serve and help the man.

### 1 Corinthians 11:10

Ver. 10. By *power on her head* is here to be understood (as some think) a covering on her head, in sign that she is under the power of her husband: the thing signified is here put for the sign, as the sign is often put for the thing signified. Thus the ark, which is called, *the ark of God's strength*, Ps 132:8, is itself called *his strength*, 1Ch 16:11. But others here by *head* do not understand the woman's natural head, but her husband, or the man, who is the political head of the woman; and by having *power* on him, understand her exercising of her power in him, testifying it by covering her head; and think this text well expounded by 1Ti 2:12, where the apostle forbiddeth the woman to *usurp authority over the man*. He addeth another reason, *because of the angels*. By *angels* here some understand God himself, who by the ministry of angels created man and woman in this order, and put this law upon the woman. Others understand those messengers which the man sent sometimes, by whom the woman was betrothed (but this was a custom only in use amongst the Jews). Others here by *angels* understand the ministers and officers of the church, who are sometimes in holy writ called *angels*. Others understand the evil angels, who watch to take advantage to tempt men from objects appearing beautiful to unchaste thoughts, &c. But the most and best interpreters understand here by *angels*, the good angels; for the apostle would hardly have spoken of devils under the notion of angels, especially speaking to deter persons from actions; and so it teaches us, that the good angels, who are ministering spirits for the good of God's elect, at all times have a special ministration, or at least are more particularly present, in the assemblies of people for religious worship, observing the persons, carriage, and demeanour; the sense of which ought to awe all persons attending those services, from any indecent and unworthy behaviour.

### 1 Corinthians 11:11

Ver. 11. Lest the man, upon the apostle's discourse of his pre-eminence and dignity over the woman, should wax proud and insolent, and carry himself too imperiously, the apostle addeth this, that they both stand in need of each other's help, so as neither of them could well be without the other, either as to matters that concern God, or that concern the world; the Lord so ordering and disposing it, that they should be mutual helps one to another. Or else the sense is, they are equal in the Lord as to a state of grace, in Christ there is *neither male nor female*: though there be a difference between a man and woman in other things, and the man hath the priority and superiority; yet when we come to consider them as to their spiritual state, and in their spiritual reference, there is no difference.

### 1 Corinthians 11:12

Ver. 12. The man hath a priority to the woman, being first created, and a superiority over her upon that account, she being made for him, not he for her, this is indeed the man's advantage; but on the other side, since the creation of the first man, all men are by the woman, who conceives them in her womb, suckles them at her breasts, is concerned in their education while children, and dandled upon her knees; the man therefore hath no reason to despise and too much to trample upon the woman: and *all these things are of God*, by the wise ordering and disposing of God; so as neither hath the man, by reason of his prerogative, in being first created, and the end for which the woman was created, any cause to insult and triumph over the woman; neither hath the woman any cause, by reason of her prerogative, that the man is by her, any cause to triumph over the man; but both of them ought to look upon themselves as having their prerogatives from God, and in the use of them to behave themselves according to the will of God, behaving themselves in their respective stations as it is the will of God they should behave themselves, the woman being subject to the man, and testifying such subjection by all the signs of it, and the man carrying himself towards the woman as he who is the image and glory of God.

### 1 Corinthians 11:13

Ver. 13. No man is truly and thoroughly convinced of an error, till he be convicted by his own conscience. It is therefore very usual in holy writ for God, by his sacred penmen, to make appeals unto men's own consciences, and put them to judge within themselves, to examine a thing by their own reason, and according to the dictates of that to give sentence for or against themselves. The thing as to which he would have them judge within themselves, and accordingly pronounce sentence, was, whether it were a decent thing for women to pray to God with their hair all hanging loose about their shoulders, or without any veil, or covering for their head and face.

### 1 Corinthians 11:14

Ver. 14. He tells them, that they could not judge this as a thing comely, for nature itself taught them, that it is a shame for a man to wear long hair. By *nature* here some understand the law of nature, according to which it would have an intrinsic evil in it, which it is plain it hath not; for then neither must the Nazarites have used it, (as they did), neither would it be lawful for the sake of men's health or life. Others understand by *nature* the law of nations; but neither is this true, for in many nations men wear hair at the utmost length. Others understand common sense, or the light and judgment of that natural reason which since the fall is left in man; but this must be the same in all men, and we know that all men do not judge this shameful. Others therefore by *nature* here understand a common custom, which (as they say) maketh as it were a second nature; so the term is taken, Ro 11:24; but it cannot so signify here; for there neither is, nor ever was, such a universal custom in any place, that none in it wore long hair. Others by *nature* here understand natural inclination; but neither can this be the sense, for there is in some men, as well as in women, a natural propension and inclination to wear their hair at excessive lengths. Others here by *nature* understand the difference of the sex, as they take this word to be used, Ro 1:26; the distinction of the sexes teacheth us this: and this seemeth to be the most probable sense of this text. The apostle arguing, that as the male and female sex are artificially distinguished by garments, and it was the will of God they should be so, so they should also be distinguished by the wearing of their hair; and it was no less shame for a

man to wear his hair like a woman, than to wear garments like a woman.

### 1 Corinthians 11:15

Ver. 15. *But, he saith, if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her.* Long hair is comely for the woman, and accounted to her for a beauty or ornament, for God hath *given her her hair for a covering.* There have been books written about the lawfulness or unlawfulness of men's wearing long hair, and the due or undue lengths of men's hair, the substance of which were too much to transcribe here. That which in these verses seemeth to be commended to us, as the will of God in this matter, is:

1. That men and women should so order their hair, as by it to preserve the distinction of sexes.
2. That men should not wear their hair after the manner of women, either dishevelled, or curled, and tricked up about their heads, which speaks too much of an unmanly and effeminate temper, much more was what became not Christians. And if this be forbidden men, as to the use of their own hair, they stand concerned to consider whether it be lawful for them thus to wear and adorn themselves with the hair of other men and women.

### 1 Corinthians 11:16

Ver. 16. *If any man seem to be contentious;* if any man hath a mind to quarrel out of a love to show his wit in discoursing what may be said on the other side, or out of a desire to hold up a party, and contradict us.

*We have no such custom,* of women's praying or prophesying with their heads uncovered, or men's praying or prophesying with their heads covered; or we have no such custom of contending for these little frivolous things; *neither any of the churches of God;* and good Christians, in their practices, ought, in things of this nature, to have an eye and regard to the custom of their own church, and also of other Christian churches. Thus the apostle closeth this discourse, and proceedeth in the next verses to tax other abuses which were crept into this famous church.

### 1 Corinthians 11:17

Ver. 17. *Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not;* I come now to another thing of greater consequence, as to which I must much blame you; I am so far from being able to commend or approve of what you do, that I must for it smartly reflect upon you.

*That ye come together not for the better, but for the worse;* that when you meet in your church assemblies, for the performance of your religious duties, to pray, preach, hear, or receive the holy sacrament, you so meet and behave yourselves, as your meeting tends to the increase of your sin, rather than to the increase of your grace, and the promoting the work of God in yourselves and the souls of others.

### 1 Corinthians 11:18

Ver. 18. *In the church,* here, must signify the religious assembly; for at this time there were no temples built for Christians, but they met in private houses, as the iniquity of those times would bear: yet others think the place is here meant where the church was wont to meet, and say, that the Christians had a certain stated place, though in a private house, where they used to meet. But it is not very probable that they should, in the midst of heathens, be so quiet and secure as to meet either constantly, or ordinarily, in any one certain and stated place, so denominated. What schisms, or *divisions*, the apostle meaneth, he expoundeth in the following verses; either they quarrelled about meats, or drinks, or their order in sitting down, or the time when they should begin, or did not stay till they were all met.

### 1 Corinthians 11:19

Ver. 19. *There must be;* it is not simply and absolutely necessary that there should be such divisions amongst you, (they are caused from the free acts of men's corrupt wills), but yet these things do not fall out by chance, but through the providence of God, who hath so immutably ordered and decreed, to suffer Satan to show his malice, and men to discover the lusts

and corruptions of their own hearts.

*Heresies:* though heresy be a term that, by ecclesiastical usage, is restrained to signify perverse opinions in matter of doctrine, as to which men are stubborn and tenacious; yet it is manifest, that the word is not natively so to be restrained, neither can it reasonably be here so interpreted, but signifies the same thing with *schisms* and *divisions* before mentioned: for though (as will appear from 1Co 15:1-58) there were corrupt opinions amongst them in matters of doctrine, yet it is unreasonable to understand the apostle here, as speaking with reference to them, these words being brought as a reason why he was inclined to believe that there were such *schisms* or *divisions* amongst them, because there must be heresies.

*That they which are approved may be made manifest among you:* God hath his wise end in suffering breaches and divisions, that such as are true and sincere Christians, opposing themselves to such violations of charity, might appear to you to be true and sincere, and to have the love of God dwelling, working, and prevailing in them.

### 1 Corinthians 11:20

Ver. 20. The Greek words do not necessarily signify *into one place*, they may as well be translated, for the same thing, and possibly that were the better translation of them in this place; divisions appearing the worse amongst persons that met as one and the same body, and for one and the same grave action, and that such an action as declared them one body, and laid upon them the highest obligation to brotherly love imaginable.

*This is not to eat the Lord's supper:* some words must be here supplied to complete the sense.

*This is not to eat;* that is, as you do it is indeed not to do it; to eat the Lord's supper in an unlawful manner, is not to eat it. It is called *the Lord's supper*, either because he ordained and instituted it, or because it was instituted for the remembrance of his death, 1Co 11:26 Lu 22:19. Some think that the sacrament of the Lord's supper is here meant, and so one would think, by comparing what is here with 1Co 11:23,24. Others say,



that the love feast is here intended, which ordinarily preceded the Lord's supper; the reason they give is, because the abuses here mentioned, viz. not staying one for another till the whole church were met, one eating plentifully, another sparingly, some being hungry while others had ate and drank enough, could not be at the Lord's supper, where the minister beginneth not till the whole church be assembled, and where there is no such liberal eating and drinking. To this purpose we are told, that by an ancient custom in Greece (within which Corinth was) the rich men offered some things to their idols, (which after that action the poor had for their relief), and made feasts in the idol's temples, of which all had a liberty to eat. That the Christians imitated this practice of theirs, and the rich amongst them upon the Lord's days made feasts, at which both poor and rich Christians might be, and the poor carried away what was left. But this church growing corrupt every way, and having got teachers to their humours, they at these feasts neglected the poor, inviting only the rich to them, and also exceeding in their provision for their rich guests. These feasts were called feasts of love, or love feasts, either because:

1. Love to God was that which (pretendedly at least) caused them.
2. Or because they were representations of our Lord's last supper, in which he first ate the paschal lamb, then instituted what we call the Lord's supper; or because they immediately preceded or followed the administration of the Lord's supper, from whence the love feast, being immediately before or after it, had also the same name. But if we allow this, we must make the love feasts also Christ's institution, and instituted in remembrance of him, neither of which can be proved. The meaning must be: You cannot rightly communicate at the Lord's table, when immediately before or after that table, at your love feast, you are guilty of such disorderly actions. In the mean time, only what Christ instituted for remembrance of his death is what the apostle calls *the Lord's supper*.

### 1 Corinthians 11:21

Ver. 21. There was at this time in most of the Christian church a Jewish party, viz. such as were converted from Judaism to Christianity, and had a tang of the old cask, being too tenacious of some Jewish rites. These

looked upon the Lord's supper as an appurtenance to the passover, immediately after which we know that Christ at first instituted his supper. As therefore Christ did eat the paschal supper before the Lord's supper; so they, in imitation of him, though they forbore the paschal lamb, yet would have a supper of their own to precede the Lord's supper, and having provided it at home, would bring it to the place where the church was to meet; and their poor brethren contributing nothing to the charge of that supper, they would not stay for them, but took this their *own supper*: so it came to pass, that the poorer Christians were *hungry*, had none or very little share in their feast, while others, the richer part of the church, had too much; for I take our translation of this word, μεθει, to be very hard and uncharitable. Hard, because the word doth not necessarily so signify, only drinking beyond what is strictly necessary, and our translators themselves, Joh 2:10, render it *well drunk*. Uncharitable, because it certainly must be very uncharitably presumed of this church of Corinth, that they should suffer persons, at that time actually drunk, to come to the Lord's table.

### 1 Corinthians 11:22

Ver. 22. *What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in?* Hence evidently appears, that these love feasts were kept in the place where the assembly met for the public worship of God; for the apostle would have them (if they would continue them) kept in their private houses: and he doth not only blame the abuses of these feasts, but the feasts themselves as kept in the place where the church met, or as having in them any pretence to any thing of religion: meet they might, friendly to eat and to drink, but their private houses were the fittest places for that.

*Or despise ye the church of God?* Or do you despise the place (as some think) where the church of God meeteth, or the people met in that place, by carrying yourselves so disorderly in such a grave assembly; or the poorer part of the church, who, though poorer, are a part of the church, redeemed by the blood of Christ? The next words would incline us to think that the sense; for it followeth, *and shame them that have not*, that is, that have not estates to contribute to such feasts, and so are forced to go away without any due refreshment.

### 1 Corinthians 11:23

Ver. 23. About these love feasts preceding the Lord's supper, I have received nothing from the Lord, you have taken the practice up from the Jews or heathens: I do not know that it is unlawful for you civilly to feast, and eat and drink in your private houses; but to come to make such feasts immediately before you religiously eat and drink at the Lord's table, I have received no order from the Lord for any such practice. I have told you what I received from the Lord, which is no more than: *That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:* see this in the evangelists, Mt 26:26 Mr 14:22 Lu 22:19; where all these words are opened. Some think that Paul received this from the Lord by immediate revelation (as it is thought Moses received the history we have in Genesis and part of Exodus, which relates to a time before he was born, or arrived at man's estate). Others think that he received it from St.Luke's writings (for the words are quoted according to his Gospel). Others think he received it from some other of the apostles. Certain it is, that he did receive it from the Lord; how, is uncertain.

### 1 Corinthians 11:24

Ver. 24,25. These words we also met with, Lu 22:19,20, and in the other evangelists' narration of the institution of the supper. See Poole on "Lu 22:19". See Poole on "Lu 22:20".

### 1 Corinthians 11:26

Ver. 26. From hence it appears, that the bread and wine is not (as papists say) transubstantiated, or turned into the very substance of the flesh and blood of Christ, when the communicants eat it and drink it. It is still the same bread and cup it was. The end of the institution is but to commemorate Christ's death; and upon that account the waiting upon God in this ordinance, will be a standing duty incumbent upon Christians, until Christ shall come to judgment. Some think, show ye, is a better translation of the verb, than (as we translate it) *ye do show*; wherefore so behave yourselves at this ordinance, as those who know what they have to do in it,

that is, to show forth the death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 11:27

Ver. 27. Divines agree, that the unworthiness here spoken of, respecteth not the person of the receiver so much as the manner of the receiving; in which sense, a person that is worthy may receive this ordinance *unworthily*: it is variously expounded, without due religion and reverence, without faith and love, without proposing a right end in the action, under the guilt of any known sin not repented of, &c.

*Shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord;* shall incur the guilt of the profanation of this sacred institution; for an abuse offered to a sign, reacheth to that of which it is a sign; as the abuse of a king's seal, or picture, is justly accounted an abuse of the king himself, whose seal and picture it is. Some carry it higher; he shall be punished, as if he had crucified Christ, the profanation of Christ's ordinance reflecting upon Christ himself.

1 Corinthians 11:28

Ver. 28. He is to examine himself about his knowledge, whether he rightly understands what Christ is, what the nature of the sacrament is, what he doth in that sacred action; about his faith, love, repentance, new obedience, whether he be such a one as God hath prepared that holy table for; it is the children's bread, and not for dogs; a table Christ hath spread for his friends, not for his enemies.

*And so let him eat, &c.;* having so examined himself, not otherwise. Whence it appears, that neither children in age or understanding, nor persons not in the use of their reason, nor unbelievers, nor persons under the guilt of sins not repented of, have any right to the Lord's supper: accordingly was the practice of all the primitive churches, and all rightly reformed churches. Whether they ought, if they will presume to come, to be kept away by the officers of the church, and how, and by whom? Whether good Christians may communicate with such at the holy table? And after what previous duty performed? Are questions that belong not to

this text.

### 1 Corinthians 11:29

Ver. 29. *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily;* in the sense before mentioned, either having no remote right or no present right to partake in that ordinance, being an unbeliever, or a resolved unholy or ignorant person; or irreverently and irreligiously. He *eateth and drinketh* κριμα, *damnation*, or judgment, it is no matter which we translate it; for if he brings God's judgments upon him in this life, they will end in eternal damnation, without a timely repentance; but it is *to himself*, not to him that is at the same table with him, unless he hath been guilty of some neglect of his duty to him.

*Not discerning the Lord's body;* and his guilt lieth here, that he doth not discern and distinguish between ordinary and common bread, and that bread which is the representation of the Lord's body, but useth the one as carelessly, and with as little preparation and regard to what he doth, as he uses the other.

### 1 Corinthians 11:30

Ver. 30. You, it may be, are not aware of it, but look upon other causes why so many amongst you are sick, and weak, and die immaturely; but I, as the apostle of Jesus Christ, (and so know the mind and will of God), assure you, that this your irreverent and irreligious profanation of this holy ordinance, is one great cause of so many among you being sick, and weak, and dying in unripe age. Some think that the word *sleep* argues that they were godly, penitent Christians that so died, (for the death of wicked men is hardly called sleeping any where in holy writ), to let us know, that even good people, who yet may be saved, may bring judgments in this life upon themselves, as by the profanation of God's name in other ordinances, so more especially by their profanation of it in this ordinance of the supper.

### 1 Corinthians 11:31

Ver. 31. This word *judge* in Scripture signifies all parts of judgment, examining, accusing, condemning, &c.: here it signifies accusing ourselves, condemning ourselves; discriminating ourselves, by the renewings of faith and repentance, from unbelievers, impenitent and profane persons: if we would thus judge ourselves, God would not accuse or condemn us.

### 1 Corinthians 11:32

Ver. 32. Lest they be terrified at what he had said, and look upon their afflictions as indications of God's displeasure against them to that degree, that he would not look any more upon them as his children; he tells them, that when God's people are afflicted with the evils of this life, sickness, &c., God doth not deal with them so much as a Judge, as a Father, who chasteneth the child whom he loveth, and scourgeth whom he receiveth, Heb 12:6-8; and doth it for a good end, to prevent the eternal condemnation of the soul with the impenitent sinners of the world, giving us our hell in this life, that we may escape it in the life to come.

### 1 Corinthians 11:33

Ver. 33. The apostle concludes this discourse with an exhortation to them, for the time to come to take heed of these irreligious and irreverent behaviours, with relation to the Lord's supper; that they should not take the sacrament before the whole church were met together, the rich should stay for the poor, and not receive it in parties, but as one body eat that one bread.

### 1 Corinthians 11:34

Ver. 34. And if any one hungered, they should not make the place where they met together for the solemn worship of God, a place for eating and drinking at feasts, but eat at home; lest, by these disorderly and irreverent actions, they incurred the displeasure of God, and brought down the judgment of God upon themselves. Lastly, he minds them, that if there were any other things of this nature, which he had not spoken to, he did

design suddenly to come to them, and then he would set them in order, by giving them rules about them.

## 1 Corinthians 12:1

### Chapter Summary

1Co 12:1-3 Paul teacheth that none can own Christ but by the Holy Ghost,

1Co 12:4-6 whose gifts are diverse,

1Co 12:7-11 and dealt out to different persons to profit withal.

1Co 12:12,13 As many members make up one natural body, so Christians in general form one mystical body,

1Co 12:14-26 and as every member is equally a part of the natural body, and hath a necessary function allotted it.

1Co 12:27-31 So is it with Christ's body, the church; to the several members of which God hath assigned different gifts and offices for the general good.

Ver. 1. The word *gifts* is not in the Greek, but supplied by our interpreters. In the Greek is no more than *concerning spirituals*, which is equally applicable to spiritual offices, or administrations, operations, and gifts; of all which he afterward treateth something, but mostly concerning gifts, which are chiefly spoken of in this chapter: and our translators agree with the best interpreters, in supplying the text with the word *gifts*. This church eminently abounded in these abilities to spiritual actions given them of God (for *spiritual gifts* signifies nothing else); and as they abounded in them, so they erred much in the abuse or ill use of them, as we shall afterward read in this chapter. Therefore the apostle tells them, that as to them, he would not have them *ignorant*, either of the favour of God in enriching them with them, as he had said, 1Co 1:5, or yet in the due and right use of them, so as God might have glory from their good use of them: or of the errors that they had ran into, or might further run into, in the ill use of them.

## 1 Corinthians 12:2

Ver. 2. *Ye know that ye were Gentiles;* so they were still in respect of their birth and country; but he speaketh with reference to their religion and way of worship.

*Carried away unto these dumb idols;* carried away by your idol priests, and by the examples of your friends and neighbours, to idols, which, though they seem to you to speak, and to tell you of things to come, yet indeed have mouths and speak not, only the devil spake from them.

*Even as ye were led;* wherein you acted not under the conduct of reason, nor as became reasonable creatures, but you were blindly led by the dictates of priests, or by the examples of others. This the apostle puts them in mind of, to let them know, that all those excellent gifts with which they were now endued, as he had told them, 1Co 1:5,6, they had received from God since their conversion to Christianity, and from the Spirit of Christ; for before their conversion they were like brute beasts, knowing nothing, but led by others.

## 1 Corinthians 12:3

Ver. 3. The apostle proveth that they had received their spiritual gifts from the Spirit of God, because when they had not received this Spirit, they blasphemed the Christian religion, and called Christ *accursed*, which could not be done by any that spake *by the Spirit of God*; for there being but one God, and the Holy Spirit being one of the three persons in the Divine Being, and Jesus Christ another, and the eternal Son of God, it could not be but he that called Christ accursed, as the Jews and the heathens did, must blaspheme God, which none could do by the influence of that Holy Spirit, who was one of the persons in the blessed Trinity: and as by this the apostle lets them know, that they were now acted by another spirit than they were in their Gentile state; so he also lets them know, that those heathens, amongst whom they lived, were not acted by the Spirit of God, but by the evil spirit. On the other side, he saith, that *no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost*. There is a double saying that Jesus is the Lord:



1. When men only say it with their lips, but do not believe it in their hearts, are not affected with what they say, nor do pay that homage of faith and obedience to him, which should correspond with such a profession: thus men say Christ is the Lord, who preach him or discourse of him as men, though they do not in heart believe in him, receive or embrace him, or live up to the holy rules of life which he hath given; thus Judas, Caiaphas, and others, said Christ was the Lord; this they could not do *but by the Holy Ghost*, that is, the gifts of the Holy Ghost, which are common, which those might have who were never renewed by the Holy Ghost. So these Corinthians generally going thus far verbally to acknowledge Christ the Lord, it was an argument they had thus far been influenced by the Holy Ghost.
2. There is a serious and saving saying *that Jesus is the Lord*, when men do not only with their lips speak these words, and other words to the same sense, but heartily acknowledge him, believe in him, love him, obey him, and call upon him, professing him as they ought to do, and so as may be of advantage to them to life and salvation. No man now doth this but by the Holy Ghost renewing and sanctifying him, and blessing him with and helping him in the exercise of such habits. We shall observe in holy writ, that some verbs signify not the action only, but the action with its due quality: thus, hearing sometimes signifieth to hear so, as withal to believe. Calling *upon the name of the Lord*, Ro 10:13, signifieth a calling aright. Confessing, 1Jo 4:15, signifies a confessing with faith and love. So the verb *say* in this text may signify such a saying or speaking, as is attended with faith, love, and due obedience.

### 1 Corinthians 12:4

Ver. 4. *Gifts* signifieth the same thing with habits, or powers, or abilities to actions; our actions being either natural, as eating, drinking, sleeping, &c., or moral, or spiritual. These powers are either natural, which are in an ordinary course of providence bred with us, as the infant hath a power to eat, drink, sleep, cry, &c.: or acquired, and that by imitation, or human learning, as the child gets a habit of speaking, or a power to write, understand languages, arts, and sciences: or infused; and those are either merely infused, as faith, love, and all habits truly spiritual are, and therefore called graces, or spiritual gifts of the highest natures; or else such

as are obtained by the use of means on our parts, but yet not without the influence of the Holy Spirit of God; such are abilities to pray, preach, &c. There are some common powers, that is, such as those might have, who should never be saved, which might be merely infused, and were extraordinary in those first times of the gospel; such as the gift of tongues, prophecy, healing, &c. These powers, especially such as are not natural and common to all in an ordinary course of providence, nor acquired merely by imitation, or study, or the teaching of others, but infused either in whole or in part, are those which the apostle here calleth *gifts*: and he saith there is a diversity of them; there was the gift of prophecy, of healing, of tongues, &c.; but he tells them, this diversity of gifts flowed all from one and the same Spirit, the Spirit was not diverse, though his influences were divers.

### 1 Corinthians 12:5

Ver. 5. There are divers offices or ministries in the church of God; one ministereth in the office of an elder, another in the office of a deacon; one in one service of the church, another in another service; but there is but one Lord to whom they minister; they all serve the great Lord of the church, Jesus Christ, though in divers orders and places of ministration.

### 1 Corinthians 12:6

Ver. 6. *Operations* and *administrations* both differ from *gifts*, as acts from habits. Habits and powers, by which men performed holy offices in the church, or wrought miracles, are called *gifts*. The acts or exercise of these powers are called *administrations* and *operations*. These latter differ one from another, as the former signify standing and continuing acts in the church; *operations*, ενεργηματα, rather signify miraculous effects, such as healing the sick without the application of ordinary means, speaking with divers tongues, &c. The apostle tells them, that as there was a diversity of gifts, or powers, and a diversity of acts in the constant service of the church, by which men exercised those gifts or powers they had in the performance of them; so there were diversities of operations, by which men used those extraordinary gifts or powers, which God gave some in the first plantation of the church, for the sake of such as believed not. But it

was *the same God* that wrought them all, and in all, though all did not do, or could not do, the same things.

### 1 Corinthians 12:7

Ver. 7. He here calleth gifts, *the manifestation of the Spirit*, partly to let them know, that these powers flowed from the Holy Spirit apparently, they having no such powers while they were heathens, and carried after dumb idols, as they were led; and partly to let all know, that these gifts and powers were evident proofs both of Christ's ascension, and of the promise of the Father and of Christ in sending the Holy Spirit, Ac 1:4 16:7,8 Eph 4:8. These gifts he tells them were *given to every man*; where *every* signifieth each one; for the same gifts or powers were not given to all, but to those to whom they were given, they were given not to puff them up, or to give them matter to boast of, but to do good withal to the church of Christ. No man hath any power or gift given him of God, either for his own hurt, or the hurt of others, but only for his own good, and the good of others.

### 1 Corinthians 12:8

Ver. 8. There are different apprehensions as to the particular gifts here enumerated, and it is no wonder, these extraordinary gifts being ceased, if we be now at a loss to determine what is to be understood by the terms whereby they are expressed. Some by *the word of wisdom*, here, understand a faculty to deliver grave sentences; others, an ability to open the deep mysteries of religion; others, a singular knowledge of spiritual things, joined with a great authority, &c.; others, an ability to explain the deep wisdom of God. But it is most probable, that he meaneth by it what we ordinarily understand by wisdom, viz. a faculty, from a good judgment of the circumstances of actions, to do them at the best time, and in the best manner, wherein they may be serviceable to their ends. It is as uncertain, whether by *the word of knowledge* he meaneth a capacity to comprehend things in our knowledge, or to communicate it to others, or the actual communication of it by preaching, which was the work of the pastors and teachers; or the prophetic knowledge of future contingencies; or an ability to speak of spiritual things doctrinally, without any great faculty of

applying them.

### 1 Corinthians 12:9

Ver. 9. *To another*, he saith, is given *faith*: by which cannot be understood that faith which is common to all Christians, for he is speaking of such gifts as were given to some Christians, not to all; he must therefore mean, either a faith of miracles, that is, a persuasion that God would work a miracle in this or that case, or a great knowledge in the matters of faith, or a great confidence and boldness in the discharge of their office.

*To another the gifts of healing*, of healing diseases miraculously, without the application of ordinary rational medicines.

### 1 Corinthians 12:10

Ver. 10. *To another the working of miracles*, of other sorts, such as the inflicting punishments on sinners, casting out devils, &c.

*To another prophecy*, which in the general signifieth the revelation of the will of God, whether by the foretelling future contingencies, or opening the Scriptures by preaching or teaching.

*To another discerning of spirits*; a power wherein God, for the further authority and credit of his gospel in the primitive times, communicated to some men something of his own prerogative to discern men's inward thoughts and hearts, and to make up a judgment of their truth and sincerity, or contrariwise of their falsehood and hypocrisy.

*To another divers kinds of tongues*, that is, a power to discourse with men in their several languages, as we read in Ac 2:8.

*To another the interpretation of tongues*: this is made a diverse gift from an ability to speak with divers tongues; possibly some of those that spake with divers tongues could not interpret what they said.

### 1 Corinthians 12:11

Ver. 11. Though the Spirit of God be but one, from whom these several powers and abilities flow; yet he doth not give all this variety of gifts to all Christians, but one to this man, another to another, as the same Holy Spirit pleaseth, for the glory of God, or the good of the church.

### 1 Corinthians 12:12

Ver. 12. For as it is in the body natural, the integral parts, or members of it, are *many*, yet *the body is but one*; so it is in the spiritual body, the church, which is that mystical body of which Christ is the Head. The members of the church may be many, and there may be in several members of the church a diversity of gifts, of administrations, and operations, yet the church is but one, yea, Christ and the church make up but one mystical body, of which he is the Head; and they are the members; and therefore the several members, having several gifts, or several offices, or several powers and operations, had no reason, for their difference in such gifts, or powers, or offices, to envy one another, or to despise each other, or glory over one another; for they were but one body, and had all the same Head, though they had from the same Spirit divers abilities, offices, and powers for several operations.

### 1 Corinthians 12:13

Ver. 13. The apostle proveth the oneness of the church, as the body of Christ, from the same sacraments of the New Testament instituted for all Christians, and wherein they jointly partake. He saith, we are *baptized into one body*, by which he must mean the universal church, for Christ is the Head of that; particular churches are but parts of that church, of which Christ is the Head. Let men be of what nation they will, whether Jews or Gentiles, turning to the Christian religion, and of what condition they will, when they are baptized they are by it made members of that one body, of which Christ is the Head; though for the more convenient administration of, and participation in, the ordinances, they are divided into smaller societies, which also have the denomination of churches; as the smallest drop of water may be called water, though there be but one element of

water.

*And*, saith the apostle, *we have been all made to drink into one Spirit*; which some interpret as if it were, we have all drank of one Spirit, that is, been made partakers of one Spirit, whose benefits are, sometimes set out under the notion of water, *living water*, Joh 4:10,14 7:38,39; and so in the Old Testament, Isa 12:3 Eze 47:1-23. But many others choose rather to interpret drinking in this place, of drinking at the table of the Lord, partaking of that whole action being set out here by one particular act there performed. This is probable, considering that the apostle, in the former part of the verse, had been speaking of the other sacrament of the gospel, and that he, speaking of the Lord's supper. 1Co 10:17, had used this expression: *For we being many, are one bread, and one body*.

#### 1 Corinthians 12:14

Ver. 14. As the natural body is *totum integrale*, a whole consisting of many members; so the body spiritual, the mystical body of Christ, is not made up of one single member, but of many members.

#### 1 Corinthians 12:15

Ver. 15,16. It should seem by these expressions, that one great cause of those divisions, which the apostle had charged the church of Corinth with, was their difference in *gifts, administrations, and operations*; which was to that degree, that either those who were higher in gifts and administrations, and more famous for their miraculous operations, despised and vilified those that were inferior to them; or those who were lower in gifts, or in their stations in the church, or their power to work miracles, would not own themselves members of the church at Corinth, because they were in those low and inferior orders and degrees. The apostle argueth the unreasonableness of this, by a further comparing of the natural with the spiritual mystical body, the church, and showeth, it was altogether as unreasonable for men to disclaim the church, and their relation to it, because they had not the most eminent gifts, or were not in the most eminent places and offices, as for the foot to say, it was not of the body, because it was not the hand; or for the ear to say, it was not of the

body, because it was not the eye.

### 1 Corinthians 12:17

Ver. 17. There are several actions to be performed by the body of a man, either for the support and the upholding of it in life, or for the accommodation of it while it lives; seeing, hearing, and smelling (which are the three actions here mentioned) are not indeed necessary for the upholding of life, but they are highly useful for a man's better being, and the accommodation of bodily life; therefore there is need of a variety of bodily members, organs or instruments of sight as well as of hearing, and organs of smelling as well as hearing; the wise God hath created no member of man's body in vain, each one hath its use in order to the being or well-being of the body: so it is in the church of God, as the apostle, 1Co 12:27, argueth; but he goes yet further on, first, in his comparison of the natural and mystical body.

### 1 Corinthians 12:18

Ver. 18. The infinitely wise God, who hath made the body of man, and ordered all the members of the body for several uses and offices, either for the upholding or accommodating the life of man, hath likewise appointed the order in the body in which every member shall stand; that the head should be uppermost for the better guidance of the whole body; the feet lowermost to tread upon the earth, and to bear the weight of the whole body: and none must repine at the wisdom of God, which hath not only created man's body, (consisting of a variety of members), but also appointed every member its place, and there setteth it, that it cannot shift its station or office.

### 1 Corinthians 12:19

Ver. 19. The body is a whole consisting of many members, it could not therefore be a body if there were but only one member. Or how could the body perform the several actions necessary either for the being or the well-

being of it, if it consisted but of one member?

1 Corinthians 12:20

Ver. 20. The multiplicity of members, having several uses and offices for the service of the whole body, do not make a multiplicity of bodies, the body still is but one.

1 Corinthians 12:21

Ver. 21. He names two of the most noble and useful members of the body, *the head and the eye*, which yet cannot tell the hands or the feet they have no need of them: the wise God having created nothing in vain, but made every member in the body of a man for use, as to the whole, so to the several parts of the body; the hand is useful to the eye, and the feet are of use to the head. The application of this similitude, which the apostle so much enlargeth upon, we shall have, 1Co 12:27, &c.

1 Corinthians 12:22

Ver. 22. By *feeble* the apostle here doth not only mean most weak, but which seem to us most abject and contemptible; in which sense the word is used, 2Co 12:10; such are the belly and the entrails; the eye also is a feeble member, &c.; yet these parts are most necessary for the use of the body, being such without the use of which the body cannot live.

1 Corinthians 12:23

Ver. 23. All know what those parts of the body are, which are commonly judged *less honourable* and less comely; upon these we bestow more abundant honour and comeliness, by hiding them and covering them, that they are not, as the hands, and face, and head, (which we esteem more honourable parts of the body), exposed to the public view of those with whom we converse.



### 1 Corinthians 12:24

Ver. 24. God hath, in the wisdom of his providence, so ordered it, that as we have some parts of our body which are judged uncomely, and not for those noble uses that others are; so we have other parts that are, for use, more noble, yet in common repute more ignoble and uncomely: and the same wise God hath so built the body of man, as of both these to make a temperament so as they all concur in the composition of the same body, and more abundant honour in covering and clothing them is given to those parts, that, in the judgment of men, seemed most to lack honour, that their uncomeliness might by some artificial means be taken away.

### 1 Corinthians 12:25

Ver. 25. By *schism* is here meant division, and that also must be expounded figuratively, and it is expounded in the next words, *that the members should have the same care one for another*; that though the members differ in honour and office, yet they might mutually take care for each other, as if they were all in an equal degree of honour.

### 1 Corinthians 12:26

Ver. 26. From this union of the members in the body natural, of all the members proceedeth a natural sympathy, that if one member suffereth, all are afflicted, and ready to contribute to the relief and help each of other; and likewise the honour that is reflected on the body, is reflected on all the parts, and all rejoice in the good that affecteth any one single member.

### 1 Corinthians 12:27

Ver. 27. Considering you in the whole as a church, so *ye are the body of Christ*: considering you particularly as individual believers, so *ye are members of Christ*. Some think εκ μερους signifies in part, intending that true believers amongst them were members of Christ, but not others. The apostle, in these words, beginneth to apply to them what he had before

discoursed concerning the body natural, and the parts thereof; you are the mystical body of Christ, which hath a great analogy with that natural body which you carry about with you.

### 1 Corinthians 12:28

Ver. 28. The apostle, Eph 4:11, seemeth to make a different enumeration; there he saith: *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.* He mentioneth here only three of those there mentioned, viz. *apostles, prophets, teachers.* He reckoneth up there *evangelists*, whom he doth not here mention. He here first mentioneth *apostles*, by whom he meaneth those servants of God who were sent out by Christ to lay the first foundations of the gospel church, and upon whom a universal care lay over all the churches of Christ, having not only a power in all places to preach and administer the sacraments, but to give rules of order, and direct in matters of government; though particular churches had a power of government within themselves, otherwise the apostle would not have blamed this church for not casting out the incestuous person.

*Prophets* signify persons (as I have before noted) that revealed the mind and will of God to people, whether it were by an extraordinary impulse and revelations or in an ordinary course of teaching; whether they revealed things to come, or opened the mind and will of God already revealed. But in this text, and in Eph 4:11, *prophets* seem to signify, either such as from the Spirit of God foretold future contingencies, (such was Agabus, of whom we read in the Acts of the Apostles, and others in the primitive church), or else such as interpreted Scripture by extraordinary and immediate revelation. Some think that *prophets* signify the ordinary pastors of churches; but they seem rather to be comprehended under the next term of *teachers*, unless we had better grounds than we have to distinguish between pastors and teachers, making the work of the teacher to speak by way of doctrine and explication, and the work of the pastor to speak practically.

*Thirdly teachers:* some by these understand governors of schools; others, such ministers whose work was only to expound the Scriptures, or the mysteries of salvation: but the apostle, in this enumeration, (which is the

largest we have in Scripture), not mentioning pastors, it seemeth to me that he means the fixed and ordinary ministers of churches, or the elders, whom the apostles left in every city, which by their ministry had received the gospel.

*After that miracles;* after that such as he empowered to work miraculous operations, and those of more remarkable nature, for otherwise the *healings* next mentioned come under that notion also.

*Then gifts of healings;* then such persons as he gave a power to in an extraordinary way to heal the sick. Who the apostle means by *helps*, and by *governments*, is very hard to determine. Certain it is, that he doth not mean the civil magistrates; for the time was not yet come for kings to be nursing fathers, and queens nursing mothers to the gospel church. But whether he meaneth deacons, or widows, elsewhere mentioned, as helpful in the case of the poor, or some that assisted the pastors in the government of the church, or some that were extraordinary helps to the apostles in the first plantation of the church, is very hard to determine.

*Diversities of tongues;* such as spake with divers tongues, that faculty being a gift, as we heard before, not given to all, but to some in the primitive church. The apostle, by this enumeration, showeth what he meant by those *diversities of gifts, differences of administrations, and diversities of operations*, of which he spake in 1Co 12:4-6.

### 1 Corinthians 12:29

Ver. 29,30. That is, all are not, nor can be, any more than all the body can be an ear, or an eye, or a hand, or a foot: you cannot expect, that in a governed body all should be governors; and you see by experience, that all cannot work miracles, prophesy, speak with tongues, or heal those that are sick.

### 1 Corinthians 12:31

Ver. 31. *But covet earnestly the best gifts:* the word may be translated

indicatively: Ye do covet the best gifts; or as we translate it, imperatively: Covet ye; I would have you be covetous to excel in the best gifts, that is, those which will make you most useful and profitable to the church of God.

*And yet show I unto you a more excellent way;* but yet (saith he) gifts are not the best things, the habits of saving grace are much more valuable than gifts; love to God and your neighbour ought to be by you preferred before gifts. To a discourse of which the apostle thus shortly passeth.

### 1 Corinthians 13:1

#### Chapter Summary

1Co 13:1-3 All gifts, how excellent soever, without charity are nothing worth.

1Co 13:4-12 The praises of charity,

1Co 13:13 and its preference to faith and hope.

Ver. 1. The apostle had promised, in the close of the former chapter, to show them a more excellent thing than gifts, or a more excellent course than that they were so hotly pursuing, in their emulation of the best gifts; he now cometh to show them that way, that course: the way was that of love; the course was the study and pursuing methods how to show their love to God and to one another. For (saith the apostle) *though I speak*, that is, if I could speak, or admit I did speak, *with the tongues* used in all the nations of the world, and with the tongues *of angels*; by which some understand the best and most excellent ways of expressing ourselves. Angels have no tongues, nor make any articulate audible sounds, by which they understand one another; but yet there is certainly a society or intercourse among angels, which could not be upheld without some way amongst them to communicate their minds and wills each to other. How this is we cannot tell: some of the schoolmen say, it is by way of impression: that way God, indeed, communicates his mind sometimes to his people, making secret impressions of his will upon their minds and understandings; but whether angels can do the like, or what their way is of communicating their minds each to other, is a great secret, and we ought to be willingly ignorant of what God hath not pleased, in any part of his

revealed will, to tell us. Neither do I judge it a question proper to this place, where the *tongues of angels* unquestionably signify the best and most excellent ways of expressing and communicating ourselves to others; as manna is called *angels' food*, Ps 78:25, that is, the most excellent food, for angels, being spiritual substances, need no food, have no mouths to eat, nor bellies to fill; and this the apostle meaneth. Though I could express myself, or communicate my mind to others, in the most excellent way, or in the greatest variety of expression, yet if I have not *αγαπην*, which we translate, *charity*, but possibly might be better translated love, because we usually by charity (in common speech) understand that indication of brotherly love, which is in act of bounty, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, giving to those that are in want; which it is possible that men do out of mere humanity, or a superstitious opinion of meriting thereby, without any true root of love to our neighbour, which is never true if it doth not grow out of a love to God. If I want love, (saith the apostle), a true root of love to men, flowing from a true love to God, and out of obedience to his precept, I am but *as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal*, that is, I only make a noise, but it will conduce nothing to my salvation, it will be of no use to me; but if I have this true root of love, then it will be of avail to me. And thus the apostle proveth, that the habit of love to God and man in the heart, is far more excellent than the gift of tongues, which many of the Corinthians had, or coveted, or boasted in, despising those who had it not.

### 1 Corinthians 13:2

Ver. 2. *And though I have the gift of prophecy:* it hath been before showed, that *the gift of prophecy*, signifieth an extraordinary power or faculty, by which men in those primitive times were enabled to reveal the mind and will of God, either as to future contingencies, or things which should afterwards come to pass in the world, or by further explication or application of the mind and will of God already revealed in holy writ.

*And understand all mysteries, and all knowledge:* though, saith the apostle, I have a vast knowledge, and could in any notion comprehend the most sublime and hidden things, whether Divine or human.

*And though I have all faith* (except that which is saving and justifying).

*So that I could remove mountains:* he further opens what faith he meant, viz. faith of miracles, a firm persuasion that God would upon my prayer work things beyond the power, and contrary to the course, of nature: the apostle alludeth to the words of our Saviour, Mt 17:20.

*And have not charity, I am nothing;* yet, saith he, if I have not love, that true love to God and men, by which that faith which is profitable to salvation worketh and showeth itself, it will all signify nothing, be of no profit nor avail unto me in order to my eternal salvation; I may perish for ever, notwithstanding such gifts.

### 1 Corinthians 13:3

Ver. 3. The apostle proceedeth from common gifts, powers, and habits, to actions, and instanceth in two; the first of which might be a great service to men; the latter, an appearance of a great service to God.

*Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor;* though, saith he, I feed the poor with my goods, and that not sparingly, but liberally, so as I spend all my estate in that way, and make myself as poor as they: *and though I give my body to be burned;* though I die in the cause of Christ, for the testimony of his gospel, or for owning of his ways; and that by the sharpest and most cruel sort of death, burning; and be not dragged to the stake, but freely give up myself to that cruel kind of death: *and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing;* yet if I have not a root and principle of love to God in my heart, that carrieth me out to these actions and these sufferings, they all will signify nothing to me, as to my eternal salvation and happiness. From whence we may observe, that:

1. The highest acts of beneficence or bounty towards men, (which we usually call good works), are not meritorious at the hand of God, and may be separated from a true root of saving grace in the soul.
2. That the greatest sufferings for and in the cause of religion, may be separated from a true root and principle of saving grace.
3. That no actions, no sufferings, are sufficient to entitle any soul to heaven, further than they proceed from a principle of true love to God,

and a desire to obey and to please him in what we do.

Faith and love must be the roots and principles of all those works which are truly good, and acceptable to God, and which will be of any profit or avail to us with reference to our eternal happiness.

### 1 Corinthians 13:4

Ver. 4. Lest the Corinthians should say to the apostle: What is this love you discourse of? Or how shall we know if we have it? The apostle here gives thirteen notes of a charitable person.

*Charity suffereth long:* by love or *charity* he either meaneth a charitable person, a soul possessed of that love, which he had been commending; or if we take the term plainly, to signify the habit itself, the meaning is, it is a habit or power in the soul, enabling and inclining it to do these things: to suffer long, not to be too quick and tetchy with brethren that may offend or displease us; the charitable man will withhold and restrain his wrath, not be rash in the expressions of it, and hasty to revenge.

*And is kind;* it disposeth a man to desire to deserve well of all, and to do good to all, as he hath occasion and opportunity; so as it is impossible there should be in a man any thing more opposite to this grace, than a currish, churlish temper, with a study and desire to do others mischief.

*Charity envieth not;* though a charitable person seeth others in a higher and more prosperous condition than himself, yet it doth not trouble him, but he is glad at the preferment, good, and prosperity of other men, however it fareth with himself. Every envious man, that is displeased and angry at another's faring well, is an uncharitable man, there is no true root of love to God or to his neighbour in his heart.

*Vaunteth not itself;* he doth not prefer himself before others, ambitiously glorytug or boasting, and acting rashly to promote his own glory, and satisfy his own intemperate desires or lusts. He *is not puffed up*, proudly lifting up himself above others, and swelling with high conceits of himself.

### 1 Corinthians 13:5

Ver. 5. *Doth not behave itself unseemly;* he doth not behave himself towards any in an uncomely or unbeseeming manner, and will do nothing towards his brother, which in the opinion of men shall be a filthy or indecent action.

*Seeketh not her own;* he doth not seek what is his own, that is, what is for his own profit or advantage only; he hath an eye to the good and advantage of his brother, as well as his own profit and advantage. Such a man *is not easily provoked;* he is not without his passions, but he is not governed by his passions, and overruled by them to fly out extravagantly against his brother upon every light and trivial occasion; he knows how to bear injuries, and is willing rather to bear lesser wrongs, losses, and injuries, than to do any thing in revenge of himself, or to the more remarkable prejudice of his neighbour. He *thinketh no evil,* that is, no mischief, nothing that may be hurtful and prejudicial to his neighbour. Or else, he doth not rashly suspect his neighbour for doing evil (which possibly may be the better interpretation); and so it teacheth us, that lightly to take up evil reports of our neighbours, is a violation of charity; for the man that hath a true love to his brother, though he may believe evil of his brother, and charge him with evil, when it evidently appears to him that he is guilty; yet before that be evident to him, he will not suspect, nor think any such things of him.

### 1 Corinthians 13:6

Ver. 6. He doth not rejoice in the sinful falls of others, but he rejoiceth in all truth, and the success and prospering of truth in the world; or in the manifestation of any person's truth, or innocency, and righteousness.

### 1 Corinthians 13:7

Ver. 7. The charitable man *beareth all* injuries with patience; he *believeth all things* that are good of his brother, so far is he from being credulous to his prejudice; *endureth all things* that a good man ought to endure, that is, any evils done to himself. In the same sense Solomon saith, Pr 10:12: *Love*



*covereth all sins.*

### 1 Corinthians 13:8

Ver. 8. The apostle, from another argument, commendeth the grace of love, viz. its never failing; it shall go with us into another world, and have its use and exercise there, where there will be no prophesying, no speaking with divers tongues, but there the saints shall love God. And this maketh it evident, that by charity, or love, (before mentioned), the apostle doth not singly mean bounty or beneficence to those that stand in need of those good things of this life, in which we can help them.

*Whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away: by knowledge,* here, some understand the communicating of knowledge to the church by preaching: others, the means we now have by meditating in and study of the Scriptures: others, better, of the imperfect degrees of our knowledge, or the way of our procuring it: the following verses would incline us to interpret it of the former, though it be true also of the latter.

### 1 Corinthians 13:9

Ver. 9. *For we know in part;* it was truly said, as to things human, that the greatest part of those things that we know, is the least part of those things which we are ignorant of. A great measure of Divine things is also unknown to us, and the knowledge of them reserved for the resurrection and day of judgment, Joh 14:20.

*And we prophesy in part;* nor can the communication of our knowledge to that, be larger than what we by prophecy communicate; we having ourselves but a short and imperfect communication of Divine things, we can communicate but an imperfect degree of knowledge to others.

### 1 Corinthians 13:10

Ver. 10. But when we come to heaven, we shall be in such a state, as nothing shall or can be added to us; then our partial and imperfect

knowledge shall be swallowed up in a knowledge perfect and complete.

### 1 Corinthians 13:11

Ver. 11. The apostle compareth the state of believers in this life, compared with their state in another life, to the state of a child, compared to that of a man. Look, as one, when he is a child, knoweth things imperfectly, and discourseth of them in the style and according to the knowledge of a child; but when he is grown up, he discourseth of them at another rate, according to the degree of knowledge which he hath acquired by instruction of others, or his own experience and observation: so it is with all of us; in this life we, like children, have a poor, low, imperfect knowledge of spiritual things, and accordingly discourse of them; but when we come to heaven, we shall know them and discourse of them in a more perfect manner.

### 1 Corinthians 13:12

Ver. 12. The apostle pursues his former theme, comparing the imperfect state of believers, as to knowledge in this life, with what shall be in the life that is to come. In this life it is as in a looking glass, (where we only see the images and imperfect representations of things), and darkly, in a riddle; it is but a little knowledge that we have, and what we have we get with a great deal of difficulty; but in heaven we shall have such knowledge as two men have who see one another face to face, and shall know God fully, in some measure, though not in the same degree, of the fulness and perfections wherein God knoweth us.

### 1 Corinthians 13:13

Ver. 13. Take us according to our state in this life, we have, and shall have, the exercise of three graces: *faith*, to evidence unto us those things which we do not see, either by the eye of sense or reason; *hope*, by which we wait for the receiving of them; and *love*, by which we delight ourselves in God, and show obedience to the will of God. But of all these, love is *the greatest*, either in respect of its use and profitableness unto men, or in respect of its duration and abiding (which last the apostle seemeth chiefly

to intend).

*Faith* shall cease when we come to the vision of God; and *hope*, when we come to the fruition of God in glory; *love* also will cease, as to some acts, but never as to a pleasure and a delighting in God; that will be to eternity.

## 1 Corinthians 14:1

### Chapter Summary

1Co 14:1-5 Prophecy, for its greater tendency to edification, is preferred before speaking with tongues.

1Co 14:6-11 Tongues not understood, like indistinct musical sounds, are of no service to the hearers.

1Co 14:12-20 All gifts should be referred to edification.

1Co 14:21,22 Tongues are of use for the conviction of unbelievers,

1Co 14:23-25 but in the assemblies of the church prophecy is more useful.

1Co 14:26-33 Rules for the orderly exercise of spiritual gifts in the church.

1Co 14:34-38 Women are forbidden to speak there.

1Co 14:39,40 An exhortation to use each gift freely, but with decency and order.

Ver. 1. *Follow after charity*; that love to God and your brethren, concerning which I have been speaking so much, as preferable to all common gifts, follow that with your utmost diligence, as the persecutors follow you; for it is the same word that is ordinarily used to signify the violent prosecution of persecutors, though it be applied also to things which we ought eagerly to follow, Ro 9:31 14:19.

*But rather that ye may prophesy*; but rather, or principally that you may be able to reveal the mind and will of God unto others. Some think, by foretelling things to come; but that is not very probable, such an ability of prophesying being given but to few under the New Testament: it is therefore more probable, that he speaketh of an ability to open the

Scriptures, either by immediate revelation, (as to which they could use no means but prayer and a holy life), or by ordinary meditation, and study of the Scriptures. For though the former species of prophesying, by prediction of future things, when the truth of it was justified by such prophecies' accomplishment, was of great use to confirm the doctrine of the gospel; yet the latter was of greater and more general use for the good of others, which makes the apostle put them upon the coveting and earnest desire of that faculty or ability, because, of all others, it made them most eminently and generally useful to others, as well those within the church, as those without; and thais the apostle expoundeth himself, 1Co 14:3.

### 1 Corinthians 14:2

Ver. 2. *For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue;* by a *tongue* (for *unknown* is not in the Greek, but necessarily added by our translators, for he speaketh of such a language) he meaneth a language not known to all, or at least not to the most of them that hear him. It may be asked, what unknown language the apostle here meaneth? Shall we think that any pastors or teachers in the church of Corinth were so vain, as to preach in the Arabic, Scythian, or Parthian language to a people who understood only the Greek? Our learned Lightfoot thinks this not probable, and that if any had been so vain for ostentation, the apostle would rather have chid them for suffering such an abuse, and have forbidden such further practice, than have given direction, than if any so spake he should interpret, as he doth, 1Co 14:5. He rather thinks, therefore, that the apostle meaneth the Hebrew tongue; the use of which, though it was by this time much lost through the Jews' mixture with other nations, yet was restored in a great measure to the guides of churches, for their better understanding the Scriptures of the Old Testament; and continued amongst the Jews in their reading of the law in the synagogues. Now there being many Jews in this church, and the service of God being ordinarily in the Jewish synagogues performed in that language, it is very probable, that some of these Jews that were Christianized (to show their skill) might, when they spake to the whole church of Corinth, use to speak in Hebrew, though few or none understood that language. The apostle saith, he that did so, spake *not unto men*, that is, not to those men who did not understand that language, not to the generality of his hearers, though possibly here and there some might understand him, *but unto God*, who being the Author of all languages,

must necessarily know the significancy of all words in them: for (he saith) scarce any man understood him.

*Howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries;* howbeit he may speak mysterious things to himself, and to the understanding of his own soul and spirit. Others think that it was possible, that some who thus spake, being but the instruments of the Holy Spirit, might not themselves understand all which they said; but that is hardly probable.

### 1 Corinthians 14:3

Ver. 3. *Speaketh unto men;* that is, to the understanding of men, and for the good and profit of men.

*To edification;* for their increase in knowledge and all habits of grace.

*And exhortation;* to quicken them in the exercise and practice of such duties as God hath, in his word, required of, them.

*And comfort;* and for the relief of them under their burdens, to support and uphold their troubled or wounded spirits. These expressions make it probable, that the apostle, by prophecy in this text, understands ministerial preaching; which more properly tends *to edification, exhortation, and comfort*, than the foretelling of things to come.

### 1 Corinthians 14:4

Ver. 4. *He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself;* knowledge or understanding of the things that any man speaketh, is necessary to the improvement of them, by their being a means to promote faith and love; for how shall what men say in the least promote, either my faith in God or Christ, or my love to him, if I understand not what they say?

*How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?* Ro 10:14. So that, though he that speaketh in an unknown tongue may (if he understand what he says) have his own heart affected with what he saith, yet it is not

possible he should affect another.

*But he that prophesieth edifieth the church;* but he that preacheth in an intelligible language and style to all that hear him, he doth what in him lieth to edify all those that hear him.

### 1 Corinthians 14:5

Ver. 5. *I would,* in this place, signifies no more than either I could wish, or I could be content that you could all speak with tongues, if God pleased. It should seem by this speech of the apostle's, that this speaking in unknown tongues was that extraordinary gift, which, above all others, this church, or the several members of it, were proud and ambitious of. St. Paul tells them, that if God pleased he wished they could all do it. But of the two, he rather wished them all a power to open and apply the Holy Scriptures to men's understandings and conscience. He addeth the reason, because it was a more honourable gift and work, and made men truly greater. But he adds, *except he interpret,* for then he prophesied also.

*That,* saith he, *the church,* that is, those that heard him prophesying, *may receive edifying.* Whence we learn:

1. That spiritual growth, and proficiency in Divine knowledge and habits of grace, ought to be the great end of all preachers; and whose doth not propound this as his end, abuseth his office, and trifles in a pulpit.
2. That whose maketh this his end, will make it his business, to the best of his skill, to use such a language, style, and method, as the generality of his hearers may best understand; for without their understanding, there can be no edifying. And this lets us see the vanity of using much Latin, or Greek, or a lofty style, or a cryptic method, not obvious to poor people in popular sermons, where the people understand not those languages; or philosophical ratiocinations before a plain people that understand none of these things. Such preaching is neither justifiable by reason, nor by the practice either of Christ or his apostles.

### 1 Corinthians 14:6

Ver. 6. God hath given me an ability to speak with tongues; suppose I should come to you speaking in the Arabian, Scythian, or Parthian language, what good would it do you? How should it any way *profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?* Some make these four things distinct each from other; others think that they all signify no more, than the interpreting mentioned in the former verse. Those who distinguish them say, by *revelation* is meant the explication of the types and figures of the Old Testament; or some such revelation as John had in Patmos; or the expounding the mysteries of the gospel.

By *knowledge* they understand the knowledge of history, or any other ordinary knowledge.

By *prophesying*, the explication of the difficult texts of Scripture.

By *doctrine*, catechetical or practical doctrine. But these are all but uncertain guesses; the sense is plainly no more, than, if I should come speaking with unknown tongues, and no way by interpretation make what I say intelligible unto you.

### 1 Corinthians 14:7

Ver. 7. In the sounds which are artificially made by the use of wind music, or other music, nothing could be understood, if art had not also devised a distinction in the sounds; that one sound should signify one thing, another sound should signify another thing: so unless the voice of the teacher be significant to, and understood by, the person instructed or taught, the sound is of no use at all.

### 1 Corinthians 14:8

Ver. 8. The trumpet is made use of in battles, and that variously; it is used to give soldiers notice to march on against the enemy, and also to sound a retreat: if there were not a distinction in the one sound, and in the other,

how should the soldier know when to go forward, and when to come back, by the sound of it? To instruct them what to do, the trumpet must not only sound, but sound intelligibly to those that hear it, which it could not, if there were no distinction in the sound.

### 1 Corinthians 14:9

Ver. 9. By λογον ευσημων is meant words which signify well to those that hear them; for words may be significant enough in themselves, yet nothing at all significant to them that hear them, being unlearned; such sounds of words can contribute nothing to people's knowledge, but are so much lost labour. This is a text that deserveth the thoughts of those who affect in preaching, if not the use of languages, yet the use of a style, or method, which not one of many of those who hear them understand. It is all one to speak in an unknown tongue, as in a style or method that people do not understand; and truly, such are the generality of ministers' hearers, that words most significant in themselves, and to learned ears, are least significant to them, being hardest to be understood; so as they know nothing of what they say, and the minister doth but, as to the far greater number of people, beat the air (which is a dreadful meditation).

### 1 Corinthians 14:10

Ver. 10. *The whole earth was originally of one language, and of one speech,* Ge 11:1; but upon the building of Babel, Ge 11:7, God confounded their languages, so as they did not understand one another. They being scattered abroad, had different languages; so as now there are in the world many languages, and the words in every language are significant to those that understand that language.

### 1 Corinthians 14:11

Ver. 11. But if a man doth not understand the language, the words are not significant unto him, I shall neither understand him, nor will he understand me; for a barbarian cannot understand one of another nation, till he hath learned the language of that nation; nor can a man of another nation



understand a barbarian till he hath learned his language.

### 1 Corinthians 14:12

Ver. 12. This proves that the members of the church of Corinth were very ambitious of *spiritual gifts*. The particle οὐτω, which our translation here renders *so*, plainly signifies therefore in this place. In the Greek it is, because, or *forasmuch as ye are zealous of spirits*; the efficient is put for the effect, the Spirit, which is the author of those gifts, for the gifts themselves.

*Seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church;* seek that ye may excel in them, and that will be, if you most desire those which tend to the edifying the church, and use those with which God hath blessed you in the best order and manner for that end. From whence it is observable, that the improvement of the people to whom we preach in the knowledge of God, and in faith and obedience, is the great end which we ought to propose to ourselves in the discharge of our office, and in the use of our gifts.

### 1 Corinthians 14:13

Ver. 13. To *interpret* here signifieth no more, than to render that intelligible to people, which he first uttereth in an unknown tongue. But what need he *pray* for that? Hath not every man that can speak a power to speak his native language, as well as a foreign language? Some say, therefore, that ινα in this place signifies also, let him pray and also interpret; but this seemeth hard: nor can I think those that had a faculty to speak in an unknown tongue, might some of them not themselves understand what they said, and so had need to pray that they might interpret: but they might be puffed up with their gift, and think it beneath them to interpret, and then they had need to pray that they might have humility enough to interpret. Others think, that by interpreting in this place, is meant something more than bare translating, or turning the words into the common language of the place, viz. the opening and applying of the Scriptures, an ability to which was a distinct gift; which they who would have, had need pray that God would open their eyes to understand the mysteries of his law.

### 1 Corinthians 14:14

Ver. 14. From this and the former verse, the papists would justify the lawfulness of their Latin service, which none or few of the common people understand; and they seem to have a little advantage from the opinion of some of the ancients: That some of those who spake with tongues, did not themselves understand what they uttered, but the Spirit of God only made use of their tongues as machines. But these are apprehensions much beneath the Spirit of light and truth, that it should make use of the tongue of a man for an end neither profitable to the man himself, nor others. Besides, how is it then true which we had, 1Co 14:4, that he who spake in an unknown tongue edifieth himself? Nay, how can it be true, which is here said, that such a man's *spirit prayeth*? Nor is it here said, *my understanding is dark or blind*, but *unfruitful*; that is, though myself understand, yet my knowledge bringeth forth no fruit to the advantage or good of others.

*My spirit prayeth*, but others cannot pray with me.

### 1 Corinthians 14:15

Ver. 15. What is to be done then? *I will* (saith the apostle) *pray with the spirit*; that is, either use the extraordinary influences of the Spirit of God upon me; or with my own spirit, with the inward attention of my thoughts, and the utmost intension of my mind, and the greatest devotion and fervour of affections.

*And I will pray with the understanding also*; but I will so pray, that myself and others may understand what I say; I will neither so pray, that myself shall not understand what I say, nor yet so, that others shall not understand me.

*Understanding* is here taken in a passive sense, though the active sense of the term be not to be excluded. The same thing he also saith of singing, to let us know, that all our religious acts in public assemblies ought to be so performed, that others may be benefited by them, which they cannot be, if

they do not understand what we say, whether it be in preaching, praying, or singing.

### 1 Corinthians 14:16

Ver. 16. *Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit:* blessing is expounded in the latter part of the verse, *giving of thanks* to God, which is either in prayer, (for thanksgiving is a part of prayer), or in singing of psalms. Blessing *with the spirit* either signifieth giving of thanks with the inward man, or giving of thanks in an unknown tongue, by the extraordinary influence of the Spirit of God.

*How shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks?* It is plain from hence:

1. That the teachers had in the apostolical churches distinct places and seats from the common hearers, for their better convenience in speaking, that they might so speak as all might hear, understand, and be profited.
2. That in those churches there was one only who used to speak audibly, and the work of the others was only from a devout heart to *say Amen*, wishing or praying that God would do what, in the name of all, he that ministered had asked of God for them. So 1Ch 16:36 Ne 5:13.8:6 Ps 106:48.

*Seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest:* people ought not to say *Amen* to any thing, unless they understand that petition, or those petitions, to which, in the worship of God, they add their *Amen*, which word makes the petitions theirs, being a particle of wishing, as well as affirming.

### 1 Corinthians 14:17

Ver. 17. Otherwise, saith the apostle, it is possible that thou mayst give thanks well; but others get no good by it, nor can make any good and spiritual improvement of it.

### 1 Corinthians 14:18

Ver. 18. Our Saviour, in the parable of the good shepherd, gives us this as his character, that the sheep hear his voice, and follow him, Joh 10:4; and we shall observe this great apostle every where propounding himself for imitation to them. They are bad shepherds over God's flock, that must only be heard, but not followed. The apostle lets them know, that God had not left him without the gift of speaking with divers tongues, nay, he had it in a more eminent manner than them all; put them all together, they could not speak with so many tongues as he did.

### 1 Corinthians 14:19

Ver. 19. Yet he had so great a regard to the end of his ministry, teaching others, and communicating Divine knowledge to them, that he had rather speak a little tending to that end, than never so much in a language which those to whom he spake did not understand.

### 1 Corinthians 14:20

Ver. 20. *Be not children in understanding;* in understanding the differences of gifts, and which are more excellent, or of the right use of gifts.

*Howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men;* you are commanded indeed in something to be like little children, Mt 28:3, but it is not to be understood with relation to knowledge and understanding, but with reference to innocence and malice, which is opposite to it; ye ought to study to be men in understanding, though with respect to innocence ye ought to be as little children.

### 1 Corinthians 14:21

Ver. 21. *In the law it is written:* by *the law* here is meant the Old Testament, (as in many other texts, Joh 10:34 15:25), so called (as some

think) in opposition to the words of the scribes. The words following are quoted out of Isa 28:11,12: *For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said: This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.* But there is nothing more ordinary, than for the penmen of the Scriptures of the New Testament to quote passages out of the Old, keeping not so much to the words as to the sense; nor quoting them all, but so many of them as serve for their purposes. The words in the prophet are a threatening, that because God had brought the Jews into Canaan, and promised them rest there, upon their obedience to his commandments, and they would not hear, he would now take another course with them, speaking to them with men of stammering lips, and of another language; meaning the Chaldeans and Babylonians, with whom in captivity they conversed afterwards for seventy years. The sense is much the same (as some think); for they that speak to others in and with strange tongues, are like those that stammer at others, which looks more like a mocking them than an instructing them. Others make the gift of tongues, under the New Testament, to be within the prophecy of Isaiah; as if the prophet's words contained both a threatening, to speak to the Israelites with the strange tongues of the Chaldeans; and a promise under the gospel, to speak to them with the tongues of the apostles and others, tuned to various tunes, as men of several nations could understand. Others make this the sense, as if the prophet complained, that the people were so mad, that they regarded no more God speaking to them, than they would have regarded one chattering with a strange tongue. And they think, the apostle checks them for being so ambitious of speaking with strange tongues, whenas their being so spoken to was by the prophet threatened as a judgment upon them.

And yet they will not hear me, nor hearken to and obey me.

### 1 Corinthians 14:22

Ver. 22. *Wherefore tongues are for a sign, &c.;* that is, an eminent product of Divine providence for the confirmation of the truth of the doctrine of the gospel; signifying that the doctrine which was so delivered in every nation's language, must be from heaven, from whence the first ministers must have their power so to speak; yet, doubtless, they were not only for a sign, being also a means, by which the knowledge of the gospel

was conveyed unto those who could not have understood what the apostles and first ministers of the gospel said, had they not spoken to them in the language of the hearers. When he saith, *prophesying serveth not for them that believe not*, the meaning is, not only for them that believe not; for prophesying is certainly of use to them that believe not, for their conversion, as well as *for them that believe*, for their edification.

### 1 Corinthians 14:23

Ver. 23. *Be come together into one place;* the phrase signifieth to one place, or for one and the same work; the first seemeth to be meant here by what followeth.

*And all speak with tongues:* some think that the apostle here, by all speaking with tongues, understands all, or many of them, confusedly talking together; and indeed that is an error we shall find the apostle afterward reflecting upon them for; but here I do not think it is intended, but only, many of you, one after another, because of what the apostle speaketh of prophesying, 1Co 14:24. For if *all* prophesied in that sense, talking at the same time together confusedly, and unbelievers came in and heard, they would also, instead of being convinced, say they were mad.

*And there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers;* those that are heathens, or that did not understand the language you discoursed in.

*Will they not say that ye are mad?* Would they not say you were men that had lost the use of your reason, to talk to men in a language you yourselves knew they understood nothing of?

### 1 Corinthians 14:24

Ver. 24. *But if all prophesy:* *all* here certainly is not to be understood of every one in the assembly, for all were not prophets, 1Co 12:29, nor could the speaking of a great number be judged orderly by the light of nature: it here must signify any, one or more, successively, interpret or apply the Holy Scriptures.

*He is convinced of all;* the heathens will see an order in this, and will stand still to hear and be convinced.

*He is judged of all;* seeing their wicked life and false religion judged and condemned by all those that so prophesy.

### 1 Corinthians 14:25

Ver. 25. God either, by an extraordinary providence, discovering to him that prophesieth the secrets of such a sinner's heart, and causing him that prophesieth to make them manifest; or, by a more ordinary providence, (often experienced at this day), directing the preacher to such subjects and discourses, as he that cometh to hear shall think directed to himself, and confess that he is the man, and be convinced of his errors, and converted, and turn to the Christian religion, and report that God indeed is amongst you. So as prophesying will have these two great advantages of speaking with tongues, God will be more glorified, and the souls of others will be more profited; which makes the gift of prophesying much preferable to the gift of tongues.

### 1 Corinthians 14:26

Ver. 26. By what followeth in the two next verses, one would think that some of them, in their church meetings, were so absurd, as, being endued with several gifts, they would be using them all together, one singing, another preaching, a third speaking with tongues, &c.; but this is so apparent a confusion, that one must be very uncharitable to this famous church, to presume that they should be so absurd. Others therefore rather think, that those endued with several gifts, of which he reckoneth five, under which he comprehendeth all others), were every one contending for his course to exercise his gift; one, for spending the time in singing the psalm he had made; another, for spending the time in hearing his doctrinal discourse; a third, for the spending it in hearing him discourse in an unknown tongue; a fourth, for the spending it in hearing his revelation; a fifth, for the spending it in hearing his interpretation; or at least desiring the time might be protracted, until they had been all successively heard.

*Let all things be done unto edifying:* to prevent this and other disorders, the apostle giveth several rules. The first is: That all things should be so done, as might tend best to promote in men faith and holiness; that is and ought to be the main and chief end of those who any way minister in sacred things.

### 1 Corinthians 14:27

Ver. 27. Concerning the use of their gift of tongues, he directeth three things:

1. That every one that had it should not be ambitious to show it at all times, but *two or three at most* at a time.
2. That they should do it *by course*, not together, confusedly.
3. Not without *one to interpret*, that people might understand. For though these were extraordinary gifts, flowing from a more than ordinary influence of the Spirit of God, yet they were abiding habits, not coming upon them at some certain times, by an impulse; for then they would not have been under human government, as it is apparent this gift of tongues was, else Paul could not have so governed himself in the use of it, as he lets us know he did, 1Co 14:19.

### 1 Corinthians 14:28

Ver. 28. If he hath a mind to use this gift, he may use it *to God*, who understands all languages, by *himself*; but *let him keep silence* in the assembly of Christians, where he is not understood.

### 1 Corinthians 14:29

Ver. 29. That is, two or three successively, the one beginning to speak when the others have done, and two or three at the same church assembly; and if there be more present, let them sit still and judge of the truth of what he saith.



### 1 Corinthians 14:30

Ver. 30. There were two modes or sorts of prophecies; the one ordinary, when the teacher came to those assemblies furnished with a revelation from some previous impression of God upon him, enabling him to give the sense of some scripture, or to open some Divine truth; not as we are, but by some influence of the Holy Spirit upon him, without the use of such means as we use. The other was, by some present afflatus or impression. The apostle seems not to speak of the latter; or if of both, he plainly lets them know, that even such a one was under the government of natural order, and obliged to do nothing confusedly and tumultuously, but might, without any offence to God, stay until the other had finished his discourse.

### 1 Corinthians 14:31

Ver. 31. Ye may not all prophesy in the same day, or hour, or moment of time, but orderly and successively *ye may all prophesy*, the end of it being for the instruction and consolation of all; which may mind you so to govern yourselves in the exercise of that gift, as not to lose your end, *but that all may learn, and all may be comforted*. Which lets us know, that though their receiving the gift of prophecy obliged them to an exercise of it, yet it did not oblige them to an exercise of it in or at this or that particular time. judged by the law of God, or the light of nature, or the common custom of other churches, to be done indecently or confusedly, without order. It is very observable, that though the apostle, in these things, hath given rules, yet he hath determined nothing shameful or uncomely, but what he hath made to appear so, either from the Divine law, (as in the case of the women's prophesying, 1Co 14:34), or from nature and reason, (as in the case of many speaking at the same time), it being useless to the end, which was teaching and instructing those to whom they spake, and what unbelievers would count the effect of madness, 1Co 14:23.

### 1 Corinthians 14:32

Ver. 32. By *the spirits of the prophets* the apostle either meaneth their spiritual gifts, as to the use and exercise of them, and the actions to be done by them; or, the actions themselves, or interpretations pretendedly done and given by the exercise of those gifts, their doctrines; or, that instinct, or impetus, by which they pretend themselves to be moved to prophesy: these (he saith) *are subject to the prophets* themselves, so as they may themselves govern their gifts, or (which most think is the rather here intended) they are subject to the judgment and censure of others that are endued with the same gift. But here ariseth a difficulty, how the gifts of the Holy Spirit, flowing immediately from the Spirit, should be subject to any human judgment or censure? This indeed they could not, if the Divine revelation to this or that man were full and perfect, and ran as clearly in the stream always, as it was in the fountain. But God giveth his Spirit to us but by measure, and in the exercise of our gifts there is always *aliquid humani*, something of our own; and this maketh them *subject to the prophets*, viz. whether what they pretended to have from the Spirit of God were indeed from it, yea or no? Prophets were obliged to prophesy, Ro 12:6, but *according to the analogy of faith*: now, whether they did so or not, might be judged by other prophets, according to that rule. Others think this text is to be interpreted restrainedly, viz. as to this thing in this matter of plain, natural order, commanding, while one speaks, all the rest to hold their peace.

### 1 Corinthians 14:33

Ver. 33. Here he showeth the principle upon which he said, that *the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets*: what any prophets speak is not so certain, or at least not more certain, than this, that nothing which is *confusion* can be from God. Now, for two or three to speak together in a public assembly, is a confusion, and a breach of order, of which God cannot be the author: therefore, in such a thing as that, the spirits of the prophets must be subject to other prophets; and there is a general rule which concerneth not only the church of Corinth, but all churches.

### 1 Corinthians 14:34

Ver. 34. This rule must be restrained to ordinary prophesyings; for

certainly, if the Spirit of prophecy came upon a woman in the church, she might speak. Anna, who was a prophetess, in the temple *gave thanks to the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem*, Lu 2:38: and I cannot tell how Philip's daughters prophesied, if they did not speak in the presence of many, Ac 21:9. The reason that is given why women should *keep silence*, is, because *they are commanded to be under obedience*. This apostle speaketh much the same thing, 1Ti 2:11,12, because it looked like a usurping authority over the man; which indeed is true, if it had been the ordinary practice of women to speak in the assemblies of the church; but not so, if some particular women sometimes spake upon an extraordinary impulse or impression. The law to which the apostle here refers, is thought to be that, Ge 3:16, where the woman is commanded to be subject to her husband, and it is said, that he should rule over her; yet that law did neither restrain Miriam from prophesying, Ex 15:20, nor yet Huldah, to whom Josiah himself sent, 2Ch 34:22, of whom it is also said, that *she dwelt in the college*. But setting aside that extraordinary case of a special afflatus, it was, doubtless, unlawful for a woman to speak in the church.

#### 1 Corinthians 14:35

Ver. 35. This must be understood of speaking to the congregation, for the instructing them, or speaking in the congregation to the minister, or any of the people, for her own instruction, for the woman might, doubtless, say Amen to the public prayers, and also sing with the congregation to the honour and glory of God. But for her to speak in an ordinary course of prophecy to instruct people, or to call aloud to the minister, or any members in the assembly of the church, to be satisfied in any thing wherein she was in doubt, this she is forbidden.

#### 1 Corinthians 14:36

Ver. 36. These words look like a smart reflection upon divers members of this church of Corinth, who thought themselves wiser than all the world besides; and the apostle might foresee, that out of the high opinion they had of themselves they would much contemn and slight his directions. He therefore asks them, what they thought of themselves? Whether they

thought themselves the only churches in the world, or were the first that believed in Christ, so that the gospel went out from them, and they might give law to all churches? There were churches at Jerusalem, and in several other places, before there was any church at Corinth, so as the gospel came unto them from other churches, and did not go out from them to other churches.

#### 1 Corinthians 14:37

Ver. 37. If there be any amongst you who hath a conceit that he is inspired by God, and from that inspiration understandeth the mind and will of God, he must acknowledge, that I also am an apostle, and know the mind and will of God as well as he; and being so, that what I tell you *are the commandments of the Lord.*

#### 1 Corinthians 14:38

Ver. 38. If any one will pretend ignorance in this, he is wilfully ignorant; for my own part, I will concern myself no further about him, but leave myself and him also to the judgment of God; *let him be ignorant.* In some copies it is, he shall not be known: in the day of judgment Christ shalt say unto him: Depart from me, I know you not.

#### 1 Corinthians 14:39

Ver. 39. The apostle concludeth his discourse, summarily repeating all that he before had said. He had, 1Co 14:2, encouraged their desire of spiritual gifts; all along the chapter he hath been magnifying the gift of prophecy above the gift of tongues, as being of much more general use, and more for the profit of others; but he minds them here, that he did not forbid those to whom God had given the gift of tongues, to make use of it at due times, and in a due manner and order.

#### 1 Corinthians 14:40

Ver. 40. He forbade them not to speak with tongues, provided they did it decently and orderly, as all other things ought to be done in so grave an assembly as that of the church, and so grave an action as the worship of God. For women to prophesy in the public assemblies, was an indecent thing; he had said, 1Co 14:35, that it was *a shame*. For many of them to speak together, confusedly, making a noise, that was disorderly. Nor did this decency or indecency, order or disorder, arise from obeying or disobeying the apostolical constitution, but from the law of God, the light of nature, the common usage of all the churches of Christians, as 1Co 14:33. All things ought so to be done, (especially in religious assemblies and actions), as they may not be judged by the law of God, or the light of nature, or the common custom of other churches, to be done indecently or confusedly, without order. It is very observable, that though the apostle, in these things, hath given rules, yet he hath determined nothing shameful or uncomely, but what he hath made to appear so, either from the Divine law, (as in the case of the women's prophesying, 1Co 14:34), or from nature and reason, (as in the case of many speaking at the same time), it being useless to the end, which was teaching and instructing those to whom they spake, and what unbelievers would count the effect of madness, 1Co 14:23.

## 1 Corinthians 15:1

### Chapter Summary

1Co 15:1-19 From the truth of Christ's resurrection Paul inferreth the necessity of our own.

1Co 15:20-23 Christ the first-fruits, being raised, shall be followed in due order by those that are his, 1Co 15:24-28 till having subdued all enemies he shall give up the kingdom to God the Father.

1Co 15:29-34 If there be no resurrection of the dead, in vain is it for any one to risk his life, as the apostle did continually.

1Co 15:35-50 The manner of the resurrection.

1Co 15:51-57 The change which shall be wrought at the last day in the bodies both of the dead and the living.

1Co 15:58 An exhortation to stedfast faith and perseverance in our duty.

Ver. 1. The apostle, towards the conclusion of his Epistle, comes to reprove the Corinthians for an error in the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead; an error, though last mentioned, yet of all the most momentous. The resurrection of the body in the last day is an article of faith, to the firm belief of which reason speaketh not sufficiently, and therefore it was denied by many philosophers and worldly wise men, Ac 17:18. It should seem, that some in the church of Corinth had sucked in some of their notions; the apostle, therefore, in this chapter setteth himself to confirm that article of the Christian faith. To this purpose he begins, telling them, that that which he declared unto them was *the gospel*, that is, that doctrine of the gospel which he had before preached to them, and which they had heard, and believed, and embraced as the truth of God, and wherein the greatest part yet stood firm to their former profession, though some of them had been seduced and warped.

### 1 Corinthians 15:2

Ver. 2. *By which also ye are saved;* by the believing, receiving, of which doctrine, you are already in the way to salvation (as it is said, Joh 3:18: *He that believeth on him is not condemned;* and Joh 3:36: *He hath everlasting life,* and shall be eternally saved): but not unless ye persevere (for that is meant by keeping *in memory* the doctrine which I have *preached unto you*); and this you must do, or your believing will signify nothing, but be *in vain* to your souls.

### 1 Corinthians 15:3

Ver. 3. For I, in my preaching, delivered it to you as one of the principal articles of the Christian faith, which I received, either from Christ by *revelation*, ( as he saith, Ga 1:12), or from Ananias. Ac 9:17, *how that Christ died for our sins,* Ro 4:25, that is, that he might satisfy the Divine justice for our sins, and make an atonement for us. And this is *according to the Scriptures* of the Old Testament, where it was foretold, Isa 53:5, *He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities;* and Da 9:26, that the *Messiah* should *be cut off, but not for himself*.

### 1 Corinthians 15:4

Ver. 4. Not the death only, but the burial of Christ, and his resurrection again from the dead, were (though more darkly) revealed in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Jonah and Isaac were both of them types of this; David prophesied, that God would not leave his *soul in hell*, nor suffer his *Holy One to see corruption*, Ps 16:10; which Peter applieth to Christ, Ac 2:31: so Ac 13:35. So that the doctrine of the New Testament in these things agreeth with the doctrine of the Old; with this only difference, that the Old Testament contained the New Testament in a mystery, and the New Testament was the Old Testament more fully and plainly revealed.

### 1 Corinthians 15:5

Ver. 5. We read not in the history of the gospel of Christ's appearing unto Peter, unless he were one of those to whom Christ appeared, as they were going to Emmaus; for which there is this probability, because when they came to Jerusalem, they told the rest, that the Lord was risen, and had appeared unto Simon, Lu 24:34 (if Simon Peter be there meant). His appearance to the whole number of the disciples we have recorded, Joh 20:19: they are called *twelve*, ( though Judas was now dead, and Thomas at that time was not there), because twelve was the number that God had appointed the college of apostles to consist of; so, Ge 42:13, the children of Jacob said they were *twelve brethren*, though they thought at that time that Joseph (who made the twelfth) was dead. This is much more probably the sense, than the fancy of some, that Barnabas, who was afterward chosen to supply the room of Judas, being at that time a disciple, might at that time be with them; for admit he were, yet Thomas, we are sure, was at that time absent.

### 1 Corinthians 15:6

Ver. 6. Of this appearance to *above five hundred brethren at once* the Gospels say nothing; but it is probably thought to be understood of that great meeting of the disciples in Galilee, where our Saviour promised to

meet them, Mt 26:32 28:7, after his resurrection. Wherever it was, the apostle saith, that the greater part of them were yet in a capacity to give a living testimony to the resurrection of Christ, though some of them were dead.

### 1 Corinthians 15:7

Ver. 7. The Scripture tells us nothing, in the history of the gospel, of Christ's appearing to *James*; but we read of two appearances to the apostles besides these, which the apostle had before mentioned.

### 1 Corinthians 15:8

Ver. 8. *Last of all* the apostles, or, it may be, last of all persons; for after Stephen we read of none but St. Paul who saw Christ. Stephen, as they were stoning him, cried out: *Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God*, Ac 7:56. We read of Paul's hearing a voice from him, Ac 9:4, and no doubt but he had a bodily sight of him, for he here reckoneth himself amongst those that were eye witnesses. Nor is it any objection against it, that he was struck blind, for that was after his sight of Christ, not before. He calls himself an abortive, or *one born out of due time*, either because he was added to the number of the twelve; or in respect to his new birth, he being converted (as he tells us afterward) after that he had been a persecutor of the church of Christ, after the descending of the Holy Ghost; or, it may be, because his conversion was sudden, like the abortive birth of a woman.

### 1 Corinthians 15:9

Ver. 9. *The least*, not in dignity, or gifts, or labours; (he tells us, that he had *laboured more than all*, he had made the gospel to abound *from Jerusalem to Illyricum*; he hath in this Epistle let us know, that he spake with tongues more than they all); but deserving the least esteem, as he afterward expoundeth himself, telling us, that he was not worthy of the name of an apostle. He gives the reason, because he had before been a persecutor of the church of God, the history of which we have, Ac 9:1-3.



### 1 Corinthians 15:10

Ver. 10. *By the grace of God I am what I am;* by the free love and goodness of God, I, that was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, have obtained mercy; and though it was impossible for me any more to requite and answer, than at first to merit, that love, yet his grace in me hath produced some fruit, and hath not been wholly in vain; for in the discharge of my ministry, as an apostle, I have abundantly laboured, though not more than all the rest of the apostles taken together, yet more than any one of them all, who were my fellow apostles: what these labours were, he told us, Ro 15:19; and more fully, 2Co 6:4-10. But lest he should be thought to arrogate any thing to himself, and the power or good use of his own will, he addeth, *yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*

*Grace* seemeth, in the latter part of the verse, to be taken in something a different sense from what it was in the former part: here it signifies the free love and favour of God; though it may also there be understood of those gracious habits, which were the effects of that free love and mercy; here it plainly signifies those gracious habits which were infused into Paul, together with the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, by which he was enabled to reduce those habits into acts. Paul had something in the acts he had done considered as a man, but yet so little, as in these spiritual acts he denieth his own efficiency, and attributeth all to Divine grace, either exciting him to his actions, or preventing, or working in and with him, and assisting him, and giving him all that success he had had.

### 1 Corinthians 15:11

Ver. 11. *Whether it were I or they;* whether I or any other of the apostles preached amongst you.

*So we preach, and so ye believed:* this was one great point that we preached amongst you, that Christ was risen again from the dead. This we held forth to you as the object of your faith, this you received and closed with as the object of your faith; we did not only preach to you, that Christ died for our sins, but that he rose again for our justification. Neither was

your faith objected only in Christ as one that was crucified and had died, but as one that was risen from the dead. Thus Peter preached, Ac 2:31 3:15 4:10 5:30; and Stephen, Ac 7:56; and Peter, Ac 10:40; and Paul, Ac 13:37 17:3,31; and so all the apostles.

### 1 Corinthians 15:12

Ver. 12. The apostle having laid a good foundation, proving the resurrection of Christ by a plentiful testimony of those who saw him after that he was risen from the dead; and minded them, that this was the doctrine of the gospel, which both they and all the rest of the apostles had with one consent preached to them; he comes to build upon it, and from this, as a main argument, to prove, that there must needs be a resurrection from the dead; and beginneth with a reflection upon some in that church who denied it. Who those were we are not told: some think they were *Hymeneus and Philetus*, mentioned 2Ti 2:17,18, who held *that the resurrection was past*; others think he reflects on Cerinthus, who was one of the leaders of those heretics we read of, who after Simon Magus denied the resurrection others think they were some of the Sadducees, of whom we read in the Acts, that they denied the resurrection, or some of the Pharisees, who denied the resurrection of Christians, looking on them as apostates; others think they were some who had been tinctured, at least, with the doctrine of the pagan philosophers. We cannot certainly determine who, but certain it is some there were; and the apostle argues them in this thing to assert absurdly, upon this supposition, that Christ was risen.

### 1 Corinthians 15:13

Ver. 13. *If (saith the apostle) there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen.* But some will possibly say: How doth this follow? Suppose it true, that Christ be risen, how doth it follow, that the dead shall rise? The force of it lieth in several things:

1. Christ, as he saith, 1Co 15:20, is *the first-fruits of them that slept*, the exemplary cause of our resurrection.

2. If we consider Christ as the Head, it is unreasonable, that the Head should be risen from the dead, and the members yet held of death, when it is the office of the Head to communicate sense, life, and motion to the members.

Again, the argument is strong from the consideration of the end of Christ's resurrection, which was to show his victory over death, that the dead might hear his voice and live, and that he might be the Judge of the quick and the dead (which he could not have been, if the dead did not rise). Now though it be true, that Christ's headship to his church, and the apostle's argument from thence, will not prove the resurrection of the wicked, yet, (besides that the resurrection of believers is the main thing the apostle here proveth, having elsewhere abundantly proved the general resurrection), the consideration here of Christ's being raised, that he might be the Judge both of the quick and of the dead, will prove the resurrection of the wicked, as well as of believers.

#### 1 Corinthians 15:14

Ver. 14. Now, (saith the apostle), if Christ be not raised, in what a case are you! And we also, who have preached his resurrection to you! Our preaching is vain and false, and your faith is so also, for the object of it faileth, which is a Christ risen from the dead.

#### 1 Corinthians 15:15

Ver. 15,16. There is nothing in these two verses but what the apostle had before said, viz. That if Christ were not risen, the apostles' preaching and the Corinthians' believing were both of them vain and false. Only what the apostle, in the former verse, called preaching, he here calleth witnessing: *We are* (saith he) *false witnesses of God*. To be false witnesses for men, or in the name of men, is against the ninth commandment, and a sin of no ordinary magnitude; but to be a false witness of God, is a much higher sin. This title of *witnesses* was at first given to the apostles by Christ, Ac 1:8; afterwards often (especially in the Acts) applied to them, Ac 1:22 2:32 4:33 5:32 10:39,41: particularly Paul applieth it to himself, Ac 22:15 26:16. It is true, the apostles, who either saw Christ while he was on earth

after his resurrection, or in heaven, as Paul did, Ac 9:1-43, were in the strictest sense eye witnesses; but yet in a larger sense this notion agreeth to all ministers, who testify, upon the hearing of the ears, and upon reading the Scriptures, the same thing which the apostles testified, though not upon the same evidence. Now to affirm a thing, as from God, for truth, which is in itself false, is a very high transgression; which (saith the apostle) we must be guilty of, if Christ be not raised; and *if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised.*

### 1 Corinthians 15:17

Ver. 17. That is, ye are yet in your estate of nature, under the guilt and condemning power of your sins, which are not yet pardoned to you; for no sins are remitted, but upon believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, which none can do, if Christ be not risen from the dead; for by that he was *declared to be the Son of God with power*, Ro 1:4: his death declared him to be truly man, it was his resurrection that manifested him to be truly God, God over all blessed for ever, and so the proper object of people's faith.

### 1 Corinthians 15:18

Ver. 18. Some think that the term *in Christ* in this text, is of the same significancy with for the sake of Christ, which would restrain it to martyrs; but I know no reason for that, because what is said is true of all; for it is plain, from what was said before, that if Christ be not risen from the dead, all that die must die in their sins, there being no object for their faith to work or lay hold upon; the door of salvation remaineth as fast shut as ever, so as those whom they looked upon as being asleep in Christ, must necessarily perish, if Christ be not risen; there is no forerunner entered into the heavens for us.

### 1 Corinthians 15:19

Ver. 19. The apostle here argueth the resurrection of believers from a new head. It is not reasonable for any to imagine, that those who believe in

Jesus Christ should of all others be the most miserable; but this they must be, if there be no resurrection from the dead. He enlargeth upon this head or argument further, 1Co 15:30,31. The reason of it is, because it must then follow, that they could have no hope in Christ beyond this life; and the condition of the apostles, and the generality of Christians, at least in those first and furious times, was a most afflicted state and condition. The apostle was *in jeopardy every hour*, 1Co 15:30, he died daily, 1Co 15:31. If any say: How doth this follow? For their souls might be in glory, though their bodies, once dead, were not raised? It is answered:

1. That it still must hold as to their bodily, fleshy part.
2. That those who denied the resurrection of the body, denied also the immortality of the soul.
3. That Paul speaketh upon the supposition of the Divine ordination; God having so ordered it, that the death of Christ, without his resurrection, should be of no avail to us to save either soul or body; and that our souls and bodies should not be separately, but jointly, glorified upon their reunion in the end of the world: 1Pe 1:3, we are said to be *begotten to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*.

### 1 Corinthians 15:20

Ver. 20. The apostle returneth to his former argument, to discourse concerning the resurrection of Christ, who is by him called the *first-fruits of them that slept*; not of all that shall rise, (as some think), for it will be hard to prove, that any benefit of Christ's death or resurrection, after this life, belongs to wicked men: nor is it usual for the penmen of holy writ to express the death of unbelievers under the gentle notion of a sleep; and, Co 1:18, Christ is called *the first-born from the dead*, as he is *the Head of the church*. It is rather spoken with reference to believers; the resurrection of wicked men, flowing rather from God's providence, in order to the manifestation of his justice in the last judgment, than from the mediation of Christ. But here a question ariseth: How Christ is said to be the first-fruits of those that sleep, whenas we read of divers in Scripture that were raised from the dead before Christ was so raised?

Answer.

1. Christ was the first that rose again by his own power and virtue.
2. He was the first who rose again, and died no more.
3. He was the first in respect of dignity.
4. He was the first-fruits of them that sleep, by his resurrection making a way for the resurrection of others, even of all such as were members of him; as the offering of the first-fruits, under the law, sanctified the whole crop.

#### 1 Corinthians 15:21

Ver. 21. Since by one man, viz. Adam, (who is also styled *the son of God*. Lu 3:38, because he had neither father nor mother), came man's subjection to mortality, sicknesses, and death here, and eternal death and misery in another world; it pleased God that by one, who though he was the eternal, only begotten Son of God, yet was also made man, and was flesh of our flesh, the resurrection of those that are believers, and asleep in Christ, should come, Heb 2:14.

#### 1 Corinthians 15:22

Ver. 22. As in the first Adam all men, that were in him, became subject both to temporal death, and all the afflictions and miseries of this life, which are so many little deaths, Ro 8:36, and forerunners of natural death, or attendants upon it; and also to that eternal death, which is the consequent of the guilt of sin, Ro 6:23: so in Christ, that is, through the merits of his death, and through his resurrection, all that are in him, being chosen in him, given to him, and by faith implanted into him, are not only spiritually made alive, (being *passed from death unto life*, 1Jo 3:14), but shall be raised from the dead unto eternal life. But though this text doth not prove the general resurrection, (being only intended of believers, that are members of Christ), yet it doth not oppose it. But that the *all* here mentioned is no more than all believers, appeareth not only from the term

*in Christ* in this verse, but from the whole following discourse; which is only concerning the resurrection of believers to life, not that of the wicked to eternal condemnation.

### 1 Corinthians 15:23

Ver. 23. *In his own order,* either with respect to time, or dignity, lest any should say: If Christ's resurrection be the cause of the resurrection of believers, then why did not all the saints, that were in the graves, rise with Christ? The apostle saith: God had appointed an order, and this order was, that they that were dead, or should be dead, before Christ's second coming, should not prevent one another, 1Th 4:15, &c. Besides, the order which God had set was, That Christ should be *the first-fruits* of this harvest, rising first from the dead, so as to die no more.

*Afterward they that are Christ's at his coming;* then believers, that are members of Christ, by faith implanted into him, should also rise, but not before his second coming.

### 1 Corinthians 15:24

Ver. 24. *Then cometh the end;* the end of all the miseries and afflictions which believers meet with in this life, or the end of all our preaching and ministry, the end of the world, or the end of man; or rather, (as the next words seem to interpret it), the end of that mediatory kingdom of Christ, which he now administereth instead of his Father, and shall manage to the end of the world.

*When he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father:* Christ shall then deliver up those keys of life, and hell, and death to his Father, yet shall not Christ's kingdom cease (for the prophet saith, Isa 9:7, that of it *there shall be no end*): Christ's essential kingdom, which is his dominion, which he hath and exerciseth over all created beings, together with his Father, and the Holy Spirit, (all being but one Divine essence), that shall hold and abide for ever; but his mediatory kingdom, by which he ruleth over his church in the midst of his enemies, that shall cease, and be delivered up unto the Father. So that Christ's delivering up the kingdom to

his Father, proveth no inferiority of Christ to his Father, more than his Father's committing that mediatory kingdom to him can prove his Father's not reigning, or inferiority to him, which it certainly doth not. It signifieth only the ceasing of that dispensation, or Christ's exercise of his mediatory kingdom on earth, in the rule and government of the church, and subduing his and his people's enemies.

*When he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power;* then shall all rule and authority of kings and princes of the earth cease, and all the ministration of good angels, and power of evil angels; so shall all ministrations and governments in the church militant here on earth, and all those that are the enemies of the church shall be subdued and brought under.

### 1 Corinthians 15:25

Ver. 25. God hath so decreed, (and what he hath said must come to pass), that Christ should, as Mediator, exercise a Kingdom and government in the world, until he haith subdued all the enemies of his gospel and people; all those who have said, he shall not rule over them; the whole world that lieth in wickedness, the devil, and all his instruments: this he proveth from the words of the psalmist, Ps 110:1.

The term *until* doth not signify the determination of Christ's kingdom then, though his mediatory kingdom on earth will then be determined. He shall still reign, but not as now, in the midst of his enemies, and in the exercise of his kingdom in the conquest and subduing of them.

### 1 Corinthians 15:26

Ver. 26. If death be an enemy, (as we usually judge), that also must be destroyed; and there is no other way to destroy death, but by the causing of a resurrection from the dead. So that the apostle proveth the resurrection from the necessity of Christ's reigning until all his enemies be destroyed, of which death is one; for it keeps the bodies of the members of Christ from their union with their souls, and with Christ, who is the Head of the whole believer, the body as well as the soul.



### 1 Corinthians 15:27

Ver. 27. The apostle referreth to Ps 8:6, where the psalmist adoreth God for the privileges given man in his creation; amongst which this is one, that God had *put all things under his feet*: the psalmist afterward expounds that universal partice, Ps 8:7,8, by *all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fish of the sea*. But that that psalm, or some passages at least in it, are to be understood of Christ, appeareth from Heb 2:6-8, where the penman applieth it to him, as doth the apostle here; under whose feet all things are put in a much larger sense, and therefore the apostle expounds the affirmative, Heb 2:8, by a negative, *he left nothing that is not put under him*. But lest men of perverse minds should conclude, that then the Father also is put under Christ, the apostle addeth, that when he saith, he hath put all things under his feet, the Father himself, who is the person that put all things under him, is not to be included.

### 1 Corinthians 15:28

Ver. 28. The Son's subjection to his Father, which is mentioned in this place, doth no where prove his inequality of essence or power with his Father; it only signifieth what was spoken before, that Christ should deliver up his mediatory kingdom to his Father; so manifesting, that whatsoever he had done in the office of Mediator, was done in the name of his Father, and by his power and authority; and that as he was man, he was subject to his Father. Suppose (saith Pareus) a king should have one only son, whom he should take into a partnership with him in his majesty and kingdom; but yet so, that the king should still have the pre-eminence of a father, the son only the dignity of a son in such power and authority: after which this king, having some subjects risen up in rebellion against him, should send his son with armies and his authority against them; he should despatch the work, and at his return yield up his commission to his father, yet still retaining the same nature he had, and authority with which his Father had before clothed him, was a partner in the kingdom and government with him.

*That God* (saith the apostle) *may be all in all*; instead of all things which

the heart of man can wish; or that God may exercise a full and perfect empire and government over all things; that the incomprehensible glory of God may fill all the elect. But is not God in this world all in all?

*Answer.* He is; but he doth not so appear ruling in the midst of his enemies here.

2. The government will be altered; God here is sole King of the world, but he partly ruleth it by Christ, as Mediator, whose mediatory kingdom shall then cease, and nothing shall appear but the essential kingdom of God; the power by which the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost (three persons, though but one God) shall govern and rule all things, when all this sublunary world shall cease.

### 1 Corinthians 15:29

Ver. 29. A very difficult text, and variously expounded. The terms baptize, and baptism, signify no more in their original and native signification, than to wash, and a washing: the *washing of pots and cups*, in use amongst the Jews, is, in the Greek, the baptisms of pots and cups. But the most usual acceptation of baptism in Scripture, is to signify one of the sacraments of the New Testament; that sacred action, by which one is washed according to the institution of Christ, *in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*. It is also metaphorically used by our Saviour in the Gospels, Mt 20:22,23 Mr 10:38,39 Lu 12:50, to signify a suffering for the name of Christ. And it is also used thus metaphorically, to signify the action of the Holy Ghost in cleansing and renewing our hearts, Mt 3:11,12 Joh 3:5. The last usage of the term is by no means applicable here. The question is: Whether the apostle meaneth here only: Why are men washed for the dead? Or why are men baptized religiously for the dead? Or why are men baptized with blood for the dead? For the popish notion, that baptism here signifies any religious actions, as fastings, and prayers, and penances for those that are in purgatory, there is no such usage of the term in Scripture; for though in Scripture it signifies sometimes sufferings from the hands of others, as in Mt 20:22,23 Mr 10:38,39, yet it no where signifies penances, or such sufferings as men impose upon themselves for the dead. Nor doth Paul here say: To what purpose do men baptize themselves? But *why are they baptized for the dead?*

1. Those that think the term here signifies washing, *what shall they do who are washed for the dead?* Tell us, that it being a custom in many countries, for neatness and cleanliness, to wash dead bodies, the primitive Christians used that ceremony as a religious rite, and a testification of their belief of the resurrection. That such a custom was in use amongst Christians, is plain from Ac 9:37: but that they used it as religious rite, or a testimony of their faith in the resurrection, appeareth not. And though it be  $\upsilon\pi\epsilon\rho\ \tau\omega\nu\ \nu\epsilon\kappa\rho\omega\nu$ , yet they say  $\upsilon\pi\epsilon\rho$  is so used, Ro 15:8, *for the truth of God*, expounded by the next word, *to confirm the promises*.
2. Those that think, that by baptizing, in this text, the sacrament of baptism is to be understood, give us more than one account. Some say, that whereas they were wont in the primitive church, before they admitted persons into a full communion with the church, to keep them for some time under catechism, in which time they were called *catechumeni*; if such fell sick, and in danger of death, they baptized them; or if they died suddenly, they baptized some other for them, in testimony of their hope of the joyful resurrection of such a person to eternal life. Now admit this were an error of practice in them, as to this ordinance; yet if any such thing were in practice in this church, the argument of the apostle was good against them. But how shall any such thing be made appear to us, that there was such an early corruption in this church? Others say, that some, believing the resurrection, would upon their death beds be baptized, in testimony of it, from whence they had the name of *clinici*. Others say: To be *baptized for the dead*, signifieth to be baptized when they were dying, and so as good as dead. Mr. Calvin chooseth this sense: but the question is: Whether the Greek phrase  $\upsilon\pi\epsilon\rho\ \tau\omega\nu\ \nu\epsilon\kappa\rho\omega\nu$  will bear it? Others tell us of a custom in use in the primitive church, to baptize persons over the graves of the martyrs, as a testimony of their belief of the resurrection. That there was anciently such a custom, I doubt not; and I believe that the custom with us in reading of prayers over dead bodies at the grave, doth much more probably derive from this ancient usage, than the papists' praying for the dead; but that there was any such custom so ancient as the apostles' times, I very much doubt. There are yet two other senses given of this difficult phrase, either of which seemeth to me much more probable than any of these. To the first we are led by the next verse:

*And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? Which inclineth many good interpreters to think, that the baptism here mentioned, is that baptism with blood mentioned by our Saviour, Mt 20:22,23; and so the sense is no more than, if there be no resurrection of the dead, why do we die daily? Why are we killed all the day long? For we do that in hope of a blessed resurrection. The only objections against this are:*

1. That none but Christ himself useth the word in this sense (which seemeth a light exception).
2. That *υπερ των νεκρων* is hardly capable of that sense; but yet our learned Dr. Lightfoot brings parallels of such a usage of the preposition out of the LXX. Others observe, that the apostle, in this whole chapter, is discoursing of the resurrection of believers unto life, and they are such dead alone, that he here speaketh of, for whom he saith any were baptized. Now, it is plain from Scripture, that baptism is a seal of the resurrection, signifying to believers, that they shall be made partakers of the death and resurrection of Christ (the resurrection being strongly proved from God's covenant, of which baptism is a seal, Lu 20:37,38); and being so, it confirmed the covenant, not only to the persons baptized, but to the whole church, as well the triumphant as the militant part of it; as well with reference to those of it that were dead, as those that were living. So that so often as baptism was administered in the church, so often God repeated the covenant made to his whole church, that he was the God of believers and of their seed: so that all who to this day are baptized, are baptized for the dead, that is, for the confirmation of God's covenant to his whole church, as well that part of it which is dead, as that part which is yet alive; and it testifieth, that those that sleep in Christ (although dead) yet live in the promise of the resurrection, because God is their God, and he is not the *God of the dead, but of the living*, as our Saviour speaketh in Lu 20:38. In this variety amongst learned men about the true sense of this place, I shall leave the reader to his own judgment, although to me the two last seem to be most probable.

1 Corinthians 15:30

Ver. 30. We are the veriest fools in nature, if there be no resurrection of believers unto life; for it is in the firm belief and hopes of that, that we are in danger of our lives, and all that we have, every hour of our lives.

### 1 Corinthians 15:31

Ver. 31. What is meant here by *your rejoicing which I have*, is something doubted; some understanding it of the apostle's rejoicing in them as believers, whom he had been an instrument to convert, and bring home to Christ; others, of their rejoicing in him (which seems not probable, many of them so much despising and vilifying him): others understand it of their glorying against him, and triumphing over him, and that this was one of his sufferings which he instanceth in, which he underwent in hope of a resurrection. The words are not an oath, (for here God is not called to witness), they are only an attestation. As the prophets sometimes call heaven and earth to witness, so here he calls their *rejoicing* to witness; and this rejoicing seems to be the joy of those who amongst them truly rejoiced in Jesus Christ, for which also he rejoiced daily, they being the seal of his apostleship. That which he solemnly affirms, is, that he died daily; not only was ready to die daily, but in the same sense that he elsewhere saith, he was in *deaths often*, and that they were *killed all the day long*; suffering such afflictions as were near akin to death, and led on to death, as their end.

### 1 Corinthians 15:32

Ver. 32. Concerning this fight of the apostle with *beasts at Ephesus*, there are two opinions; some thinking that he indeed fought with beasts, and we know that in those countries such a punishment was in use, to bring out malefactors to fight with wild beasts; but as we read in the Acts of no such dealings with Paul, so that being a punishment rather for their slaves and vilest men, it can hardly be thought that Paul, who was a free man of Rome, should be exposed to it. They seem therefore better to understand it, who interpret it of his conflict with men, who in their conditions and manners were like beasts; and that he doth not speak here of his scuffle with Demetrius, mentioned Ac 19:34-41, but some other conflict he had there, of which the Scripture giveth us no large account, but it seems to be

generally and obscurely mentioned in the next Epistle, 2Co 1:8, for this Epistle was wrote after his contest with Demetrius. By that phrase, *after the manner of men*, some think he means, as men use to fight; some have other notions of it: the sense seems to be plainly this: If I have fought with beastly men at Ephesus after the manner that men fight with beasts, exposing my body to their rage and fury, what profit is it to me, if the dead rise not? I have opposed myself to their fury out of a hope for a joyful resurrection; but if there shall be no such resurrection, the epicures, that resolve to stick at nothing, nor to deny themselves in any sensual satisfaction from meat and drink, have the best of it; all men had then best sing their song: *Let us eat and drink*, for we have but a little time to eat and to drink in; we know that we shall die, and there will be an end of us.

### 1 Corinthians 15:33

Ver. 33. Do not suffer yourselves to be abused with evil and corrupt discourses of those philosophers amongst whom you converse, who argue from innate principles of reason against articles of faith; though you may judge that they talk but for discourse sake, yet their communication or discourse is naught, and will influence men as to things of practice, and debauch men in their morals. It is a verse or saying taken out of, or at least found in, one of the pagan poets; but containing in it much truth.

### 1 Corinthians 15:34

Ver. 34. *Awake to righteousness, and sin not:* sin is in Scripture compared to sleep, Re 13:11 Eph 5:14, and that very properly; for as the natural senses are bound up in natural sleep, so the sinner's spiritual senses are locked up, so that he doth not exercise them to discern between good and evil; and as he that is asleep is void of all care and fear, is secure, so the sinner is secure and void of fear. And repentance is set out under the notion of awaking; we are not only concerned to eschew evil, but to do good; not only to awake from sin, but to *righteousness*, that is, to a holy life and conversation, that is it which is here called *righteousness*, all spiritual rectitude being to be judged from the soul's conformity to the Divine rule; hence sin is called a crooked way, because it will not agree with the rule of God's word.

*For some have not the knowledge of God;* for some amongst you have not a due and saving knowledge of God, or a right apprehension of the things of God;

*I speak this to your shame;* though it be a shame for them that have it not, considering the light and means of knowledge which you have had by my ministry, and the ministry of others who have been amongst you.

### 1 Corinthians 15:35

Ver. 35. Some of your vain philosophers, who are resolved to give credit to nothing upon the account of a bare Divine revelation, unless they can give a further rational account of it in the circumstances, will be ready to object and say: How is it possible, that those very bodies which are putrefied, and turned into dust, and that dust, it may be, scattered to the four winds, should be raised up? And if the same bodies shall not again rise, what kind of bodies shall the believers have in the resurrection? Shall they be bodies that will need meat, and drink, and clothes, as our present bodies do? Or what other bodies shall they be?

### 1 Corinthians 15:36

Ver. 36. He saith not: *Thou fool*, in anger, (which is that using of this term which our Saviour saith, Mt 5:22 brings a man under the danger of hell fire), but in the way of a grave and authoritative reproof, calling them fools for their want of a due understanding of the things and ways of God. He lets them know, that they might as well ask, how the grain of wheat, which they ordinarily sowed in their field, did rise again; for that grain also rotteth under the clods of the earth, under which it is buried, before it again riseth.

### 1 Corinthians 15:37

Ver. 37. And when it again riseth, or shooteth up, it is not bare grain, without either stalk or ear, which was the body by them sown.

### 1 Corinthians 15:38

Ver. 38. But God giveth to every grain, or kind of seed, such a kind of body as it pleaseth him, and a several body, according to the nature of the grain; yet none will deny, but it is the seed sown which cometh up, though with a different body, in respect of some qualities.

### 1 Corinthians 15:39

Ver. 39. Flesh is a kind of body, but it is of various degrees of dignity and excellency, in respect of the qualities of it: the flesh of men is of a differing excellency from the flesh of beasts; and there is a difference in natural qualities between the corporeal substances of beasts, and of fishes, and birds; yet they are all bodies, they are all flesh; our distinction between flesh and fish, is but according to our idiom or propriety of speaking; we read of the flesh of fish, Le 11:10,11.

### 1 Corinthians 15:40

Ver. 40. *There are also celestial bodies;* such are the sun, the moon, and the stars.

*And bodies terrestrial;* men, beasts, birds, fishes, the elements, stones, &c.

*But the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another;* now between these two species of bodies, in respect of qualities, there is a very great difference; the glory of the heavenly bodies is much greater than the glory of the earthy bodies that are compounded of the elements.

### 1 Corinthians 15:41

Ver. 41. Amongst the celestial bodies there is a great deal of difference with respect to the qualities; one of them is in glory much differing from



another, the glory of the moon is not like the glory of the sun, and the glory of a star is much beneath the glory both of the sun and of the moon; yea, one star is more glorious than another: yet they are all bodies, though of different species and qualities.

### 1 Corinthians 15:42

Ver. 42. *So also is the resurrection of the dead;* that is, so shall it be, as to the bodies of the saints, in the resurrection. The same bodies of the saints shall rise, though with qualities, and in a condition, much different from what they were when they fell; as the same grain of wheat shooteth up, though with another body: and as there is a difference between celestial and terrestrial bodies, and between celestial bodies themselves; so there will be a difference between the bodies of the saints, now that they are only of the earth, earthy, from what they shall be in the resurrection; which difference he openeth in several particulars.

*It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown,* that is, it dieth and is buried in such a state, that it is subject to putrefaction; but when it shall be again raised from the dead, it shall be subject to no putrefaction or corruption: so 1Co 15:52: *The dead shall be raised incorruptible.*

### 1 Corinthians 15:43

Ver. 43. *It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory:* there is nothing more uncomely, unlovely, and loathsome than a dead body; but it will not be so when it shall be raised again, then it shall be a beautiful, comely body. We shall rise in a full and perfect age, (as is generally thought), and without those defects and deformities which may here make our bodies appear unlovely. Daniel says, Da 12:3, the righteous *shall shine as the stars*: Christ saith, Mt 13:43, they shall *shine like the sun*: the apostle saith, Php 3:21, we shall be made *like unto his glorious body*. Three things make the body beautiful, a perfection of parts, the well putting them together and proportioning them one to another, and a well-tempered, cheerly spirit; all these will concur in the bodies of saints in the resurrection. The schoolmen determine, that much of the beauty of the saints' bodies in the resurrection,

will flow from their perfect sight of God, and the reflection of God upon them.

*It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:* when it dieth it is a frail, weak body, unable to resist injuries; but it shall rise a strong body, with quick senses, and subject to no more weaknesses.

### 1 Corinthians 15:44

Ver. 44. *It is sown a natural body;* such a body as all living creatures have by nature, which is upheld by the actions of the soul that quickeneth it; both the vegetative powers, by which it is nourished by the use of meat and drink, the eating, concocting, and digesting it, &c.; and the sensitive powers, &c. But it shall be *raised a spiritual body;* spiritual, not as to the substance of it, for in that sense a spiritual body is a contradiction), but in respect of the qualities and conditions of it, Mt 22:30 Lu 20:35,36. Bodies which, in respect of many new qualities they shall have, shall be more like angels and other spirits, than human bodies; beautiful, incorruptible, free from infirmities, not subject to hunger, or thirst, or injuries from cold or heat, &c.; not using meat, drink, clothes, physic, or marriage; free, active, and nimble as spirits, 1Th 4:17.

*Spiritual,* because they shall perfectly obey the soul made perfect, and be by it commanded to spiritual actions only; of subtile, spiritual, refined constitutions.

### 1 Corinthians 15:45

Ver. 45. The first part is written in Ge 2:7, God *breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, and so he became a living soul;* that is, a living substance, living an animal, natural life, by virtue of that breath of life which God breathed into him.

*The last Adam,* by which he meaneth Christ, who in time was after the first Adam, and was born in the last days, and was the last common Head; as Adam was the first, with respect of natural and carnal propagation, so Christ was the last Head, in respect of grace and spiritual regeneration, he

*was made a quickening spirit:* He was *made* so, not when he was conceived and born, for he had a body subject to the same natural infirmities that ours are; but upon his resurrection from the dead, when, though he had the same body, in respect of the substance of it, yet it differed in qualities, and was much more spiritual; with which body he ascended up into heaven, clothed with a power, as to quicken souls with a spiritual life, so also to quicken our mortal bodies at his second coming, when he shall raise the dead out of their graves.

### 1 Corinthians 15:46

Ver. 46. Christ, the spiritual Adam, was not first in order of time, but the natural Adam, God in his providence rising from more imperfect to more perfect dispensations: and so it is as to God's providences relating unto us; we have first natural bodies, we are born with such, we grow up and die with such, but then we shall rise again with others, in respect of more excellent qualities and endowments.

### 1 Corinthians 15:47

Ver. 47. Adam, who was the first man, was of the earth, Ge 2:7, and was of an earthy constitution, like unto the earth out of which he was formed; but Christ had another original: for though his body was formed in the womb of the virgin, and he was flesh of her flesh, yet she conceived by the Holy Ghost overshadowing her, and Christ had an eternal generation (as to his Divine nature) from his Father.

### 1 Corinthians 15:48

Ver. 48. Such a body as Adam had, (which was earthy), such all the sons of Adam have; and such a body as Christ now hath since his resurrection, (which is a heavenly body), such a body also shall believers, who are heavenly, have in the resurrection.

### 1 Corinthians 15:49

Ver. 49. And as believers, being the natural sons of the first Adam, have borne his image, had such bodies as he had while they lived here; so they shall also in the resurrection bear the image of the heavenly, the image of Christ; that is, have such bodies as was Christ's body after that he was again risen from the dead.

### 1 Corinthians 15:50

Ver. 50. *Flesh and blood* do not here signify sin, the unrenewed nature, (as some would have it), but our bodies, in their present natural, corruptible, frail, mortal state; so the terms signify, Eph 6:12 Heb 2:14. Flesh and blood shall inherit the kingdom of God, (else our bodies could not be glorified), but our body, as in its present state, till changed and altered as to qualities, till it be made a spiritual body, shall not inherit the kingdom of God. The latter words give a reason why *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*; because it is *corruption*, that is, subject to natural corruption and putrefaction, and the heavenly state of *incorruption*; the bodies of believers therefore must be raised up in that state of incorruption mentioned 1Co 15:42, before they can be capable of inheriting the kingdom of God.

### 1 Corinthians 15:51

Ver. 51. They might object: How can this be? There will be many saints alive in the world at the day when Christ shall come to judge the world, they will have natural bodies, such as they were born with, and grew up with in the world until that time. Saith the apostle: I now tell you a secret thing; for so the term *mystery* signifieth, Ro 11:25 16:25, and in many other texts.

*We shall not all sleep* any long sleep: some think all shall die, but some for a very short time, and then they shall revive.

*But we shall all be changed*, either dying for time, or by some other work of God, their natural, corruptible bodies shall be turned into spiritual

bodies, not capable of corruption.

#### 1 Corinthians 15:52

Ver. 52. This change will be on the sudden, *in a moment*; either upon the will and command of Christ, which shall be as effectual to call persons out of their graves, as a trumpet is to call persons together; or rather, upon a sound made like to the sound of a trumpet, as it was at the giving of the law upon Sinai, Ex 19:16. We read of this last trump, Mt 24:31 1Th 4:16. There shall (saith the apostle) be such a sound made; and upon the making of it, the saints, that are dead, shall be raised out of their graves; not with such bodies as they carried thither, (which were corruptible), but with such bodies as shall be no more subject to corruption; and those who at that time shall be alive, shall one way or another be *changed*, and be also put into an incorruptible state.

#### 1 Corinthians 15:53

Ver. 53. God hath so decreed, that our flesh and blood, in the state wherein now it is, shall not be glorified; it shall be the same body as to the substance, but not as to the qualities; it is now *corruptable* and *mortal*, it must be put into a state of *incorruption* and *immortality*, before it can enter into the kingdom of heaven.

#### 1 Corinthians 15:54

Ver. 54. That is, in an eternal and continuing victory; the saints shall die no more. The quotation which the apostle bringeth, is out of those two texts, Isa 25:8 Ho 13:14; which two texts, the apostle saith, at that day will have a more full, perfect, and eminent accomplishment, than ever they before had.

#### 1 Corinthians 15:55

Ver. 55. The apostle, in the contemplation of this blessed day, triumpheth

over death, in a metaphorical phrase: *Where is thy sting?* What hurt canst thou now do unto believers, more than a wasp, or hornet, or bee, that hath lost its sting? *O grave,* or *O hell,* (the same word signifieth both), *where now is thy victory?* The conqueror of all flesh is now conquered, the spoiler of all men is spoiled; it had got a victory, but now, *O death,* where is thy victory?

### 1 Corinthians 15:56

Ver. 56. *The sting of death is sin;* if it were not for sin, death could have no power over man; sin is that which giveth death a power to hurt the children of men: *The wages of sin is death,* Ro 6:23.

*And the strength of sin is the law;* and without the law there could be no transgression. The law is so far from taking away the guilt of sin, that, through the corruption of our natures, strongly inclining us to what is forbidden, it addeth strength to sin; *sin* (as the apostle saith, Ro 7:8) *taking occasion by the commandment,* and working in us *all manner of concupiscence.*

### 1 Corinthians 15:57

Ver. 57. The victory over sin and over death, we have both through the death and the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ; who by his death both delivered us from the guilt of sin, and also from the power of sin; and who through death destroyed him who had the power of death, even the devil.

### 1 Corinthians 15:58

Ver. 58. The apostle concludeth his discourse, proving the resurrection of the body from the dead, founding upon it an exhortation to holiness, which is here called *the work of the Lord,* because it is made up of works done by us at the command of Christ, and with direct respect to his glory in obedience to his will. He mindeth them not only to do these things, but to do them *stedfastly,* not by fits, but never turning aside from them either one way or another; and *unmovably,* so as no temptations, either from

dangers, or rewards, or false teachers, should shake their faith, as to the principles that lead unto such a holy life, this especially of the resurrection from the dead.

*For as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord; because they knew, that through the grace of God, and the merits of Christ, such works as these should not want their reward; for though the work of God be wages to itself, and Christians should not serve God merely for wages, yet it is lawful for them (as for Moses) to have an eye to *the recompence of reward*; and a greater reward than this of the resurrection of the body to eternal life, and that in a state of immortality and incorruption, in a spiritual and honourable estate, could not be.*

## 1 Corinthians 16:1

### Chapter Summary

1Co 16:1-4 Paul directeth the Corinthians how to proceed in their collections for the relief of the brethren at Jerusalem.

1Co 16:5-9 He mentioneth his design of visiting them, 1Co 16:10-12 and commendeth Timothy, who was coming to them.

1Co 16:13-18 After some seasonable admonitions, 1Co 16:19-24 he closeth the Epistle with divers salutations.

Ver. 1. The business of relieving the poor members of the church, is a moral duty, a sacrifice with which God is well pleased, Php 4:18; our faith must work by this love. The apostle, in several Epistles, was very solicitous about this; he mentioneth it, Ro 15:26 Ga 2:10, as well as in this Epistle. Besides that our Saviour had foretold, that the state of the church would be such, that they should have the poor always with them; Agabus, Ac 11:28, had prophesied of a famine, which (some think) raged at this time; and besides, the persecution at Jerusalem had scattered the brethren abroad, and being out of their country and employments, they could not but be at a loss for a livelihood, and so need the charitable contribution of other churches under better circumstances, as they were at this time in

Greece. The churches of Galatia and Macedonia had been very liberal this way; and the apostle, by their example, quickens the churches both at Rome and Corinth, Ro 15:26 2Co 8:4. As to this he had (as he saith) *given order to the churches of Galatia*, which, it is thought, he did in his journey through Galatia, Ac 16:6; and he ordereth the church at Corinth to follow that order, which followeth.

### 1 Corinthians 16:2

Ver. 2. From hence both divers of the ancients, and very many late divines, argue for the change of the sabbath from the seventh day of the week to the first. It is plain from hence, that the gospel churches were wont to assemble upon that day; nor do we read in Scripture of any assembly of Christians for religious worship on any other day. On this day the apostle orders collections for the poor saints to be made, accordingly as God had prospered any in their employments; he directeth that they should every one lay by him something, not doing what he did with any ostentation, but having it ready when it should be called for: this he calls a treasuring (so it is in the Greek); monies laid by for charitable uses are treasures, both with respect to those for whom they are laid up, and also for ourselves; for he that giveth to the poor, layeth up for himself treasures in heaven. He would have *no gatherings when* he came, either to avoid the scandal of his being chargeable to them, or that he would have no delay, but when he came it might be in a readiness to be presently sent away.

### 1 Corinthians 16:3

Ver. 3. The word here translated *liberality*, is the same which signifieth grace; their charity is called by that name, either because it flowed from their free love towards their poor brethren, (though living at a great distance from them), or because their sense of the free love and grace of God to them, was that which moved them to that charitable act, 2Co 8:9.

### 1 Corinthians 16:4

Ver. 4. To encourage them to the more free and liberal contribution, he



promiseth them himself to go along with those that carried it, if it were thought meet. Whether Paul, according to this promise, did go to Corinth, some question, because of what we read, 2Co 1:15,16. But others think, that he speaketh there of another journey, which he intended thither; and that he did go in a fulfilling of this promise, because we read, Ac 20:1-38, that he went into Greece, and spent there a considerable time; during which it is very probable that he did not omit to visit the church of Corinth.

### 1 Corinthians 16:6

Ver. 6. He did stay in Greece three months, Ac 20:3, but it is believed some things hindered him, that he did not winter at Corinth. It was the custom for some members of the gospel churches, to accompany the apostles some part of their way when they went from them to any other places, in token of their kindness and respect to them, Ac 15:3 17:15 20:38.

### 1 Corinthians 16:7

Ver. 7. I will not see you in my passage into Macedonia, for then I shall have no time to stay long with you; and I hope to gain a time when I shall stay longer with you; but all this must be understood with submission to God's will, who can hinder, and order my journeys, and determine my purposes, as he pleaseth. James teaches us, when we declare our resolutions to go to this or that place, to add: *If the Lord will*; and our apostle observeth that rule, Ro 1:10.

### 1 Corinthians 16:8

Ver. 8. He altered this resolution afterward, for, Ac 20:16, *he hasted, if it were possible, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost*. Pentecost was a Jewish feast, and not named here as a feast then celebrated by Christians, but as a known period of time; for the Jews computing time from their festivals, Christians who lived amongst them, and had some of them been converted from their religion, computed also their time from the Jewish

festivals.

### 1 Corinthians 16:9

Ver. 9. For God hath opened to me at Ephesus a great opportunity to preach the gospel, which I have reason to hope will also be effectual for the conversion of many souls. What this door of hope was, whether God had let him know there were many souls in that place prepared for receiving the gospel; or that some eminent persons for authority or learning, whom many were like to follow, were there already converted; or that he looked upon that famous city as like to be a place where many might be converted; is not told us.

*And* (saith the apostle) *there are many adversaries*, ( as it will appear to those that read Ac 19:1-41 and Ac 20:1-38), therefore there was need of the presence of the apostle himself, whose authority might better stop their mouths, than the more inferior pastors could. What would have afrighted others from going or staying there, this great apostle mentions as an argument to cause him to make haste to go thither, and to tarry there for some time.

### 1 Corinthians 16:10

Ver. 10. He had told them, 1Co 4:17, that he had sent Timothy unto them, whom he there calleth his *beloved son*, and *faithful in the Lord*. Here he bespeaketh his welcome and security. It is probable he had it in commission from Paul to visit divers other churches in his journey to them, and therefore he speaketh of his coming as uncertain, but chargeth them, that if he did come, they would take care of him, that he might not be exposed to danger or trouble from any party amongst them.

*For he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do;* for (saith he) he is a minister of the gospel, and engaged in the same work of the Lord that I am.

### 1 Corinthians 16:11

Ver. 11. *Let no man therefore despise him;* either because he is a very young man, 1Ti 4:12, or upon any other account.

*But conduct him forth in peace, that he may come unto me;* but when he cometh away, show him the respect you use to show me, conduct him in his way.

*For I look for him with the brethren;* for I have need of his help here, in carrying on the business of the gospel; and therefore I, with the brethren here, expect him; or, I expect him with the rest of the brethren, who are in like manner employed abroad in carrying about the gospel.

### 1 Corinthians 16:12

Ver. 12. *Apollos* (as may be seen, Ac 18:27) was known to them, and had been a preacher amongst them, and was grateful to many of them; he was *an eloquent man, mighty in the Scriptures, instructed in the way of the Lord, and fervent in the spirit,* Ac 18:24-28; he was one of those from whom some of this church denominated themselves, 1Co 3:4. For these reasons Paul would have persuaded him to go and visit this church, (which some think that he had left, because of those contentions and divisions which were amongst them), but he had no mind to go at that time; though it is said, that he afterwards did return again to them, when Paul, by his Epistle, had quieted those divisions, and allayed their heats.

### 1 Corinthians 16:13

Ver. 13. *Watch ye:* watching, in its usual acceptation, signifieth a forbearing of sleep; and that in order to some end. Sin is set out under the notion of sleep, Eph 5:14; so that spiritual watching signifies a diligent abstaining from sin, and from whatsoever may be to us a temptation to sin against God, in order to the perfecting of holiness, and the obtaining life and immortality.

*Stand fast in the faith;* be steady in the profession of the truth, and holding

close to the doctrine of faith.

*Quit you like men, be strong;* you are as soldiers fighting against the world, the flesh, and the devil; do not behave yourselves like children, whom the least opposition will terrify and throw down; but like men, with a spiritual courage and fortitude, becoming such who have so good a Captain, and so good a cause.

#### 1 Corinthians 16:14

Ver. 14. *Charity* (as hath been before discoursed) is a term comprehensive both of love to God, and to our neighbour; the failure of this in their divisions and contentions, and satisfying their own judgments and humours, without regard to the consciences of others, and having no regard to the profit of others, is that which the apostle, in this Epistle, had once and again blamed in the members of this church; in the conclusion of his Epistle, he therefore again recommends to them the getting and exercising of this habit.

#### 1 Corinthians 16:15

Ver. 15. Of this *Stephanas* we read before, 1Co 1:16; his family was one of those few families which Paul baptized: he is here called *the first-fruits of Achaia*, because (as it should seem) he was one of the first of all those who in that country received the gospel. He further saith of him, that he had given up himself *to the ministry of the saints*, either in preaching the gospel, or (which is more probable) in the proper employment of a deacon, in relieving such amongst the saints (whether of that or other churches) as were in want.

#### 1 Corinthians 16:16

Ver. 16. He adviseth them to reverence him, and all such as were helpers and labourers of that nature, and wrought with the apostles in the work of the gospel.

### 1 Corinthians 16:17

Ver. 17,18. It should seem that this church had sent these three persons to Paul at this time (as most think) at Ephesus, to acquaint him with the state of their churches; these men supplied the want of that whole church's coming, or they made a report to the apostle of the Corinthians more fully than they had done in their letters. He adds, that they had *refreshed his spirit*, not with bringing him any money, (for the apostle hath told us, 1Co 9:15, that he gloried in this, that he had preached the gospel to them freely, without being any charge to them), but by their visit, and the conference that he had had with them about the state of that church. The apostle addeth, that they had refreshed their spirits also; intimating, that their joy was his, and that what was a refreshing to him, ought also to be so to them; he therefore recommendeth these men, and such as they were, to be revered and respected by this church.

### 1 Corinthians 16:19

Ver. 19. He meaneth the Lesser Asia, in which was Ephesus; from whence it is more probable (according to the Arabic and Syriac opinion) that this Epistle was written, than from Philippi (according to the copy followed by our translators). And that which further adds to that probability is, that the apostle mentioneth the salutations of *Aquila and Priscilla*, as persons that were at that time with him; now, that they lived at Ephesus, or at least went thither with Paul, and tarried there, appeareth from Ac 18:19: their saluting the church of Corinth *in the Lord*, signifies their wishing them all spiritual blessings in and from Christ. But what is meant by *the church in their house*, which joined with Paul in this salutation, is not so plain: we read the like, Col 4:15, of the church in Nymphas's house; and in Philemon's house, Phm 1:2; and the same again of this Aquila and Priscilla, Ro 16:5. Some think that it signifieth no more, than that their whole families had received the Christian faith; others think, that divers other Christians sojourned with them; others, that the church was wont to meet in some room in their house: but the last is not probable, either that in those times the church kept their meetings in any one stated place, or that Christians then had such spacious houses as could afford a room large

enough for the whole church to meet in.

### 1 Corinthians 16:20

Ver. 20. This proveth no more, than that as it is in use with us to salute one another with a kiss when we meet; so it was in use in those times and countries to do the like, in token of love and friendship. It is called *the kiss of charity*, 1Pe 5:14. The apostle requireth, that in these salutations they should have chaste and holy thoughts. This seemeth to be all meant by the *holy kiss*, mentioned Ro 16:16 2Co 13:12 1Th 5:26, and here.

### 1 Corinthians 16:21

Ver. 21. These words are judged to signify to us, that though the former part of the Epistle was written out of Paul's copy by some others, yet the three last verses were written by him with his own hand.

### 1 Corinthians 16:22

Ver. 22. *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ:* love is an affection of the heart, but discernible by overt acts: the meaning is: If any man, by any notorious acts, declareth that he loveth not the Lord Jesus, whether he be a hypocrite, owning the name of Christ, but living in a contempt of and disobedience to his commandments; or an apostate, who showeth his want of love to Christ by denying him in an hour of danger and persecution, or an open enemy and persecutor of Christ and his gospel.

*Let him be Anathema Maran-atha;* let him be accursed, let him be looked upon as a detestable and abominable person. Some tell us, that the Jews having three excommunications, this word signifieth their highest degree, by which the person was given up to the judgment and vengeance of God; but others say, there is no such term to be found among them, and that the term *Maran-atha* signifies no more than: The Lord is come. Let the Jews and other vain persons say what they will, the Lord is come; and if any love him not, let him be looked on as a detestable person.

1 Corinthians 16:23

Ver. 23. That is: The Lord Jesus favour you, and bless you with all spiritual blessings: this is the apostle's ordinary salutation, Ro 16:24.

1 Corinthians 16:24

Ver. 24. As I love you, so I desire to be again beloved of you in Christ sincerely. Or, I love you all in Christ, and for Christ's sake; or, I wish that my love may abide in and with you.

*The first (epistle) to the Corinthians was written from Philippi by Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus, and Timotheus.*

These words are no part of Scripture; and (as was said before) it is much more probable, that this Epistle was written from Ephesus than from Philippi, though it might be sent by these, or some of these, men named.

## 2 Corinthians 1:1

### THE ARGUMENT

Concerning the sacred penman as well of this as the former Epistle, and the church to whom this as well as that Epistle was sent, enough hath been said before. It is plain, that the apostle, when he wrote it, was in Macedonia; probably at Philippi, which was the first city of Macedonia, Ac 16:12, whither Paul went after the uproar that Demetrius had made at Ephesus, of which we read, Ac 20:1. The occasion of his writing this Second Epistle seemeth to be, partly the false teachers' aspersing him:

1. As an inconstant man, because he had promised to come in person to Corinth, and was not yet come; the reason of which he showeth, 2Co 1:1-24, was not levity, but the troubles he met with in Asia, and his desire to hear they had first reformed the abuses he had taxed them for.
2. As an imperious man, because of the incestuous person against whom he had wrote; which charge he avoids, by showing the necessity of his writing in that manner, and giving new orders for the restoring him, upon the repentance he had showed.
3. As a proud and vain glorious man.
4. As a contemptible person; base in his person, as he expresseth it.

The further occasions of his writing were: To commend them for their kind reception of and compliance with the precepts and admonitions of his former Epistle, and their kind reception of Titus: as also to exhort them to a liberal contribution to the necessities of the saints in Judea, to which they had showed their forwardness a year before: and his hearing that there was yet a party amongst them bad enough, that went on in vilifying him and his authority, as well as in other sinful courses; against whom he vindicateth himself, magnifying his office, assuring them he was about to come to Corinth; when they should find him present such as, being absent, he had by his letters declared himself, if they were not reformed. The substance therefore of this Epistle is partly apologetical, or excusatory, where he excuseth himself for his not coming to Corinth so soon as he thought, and for his so severe writing as to the incestuous person: partly hortatory,



where he persuadeth them, more generally, to walk worthy of the gospel; more specially, 2Co 8:1-24 and 2Co 9:1-15, to a liberal contribution to the saints: partly minatory, or threatening, where he threateneth severity against those whom, when he came amongst them, he should find contumacious and impenitent offenders. He concludes the Epistle (as usually) with a salutation of them, pious exhortations to them, and a prayer for them.

### Chapter Summary

2Co 1:1,2 Paul saluteth the Corinthians,  
2Co 1:3-7 and blesseth God for the comforts and deliverances given him, not solely for his own sake, but for the comfort and encouragement of others also.  
2Co 1:8-11 He telleth them of a deliverance he had lately had from a great danger in Asia, and expresseth his trust in God's protection for the future through their prayers.  
2Co 1:12-14 He calleth both his own conscience and theirs to witness his sincerity in preaching the gospel,  
2Co 1:15-22 and excuseth his not coming to them, as not proceeding from lightness,  
2Co 1:23,24 but from lenity towards them.

Ver. 1. *The will of God* here doth not signify the bare permission, but the calling and precept of God; he was *called to be an apostle*, Ro 1:1 1Co 1:1, making him *a minister and a witness*, Ac 26:16. His joining of *Timothy* with him, showeth both the great humility of the apostle, and his desire to give him a reputation in the churches, though he was a very young man. The Epistle is not directed only to the church of God which was at Corinth, (the metropolis of Peloponnesus), but also to all those Christians which lived in Achaia: by which name probably he doth not understand all Greece, (though that anciently had that name, from one Achaeus, that was king there, from whom the Grecians had the name of Achivi,) but that region of Peloponnesus which lay in a neck of land between the Aegean and Ionian Seas; which obtained that name in a more special and restrained sense.

## 2 Corinthians 1:2

Ver. 2. This was the apostle's common salutation, Ro 1:7. See Poole on "Ro 1:7". 1Co 1:3; where it is observable, that not the Father only, but the Lord Jesus Christ is invoked, and made the Author of *grace*, which is the free love of God, and of *peace*, which signifieth either reconciliation with God upon the free pardon of our sin, or union with men, and brotherly love amongst themselves. The heathens used to begin their epistles with wishing one another health and prosperity; but the apostle hath shown us a more Christian way, and more suited to the faith of Christians, who believe the love and favour of God the greatest and most desirable blessings.

## 2 Corinthians 1:3

Ver. 3. It is a usual form of thanksgiving, Ro 1:25 9:5. It is in use with us, signifying our sincere and hearty desire that both we ourselves might be enabled, and others by our examples might be quickened, to speak well of God, and to praise his name. This God is called *the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, that is, by eternal generation: he is also called *the Father of mercies*, because he is the Fountain of all that good which floweth to poor creatures. And upon the same account he is also called *the God of all comfort*.

## 2 Corinthians 1:4

Ver. 4. *Who comforteth us in all our tribulation; us*, who are the ministers of the gospel, (as it may appear by what followeth), for the apostle saith, that God doth it, that ministers might, from the comforts wherewith God had comforted them, be able to comfort his people when they are under any trouble, either of body or mind, by the same methods and arguments which the Holy Spirit had used and brought to their minds under trouble to relieve any of them. Two things are observable from this verse:

1. That the apostle attributeth all the support, relief, and comfort, which he had under any tribulation, to God, as the Fountain and Author of all mercy; for though possibly our comforts may be caused from the application of some promises in holy writ, either called to our minds by

the act of our own minds, or brought to our remembrance by some others; yet it is God who must make those plasters to stick, and to become healing and sanative to our souls: so that he is the principal efficient cause, though the Scriptures, or men, may be instrumental causes.

2. That the gifts, graces, and mercies that God bestowed upon his ministers, are bestowed upon them, not merely for their own use, but for the use and good of others; to enable them to be serviceable in doing good to others' souls.

### 2 Corinthians 1:5

Ver. 5. He calleth his and the other apostles' sufferings, *the sufferings of Christ*, either because they were sufferings for Christ, that is, for doing the work which Christ had given them to do; or his and their personal sufferings, as members of that body of which Christ is the Head. Christ calleth Saul's persecuting the saints, a persecuting of himself, Ac 9:4. Thus we read of Paul's filling up *that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ*, Col 1:24.

*So our consolation also aboundeth by Christ;* but, saith the apostle, blessed be God, as we have many sufferings for Christ, so also we have many consolations by Christ. Christ, as God, is the efficient cause of the saints' consolation; as Mediator, dying for us, he is the meritorious cause; and it is by his Spirit (who is called the Comforter) that they are applied to us.

### 2 Corinthians 1:6

Ver. 6. *And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation;* our sufferings tend to *your consolation and salvation*, your souls being upheld and supported by the sight of our boldness, and courage, and confidence in our sufferings: thus, Php 1:13,14: *My bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; and many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.* And his sufferings also were for their

salvation, as they encouraged them to suffer also; and, if we suffer with him, we shall reign with him; and our light and momentary afflictions shall work *for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, 2Co 4:17.

*Which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer;* and (saith the apostle) our suffering hath had a good effect amongst you, while you, with faith and patience, endure sufferings of the same sort which we endure and suffer.

*Or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation;* and if we be supported, upheld, and comforted under our sufferings, the advantage of this also redoundeth to you, as you are encouraged to suffer for the gospel and profession of Christ, from seeing how God supporteth us under our sufferings.

### 2 Corinthians 1:7

Ver. 7. We have a *stedfast hope* of you, that as you have endured sufferings for Christ and his gospel, so you will still endure them, as we have done. And we know, *that as you are partakers of the sufferings* of Christ and his gospel, so you shall also share in those Divine consolations that those feel who endure such sufferings.

### 2 Corinthians 1:8

Ver. 8. We are at a great loss to determine what these troubles were in Asia, of which the apostle doth here speak. We read of several troubles Paul met with in Asia: it was there he was in danger through the tumult raised by Demetrius, Ac 19:23. It was there (at Ephesus) where he fought with beasts after the manner of men, as he told us in the former Epistle, 1Co 15:32. Whoso readeth Ac 19:1-41 and Ac 20:1-38, will find the largest account we have in Scripture of the troubles Paul met with in Asia. But this Epistle is thought to have been written at a time that will not agree to the time of those troubles; therefore they are thought to have been some troubles of which we have a mention no where else in holy writ.

*We were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we*

*despaired even of life*: whatsoever they were, this text tells us they were very great, and above his natural strength to have borne; some think, above the strength of ordinary Christians, insomuch that if the apostle had not found the more than ordinary assistances of the Spirit of God, he could not have stood under them.

## 2 Corinthians 1:9

Ver. 9. *But we had the sentence of death in ourselves;* we verily thought we should have been killed; and so it is expounded by the last words of the former verse, *we despaired even of life*. And this God did to teach us, that we should, when we are in dangers, look above the creature, and have no confidence in created means, but only look up to him, who *raiseth the dead*; as Abraham offered up Isaac, Heb 11:17-19, *accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead*. Abraham had a promise to bottom such a faith upon; God had told him: *That in Isaac his seed should be called*: so had Paul, God having revealed to him, that he had a farther work for him to do. So have not all Christians; we do not know our courses, nor what work God hath in his eternal counsels laid out for us, and therefore cannot be confident of deliverances in this life by the Almighty power of God; but yet we, under our greatest trials, may trust in God, who will certainly raise us from the dead; of which faith we have an instance in Job, Job 19:25-27. However, for our comfort in our distresses we may observe: That God, in his great deliverances of his people, useth to suffer them first to be brought to the greatest extremities; that in the mount of the Lord it may be seen, and that they may learn to know that their salvations are from him; more from his Almighty power, than from the virtue of any means they can use, though yet it be our duty to use what lawful means his providence affordeth us.

## 2 Corinthians 1:10

Ver. 10. *So great a death*, in this text, signifies no more than so great a trial of affliction; as he elsewhere saith, he was *in deaths often*, that is, in dangers of death. Nor (saith the apostle) were we only at that time in danger of our lives, nor had we only at that time an experience of God's power, goodness, and faithfulness in our deliverance; but we are *in*

*jeopardy every hour, and experience the power of God in our deliverance yet every day. And it being for the advantage of the church of Christ, that our lives should be prolonged, (though we desire rather to be dissolved, and to be with Christ), we are confident that he will yet deliver. Former experiences of God's goodness in delivering us out of troubles, ought to increase our faith, and beget a confidence in us, that God will yet deliver us, if it may be for his own glory, and our good.*

### 2 Corinthians 1:11

Ver. 11. *Ye also helping together by prayer for us:* faith ought; not to hinder prayer; nor doth God's principal efficiency, as to any mercy or deliverance bestowed upon us, give a *supersedeas* to us, as to the use of any means, whether natural or spiritual, by which the mercy may be obtained. Nor are the prayers of the meanest saints useless for the greatest, or beneath their desires; men and women's favour with God depends not upon their order, station, and repute in the world.

*That for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf:* by the gift here he means the deliverance before mentioned; which he calls a *gift*, to denote, not only God's principal efficiency in it, but his free bestowing of it: this gift (saith he) is *bestowed by the means of many*, because obtained upon the intercession or prayers of many. God doth therefore bestow mercies upon particular persons at the intercession of many others on their behalf, that he may not only have the praises of those persons upon whom he so bestoweth the mercy, but of those who have been so praying. The apostle hereby hinteth to us, that we ought no more to forget to give thanks for others, for whom God hath heard us, than to pray for them when in distress.

### 2 Corinthians 1:12

Ver. 12. He declareth the confidence that he had, that he should not want their prayers, because his own heart told him, to his joy and satisfaction, that however others might reproach him, as if he had carried himself deceitfully, or craftily, yet he had not done so, but had lived in the world in

all *simplicity and sincerity of God* (so the Greek is). Simplicity is opposed to double-mindedness; where there is a composition in a man, a mixture of truth and falsehood, fairness in speech and falsehood in heart or action. Sincerity is opposed to hypocrisy. It is said to be of God, because he is the God of truth, hath commanded it, approveth it, worketh it, and disposeth the heart of man to it. This is opposed to *fleshly wisdom*, which prompteth a man to seek his own ends any way, good or bad.

*But* (saith the apostle) *we have had our conversation in the world*, not by the guidance of any such corrupt habit or principle, but *by the grace of God*, the love and fear of God dwelling in us; or, we have done this, not of ourselves, but by the guidance and assistance of Divine grace, helping us so to live, and to have our conversation in the world.

*And more abundantly to you-ward*; and more especially you are our witnesses of this, amongst whom we have preached the gospel freely, so as we have not made it chargeable to you.

### 2 Corinthians 1:13

Ver. 13. I do not tell you stories; the things which I write, and which you read, either in my Epistles to you, or to other churches of Christ, are what you know, must own and acknowledge, to be truth; and I hope you shall acknowledge them to be so to the end both of my life and yours.

### 2 Corinthians 1:14

Ver. 14. *In part*, may either refer to persons or things; part of you have so owned and acknowledged us, though others of you have abused us. Or you have *in part*, or at some times, owned us, that you had cause to bless God for us, and to rejoice that God ever sent us to preach the gospel amongst you. And as some have owned us as their joy, or all of you have at some times acknowledged us as such, so you are also *our rejoicing*; we rejoice that God hath made our labour successful to your souls, and I trust, in the day when the Lord Jesus shall come to judge the world, you shall be more our rejoicing.

## 2 Corinthians 1:15

Ver. 15. Being confident that my presence with you would be matter of rejoicing both to you and also to me, I purposed: to come unto you before I went into Macedonia, visiting you shortly in my journey thither, that so you might have, a second longer visit in kindness to you. We find, Ac 16:9, that Paul received his first call into Macedonia in a vision; we read again of his passing through Macedonia to go to Jerusalem: the apostle seemeth to speak here of the latter.

## 2 Corinthians 1:16

Ver. 16. He had purposed to take Corinth in his way unto Macedonia, and after he had finished his business in Macedonia, his resolutions were to have come back to Corinth, and to stay with them some time, hoping to have some of their company some part of the way toward Judea: but it seems, though he thus purposed, yet God had otherwise ordered his motions.

## 2 Corinthians 1:17

Ver. 17. *When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness?* Though the apostle doth not in so many words tell us so, yet it is apparent from this verse, that some of the Corinthians had taken occasion from his not coming at this time to Corinth, to charge him with levity and inconstancy, as if his words were not to be regarded. It is very observable, how little things the men of the world will take advantage from, to vilify and lessen the reputation of God's faithful ministers and people. How many others might have promised to be in such a place at such a time, and have failed, without the reproach of the men of the world! Who would have been so charitable to them, as to have excused them, by saying: They spake according to their present intentions and resolutions, but they were hindered by the providence of God; but if Paul fails, they will interpret it to be from the lightness and inconstancy of his mind: so charitable is the world to its own; so uncharitable to those who are not of the world, but by God called out of the world. From this imputation the apostle cleareth



himself, denying that he used *lightness*, and that his not coming proceeded from any levity or inconstancy of mind; for he did fully purpose to have come.

*Or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh?* Or (saith he) did I purpose after the manner of carnal men, who make no conscience of their word, who promise and deny both in a breath?

*That with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay;* should there be in me such a spirit as to speak a thing with my lips which my heart doth not agree to? This lets us know, that truth and steadiness are things which do highly commend either a minister or a Christian, but especially him who is a minister of the gospel.

### 2 Corinthians 1:18

Ver. 18. *As God is true* to his promises, so he hath taught me to be true to mine. Some make these words not to be merely declarative of the truth of God, but a kind of an oath, or calling the God of truth to witness, that his *word toward* them; by which some understand the gospel, or the word which he had preached amongst them (and of that indeed he speaketh in the next verse); but to me it seemeth much less strained, to interpret Paul's *word*, in this verse, of that word of promise of which he had before spoken, the promise which he owned before that he had made them of his coming to them. That *word*, he saith, *was not yea and nay*, that is, he did not make it with a quite contrary intention; but when he promised, he faithfully intended to have justified his word, and indeed to have come; but the providence of God, to which all men are subjected, had otherwise ordered him and disposed of him; which was the cause why he had not yet been as good as his word. It is very observable, how careful this great apostle was to clear himself from any imputations of levity and falsehood; and it should teach us to be careful to maintain our reputation in the world for truth and steadiness.

### 2 Corinthians 1:19

Ver. 19. The apostle here giveth a reason why he had made truth and

sincerity so much his business (which reason obligeth us also, who are as much bound as he to study a conformity to Christ); saith he: *The Son of God, who was preached among you, that is, Jesus Christ*; who, though (as some observe) he is in these Epistles no where called God, but Lord, is here called *the Son of God*; which can be understood in no other sense, than by eternal generation; for those who are only the sons of God by adoption, are not the subjects of ministers' preaching. We read of this *Silvanus*, 1Th 1:1 1Pe 5:12: some think that he was the same person who is called Silas, Ac 16:19.

Of *Timothy* we have heard before. They were both ministers who (as well as Apollos before mentioned) had laboured in the gospel amongst the Corinthians.

*Was not yea and nay, but in him was yea*: now (saith the apostle) that Christ, whom both I, and other ministers of the gospel, have preached to you, is not uncertain and unconstant, one thing at one time, and in one place, another thing at another time, and in another place. He was only one and the same; his doctrine was always certain and uniform, and consistent with itself; and our conversation ought to be suitable to him and his doctrine.

## 2 Corinthians 1:20

Ver. 20. As Christ was *yea*, and all his doctrine certain and uniform, so *all the promises of God are yea*; the promises of the Messiah have their yea and Amen in him; all the promises of grace, whatsoever is promised to believers, shall be verified by him, that so God may be glorified, and have from men the honour of being always esteemed a true and faithful God, one that cannot fail and falsify his word. But how are the promises of God yea and Amen in Christ by us?

*Answer.* As the ministers of the gospel are the ministers of Christ for the explication and application of them. The promises are from the Father, through Christ as the meritorious cause, and internally applied by the Holy Spirit, while they are more externally applied by the ministers of the gospel.

## 2 Corinthians 1:21

Ver. 21. The anointing here mentioned is, doubtless, the same mentioned by St. John, 1Jo 2:20,27, by which is understood the Holy Spirit: so as God's anointing his people signifies his giving them his Holy Spirit, to dwell and to work in them; which Holy Spirit diffuseth itself throughout the whole soul of the believer, as the oil of old poured out upon the heads of the kings, high priests, and prophets. Believers are said to be *anointed*, because God hath, by his Spirit given to them, declared, that he hath set them apart to be kings and priests, a royal priesthood. The same God also *establisheth* their souls both in faith and love, and all *in Christ*; in him as our Head, and through him as the meritorious cause of all that grace wherein we stand. It is observable, that how much soever vain man may ascribe to the power of man's will, yet the blessed apostle attributeth all to God; both our anointing, the first infusion of gracious habits, and also our establishing. It is grace by which we stand.

## 2 Corinthians 1:22

Ver. 22. The use of a seal is for confirmation of the thing to which it is affixed; the effect of it is the making the impression of itself upon the wax: so as sealing us, both in this and other texts, signifies both the confirmation of the love of God to our souls, and also the renewing and sanctification of our natures, imprinting the image of God upon our souls, making us (as the apostle Peter saith, 2Pe 1:4) *partakers of the Divine nature*; but the first seemeth probably to be most intended here.

*And given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts:* we have the same expression, 2Co 5:5 Eph 1:14. We read of *the first-fruits of the Spirit*, Ro 8:23. The giving unto believers the Holy Spirit, and those saving spiritual habits which are his effects in the soul, are both the first-fruits and an earnest; for as the first-fruits assured the harvest, and the earnest is a sure pledge of the bargain, when those who give it are honest and faithful; so the sanctifying habits, wrought in the soul by the Spirit of holiness, are a certain pledge of that glory which shall be the portion of believers.

## 2 Corinthians 1:23

Ver. 23. Here is a perfect form of an oath, which is nothing else but a solemn calling of God to witness the truth of what we speak, whether promising or asserting. Those words, *upon my soul*, also have the force of an imprecation; but it is in a very serious thing: the apostle was deeply charged with levity, for not making good his promise in coming; and because he reasonably presumed, that some amongst them would be difficult to believe the true cause, to gain credit with them, he takes a voluntary oath, which in weighty matters is lawful (though sometimes it be done not before a magistrate). The thing he thus attests is: That he hitherto had forbore to come out of kindness to them; to *spare* them, (as he phraseth it), which may either be understood of their purses, for he could not have gone without some charge to them, though he took no standing salary from them for preaching: or (as others possibly judge better) to spare their persons; for if he had come before they had reformed those abuses that were amongst them, he must (as he before spake) have come unto them *with a rod*.

## 2 Corinthians 1:24

Ver. 24. *Not for that we have dominion over your faith;* not (say some) that we pretend or boast of any dominion over you because of your faith, as if upon that account we would be chargeable, and exact monies of you. But their interpretation is better, who think that by these words the apostle removes from himself, and much more from all inferior ministers, any power of imposing upon people to believe any thing, but what God had in his word revealed as the object of faith. He had in the verse before used the phrase *spare you*, which he thought might sound harsh in their ears, and give some occasion to carp at him, as if he designed some lordly power over them: No, (saith the apostle), though I speak of sparing you, I intend no exercise of lordly power, *but only to promote your joy*, by removing those things which hinder your true rejoicing. Your present glorying is not good, while these disorders, contrary to the will of God, are amongst you; and you are full of contentions and divisions, which hinder your comfortable society and communion together, as one body.

*For by faith ye stand;* the most of you stand in the faith (so some interpret

this). I should rather make this the sense, by faith you must stand; if you err in matters of faith, (as some of this church had done in the business of the resurrection, as the apostle told us in 1Co 15:1-58), you fall; you no longer stand than you keep the faith pure and uncorrupt. For, because of their errors as to the resurrection, I cannot tell how to make the apostle's sense to be what some learned men make it to bear, that he had nothing to blame in them in matters of faith, but only in some things referring to order; and therefore they need not to suspect his exercise of any dominion over their faith.

## 2 Corinthians 2:1

### Chapter Summary

2Co 2:1-5 Paul, having shown a motive of tenderness for not coming to Corinth, as also for writing his former Epistle,

2Co 2:6-9 declareth himself satisfied with the censure inflicted on the incestuous person, and desireth them to forgive and comfort him,

2Co 2:10,11 as he himself had forgiven him in Christ's name.

2Co 2:12,13 His uneasiness for not finding Titus at Troas had caused him to go forth with into Macedonia.

2Co 2:14-16 He blesseth God for the successfulness of his labour every where,

2Co 2:17 professing his sincerity and disinterestedness before God.

Ver. 1. One reason why I put off my formerly intended journey to you, was, that I might give you time to repent, and reform those disorders that were amongst you, that my coming to you might neither cause heaviness in you, seeing me come with a rod, to chide and reprove you; nor yet in myself, who do not delight in censures and chidings, but must myself have been sad to have seen such errors and disorders amongst you, as I must by my paternal and apostolical authority have corrected.

## 2 Corinthians 2:2

Ver. 2. When I am there, I have no refreshment or joy in that part of the citizens who are pagans, all my joy is in that part which are Christians, and constitute the church of God in that city: so as I could have had no pleasure or joy in my being there, if I had had nothing but occasion of sadness and heaviness from you, in whom was all my expectation of any joy or refreshing.

## 2 Corinthians 2:3

Ver. 3. This hath been the cause of my writing this Second Epistle to you, before I myself came in person, that you might have a time more fully and perfectly to reform such things as are amiss amongst you, and I have formerly given you notice of; lest when I come, instead of rejoicing in you, as I ought to do, or having any just occasion so to do, I might meet with what would give me nothing but trouble and sadness; which would not only be grievous to me, but would be contrary to your duty, for *I ought to rejoice* in you, and you ought so to behave yourselves, that I may have cause to rejoice in you. And I have confidence in the most of you, or in all you who are sincere, that you would all be glad to see me glad and cheerful, rejoicing in my society with you.

## 2 Corinthians 2:4

Ver. 4. Every man that deriveth from God, is in this made partaker of the Divine nature, that like as God doth not grieve willingly, nor willingly afflict the children of men, so neither will he; but if, by reason of his office or trust reposed in him, he be under an obligation sometimes to speak smartly, or to chastise and punish others for their errors, yet he will so do it as one that hath no pleasure and delight in it. Thus the good judge weepeth, or at least showeth sorrow and compassion, when he giveth sentence against malefactors. So, this great apostle, to whom God had committed a care over all the Christian churches, saw a necessity of reproving this church that was at Corinth, for enduring the incestuous person in their communion, and not casting him out; for their errors about the resurrection, for their divisions, schisms, and contentions, &c.: but he

professeth that he did this *with many tears*; and those not shed in hypocrisy, but forced from the anguish and affliction of his heart; that he had nothing less in his design, than to put them to any excessive grief or trouble, but what he wrote was out of a principle of love and good will, both to the welfare of their whole church, and to the good of the particular souls of those that were the members of that church. Ministers or others do no good by their censures or reproofs, if they do not so dispense them, as people may see that what they do, or say, is out of their abundant love to their souls.

### 2 Corinthians 2:5

Ver. 5. The particle *if* doth not here signify any doubting or uncertainty (for the incestuous person, of whom the apostle here, and in the following verses, speaks, had certainly caused grief both to the apostle, and also the church whereof he was a member). It is as much as although; or the apostle speaketh in this form, because by his repentance his grief was much allayed. But how doth the apostle say, that he had grieved him *but in part*? Some think he saith so, because the apostle's grief for his sin was now turned into joy by his repentance: others think, that those words, *in part*, signify that it was not the whole church that had grieved him, but only a part of it, viz. this incestuous person, and those who took part with him. Others say, the apostle saith, *in part*, to let us know, that it was not a grief to him only, but to them also. The last would bid very fair for the sense of the place, if the apostle had not in his First Epistle, 1Co 5:2, said that they were puffed up, and had not mourned. So as I judge the second more like to be the sense of the apostle; viz. that it was not the whole church that had grieved him, but a part of it only: and therefore the next words are added, *that I may not overcharge you all*, that is, that I might not load you all with that imputation, as if you were all involved in it.

### 2 Corinthians 2:6

Ver. 6. This verse maketh it clear, that by *any*, 2Co 2:5, he means the incestuous person, mentioned in 1Co 5:1-13, whom he had ordered to be cast out, and delivered to Satan; which (as appeareth from this verse) they had done, which is the *punishment* mentioned in this verse. They who

think, that the punishment here mentioned was not excommunication, but another being delivered to Satan, and vexed by him:

1. Beg a grave question, viz. Whether delivering to Satan in this place signifieth any more than a casting of the person out of Christ's kingdom on earth, (which is his church), and making him one of the world again, of which Satan is the god?
2. They seem not to consider, that if this church had delivered him to Satan, they could have done no more: so as the apostle would not have said: *Sufficient is this punishment*, when it was the greatest that they could inflict.

Some object, that it is not probable that the apostle (had he been cast out of the communion of the church, for so notorious a crime) would have given order for his being restored in so short a time, as was that between his writing the First and this his Second Epistle.

1. Some think, that he was as yet only under a suspension, and the church had not proceeded to excommunication: this opinion is favoured by the Greek word here used, which is *επιτιμια*, the gentlest of all the words in use in that language to express punishment by.
2. Though in the times following the apostles', a longer time was set after excommunication, for testifying the repentance of sinners notoriously scandalous, before the church did again admit them into her fellowship: yet that it was so in the apostles' time, is more than appears. Possibly it might be so ordered afterwards, when, as the church multiplied, so sin more abounded; and they might, from many experiences of relapses, be quickened to make such orders.
3. The gift of discerning spirits was more usual in the apostles' times than afterward; so that though in following times, when the apostles were dead, and the extraordinary gift of discerning spirits was failed or abated, the church being not able any other way to judge of the truth of sinners' repentance, than from their changed life and conversation, which asked time, might set a longer time for such penitents; yet there might not be the same reason for the apostles doing it.



4. Notwithstanding any thing that appears, there might be the distance of a year or two between Paul's writing these two Epistles.

*Which was inflicted of many:* who these many were, by whom the apostle saith this punishment was inflicted, is a little disputed; whether the presbytery, or the community. Their opinion seemeth (to me) best, who think that the officers of the church of Corinth heard and judged of matters of faith, and reported it to the community; but he was not cast out without the consent and approbation of the community.

### 2 Corinthians 2:7

Ver. 7. *So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him:* forgiveness in this place doth not signify the taking away or remitting of the guilt of sin, (that is God's work, not man's), but remitting of the punishment. And this maketh that probable, that they had not as yet proceeded with this person to excommunication, only kept him (like a suspected leper, without the camp) out of a communion with the church: or if they had actually cast him out, forgiving here can signify nothing but restoring him again to a full communion with them; which is also the comforting which is here mentioned.

*Lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow:* it is plain from hence, that the apostle had intelligence that this person expressed abundant sorrow; otherwise he would not have expressed his fear of his being drowned in his own tears. Though the condition of such, at this day, is sad enough, who are regularly cast out of the communion of any true church of Christ, for crimes which deserve such a punishment, yet we must imagine it much sadder then. Now churches are multiplied, whole cities and nations are Christianized, and though a person be cast out of a church, yet it is not so taken notice of, but he may yet have converse with other Christians, &c.: but there, the greater part of the city being heathens, and the whole countries of Achaia and Greece (contiguous to it) being heathens; one cast out of the communion of the church (if he had the least sense of religion) could not but be deeply afflicted to be in such a case, as none but heathens and professed idolaters would keep him company, or have any intimacy with him.

## 2 Corinthians 2:8

Ver. 8. That you would restore him to a communion with you in your church assemblies, and take him into the bosom of your church again, and be (as before) friendly towards him. The word which we translate *confirm*; is κυρωσαι, which signifieth authoritatively to establish or confirm. Some observe, that the apostle speaks to them as judges, to gain their good opinion, and make them more pliable, whereas he might authoritatively have absolved him. It is hard: to say what authority the apostles had, or had not, to excommunicate; but we want a precedent in holy writ of the apostles, or any of them, exercising such a power, as being absent, and so in no capacity to hear the proof of any fact against scandalous persons. Paul (1Co 5:1-13) writes to the church of Corinth to do it, and doth only himself command them to do their duty; and here again he writeth to them to forgive him, and restore him. There being no mention, either in the former Epistle, or here, of any command that the incestuous person should put away his wife taken unlawfully, or that he did any such thing in testification of his repentance, makes it very probable, that his crime was not using his father's wife as his wife, but as his harlot; had it been otherwise, we should, very probably, have read of something in the one or the other place, signifying such a command of the apostle, or the thing done by him.

## 2 Corinthians 2:9

Ver. 9. As for other ends, so for this also I wrote my former Epistle to you, and I now write this Second Epistle to you also, that I might have an experiment of you, what regard you would show to that apostolical authority wherewith God hath invested me.

## 2 Corinthians 2:10

Ver. 10. The word so often repeated in this verse, and translated *forgive*, is χαριζομαι, which signifies to give, or gratify, or do a kindness, as well as to forgive; so as it needeth not always to be interpreted of any judicial act of absolution. If you see reason to remit any thing of the punishment

inflicted upon the incestuous person, I am satisfied with what you do, I shall take no offence at you for it. If I have showed any favour to any person amongst you that hath fallen under my reproof and chastisement, it hath been for your sake, for the good and advantage of your church, or upon their motion and intercession; and I have done it sincerely in the sight of Christ (the Greek is, in the face of Christ).

## 2 Corinthians 2:11

Ver. 11. As I have done it in kindness to you, so I have also done it for the advantage both of that person, who is so forgiven, and of your whole church, which is concerned in the welfare or miscarriage of every individual member.

*Lest Satan should get an advantage of us:* the Greek is: That we be not overcome by Satan: *πλεονεκτειν* properly signifies to get again, or to gain a superiority, to get the upper hand. The advantage Satan was like to get by their continuing severity to this offender, was either by his over much grief, or by the hardening of his heart; so as he, seeing no probability to be restored again to his communion with the church, should be exposed, either to temptations to some desperate courses, (which are often the effects of minds full of sorrow and discontent), or else to courses of idolatry or looseness, in giving up himself to the devil's kingdom in the world, because he could not be admitted into the church, which is the kingdom of Christ.

*For (saith the apostle) we are not ignorant of his devices, νοηματα,* his thoughts and counsels, how he continually walketh about both like *a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour;* and like an *old serpent,* seeking whom and how he may deceive. This lets us know, with how much prudence those who are trusted with the souls of others, ought to manage their reproofs, or severe dealings with others: the end of all these is the amendment and reformation of such persons, not their spiritual ruin and destruction; and all reproofs and censures must be given, and made, and managed with reference to that end. We have not only the concern of God's glory (which is the main) to be looked at, but the good also of their souls, whom we so reprove, censure, or alienate ourselves from: and indeed, without consulting this, we cannot consult God's glory; who hath

told us, that he desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live: and therefore we must have an eye about us, and beneath us, to the devil, as well as above us, to God; and prudently judge how such afflictive and harsh actions may be so done by us, that in the mean time Satan get no advantage, and we lose the souls of those with whom we so deal, instead of gaining them to God; which is the main and principal end we ought in all those actions to aim at, 1Co 5:5; so 1Ti 1:20.

### 2 Corinthians 2:12

Ver. 12. This *Troas* was either the city, or the whole country, called Troy or Ilium, or the lesser Phrygia. We read of Paul's going thither by sea from Philippi, Ac 20:6, and of his having been there, 2Ti 4:13. He tells us, that the business why he went thither, was to preach the gospel; for it was not the apostles' business to stay, as fixed ministers, in any one place, but to carry the gospel up and down the world to several places; which they did by virtue of their general commission to go, preach, and baptize all nations; though sometimes they had a more special call and commission, as Paul had to go into Macedonia. The *door opened*, either signifieth the free liberty he had there to preach, or the great success which God gave him in his work; which he elsewhere calleth an *effectual door*.

### 2 Corinthians 2:13

Ver. 13. He tells us, that when he came there, he was much troubled because he did not find his brother Titus; where the humility of this great apostle is considerable, in that he disdained not to call *Titus* (a person, though a minister, yet much inferior to him as an apostle) *brother*. Several reasons are given of Paul's trouble. That which is most probable is, that he did expect at Troas to have met with Titus come from Corinth, from whom he might more perfectly have understood the affairs of that church: not finding him there, he tells us he went forward into Macedonia; whither, after the uproar at Ephesus, he designed to go, (as we read, Ac 20:1), but went first into Greece, and stayed there three months, intending to come to Macedonia in his return, 2Co 2:3.

## 2 Corinthians 2:14

Ver. 14. *Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ:* the translation of the Greek here is not certain; for to translate it word for word, it is: But thanks be to God always, triumphing us in Christ; which makes it uncertain, whether there be not a defect of a preposition, upon the supply of which it would be, who triumpheth over us in Christ, having subdued our hearts to the kingdom and obedience of Christ. But the most interpreters rather agree with our translators, and think the sense of the apostle is *who maketh us to triumph*. In the Hebrew there is a conjugation, where the active verb signifieth to make another to do a thing; and there are several instances brought by learned men out of the Septuagint, where the active verb in the Greek also hath that sense; that which cometh nearest it in the original in holy writ, is that, Ro 8:26, where the Spirit is said to make *intercession for us*, because it causeth us to make intercession. According to this, the sense is: Blessed be God, who though we meet with many enemies, yet through Christ he maketh us *more than conquerors*, Ro 8:37, so that we are not overcome by any of them, but, on the contrary, we triumph over them as conquered by us.

*And maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place;* and this by manifesting by us in every place *the savour of the knowledge* of Christ; that is, of the gospel. He calleth it a *savour*, either with allusion to that sweet perfumed ointment, with which the high priest, under the law, was anointed, Ex 30:23 Ps 133:2; or with reference to the incense used also under the law; or with relation to Solomon's expression, So 1:3, where we read of *the savour of Christ's good ointments*, and that his name is as an ointment poured forth. By the savour of the knowledge of Christ here mentioned, the apostle plainly meaneth the reputation or good report that the gospel had in every place: see Ho 14:7.

## 2 Corinthians 2:15

Ver. 15. For the God whom we serve doth not judge of us, nor will reward us, according to our success, but according to our faithfulness and diligence in his work. We give unto all a good savour by our doctrine; and our labours are a sweet savour in the nostrils of God, whatever effects they

have upon souls. God accepteth of our labours as to good men, to whom we are instruments of eternal life and salvation; and though others despise the gospel, and refuse the sweet sound of it, yet as to them also we are a sweet savour in the nostrils of God: Though Israel be not saved, (saith the prophet, Isa 49:5), yet I shall be glorified. It is not for any neglect in us, as to our duty, if any perish, but from their own wilfulness and perverseness.

### 2 Corinthians 2:16

Ver. 16. As sweet smells, which are to some pleasant and comfortable, are to others pernicious and deadly; so it is with the sweet savour of the gospel. The report which we in all places make of Christ, to some, through their unbelief and hardness of heart, and fondness of their lusts, proveth but *the savour of death unto death*, hardening their hearts to their eternal ruin and destruction; but to such who, being ordained to eternal life, believe our reports, and embrace the gospel, and live up to the precepts and rule of it, our preaching proves a cause of spiritual and of eternal life, to which that leadeth.

*And who is sufficient for these things? And oh how great a work is this! What man, what angel, is sufficient for it? It is a mighty work to preach the gospel as we ought to preach it.*

### 2 Corinthians 2:17

Ver. 17. Lest the false apostles and teachers in this church should slight this exclamation of the apostle's, and the pretended difficulty he made of the ministerial work, the apostle adds these words: I confess (saith he) it is no very difficult thing to speak of Christ, and pretend to preach and do as much as I do; but there are many *καπηλευοντες*, we translate it, *corrupt the word*; the Greek word signifies, to sell wine or victuals for money; and because such kind of people make no conscience to deceive, cheat, and deal fraudulently with their customers, it is sometimes used to signify corrupting or deceiving. We are not (saith the apostle) of the number of those who in preaching merely serve their own bellies, and turn the church into a tavern or victualling house, making a gain of the gospel, and discoursing a little while in a pulpit for gain; and so making no conscience,

either what they speak, or how they speak. But we speak by authority from Christ, and in Christ's name; clothed with his authority, and as his ambassadors; and so dare not say any thing unto people, and deliver to his people what he never gave us any commission to speak, nor yet to speak whatever cometh at our tongue's end; but we must remember that we are *in the sight of God*, and speak as from God of God; and that not fraudulently, but sincerely; sincerely aiming at the glory of God in what we do, and the salvation of the souls of them to whom we speak. This is a great work, first to consult the mind and will of God, and find it out by study and meditation; then faithfully to communicate it unto people, without any vain or corrupt mixtures (which do but adulterate the word preached); then to apply it to the consciences of those that hear us.

*Who is sufficient for these things?* That is, to discharge the office of the ministry in the preaching of the gospel, as men ought to preach it.

## 2 Corinthians 3:1

### Chapter Summary

2Co 3:1-3 To obviate the imputation of vain glory, Paul showeth that the gifts and graces of the Corinthians were a sufficient commendation of his ministry,

2Co 3:4,5 the efficacy of which he ascribeth entirely to God. 2Co 3:6-11 He proveth the superior excellency of the gospel ministry to that of the law, 2Co 3:12-18 and thereupon justifieth his plain speaking, as under a dispensation of greater light and liberty than that of Moses.

Ver. 1. The apostle, in the former Epistle, had spoken much in the vindication of himself and of his office; he seeth reason to return again to something of the like discourse, being provoked by the many imputations which the false apostles and teachers, in this church, had

laid upon him: therefore he saith: *Do we begin again?*  
Or else  
these words may have a special reference to the last  
verse of the  
former chapter; where he had commended himself, as  
being none of those  
who corrupted the word of God, but had preached as of  
God, and in the  
sight of God. No, (saith the apostle), though some  
others stand in  
need of commendatory letters, and are very careful to  
procure them,  
(by which *others* he very probably means the false  
apostles and  
teachers, which were Paul's great enemies), yet I trust  
I need not any  
letters commendatory to recommend me to you, any more  
than letters of  
recommendation from you to commend me unto any other  
churches of Christ.

### 2 Corinthians 3:2

Ver. 2. Your Christianity, and embracing of the gospel of Christ, your faith and holiness, are instead of an epistle to me, to let the world know, both with what faithfulness, and with what blessing of God, and success upon my labours, I have preached the gospel; and you are such an epistle as I do not carry about in my pockets, or lay up in my closet, but it is written in my heart, where I carry continually both a thankful and honourable remembrance of you. Nor are you only taken notice of by me as a famous church, to the planting and watering of which God hath blessed my labours, and the labours of other ministers; but, as he saith to the Romans, Ro 1:8: *Your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world,* so he saith here: *Ye are our epistle, known and read of all men;* that is, all Christians take notice of you as a church to which God hath particularly blessed my ministry; so as I need no other recommendation than what I have from your receiving, and the proficiency you have made in, the gospel. Nothing so commends a minister as the proficiency of his people.

### 2 Corinthians 3:3

Ver. 3. He had told them before that they were his epistle, his epistle



recommendatory, the change which God had wrought in their hearts did more recommend him than all the epistles in the world could; but here he tells them that they were *the epistle of Christ*, it was Christ that wrote his law in their hearts, (which writing was that which commended the apostle, who himself had but a ministration in the work), nor was it a writing *with ink*, but the impression of *the Spirit of the living God*. An epistle *not written in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart*: he alludeth to the writing of the law, which was written in *tables of stone*, Ex 31:18, and also to the promises, Eze 11:19 Eze 36:26. That work of grace in the hearts of these Corinthians, which recommended the apostle, was wrought by Christ, and the apostles were but ministers in the working of it; it was a work more admirable than the writing of the law in tables of stone, and this work (he saith) was *manifestly declared*.

### 2 Corinthians 3:4

Ver. 4. We are not infallible in the case; but I tell you what confidence we have, hoping in God concerning you, through the merits of Jesus Christ.

### 2 Corinthians 3:5

Ver. 5. I would not have you think that we judge ourselves sufficient to work a change in the hearts of men; we are so far from that, that we have no sufficiency so much as to think one good thought, which is the lowest human act. Though the subject, upon which the apostle is here discoursing, be a sufficiency to work a work of grace in the hearts of men; yet here is a strong proof to prove the impotency of man's will unto any thing that is truly and spiritually good: for though the apostle declares here his own and all other ministers' insufficiency to the change of any man's heart, yet he proveth it by an argument, concluding from the lesser to the greater; for if they be not sufficient of themselves, and as of themselves, to think any thing which is truly and spiritually good, they are then much less sufficient for so great a work as the conversion of souls. Nor doth that term, *as of ourselves*, any thing alter the matter; for if we can think good thoughts, in any sense, *as of ourselves*, it is not *of God*, in the sense which the apostle is speaking of; who is not here speaking of God as the God of nature, (from whom indeed we derive our power of thinking), but as the God of grace, from whom we derive our power of thinking holy thoughts, and such as are truly and spiritually good. The apostle determineth all our sufficiency to spiritually good actions to be from God, our sufficiency to the lowest (which is thinking good thoughts) as well as to those of the highest sort; amongst which must those actions be accounted, by which men are made workers together with God, in the bringing of souls out of darkness into marvellous light; opening their eyes, turning

them *from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God*, Ac 26:18. Our sufficiency to think any thoughts, or to do any natural or moral actions, is from God, as he is the God of nature. But it appeareth from all the preceding discourse, that our apostle is here speaking of that sufficiency which floweth from God through the mediation of Christ: our power of thinking floweth from the providence of God towards all men; and if that had been all which the apostle had meant in saying, *our sufficiency is from God*, it had been no more than what they might have learned from the heathen philosophers, who would have acknowledged, that all men's sufficiency to natural actions is from the Divine Being, or the first Mover.

## 2 Corinthians 3:6

Ver. 6. This verse plainly openeth what he had said before, and lets us know what sufficiency of God that was of which he there spake. He hath (saith the apostle) not found, but *made us* sufficient. We were men before, and, through the creating power and providence of God, we had an ability to think and to speak; but God *hath made us* sufficient, by a supervening act and influence of his grace, to be *ministers of the new testament*, that is, of the gospel; which being the new revelation of the Divine will, and confirmed by the death of Christ, is called the new testament.

*Not of the letter, but of the Spirit:* by *the letter*, here, the apostle understandeth the law; for the law is called *the letter*, Ro 2:27 Ro 7:6: *Who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law*; that is: While thou, by some external acts, professest a subjection to the law (particularly by circumcision) in a multitude of other actions, (which are more valuable in the sight of God than those external acts), thou transgressest the law. The law, in opposition to the gospel, is called *the letter*, sometimes a dead letter; because it was only a revelation of the will of God concerning man's duty, no revelation of God's grace, either in pardoning men their omissions of duty, and doing acts contrary to duty, or assisting men to the performance of their duty. As the gospel is also called *the Spirit*, both in opposition to the carnal ordinances of the law, and because Christ is the matter, subject, and argument of it; and chiefly because, that the preaching of it is so far attended by the Spirit of grace, that where men do not turn their ears from the hearing of it, nor shut their eyes against the light of it, nor harden their hearts against the precepts and rule of it, it becomes (through the free grace of God) effectual to change their hearts, and to turn them *from the power of Satan unto God*, and to make them truly spiritual and holy.

*For the letter* (that is, the law) *killeth*; the law showeth men their duty, accuseth, condemneth, and denounceth the wrath of God against men for not doing their

duty, but gives no strength for the doing of it. But the *spirit* (that is, the gospel) *giveth life*: the gospel, in the letter of it, showeth the way to life; and the gospel, in the hand of the Spirit, or with the Spirit, working together with it, (the Holy Spirit using it as its instrument), giveth life; both that life which is spiritual, and that which is eternal, as it prepareth the soul for life and immortality.

## 2 Corinthians 3:7

Ver. 7. The apostle is manifestly comparing the ministry of the gospel with the ministry of the law, and showing the excellency of the former above the latter. In the former verse he had called the law, *the letter*; and the gospel, in opposition to it, he had called, the spirit: here he calleth the ministration of the law, *the ministration of death*; because it only showed man his duty, or things to be done, but gave no strength or help by which he should do them; only cursing man, but showing him no way by which he might escape that curse: so it did kill men, and led them to eternal death and condemnation, without showing them any means of life and salvation. He also undervalueth the law, in comparison with the gospel, as being only *written and engraven in stones*; whereas (as he had said before) the gospel is written in *the fleshy tables of men's hearts*. Yet (saith he) the ministration of the law (which was indeed but the *ministration of death*) was *glorious*: there was a great deal of the glory and majesty of God attended the giving of the law, of which we read, Ex 19:1-25.

*So that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance*: of this we read, Ex 34:29,30: *When Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him*. So as it was glorious to be but a minister of the law, that is, of the revelation of the will of God, as to man's duty, *which glory* (saith the apostle) *was to be done away*: Moses's face did not always so shine, neither was the glory of his ministration to abide always, but to cease by the coming in of the new covenant.

## 2 Corinthians 3:8

Ver. 8. How shall not that ministration, which is more spiritual, and the effects of which are much more spiritual, be accounted much more glorious? Thus the apostle doth not only magnify the gospel above the law, but he also magnifieth his offices in the ministration of the gospel; which ministration he reasonably concludeth to be a more glorious ministration than that which Moses had, in whom the Jews so much gloried.

## 2 Corinthians 3:9

Ver. 9. What the apostle before called *the ministration of death*, he here calleth *the ministration of condemnation*; and therein gives us a reason why he called it the ministration of death, because it led unto eternal death, as showing men sin, so accusing and condemning men for sinful acts. If it pleased God (saith the apostle) to make that ministration glorious, that the minister of the law (Moses) appeared so glorious in the eyes of Aaron and of the people; *the ministration of righteousness* (by which he means the gospel) must needs be more exceedingly glorious. He tells us, Ro 1:16,17, that he was *not ashamed of the gospel—for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith*; that is, the righteousness wherein a soul must stand and appear righteous before God.

*The ministration of righteousness* signifieth the ministration of that gospel, that doctrine, which revealeth righteousness.

*Righteousness* is here opposed to *condemnation*; and therefore signifieth that which is opposed to it, viz. justification. For God doth not so freely remit sins, but that he declares his righteousness in the remission of them; and will show himself just, while he showeth himself *the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus*, Ro 3:26. And from hence it appeareth, that the gospel is called the ministration of righteousness, because he that ministereth in it exhibiteth the righteousness to Christ to be reckoned to the soul, as that whereby it must be justified; for God could not otherwise declare his righteousness in the remission of sins, nor show himself just in justifying the ungodly. This ministration (he saith) must needs be more glorious in the eyes of men than the ministration of the law; for that ministration afforded nothing but terror and death, this affordeth relief, and comfort, and life.

## 2 Corinthians 3:10

Ver. 10. The law had in it something of intrinsic glory and excellency, as it was the revelation of the will of God to and concerning his creatures; there was an inseparable glory attending it upon that account: and it was made glorious in the ministration of it; as it pleased God that the giving of it should be attended with thunder and lightning, fire and smoke, and an earthquake, and a voice like to the sound of a trumpet, as we read, Ex 19:16-18: this was an accidental and adventitious glory, and made that which was glorious in itself, glorious also in the eyes of the people, that saw and heard these things. But yet, saith the apostle, if we compare it with the glory of the gospel, it had comparatively no glory; so much doth that excel. For though the law was the revelation of the Divine will, as well

as the gospel, yet the law was the revelation of the Divine will but as to duty, and wrath, in case of the nonperformance of that duty: but the gospel is the revelation of the Divine will, as to grace and mercy, as to remission of sin, and eternal life. And although the gospel came not into the world as the law, with thunder, and lightning, and earthquakes; yet that was ushered in by angels, foretelling the birth and office of John the Baptist, and of Christ; by the great sign of the virgin's conceiving and bringing forth a Son; by a voice from heaven, proclaiming Christ the Father's only begotten Son, in whom he was well pleased. But that which the apostle doth here principally intend, is the exceeding excellency of it, in regard of its further usefulness and comfortable nature.

### 2 Corinthians 3:11

Ver. 11. The apostle, by another argument, proveth the ministration of the gospel to be much more glorious than the ministration of the law, because it is more durable and abiding. The strength of the argument dependeth upon this principle, that any durable good is more excellent and glorious than that which is but transitory, and for a time. The ministration of the law is done away; the law, contained in ordinances, is itself done away, and therefore the ministration of it must needs cease. There are now no priests and Levites, no worldly sanctuary, nor any ministrations in it, or relating to it. But our Saviour hath told us, that the gospel shall be preached to the end of the world; so as that ministration must (according to all principles of reason) be more glorious, as that which is eternal is more glorious than that which is fluid and vanishing.

### 2 Corinthians 3:12

Ver. 12. *Hope* here signifieth nothing but a confident, certain expectation of something that is hereafter to come to pass. The term *such* referreth to something which went before: the sense is: We being in a certain confident expectation, that our ministration of the gospel shall not cease, as the ministration of the law hath done; and that the doctrine of the gospel brings in not a temporary, but an everlasting righteousness; that there shall never be any righteousness revealed, wherein any soul can stand righteous before God, but that which is revealed in the gospel to be *from faith to faith*; we are neither ashamed nor afraid to preach the gospel with all freedom and boldness. We do not, as Moses, cover ourselves with a veil when we preach the gospel to people, but we speak what God hath given to us in commission to speak, unconcernedly as to any terrors or affrightments from men: we know, that great is the truth which we preach, and that it shall prevail and outlive all the rage and madness of the enemies of it.

## 2 Corinthians 3:13

Ver. 13. We have the history to which this passage of the apostle relateth, in Ex 34:33,35, where we read, that *when Moses had done speaking, he put a veil on his face*. The apostle here elegantly turns that passage into an allegory, and opens to us a mystery hidden under that piece of history. That shining of Moses's face, in a type, prefigured the shining of Him who was to be the light of the world; as he was from eternity *the brightness of his Father's glory*. Moses's covering himself with a veil, signifies God's hiding the mystery of Christ from ages. Moses did not put a veil on his face for that end, that the children of Israel might not look upon him; but this was the event of it, which also prefigured the blinding of the Jews; they first shut their eyes and would not see, then God judicially sealed their eyes that they should not see, that Christ was *the end of the law for righteousness*, the true Messiah, and the Mediator between God and man; they could not (as the apostle expresseth it) see *to the end of that which is abolished*; to the end of the legal dispensation, to the end of all the types of Christ which were in the Levitical law. Now, (saith the apostle), we do not do so, but make it our business to preach the gospel with as much openness, and plainness, and freedom, as is imaginable. The whole history of the gospel justifieth what this text affirmeth concerning the Jews; that they could not see that Christ, by his coming, had put an end to the law, and the righteousness thereof. We find upon all occasions how much the Pharisees, and those who adhered to that sect, stuck in the law, to the hinderance of their receiving of, or believing in, the Lord Jesus Christ.

## 2 Corinthians 3:14

Ver. 14. Here the apostle expoundeth what he meant before by the mystical veil, viz. the blinding of the eyes of the Jews; of which we read often in the New Testament, Mt 13:14 Mr 4:12 Lu 8:10 Joh 12:40 Ac 28:26 Ro 11:8: see the notes upon all those texts. And (saith the apostle) to this day the veil remaineth not taken away; that veil, which was signified by the veil with which Moses covered his face.

*In the reading of the Old Testament*, is, when the Old Testament is read: some part of which was wont to be read in the synagogues every sabbath day. But we shall meet with this in the next verse more fully. But (saith he) this *veil is done away in Christ*. It is really taken away upon the coming of Christ; that is, the veil, that covered the face of Christ, is now truly, taken away upon his coming; the types are this filled in him, as their complement and antitype; the prophecies are fulfilled in him, as he whom they concerned, and of whom the prophets spake. But the veil, that is drawn over men's hearts, is not taken away, till they come to

receive Jesus Christ as the end of the law for righteousness, to close with him, and to believe in him. God hath taken the veil off from Christ, by sending him personally to fulfil all righteousness; but Christ profiteth nothing particular souls, until they come to believe in him, then it is taken away from their souls, and not before. Which was the reason that it remained still upon the Jews, among whom he came, as among his own, but they received him not.

## 2 Corinthians 3:15

Ver. 15. *The veil*, mystically signified by the veil upon Moses's face, which hindereth them from seeing or discerning the Messiah to be come. But why doth he say, *when Moses*, that is, the books of Moses, or rather of the Old Testament, are *read*? Possibly he thereby hinteth, that it was their duty, when in the synagogues they heard the chapters of the Old Testament read, which contain the types and prophecies of Christ, they ought to have looked through those veils, and have considered Christ as the end of those things; so the law, as a schoolmaster, should have led them to Christ: but it was quite otherwise. When they heard those portions of the Old Testament read, through the veil upon their hearts, they could not see through the veil of those types, prophecies, and ritual performances, but rested in them as things in the performance of which they laid their righteousness. Or, if they before had some little convictions upon their spirits, yet when they again came into the synagogues, and heard the law read, the veil again appeared over their hearts, so as they could not see Christ.

## 2 Corinthians 3:16

Ver. 16. *When it shall turn*, may be understood of the whole, or of the generality (at least) of the Jews; when they shall be converted to the faith of Christ, or when any particular person shall be converted to Christ, then *the veil shall be taken away*; not the veil with which God covered and veiled the mysteries of the gospel, (that was already taken away upon Christ's coming in the flesh), but the veil of blindness, which they had drawn over their own souls. Though the light of the gospel shineth clearly, and Christ be unveiled, yet until men, by a true faith, receive Christ, and turn from sinful courses to the obedience of the gospel, they see little or nothing of Christ. The taking away of this veil, and the turning to the Lord, are things done in souls at the same time; therefore nothing is to be concluded here, from the apostle's naming the removal of the impediment, after the effect of which that is a cause.

## 2 Corinthians 3:17

Ver. 17. The Lord Christ was a man, but not a mere man; but one who had the Divine nature personally united to his human nature, which is called the *Spirit*, Mr 2:8. But some think, that the article here is not merely prepositive, but emphatical; and so referreth to 2Co 3:6, where the gospel (the substance of which is Christ) was called *the Spirit*. So it is judged by some, that the apostle preventeth a question which some might have propounded, viz. how the veil should be taken away by men's turning unto the Lord? Saith the apostle:

*The Lord is that Spirit*, or he is that Spirit mentioned 2Co 3:18; he is a Spirit, and he gives out of the Spirit unto his people, the Spirit of holiness and sanctification.

*And where the Spirit of the Lord is*, ( that holy, sanctifying Spirit, which is often called the Spirit of Christ), *there is liberty*; for our Saviour told the Jews, Joh 8:36: *If the Son make you free, then shall ye be free indeed*: a liberty from the yoke of the law, from sin, death, hell; but the liberty which seemeth here to be chiefly intended, is a liberty from that blindness and hardness which is upon men's hearts, until they have received the Holy Spirit.

## 2 Corinthians 3:18

Ver. 18. Some by *we* here understand all believers; others think it is better understood of ministers: but the universal particle *all* rather guideth us to interpret it of the whole body of believers, of whom the apostle saith, that they *all* behold *the glory of God with open face*; that is, not under those dark types, shadows, and prophecies, that he was of old revealed under, but as in a looking glass, which represents the face as at hand; not as in a perspective, which showeth things afar off. We behold him in the glass of the gospel, fully opened and preached; and this sight of Christ in the gospel is not a mere useless sight, but such a sight as changeth the soul into the image and likeness of Christ, *from glory to glory*; carrying on the souls of believers from one degree of grace to another; or making such a glorious change in the heart, as shall not be blotted out until a soul cometh into those possessions of glory which God hath prepared for his people. And all this is done *by the Spirit of the Lord*, working with the word of God in the mouths of his ministers, but so as the Spirit hath the principal agency and efficiency in the work.

## 2 Corinthians 4:1



## Chapter Summary

2Co 4:1,2 Paul declareth his unwearied zeal and integrity in preaching the gospel,

2Co 4:3-6 so that if any see not the truth of it, it must be owing to their corrupt hearts, not to want of clear light.

2Co 4:7-11 The weakness and sufferings he was exposed to redounded to the praise of God's power.

2Co 4:12-18 That which animated him in undergoing them for the church's sake, was the assurance of a more exceeding and eternal reward.

Ver. 1. It is the opinion of Beza, that the traducers of this great apostle took advantage from his great trials and afflictions, by reason of them, to conclude him no such man as he was by some represented; and that the apostle upon that takes advantage to magnify his office. God (saith he) having intrusted us with so glorious a ministration, as I have proved that of the gospel to be, according to the measure and proportion of gifts and graces which God hath bestowed upon us, or by reason of that infinite grace and mercy which God hath showed us, in calling us to so honourable a station and office, though we meet with many adversaries, many afflictions, many difficulties, yet we bear up and sink not under them, nor faint in our spirits because of them.

### 2 Corinthians 4:2

Ver. 2. *But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty;* though we be exposed to many sorrows and sufferings, it is not for any dishonest or unwarrantable behaviour amongst men; nay, we have not only declined openly dishonest actions, but any secret or hidden dishonest behaviour. Possibly he reflecteth upon those, whether teachers or others in this church, who, though they behaved themselves very speciously in their more external conversation, yet it was a shame to speak what things were done of them in secret. We (saith the apostle) have renounced all secret, dishonest, shameful actions.

*Not walking in craftiness;* it hath not been our design to carry ourselves

craftily, to cheat people with a fair outside and external demeanour.

*Nor handling the word of God deceitfully;* nor in our ministry have we cheated and deceived people, instead of instructing them in the truth; crying: Peace, peace, when God hath said: There is no peace to the wicked, and tempering our discourses to all men's humours, not speaking right things, but smooth things.

*But by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God:* our business, in the course of our ministry, hath been to commend ourselves to every man's conscience, as in the sight of God, by manifesting to them the truth of God.

### 2 Corinthians 4:3

Ver. 3. The apostle calls the gospel *his gospel*, because of his instrumentality in the promoting and publishing of it. His meaning is: If the doctrine of the gospel, which I am an instrument to preach, be hidden, so as there yet be any souls that do not understand, receive, and believe it, the fault is not in the word we preach, nor yet in our preaching of it, (which hath been in all simplicity and plainness, without craftiness or deceit), but in themselves, who favour and indulge their lusts to that degree, as that they deserve to be lost, or are at present in their sinful state; in which sense all men are in the parables compared to the lost sheep, or lost goats; and Christ is said to have come to seek and to save those that are lost. Men, mad upon their lusts, may not understand the doctrine of the gospel which we preach; but others understand and believe it. I had rather understand the term *lost* in this sense, than as expressing reprobates; for it seemeth something harsh to make this phrase to signify that God had no more in Corinth at this time that belonged to the election of grace, than those that were already converted; or that all those that were at this time hypocrites in this famous church, were such as perished eternally. Yet the words of the next verse seem rather to favour their notion, who by *lost* here understand reprobates.

### 2 Corinthians 4:4

Ver. 4. Though some, by *the god of this world*, understand the true and living God, the Lord of heaven and earth; yet the notion of the most interpreters, that it is the devil who is here called *the god of this world*, because he ruleth over the greatest part of the world, and they are his servants and slaves, is most consonant to Scripture: for though we nowhere else find him called the god of this world, yet our Saviour twice calls him *the prince of this world*, Joh 12:31 14:30; and our apostle, Eph 2:2, calls him *the prince of the power of the air*. The effect also doth more properly belong to the devil, than unto God, who no otherwise blindeth the eyes of them than either permissively, by suffering them to shut their own eyes, or judicially. And the apostle declares, that those who are so blinded are such persons as *believe not*. He further declareth the end of the devil's agency in blinding men's eyes with errors, malice, and prejudice, *lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, the express image of his person, (considered as to his Divine nature), should shine unto them, that is, into their hearts.*

#### 2 Corinthians 4:5

Ver. 5. *For we preach not ourselves:* for a man to preach himself, is to preach the devices and imaginations of his own heart, instead of the revealed will of God; to make his discourses the evomitions of his own lusts and passions; or to make himself the end of his preaching; preaching merely for filthy lucre sake, or to supply himself with bread, or for the ostentation of his own wit, and learning, and parts.

*But we preach Christ Jesus the Lord;* we preach what he hath commanded us to preach, and he is the subject of our discourses; we either preach what Christ is, or declare in our preaching what he hath done and suffered for sinners, or what he hath commanded us to do in order to our and your obtaining of life and salvation through him. And in our preaching, though in the first place we are Christ's servants, who hath commanded us to go and preach, and who is the subject matter of our preaching, and whose honour and glory is the end of all our preaching; yet we are also *your servants:* really so, not in that we serve your lusts and humours, and speak smooth things, Such as may be pleasing to your humours; but *for Jesus' sake,* because in revealing the will of God to you, and in publishing the grace of the gospel to you, we do you the highest service we can in your

eternal concerns.

### 2 Corinthians 4:6

Ver. 6. The Holy Ghost in the New Testament often compareth the work of the new creation by Jesus Christ, to the work of God in the old creation; intimating to us, that the latter is as great a work of providence and Divine power, as the former: Eph 4:24, *the new man, after God*, is said to be *created in righteousness and true holiness*. For as that is a creation which is a making of something out of nothing, (as God created the heavens and the earth), so the production of one thing out of another, which hath no fitness or aptitude to receive such a form, is also a true creation, and requireth an Almighty power. God made *light to shine out of darkness*, Ge 1:2,3: so (saith the apostle) he hath made Christ (who is the Light of the world) to shine into our hearts, to give us the true knowledge of God, and of his glory, the glory of his grace.

*In the face of Jesus Christ*; that is, by which we attain the clear and certain knowledge of God: as a man is distinctly known by or from his face, God is clearly and distinctly known only in and by Christ.

### 2 Corinthians 4:7

Ver. 7. By the *treasure* here mentioned, the apostle meaneth either his ministration, or apostolical office, which he before had proved glorious, more glorious than that of the law; or else, that *light of the knowledge of the glory of God*, which (as he had before said) God had made to shine into their hearts *in the face of Jesus Christ*. This treasure (saith he) we, even we that are the apostles of the Lord, have in our souls, which are clothed with bodies; and these not made of iron, or stone, or any other matter not capable of impressions of violence, but made of earth, like earthen pots or shells, that easily receive impressions of violence, and are presently broken in pieces.

*That the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us*; that the world may see, that whatsoever powerful effects are wrought by us, they are the work of the excellent power of God; not done by us, but by him;

that he, not we, might have all the glory.

#### 2 Corinthians 4:8

Ver. 8. *We are troubled on every side;* we are many ways, indeed every way, afflicted, afflicted with all sorts of afflictions; *yet not distressed;* but yet we are not like persons cooped up into a strait place, so as they are not able to turn them, nor know which way to move (so the word signifies).

*We are perplexed;* the word signifies doubting, uncertain what shall become of us, or how God will dispose of us; full of anxious, troublesome thoughts about what shall be our lot in the world; *but not in despair;* but yet not despairing of the help, presence, support, and assistance of God.

#### 2 Corinthians 4:9

Ver. 9. *Persecuted;* violently pursued and prosecuted by such as are the adversaries of the gospel, and enemies to our Lord Jesus, because of our profession of him, and preaching his gospel; *but yet not forsaken* of God, nor wholly of men; God, by the inward influences of his Holy Spirit, supporting, upholding, and comforting us; and also, by his providence, raising us up some friends that stick by us.

*Cast down,* either in our own thoughts, (as it is the nature of worldly troubles and afflictions to sink men's thoughts), or cast down by the violence of men, thrown to the earth; *but not destroyed;* but yet we live, and are by the mighty power of God preserved, that we are not utterly destroyed.

#### 2 Corinthians 4:10

Ver. 10. A Christian beareth about with him *the dying of the Lord Jesus* in his mind and soul, while he fetches strength from it to deaden his heart unto sin; being *buried with Christ into death,* and *planted in the likeness of his death;* having his *old man crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth he may not serve sin,* Ro 6:4-6. He

also beareth about with him *the dying of the Lord Jesus in his body*; either in a representation, while in his sufferings he is made conformable to the death of Christ, Php 3:10; or in his own real sufferings, which he calleth *the dying of the Lord Jesus*, because they were for Christ's sake, and because Christ sympathizeth with them therein, he being afflicted in all their afflictions; yea, and Christ (as the apostle expreseth it, Php 1:20), is magnified in their body, by death, as well as by life. This the apostle tells us he did, *that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in his body*: by the life of Christ must be here understood, either the resurrection of Christ, and that life which he now liveth in heaven with his Father; or that quickening power of the Spirit of Christ, which then mightily showeth itself in believers, when they are not overwhelmed by the waters of affliction, nor conquered by their sufferings; but in, and over all, are more than conquerors, through that mighty power of Christ which showeth forth itself in them: or (as some think) that lively virtue and power of Christ, which showeth itself in the efficacy of the apostles' ministry; by which so many thousands of souls were brought in to Christ, which was not the effect of their own virtue, but of the life of Christ manifested in their body. But the apostle having before spoken of his sufferings, it seems best interpreted of that living power put forth by Christ, in upholding the earthly vessels of his apostles, notwithstanding all the knocks they met with, to carry about that heavenly treasure with which God had intrusted them.

## 2 Corinthians 4:11

Ver. 11. We who are yet alive, as having breath still in our bodies; in another sense we do not live, viz. as life signifies prosperity and happiness; for we *are always delivered unto death*, that is, under continual threats and dangers of death, so that we have always the sentence of death in ourselves; *for Jesus' sake*, for our owning, preaching, and professing Christ, and the doctrine of the gospel. We are not delivered to death for evil doing, nor merely as innocent persons, but for well doing; and that in the noblest sense, for obeying the commands and for publishing the gospel of Christ.

*That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh; and the infinitely wise providence of God permitteth this, that he might make*

manifest in our mortal flesh, that Christ is risen from the dead, and liveth for ever, making intercession for us; and, as a living Head, giving necessary influences of strength, support, and comfort, as to all those who are his members, so more particularly to us, who are some of the principal members of that mystical body, of which he is the Head. So that our sufferings are so far from being an evidence against the truth of our doctrine and of our ministration, that they are rather an evidence of the truth of both; as testifying, that he whom we preach, having died for our sins, is also risen for our justification, and exalted at the right hand of God; from whence he dispenseth his spiritual influences, as to the souls of all his people, so to our souls in particular, by which we are enabled, without fainting, to suffer such things with boldness, courage, and patience.

#### 2 Corinthians 4:12

Ver. 12. You see the difference between us and you; either the real difference, or the fancied difference. We are killed all the day long, in deaths often, delivered to death always; you are rich, and full, and want nothing; *life*, that is, security, happiness, and prosperity, attends you. Or the fancied difference: You bless yourselves, that you are not in so much jeopardy as we are, and some of you are ready to curse us, because vipers stick to our hands, and we are in continually renewed and repeated troubles. Very good interpreters think these words a smart ironical expression, by which the apostle reflecteth upon a party in this church, who from his sufferings concluded against the truth of his doctrine, or his favour with God; and for themselves, because of their immunity and freedom from such sufferings. Others think the sense this, our death is your life; our sufferings are your spiritual advantage.

#### 2 Corinthians 4:13

Ver. 13. *The same spirit of faith* signifieth the same faith, or faith proceeding from the same spirit; thus, Isa 11:2, *the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord*, signifieth wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, &c. It is a question whom the apostle meaneth when he saith: *We having the same faith*. Some think he meaneth the saints under the Old

Testament, whose faith was the same with the faith of believers under the New Testament; and that which guideth them to that interpretation, is the apostle's following quotation out of Ps 116:10. But the scope of the quotation seemeth to be, to prove that all good men will speak as they believe; they therefore seem better to interpret the text, that make this the sense of it: Though God, in the wisdom of his providence, hath assigned us in this world a different lot from you, that you are full, we empty; you in prosperity, we in adversity; yet we are partakers of the same faith with you, and are acted from the same spirit that you are: and as David's spirit guided him to a profession of his faith, and a speaking what he believed; so we also speak, and must speak, according to what we believe. And this is manifestly the sense of the words, if we consider what followeth in the next verse.

#### 2 Corinthians 4:14

Ver. 14. Knowing that God the Father, who raised up the Lord Jesus from the dead, as the first-fruits of them that sleep, shall likewise, by the virtue of his resurrection, and by a power flowing from him, as now alive, and sitting at the right hand of God, quicken our mortal bodies; that both our souls and bodies may be presented with you, to be both eternally glorified: this maketh us that we do not fear death, but are unconcerned, although by wicked men we every day be delivered to it, and brought within the danger and sight of it; still the resurrection of Christ is made the foundation of our resurrection, and a firm ground for our faith of it. And we are from this text confirmed in the truth of this, that although the lot of God's people in this life be very different, (some are poor, some rich, some in prosperity, some in adversity, and encompassed with sorrows and afflictions), yet if they have all the same faith, they shall all meet in the resurrection, and shall, by Christ, be all presented unto God as persons redeemed by him, and washed with his blood, and who shall be glorified together.

#### 2 Corinthians 4:15

Ver. 15. *All things* that Christ hath done and suffered, his death, and his resurrection from the dead, and all things that I have done or suffered, all *are for your sakes*; that the greater benefit it be which you receive from



God, the greater praise, honour, and glory might redound to him by *the thanksgiving of many*; for God can be no otherwise glorified by us, than by the predicating of his mercy and goodness, and the praising of him for the mercies which we receive from him. The more God doth good unto, the more honour, praise, and glory redoundeth to his name.

### 2 Corinthians 4:16

Ver. 16. Because of this double advantage which accrueth from our sufferings, viz. the furthering of the good of your souls, and the promoting the glory of God from the thanksgivings of many, though we suffer many harsh and bitter things, yet we do not faint nor sink under the burden of our trials; but though, as to our outward man, we are every day dying persons, daily decaying as to the strength, and vigour, and prosperity of our outward man, yet the strength and comfort of our souls and spirits reneweth day by day; we are every day stronger and stronger as to the managing of our spiritual fight, and every day more cheered and comforted in our holy course.

### 2 Corinthians 4:17

Ver. 17. The apostle in these words wonderfully lesseneth his own, and the rest of the apostles', and all other Christians' sufferings for the gospel: he calleth them *light*, not that they were so in themselves, but with respect to that *weight of glory* which he mentioneth in the latter part of the verse: he calleth them momentary, *but for a moment*, with reference to that eternity which is mentioned. The *afflictions* are *light*, the *glory* will be a *weight*; the *afflictions* are *but for a moment*, the *glory* shall be *eternal*. And (saith the apostle) *our affliction worketh for us this glory*: the glory will not only be a consequent of these afflictions, but these afflictions will be a cause of it; not a meritorious cause, (for what proportion is there between momentary afflictions and eternal glory? Between light afflictions and a weight of glory, an exceeding weight of glory?) But a cause in respect of the infinite goodness and mercy of God, and in respect of the truth and faithfulness of God.

## 2 Corinthians 4:18

Ver. 18. Two things support the spirits of Christians under trials;

1. The eyeing of him who is invisible; this supported Moses, Heb 11:27:  
*He endured, as seeing him who is invisible.*
2. The seeing by the eye of faith the things which are invisible; the things which God hath prepared in another world for those that love him; the things which eye hath not seen, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.

*For* (saith the apostle) *the things which are seen*, which fall under the senses of men, they *are* but *temporal*, and of a temporary duration; but the invisible things, the *exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, which are before mentioned, they are of an eternal duration, and therefore much to be preferred before those things which endure but for a moment.

## 2 Corinthians 5:1

### Chapter Summary

2Co 5:1-9 Paul declareth that, in assured hope of a blessed immortality hereafter, he was indifferent to life, and laboured only to approve himself to Christ,

2Co 5:10,11 that knowing the general judgment that would follow, and the terrors of it, he was solicitous to persuade men,

2Co 5:12,13 that this was said not by way of boasting, but purely to furnish the Corinthians with a reply in his justification against false pretenders,

2Co 5:14-16 that, moved by the love of Christ, he was become dead to all former regards,

2Co 5:17-19 and all things being now made new by God in Christ reconciling the world to himself.

2Co 5:20,21 He, as ambassador for Christ, besought men to embrace the offered reconciliation.

Ver. 1. The apostle had before said, that he looked at the things not seen;

in this verse he openeth himself, and showeth what those unseen things are: *We* (saith he) *know*, we have a certain persuasion, we doubt not of it, but that if our body were dissolved. This body he calleth *an earthly house*, either because it is made of the dust of the earth, into which it must again be resolved; or because it is only the habitation of the soul, so long as the soul is on this side of heaven; and therefore he calleth it also, the *earthly house of this tabernacle*. A tabernacle is a moving house or booth built up for a time. This tabernacle (saith the apostle) must be pulled down, and taken in pieces; and we are certain, that if it be dissolved, *we have a building of God*, either a blessed, eternal mansion, (according to that of our Saviour, Joh 14:2: *In my Father's house are many mansions*), or else, God will give us a spiritual, glorious, incorruptible body; not *a house made with hands*, nor a house that shall be dissolved and any more pulled down, but which shall be *eternal in the heavens*; in such a state, as that it shall be incorruptible, and no more subject to any corruption or decay.

### 2 Corinthians 5:2

Ver. 2. We are so confident of such a blessed state, that we passionately desire to be invested into it; and this groaning is also an evidence of it, for the desire of grace shall not be made frustrate; desirous that our mortality may put on immortality, and our corruption may put on incorruption. It is against the nature of man to desire death, which is the stripping or unclathing the soul of flesh; but not to desire that the garment of immortality may be put upon mortality, which is that our house from heaven, which is mentioned in 2Co 5:1.

### 2 Corinthians 5:3

Ver. 3. Some make the clothing here spoken of different from the clothing before mentioned; and make this verse restrictive of what the apostle had before said, of the certainty which some have of being clothed upon with a glorious body.

*If so be* (saith the apostle) *we shall not be found naked*, but *clothed*, i.e. with the wedding garment of Christ's righteousness; for concerning those that do not die in the Lord, that do not watch, and keep their garments, it is

said, Re 16:15, they shall walk naked, and men shall see their shame. But considering the clothing before mentioned was not this clothing, but the superinducing of an immortal, incorruptible, glorious state of body, upon our mortal, corruptible state, some judicious interpreters think, that the clothing here mentioned is the clothing of the soul with the body. It is manifest that the apostles apprehended Christ's second coming much nearer than it hath proved. Therefore he saith, 1Th 4:15: *We that are alive* (supposing that generation might live) to Christ's second coming; and 1Co 15:51: *We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed*. This some think (and that not improbably) is the cause of this passage; the sense of which they judge to be this: If so be that we be, at the resurrection, found in the flesh, clothed still with our bodies, and shall not be found naked, that is, stripped of our flesh, and dead before that time.

#### 2 Corinthians 5:4

Ver. 4. By *tabernacle*, he meaneth (as he had before expounded it) the earthly house of our body.

*Do groan*; both a groaning of grief, and also of desire.

*Being burdened*; either with the body of flesh; or with sin, *the body of death*, Ro 7:24; or with the load of trials and afflictions.

*Not that we would be unclothed*, that is, die, be unclothed of our flesh, (nature abhorreth death, and flieth from it), *but clothed upon*; which is expounded, 1Co 15:54, our *corruptible* having *put on incorruption*, and our *mortal* having *put on immortality*. And this confirmeth what was observed before, that the apostles had some persuasion, (though not from any Divine revelation of that hour), that the resurrection, and day of judgment, would be before the determination of that age and generation; that so we might come into the possession of eternal life (for that the apostle meaneth by *mortality* being *swallowed up of life*). Death is not desirable for its own sake, but upon the account of that immortal life into which it leadeth the souls of believers; nor (as was said before) doth the apostle here directly desire death, (which is that which in this verse he calleth unclothing), but rather the change mentioned 1Co 15:52, which he here calleth a clothing upon.

## 2 Corinthians 5:5

Ver. 5. *The selfsame thing* is the life, the eternal life, mentioned in the former verse; the *house in the heavens, not made with hands*, 2Co 5:1. God *hath wrought us for it* (as some interpret the text) in creation, and by his providence, forming our bodies in the womb: but it is much better interpreted by others concerning regeneration; for in the first birth (without respect to the decree of election) God hath no more wrought us for it, than the worst of men. The apostle therefore is, doubtless, to be understood, as speaking concerning the work of grace, which is here attributed to God; we have not wrought ourselves into or up to any fitness or any grounded expectation of the future blessed and glorious estate; but it is God who hath prepared us for it, and wrought such a lively hope of it in us.

*Who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit;* and hath also given us his Holy Spirit as the pledge and earnest of it; (concerning this, see 2Co 1:22;) he hath given us his Spirit to dwell and to work in us, and to assure us of what we speak of, viz. the house in the heavens, the building of God, that is not made with hands. The Spirit of grace given to the people of God, working and dwelling in them, is a certain pledge of that glory and life eternal, which he hath prepared for them.

## 2 Corinthians 5:6

Ver. 6. We are always full of courage and comfort, being confident of this glory, and the swallowing up of mortality in life: for we know, that while we are in our earthly home (which is our body) we are farthest off from that which is our true home, (which is heaven), from the vision and fruition of God; for believers are but *strangers and pilgrims on the earth*, desiring *a better country, that is, an heavenly*, Heb 11:13,16.

## 2 Corinthians 5:7

Ver. 7. That is, we live, and order our conversations, *not by sight*, or any evidence of sense, but *by faith*, which is described by the apostle, Heb

11:1, to be *the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*. We see nothing here by the eye of sense but mortality, corruption, and misery; but by faith we see another more excellent and glorious state, and we order our life according to our faith, and sight of things that are invisible: or *sight* here may be taken more strictly for the beatific vision prepared in heaven for the saints.

### 2 Corinthians 5:8

Ver. 8. We are confident of such a blessed state, and this makes us willing to be out of this body, that we might have the glorious presence and enjoyment of God to all eternity.

### 2 Corinthians 5:9

Ver. 9. Having such a hope, yea, not such a hope only, but such an assurance and confidence, *we labour*, both actively, doing the will of God, and passively, submitting to the will of God in all afflictive providences; that while we are in the body, and absent from the Lord, *we may be accepted of him*; as we know we shall be, when we shall be present with him, in another sense than we now are.

### 2 Corinthians 5:10

Ver. 10. The apostle declareth, either the ground of his confidence, or, rather, the reason of his and other believers' labour, so to behave themselves, as that, both in life and death, they might be accepted of God; that was, his knowledge and firm belief of the last judgment. It is called *the judgmentseat of Christ*, because he it is whom God hath appointed to be the *judge both of the quick and the dead*, Ac 10:42. The word translated *appear*, is *πεφανερωσθαι*, which signifieth to be made manifest, and so signifieth not only to appear, but to be inquired into, searched, and examined, and narrowly sifted: and this lets us know, that those texts which speak of believers not being judged, or not coming into judgment, must not be understood of the judgment of inquiry, (for all shall come into that judgment), but of the judgment of condemnation. And it lets

us also know the vanity of their opinion, who think that pagans shall not rise again in the last day.

*That every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad: the end of this judgement is declared, that every man may receive according to what he hath done in his body; that is, according to the thoughts he hath thought, the words that he hath spoken, the actions which he hath done, during the time that his soul dwelt upon the earth in his body; whether the things which he did in that state were good, and such things as God required; or sinful, and contrary to the revealed will of God. What this receiving means, we are told, Mt 25:46: *These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.* Hence we read, Joh 5:29, of a *resurrection of life*, and a *resurrection of damnation*.*

### 2 Corinthians 5:11

Ver. 11. We believing and being fully persuaded, that there shall be such a great and terrible day of the Lord, when there shall be such a narrow inquiry and search into whatsoever men have thought, spoke, or done in the flesh; *we persuade men* to believe in the *Lord Jesus Christ*, to walk according to the rule of the gospel, to be charitable towards us, and not to censure or judge us, or use against us hard speeches. If any will not be persuaded to think well of us, yet the sincerity of our hearts and ways is *made manifest unto God*; he knoweth what we are, and how we have behaved ourselves: and *I trust* we have so behaved ourselves, that we are not only made manifest unto God, but we *are made manifest in your consciences*; so as your consciences will bear us a testimony, how we have behaved ourselves amongst you.

### 2 Corinthians 5:12

Ver. 12. I do not speak this to commend myself unto you; he had before declared, that he trusted that he was made manifest to their consciences, and so needed not further to commend himself. But (saith he) I speak it only *to give you occasion to glory*, to glory in me as the apostle of Christ unto you, or to defend me against the scandals and reproaches of those that

reproach me, when themselves have no true inward cause of glorying, though they have in outward appearance, in respect of their riches, wit, wisdom, or the like.

### 2 Corinthians 5:13

Ver. 13. It should seem, that some amongst the Corinthians, amongst other reproaches, had reproached Paul for a madman; either taking advantage of the warmth and fervour of his spirit, or of those ecstasies in which he sometimes was; or of his speaking things which they could not apprehend and understand: as the Roman governor, in the Acts, told him: *Much learning hath made thee mad.* The apostle tells them, that if indeed he was beside himself in any of their opinion, it was *to God*, that is, for the honour and glory of God: or if he was sober, it was for their sake; in what temper soever he was, it was either for service to God, or them.

### 2 Corinthians 5:14

Ver. 14. The *love of Christ* signifieth either that love towards the sons of men which was in Christ before the foundation of the world; for even then (as Solomon telleth us, Pr 8:31) he was *rejoicing in the habitable part of the earth, and his delight was with the sons of men:* which love showed itself in time, in his coming and assuming our natures, and dying upon the cross for us; Joh 15:13: *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.* Or else it signifieth that habit of love to Christ, which is in every believer; for it is true of either of these, that they constrain a believer's soul.

*Because* (saith the apostle) *we thus* account, or reason, *that if one died for all.* All here is interpreted according to the various notions of men, about the extent of the death of Christ. Some by the term understanding all individuals; some, all the elect, or all those that should believe in Christ; others, some of all nations, Jews or Gentiles. Be it as it will, that point is not to be determined by this universal particle, which is as often in Scripture used in a restrained sense, as in a more general sense. The apostle here concludeth, *that if one died for all, then were all dead;* which is to be understood of a spiritual death, as Eph 2:1. And the apostle's



argument dependeth upon this, that if all, for whom Christ died, had not been dead in sin, there then had been no need of his dying for to expiate their sin, and to redeem them from the guilt and power of it; but be they what they would, for whom Christ died, whether all individuals, or all the elect only, his dying for them was a manifest evidence that they were dead.

### 2 Corinthians 5:15

Ver. 15. And he died for all those for whom he died, not only to redeem them from the guilt of sin, but also from their vain conversation; that they which live by his grace, might not make themselves the end of their life, and live to serve themselves, and gratify their own corrupt inclinations; but might make the service of Christ, the honour and glory of him who died for them, and also rose again from the dead, the end of their lives; arguing the reasonableness of a holy and Christian life, from the love and end of Christ in dying for them; according to that, Ro 14:7,8: *For none of us, liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.* This is one way by which a believer fetcheth strength from the death of Christ to die unto sin, and from his resurrection to live unto newness of life; he concluding: If Christ died, and rose again for him, that then he was once dead in trespasses and sins; and therefore he judgeth himself obliged, now that he is made spiritually alive, not to live to himself, or serve his own profit, honour, reputation, lusts, or passions, but to live in obedience to him, and to the honour and glory of him, who died to redeem him from the guilt and power of sin, and rose again to quicken him to newness of life and conversation, to the honour and glory of his Redeemer.

### 2 Corinthians 5:16

Ver. 16. *Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh:* words of sense in Scripture ordinarily signify more than the act of that sense which they express; particularly this term *know* ordinarily signifieth to approve and acknowledge; and so it signifies here. We *know*, that is, we regard, we acknowledge no man in the discharge of our office; we regard no man with respect to any external fleshly consideration. Under which notion he

comprehends all things not spiritual, whether carnal relations, riches, &c.

*Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh; not from any sight of him, for we read not that Paul at any time saw Christ, but, Ac 9:1-43, when he saw him, not according to the flesh, but as exalted at the right hand of God: but by the hearing of the ear Paul had known Christ, as one that had lived in the flesh, and who had conversed with men for above thirty years; yet (saith he) *we know him no more*, we shall neither see nor hear him any more in the flesh; we now only know him as he hath a glorious body, with which he sitteth at the right hand of God.*

### 2 Corinthians 5:17

Ver. 17. *If any man be in Christ*, is as much as, if any man be implanted or ingrafted into Christ, by faith united to him, *he is a new creature*; ( the Greek is, a new creation); a phrase which argueth the greatest change imaginable, and such a one as can be wrought in the soul by no other power than the power of God. We have the same expression, Ga 6:15. The ellipsis of the verb makes some translate it: *Let him be a new creature*, supplying εστω for εστι. But the next words show us, that the apostle is speaking of what is past: *Old things are passed away*, old affections, passions, notions, &c. He hath the same soul, but new qualities, new apprehensions in his understanding, new inclinations in his will and affections, new thoughts, counsels, and designs. The predicate showeth, that the term, *be in Christ*, cannot be understood of those that are only in the church, and turned from paganism to the Christian faith; for there are many such in the world, in whom there is no new creation, and who have in them nothing of this new creature.

### 2 Corinthians 5:18

Ver. 18. *And all things are of God*; this change, which is wrought in our hearts, is not of ourselves, but wrought in us by the great and mighty power of God: so Joh 1:13: *Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God*; of God, as the principal efficient Cause.

*Who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ; who, by the blood of his Son Jesus Christ, meritoriously, and by the Spirit of Christ, actually, hath reconciled us unto himself; of enemies hath made us friends.*

*And hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; hath intrusted us with the preaching of the gospel. It is God that hath reconciled us; it is Christ by whom we are reconciled, his blood is the price of our reconciliation; but he committed to his apostles, and so to the successive ministers of the gospel, the ministry of reconciliation, that is, the ministry of the gospel, by which this reconciliation is published to such as are yet enemies to God. They have but a ministration in it; God hath appointed them to publish and to declare it, and to entreat men to be reconciled unto him.*

## 2 Corinthians 5:19

Ver. 19. *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself; by world, here, some would understand all mankind, and by reconciling, no more than making God reconcilable; but this proceedeth from an over fondness of their principle of Christ's dying for all, and every man. For as it is manifest from a multitude of scriptures, that world is many times taken in a much more limited and restrained sense; so there is nothing here that guides us to interpret it in such a latitude; nay, that which followeth, doth manifestly so restrain it; for God was not in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, that is, every man and woman in the world, so as not to impute their sins to them. This the apostle here affirmeth; which makes it manifest, that by world here is meant many, some of all sorts, as well Gentiles as Jews; even so many as he pleaseth not to impute their sins unto.*

*And hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation: now, (saith the apostle), the dispensing and publishing that word, by which this reconciliation is made known to the children of men, God hath committed to us; to us, that are apostles, and so to the ministers of the gospel that shall succeed us in the work of the ministry. This mightily commendeth the gospel, and the preaching of it, that it is the word by which, as a means, souls are reconciled unto God.*

## 2 Corinthians 5:20

Ver. 20. The apostle here giveth us a true notion, not only of apostles, which were the first and principal ministers of the gospel, but of all other ministers; teaching us what all ministers should be, and what all true ministers of the gospel are. They *are ambassadors for Christ*. There is by nature an enmity between the creature and God; he naturally hateth God, and God is angry with him. Those *that were sometime alienated, and enemies in their minds by wicked works*, Christ hath reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, Col 1:21,22; he hath purchased a reconciliation for them. But yet, till they have received Christ as their Lord and Saviour, they are not actually recovered to God by him. God does by men, as great princes do by such as they are at enmity with; he sends his ministers to them, who are his ambassadors; and as all ambassadors represent the person of him whose ambassadors they are, and speak in his name, and as in his stead, persuading to peace; so these speak as in Christ's name, and in God's stead; their business is to beseech men to be reconciled unto God, to lay down their arms, and to accept of the terms of the gospel for peace and reconciliation.

## 2 Corinthians 5:21

Ver. 21. *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin: Christ knew no sin*, as he was guilty of no sin; *Which of you* (saith he, Joh 8:46) *convinceth me of sin? 1Pe 2:22*, *He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: but God made him to be sin for us. He was numbered with the transgressors*, Isa 53:12. Our sins were reckoned to him; so as though personally he was no sinner, yet by imputation he was, and God dealt with him as such; for he was made a sacrifice for our sins, a sin offering; so answering the type in the law, Le 4:3,25,29 5:6 7:2.

*That we might be made the righteousness of God in him;* that so his righteousness might be imputed to us, and we might be made righteous with such a righteousness as those souls must have whom God will accept. As Christ was not made sin by any sin inherent in him, so neither are we made righteous by any righteousness inherent in us, but by the righteousness of Christ imputed to us; as he was a sinner by the sins of his people reckoned and imputed unto him.

## 2 Corinthians 6:1

### Chapter Summary

2Co 6:1,2 Paul entreateth the Corinthians not to frustrate God's grace,

2Co 6:3-10 setting forth his own inoffensive, painful, and patient demeanour in the discharge of his ministry, 2Co 6:11,12 of which he telleth them he spake more freely out of the great love he bare them,

2Co 6:13 challenging the like affection from them in return.

2Co 6:14,15 He dissuadeth from any intimate connections with unbelievers,

2Co 6:16-18 Christians are the temples of the living God.

Ver. 1. *We then, as workers together with him:* ministers of the gospel are fellow workers together with Christ; though but as instruments, serving him as the principal Agent, and efficient Cause: he trod the wine press of his Father's wrath alone, and had no partner in the purchase of man's salvation; but in the application of the purchased salvation, he admits of fellow workers. Though the internal work be his alone, and the effects of his Spirit upon the souls of those whose hearts are changed; yet there is a ministerial part, which lieth in exhortation and argument, by the ear conveyed to the soul; thus ministers work together with Christ. And without him they can do nothing: they are workers, but they must have Christ work with them, or they will find that they labour in vain.

*Beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain:* grace signifieth any free gift; and it is in the New Testament variously applied; but here it signifies, the doctrine of the gospel, held forth in the preaching of it, which these Corinthians had received with the ears of their bodies. And this was Paul's, and should be every godly minister's, work, not with roughness, but with all mildness and gentleness, to beseech those to whom they preach the gospel, that they would believe and embrace it, and live up to the holy rules of it; without which, (as to their souls' benefit), all the kindness of God, in affording them the gospel and means of grace, is in

vain, and lost: though God yet hath his end, and his ministers shall he *a sweet savour to God*, as well with, reference to them that perish, as those who shall be saved. For the effectual grace of God in the heart, that cannot be received in vain; nor is that here spoken of.

## 2 Corinthians 6:2

Ver. 2. *For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee:* the words here quoted, are taken out of the prophet Isaiah, Isa 49:8, according to the Septuagint's translation. Though some think, that the apostle here doth but accommodate to the spiritual salvation brought in by Christ, a temporal salvation mentioned, and primarily intended; yet the most and best interpreters rather judge that whole chapter in Isaiah to refer to Christ, and that the salvation there mentioned, is to be understood of the spiritual salvation of the gospel; of which also the apostle speaketh here, and maketh these words (as in the prophet) the words of God the Father to Christ his Son; testifying both his assistance of him in the accomplishment of the work of man's redemption, and his acceptance of him; according to which sense, the *accepted time* is the same with what the apostle calls, *the fulness of time*, Ga 4:4; (though it may also be so called in the same sense that the apostle calleth the gospel *a faithful saying, worthy of all acceptance*, 1Ti 1:15;) in which sense the gospel time was prophesied of as an acceptable time, Ge 49:10 Hag 1:8.

*Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation;* now is that accepted or acceptable time, now is that day of salvation, spoken of by the prophet; therefore you are concerned to receive this grace of the gospel, and to live up to the rule of it.

## 2 Corinthians 6:3

Ver. 3. *Giving no offence in any thing:* to give no offence signifies, to avoid all actions which may be occasion of spiritual stumbling unto others, i.e. to make them to sin against God, or estrange their hearts from Christ, and the owning and profession of his gospel. These words may be understood as a general precept given to all Christians; so it agreeth with 1Co 10:30,32; or (which the following verses seem most to favour) as

referring to himself and Timothy, and other ministers of the gospel; like true pastors of the church of Christ, going out before the flock, and showing in their example what they ought to be.

*That the ministry be not blamed; the ministry* here may either signify the office of the ministry, or the subject of it, the gospel, which, 2Co 5:18, is called *the ministry of reconciliation*: not only the office of the ministry, but the gospel itself, suffereth by the scandalous conversation of ministers and private Christians; ignorant persons being not able, or not willing, to distinguish between the faults of persons and the faults of a doctrine or office.

#### 2 Corinthians 6:4

Ver. 4. *But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God*: ministers of the gospel are in the first place to be considered as *the ministers of God*; secondarily, as ministers and servants of the church; which they ought to serve so far, as in serving it they do obey Christ. None can approve or commend themselves for ministers of God that live a scandalous life; God hath not sent them to lay stumblingblocks in, but to remove them out of, the way of men.

*In much patience; patience* signifies an enduring of evils quietly and cheerfully, at the command of God; or when we see it is the will of God, we should patiently submit to put our necks into the heaviest yokes. The apostle goes on reckoning up several species of those evils: *afflictions* is a general term, signifying any evils that wear out our bodies.

*Necessities* signify any bodily wants of food, or raiment, or whatever is for the use of man's life.

*Distresses* signify, properly, a man's being straitened, or thrust up in a place, so as that he knoweth not how to steer himself; and, metaphorically, a want of counsel, not knowing what to do, or which way to turn ourselves.

## 2 Corinthians 6:5

Ver. 5. *In stripes:* the apostle, 2Co 11:23, tells us he was *in stripes above measure*; and 2Co 11:24, that *of the Jews he five times received forty stripes save one*: we read of his *many stripes*, Ac 16:23.

*In imprisonments;* of the imprisonment of him and Silas, Ac 16:23, which was not the only time before the writing of this Epistle, as appeareth by this verse.

*In tumults,* or seditions raised by the Jews and the heathens; we have a record of one at Ephesus, Ac 19:21-41, caused by Demetrius: others, by *tumults*, here, understand unfixed and uncertain habitations, tossing to and fro, so as they could be quiet in no place; but the former seemeth rather the sense of the word, as Lu 21:9 1Co 14:33.

*In labours;* he either means labours with his hands, (which Paul was sometimes put to, as Ac 18:3 20:34), or travels and journeys. The word is a general word, significative of any pains that men take.

*In watchings;* religious watching, 2Co 11:27.

*In fastings,* as acts of discipline, by which he kept under his body, and brought it into subjection, as he told us, 1Co 9:27.

## 2 Corinthians 6:6

Ver. 6. *By pureness:* as the apostle in the former words had declared the patience of his conversation, in the enduring of the afflictions of the gospel; so in this verse he declares the more internal holiness of it, under the general notion of *pureness*; showed in his knowledge, faith, gentleness, kindness, or goodness towards all men. The word translated *pureness*, signifieth rather the universal rectitude of his heart and ways, than (as some think) the habit or exercise of any particular virtue. In or *by knowledge*; a right understanding and notion of spiritual things; if it doth not here signify faith, which is a superstructure on this foundation, and that habit which hath a special influence upon purifying the heart, Ac 15:9. Without knowledge there can be no purity, Pr 19:2.



*By long-suffering;* the apostle means, not being easily provoked by such as had offended him, or done him wrong.

*By kindness;* the word translated *kindness*, signifies generally any goodness by which a man may show himself either sweet and pleasant, or useful and profitable, unto his neighbour.

*By the Holy Ghost;* thus the apostle showeth how he behaved himself; but not through his own strength, but through the influence and assistance of the Holy Ghost.

*By love unfeigned;* the *love unfeigned* here mentioned, is a general term, signifying that habit of grace wrought in his soul by the Holy Spirit of God, which was the principle of the *long-suffering* and *kindness* before mentioned.

## 2 Corinthians 6:7

Ver. 7. *By the word of truth;* living up to and keeping our eye upon the word of God, which is the word of truth: this seems to be the sense, rather than speaking truth to every one, as some have thought.

*By the power of God;* by the efficacious working of the Spirit of God upon our hearts, enabling us to live up to the doctrine we preach. Some understand here, by *the power of God*, that extraordinary power of working miracles, which God gave the apostles; others, the gospel, which the apostle calls *the power of God unto salvation*, Ro 1:16. It may be understood of the first and the last joined together; for the gospel is no otherwise the power of God to salvation, than as it is attended to the souls of those to whom it is so made powerful, with the inward, powerful, efficacious working of the Holy Spirit.

*By the armour of righteousness;* he means a good conscience, (which cannot be without a universal rectitude, or uprightness of life), which is a defence against all temptations, either from prosperity or from adversity. In which sense that of Solomon is true: *He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely*, Pr 10:9: and David prayeth, Ps 25:21: *Let integrity and uprightness*

*preserve me.*

### 2 Corinthians 6:8

Ver. 8. *By honour and dishonour;* we depart not from our integrity, whether we be honoured or dishonoured.

*By evil report and good report;* well or evilly reported of. This hath from the beginning been the lot of all the faithful ministers of Christ; some have given them honour, others have cast reproach upon them; some have given a good report of them, some an evil report.

*As deceivers, and yet true;* some have represented them as impostors, and such as deceived the people; others have spoken of them as true men: their business is to go through good report and bad report, honour and dishonour, still holding fast their integrity.

### 2 Corinthians 6:9

Ver. 9. *As unknown, and yet well known;* dealt with by Jews and heathens as persons wholly unknown to them, though we be sufficiently known; or being such whom the world knoweth not, as to our state towards God, and interest in him, though it knows us well enough as to our other circumstances.

*As dying, and, behold, we live;* so hunted and persecuted, as that we appear every day dying; yet such hath been the power of God's providence, that we yet live:

*As chastened, and not killed;* and though our heavenly Father chasteneth us, yet we are not utterly consumed: the apostle alludeth to that, Ps 118:18: *The Lord hath chastened me sore; but he hath not given me over to death.*

### 2 Corinthians 6:10

Ver. 10. *As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing;* appearing to others as persons

drowned in griefs and sorrows, yet we are always rejoicing in God, (Hab 3:17,18), and in the testimony of a good conscience, 2Co 1:12.

*As poor, yet making many rich;* in outward appearance poor, having no abundance of the good things of this life; yet making many rich in knowledge and grace, God by us dispensing to them the riches of his grace.

*As having nothing, and yet possessing all things as having nothing,* no houses, no lands, no silver or gold, Ac 3:6; yet being as well satisfied and contented, as if all things were ours; as well satisfied with that little which we have, as the men of the world are with their abundance; *possessing all things* in Christ, though having little in the creature.

### 2 Corinthians 6:11

Ver. 11. *Our mouth is open* to speak freely to you, and to communicate to you the whole will and counsel of God; *our heart is enlarged* both by the love that I have towards you, and by the rejoicing that I have in you. This enlargement of my heart is that which openeth my lips, and makes me speak freely to you, both in admonishing you of your errors, and in exhorting you to your duty.

### 2 Corinthians 6:12

Ver. 12. *Ye are not straitened in us;* if you cannot mutually rejoice in me, and what I write, or if you do not repay me the like affection, the fault is not in me; I have done my duty, and that too from a true principle of love to you.

*But ye are straitened in your own bowels;* but it is through mistakes and misapprehensions in yourselves, your not aright conceiving of me in the discharge of my apostolical office. Or the cause of your trouble and sorrow is from yourselves, upon your suffering the incestuous person, and other scandalous persons, to abide in your communion; which was an error I could not but take notice of, according to that apostolical authority which God hath committed to me.

## 2 Corinthians 6:13

Ver. 13. *Be ye also enlarged,* both in love to me, and also in obedience; it is but a just recompence for that great affection which I have borne, and upon all occasions showed to you; and also for that faithfulness which I have showed in discharging the duty of my relation to you. For I speak as a father unto children, it being but reasonable, that children should recompense to their fathers their love to them, and be as exact and faithful in their duty to their parents, as their parents are in their duty towards them.

## 2 Corinthians 6:14

Ver. 14. *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers:* they too much restrain the sense of this general precept, who either limit it to religious communion with idolaters, or to civil communion in marriages. The precept is delivered in a term of more general significancy, than to be limited by either of these, though both of them, questionless, be comprehended in it: μη γινεσθε ετεροζυγουντες, do not become such as in the same yoke draw another way. It is a metaphor drawn from horses or oxen; which should draw together, being in the same yoke, neither standing still, nor yet holding back. It is a general precept, prohibitive of all unnecessary communion and intimate fellowship with such, as either in matters of faith or worship, or in their lives and conversations, declare themselves to be unbelievers; for why we should expound απιστοις of infidels merely, I cannot tell, especially considering that the apostle, 1Co 5:9-11, seems to allow a further communion with a heathen, than with a notoriously scandalous Christian. So as this precept may reasonably be interpreted by those in the former Epistle, of marrying with such, eating with them at idol feasts, or at the Lord's table, (as 2Co 5:1-21), maintaining intimate communion with them, &c.

*For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?* The reason he giveth, is, because they could have no comfortable communion with such; they were *righteousness*, those persons were *unrighteousness*; they were *light*, such

persons were *darkness*, that is, full of the darkness of sin and ignorance. In the mean time, this precept ought not to be extended to a total avoiding of commerce with, or being in the company of, either heathens, or scandalous persons; for as to that, the same apostle had before determined it lawful, 1Co 5:11. Whatever communion with such persons is either necessary from the law of God or nature, or for the support and upholding of human life and society, is lawful even with such persons; but all other is unlawful.

### 2 Corinthians 6:15

Ver. 15. *And what concord hath Christ with Belial?* By *Belial*, in this text, very good interpreters understand the devil; judging that the apostle here opposeth Christ, who is the Head of Believers and of the church, to him who is the head of all unbelievers, and the god of the world. The term is used only in this place in the New Testament, but very often in the Old Testament, to express men notoriously wicked and scandalous, De 13:13 Jud 19:22 1Sa 1:16 2:12 25:17 2Sa 16:7 2Ch 13:7. The Hebrews themselves are not agreed in the etymology of it; Ps 101:3, a *wicked thing* is called a *thing of Belial* (as may be seen in the margin of our bibles); so as the argument is drawn from our duty of conformity to our Head; Christ hath no fellowship with the devil, therefore we ought to have no unnecessary communion with such who manifest themselves to be of their father the devil, by their doing his works; nor hath Christ any communion with the sons of Belial.

*Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?* What part or portion, that is, what society or communion, hath a believer with one that beheveth not? What hath he to do with him? It was a usual phrase amongst the Jews, Jos 22:25,27. Some by this *part* understand, what portion in the life to come? In which sense it teacheth us, that we should maintain intimate and elective communion in this life only with such as we would gladly have our portion with in another life. But the most judicious interpreters think this is not intended in this place.

### 2 Corinthians 6:16

Ver. 16. *And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?* This particular instance giveth some expositors occasion to interpret 2Co 6:14, of communion with idolaters in such acts of religion as are proper to them; but nothing hinders but that that precept may be interpreted more generally, though the apostle gives this as one particular instance, wherein he would have them avoid communion with unbelievers.

*For ye are the temple of the living God;* the argument is drawn from what the apostle had before asserted, 1Co 3:16 6:19, their being the temples of the Holy Ghost; which he proveth from Le 26:12 Eze 37:26,27.

*As God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people:* not that what the apostle meaneth here, is the literal meaning of Le 26:11,12; for it is manifest, that God by Moses there is speaking not of God's dwelling in the persons of believers, or in his church, but of that gracious presence and manifestation of himself to his people in the tabernacle erected by his order. Some therefore think, that the place here alluded to, though not quoted verbatim, is that, Eze 37:26,27, which is a promise respecting the kingdom of Christ; where God promiseth to *make a covenant of peace* with his people, and saith, *I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* The words, as they are here quoted, are entirely to be found in no one text of holy writ; it is sufficient that they are to be found there in parts. Nor doth this text so properly speak of God's dwelling in particular believers, as of his dwelling in the churches of his people; therefore, though he speaks of many, *ye are*, yet *temple* is in the singular number. These many are but one body; the church in which God dwelleth, and with which he hath communion, which is expressed by *walk in them;* as in Re 2:1, he is said to *walk in the midst of the golden candlesticks*. Nor is the term *living* vainly added to *God;* for besides that he is usually so called, as being ever-living, and the Fountain of all life; it also showeth the opposition between him and idols, which are dead things: and therefore God could have no more communion with idols, than the living can have with the dead; nor could they have communion with the living God and dead idols. Nor could they be the people of the living God, and the people or worshippers of dead idols; so as those that were idolaters must lose the advantage of that covenant wherein God had said: *I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

## 2 Corinthians 6:17

Ver. 17. The apostle here quoteth words out of the Old Testament, no where to be found there syllabically, without variation, but keeping to the sense of them, which is a thing very usual with the penmen of the New Testament. The first quotation seemeth to be taken from Isa 52:11: *Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord.* Interpreters are not agreed as to the term from whence the prophet there admonisheth the Jews to depart: some make it to be their former sinful courses; others make it to be the kingdom of the devil and antichrist; others make it to be literal Babylon; the prophet foreseeing, that when the Jews should have a liberty given them to leave Babylon, (which happened in the time of Cyrus the Persian monarch), some of them (now as it were incorporated with the Chaldeans) would linger, and find a difficulty to pluck up their stakes in Babylon, though it were in order to their return to Jerusalem, heretofore the joy and praise of the whole earth. Whatever was the prophet's meaning, certain it is, the apostolical precept cannot be interpreted of a leaving literal Babylon, for neither the Christian jews, nor Gentiles, were at this time there; he must therefore be understood of a mystical Babylon. And the sense must be this: *Come out and be ye separate* from those with whom your souls will be in as much danger as the Jews were in the literal Babylon. But whether by these are to be understood idolaters only, or all notorious scandalous livers, is the question: The true determination of which, I conceive, dependeth upon the sense of those words: *Come out, be ye separated*; which words, I think, are not fully interpreted by those that follow, *touch not the unclean thing*; for, doubtless, the former words are a precept concerning the means to be used in order to that as an end, it being a hard thing to touch pitch, and not to be defiled therewith. On the other side, they interpret it too rigidly, who make it to be a prohibition of all commerce or company with such persons; for this is contrary to the apostolical doctrine in his former Epistle to this church, where he had allowed, 1Co 5:1-13, a civil commerce and traffic with the worst of men; and, 1Co 7:1-40, had forbidden the separation of Christians and heathens, once joined in marriage, unless the unbeliever first departed. The text therefore must be understood only of elective and unnecessary, intimate communion; and is much the same with that, 2Co 6:14: *Be ye not*

*unequally yoked with unbelievers.* So as that it doth by no means justify the withdrawing of all civil or religious communion from those whose judgments or practice in all things we cannot approve; it only justifieth our withdrawing our communion from idolaters, and from notorious scandalous sinners in such duties and actions, or in such degrees, as we are under no obligation to have fellowship and communion with them in; and our forbearing to touch their unclean things in that fellowship and communion which we are allowed with them, having no fellowship with them in their unfruitful works of darkness, but reproving them, even while in civil things, and some religious actions, we have some fellowship with them.

## 2 Corinthians 6:18

Ver. 18. The latter words, which are a promise of God's reception of them who for his sake withdraw from a sinful communion with idolaters and scandalous persons, are taken out of Jer 31:1,9, and teach us this: That none can reasonably expect that God should fulfil his covenant with them, who make no conscience of fulfilling their part in it with him; nor claim the benefits of a Father, who perform not the duties of his children: but on the contrary, those who are conscientious in the discharge of their duties of filial obedience, may expect from him both the kindness and the protection of a Father; which is the more valuable because he is the *Lord God Almighty*, who wants no power to protect them, or so to influence them, as to make them in all things happy, as the children of so great a Father.

## 2 Corinthians 7:1

### Chapter Summary

2Co 7:1 Paul exhorteth the Corinthians to purity of life,

2Co 7:2 and to receive him, who had done nothing to forfeit their esteem.

2Co 7:3-7 He repeateth the assurance of his love for them, and showeth what comfort he had received in all his troubles from the report which Titus had brought of their good dispositions toward him.



2Co 7:8-12 So that, upon the whole, he did not repent of having grieved them a little by letter, considering the good effects which that godly sorrow had produced.

2Co 7:13-16 Above all, he rejoiced to observe the good impressions which their behaviour, so answerable to his former boastings of them, had left in the mind of Titus.

Ver. 1. *Having therefore these promises;* i.e. of God's dwelling in us, and walking with us; of God's being our Father, and making and owning us as his sons; which promises are made to true penitents that will touch no unclean thing.

*Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and the spirit;* let us, through the assistance of Divine grace, endeavour to cleanse ourselves, or keep ourselves clean, not only from fleshly filthiness, such as are sins of intemperance, drunkenness, uncleanness; but also from spiritual filthiness, extravagant passions, corrupt affections, pride, envy, rash anger, idolatry, contention, division.

*Perfecting holiness in the fear of God;* and that, because we are not only obliged to holiness, but to perfect holiness, in, or through, the fear of the Lord; awing our hearts, lest we should profane the temple of the Lord, or behave ourselves as undutiful sons to so good a Father. So far are God's promises, and our belief of them, or affiance in God for the fulfilling of them, from hindering us in the practice and exercise of holiness, that there can be no more potent motive to persuade the perfection of holiness; and that not only from the argument of Divine love, contained in the promises, but from the consideration of the persons to whom, and the conditions upon which, the promises are made.

## 2 Corinthians 7:2

Ver. 2. *Receive us;* let us have a room in your hearts and esteem, or (more generally) accept us, as you ought to receive and accept the ministers of Christ. As our heart is enlarged towards you, so let your hearts be enlarged towards us; we have done nothing to alienate your hearts from us.

*We have wronged no man;* we have done no harm to any of you, we have not been like the shepherds that merely take the fleece, and eat the flesh of the flock: Ac 20:33: *I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. We have corrupted no man;* we have corrupted none by any false doctrine, or by flattering speeches, or by bribes or gifts.

*We have defrauded no man;* we have cheated or defrauded no man. By which vindication of or apology for himself and his fellow labourers, it is not improbably judged, that the apostle reflecteth upon those false apostles and teachers that were crept into this church, who had wronged him, corrupted them, and been too busy in other ways to pick their pockets. Nothing becometh more a minister of the gospel, than innocency and righteousness; nothing more commends him unto his people: for though they are easily persuaded that an innocent and just man must be a pious man, yet they are difficultly persuaded, (and there is no reason for it), that an unjust or mischievous man can be so. Men are so mad of their lusts, that oftentimes teachers who will favour them in them, though never so unjust and unrighteous in their actings, shall find more favour with them, than the most righteous person that will not spare them as to their Herodias: But he who will entertain the least hopes to bring men off from their lusts and sinful practices, is concerned above all men to be innocent and righteous.

### 2 Corinthians 7:3

Ver. 3. The apostle deals very tenderly with this church, which was (as he knew very well) full of many touchy members; who upon all occasions were ready to reflect upon him, and to take occasion from any expressions of his in letters, as well as other things, to that purpose; to obviate whose whisperings, the apostle tells them, that he did not speak this to reflect upon or expose them, as if they had wronged or defrauded him; for the love which he bare to them was such, as would admit of no such thing; he so loved them, as that he could live and die with them.

### 2 Corinthians 7:4

Ver. 4. *Great is my boldness of speech toward you;* because I so dearly

love you, therefore I speak so boldly and freely to you (as men use to speak most freely to those whom they most love).

*Great is my glorying of you;* I boast of your obedience to others, and therefore would be far from exposing you. And this I do not feignedly, for *I am filled with comfort* on your behalf (a further account of this he giveth us afterward).

*I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation;* yea, (saith he), the report I have received of your carriage and behaviour, upon your receipt of my former Epistle, hath filled me with a joy that balanceth all the affliction and tribulation that I meet with for the gospel. So good news to a faithful minister is the repentance and reformation of any member or members that belong to his flock; whereas the hireling, or false teacher, is not much concerned whether the souls of his people do well or ill.

### 2 Corinthians 7:5

Ver. 5. Of this motion of the apostle's *into Macedonia*, what he did and suffered there, we have a short account, Ac 20:1-38. He saith his *flesh had no rest*, he met with incessant storms of persecution; and was *troubled* both by Jews and Gentiles in all places where he came.

*Without were fightings;* by persons that were without the Christian church; such were the generality of the Jews and Gentiles; *within were fears;* and by false brethren within, or with his own fears, lest those violent dealings should be temptations to Christians, being yet tender and young in the faith, to relapse and apostatize.

### 2 Corinthians 7:6

Ver. 6. *God, that comforteth those that are cast down:* it is observable, how careful the apostle is to ascribe all the supports and reliefs of his spirit unto God. Nor is this notion, or name, of God unuseful to any that fear him, who through any casualties or contingences of this life shall happen to be cast down. It advantageth our faith in prayer, in any such straits, to consider God as having taken to himself the name of him that comforteth

those that are cast down.

*Comforted us by the coming of Titus:* it is only the coming of Titus, his fellow labourer, and one dear to him, that he mentioneth in this verse, as the means of his support and relief; yet he entitleth God to his comfort under his dejection. God comforteth his people variously, sometimes by his good word, sometimes by his providence; be what will the instrumental cause, God is the principal efficient.

### 2 Corinthians 7:7

Ver. 7. *And not by big coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you:* I was glad to see Titus, but that was the least of that consolation which he brought me. You had before much comforted and rejoiced him, and he being come to me, made me a partaker of his consolation, upon his beholding or being a witness to *your earnest desire*, to give me satisfaction in the things about which I wrote to you; *your mourning*, either for those scandals amongst you, of which I have given you notice; or for my afflicted state and condition; or for the offence you had given me, which caused me to write that sharp letter to you.

*Your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more:* your earnest desire to give me satisfaction, and yield obedience to my admonitions, or to maintain and defend my honour and reputation against such as had impeached and wounded it; these things much augmented my rejoicing in and over you. Nothing so much rejoiceth the heart of a conscientious, faithful minister of Christ, as to see his people's obedience to the doctrine of the gospel, which he is an instrument to communicate to them.

### 2 Corinthians 7:8

Ver. 8. *For though I made you sorry with a letter;* the apostle doubtless meaneth the former Epistle to this church.

*I do not repent, though I did repent:* as to which, he saith, that although he was sometimes troubled, because (probably) he understood that some truly pious persons in this church were troubled at it, as thinking themselves

intended in the reprehensions of it; for which effect, or mistake, (he saith), he was once sorry, being troubled that he should do any thing to grieve them, whom he so affectionately loved; yet now he tells them he was not sorry.

*The same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season; and their sorrow was but a temporary sorrow, until they could reform those abuses, which they were made sensible of by that Epistle, and give the apostle that wrote it just satisfaction.*

### 2 Corinthians 7:9

Ver. 9. *Now I rejoyce, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance:* the apostle takes all advantages to insinuate himself into the good opinion and affections of the members of this famous church, and to obviate any misrepresentations of him to them from those false teachers that were crept in amongst them. Lest they should take some advantage from his saying, that he repented not that he had made them sorry, he here openeth himself, and tells them, he did not rejoyce in their sorrow, but in the blessed product and effect of it; which was their reformation of those abuses and errors which he had reproved them for, the effect of which reproof was this their sorrow for a little season. And that they *were made sorry after a godly manner;* they did but sow in tears, they reaped in joy; they had a wet seed time, but a fair harvest. They sorrowed with a sorrow according to God; the cause of their sorrow was their sin, the root of it a love to God, the manner of it such as was agreeable to the will of God.

*That ye might receive damage by us in nothing;* the wise God so governing things by his providence, that nothing which the apostle spake or wrote should prove detrimental, but rather advantageous; to this church which he so loved.

### 2 Corinthians 7:10

Ver. 10. *Godly sorrow;* that sorrow which is according to God, either commanded by him, (as sorrow for our own or others' sins, or for the judgments of God, as they are the indications of God's wrath and

displeasure for sin), or which he, as the God of grace, worketh in the soul, touching the heart by the finger of his Spirit, Zec 12:10. Or that sorrow whose end is the glory of God, in the reformation of the person sorrowing, by a hatred and detestation of sin, and a hearty turning from it.

*Worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of;* it is not repentance, but it produceth that change of heart and life which is repentance; and shall not be imperfect, but perfect, which shall issue in the salvation of the soul, and will never be repented of. Never did any when he came to die repent of true repentance; nor is it possible that reasonable souls should repent of what issueth in their eternal salvation.

*But the sorrow of the world worketh death;* but all sorrow except this is but *the sorrow of the world*, the effect of which is oftentimes natural death; while men bow down under their burdens, and through impatience destroy themselves, or at least so fix their thoughts upon sad objects, and so afflict themselves with them, that they bring themselves into diseases tending to death. It also worketh spiritual death; as it indisposeth men for their duty, (as it was in the case of Elijah), and is a temptation to them to be angry against God, (as in the case of Jonah), to fret, murmur, and repine against God's providence: and by this means it also worketh towards eternal death, which is the wages belonging to sin.

## 2 Corinthians 7:11

Ver. 11. The apostle having showed the mischievous effects of worldly sorrow, all which he comprehended under the word *death*, here showeth the blessed effects of that sorrow which is according to God.

*What carefulness it wrought in you!* The first he mentioneth is great *carefulness*, both to make our peace with God for our former violations of his law, (using all means he hath prescribed and directed thereunto), and also to preserve our peace, by avoiding the like breaches for the time to come.

*What clearing of yourselves!* The Corinthians' sorrow might work in some of them a *clearing* or purging themselves of that guilt which other members of that church had incurred. But there is another clearing of

ourselves, which true repentance worketh, not by denying the fact, but by confessing it, with taking shame to ourselves; which, though it be not a clearing of a person from the fact, yet, through Divine grace, joined with a reformation, it is a clearing him from the guilt thereof.

*What indignation!* What a displeasure against yourselves for your follies!

*What fear!* Not so much of the wrath of God, as lest you should again fall into the like temptations, and be overcome by them.

*What vehement desire!* What hearty prayers to God, that for the time to come you might be kept from the like temptations!

*What zeal!* What warmth and great degrees of all sanctified affections; love to God, hatred of sin, fear of offending God, desire to please him!

*What revenge!* What acts of discipline, fasting, denying of yourselves in some lawful things wherein you may have offended, or the too free use of which may have been to you occasions of offending.

*In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter;* by these acts, though some of you have been to be blamed, yet the body of you have showed yourselves clear of this matter; or though all of you have been formerly too guilty of some things I have charged you with, yet you have cleared yourselves both to God, who imputeth no sin to him that confesseth his sin and forsaketh it, and to me, who am abundantly satisfied with your declared sorrow, repentance, and reformation.

## 2 Corinthians 7:12

Ver. 12. *I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong;* for the cause of him that had abused his father's wife, not out of any particular hatred or ill-will I had to him; *nor for his cause that suffered wrong;* nor for the sake of him whose wife was so abused; nor for my own sake, who had been so abused, and suffered wrong by you.

*But that our care for you in the sight of God might appear to you;* but only out of a love to your souls, and a care I had for you, that in all things

you might approve yourselves unto God. Or possibly this text is more generally be interpreted, without respect either to the incestuous person in particular, or to his father; and the sense of the verse no more than this: Though in my former Epistle I wrote something sharply to you, yet I did it not in any passion, nor was I drawn aside by any prejudice or hatred of any person, nor out of any partial affection to any, as to any thing for which I blamed you; but out of that general love and affection which I have to you all, which produceth in me a care of and a solicitude for you, that you might do no evil; which care I was willing should appear to you.

### 2 Corinthians 7:13

Ver. 13. *We were comforted in your comfort;* the comfort which your letters brought us, and so came from you; or the comfort which you received upon your reformation of those things which were amiss amongst you. And we also *joyed for the joy* that Titus conceived, upon his understanding of your affairs, and your ready obedience to the Epistle which I wrote to you: such is the union between the true members of Christ, that they are comforted with one another's comforts, and afflicted with one another's sorrows and griefs.

### 2 Corinthians 7:14

Ver. 14. The apostle here multiplieth expressions to sweeten the Corinthians, by all manner of ways declaring his value for and affection towards them. It appeareth by this, that the apostle had at some time before spoken something to Titus in commendation of this church of Corinth, which he here calleth a *boasting* of them; he now again boasted, that he had said nothing but the truth, which Titus had experienced, and reported to him.

### 2 Corinthians 7:15

Ver. 15. By your obedience to my admonitions and exhortations, you have not only obliged me in a debt of love to you, but Titus also; who joyfully remembers, with what *fear and trembling you received him*, lest he should



find any thing amongst you that should grieve and offend him.

## 2 Corinthians 7:16

Ver. 16. That I can write and speak to you with confidence that you will hearken to my admonitions and exhortations, and that I can confidently boast and glory concerning you.

## 2 Corinthians 8:1

### Chapter Summary

2Co 8:1-5 Paul extolleth the liberal contributions of the Macedonian churches for the relief of the brethren in Judea,

2Co 8:6-8 and recommendeth the like charity to the Corinthians, as well beseeming their other graces,

2Co 8:9 enforced by Christ's example,

2Co 8:10-12 consistent with the alacrity they had already expressed therein,

2Co 8:13-15 and a precedent which might in time be of use to themselves.

2Co 8:16-24 He letteth them know the willingness of Titus to come and further this good work among them; and commendeth him to their love, together with the brethren, men of special worth, who were sent with him on the same errand.

Ver. 1. The apostle in this chapter proceedeth to a new argument, viz. the pressing of this church to acts of charity. This is that which he here calleth *the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia*, putting the cause for the effect. Bounty or liberality to the poor saints and members of Christ, as such, floweth from that habit of love by which men are taught of God to love one another; for though men, from a natural goodness, or habits of moral virtue, may relieve men as men, compassionating persons in misery; yet none, from any such principle, do good to any members of the household of faith, as such; such rather feel from them the effects of their hatred, in taking what is their own from them.

## 2 Corinthians 8:2

Ver. 2. *In a great trial of affliction;* how great the afflictions of the churches in Macedonia were, both from the Jews and pagans, may be read in Ac 16:1-40 and Ac 17:1-34. Afflictions are called trials, because under them God maketh a trial of our faith, patience, and constancy; and the devil also, ordinarily, by them trieth to draw out our lusts and corruptions.

*The abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded into the riches of their liberality;* God made their inward peace and joy in the Holy Ghost so to abound in them under their trials, that though they were poor, (deeply poor), yet they abounded in the riches of liberality; not ministering to the necessities of their poor brethren in proportion to their abilities, or as might have been expected from men under their circumstances, but showing themselves rich in their liberality, though poor in their estates, and as to what they had of this world's goods.

## 2 Corinthians 8:3

Ver. 3. Two things the apostle commendeth in the charity of the churches of Macedonia:

1. The quantity of their gift, which, he saith, was *to their power*, *yea*, (on his knowledge), *beyond* what they were able.
2. Their freedom in the action; so as they did not need the apostle's exhortations and arguments, but did it of themselves freely and cheerfully.

## 2 Corinthians 8:4

Ver. 4. Bringing what they had freely collected amongst themselves to the apostles, and importuning them to receive it at their hands, and to take upon them the work of distributing it.

## 2 Corinthians 8:5

Ver. 5. We might have hoped for something from them, though they were in that poor afflicted condition; but what they brought was much beyond what we could hope for, or expect from them. Or else this phrase may refer to what followeth: they did not only bring us their *gift*, but they also *gave up themselves* to us, to be disposed of for the good of the church, according to the will of God; for they first gave themselves up to the Lord, devoting themselves to his service and glory, and then to us, the will of God so ruling and directing them.

## 2 Corinthians 8:6

Ver. 6. *The same grace*, in this place, signifieth no more than the same gift, or the same good work, in collecting in the church of Corinth. If by *grace* here be understood the grace of God, the cause is put for the effect (as we had it in the first verse); but  $\tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  being not here added, possibly it had been better translated gift, or free contribution; for how a minister should finish the grace of God, is hard to conceive; and the phrase is at best very hard, but he may be an instrument for completing a good work, which is done from a habit of Divine grace, by exhortations and arguments, which he may use to press the performance of it. Titus (it seemeth) had been diligent in some other places to make this collection; going to Corinth the apostle presseth him to go on with it there also.

## 2 Corinthians 8:7

Ver. 7. Though the apostle made little use of oratory in his ordinary discourses and epistles, yet he knew how to use it when it might be of probable advantage for the ends which he aimed at, viz. the glory of God, and the good of the souls that were under his care. He did not turn divinity into mere words and rhetorical flourishes; yet he made use of these sometimes, as a waiting maid to divinity. Being therefore to press upon these Corinthians this great duty of charity, he insinuateth himself into them, by telling them, that they abounded in all other spiritual habits:

*Faith*, by which they had both steadily assented to the truth of gospel propositions, and also received Christ.

*Utterance*, by which they were enabled either to speak with tongues, or to God in prayer. For to men by prophecy and exhortation.

*Knowledge*, both of things Divine and human. And in *love* to the ministers of the gospel, which, if it did not appear in all, yet it did in many of them. And from hence he fetcheth an argument to press them to be complete in this habit of grace. The force of the apostle's argument lies, in the duty of all Christians to strive after perfection, and that natural desire, which is in all ingenuous people, to be perfect in that good of which they have a taste in less perfect degrees.

### 2 Corinthians 8:8

Ver. 8. I do not speak in an imperious way, as one that commandeth you; or rather, God hath no where given an express command as to the quantum of what you should give; but *the forwardness of others* makes me thus speak to you, as not being willing you should in good works come behind any churches; and that I might *prove the sincerity of your love*, to God, to me, and to the poor afflicted saints that are in Judea. Though God hath not directed the particular sums we should give to those that are in need, yet he hath given us general rules; That we should give *as God hath prospered us*, 1Co 16:2; and so as there may be some *equality*, as the apostle speaketh, 2Co 8:14. So, as the sincerity of our love to God dependeth in some measure upon the proportion of what we give at his command, so doth also the sincerity of our love to those poor members of Christ that are in want; that there may be a moderate supply for their want, from our abundance.

### 2 Corinthians 8:9

Ver. 9. *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*; call to mind the free love of your Lord and Master Jesus Christ, which you know, believing the gospel, which gives you a true account of it, and having in your own souls experienced the blessed effects of it: *He was rich*, being the *Heir of*

*all things*, the Lord of the whole creation, Heb 1:2, all things were put under his feet.

*Yet for your sakes he became poor*; yet that he might accomplish the work of your redemption, and purchase his Father's love for you, he took upon him the form of a servant, stripped himself of his robes of glory, and clothed himself with the rags of flesh, denied himself in the use of his creatures, had not where to lay down his head, was maintained from alms, people ministering to him of their substance.

*That ye through his poverty might be rich*; and all this that you might be made rich, with the riches of grace and glory; rich in the love of God, and in the habits of Divine grace; which was all effected by his poverty, by his making himself of no reputation, and humbling himself. If after your knowledge of this, by receiving and believing the gospel, and experiencing this, in those riches of spiritual gifts and graces and hopes of glory which you have, you shall yet be found strait hearted in compassionating the poverty and afflicted state of his poor members, or strait-handed in ministering unto them, how will you in any measure answer this great love, or conform to this great example?

## 2 Corinthians 8:10

Ver. 10. Giving to those that were in want, was matter of precept (it being what the law of God and nature did require); but giving as the Macedonians had given, not only to, but beyond, their ability, was not so. Or, possibly, the apostle's saying, *I give my advice*, doth not suppose what he advised to be no commanded duty; friends may advise us to what is our duty to do.

*For*, saith the apostle, *this is expedient for you*; for your profit, or for your honour and reputation. A precept alone ought to oblige us to this doing of the thing commanded, but the profit, credit, and honour of the action adds an edge to the duty, and layeth us under a double obligation; the first, of obedience to God; the second, of being wise for ourselves.

*Who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago*: the apostle proveth the expediency of it from the concern of their

reputation in it; that they might not be thought to have gone backward, or to become weary of well doing, in regard they had begun this charitable work some time before.

*Objection.* But how cometh he here to put doing before willing (for so it is in the Greek, *not only to do, but also* θελειν, to will)? Some tell us these hystero-logies, or putting things after which should in order be before, are usual in holy writ; but possibly it is better answered by others, that θελειν here doth not signify the mere inclination of the will, but a forwardness, (thus our translators understood it, and therefore translate it *to be forward*), or a spontaneous willingness, without arguments used by others to persuade them to it. So as the sense is this: You not only began to do the thing a year ago, but you did it of your own accord, without our exhortations and arguments, of your own free mind and will; so as if you should now be behind hand, it would be a reproach to you. This sense is favoured by the next verse, what he here calls a willing, he there calls *a readiness to will*.

### 2 Corinthians 8:11

Ver. 11. Ye showed yourselves some time since free to will the thing which I am now pressing you unto, you have now opportunity to do it, and the example of other churches going before you in the doing of it; show yourselves now constant by *the doing of it*; that seeing God hath given you something of this world's goods, and that in proportions beyond your poor brethren, as you pretended a great readiness a great while since to relieve them, so you may by your performance justify that it was not all a mere pretence.

### 2 Corinthians 8:12

Ver. 12. He had before directed them to give out of that which they had, that is, in a proportion to what God had blessed them with; for he tells them that it is the willing mind which God accepteth, not the quantity of the gift. God doth not require of people things not in their power, yet bare velleities, or pretended willings, are not accepted; there must be an acting according to our power to justify the sincerity of our willing mind, and

men vainly pretend to will that towards the performance of which they never move. Though God requireth not of us things that are not within our power, yet he requireth of us the putting forth of our power in doing what he hath commanded us, so far as we are able; which indeed can alone justify the willingness of our mind to be more than a mere pretence. A present impotency, if contracted by our own fault, will not excuse us from the performance of those acts as to which it doth extend, to which some are bound by the just laws of God or men; but it is very unreasonable to think it should excuse as to those acts to which it doth not extend, and as to which it cannot be pleaded.

### 2 Corinthians 8:13

Ver. 13. I do not press you to such proportions in giving as should make your afflicted brethren rich, and you poor.

### 2 Corinthians 8:14

Ver. 14. *But by an equality;* but only to bring you and them to some equality, that they might not starve while you have plenty, and what you may well enough spare.

*That now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want;* I do not urge you to make your necessaries a supply for others' wants; I would only have a supply for their wants out of your abundance.

*That their abundance also may be a supply for your want:* some by *their abundance* understand their aboundings in the good things of this life: they are now in distress by reason of the great famine that is in Judea, or by reason of the great storm of persecution that is there raised against Christians; yet God may turn the scales, he may send a famine in those parts where you live, and there may be plenty in Judea; then their abundance may supply your wants. Others interpret *their abundance* of the aboundings of their grace, which may quicken them up to pray for you, for the supply of such grace to you as you stand in need of.

*That so there may be an equality,* they being instruments of spiritual

blessings to you, as you are instruments of temporal blessings and good things to them.

## 2 Corinthians 8:15

Ver. 15. This quotation would incline us to think, that the *abundance* mentioned in the latter part of the former verse, as also the *equality* mentioned in the end of it, is rather to be understood with reference to the good things of this life, than with reference to spiritual blessings, or to temporal and spiritual put together, balancing one another to make an equality. For certain it is, that this quotation referreth to manna, which was the bread God afforded for the bodies of his people in the wilderness, though, considered typically, it is rightly by the apostle called *spiritual meat*, 1Co 10:3; signifying that bread which came down from heaven, which Moses could not give, as Christ tells us, Joh 6:32,58. These words are quoted from Ex 16:18, though more agreeably to the Septuagint than to our translation. The history is this: The manna being fallen, the text saith, Ex 16:17, that *some gathered more, some less*; but it so fell out, by the providence of God ordering it, that when they came and measured what they had gathered, *he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack*. Now of this the apostle makes an argument to press the Corinthians to this charitable act. The force of which lies in this: As it was in the case of manna; there were some that gathered more, others that gathered less, yet all had enough; so it will be as to the riches of the world that men gather, though some gather more, and others gather less, yet men will find, that those that have gathered little, (have less estates than others), using what they have to the glory of God, and according to the Divine rule, will have no lack; and those that have gathered much, if they do not distribute it according to the will of God, will find that they have nothing over; God will shrink their heap into some equality to those whom at God's command they would not relieve: Ec 5:10: *He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver*. The wisdom of the Divine providence hath not ordained levelling, nor made all men equal in their portions of the good things of this life; but he hath willed such an equality as every one may eat, (unless he or she that will not work), either from the sweat of their own faces, or from the charity of others. Besides, nature craveth no great things, but is satisfied with a little; so that he that hath gathered little shall have no lack, if he can but moderate the excesses of his



appetite; and he that hath gathered much hath nothing over, what is either necessary for himself and his family, or what he ought to part with for the relief of others at the command of God.

### 2 Corinthians 8:16

Ver. 16,17. The apostle, by his exhortation, put Titus upon this employment of making at Corinth an extraordinary collection for the poor Christians that were in Judea; but it should seem, that when he did it, Titus let him know, that he was before resolved upon it: so as, though he went at the entreaty of the apostle, yet he went also of his own accord, having resolved upon the work before the apostle spoke to him of it. To let us know, that we are not sufficient of ourselves so much as to think one good thought, he gives *thanks to God* for putting this *earnest care into the heart of Titus*.

### 2 Corinthians 8:18

Ver. 18. Who this other *brother* was, whether Luke, or Barnabas or Silas, or Apollos, or Mark, is not much material; it is plain, whoever he was, that he was a brother and a minister one who had a good repute for preaching the gospel.

### 2 Corinthians 8:19

Ver. 19. And that he was *chosen by the churches* to go along with Paul and Titus, to carry the charity of other churches to the distressed Christians in Judea; which charity is here again called *grace*, for the reason before mentioned, 2Co 8:1. He declares that their end in this administration, was *the glory of God*, and the proof and *declaration* of these Corinthians' sincerity of brotherly love, and *ready mind* to yield obedience to the will of God declared to them.

## 2 Corinthians 8:20

Ver. 20. I have sent more than one as witnesses of what is done in this service, that none might reflect upon those trusted with the charity of divers churches, as if they converted any part of it to their own private use, and did not distribute it to those for whom it was given. The apostle here commendeth to all ministers and Christians, a prudent foresight of such scandalous imputations, as they may be exposed to (be their sincerity what it will) from the men of the world, who have no good will towards them; and a provision against them. Paul could have trusted Titus in the distribution of these alms, but he did not know what the world might say, had he discharged the trust alone; he therefore takes in one with him, to be a witness of his actions.

## 2 Corinthians 8:21

Ver. 21. He had said the same, Ro 12:17. In both places he instructeth us, what is the great duty of all Christians, but of ministers especially, (who are as cities built upon a hill, and cannot be hid, and against whom ill men are much more ready to open their mouths, than against private Christians of a more obscure condition), viz. to *provide things honest, not only in the sight of God*, (having an eye, that in our actions we do nothing which God hath forbidden us, nor omit any thing which God hath commanded us), but also looking that in our conversation we (as much as in us lies) do those things which have a good report amongst men, Php 4:8. For besides that we are obliged to give no offence to Jews or Gentiles, nor any way to alienate them from the ways of God, we are also obliged to do what in us lieth to win and gain them to Christ; to which, the doing of actions which they account dishonest (though, it may be, some are not so upon a strict inquiry) is no fitting mean.

## 2 Corinthians 8:22

Ver. 22. This *brother* is uncertainly guessed at, nor is it at all material for us to know whether it were Epenetus, or Apollos, or Sosthenes, or any other; it is sufficient for us to know, that he was a brother, and one of whose diligence and faithfulness the apostle, and the churches where Paul

now was, had had experience; and that he was now very ready and forward to be employed in this service, upon the apostle's recommendation of this church unto him.

### 2 Corinthians 8:23

Ver. 23. This verse contains the apostle's credential letters, given to Titus, and the other two persons, sent about the business of making this collection in the church of Corinth. Many, in matters where the drawing of their purses is solicited and concerned, are very scrupulous and inquisitive, seeking all advantages to excuse themselves; one while pleading their own poverty, another while objecting against the state, or want, or quality of those for whom they are solicited; again, questioning whether their charity shall ever come to those persons for whom it is desired, objecting against the persons intrusted with the conveyance or distribution of it. The apostle having, therefore, before obviated some objections, he here obviateth the last mentioned, letting them know, that the persons intrusted with this service were unexceptionable persons. He calleth Titus his *partner and fellow-helper concerning* them, that is, in the business of the gospel, and promoting the salvation of their souls. For the others, he tells them they were such as *the churches* had thought fit to make their *messengers*; so had the credit of the churches, whose messengers they were, who would not have intrusted them if they had not judged them faithful. He calleth either the churches, or them, *the glory of Christ*. If the words be to be understood of the *messengers*. (which seemeth the fairest application of them), the meaning is, that they were instruments of the glory of Christ: or persons who, by their grace, did bring much glory to Christ. Every one that excelleth in the habits or exercise of grace, is the glory of Christ, because without Christ he can do nothing of that nature: *I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me*, Ga 2:20. The acts and exercises of grace are indeed our acts, but the power by which we do them is from Christ: we glory in Christ, and by our holy conversations glorify Christ; and Christ glorieth in every pious and holy person, as God did concerning Job, Job 1:8 2:3.

### 2 Corinthians 8:24

Ver. 24. The chapter concludeth with an exhortation to their liberality,

backed with a heap of arguments.

1. It would be an evidence of their love to God, to their afflicted brethren, and to the apostle.
2. It would be a proof of it to those messengers of the churches, and to the churches whose messengers they were.
3. It would evidence that the apostle had not, to Titus and others, boasted on their behalf in vain.

## 2 Corinthians 9:1

### Chapter Summary

2Co 9:1-5 Paul showeth the reason why, though he knew the forwardness of the Corinthians, he had sent the brethren before hand to make up their collections against his coming.

2Co 9:6-11 He stirreth them up to give bountifully and cheerfully, as a likely means to increase their store, 2Co 9:12-15 and as productive of many thanksgivings unto God.

Ver. 1. I should think the particle *γὰρ*, here translated *for*, had been better translated *but*, as in 1Pe 4:15, and 2Pe 1:9, our translators do render it. So these words contain an elegant revocation of himself from the argument he had dwelt upon in the whole former chapter, and the sense amounts to this: But to what purpose do I multiply words to you, to persuade you to minister to the saints in distress? As to you, *it is superfluous*. By this art letting them know, that he had no doubt, but a confident expectation, concerning them; the suggesting of which hath also the force of another argument, that they might not deceive the apostle's good opinion and confidence of them.

## 2 Corinthians 9:2

Ver. 2. He gives them the reason why he judgeth it superfluous to write to them, because they had a forward mind of themselves, and needed not to be spurred on. This the apostle tells them that he knew, (he had told them of it, 2Co 8:10), he knew it either from themselves, or from some that came from them unto him; and he had boasted of them for this their forwardness in this good work to the churches of Macedonia.

*And your zeal hath provoked very many;* he tells them, that their warmth unto, and in, this work, had kindled a heat in many in those parts where he was. Having therefore been so forward in this good work, and so good instruments to kindle a heat in others, he would not have them now come behind others, or grow cold in it.

### 2 Corinthians 9:3

Ver. 3. I did not send the brethren so much to move you to this work, or quicken you to it, for you yourselves purposed it a year ago, and showed a forwardness in it; the motion proceeded from yourselves, and you showed a readiness to it, which gave me occasion to boast of you to the churches of Macedonia; but I thought you might forget it, and I would not have *our boasting in vain on this behalf*. And besides, I would have the work done, that your alms might not be to gather when I come, (as he had said, 1Co 16:2), but might be in a readiness to be taken and carried away; for that is signified here by being *ready*, not that readiness of mind of which he had before spoken, and which he had before mentioned as what he had found in them.

### 2 Corinthians 9:4

Ver. 4. For if I should come, and any of the members of the churches of Macedonia, who have heard me boasting of you as a people very forward in this charitable work, and when they are come they should find you had done nothing, only talked much of your readiness, both I should be ashamed, and you also might see some cause to blush, which I, who consult your honour and reputation equally with my own, would prevent.

## 2 Corinthians 9:5

Ver. 5. This was the cause why I judged it reasonable to send the three brethren, before mentioned, unto you, that they might make up your bounty; προκαταρτισωσι, not so much to move, quicken, or exhort you to it, as to hasten the despatch and perfecting of it, that your money might be ready gathered. The word which we translate *bounty*, in the Greek signifieth blessing, which agreeth with the Hebrew dialect. Abigail's present to David in his distress is called בְּרִכָּה, a *blessing*, 1Sa 25:27: so Jacob called his present to his brother Esau, Ge 33:11. Such kind of reliefs are called a blessing in both the Hebrew and the Greek tongue:

1. Because they are a part of God's blessing upon him that gives, Ps 24:5.
2. Because the giving of them is a recognition or acknowledgment how far God hath blessed persons, they giving as the Lord hath prospered them, 1Co 16:2.
3. Because they are an indication of the blessing, or well wishing, of him that giveth to him that receiveth the gift.
4. Because they are a real doing good to the person that receiveth them, an actual blessing of him.
5. Possibly they are (in him that gives) an effectual, real blessing of God; for we then bless God with what we have, when we use and improve it for the ends for which he hath given it to us. It is very observable, that a liberal, free giving to the relief of the servants of God in distress, is called χαρις and ευλογια, *grace* and *blessing*; a heart to it being created in us from the free grace of God, and the work itself being a real, actual blessing of God with our substance, and the fruit of our increase: which two things well digested, will be potent arguments to charity with every soul that knoweth any thing of God, or hath any love for God.

*That the same might be ready;* that the same may be ready gathered, not to gather when I come. As a blessing, we translate it, *as a matter of bounty*: the sense is the same.

*Not as of covetousness:* the meaning is, I have also sent the brethren, that they may persuade you to a free and liberal contribution, a giving that may look like a blessing, not as proceeding from a narrow heart, in which the love of money prevaieth above the love of God. Giving to the distressed saints of God sparingly, and disproportionately to what estate we have, no ways looks like a blessing; he that so gives, doth not, according to the apostle's phrase, give *ως ευλογιαν* for he neither gives as the Lord hath blessed and prospered him, nor yet according to what God requires of him; for he withholds a part of what he ought to part with: neither doth he bless his brother; he doth him some little good, but blessing another signifies a more liberal doing good to him.

### 2 Corinthians 9:6

Ver. 6. Whereas covetous persons think all lost which they give to charitable uses, the apostle correcteth their mistake, by letting them know, that it is no more lost than the seed is which the husbandman casteth into his ground, which bringeth forth thirty, sixty, or sometimes a hundred-fold; though with this difference, that whereas the husbandman's crop dependeth upon the goodness and preparedness of his ground, it is not so with this spiritual crop; a man shall not reap according to the nature of the soil in which he casts his seed; for he that giveth to a prophet or to a righteous man, in the name of a prophet or a righteous man, (though he may be mistaken in the person to whom he so giveth), yet shall he receive the reward of a prophet and of a righteous man. But this spiritual sower shall receive according to the quantity of seed which he soweth: he that soweth niggardly and sparingly shall reap accordingly; he that soweth liberally shall reap liberally: from whence we may be confirmed, that the rewards of another life will not be equal, but bear some proportion to the good works which men have done here.

### 2 Corinthians 9:7

Ver. 7. Let not any give out of any awe of us, nor as it were forced by our authority, but as God shall put it into his heart, and as he hath purposed in himself, and is inclined from himself, without any grudging or unwillingness; not because he thinks he must give, but out of choice: for

God loveth one that giveth with freedom and cheerfulness, not him that giveth as it were by constraint, or upon force; it is the will and affection of the giver, not the quantity of the gift, that God looks at. The apostle, by naming God and his acceptance in the case, lets the Corinthians know, that God was concerned in what they thus gave, it was not given to men only; according to that: *He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again, Pr 19:17.*

### 2 Corinthians 9:8

Ver. 8. Having made God, in the verse before, a debtor to those who, by giving to poor distressed saints, would make him their creditor, he here proveth him to be no insolvent debtor, but able to do much more for them, than they in this thing should do at his command out of love to him.

*He is (saith he) able to make all grace to abound toward you:* the word translated *grace*, signifieth all sorts of gifts, whether of a temporal or spiritual nature; and being here applied to God, (who is the Author of all gifts), it may very properly be interpreted concerning both. God is able to repay you in temporal things what you thus lend him, and so to pay you in specie; and he is able to pay you in value, by spiritual habits and influences.

*That ye, always having all sufficieney in all things, may abound to every good work;* that you may have a sufficieney in all things, so as that you may abound to and in every good work.

### 2 Corinthians 9:9

Ver. 9. As in the former verse the apostle had asserted God's sufficieney to repay them what they should lend him. So he here asserteth God's readiness and willingness. This he confirmeth from a promise taken out of Ps 112:9, where also is further added, *his horn shall be exalted with honour*. Concerning the merciful man, it is true that Solomon saith, Pr 11:24: *There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth*. The psalmist saith: *His righteousness endureth for ever*: by which term some understand his bounty or liberality: I had rather understand by it here his obedience to the



command of God ht his free distribution to the poor; this remaineth in God's book of remembrance for ever, God will not forget this *labour of love*, Heb 6:10. The friends which he maketh with his *mammon of righteousness*, shall receive him *into everlasting habitations*, Lu 16:9. A man's riches cannot remain for ever, but his righteousness, in the distribution of them according to the command of God, that shall remain for ever.

### 2 Corinthians 9:10

Ver. 10. The God, whose providence and blessing maketh rich, and who giveth this seed to the sower, supply you with whatsoever you stand in need of for this life, and give you a heart to multiply that spiritual seed, by which the fruits of your righteousness shall be increased. Some Greek copies read these words in the future tense, according to which reading they are a formal promise, both of good things, whereby they might show their charity, and also of a free and large heart, disposing them to that exercise of grace. Our translators render it in the form of a prayer; which yet being the prayer of the apostle, put up in faith, doth virtually contain a promise both of a temporal and a spiritual increase.

### 2 Corinthians 9:11

Ver. 11. The word liere translated *bountifulness*, signifies simplicity, in opposition to deceit and fraud. We had it before, 2Co 8:2; so Ro 12:8: so, Jas 1:5, God is said to give  $\alpha\pi\lambda\omega\varsigma$ , simply (we translate it *liberally*). We have in these two chapters met with three words, by which the bounty of Christians to persons in distress is expressed; *grace*, *blessing*, *simplicity*,  $\chi\alpha\rho\iota\varsigma$ ,  $\epsilon\upsilon\lambda\omicron\gamma\iota\alpha$ ,  $\alpha\pi\lambda\omicron\tau\eta\varsigma$ . The first lets us know the true root of all acceptable giving to those who are in distress, that must be free love: the second expresseth the true end, blessing God and our neighbour; serving the glory and commands of God, and the necessities of our brethren: this third expresseth the manner how we must give, that is, with simplicity. It is no true liberality where simplicity is wanting, that a man doth not what he doth with a plain heart and design to obey God and do good to his brother.

*Which causeth through us thanksgiving to God;* as a further argument to

press them to this liberality, he tells them, that it would cause them that were the apostles and ministers of Christ, to offer thanksgiving unto God.

### 2 Corinthians 9:12

Ver. 12. No than ought to live to himself; the two great ends of every Christian's life ought to be, the glory of God, and the good of others, especially such as belong to the household of faith. This service (saith the apostle) serveth both those ends:

1. It supplieth the necessities of the saints; and:
2. It causeth thanksgivings to God by many persons, and upon many accounts; which he further openeth in the following verses.

### 2 Corinthians 9:13

Ver. 13. *Whiles by the experiment of this ministration, upon their receiving of what you sent them, they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ; they will see how ready you are to obey the gospel of Christ, (which hath in so many places called you to this duty), and this will give them occasion of blessing God, who in the day of his power hath made such a willing people, willing at God's command, and in consideration of the love of Christ, to strip themselves to clothe his naked members, to restrain their own appetites to feed them. The grace of God bestowed on others, is matter of great thanksgiving to every gracious heart.*

*And for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men: another cause of thanksgiving will be God's moving your hearts towards them; they will see reason to bless God, who hath raised them up such friends in their great straits; so as they will both bless God on your behalf, for his grace bestowed on you, that out of the Gentiles he hath picked out a people so subject to the law of his gospel; and also on their own behalf, that God hath stirred up a people to compassionate them in their deep distresses.*

## 2 Corinthians 9:14

Ver. 14. Another way by which the glory of God will be promoted, by your simple, free, and liberal contribution, is, that by this he will have more prayers, which also will redound to your advantage, for it will procure prayers for you; and not prayers only, but a great deal of fervent love; so as they will long after your good, and after your acquaintance, when they shall receive such an experiment of *the exceeding grace of God in you.*

## 2 Corinthians 9:15

Ver. 15. Interpreters are not agreed what the apostle here meaneth by God's *unspeakable gift.* Some by it understand Christ, who is *the gift of God,* and the Fountain of all grace; and to this the epithet *unspeakable* doth best agree. Others understand the gospel, by which the hearts of men are subdued, effectually disposed, and inclined to obey the will of God. Others think it is to be understood of that habit of brotherly love, which from the Spirit of Christ, by the gospel, was wrought in the hearts of these Corinthians. If the last be meant, (to which the most incline), the apostle declareth his firm persuasion of them, that they would obey him in this thing, and giveth God thanks for giving them such a heart. Seeing the contribution was not yet made, though a year before they had declared their readiness to it, I should rather incline to interpret it concerning Christ; and that the apostle concludeth this whole discourse about contributing to the relief of these poor members of Christ, with a general doxology, or blessing of God for Jesus Christ, who is the Author and Finisher of all grace, without such a particular reference to the preceding discourse; yet hereby hinting to them, that without the influence of his grace they would, they could do nothing.

## 2 Corinthians 10:1

### Chapter Summary

2Co 10:1-11 Paul entreateth the Corinthians not to leave him cause to exert against them that spiritual power, with which he was armed, and meant to chastise

those who undervalued his person and apostolical character.

2Co 10:12-18 He pointeth out the difference between those who, for want of looking beyond themselves, were arrogant and vain intruding into, and taking merit from, the labours of others, and himself, who kept strictly within the province allotted him by God, and, avoiding self-commendation, sought honour from the commendation of Christ.

## Chapter Introduction

Hitherto the apostle, who in his former Epistle had blamed this church for so many things, and dealt sharply with them, in this Epistle hath treated them as if they had been a people that had had no faults, or none but what, in obedience to his former Epistle they had reformed, and become a new lump: which argueth, that the major part of the members of it were a good and an obedient people, by whose prevalent vote they had reformed much that was amiss. But in these four last chapters, to let us know that there was yet some of the old leaven amongst them, he useth another style; taking notice, titat lie understood there was amongst them another (though possibly the lesser) party who had much vilified him; and justifying himself against their whisperings and calumnies, not withmut some sharp reflections upon them.

Ver. 1. *Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ: meekness* respecteth the spirit or inward man, being a virtue that moderateth inward anger and rash passions.

*Gentleness* more respecteth the outward conversation. The apostle mentioneth both these virtues, as eminent in Christ, who is our great example, and to whom all Christians are bound to be conformable.

*Who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you:* he here repeateth the words of those who, in this church, reproached him; they reported him a man, who, when he was there in presence with them, was lowly and humble enough; but when he was absent from them, then he wrote imperiously and confidently enough. The sense of the words is plainly this: I Paul, (of whom some amongst you say, that when I am

there with you I am low and humble enough, even to some degrees of baseness; but when I am absent, then I write like a lord, boldly and confidently), I beseech you to consider the temper of our common Lord and Saviour, to remember how free he was from rash anger and passion, how gentle he was in his conversation; and by the obligation that is upon you, to love and practise those virtues which you saw, or have heard of, in him.

### 2 Corinthians 10:2

Ver. 2. It is true, (saith the apostle), when I have been with you I have made it my business to behave myself with all obliging sweetness, not using that authority which I might have used; and I beseech you, as not to blame me for that, (remembering the meekness and gentleness of Christ), so by your conversation not to force me to another kind of conversation amongst you; that you would not constrain me to a severer behaviour towards you when I am present with you, to be so free with some of you, as at present I am resolved to be; such, I mean, as have traduced me, as if I *walked according to the flesh*, that is, not guided by the Holy Spirit of God, and the directions of his word, but by some external, carnal considerations, respecting my own profit, pleasure, or reputation, indulging my own passions or corrupt affections. Walking *after the flesh* is opposed to a walking *after the Spirit*, Ro 8:1. He walketh *after the flesh*, to whom the fleshly appetite is the principle, rule, and end of his actions; as he, on the contrary, to whom those habits of grace which are wrought in the soul by the Holy Spirit, or the Spirit himself more immediately by his motions or impulses, are the principle of his actions, and the word dictated by the Spirit is the rule of his actions, and the glory of God is the end of his actions, is truly said to walk *after the Spirit*.

### 2 Corinthians 10:3

Ver. 3. There is a great difference between walking in the flesh, and warring after the flesh. The best of men in this life walk in the flesh, as their souls are not in a state of separation from, but union with, the body; but they do not walk after the flesh, as their fleshly appetite is not the principle of their actions, nor the satisfaction of it the end of their actions.

The apostle, in the latter part of the verse changeth the verb; in the former part he called our conversation, a walking; in the latter part he calleth it a warring; which he describeth negatively in this verse, positively in the following verses. In calling it a warring, he lets us know that it is, and will be, a life of opposition, in which a Christian will have many enemies; though his hand be against none, yet many hands will be against him. But though they be men of strife and contention, in a passive sense, yet they are not so in an active sense, according to the usual notion of warring; for they war not after the flesh, neither as fleshly men, nor in a carnal, fleshly manner, nor yet for fleshly ends. The men of the world war for their honour and glory, or for revenge and satisfaction of their lusts, or for the enlarging of their territories and dominions; but *we do not thus war after the flesh.*

#### 2 Corinthians 10:4

Ver. 4. As our end is spiritual, so are our means; the means by which we manage our spiritual fight are spiritual. Whether by these *weapons* he meaneth the word of God, and his preaching the gospel, or the censures of the church duly administered, it is true, they are not of a carnal nature, or fitted to the subduing of men's bodies, and bringing them into subjection; they are of a spiritual nature, and have their effects upon the mind and inward part of a man; yet, through the concurrence of Divine grace, there is in them a mighty force and power, to pull down *strong holds*: by which metaphorical expression he understands whatsoever opposeth the gospel, and seemeth to defend and uphold men in their sinful courses; subduing the will of man, which is so strong a hold that all the power of hell cannot storm it.

#### 2 Corinthians 10:5

Ver. 5. *Casting down imaginations; λογισμους*, reasonings; and every high thing, every height of reasoning, that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God. The great troublers of this church of Corinth were the heathen philosophers, and such as had sucked in their principles; with whose notions, which were conclusions drawn from reason not sanctified and subdued to the will of God, divers doctrines of faith would not agree.

St. Paul tells them, that the gospel, (which was the great weapon of his warfare), through the power of God, was mighty to pull down the strong holds which unbelief had in the carnal understanding of men, to overthrow their reasonings, the heights of them, which exalted themselves against the doctrine of faith; and to bring *παν νοημα*, *every thought*, or counsel into a captivity to the obedience of Christ: so as whatsoever was revealed by the apostles from the Spirit of God, men readily agreed and yielded obedience to; whatever their thoughts or reasonings about it were, they gave credit to it; not because it appeared rational to them, but upon the Divine authority of the revelation; submitting their reason to that, and believing it the most rational thing in the world, that they should believe what God affirmed, and do what God commanded; and this blessed effect the gospel had in all those who heartily embraced it: for indeed to give an assent to a proposition, merely upon a sensible or rational demonstration, is no faith, that is, no Divine faith. Truly to believe, in a Divine sense, is to assent to a proposition upon the credit of the revelation, though we cannot make it out by our reason: and this it is to have our thoughts brought into a captivity to the obedience of Christ. That whereas reason, as it is since the fall subjected in man, riseth up in arms against several Divine propositions, and saith: How can these things be? How can one be three, and three one? How could the Divine and human nature unite in one person? How can the dead rise? &c.: The believer *audit verbum Dei et tacet*, readeth these things, and others of the like nature, plainly asserted in holy writ, and chides down his reason; resolving to give credit to these things merely because God hath said them, who cannot lie. Thus our *νοηματα*, thoughts, counsels, reasonings, deliberations, conclusions, all the product of our understanding, is brought into a captivity to the obedience of Christ; and reason itself, which is the governess and mistress of the soul of man, is made a captive to revelation. And in this appeared the mighty power of the weapons of the apostle's warfare.

## 2 Corinthians 10:6

Ver. 6. The apostle certainly means by this, excommunication; which was the rod which he had before mentioned, asking them if they would he should come unto them with a rod. This rod he here threateneth them with; telling them, that he had another weapon of his warfare, of a spiritual nature too, to be used against such as preferred themselves to be believers,

but walked disorderly; only he at present spared them, because though a great part of them were obedient, yet there were some amongst them of whose obedience he could not yet glory; but yet he hoped well, and therefore should wait until, by the use of all fair means, (such as exhortations and arguments), he had reduced as many of them as he could unto obedience. But that being done, God had intrusted him with another weapon, with which he would, in the name and by the authority of God, revenge his glory upon the disobedience of others. Herein the apostle hath set a rule and a pattern to all churches, where are multitudes that walk disorderly; not to be too hasty in excommunicating them, but to proceed gradually; first using all fair means, and waiting with all patience, for the reducing them to their duty, who will by any gentle and fair means be reduced; and then revenging the honour and glory of God only upon such as will not be reclaimed.

### 2 Corinthians 10:7

Ver. 7. Are ye so weak as to judge of persons and things merely from their faces, pretences, or outward appearances? And to magnify these false apostles and teachers, merely because they set forth and magnify themselves, or because they take up a great breadth in the world, and live in a little state and splendour? If any of them do judge that he is the servant or the minister of Christ, why should he not think the same of me? What hath he to say to prove his relation to Christ more than I have? What hath he to glory in upon that account more than I have?

### 2 Corinthians 10:8

Ver. 8. Here is a remarkable maxim, a rule from which all ecclesiastical superiors ought to measure their actions: God hath given to no superiors a power for *destruction* of the flock, but only for *edification*; so as that no such can pretend to a power received from God, to do or exact any thing which may any ways hinder the salvation of the souls put under their trust; they ought to command or exact nothing, nor to do any thing, but what may probably tend to the promoting of people's faith, and holiness, and eternal salvation. This maxim the apostle puts in in a parenthesis in this verse, to sweeten what he had before spoken, concerning his readiness to



revenge the disobedience of such who should appear to be stubborn and contumacious. But he tells them, he *should not be ashamed* if he did *boast somewhat more of* a just and due *authority* than the false apostles and teachers had, who vilified him; for he was an apostle, and had a more immediate authority than they who were ordinary teachers.

### 2 Corinthians 10:9

Ver. 9. This was one imputation upon the apostle, as we may learn by the next verse. I tell you, saith the apostle, that I have an authority, and a further authority than those who vilify me can pretend unto: but I also tell you, I have no authority to do any harm to any of you; all the authority I have is for your edification, as much as lieth in me to promote the business of your salvation; so that I need not be reported as one that went about to terrify you by my letters; yet I know there are some who so represent me unto you.

### 2 Corinthians 10:10

Ver. 10. There are some amongst you that tell you, that indeed (when absent) I write severely, and with authority; but when I am there with you, neither my behaviour, nor my speech, speaks any such authority.

### 2 Corinthians 10:11

Ver. 11. I would have no such person think so of me, for he shall find me the same in deed when I come, that I have spoken myself to be by my letters. I do not write vainly, merely to terrify you, but what I truly intend to do, and when I come he shall find that I will do.

### 2 Corinthians 10:12

Ver. 12. This whole verse is a reflection upon the false teachers of the church of Corinth, from whose manners Paul purgeth himself. I (saith he) durst not, as some others, magnify myself, nor compare myself with those

that do so. Neither is it any wisdom in them to contemn and despise others, in comparison of themselves; for observe what measures they take, they only measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves amongst themselves, that is, with birds of their own feather, such as are like unto themselves, and of their own faction and party; which no wise men would do.

### 2 Corinthians 10:13

Ver. 13. The apostle may be understood as speaking both of spiritual gifts, and also of his travels to the several places whither he had gone preaching the gospel. He reflecteth still upon the false teachers who were crept into this church; who (as it should seem) had much boasted of their gifts and abilities, and of their labours and successes. In opposition to whom, he saith, that he boasted not *without his measure*, or, (as it is in the Greek, *τα αμετρα*) unmeasurable things; but he kept himself within *the measure of the rule*; that is, according to that regular measure which God hath set us. Which *measure* extendeth *even to you*. You have those amongst you who boast unmeasurably of the gifts which they have, and of the great things which they do; I durst not do so (saith the apostle); God hath given me a measure and a rule, according to that I have acted, and of those actings only I will glory. And in my so doing I can boast of you, for to you my measure and line hath reached; God hath made me an instrument to raise him up a church amongst you.

### 2 Corinthians 10:14

Ver. 14. For in our boasting of you as our converts, amongst whom I have preached the gospel, and God hath made my preaching successful; *we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure*, and arrogate that to ourselves which belongeth not to us: for the thing is true, and ye know that in our *preaching the gospel we have come as far as unto you*, and that God hath given our labours success amongst you.

### 2 Corinthians 10:15

Ver. 15. So that although we have boasted of you, we have not boasted *of things without our measure*; that is, of things that are not, or (as the apostle expounds himself) of things that were not done by him but by other men; for his line did reach unto them, and his labours had been employed and made successful amongst them. And he declares his hope, that when the gospel should have had its full success amongst them, and their *faith* should be *increased*, (either by the addition of more persons to the church amongst them, or by the perfecting of their faith, and other graces), they, who were apostles and the ministers of the gospel to them, should by it be magnified, or made great; to wit, by their means, who using much navigation, would have opportunities to comment the gospel, and the ministry of it, to other people, amongst whom they should come: wherein yet they should not exceed their rule; for though ordinary ministers be fixed in particular churches and places, yet the apostles' rule was to go and preach the gospel over the whole world, being tied to no certain people or places.

#### 2 Corinthians 10:16

Ver. 16. *To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you*; the apostle here expoundeth what he meaneth by the term magnified, or *enlarged*, in the preceding verse, viz. to have a door opened to preach the gospel in places whither it was not yet come. God honoureth persons when he maketh them instruments to bring any to an acquaintance with, and to the embracing of, his gospel, who formerly had been ignorant of it, and not acquainted with it.

*And not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand*: he here seemeth to reflect on the false teachers crept into this church, who had nothing to boast in but a pretended building, upon other men's foundations, and carrying on a work by others made ready to their hands; and seemeth to prefer the work of conversion, and an instrumentality in that, before an instrumentality merely in edification, and carrying on the work of God already begun in people's souls.

#### 2 Corinthians 10:17

Ver. 17. But we have none of us any thing to glory in, neither I Paul who plant, nor Apollos who watereth; whether God maketh use of us as the first planters of the gospel, or as instruments to carry on the work of the gospel already planted, we have nothing of our own to glory in.

*God giveth the increase;* we have therefore no reason to glory in ourselves, or in our own performances, but only to give thanks to God, who maketh use of us, poor earthly vessels, to carry about and distribute that heavenly treasure, by which he maketh souls rich in faith and good works: all that we do is only instrumentally; God is all, and in all, as to primary efficiency.

## 2 Corinthians 10:18

Ver. 18. Solomon saith, Pr 27:2: *Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.* Self-commendation is an ungrateful sound to ingenuous ears; no man thinks another a jot the better for his commending himself, but always hath the worse opinion of him for such boasting; but this text speaketh of a higher approbation, viz. from God. No man is approved of God for his speaking well of himself; the business is, who they are who approve themselves in the work which God hath committed to them; to whom the Lord will say: Well done, good and faithful servants: to whom the apostle refers both himself, and those who magnified themselves, but vilified him.

## 2 Corinthians 11:1

### Chapter Summary

2Co 11:1-4 Paul unwillingly entereth upon a commendation of himself, out of jealousy lest the Corinthians should be perverted by false apostles from the pure doctrine of Christ.

2Co 11:5,6 He showeth that he was in all respects equal to the chiefest apostles.

2Co 11:7-15 That he declined being chargeable to them, not for want of love toward them, but to cut off occasion from those deceitful workers of taking

shelter under his example.

2Co 11:16-22 That he was not inferior to those, whom they so patiently submitted to, in any of their boasted pretogatives,

2Co 11:23-33 but as a minister of Christ, in labours and sufferings for the gospel's sake, was abundantly their superior.

Ver. 1. That which the apostle here calls his *folly*, was his speaking so much in his own commendation; which indeed is no better than folly, unless there be a great reason; which was here, for it was the false teachers, vilifying his person and office, that put him upon it. The verb in the latter part of the verse, may be read either imperatively, (and so we translate it), as if it were an entreaty of them to excuse him in speaking so much good of himself; or indicatively, you do bear with me.

### 2 Corinthians 11:2

Ver. 2. Jealousy is a passion in a person which makes him impatient of any rival or partner in the thing or person beloved. The apostle tells them, that he was *jealous over them*, and thereby lets them know, that he so passionately loved them, as that he was not patient that any should pretend more kindness to them than he had for them; and withal, that he had some fear of them, lest they should be perverted and drawn away from the simplicity of the gospel; upon this account he calls it a *godly jealousy*. For (saith he) I have been instrumental to bring you to Christ; this he calls an espousing of them, the union of persons with Christ being expressed in Scripture under the notion of a marriage, Eph 5:23, &c. And he expresseth his earnest desire to *present them to Christ* uncorrupted, like a *chaste virgin*.

### 2 Corinthians 11:3

Ver. 3. In all jealousy there is a mixture of love and fear: the apostle's love to this church, together with his earnest desire to present them in the day of judgment unto Christ pure and uncorrupted, caused him to write; because he was afraid, lest that as the serpent by his subtlety deceived Eve, so some

subtle seducers should corrupt them, and so withdraw them from the simplicity of their faith in Christ, and obedience to him. This danger was partly from the pagan philosophers, mixing their philosophical notions with the plain doctrine of the gospel; and partly from some that were tenacious of the Judaical rites, and would not understand the abolition of the ceremonial law.

### 2 Corinthians 11:4

Ver. 4. How our translators have interpreted *καλως ηνειχεσθε*, *ye might well bear*, I cannot tell: the words manifestly are to be interpreted, you have well borne, and so are plainly a reflection upon some in this church, who had patiently endured false teachers, who had preached other doctrine than what Paul had preached. And this the apostle giveth as a reason of his fear, lest they should be corrupted and drawn away from the simplicity of the gospel. This certainly is more obviously the sense of the words, than what others incline to, who make the sense this: If any other could come to you, who could preach to you a better Jesus, a more excellent Saviour, than we have done; or a more excellent spirit than him whom you have received; or a more excellent doctrine than the doctrine of the gospel, which we have preached; you might bear with him. For I see no pretence to interpret the verb as in the potential mood, it is manifestly the indicative mood; and declareth, not what they might do, but what they had done; which made the apostle jealous of them, lest they should be perverted. And our Saviour, Joh 5:43, hath taught us, that those who with the most difficulty receive those who come to them in God's name, are always most easy to receive those who come in their own name, without any due authority or commission from God.

### 2 Corinthians 11:5

Ver. 5. The apostle, doubtless, meaneth those that were the true apostles of our Lord. those who were immediately sent out by him to preach the gospel, behind whom the apostle was not, either in respect of ministerial gifts and graces, or in respect of labours, or in respect of success which God had given him in his work. One method that false teachers used to vilify Paul, was by magnifying some others of the apostles above him, and

preferring them before him; which makes him, both here, and in Ga 2:1-21, and Ro 11:13, to magnify his office, by showing them, there was no reason why they should make a difference between him and other apostles; for he had the same immediate call, was intrusted with the same power, furnished and adorned with the same gifts, in labours (as he elsewhere saith) he had been more than they all; nor had God been wanting in giving him success in his labours, proportionable to the chiefest of them: so as he *was not a whit behind* them.

### 2 Corinthians 11:6

Ver. 6. *But though I be rude in speech;* admit (saith the apostle) that I be no orator, speaking to you in high language, or in a neat style and phrase; either having no faculty that way, or, if I have, yet choosing rather to speak plainly, and home to your consciences, than floridly, to tickle your ears with a fine sound and chiming of words.

*Yet not in knowledge;* yet, I bless God, I am not defective in knowledge; and, as God hath enlightened me with a large knowledge of his will, so I have communicated to you the whole counsel of God.

*But we have been throughly made manifest among you in all things;* and in all things, which may declare me an apostle, one sent of Christ about the business of the gospel, I have been made manifest amongst you; preaching amongst you the whole doctrine of the gospel, and having been an instrument to convert many of you from paganism to Christianity.

### 2 Corinthians 11:7

Ver. 7. What is it that hath made you take such offence at me; seeing you cannot say, that either in my call, or in my gifts and graces, or in my labours, or in the success of my labours, I have been inferior to the chiefest of the apostles? Doth this offend you, that for your sake I have veiled my authority, and departed from my right? Which makes some of you say, I am base in presence. Is it for my putting you to no charge in my preaching the gospel? This was a thing wherein he gloried, and told them, 1Co 9:6,12,15, that he would rather die, than have his glorying void in this

particular.

### 2 Corinthians 11:8

Ver. 8. He interpreteth the term of *robbed other churches*, by a *taking wages of them*; which indeed is no robbery, as he had proved, 1Co 9:1-27. All the robbery that was in it lay in this, that his maintenance, in strictness of right, should have been proportionably from this, as well as from other churches; but for some reasons (which he thinks fit to conceal) he refused to receive any thing from this church; but spared them, and lived upon the maintenance he had from other churches, while he was doing them service. Either he saw the members of this church were poor, or that there were some in this church who would sooner have taken advantage to reproach him for it, and so have hindered the success of the gospel. Whatever it was that caused the apostle to do it, certain it is, that he did it, and make it a great piece of his glorying.

### 2 Corinthians 11:9

Ver. 9. The word which we translate *chargeable*, signifies to benumb; I benumbed no man: or, (as others), I was not myself more benumbed in any thing. If we take it in the first mentioned sense, it lets us see a reason why Paul refused to take wages of the church of Corinth, lest he should cool and benumb them as to the receiving of the gospel, when they saw it would prove chargeable to them. If in the latter sense, the apostle seems to reflect upon such whom wages only edged to their work, who preached merely for gain and filthy lucre. To distinguish himself from such hirelings, he tells them, that when he was with them, and laboured amongst them in preaching the gospel, he put them to no charge; yet he was not slothful in his work, but as laborious as those who did take wages. As to himself, he had want enough whilst he was amongst them; but the providence of God ordered him a supply from the churches of Macedonia, and by that means he kept himself from being burdensome to them; and, he tells them, so he was resolved that he would still be.



## 2 Corinthians 11:10

Ver. 10. The apostle often repeateth this, glorying much in it, that in this region of Achaia he had preached the gospel without charge to the hearers: he did so also at Thessalonica, 1Th 2:5,6,9; but concerning them, he saith, what he no where saith of the Corinthians, that they received the word in much affliction; which might, probably, be the cause. It is most likely that he either discerned this people to be more covetous, and too much lovers of their money: or that there was a generation among them, who, if he had taken wages for his labours, would have reproached him as one that was a hireling, and who did all that he did for money. And, indeed, himself seemeth in the next verses to give this as a reason.

## 2 Corinthians 11:11

Ver. 11. Can you possibly interpret my not being chargeable to you, as proceeding from a want of love in me to you? God knoweth the contrary.

## 2 Corinthians 11:12

Ver. 12. I know (saith the apostle) that there are some amongst you who, out of their hatred to me, would seek any occasion to asperse me to justify themselves. If I had (as I might) have taken wages amongst you for my labours, they would either have taken occasion from it to have aspersed me, (as doing what I did from a mercenary spirit), or at least to have justified themselves in their exactings upon you. I had a mind to prevent any such occasions of boasting.

*That wherein they glory, they may be found even as we:* it should seem by these words, that some teachers in this church, being (possibly) men of estates, required no maintenance of the people; and would have taken advantage against the apostle, if he had taken any: or, possibly, some others exacted upon them unreasonably, who, had Paul taken wages, would have justified themselves by his example. The apostle therefore was resolved to cut off from them any pretence or occasion of boasting, and to do whatever any of them did, in sparing the Corinthians as to the business of their purses.

## 2 Corinthians 11:13

Ver. 13. *For such are false apostles;* that is, persons pretending to be sent of Christ, but were indeed never sent of him.

*Deceitful workers;* persons whose work is but to cheat and deceive you; and that both with reference to their call and authority which they pretend to, and also to the doctrine which they bring.

*Transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ;* they were never apostles of Christ, only they put themselves into such a shape and form, that they might have more advantage to deceive.

## 2 Corinthians 11:14

Ver. 14. It is not at all to be wondered, that the emissaries of Satan dissemble, and pretend themselves to be what they are not, for even Satan himself, who is the prince of darkness, in order to the deceiving and seducing of souls, transformeth himself *into an angel of light;* that is, puts on the appearance and form of a good angel. He calls them *angels of light,* because they were wont to appear in a lightsome brightness; or because of that glory in which they behold the face of God; or because of those great measures of heavenly knowledge which those blessed spirits have. All tempted souls have an experiment of this; for none is tempted to evil under the appearance of evil, (evil as evil being what a reasonable soul cannot be courted to). The devil therefore, in all his temptations to sin, though his end be to ruin and destroy, yet appeareth as *an angel of light;* moving the soul to evil under the notion and appearance of good.

## 2 Corinthians 11:15

Ver. 15. It is no wonder if there be like servants, like masters: and as the devil, in order to the deceiving of souls, pretends to what he is not, viz. a friend to them; so those who seek their own profit, not your good, show themselves to be *his ministers,* driving the same design with him, also do

the like, and change their shapes, pretending themselves to be ministers of the gospel, and to aim at the good of your souls, by teaching you the way of righteousness; but God will one day judge of their works, and their reward at last will be *according to their works*.

### 2 Corinthians 11:16

Ver. 16. *I say again, Let no man think me a fool:* I know that he, who is much in magnifying and praising himself, ordinarily is judged to be a fool; but though I do so, let me not lie under that imputation. There is a time for all things; a time for a man to cease from his own praises, and a time for him to praise himself. The time for the latter is, when the glory of God, or our own just vindication, is concerned; both which concurred here: the apostle was out of measure vilified by these false apostles; and the glory of God was eminently concerned, that so great an apostle and instrument in promoting the gospel, should not be exposed to contempt, as a mean and despicable person, or as an impostor and deceiver.

*If otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little;* but if you will judge me a fool, be it so; yet receive me as such, while I boast a little.

### 2 Corinthians 11:17

Ver. 17. *That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord;* I do not pretend to have any special command of God, to speak what I shall now say in my own commendation; God hath left that to our liberty, which we may use, or not use, as circumstances of time, place, and occasion direct. Or, I do not speak according to the ordinary practice of Christians and ministers of the gospel; whose ordinary practice is to abase and vilify, not to exalt and set forth themselves, according to the more general rules of the word. Yet what the apostle saith was not contrary to the Lord, or to the directions of his word, which hath no where commanded us to vilify ourselves, or to conceal what God hath wrought in us and by us.

*But as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting:* this my confident boasting hath an appearance of foolishness in it, though really it be not so;

for nothing can be truly called foolishness, which hath a direct and immediate tendency to the glory of God, and is designed for that end.

### 2 Corinthians 11:18

Ver. 18. By *the flesh* is meant, carnal and external things; which though they be the gifts and favours of God, yet do not at all commend a man to God. The apostle saith, there are *many that glory after the flesh*; and there needs must be such in all places, because there are many that *walk after the flesh*: now, it is but natural for men to boast and glory in those attainments, which it hath been the business of their lives to pursue after. Such there were, doubtless, in this famous church, who gloried that they were native Jews, or in their riches, or in their knowledge and learning. Now, though (saith the apostle) I know there is nothing in these things truly to be gloried in, yet, others glorying in them: *I will glory also*; and let them know, that if I thought these things worth the glorying in, I have as much to glory in of that nature as any of them have.

### 2 Corinthians 11:19

Ver. 19. Ye freely suffer others foolishly glorying and boasting of themselves, therefore do ye suffer me therein to judge yourselves wise, and it belongs to the wise to bear with such as are not so wise as themselves.

### 2 Corinthians 11:20

Ver. 20. If any domineer over you, as if you were their slaves, or if any bring you into subjection to the rites of the ceremonial law; if they *devour* and make a prey of you, take wages of you, and do nothing without hire; if they carry themselves proudly, exalting themselves above you; nay, if they *smite you*, you will suffer and bear with such: this is more than to bear with a little folly and indiscretion in me. This is observable, that men of corrupt hearts and loose lives will better bear with teachers that will humour and spare them in their lusts, than with such as are faithful to their souls in instructing and reproving them, though they carry themselves with

the greatest innocency and justice towards them.

### 2 Corinthians 11:21

Ver. 21. I speak as to those reproaches they cast on me, who am by them represented to you as though I were weak and contemptible; as indeed I am, as to my person, but not as to my doctrine, and the miracles I have wrought amongst you. And being some of them are so confident in boasting what they are, and what they have done and suffered; let me be a little bold as well as they, in telling you what I am, and what I have done and suffered.

### 2 Corinthians 11:22

Ver. 22. *Are they Hebrews? so am I:* this would incline us to think, that some, at least, of those corrupt teachers, upon whom the apostle hath so much reflected, were Jews; who had endeavoured to corrupt the Gentile churches with their traditions, and imposing on them the ceremonial rites of the Jewish church. Others think otherwise, and that the words import no more than this; Do they glory in the antiquity of their stock and parentage, as descending from Abraham? I have as much upon that account to glory in as they; for although I was born, not in Judea, but *in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia*, Ac 22:3, yet I was a Jew, *an Hebrew of the Hebrews*, Php 3:5.

*Are they Israelites?* Will they derive from Jacob, to whom God gave the name of Israel, from whence all his posterity were called Israelites?

*So am I,* (saith he), I can derive from Jacob as well as they.

*Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I:* will they glory in this, that they are *the seed of Abraham?* (this was a great boast of the Jews, as we learn from Mt 3:9, and Joh 8:1-59); saith the apostle, I have on that account as much to glory in as they. Some here inquire: What difference there is in these three things? For to be a Hebrew, and an Israelite, and of the seed of Abraham, seem all to signify the same thing. Nor indeed have we any need to assign any difference, it seemeth to be but the same thing amplified in three phrases. But others distinguish more subtly, and think the first may

signify a glorying in the ancientness of their pedigree, or in their ability to speak in the Hebrew tongue; the second, may refer to the nation of which they were; the third, to the promise made to Abraham and his seed.

### 2 Corinthians 11:23

Ver. 23. Will they glory in this, that they are *ministers of Christ*, employed as the servants of Christ in preaching the gospel? I should not boast about this, (in that I may seem to *speak as a fool*), but I am much more a minister than they, both with respect to my call to the work, and also my performing of it. I had a more immediate call and mission to the work than what they can boast of, and I have done more in that work than any of them have done.

*In labours more abundant;* I have travelled more to preach it, I have laboured more in the propagation of it.

*In stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent;* I have suffered more for the preaching of it, I have been oftener whipped, oftener imprisoned, than any of them ever were: see 2Co 6:4,5.

*In deaths oft;* I have been oftener in hazard of my life: he calls dangers threatening death, *deaths*, as 2Co 1:10.

### 2 Corinthians 11:24

Ver. 24. God, to restrain the passions of his people, which might carry them out to cruelty in the punishments of malefactors, forbade the Jewish magistrates to give any malefactor above forty stripes; (so many they might give them by the Divine law, De 25:3); but they had made an order, that none should receive above thirty-nine. This was amongst their constitutions which they called *sepimenta legis*, hedges to the Divine law; which indeed was a violation of the law: for that did not oblige them to give every malefactor, that had not deserved death, so many stripes; it gave them only a liberty to go so far, but they were not to exceed. Some think, that they punished every such malefactor with thirty-nine stripes: others, more rationally, think, that they did not so, but thirty-nine was the highest

number they laid upon any. And it is most probable, that, out of their hatred to the apostle, they laid as many stripes upon him as their constitution would suffer them to do.

### 2 Corinthians 11:25

Ver. 25. *Thrice was I beaten with rods;* this was by the pagans, for the Jews whipped malefactor with a whip which had three cords. We read of one of these times. Ac 16:23; and of a second, Ac 22:24, when the captain commanded he should be so punished, but he avoided it, by pleading he was a citizen of Rome.

*Once was I stoned:* of his stoning, read Ac 14:19, it was by a popular tumult at Lystra.

*Thrice I suffered shipwreck:* we read but of one time that Paul suffered shipwreck, Ac 27:18; which was none of the three times here mentioned, for it was after the writing of this Epistle. But though many of the acts and sufferings of this apostle were written, yet all were not.

*A night and a day I have been in the deep:* some by *the deep* here understand the inner prison, mentioned Ac 16:24, or some deep dungeon; but more probably he means, some time when, after a shipwreck, he might be put twenty-four hours to swim up and down the sea upon some broken part of the ship. It refers to some eminent danger Paul was in, of which the Scripture in no other place maketh mention particularly.

### 2 Corinthians 11:26

Ver. 26. *In journeyings often;* in travellings from place to place for the propagation of the gospel.

*In perils of waters;* in the Greek, rivers, which were many in those countries through which he travelled.

*Of robbers;* such as waited to rob passengers by the high-way.

*By mine own countrymen,* the Jews, who were mortal enemies to Paul, whom they looked upon as an apostate from their religion.

*In the city;* in many cities where he preached the gospel, as we find in the Acts of the Apostles.

*In the wilderness;* in wildernesses through which he was forced to pass.

*In the sea;* storms and shipwrecks.

*Among false brethren;* false teachers and private persons, who corrupted the Christian religion, and were as great enemies to the apostle as any he had.

### 2 Corinthians 11:27

Ver. 27. The apostle reckons up several afflictive evils, ordinarily incident to such as travel in foreign countries. Of this nature were the *weariness and painfulness*, the *hunger and thirst*, the *cold and nakedness*, here mentioned. He also mentioneth we *watchings* and *fastings*, as voluntary acts of discipline, which he used for the end mentioned, 1Co 9:27, for the keeping under his body, and bringing it into subjection, and that he might the better attend and discharge the work of the ministry.

### 2 Corinthians 11:28

Ver. 28. By the *things that are without*, the apostle meaneth either those evils which happened to him from persons that had no relation to the Christian church, but were persons *without*, ( as the phrase is used, 1Co 5:13), or else such kinds of troubles and afflictions as very little influenced his mind, but only affected his outward man: such were his labours, travels, journeyings, imprisonment, stripes before mentioned.

*Beside* these (he saith) there lay upon him an inward *care* and solicitude for *all the Christian churches*; and this was a *daily* care. For an apostle differed from an ordinary pastor, not only in his immediate call from Christ, but also in his work; there lay an obligation upon such to go up and



down preaching the gospel, and they further had, both a power, and also an obligation, to superintend all other churches, and to direct the affairs of them relating to order and government: and thereupon they were mightily concerned about their doing well or ill.

### 2 Corinthians 11:29

Ver. 29. *Who*, may be either, what church? Or, what particular Christian in any church?

*Is weak*, ασθενει, through outward afflictions, or in respect of inward spiritual troubles, *and I am not weak*, and I do not sympathize with that church, or with that person?

*Who is offended*, or scandalized, under temptations to be seduced and fall into sin, *and I burn not*, and I am not on fire with a holy zeal for the glory of God, and the good of his soul, if possible to keep him upright? By which the apostle doth not only show us what was his own holy temper, but what should be the temper of every faithful minister, as to his province, or that part of the church over which he is concerned to watch; viz. to have a true compassion to every member of it, to watch over his flock, inquiring diligently into the state of it; to have a quick sense of any evils under which they, or any of them, labour. This is indeed the duty of ever private member, but more especially of him whose office is to feed any part of the flock of Christ, Ro 12:15. In this the members of the spiritual, mystical body of Christ should answer to the members of the body natural, to which our apostle before resembled it.

### 2 Corinthians 11:30

Ver. 30. The apostle here calleth the things which he had suffered for the gospel, and the propagation of it, his *infirmities*; and saith, that he chose those things to *glory* in. He would not glory of the divers tongues with which he spake, nor of the miracles which he had wrought; but being by the ill tongues of his adversaries put upon glorying, he chose to glory of what he had suffered for God. For as the mighty power of Christ was seen in supporting him, and carrying him through so many hazards and

difficulties; so these things, probably, were such as his adversaries could not much glory in. Besides, that these things had not that natural tendency to lift up his mind above its due measures, as gifts had, which sometimes puff up (as the apostle saith concerning knowledge); and also these were things which flesh and blood commonly starleth at, and flieth from: that his gifts and miraculous operations spake the power of God in him, and the kindness of God to him, in enabling him to such effects, rather than any goodness in himself; but his patient bearing the cross spake in him great measures of faith, patience, and self-denial, and love to God; and so really were greater and truer causes of boasting, than those things could be.

### 2 Corinthians 11:31

Ver. 31. Whether this phrase be the form of an oath, or a mere assertion of God's knowledge of the heart, is a point not worth the arguing. If we look upon it in the former notion, it is no profane oath, because made in the name of God; nor no vain oath, because it is used in a grave and serious matter, and for the satisfaction of those who were not very easy to believe the apostle in this matter. But I had rather take it as a solemn assertion of God's particular knowledge of the truth of his heart in what he had said. The term *blessed for evermore*, may either be applied to the Father, or to Jesus Christ. It is applied to the Creator, Ro 1:25, and to Jesus Christ, Ro 9:5. It is here so used, as that it is applicable either to the First or Second Person. The usage of it in these three texts, is an undeniable argument to prove the Godhead of Christ. The apostle, in these words, seemeth rather to refer to what he had said before, of his various labours and sufferings, than to that which followeth; which was but a single thing, and a danger rather than a suffering.

### 2 Corinthians 11:32

Ver. 32,33. Luke hath shortly given us the history of this danger, Ac 9:23-25. Soon after Paul was converted from the Jewish to the Christian religion, he, disputing with the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, confounded them by his arguments, proving Jesus was the Christ, as we read there, Ac 9:21. This so enraged them, as that they sought to kill him, Ac 9:23. And (as we learn from this text) to effect their design, they had

by some acts or other brought over the governor to favour their design; which, governor was a substitute under Aretas the king, who was father-in-law to Herod; for (as Josephus tells us) Herod put away his wife, the daughter of this Aretas, when he took Herodias. The Jews had got this deputy heathen governor so much on their side, that he shut up the gates, keeping his soldiers in arms. But (as St. Luke tells us, Ac 9:24) Paul coming to the knowledge of this design, though they watched the gates day and night, yet he found a way of escape by the help of those Christians, who at that time were in Damascus; Ac 9:25: *The disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket.* Two questions are started upon this passage of Paul's life:

1. Whether it was lawful for him to flee? But besides the particular licence our Lord, in this case, had given his first ministers, Mt 10:23, Paul did in this case no more than what divines make lawful for a more ordinary minister, viz. to flee, when the persecution was directed against him in particular, leaving sufficient supply behind him.
2. The second question raised is: Whether, it being against human laws to go over the walls of a city or garrison, Paul did not sin in this escape? But that is easily answered; for:
  - a) This was lawful in some cases.
  - b) God's glory, and the good of souls, were more concerned in Paul's life, than to have it sacrificed to a punctilio of obedience to a human law made upon a mere politic consideration.

## 2 Corinthians 12:1

### Chapter Summary

2Co 12:1-4 Paul showeth that, though he had been favoured with visions and revelations,  
2Co 12:5-10 yet for commendation of his apostleship he chose rather to glory in his infirmities,  
2Co 12:11-13 blaming the Corinthians, who had seen in him all the signs of an apostle, for forcing him to

such vain boasting.

2Co 12:14,15 He telleth them of his design of visiting them again with the same disinterestedness and fatherly affection as before.

2Co 12:16-19 He justifieth himself from any crafty extortion by his messengers,

2Co 12:20,21 and expresseth his fears, lest, both to his sorrow and theirs, he should find many notorious disorders still unredressed among them.

Ver. 1. *It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory;* it is neither comely, nor of any advantage to myself, to glory; nor would I do it but in this case of necessity, where glorying is necessary for the glory of God, and for your good, to vindicate myself to you from the imputations that some others lay upon me.

*I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord:* do any of them boast of visions and revelations from God? I have something of that nature to glory in as well as they. Some make this difference between *visions*, and *revelations*; that *visions* signify apparitions, the meaning of which, those that see them do not understand; *revelations* signify the discoveries of the mind and will of God to persons immediately, either by dreams, or by some audible voice, which maybe without any object represented to the eye. Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar seem to have had such visions as they did not understand, till interpreted by Joseph and Daniel; but undoubtedly Paul's visions were not such. The difference therefore seems rather to be, that in all visions which good and holy men had, there was a revelation; but every revelation did not suppose a vision.

## 2 Corinthians 12:2

Ver. 2. Some doubt whether  $\epsilon\nu$   $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omega$ , in this place, be so well translated *in Christ*, ( so signifying, that the person spoken of was a Christian, one that had embraced the gospel), as by *Christ*, (as the particle is sometimes used), so signifying, that this vision was given to him by the grace and favour of Christ. The *man* he speaketh of was, doubtless, himself, otherwise it had been to him no cause or ground of glorying at all. Thus several times in Scripture, the penmen thereof speaking in commendation

of themselves, they speak in the third person instead of the first. In his saying, it was *about fourteen years ago*, and in that we do not read that he did ever before publish it, he avoids the imputation of any boasting and glorying; and showeth, that had he not been now constrained, for the glory of God, and the vindication of his own reputation, to have spoken of it, he would not now have mentioned it.

*Whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body. I cannot tell:* what the circumstances of the apostle were in this ecstasy, he professeth not to know; and therefore it seems too bold for us curiously to inquire, or positively to determine about it. It is not very probable that his soul was separated from his body; but whether his body was, by some angel, carried up to the sight of this vision, or things absent were made present to him, the apostle himself, being deprived of the use of his senses, could not tell. But *such an one* (he saith) he knew, *caught up to the third heaven;* by which he means the highest heavens, where God most manifesteth his glory, where the blessed angels see his face, and where are the just souls made perfect. The Scripture, dividing the world into the earth and the heavens, calleth all heaven that is not earth or water; hence it mentioneth an aerial heaven (which is all that space between the earth and the place where the planets and fixed stars are); hence we read of *the fowls of the heaven*, Da 4:12, of *the windows of heaven*, Ge 7:11, of a *starry heaven*, where the stars are, which are therefore called *the stars of the heaven*, Ge 22:17; and then the *highest heaven;* which was meant in the Lord's prayer, when we pray: *Our Father which art in heaven;* and is called *the heaven of heavens*. This is the heaven here spoken of.

### 2 Corinthians 12:3

Ver. 3,4. *How that he was caught up into paradise:* some by *paradise* understand a place distinct from *the third heaven* before mentioned, and think the apostle here speaks of more visions than one; but they speak much more probably, who interpret it of *the third heaven* before mentioned, called *paradise*, in regard of the delight and pleasures of it. Thus the term is used by our Saviour to the thief upon the cross, Lu 23:43, and thus it is used, Re 2:7.

*And heard unspeakable words;* what these *unspeakable words*, or things,

were, which the apostle heard in this ecstasy, is vainly inquired; whenas the apostle hath told us twice, that he could not tell *whether he was in or out of the body*; and that the words or things were such as were *unspeakable*.

*Which it is not lawful for a man to utter*; such as were either impossible to be uttered, or at least which he was prohibited to utter; so they could be made known to none but only to him that heard them. If any inquireth, for what purpose God showed them to Paul, if he might not communicate them for the good of others? The answer is easy; that this vision might be for his own confirmation, as sent of God, and for his consolation under all those hazards and dangers which he was to undergo in the ministry of the gospel, to which God had called him.

### 2 Corinthians 12:5

Ver. 5. *Of such an one will I glory*: the apostle, as appeareth by what followeth, speaketh of himself; but he does it in a third person. The meaning is, that that man who had been thus dignified of God, in such revelations and visions, might well glory of such a favour; but *yet* (saith he) *of myself will I glory*. But how doth the apostle say, that of himself he will not glory, if he were the person intended?

*Answer.* Some say, he distinguisheth concerning himself; as to his inward man, his soul, (which was rapt into the third heavens) he did glory; but as to his body, or outward man, he would not glory in any thing which he had done, but only in what he had suffered. I should rather interpret it thus: In this the Lord greatly dignified me; but here was nothing of myself; of myself therefore I will not glory in any thing, except those things which I have suffered for the name of God.

### 2 Corinthians 12:6

Ver. 6. If I should have a mind to glory, I should not be a fool; for I would not glory in things that were not true. And though a man, in speaking things of himself which are true, may sometimes betray folly (viz. where

he doth it merely to set forth himself, and make himself to appear a greater person than indeed he is); yet for a man to glory of himself, where the honour of God is concerned in the vindication of himself from reproaches and calumnies, speaks not any folly.

*But* (saith the apostle) *I forbear*, having no desire that any *should think of me above what he seeth in me, or heareth of me* from others' mouths, and not mine own.

### 2 Corinthians 12:7

Ver. 7. The best of God's people have in them a root of pride, or a disposition to be *exalted above measure*, upon their receipt of favours from God not common to others; of which nature extraordinary revelations are none of the meanest, especially when they are multiplied, as it seems they were here to Paul. To prevent the breaking out of which, the apostle here tells us, that he had *a thorn in the flesh* given him. It is variously guessed what this was; he calleth it *a thorn in the flesh*; but whether (supposing *flesh* to be here strictly taken) he meaneth some disease affecting his body with pain and smart, and if so, what that specific disease was, is no where revealed, and very uncertainly conjectured: or whether (taking *flesh* in a large sense, for his state in the flesh) he meaneth some motions to sin made to him from the devil; the importunity of which made them very grievous and afflictive to him, being *in the flesh*: or (as others think) motions to sin from his own lusts; which God suffured to stir in him, withholding such influence of his grace, by which he ordinarily kept them under, and in subjection; is very uncertain. The last mentioned seem to be least probable. For although the devil hath an influence upon our lusts, to excite and educe them into acts, yet it seems not according to the language of holy writ, to call these *messengers of Satan*; neither is it probable that St. Paul would have reckoned these amongst the gifts of God unto him: nor was this an infirmity which he would have gloried in, or which would have commended him; nor doth the term *buffet* so well agree to this sense. It seems therefore more properly to be interpreted, either of some great bodily affliction, or some diabolical importunate temptation, with which God, after these abundant revelations, suffered this great apostle to be infested; that he might be kept humble, and not lifted up upon this great favour which God had showed him; which, considering the

danger of pride, might well be reckoned amongst the gifts of God to this great apostle. And so he here gives another reason why he would not glory in the abundance of his revelations, because God by this providence had let him know, that his will was, that he should walk humbly notwithstanding them; and it had been very improper for him, being immediately upon this favour humbled by such a providence, to have lifted up himself by reason of it.

### 2 Corinthians 12:8

Ver. 8. For the removal of this affliction, (of what nature soever it was), for the taking of this thorn out of my flesh, I prayed often. It is lawful for us to pray for the removal of bodily evils, though such prayer must be always attended with a due submission to the wisdom and will of God; they being not evils in themselves, but such trials as God intendeth for our good, (as it was here in Paul's case), and which issue in our spiritual advantage.

### 2 Corinthians 12:9

Ver. 9. *And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee:* Paul prayed, and God answered, not *in specie*, ( doing the very thing for him which he asked), but *in valore*, giving him what was every whit as valuable. His answer was: *My grace* (my love and favour, not that which the apostle had already received, but which God was resolved further to show him, strengthening and supporting him under his trials, as also comforting and refreshing him) shall be enough for thee, to uphold thee under the present trial which is so burdensome to thee.

*For my strength is made perfect in weakness;* for my Divine power, in upholding and supporting my people, is never so glorious as when they are under weaknesses in themselves. When they are sensible of the greatest impotency in themselves, then I delight most to exert and put forth my power in them and for them, my power then is most evident and conspicuous, and will be best acknowledged by my people.

*Therefore* (saith the apostle) *I will choose to glory in my infirmities, that*



*the power of Christ may rest upon me.* Those dispensations of providence, in which the souls of men have the greatest experiences of the power and strength of Christ, are most to be gloried in; but such are slates of infirmities. This text confirmeth Christ to be God blessed for ever; for by his power it is that we are supported under trials, his strength it is which is made perfect in the weakness of poor creatures.

### 2 Corinthians 12:10

Ver. 10. Amongst other reasons why I rather choose to glory in what I suffer for Christ, (which is what he here calleth *infirmities*, and further openeth by *reproaches, necessities, persecutions, and distresses for Christ's sake*), this is one; that I never find myself more *strong* in the habits and acts of the grace that is in me, than *when I am* thus made *weak*. What the apostle here saith of himself, the people of God have ever since his time ordinarily experienced: then it is that they are made strong in the exercises of faith, and patience, and love to God. A child of God seldom walks so much in the view of God as his God, and in the view of his own sincerity, as when, as to his outward condition and circumstances in the world, he walks in the dark and seeth no light.

### 2 Corinthians 12:11

Ver. 11. *I am become a fool in glorying;* I may amongst some of you (who interpret all things I say into the worst sense) gain nothing but the reputation of a weak man, wanting understanding, for speaking so much in my own commendation (contrary to the rules of modesty in ordinary cases).

*Ye have compelled me;* but it is not matter of choice, but of necessity to me; the ill-will which some amongst you have to my honour and reputation, and continual defaming me as a vile and contemptible person, hath constrained me, for the honour of Christ, (whose apostle I am), and the vindication of my own reputation, to boast in this manner; at least to relate what God hath done for, and in, and by me.

*For I ought to have been commended of you;* it was your duty to have

vindicated me from the aspersions cast upon me; so others' mouths should have praised me, and not my own: I must speak, because you hold your peace, or do worse in calumniating me.

*For in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing; for you cannot but say that I, neither in my apostolical call and commission, nor yet in my gifts and graces, nor in my labours, nor in my sufferings, come behind those that are commonly thought to be the chiefest of the apostles; though (in some of your opinions) I be nothing; or indeed, of or from myself, am nothing; doing all that I do through Christ that strengtheneth me, and by the grace of God being what I am.*

### 2 Corinthians 12:12

Ver. 12. I had not only a call to my apostleship, (of which indeed you were no witnesses), but I amongst you evidenced my call by such *signs*, as were sufficient to declare me to you to be a true apostle. Amongst these, he reckons:

1. *Patience;*

2. Miracles. The first refers to those many labours which he had, in travelling to propagate the gospel, in preaching, writing, &c.; this manifested him called of God to the work.

2. Miraculous operations were another sign; for though the working of miracles was not restrained to the apostolical office, yet when they were wrought in confirmation of the doctrine which the apostle had first preached, and so were a seal of his ministry, they were truly signs of his apostleship; it being no way probable, that the God of truth would have communicated his power to men for the confirmation of lies, or of an employment to which he had never called them.

### 2 Corinthians 12:13

Ver. 13. Wherein have not you been used as any other gospel churches were, where Peter, or James, or any other of the apostles have laboured?

Hath not the same doctrine been preached to you? Have not as great miracles been wrought amongst you? Hath not the Holy Ghost been as plentifully shed abroad amongst you, to enrich you with all spiritual gifts, so as you have come behind in no gospel benefit? I know of nothing in which it hath not fared with you as with other churches, except in this; that whereas in other churches the apostles, or their pastors, have been burdensome to them, taking stipends and salaries for their pains, I have forborne it, and have not at all charged you. If this be a *wrong* to you, I hope it is not of that nature, but I may obtain a pardon for it. The reasons of the apostle's thus sparing the church of Corinth more than some other churches, we have before guessed at.

## 2 Corinthians 12:14

Ver. 14. *Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you:* we read in holy writ but of two journeys which the apostle made to Corinth, Ac 18:1 20:2, and the latter is believed to have been after the writing of this Epistle. We must not think that all these motions are set down in Scripture. It is manifest that Paul had thoughts of going oftener, Ac 19:21 1Co 16:5 2Co 1:15. Man purposeth, but God disposeth. For which reason, James adviseth us to add: *If the Lord will*, to our expressions testifying our resolutions.

*And I will not be burdensome to you;* he lets them know, that he was coming to them with the same resolutions he had before taken up, not to put them to any charge.

*For I seek not yours, but you;* for that, which should be the design of every faithful minister, was his design; viz. the gaining of their souls to Christ, and protecting of them, that in the day of judgment he might present them as a pure and chaste virgin unto Christ. His business was not to enrich himself by them; he sought the good of their souls, not their estates.

*For the children ought not to lay up for the parents:* he looked upon them as his children, upon himself as their parent. And though indeed children ought to relieve their parents, if in want, yet it is not the course of the world for children to lay up for their parents.

*But the parents for the children;* but, on the contrary, it is the course of parents to maintain their children, and to lay up for them.

### 2 Corinthians 12:15

Ver. 15. *And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you;* I am so far from desiring your money, that, if I had it, I would willingly spend it for you; and I do spend my strength for you, willing to die in your service, labouring for the good of your immortal souls.

*Though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved;* but I am very unhappy as to some of you, who will not rightly understand me, but love me the less, the more they see my love to them.

### 2 Corinthians 12:16

Ver. 16. I hear what some say: It is true, that when I was myself with you, I laid no burden upon you, did not put upon you any collection for me; but, like a crafty man, I set others to take money of you for my use; so as, what I did not by myself, I did by those whom I employed. This appeareth to be the sense by what followeth in the next verse, where he appealeth to them for his vindication of this particular.

### 2 Corinthians 12:17

Ver. 17,18. The apostle, to avoid or wipe off this imputation, appealeth to themselves to name any person (whom he had sent unto them) that had taken any thing of them for his use. He saith, that he *desired Titus* to come to them: of this desire we read before, 2Co 8:6,16,18,22.

*With him* (he saith) he *sent another brother*: this is that brother, of whom he had said, 2Co 8:18, that his *praise was in the gospel through—out all the churches*. Some guess it was Luke, but there is no certainty of that. He appeals to them, whether either of these made a *gain* of them? That is, took any thing of them: and whether they did not walk *in the same spirit*, and *in the same steps*? Whether they did not show the same generosity and

freedom? And by their behaviour amongst them did not show, that they did not seek what was theirs, (to be enriched by their estates), but them; to communicate the riches of grace to their souls? The circumstances of God's providence may be such towards faithful ministers, as that they may be constrained to make use of others to do their work; but such, so near as they can judge, will never make use of any therein, but such as are of *the same spirit* with themselves, and walk in *the same steps*.

## 2 Corinthians 12:19

Ver. 19. *Think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you?* Some of you may think, that I speak all this in my own defence, and seek only my own credit and reputation amongst you. I do not so.

*We speak before God in Christ;* I speak as a Christian, as one who knows that God knoweth, seeth, and observeth what I say; searching my heart, and trying my reins.

*But we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying;* all that I say I speak for your good, that you may be built up in faith, and love, and all other graces: a great hinderance to which, is prejudice against me, and such as are the ministers of the gospel to you; which I therefore desire (what in me lieth) to prevent and obviate: The apostle, not only here, but in several other parts of these and other his Epistles, declares what ought to be the great end of him, and all other ministers, viz. the edification of people; the conversion of the unconverted, and the perfecting of those in whom the foundation is laid, building them up in all good spiritual habits; both of these come under the notion of edification. If we consider Christ as the Foundation, conversion is edification; the building up of souls upon Christ, who is the gospel foundation; and *other foundation can no man lay*. If we consider the infusion of the first habits of grace into the soul as the foundation, edification signifies a going on from faith to faith; a growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, a going on to perfection. The true minister of Christ ought to make edification in both of these senses his end, and his great end; for by this means is God glorified, the souls of his people benefited, and eternally saved.

## 2 Corinthians 12:20

Ver. 20. *For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would;* a good man, especially a faithful minister of the gospel, will be concerned at the sins of others, and as to their spiritual welfare. A profane person either rejoiceth in the sins of others, or at least is unconcerned for them; but a good man cannot be so, as knowing the sins of others reflect dishonour upon God.

*And that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not;* he also cannot delight in the punishments of others, or doing any thing which may be ungrateful to them. Paul feareth lest the miscarriages of this church should enforce from him some acts of severity. He instanceth in some particular disorders in the members of this church, which he feared that he should find amongst them not amended; all the effects of pride and passion.

*Debates,* or contentions, such as he had taxed them for, 1Co 1:11 3:3.

*Envyings,* or heats of passion; envying of one another for their gifts, &c. The other things which he mentioneth, are all sins against that brotherly love which ought to be found amongst Christians, and tending to ruptures amongst them; and teach us how contrary these are to the duty of Christians, who are one body.

## 2 Corinthians 12:21

Ver. 21. From hence it appeareth, that this church of Corinth, though it had many in it, without doubt, who were true and sincere Christians, yet had also many it which were otherwise; yea, many that were scandalous; for such are those mentioned in this verse. Again, the apostle's mentioning of *many* that had committed *uncleanness, fornication, and lasciviousness, and not repented;* whenas he had only given order for the excommunication of one incestuous person, 1Co 5:1-13, and in this Epistle, 2Co 2:1-17, had given order for the restoring him upon his repentance; lets us know, that the governors of churches ought to use a great deal of prudence in the administering of church censures. We are also further taught, that nothing more afflicteth a godly person, who hath

the charge of the souls of others, than to see them go on in courses of sin without repentance. Whether bewailing, in this verse, implieth proceeding to ecclesiastical censures, (as several interpreters think), I doubt; for as the word doth not necessarily imply it, so his sparing use of that rod, which he could (though absent) have as well used against other unclean persons as one incestuous person; and choosing rather that the sentence should be declared against him by the church in his absence, than by himself when present; inclineth me to think, that by bewailing, here, he only means a Christian, afflictive sense of their miscarriages; whereas his desire was, that he might have a cheerful, comfortable journey to and abode with them. But yet, in the next chapter, he seemeth to threaten something more against some particular offenders.

## 2 Corinthians 13:1

### Chapter Summary

2Co 13:1-4 Paul threateneth to vindicate his authority at his coming by punishing severely unreclaimed offenders.

2Co 13:5,6 He adviseth the Corinthians to try if they had as good proofs of their faith, as he trusted to have of his mission.

2Co 13:7-10 He wisheth that by a blameless conversation they might prevent him from using sharpness toward them, whatever became of his proofs.

2Co 13:11-14 He concludeth with an exhortation, salutation, and prayer.

### Chapter Introduction

Not *the third time* when he was upon his journey, (for he was not now travelling), but the third time that he had taken up thoughts of, and was preparing for, such a journey: which, it may be, he hinteth to them, that they might be the more afraid to continue in those sinful courses which he had blamed them for. *In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established*: he alludeth to the law of God, De 19:15, concerning witnesses in any case. God ordered, that the testimony of two or three persons should determine all questions in their law; and that should be taken for certain and established, which such a number of persons asserted.

The apostle would from hence have them conclude, that he would certainly come, because this was *the third time* that he had resolved upon it, and was preparing for it.

### 2 Corinthians 13:2

Ver. 2. *I told you* in my former Epistle, and now (though I be yet absent) I tell you beforehand, as though *I were present* amongst you.

*I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other;* I write this for the sake of those who have already sinned scandalously; and not for theirs only, but for the sake of others, who may have temptations so to offend.

*That, if I come again, I will not spare;* that, if I do come, and find any such who walk in courses of sin, and are hardened in them, so as all that I have said will not bring them to remorse and reformation, *I will not spare* them, either as to sharp reprehensions, or as to ecclesiastical censures; according to the trust which Christ hath reposed in me. Some extend this further, to a power of inflicting bodily pains; but it is not clear that the apostles were intrusted with any such power ordinarily, though sometimes they did exert such a power; as appeareth, both from the instances of Ananias and Sapphira, Ac 5:1-11, and that of Elymas, Ac 13:8-11.

### 2 Corinthians 13:3

Ver. 3. Christ (saith the apostle) hath openly showed his power in my ministry, speaking to you; how else came your hearts to be turned from dumb idols to serve the living God? How came you to be furnished with those excellent gifts wherewith you abound? But, seeing all this is not judged a sufficient proof of Christ's *speaking in me* to you, but you are yet doubting whether I am an apostle or no, and calling for *a proof of Christ in me*; I will, if I come, and find any that have lived scandalously, and are impenitent, show you another proof of that power and authority with which Christ hath trusted me. Which must be understood, either of his miraculous power to inflict some bodily afflictions upon them, or (which is more probable) of his power as an apostle to cut them off from the



communion of gospel churches.

### 2 Corinthians 13:4

Ver. 4. He had before said, that Christ in him was *not weak, but mighty*; here he showeth, that there was a time when Christ himself was weak, in a low and contemptible state, in which state *he was crucified*; this state of weakness subjected him to a death upon the cross: but, *by the power of God*, he rose again from the dead, ascended up into heaven, where he *liveth* for ever to make intercession for us.

*For we also are weak in him*; in conformity to Christ (he saith) he and the rest of the apostles were *weak*; in a low, abject, contemptible condition, exposed to reproaches, deaths, &c.

*But we shall live*; which some understand of life eternal, consequent to the resurrection of believers; but others better, of the life and vigour of the apostle's ministry. Through *the mighty power of God*, flowing from a living Christ, who hath ascended up on high, and given gifts unto men, our ministry shall be a living, powerful, efficacious ministry *toward you*.

### 2 Corinthians 13:5

Ver. 5. *Examine yourselves*: it is most commonly seen, that those who are most busy to desire or inquire after *a proof of Christ* in others, are tardiest in making an inquiry after Christ's being in themselves. The apostle therefore calleth the censorious part of this church, who desired *a proof of Christ* in him, to examine themselves.

*Whether ye be in the faith*; whether they had any true faith; such as works by love, and purifies the heart. For he knew that they were baptized, and Christians in outward profession; nor is he blaming them for any apostacy from the doctrine of faith, only for an ill life, which evidenceth their faith not to be the *faith of God's elect*, a faith of the *operation of God*, &c.

*Prove your own selves*: he doubleth the exhortation upon them, possibly for this end, to let them know, that if they found themselves in the faith,

they could not reasonably doubt whether he himself was in the faith, or not, whom God had made the instrument to convert them.

*Know ye not your own selves:* he commends to them the knowledge of themselves, as being a far more desirable piece of knowledge than the knowledge of other men; as to what they are, or what their state is towards God.

*How that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?* In the inquiry after this, he bids them to inquire, whether Christ was in them, yea or no? The name of Christ was named upon them in their baptism, Christ had been preached to them; this the apostle knew; but all this might be, and yet Christ not dwell in their hearts by faith. This is the great point the apostle directs them to examine and prove themselves about, whether Christ was in them by a lively faith? Apprehended and applied as their Saviour, ruling and governing them as their Lord and King? He lets them know the importance of this inquiry, telling them that Jesus Christ must be in them, if they were not *reprobates*. But (some might say) how could the apostle conclude this? Though at present Christ was not in them, and they as yet were no more than formal professors, yet might not God open their eyes, and work in them afterwards a more full and effectual change?

*Answer.*

1. The apostle might be allowed to know more than ordinary ministers can know. He had before said: *If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.*
2. When the gospel and the means of grace have been for some considerable time in a place, it is much to be feared, that those who have not in that time felt the saving power and effect of it upon their hearts, never shall. It is ordinarily observed, that where God blesseth the ministry of any to convert souls, their greatest harvest is in the first years of their ministry.
3. Some think, that the word  $\alpha\delta\omicron\kappa\iota\mu\omicron\iota$  should not be translated *reprobates*, but rather, not approved by God. If Christ be not in the soul by faith, it cannot be approved of God, because *without faith it is impossible to please God*. But we generally translate the word by

*reprobate, rejected, castaway, 1Co 9:27 2Ti 3:8 Tit 1:16 Heb 6:8.* It seemeth to signify persons given over by God to a stupidity of mind, &c. So as the apostle here useth a very close argument, to put them upon a search into their own hearts and states, to see if they could find Christ dwelling in them; for otherwise, (considering their long profession, and the revelation of Christ to them), it would be a ground of fear, that they were such as God had cast off for ever. However, as to their present state, they had no ground to conclude better, whatever mercy God might afterwards show them. Men's sitting and continuing long under the means of grace, and an outward profession, without a saving knowledge of Christ, and true savour of the truth, and a reformation of their lives according to the rules and directions of the gospel, is not indeed an infallible sign that he who formed them will never show them any favour; but it is a very great presumption that it will be so with such. Which should therefore strongly engage them to be very often and very seriously proving themselves, as to this thing, whether they be in Christ, and whether they have a true, saving faith?

### 2 Corinthians 13:6

Ver. 6. You make a doubt whether Christ be in us, and you would fain know how it may be evidenced that he is so. If Christ be not in us we must be reprobates.

*But I trust that ye shall know,* either in this life, by the evident signs of my apostleship, (which when I come I shall give you), and by the life and power of my ministry amongst you; or in another life, when the sheep shall stand at God's right hand, and the goats at his left; that (whatsoever you think or say of us) we are none of those who are rejected and disapproved of God.

### 2 Corinthians 13:7

Ver. 7. *Now I pray to God that ye do no evil;* I do not desire that when I come I may find objects for my severity, upon whom I may show a proof of Christ in me, by exercising that authority upon them with which Christ hath intrusted me: no, on the contrary, I heartily pray that ye may be holy

and blameless, *without spot or wrinkle*.

*Not that we should appear approved;* neither do I desire this for my own sake, that I may be *approved*, but I singly desire it for your good.

*But that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates;* that you may do that which is good; and then do you, and let the world, think of me as a reprobate, or what they will.

### 2 Corinthians 13:8

Ver. 8. *Truth* in this place notes integrity of life and conversation; truth in action, opposed to hypocrisy, or scandalous living. He had before prayed, that they might *do no evil*; which if they did not, they need not fear his coming with a rod; for though he had a power from Christ to punish, yet he had no power to punish such as did well; his power was to be used for them, not against them. As the law was not made for the righteous, and the civil magistrate is not ordained of God for the terror of those that do well, but only of those that do evil; so neither did Christ ever ordain ecclesiastical censures for the punishment of good and holy men. And indeed here is the just boundary of all civil and ecclesiastical power; no magistrate or minister, acting as Christ's servants, *can* (lawfully, or as by any commission from him) do any thing *against the truth*, or those that own, defend, and practise it; the power with which they are trusted is for edification, not destruction.

### 2 Corinthians 13:9

Ver. 9. Some by *weak* here understand a moral impotency; as the apostle had said, he could not do any thing against the truth, that is, rightly and justly he could not: and by *strong* here, a spiritual strength, a reformation, growth, and proficiency in grace. These make the sense to be this; I am so far from coming with a desire to show amongst you my apostolical power in punishing offenders, as that I should be glad to find you so strong in the exercise of grace, that I should find none to punish; that men be made weak (as to the putting forth that power) by your spiritual strength. I incline to a more general interpretation. The apostle by this purgeth

himself from any thing of vain glory, or seeking himself; Though (saith he) I be weak, (as some amongst you report me), yet if you be truly strong, I shall heartily rejoice therein. For I wish nothing more than *your perfection*; my reputation is nothing to me compared with that.

### 2 Corinthians 13:10

Ver. 10. The apostle here lets them know with how much tenderness he dealt with them; and whereas they might have charged him with sharpness in his letters, he assures them, that he therefore had so wrote, that he might prevent sharper dealings with them when he should come to them, by their hearkening to the admonitions of his letter; for otherwise, he tells them, that after he came he must deal more sharply with them in the execution of that power with which Christ had intrusted him. Yet he further tells them, that that power was for their good, not for their harm; for their edification, not for their destruction: which is the same with what he had said, 2Co 10:8, and in the verse immediately preceding.

### 2 Corinthians 13:11

Ver. 11. *Finally, brethren, farewell:* the apostle shutteth up his Epistle according to the ordinary form of conclusions of letters, wishing all happiness to them: but he addeth something as a Christian, and a minister of the gospel.

*Be perfect:* the word *καταρτιζεσθε* signifies to be compact, or united, as members of the same body, or parts of the same house; the perfection of a society lying much in the union of it. The perfection the apostle presseth here, seemeth to be the perfection of the body of the church, by the restoring of such as were separated from its communion, or had, through a spirit of contention, withdrawn themselves, rather than the perfection of the particular members of it, in the habits and exercises of grace. The Greek word seemeth that way to carry the sense; it properly signifies, the putting of members loosed from their joints into their proper place again, and such a perfection as followeth upon such an action, or any action proportionable to it.

*Be of good comfort;* the word imports exhorted, comforted, confirmed: be exhorted to yield obedience to my precepts, or counsels; be comforted in all the trials or afflictions you do meet with, or may further meet with, for your profession of the gospel; be confirmed in the truths and holy ways of God.

*Be of one mind;* if possible, of one and the same judgment in the truths of God; however, as pursuing the same scope and end; be one in affection.

*Live in peace,* free from those contentions and divisions, those debates, and strifes, and wraths, and envyings, which I have before told you of as faults among you. This is the way for to have the presence of God with you, for he is not the God of hatred and strife, but *the God of love and peace;* who hath commanded love and peace amongst those that are brethren, and will be present among them only who live in obedience to his royal law of love.

### 2 Corinthians 13:12

Ver. 12. See Poole on "Ro 16:16". See Poole on "1Co 16:20". It was an ancient custom and of common use, when friends met, for them (as a token of mutual love and friendship) to kiss each other: the Christians used it also at their ecclesiastical assemblings. It must not be looked upon as a precept, obliging all Christians to do the like; but only as directing those that then did use it, to use it innocently, chastely, sincerely, and holily.

### 2 Corinthians 13:13

Ver. 13. That is, all about me in these parts of Macedonia wish you all happiness, and by me send the remembrance of their love and respects to you.

### 2 Corinthians 13:14

Ver. 14. The free love of our *Lord Jesus Christ,* shown in the application of his redemption; that *grace* which floweth from him as the Fountain of

grace, or cometh by him as the Mediator between God and man; *the actual love of God*; that good-will by which God the Father embraceth creatures in Christ, and for his sake; and all the gracious communications of the Holy Spirit of God, (by which he strengtheneth, quickeneth, or comforteth the souls of God's people), *be with you all*. Whether you value me or not, I heartily wish you well, and all the best things. In this text is an eminent proof of the Trinity, all the Persons being distinctly named in it (as in the commission about baptism). The apostle calleth the Father, *God*; the Son, *Lord*: he attributeth *love* to the Father; (moved by which he sent his only begotten Son into the world, Joh 3:16); *grace* to the Son, who loved us freely, and died for the fellowship or *communion of the Holy Ghost*, by whom the Father and Son communicate their love and grace to the saints.

*Amen* is here used as a particule of wishing or desiring the thing before mentioned; it is the same with: Let it so be. Whether added by the apostle, or subjoined by the church of Corinth, upon the reading this Epistle among them, (as some think), is not material.

*The second (epistle) to the Corinthians was written from Philippi, ( a city) of Macedonia, by Titus and Lucas.*

If the subscriptions to the apostolical Epistles were parts of the text and holy writ, we have it here determined, who that other brother was, mentioned 2Co 8:22, sent along with Titus to carry this letter, and the benevolence of the churches of Macedonia. But it is observed, that even in this subscription there is a certain evidence, that the subscriptions of the Epistles are no part of canonical writ; for in some Greek copies it is said to be sent by Paul and Timothy; whereas Paul was the writer of it, not the messenger, and in Macedonia when it was sent; and Timothy is joined with him in the writing, 2Co 1:1.

## Galatians 1:1

### THE ARGUMENT

Galatia (to the churches in which country this Epistle is directed) is by all agreed to be a part of Asia the Lesser, now under the power of the Turks, and by them called Chiangare. Geographers tell us, it is bounded on the west by Phrygia the Greater, (now called Germian), Bithynia, (now called Becksangel), and Asia Propria, a country of Anatolia; on the south, with Pisidia, (now called Versacgeli), and Licaonia (now called Cogni); on the east, with Cappadocia (now called Amasia); and on the north, with Paphlagonia (now called Bolli). The whole country was anciently called Gallo-Grecia, from some French, who, leaving their country and coming to inhabit there, gave it that name. It had in it several cities, amongst which geographers reckon Ancyra, Synopa, Pompeiopolis, Claudiopolis, Nicopolis, Laodicea, to which also some count Antioch. When or by whose ministry this people first received the gospel, we do not read. Paul travelled thither, Ac 16:6, but was at that time *forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach* there; but, Ac 18:23, it is said, that when *he had spent some time at Antioch, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples*. This was about two years after that he was forbidden to preach there, in which time the gospel was planted and disciples made in this country.

At what time Paul wrote this Epistle to them is very uncertain; some think that it was written much at the same time when the Epistle to the Romans was written (the argument being much the same with that of that Epistle). Others think it was written at Rome during his last imprisonment, because he saith, Ga 6:17, that he bare in his *body the marks of the Lord Jesus*. It is manifest that it was written at some distance of time after the first plantation of the gospel there, for the enemy had had time to sow tares.

The occasion of writing it, was partly to reprove the members of this church, for their apostacy from the doctrine of the gospel, as to justification; partly to set them right again in it, and to vindicate himself from the aspersions and imputations which their false teachers had cast upon him, in order to their better success with their new doctrine.



The new doctrine brought in by these false teachers, was the necessity of circumcision, and other works of the law, as well as faith in Christ, in order to the justification of the sinner before God; which they pressed rather upon a politic, than any religious consideration, as being the way to avoid that persecution which at that time attended all Christians; from which imputation, those who were circumcised, though they also professed faith in Christ, saved themselves. To buoy up themselves they vilified the apostle Paul to these churches, as being no apostle, one that had learned all which he knew from James, and Peter, and John; yet varied from them as to his doctrine and practice, yea, from himself also.

The two first chapters of this Epistle are mostly spent in the apostle's vindication of himself; proving himself to be a true apostle, and not to have learned what he taught from Peter, or James, or John, but that he had it by revelation from Jesus Christ. In the two following chapters he proves the doctrine of justification *by faith in Christ*, ( in opposition to the justification taught by these false teachers, *by the works of the law*), by various arguments. In the two last chapters, he presseth their standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, together with several other things, which are the common duties of all Christians. Then closeth his Epistle, with praying grace, mercy, and peace, to be their, and all true Christians', portion.

### Chapter Summary

Ga 1:1-5 After saluting the churches of Galatia,  
Ga 1:6,7 Paul testifieth his surprise that they should so soon have forsaken the truth of the gospel which he had taught them,  
Ga 1:8,9 and pronounceth those accursed who preach any other gospel.  
Ga 1:10-12 He showeth that his doctrine was not concerted to please men, but came to him by immediate revelation from God,  
Ga 1:13,14 to confirm which he relateth his conversation before his calling,

Ga 1:15-24 and what steps he had taken immediately thereupon.

Ver. 1. The term *apostle*, in its native signification, signifieth no more than one sent; in its ecclesiastical use, it signifies one extraordinarily sent to preach the gospel; of these some were sent either more immediately by Christ, (as the twelve were sent, Mt 10:1 Mr 3:14 Lk 9:1), or more mediately, as Matthias, who was sent by the suffrage of the other apostles to supply the place of Judas, Ac 1:25,26, and Barnabas, and Silas, and others were. Paul saith he was sent *not of men, neither by man*, that is, not merely; for he was also sent by men to his particular province. Ac 13:3; *but* he was immediately sent *by Jesus Christ*, (as we read, Ac 9:1-43 and Ac 26:14-17, of which also he gives us an account in this chapter, Ga 1:15-17), *and by God the Father* also, *who*, he saith, *raised Christ from the dead*. By this phrase the apostle doth not only assert Christ's resurrection, and the influence of the Father upon his resurrection, (though he rose by his own power, and took up his own life again, and was also quickened by the Spirit), but he also showeth a specialty in his call to the apostleship. As it differed from the call of ordinary ministers, who are called by men (though their ministry be not merely of men); so it differed from the call of the rest of the apostles, being made by Christ not in his state of humiliation, (as the twelve were called, Mt 10:1-42), but in his state of exaltation, after he was raised from the dead, and sat down on the right hand of God.

### Galatians 1:2

Ver. 2. He writeth not only in his own name, but in the name of all those other Christians that were with him in the place where he now was (whether Rome or Corinth, or some other place, is uncertain); with whose consent and privity probably he wrote, possibly at their instigation, and whose common consent in that doctrine of faith which he handleth, (as well as in other things about which he writeth), he here declareth. Some think that the apostle forbears the term *saints*, or *sanctified in Christ Jesus*, &c., commonly used in his other Epistles, because of that apostacy for which he designed to reprove them; but it is implied in the term *churches*. Galatia was a large country, and had in it many famous cities; it was neither wholly Christian, nor yet such as to the major part; but there

were in it several particular congregations of Christians, which he calleth *churches*; every congregation of Christians using to meet together to worship God, being a church, a particular church, though all such congregations make up but one universal visible church. Nor, being guilty of no idolatry, though corrupted in some particular points of doctrine, and those of moment, doth the apostle deny them the name of churches, though he sharply rebuketh them for their errors.

### Galatians 1:3

Ver. 3. A common, as well as religious and Christian, form of salutation; Paul's mark in every Epistle, and used by him without any variation, (except in his Epistles to Timothy and Titus, where he only adds *mercy* &c.), the want of which, as also of his name, offers some grounds to doubt whether he wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews. Paul had used it in the beginning of his Epistle to the Romans, and both the Epistles to the Corinthians: see the notes on Ro 1:7 1Co 1:3 2Co 1:2. It teaches us, in our common discourses, whether epistolary or otherwise, to speak to our friends like Christians, who understand and believe that the *grace, mercy, and peace from God*, are the most desirable good things.

### Galatians 1:4

Ver. 4. Which Christ, though he was put to death by Pilate and the Jews, yet he was not compelled to die; for he laid down his life, no man took it from him, Joh 10:17,18. Sometimes it is said, he died for our sins, as Ro 5:8; sometimes, that he *gave himself*, (meaning, to death), as in Eph 5:2,25 1Ti 2:6 Tit 2:14: he was given by his Father, and he gave himself by his own free and spontaneous act.

*For our sins*, must be interpreted by other scriptures: here is the defect of a word here, which the Socinians would have to be remission; others, expiation (of which remission is a consequent). Both, doubtless, are to be understood, and something more also, which is expressed in the following words of the verse. Remission of sins is granted to be the effect of the death of Christ, but not the primary and sole effect thereof; but consequential to the *propitiation*, mentioned Ro 3:25; the *redemption*,

Eph 1:7; the *sacrifice*, Heb 10:12: both which texts show the absurdity of the Socinians, in quoting those texts to favour their notion of Christ's dying for the remission of our sins, without giving the justice of God satisfaction. And though some other texts mention Christ's dying for our sins, without mention of such expiation, propitiation, redemption, or satisfaction; yet they must be interpreted by the latitude of the end of Christ's death (expressed in other scriptures) relating to sin. Which is not only expiation, and remission, but the delivery of us from the lusts and corruptions of *this present evil world*. The apostle here deciphereth this world, by calling it *present* and *evil*: by the first, he hinteth to us, that there is a world to come; by the latter, he showeth the sinful practices of the greatest part of men, (for by *world* he means the corruption of persons living in the world), they are evil; and this was one end of Christ's death, to deliver his saints from their evil practices and examples; thus, 1Pe 1:18, we are said to be by the blood of Christ *redeemed from a vain conversation received by tradition from our fathers*. This (he saith) was done *according to the will of God*; the Greek word is  $\theta\epsilon\lambda\eta\mu\alpha$ , not  $\delta\iota\alpha\theta\eta\kappa\eta\nu$ : the will of God is his decree, purpose, or good pleasure, so as it signifieth both his eternal purpose, (according to Eph 1:4), and his present pleasure or consent. I see no ground for the Socinian criticism, who would have us understand by it, God's testament, or present will for things to be done after death; the word importeth no more than God's eternal purpose, as to the redemption of man by the blood of Christ, and his well pleasedness with his undertaking and performance of that work; this God he calleth *our Father*, not with respect to creation so much as adoption.

### Galatians 1:5

Ver. 5. To which Father, (yet not excluding the Son), for do great benefits bestowed upon us, be honour, and praise, from age to age, and to all eternity. The term *Amen*, being always used in Scripture either as a term of assertion, to aver the truth of a thing, or as a term of wishing, may here be understood in either or both senses; the apostle using it either to assert the glorifying of God to be our duty, and a homage we owe to God; or to signify his hearty desire that this homage may from all hands be paid unto him.

## Galatians 1:6

Ver. 6. The apostle here beginneth the matter and substance of his Epistle, with a reprehension of this church; which in, some things is much qualified, in other things much aggravated. His expressing his reproof by the word *marvel*, hath in it something of mitigation, and signifieth his better hopes concerning them. The term *removed*, also, mollifies the reproof, the apostle thereby rather charging their apostacy upon their seducers, than upon them who were seduced; though they were not to be excused for their so yielding to the temptation, and that in so short a time, either after their first conversion, or after the first attempts upon them to seduce them; and herein was the aggravation of their guilt, that they very little resisted the temptation, but were presently overthrown by it. But it was a greater aggravation of their guilt, that they suffered themselves to be removed *from him that called* them. Interpreters doubt whether this be to be understood of God, or of Paul; and if of God, whether of the First or of the Second Person. That which inclineth some to think that Paul meant himself, was his instrumentality in the conversion of these Galatians; and his complaints of them in this Epistle, for their deserting his doctrine, and alienation from him; but then the substantive to the participle must be understood, and the call must be understood of the external call only, by the ministry of the word. It therefore seemeth rather to be understood of God; the apostles generally ascribing calling to God, Ga 5:8 1Th 5:24 2Th 2:14 1Pe 1:2,15 2Pe 1:3. Nor doth it seem proper to refer the action to Christ, because the apostles ordinarily ascribe calling to the First Person in the Trinity, calling us *by Christ*, as Ro 8:30 2Th 2:13,14,16 2Ti 1:9 1Pe 5:10; besides, *the grace of Christ* is here made the term to which they are called. And though this would supply the participle with a substantive in the text, without understanding one, yet it seems both too remote, and also to alter the sense of the text; making it to run thus, from Christ that called you unto grace, instead of *him that called you into the grace of Christ*. By which grace the apostle doubtless means not the doctrine of the gospel only, (though that be sometimes called grace), but all the benefits of the gospel, justification, reconciliation, adoption; which are all properly called the grace of Christ, as being the purchase of his blood.

*Unto another gospel;* that is, to the embracing of other doctrine, differing from the doctrine of the gospel, though it be brought to you by seducers under that notion; showing you another pretended way of salvation than by

the merits of Jesus Christ, whereas God hath *given no other name under heaven, neither is there salvation in any other*, Ac 4:12.

### Galatians 1:7

Ver. 7. *Which is not another;* another doctrine it is, but another doctrine or glad tidings of salvation, or another gospel of Christ, it is not; for there is no other. In and by the new notions they bring they do but *trouble you*, and *pervert the true doctrine of the gospel*; though they use the name of Christ, and of his gospel, they do it falsely; for by making the works of the law, and the observance of them, necessary to be by you observed in order to your salvation, they quite destroy and pervert the glad tidings of salvation; viz. that we are saved by Christ alone and faith in him, and by a righteousness without these works.

### Galatians 1:8

Ver. 8,9. The apostle, by this vehement expression, doth no more suppose it possible that a heavenly angel should publish to them any other way of salvation than what he had published, than that he himself might so contradict his own doctrine. He only by it declares his certainty of the truth, which he had delivered to them; it was not to be contradicted either by man or angel; and further teacheth us, that additions to the doctrines of the gospel make another gospel; God neither allowing us to add to, nor to diminish from, Divine revelations; for of this nature were the corruptions crept into this church. These seducers owned Christ and the doctrine of the gospel: only teaching the Jewish circumcision, and other ceremonial rites, as necessary to be observed in order to people's salvation, they made the pretended gospel (which they taught) to be another gospel than that which Paul had preached, and which believers in this church had received. In saying *let him be accursed*, he also saith that he who doth this shall be accursed; for the apostle would neither himself curse, nor direct others to curse, whom he did not know the Lord would curse, and look upon as cursed. These two verses look dreadfully upon the papacy, where many doctrines are published, and necessary to be received, which Paul never preached, nor are to be found in any part of Divine writ.

## Galatians 1:10

Ver. 10. *For do I now persuade men, or God?* There is an emphasis in the particle *now*, since I became a Christian, and was made an apostle; while I was a Pharisee I did otherwise, but since I became an apostle of Jesus Christ, do I persuade you to hear what men say, or what God saith? Or (as others) do I persuade the things of men, their notions and doctrines, or the things of God? Or do I in my preaching aim at the gratifying or the pleasing of men, or the pleasing of God? The last is plainly said in the next words, *do I seek to please men?* Which must not be understood in the full latitude of the term, but restrainedly, do I seek to please and humour men in things wherein they teach and act contrary to God? It is the duty of inferiors to please their superiors, and of all good ministers and Christians, to please their brethren, so far as may tend to the advantage of their souls; or in civil things, so as to maintain a friendly and peaceable society; but they ought not to do any thing in humour to them, by which God may be displeased. In which sense it is that the apostle adds:

*For if I pleased men*, that is, in saying as they say, and doing as they do, without regard to pleasing or displeasing of Christ, *I should not show myself the servant of Christ*; for his servants we are whom we obey, and our Lord hath taught us, that no man can serve two masters, that is, commanding contrary things.

## Galatians 1:11

Ver. 11. He calls them *brethren*, though some of them were revolted, because they owned Christ, and makes known or declares to them, (so the word is translated, Lu 2:15 Joh 15:15 17:26), that the doctrine of the gospel, which he had preached unto them, was no human invention or fiction, nor rested upon human authority, but was from God, immediately revealed to him: and herein he reflecteth upon the false teachers that had seduced them, and, in order to that, vilified him, as being but a disciple to some other of the apostles, yet teaching otherwise than they taught. I would have you know (saith he) that it is otherwise; the gospel which I preached *is not after man*. He fully openeth his own meaning in this

phrase, in the next words.

### Galatians 1:12

Ver. 12. Not of man, as my first and sole instructor, not only at second-hand, from Peter, James, or John, as the false teachers had suggested, nor was I taught it otherwise than by the immediate revelation of Jesus Christ.

*Revelation* signifieth the discovery of something which is secret (as the gospel, and doctrine of it, is called a *mystery hid from ages*). It may be objected, that Paul was instructed by Ananias, Ac 9:17. But this prejudiceth nothing the truth of what the apostle saith in this place, neither do we read of much that Ananias said to him in a way of instruction; it is only said, that he laid *his hands on him*, and he was *filled with the Holy Ghost*. When, or where, he had these revelations, the apostle saith not; probably while he lay in a trance, blind, and neither eating nor drinking for three days, Ac 9:9. Others think it was when he was caught up into the third heaven, 2Co 12:2. Certain it is, that St. Paul had revelations from Christ, Ac 22:17,18 26:15-18. Revelation signifies an immediate conveying of the knowledge of Divine things to a person, without human means; and in that Paul ascribes the revelation of the gospel to Jesus Christ, he plainly asserts the Divine nature of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### Galatians 1:13

Ver. 13. It will be no difficult thing for you to believe, that I had never preached the gospel without a Divine revelation of the truth of it, if you do but reflect upon my former conversation; for you cannot but have heard, that I was born a Jew, educated in the Jewish religion, and was a zealous defender of it, so as I persecuted the Christians beyond measure. This unmeasurable persecution is expressed by Luke more particularly, Ac 8:3: *He made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison; and Ac 9:1: *He breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, &c.* He wasted the church like an enemy that useth fire and sword, and all means to destroy. The word here used is  $\epsilon\pi\omicron\rho\theta\omicron\upsilon\nu$ , which signifies to make a devastation; the word used in Ac 8:3 is  $\epsilon\lambda\upsilon\mu\alpha\iota\nu\epsilon\tau\omicron$  both words signify the*



most ruining hostile actions. And this he saith was his conversation, or constant practice, so as they might reasonably think that something more than human had made a change in him, that he should now be a preacher of that doctrine, which he had before so abominated as that his whole business was to root out those that professed it.

#### Galatians 1:14

Ver. 14. The word here used, and translated *profited*, may be interpreted either of his own personal proficiency, and going on in the Jewish religion, or of his propagating of it, and making that to go on, which seemeth to be the sense of the same word, 2Ti 2:16. And it is observed, that active verbs in the Greek in imitation of the Heb. con. Pihil., sometimes signify to do an action oneself, sometimes to make others do it; and Paul's wasting the Christian church had a rational tendency to uphold and propagate Judaism, the propagation of which was the end designed by it; this he saith he did above others of his countrymen, that were his equals in years. By this also he lets them know, that his persecuting the Christian church was not a passionate act, or for a gain to himself, but from an erroneous judgment, he verily thought that he ought to do what he against Jesus of Nazareth, and his disciples. He that he was *more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of the fathers*; by which he understands not only the rites of the ceremonial law, but the whole body of their constitutions, which the rulers of that church had made, under the notion of *sepimenta legis*, hedges or fences to the laws of God, to keep men at a distance from the violation of them; and other constitutions also, of which they had innumerable. Paul was a Pharisee, (*the son of a Pharisee*, Ac 23:6), bred up at the feet of Gamaliel (one of the doctors of their law); this was the strictest sect (for ceremonies) of their religion: and this his zeal for traditions, is that which he calleth a progress, or profiting in the Jewish religion, and was a cause of the propagation of that religion.

#### Galatians 1:15

Ver. 15. Here are two acts predicated of God, with relation to Paul: the first is a separating of him from the womb; the same was said of two of the great prophets, Isaiah and Jeremiah, Isa 49:1 Jer 1:5. The apostle here is

not speaking of God's decree, predestinating him to eternal life, but of his determining him to the work of an apostle. God predetermineth men to the stations they shall take up in the world; especially such who are to take up stations wherein they are to be eminently useful and serviceable to him. The second act predicated of God is his calling of Paul: this is an act in time, and lieth much in the preparing of persons for the work allotted to them, and in inclining the heart to it. Thus God called Paul, fitting him for the work of the ministry, and inclining him to it; to which he added his immediate command from heaven, that he should go and preach the gospel. Both these acts of God are ascribed to his good pleasure and grace, nothing but his mere free love and favour moving him, either to separate, or to call Paul to this high and great employment.

#### Galatians 1:16

Ver. 16. When it pleased God to discover Christ his Son (by an eternal generation) to me, whom neither naturally, nor from any instruction in my education, was acquainted with any thing of Christ, but, according to the common prejudices of those of my own country, looked upon him as a mere man, and an impostor; and also revealed to me the end of that discovery, not only that I myself should receive and embrace him, but that I should publish him amongst the heathens (where he intimates the specialty of his separation and call); I, saith he, immediately advised with no mortal man living, (for that is signified by *flesh and blood*, Mt 16:17 1Co 15:50), but resolved with myself to address myself to that work and employment to which I had such a special call from God.

#### Galatians 1:17

Ver. 17. As Jerusalem was the place for the oracle of the law, under the Old Testament; so it also was for the gospel upon the first publication of it. There the disciples were; they returned thither after they had seen Christ ascend to heaven, Lu 24:52; from thence they were not to depart, but to *wait there for the promise of the Father*, Ac 1:4. There the Holy Ghost came down upon them, Ac 2:1-47 there they continued till the persecution scattered them; there was the college of the apostles. Paul saith, that, upon his conversion, he did not go up thither, nor till *three years after* (as he

tells us in the next verse); but he *went into Arabia*, amongst the heathens, and the most wild and barbarous heathens, for such were the Arabians. Luke, in the Acts, tells us nothing of this. From hence it was easy to conclude, that Paul had not his commission from the other apostles that were before him, for he saw none of them till he had been a preacher of the gospel to the wild Arabians three years. And then he *returned to Damascus*: the word is *υπεστρεψα*, which is by some observed to signify his being compelled to return, (as they judge), by some persecution raised amongst the heathens; but of this the Scripture saith nothing.

### Galatians 1:18

Ver. 18. These *three years* were spent partly in Arabia, partly at Damascus, whither he returned; and he, being there, was not idle, but, as Luke informs us, *preached Christ in the synagogues, confounded the Jews, proving that this was the very Christ*, which made the Jews take counsel to kill him: here it was that he escaped them, by being *let down over the wall in a basket*, Ac 9:20,22-25. Then he *went to Jerusalem*, where his conversion, and call to preach the gospel, was not heard of, (possibly in regard of the remoteness of Arabia, where he had spent most of those three years; or in regard of the troubled state of the church at Jerusalem at this time), insomuch that the disciples were afraid to admit him to join with them, until Barnabas had given testimony concerning him, Ac 9:27. He tells us here that he stayed there but *fifteen days*; during which time Luke tells us, Ac 9:29, *he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians*.

### Galatians 1:19

Ver. 19. The apostles were at this time scattered, either through the persecution, or for the fulfilling of the work of their apostleship; so as probably there were at this time no more of the apostles at Jerusalem, except Peter, and James the less, the son of Alphaeus, who is here called the brother of our Lord, as is generally thought, according to the Hebrew idiom, who were wont to call near kinsmen, brethren. Upon another journey which Paul made to Jerusalem, he saw others (as we shall hear in the next chapter); but that was several years after this his first journey

thither.

### Galatians 1:20

Ver. 20. Whether those words, *before God*, make this sentence an oath, is not material to determine; they are either an oath, or a very serious asseveration. If the apostle designed to call God for a witness, to the correspondence of his words with the truth of the things he had spoken, they make up an assertory oath, which was lawful enough (though privately taken) in so serious a matter as this, where the apostle is vindicating his apostleship from some acts, of which probably he had no witnesses at hand to produce; but they may be understood (by the supplement of, I speak, or, I say this) only as a form of serious assertion, to confirm the truth of what he asserted. He minds them, that he was sensible of God's presence in all places, and particular taking notice of the things spoken; as being spoken before him, who knew that what he spake was truth.

### Galatians 1:21

Ver. 21. After that I came from Jerusalem, I came into the country of Syria; probably not to Damascus, the chief city of Syria, (where he had so narrow an escape in a basket), but into the country parts of Syria; for Syria lay in the way between Judea and Cilicia. It appeareth by Ac 9:30, that Paul was designed for Tarsus, his native place; where we are also told, that the brethren conducted him to Caesarea, which stood upon the confines of Syria. It is probable that he stayed some time at Tarsus; for there Barnabas found him, Ac 11:25,26, and *brought him to Antioch*; so that Paul had but fifteen days at Jerusalem to converse with the apostles, and in that time he saw none of them, but Peter, and James the son of Alphaeus.

### Galatians 1:22

Ver. 22. To be *in Christ*, signifieth:

1. Their being Christians indeed; they having received Christ by a true and

lively faith, and given themselves to the obedience of his precepts. In this sense the apostle saith: *If any man be in Christ he is a new creature.*

2. Their being Christians in name, by baptism and outward profession. These churches are said to be in Christ in this latter sense.

We have a parallel text, 1Th 2:14. They do not judge improperly, who think that by Judea here is not meant the province, but the whole country of Judea; which comprehended not Judea only, but Samaria and Galilee. John Baptist and our Saviour (who both mostly preached in Galilee) had prepared their due matter for gospel churches. Peter, and John, and Philip, preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans, Ac 8:25,40. Of all these churches Paul speaks, telling us he was personally unknown unto them; so far he was from learning the Christian doctrine from the apostles or them.

#### Galatians 1:23

Ver. 23. Though those churches in the country of Judea had never seen Paul's person, yet they had heard of him:

1. That he had been a persecutor of those which professed the doctrine of the gospel, which he here calleth *the faith*, it being the object and the means of faith.
2. That there was such a change wrought in him, as that he was now become a preacher of that doctrine, for the profession of which he had formerly wasted and destroyed, the churches of Christ.

#### Galatians 1:24

Ver. 24. And they praised God on his behalf, for working so great a change in him.

#### Galatians 2:1

## Chapter Summary

Ga 2:1,2 Paul showeth for what purpose after many years he went

to Jerusalem.

Ga 2:3-5 That Titus, who went with him, was not circumcised,

and that on purpose to assert the freedom of the

Gentile converts from the bondage of the law.

Ga 2:6-10 That no new knowledge was added to him in conference

with the three chief apostles, but that he received

from them a public acknowledgment of his Divine

mission to the Gentiles.

Ga 2:11-13 That he openly withstood Peter for dissimulation with

respect to Gentile communion.

Ga 2:14-20 Expostulating with him, why he, who believed that

justification came by the faith of Christ, acted as

though it came by the works of the law.

Ga 2:21 Which was, in effect, to frustrate the grace of God.

Ver. 1. *Fourteen years after;* either fourteen years after the three years before mentioned, and the fifteen days; or fourteen years after the conversion of Paul, or fourteen years after the death of Christ. This journey seeming to be that mentioned Ac 15:2, it seems rather to be understood of fourteen years after the death of Christ.

*I went up again to Jerusalem:* motions to Jerusalem are usually in Scripture called ascendings or goings up; either because of the mountains round about it, or in respect of the famousness of the place: see Ac 15:2 21:4. The occasion of this journey we have, Ac 15:1,2. It was to advise with the apostles and elders, about the necessity of circumcision; some that came from Judea having taught the disciples at Antioch, that except they

were circumcised they could not be saved.

*With Barnabas, and took This with me also;* Barnabas was chosen to go with Paul, Ac 15:2, and some others, whom Luke nameth not, but it is plain by this text Titus was one.

### Galatians 2:2

Ver. 2. *And I went up by revelation;* revelation signifieth God's immediate declaration of his will to him, that he would have him take this journey; which is not at all contradicted by Luke, saying, Ac 15:2,3, that their journey was determined by the Christians at Antioch. God, to encourage Paul, had let him know it was his will he should go; and also put it into the Christians' hearts at Antioch, to choose him to the journey. His motions from one place to another were much by revelation, or immediate order and command from God, Ac 16:9 Ac 22:18 23:11.

*And communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles;* he saith, he communicated, or made a report or relation of, (in which sense the word is used, Ac 25:14), that doctrine of the gospel which he had preached amongst the Gentiles; he, doubtless, more particularly means, the abolition of circumcision, and no necessity of the observance of the law of Moses contained in ordinances.

*But privately to them which were of reputation;* but he saith that he did it *privately*, and to men of *reputation*; by which he meaneth the apostles, or some other Christians of greatest eminency.

*Lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain;* lest he should have prejudiced himself, as to the course of the gospel, which he metaphorically compareth to a race: see 1Co 9:26.

*Objection.* If any ask how this influenced Paul, so as to make him privately to communicate the doctrine which he had amongst the Gentiles preached publicly? It is easily answered:

1. That the consent of those who were apostles before him to the doctrine which he preached, was of great moment to persuade all Christians to

embrace it; and by this means he obviated the scandal of being singular in the doctrine which he preached.

2. Besides that Paul was now at Jerusalem, which was the chief place of the Jews' residence, to whom God indulged a greater liberty for the ceremonial usages, than to the churches of the Gentiles, who had not been educated in that religion. And had Paul openly there declared the liberty of Christians from circumcision, and the ceremonial usages, he had both enraged those who as yet continued in the Jewish religion, and possibly given no small offence to those who had been educated in that religion, though they were converted to the faith of the gospel, they not fully yet understanding the liberty of Christians from that yoke. By one or both of which ways, had Paul openly at Jerusalem published the doctrine which he had publicly preached in Damascus and Arabia, and other places of the Gentiles, his labours might have been rendered useless, and he might also have been less successful in his further course of preaching it.

### Galatians 2:3

Ver. 3. The apostle brings this as an instance of the apostles at Jerusalem agreeing with him in his doctrine, as to the non-necessity of circumcision; for though Titus was with him, who was a native Gentile, being a Greek, and a minister of the gospel, (and possibly Paul carried him with him for an instance), yet the apostles at Jerusalem did not think fit to impose upon him circumcision; no, not upon a solemn debate of that question. If any shall object that Paul himself circumcised Timothy, who was a Greek, Ac 16:1,3; the answer is easy, the same text letting us know that his mother *was a Jewess*, and that he did it *because of the Jews in those quarters*. As to the Jews, it was matter of liberty at this time, they might or might not be circumcised. Now in matters of this nature, where men have a liberty, they ought to have regard to circumstances, and to do that which they, from a view of circumstances, judge will be most for the glory of God, the good of others, and give least offence, 1Co 10:28-31.

### Galatians 2:4



Ver. 4. He gives the reason why circumcision was not urged upon Titus, viz. because there were some got into that meeting, where Paul debated these things with the apostles that were at Jerusalem, who, though they had embraced the Christian religion, (and upon that account were *brethren*), yet were soured with the Jewish leaven, and were very zealous for all Christians to observe the Jewish rites of circumcision, &c.; upon which account it is that he calleth them *false brethren*. These (he saith) *came in privily, to spy out that liberty* which all Christians had, and Paul had preached and used, as to these Jewish ceremonies; who, could they have obtained to have had Titus circumcised, they had had a great advantage to have defamed Paul, as teaching one thing to the Gentile churches, and practising the contrary when he came to Jerusalem to the apostles, and amongst the Jews. And this being a liberty which he and all Christians had, in and from Jesus Christ, he would not part with it, for they aimed at nothing but the bringing of Christians again under the *bondage* of the ceremonial law. Some may say: It being a thing wherein Christians had a liberty, why did not St. Paul yield to avoid their offence; becoming all things to all men to gain some?

*Answer.* In the use of our liberty, all circumstances are to be considered, as well as that of scandal and offence. The valuable opposite circumstance in this case, seems to be the validity and success of the apostle's ministry, the efficacy of which would have been much weakened, if his enemies had from hence gained an advantage to represent him, as doing one thing in one place and the quite contrary in another. Besides, though at this time the use or not use of the ceremonial rites, by the Jews, was a matter of liberty, by reason of God's indulgence to them for the prejudices of their education, yet whether they were at all so to the Gentile churches, may be doubted: see Ga 5:2,3. Further yet, these brethren urged the observation of these rites, as necessary to salvation, (as appears from Ac 15:1), for they were of the sect of the Pharisees, Ga 2:5. And to use them under that notion, was no matter of liberty.

### Galatians 2:5

Ver. 5. To these Judaizing Christians the apostle did not think fit to yield one jot, not for the least time, nor in so much as one precedent; having a desire that these Gentile churches might not be perverted. Or, (as others

think), to which men *of reputation* we yielded not in the least. It is very probable, that Peter and James, upon their first arguing the case, to avoid the scandal and offence of the Jews, would have had Titus circumcised: St. Paul would not yield to it, that he might preserve the doctrine of the gospel, which he had planted amongst the Galatians, and other Gentiles, pure, and not encumber those churches with the Mosaical rites. But the most and best interpreters rather judge the persons here mentioned, to whom Paul would not yield, to be some Judaizing Christians, rather than the persons *of reputation*, mentioned Ga 2:2.

### Galatians 2:6

Ver. 6. *But of those who seemed to be somewhat:* the word translated *seemed*, is the same with that in Ga 2:2, which we there translate *of reputation*. The apostle means the same persons that were of the greatest reputation, and so the following words, *to be somewhat*, do import, Ac 5:36 8:9. We must not understand the apostle, by this expression, to detract from the just reputation that the apostles, and these eminent Christians at Jerusalem, had; he only taketh notice here of them, as magnified by the false teachers of this church, to the lessening of himself; and as *those who seemed to be somewhat*, must be interpreted as relating to these men's estimation of them; that seemed to you to be somewhat, though I seem nothing to you.

*Whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me;* whatsoever they were formerly, suppose (as probably some of these Galatians had said) that they saw Christ in the flesh, were immediately called by him, when I was a Pharisee, &c.

*God accepteth to man's person;* hath no regard to what a man hath been, but to what he is.

*For they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me;* when I came to confer and discourse with them, about the doctrine which I and they had taught, I learned no new doctrine from them, different from what I had before taught, neither did they reprove or correct me, for any thing which I had taught amiss; we were all of the same mind.

### Galatians 2:7

Ver. 7. *But contrariwise, when they saw;* they were so far from contradicting any thing that I had preached, that when they understood from me, and Barnabas, (who Ac 15:12, declared in the council *what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them*), *that the gospel of the uncircumcision*, that the business of preaching the gospel to those who were no Jews, (for that is meant by *uncircumcision*; not simply those that were not circumcised, for some of the heathens were circumcised, yet all go in Scripture under the name of uncircumcised), *was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter*; as the preaching of the gospel to the Jews was committed to Peter, and not to him only, but to James and John. It must not be so understood, as if Paul might not preach to the Jews, or Peter might not preach to the Gentiles, (for the contrary is evident from Ac 9:15, as to Paul, and from Peter's preaching to Cornelius, Ac 10:1-48), but because God designed the Gentiles to be more especially the province for Paul to exercise his ministry in, Ac 26:17, (and accordingly he was specially sent out by the church, Ac 13:3), as Peter's chief work was among the Jews.

### Galatians 2:8

Ver. 8. As Paul's call was equal to that of Peter both of them being Divine, so, saith the apostle, my ability and success was equal; as God *wrought effectually in* and by *Peter* in the discharge of his apostleship in the province intrusted to him, (which was preaching to the Jews), so he wrought effectually and mightily in me, or by me, in the province wherein I was employed, viz. carrying the gospel to the Gentiles. This efficacious working of God, both by Paul and Peter, was seen in the conversion of multitudes by their ministry, as well as in their miraculous operations, by which they confirmed the doctrine of the gospel which they preached.

### Galatians 2:9

Ver. 9. James, (called, the less), the son of Alpheus, before called *the Lord's brother*, as is thought, because he was the son of the virgin Mary's sister; whose naming here in the first place spoileth the papists' argument

for Peter's primacy, because in some other places he is first named.

*Cephas*; that is, Peter, called here *Cephas* in the Syriac, possibly because he is named with others who had Syriac names; in most places he is by this apostle called Peter.

*John*, the apostle and evangelist, who is also known by the name of *the beloved disciple*.

*Who seemed to be pillars*; Paul, in saying they *seemed to be pillars*, doth not deny them to be so; being such as God made use of in the first founding and building of the gospel church; as also to bear it up, (in the same sense that the church is called *the pillar and ground of truth*), and as by them the gospel was carried out into the world; but he useth the word *seemed*, because the false teachers had magnified their ministry, but disparaged his. When these, he saith, *perceived the grace that was given to me*; by which, he either understands his office of apostleship or the crown and seal of his office in the blessing which God had given to his labours amongst the Gentiles.

*They gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship*; they looked upon him and Barnabas as much pillars as themselves; and in token of it gave them their right hands, (a token of admitting into fellowship, 2Ki 10:15 Jer 1:15), and agreed *that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision*; that it should be their special work to go and preach to the Gentiles, as they (viz. James, and John, and Peter) would make it their special work to preach the gospel to the Jews.

### Galatians 2:10

Ver. 10. These pillars and apostles, which have among you the greatest reputation, added no new doctrine to us, gave us nothing new in charge; they only desired us that we would be careful, wheresoever we went, to make collection for the poor Christians in Judea, who either by selling all they had to maintain the gospel in its first plantation, or by the sharp persecution which had wasted them, or by reason of the famine, were very low; nor was this any new thing, I had before done it, and was very forward to do it again, had they said nothing to us about it.

### Galatians 2:11

Ver. 11. Of this motion of Peter's to Antioch the Scripture saying nothing, hath left interpreters at liberty to guess variously as to the time; some judging it was before, some after, the council held at Jerusalem, of which we read, Ac 15:1-41. Those seem to judge best, who think it was after; for it was at Antioch, while Barnabas was with Paul; now Paul and Barnabas came from Jerusalem to Antioch, to bring thither the decrees of that council; and at Antioch Barnabas parted from Paul; after which we never read of them as being together. While Paul and Barnabas were together at Antioch, Peter came thither; where, Paul saith, he was so far from taking instructions from him, that he *withstood him to the face*. Not by any acts of violence, (though the word often expresseth such acts), but by words reproving and blaming him; for, (saith he) he deserved it, *he was to be blamed*. Though the word signifies, he was condemned, which makes some to interpret it, as if Peter had met with some reprehension for his fact before Paul blamed him, yet there is no ground for it; for though the Greek participle be in the preterperfect tense, yet it is a Hebraism, and put for a noun verbal, which in Latin is sometimes expressed by the future, according to which we translate it; see 1Co 1:18 2Co 2:15 2Pe 2:4 so our interpreters have truly translated it according to the sense of the text.

### Galatians 2:12

Ver. 12. It should seem that Peter had been at Antioch some time; while he was there, there came down certain Jews from James, who was at Jerusalem: before they came Peter had communion with those Christians at Antioch, which were by birth Gentiles, and at meals eat as they eat, making no difference of meats, as the Jews did in obedience to the ceremonial law; but as soon as these zealots for the Jewish rites (though Christians) were come, Peter withdrew from the communion of the Gentile Christians, and was the head of a separate party; and all through fear of the Jews, lest they should, at their return to Jerusalem, make some report of him to his disadvantage, and expose him to the anger of the Jews.

### Galatians 2:13

Ver. 13. The fact was the worse, because those Christians which were of the church of Antioch, having been native Jews, followed his example, and made a separate party with him. Nay, *Barnabas*, my fellow labourer, who was joined with me in bringing the decrees of the council in the case, *was carried away with their dissimulation*. So dangerous and exemplary are the warpings and miscarriages of those that are eminent teachers.

### Galatians 2:14

Ver. 14. *Uprightly*, here, is opposed to halting. Peter halted between two opinions, (as Elijah sometime told the Israelites), when he was with the Gentiles alone, he did as they did, using the liberty of the gospel; but when the Jews came from Jerusalem, he left the Gentile church, and joined with the Jews; this was not according to that plainness and sincerity which the gospel required; he did not (according to the precept he held, Heb 12:13) *make straight paths to his feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way*. Paul not hearing this from the report of others, but being an eye-witness to it, doth not defer the reproof, lest the scandal should grow: nor doth he reprove him privately, because the offence was public, and such a plaster would not have fitted the sore; but he speaketh *unto Peter before them all*, rebuking him openly, because he sinned openly; and by this action had not offended a private person, but the church in the place where he was, who were all eyewitnesses of his halting and prevarication, 1Ti 5:20.

*If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews; if thou, who art a Jew, not by religion only, but by birth and education, hast formerly lived, eat, and drank, and had communion with the Gentiles, in the omission of the observance of circumcision, and other Jewish rites, generally observed by those of their synagogues; (as Peter had done before the Jews came from from Jerusalem to Antioch); why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? Why dost thou, by thy example, compel the members of a Gentile church to observe the Jewish rites? For compelling here doth not signify any act of violence, (Peter used none such), but the example of leaders in the church, who are persons of reputation and authority, is a kind of compulsion to those that are inferiors,*

and who have a great veneration for such leaders. So the word here used, αναγκαζεις, is used in 2Co 12:2, as also to express the force of exhortations and arguments. Of such a compulsion the word is used, Lu 14:23. Peter, by his example, and possibly by some words and arguments he used, potently moved those proselyted Jews, who were in communion with the churches of Galatia, to observe the Jewish rites: so that by this fact he did not only contradict himself, who by his former walking with the Gentile church had practically asserted the gospel liberty; but he also scandalized those Christians in these churches who stood fast in the liberty which Christ had purchased for them, and Paul had taught them; and also drew others away from the truth they had owned and practised. This was the cause of Paul's so open and public reproof of him.

#### Galatians 2:15

Ver. 15. *Jews by nature;* born Jews, not only proselyted to the Jewish religion, (and so under an obligation to the observation of the Jewish law), but of the seed of Abraham, and so under the covenant made with him and his seed, as he was the father of the Jewish nation.

*Not sinners of the Gentiles:* the Gentiles were ordinarily called by the Jews *sinners;* though it appeareth that there were divers of them worshippers of the true God, and came up to Jerusalem to worship; for whose sake there was a peculiar court allotted in the temple, called: *The court of the Gentiles.* Yet not being under the obligation of the Jewish law, they went under the denomination of sinners by the Jews; and the most of the Gentiles were really sinners, and that eminently, (for such the word here used ordinarily signifieth), as the apostle describeth their manners, Ro 1:29-31.

#### Galatians 2:16

Ver. 16. *Knowing that a man is not justified;* we knowing that a man is not absolved from the guilt of sin, and declared righteous in the sight of God; *by the works of the law;* by any kind of works done in obedience to the law of Moses, whether ceremonial or moral. For it is manifest that although this question about justification by works began about

circumcision and works done in obedience to the ceremonial law, yet the determination of it extended further. For the apostle, by *the law*, understands that law by which *is the knowledge of sin*, Ro 3:20. Now the knowledge of sin, is neither only nor chiefly by the ceremonial law; nor did ever any of those, against whom the apostle argueth, think, that men could be justified by obedience only to the law contained in ordinances; nor could boasting be excluded, (which the apostle showeth, Ro 3:27, was God's design in fixing the way of a sinher's justification), if men might be justified by works done in obedience to the moral law; nor was it the ceremonial law only, the violation of which *worketh wrath*, Ro 4:15, or disobedience to which brought men *under the curse*, Ga 3:10.

*But by the faith of Jesus Christ;* but we are justified by believing in Christ: not by faith as it is a work of ours, for that was denied before; nor by faith as a principal efficient cause, for in that sense it is God that justifieth; nor as a meritorious cause, for so we are justified by the blood of Christ; but by faith as an instrument apprehending and applying Christ and his righteousness.

*Even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law;* we (saith the apostle) that are Jews, knowing this, have not only assented to the truth of the gospel proposition, but accepted of this way of salvation, and received the Lord Jesus; that we so doing, not trusting to the law, or any obedience of ours to it, might be absolved from the guilt of sin, and declared righteous before God.

*For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified;* for no mortal man shall ever be absolved or declared righteous upon his own personal obedience to the law of God; being in the best imperfect, and much short of what the law requireth.

### Galatians 2:17

Ver. 17. Some interpreters think, that the apostle here begins his discourse to the Galatians upon the main argument of his Epistle, viz. justification by faith in Christ; though others think it began, Ga 2:15. *If, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners;* if (saith the apostle) you make us grievous offenders in our expectation of being justified by Christ, and not by the



works of the law, you make *Christ the minister of sin*, who hath taught us this. But others think that the apostle here obviateth a common objection which was then made, (as it is also in our age), against the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ; viz. That it opens a door of liberty to the flesh, and so makes Christ a *minister of sin*, as if he relaxed men's obligation to the law of God; which is the same objection which the apostle answered in his Epistle to the Romans, Ro 6:1-23. If while, we plead for justification by Christ, we live in a course of notorious disobedience to the law of God, then Christ must be to us a minister of sin, and come into the world to purchase for us a possibility of salvation, though we live in never so much notorious disobedience to the law of God. As if there were no obligation upon men to keep the law, unless by their obedience to it they might obtain pardon of sin and justification. This calumny the apostle disavows, first, by a general aversation: *God forbid!*

### Galatians 2:18

Ver. 18. By *the things which he destroyed*, some understand the state of sin; and from hence conclude the mutability of a state of justification: but there is no need of that, it may as well be understood of a constant course and voluntary acts of sin. If I teach a doctrine that shall encourage a sinful life, or if I should live in a course of sin, these are *the things which I*, as a minister of Christ, have in my preaching and doctrine *destroyed*, teaching you, that not only the guilt of your sins was removed upon your justification by Christ, but the dominion of sin also destroyed: and they are things which justification destroyeth; God never saying to any soul: *Thy sins are forgiven thee*, without adding, *sin no more*. So as, if a justified state would admit of a going on in a settled course of sin, it would build what it destroyed.

*I make myself a transgressor*; now should I, or any one, do any such thing, we should thereby make ourselves great transgressors. So as the apostle's argument here seemeth to be the same with that, Ro 6:2: *How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?* He strives at the same thing here, viz. to prove that the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ, could not give a liberty to any to sin, because it shows persons made partakers of that grace, that they are freed, not only from the guilt, but also from the power and dominion of sin, so as that none can from it receive any comfort as to the former, nor find the latter wrought in them.

## Galatians 2:19

Ver. 19. *Through the law* of Christ, as some say; or rather, through the law of Moses, of which he had been before speaking: that is, say some, through the death of the law; the law itself being dead, as a covenant of works, Ro 7:6. Or rather, by means of the law, giving me a knowledge of sin, and condemning me for sin.

*Am dead to the law,* as to any expectation of being justified by obedience to it.

*That I might live unto God;* not that I might live in disobedience to it, as it is a rule of life, but that I might live more holily unto God: so as my being dead to the law, as a covenant of works, or as to any expectation of being justified from my obedience to it, gives me no liberty to sin at all; for this is the end why God hath freed me from the bondage and rigour of the law, that I might live unto him, and serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness.

## Galatians 2:20

Ver. 20. This Epistle is much of the same nature with that to the Romans, and the substance of what the apostle saith in the latter part of this chapter, agreeth much with Ro 6:1-23; where we find an expression much like to this, Ga 2:6: *Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

*I am* (saith the apostle) *crucified with Christ;* not only by justification made partaker of the benefits coming by a Christ crucified, but also as having communion with the death of Christ, in the mortification of my lusts. A figure of which (as he informs us, Ro 6:4) we have in baptism, *buried with him by baptism into death.*

*Nevertheless I live;* yet (saith he) I live a holy, spiritual life; though dead to the law, and though crucified with Christ.

*Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;* but I cannot say so properly that it is I, for my motions are not according to my natural propensions and

inclinations; *but Christ*, by his Spirit, *liveth in me*, having renewed and changed me, made me a new creature, and begot new motions and inclinations in me. And though I *live in the flesh*, yet *I live by the faith of the Son of God*; all my natural, moral, and civil actions, being principled in faith, and done according to the guidance of the rule of faith in Jesus Christ.

*Who loved me, and gave himself for me*; of whom I am persuaded that he loved me, and from that love gave himself to die upon the cross for me.

### Galatians 2:21

Ver. 21. *I do not frustrate the grace of God*; I do not despise, reject, make void, (for by all these words the word here used is translated, Mr 7:9 Joh 12:48 Joh 3:15 Heb 10:28), the free love of God, in giving his Son to die for our sins: from whence is easily gathered, that those who live a loose life, and take a liberty to sin, from their justification, or from the free grace of God in Christ, they do contemn and despise the grace of God: or rather, (if we refer it to the following words), those who assert justification by the works of the law, they do reject and despise the free grace of God in the gospel, and (as much as in them lies) make it vain and frustrate.

*For if righteousness come by the law*; for if it be possible, that a man by works done in obedience to the law should arrive at a righteousness, in which he may stand before God, *then is Christ dead in vain*; then Christ died to no purpose, or without any just cause: the reason of this must be, because it was the main and principal end of Christ's death, to procure or purchase a righteousness wherein sinners might stand before God, *to bring in an everlasting righteousness*, Da 9:24. If the most proper effect of the death of Christ be taken away, then his death is made causeless, and to no purpose. Thus the apostle concludeth his thesis, laid down Ga 2:16: That none shall be *justified by the works of the law*, from two absurdities that would follow upon the contrary, viz. justification by the works of the law, the rejecting of the grace of God, and the frustration, or making void, of the death of Christ.

## Galatians 3:1

### Chapter Summary

Ga 3:1-5 Paul asketh what had moved the Galatians to depend on the law, having already received the Spirit through faith.

Ga 3:6-9 As Abraham was justified by faith, so they who are of

faith inherit his blessing.

Ga 3:10-12 The law brought men under a curse, and could not justify.

Ga 3:13,14 Christ hath freed us from the curse, and laid open the

blessing to all believers.

Ga 3:15-18 Supposing that the law justified, God's covenant with

Abraham would be void.

Ga 3:19-22 But the law was only a temporary provision against sin till

Christ's coming, and in no wise contrary to God's promises.

Ga 3:23,24 Serving as a schoolmaster to prepare men for Christ.

Ga 3:25-29 But faith being come the law is at an end, and all

believers are, without distinction, become children of

God, and heirs of the promise.

Ver. 1. *O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?* The apostle beginneth the further pursuit of the argument he was upon, with a smart reprehension of them, as men of no understanding, and bewitched. The word translated *bewitched*, signifies vitiating the eyes, or spoiling the sight, so as that men cannot discern an obvious object in a due position. The meaning is: Who hath seduced you, who hath so corrupted your understanding that your actions are as unaccountable as the effects of witchcraft?

*That ye should not obey the truth:* the word translated obey, signifies also to believe: in general it signifies to be persuaded; which may refer either to

an assent to the truth, or obedience to the precepts of the gospel.

*Before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you;* whenas Christ hath been plainly preached before you, and his death, with the blessed end and effects of it, hath been so made known amongst you, as if you had seen him crucified. Or else Christ may be said to be crucified amongst them, because it was in their time, so as they could not but hear of it, and there was no more reason for them to doubt of the truth of the thing, than if he had been crucified in their country.

### Galatians 3:2

Ver. 2. *By the Spirit* here is understood the gifts of the Spirit, which were either such as were common to all believers, (such as faith, love, &c.), or else such as were peculiar to some, and those not all believers; such were those abilities for miraculous operations given to some. Some understand this text of the former, some of the latter: it is best to take in both; all the manifestations of the Spirit then given out, either for the sanctification and eternal salvation of those to whom they were given, or for the confirmation of the truth of the gospel. Did you receive the Spirit *by the works of the law*? That he knew they could not say they did; for they were heathens, strangers to the commonwealth of Israel, so as they could pretend to no works of the law. Did you receive this Holy Spirit upon *hearing* the gospel (which is the doctrine *of faith*) preached to you? Men should take heed of vilifying that ministry, or that doctrine, which God hath blessed to the change of their own hearts, or the hearts of others. We also may observe from hence, that the hearing the gospel faithfully preached is a blessed means by which men's hearts are changed, and they receive the Holy Spirit; not enabling them (as it did some, and but some, in the beginning of the gospel) to work signs and wonders, but enabling them to the operations of a spiritual life. The strength of the apostle's argument is this: You have the greatest reason to own that doctrine as the truth, which God hath blessed to your souls to produce spiritual effects there.

### Galatians 3:3

Ver. 3. The doctrine of their false teachers was, that to faith in Christ, an

obedience also to the law of Moses was necessary to justification; they did not deny Christ, or the doctrine of the gospel, only they pleaded for the works of the law as necessary to be superadded. The apostle calls this first owning of Christ, and embracing the doctrine of faith, a beginning *in the Spirit*; their adding the necessity of obedience to the law of Moses, a being *made perfect in the flesh*; and argueth the unreasonableness of it, that their justification should be begun by a more noble, and made perfect by a more ignoble cause. He calls the doctrine of the gospel, *Spirit*, because (as he said in the former verse) they had received the Holy Spirit *by the hearing of faith*; that is, by hearing and receiving the gospel. The works of the law he calls *flesh*, because the ordinances of the law were (as the apostle calls them, Heb 9:10) *carnal ordinances, imposed on the Jews till the time of reformation*. He elsewhere calls them *the rudiments of the world*, Col 2:8,20; and in this Epistle, Ga 4:9, he calls them *beggarly elements*. For though the ordinances of the law were in their season spiritual, they being commanded by God; yet they being but temporary constitutions, never intended by God to continue longer than the coming of Christ, and the law being but a schoolmaster to lead to Christ; Christ being now come, and having died, and rose again from the dead, they became useless. Besides that God never intended them as other than *rudiments* and first *elements*, the end of which was Christ; and the observance of which, without faith in Christ, was weak and impotent, as to the noble end of justification. It spake great weakness, therefore, in the Galatians, to begin with what was more perfect, (the embracing of the gospel, and Christ there exhibited for the justification of sinners), and to end in what was more imperfect, thinking by that to be made perfect; or else the apostle here chargeth them with a defection from Christ, as Ga 4:9-11, and Ga 5:4: and so calleth them foolish, for beginning in the Spirit, (the Holy Spirit inwardly working in them the change of their hearts, and regenerating them), and then apostatizing from their profession to a carnal life. But I had rather interpret *Spirit* in this text, of the doctrine of the gospel, dictated by the Spirit; and with the receiving of which the Holy Spirit was given. And so their folly is argued from their thinking to be made perfect by the beggarly elements and worldly rudiments of the law, whenas they had first begun their profession of Christianity with embracing the more perfect doctrine of the gospel.

### Galatians 3:4

Ver. 4. There is no doubt but these churches in the regions of Galatia had their share in the sufferings of Christians by the Jews for their adherence to and profession of the doctrine of the gospel, which they might either wholly, or in a great measure, have avoided, would they have complied with the Jews in the observance of those legal rites. Therefore, (saith the apostle), to what purpose have you suffered so much for the owning of the Christian religion, if you now bring yourselves under the bondage of circumcision, and other legal observances?

*If it be yet in vain;* by which words he either correcteth himself, as if he had said: But I hope better things of you, that I shall find that you did not suffer them in vain; or else he hinteth that their suffering so much would not be in vain, because, by their apostacy from the true faith for which they suffered, they would in effect deny it, as if it had been false, and their former suffering would rise up in judgment against them.

### Galatians 3:5

Ver. 5. He had asked them, Ga 3:2, whether they had received the Spirit by the works of the law, or by hearing the gospel? Some think what he saith here to be a continuation of the same argument, but it rather seems a new one: there he spake of their receiving the Spirit, here he speaks of the ministration of the Spirit. Some understand it of God, who gives his Holy Spirit to them that ask him, and who was the Author of those miraculous operations wrought by the Spirit. I should rather understand it of the ministers of the gospel, to whom God hath committed the ministration of the Spirit; and to some of whom God, in the primitive times, gave a power to work miracles.

*Doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?* Doth God concur with our ministry upon our preaching the law, or upon our preaching the gospel? So that though there be a great cognation between the apostle's arguing, Ga 3:2, and his arguing in this verse, yet there is some difference; the apostle there arguing from the success of preaching the gospel, here from the ministration itself.

### Galatians 3:6

Ver. 6. As Abraham was justified, so must all the children of Abraham; but *Abraham believed God*, ( that is, agreed to the truth of all those promises which God gave him, and trusted in God for the fulfilling of them; for both those acts of the mind are included in believing God), and so was justified alone.

*And it was accounted to him for righteousness:* his faith itself was not imputed to him; those that put this sense upon the words, either forget that faith itself is a work, or that the apostle here is arguing for justification by faith in opposition to justification by works, and cannot be imagined to have gone about to prove that justification is not by works, by proving that it is by a work. The meaning is no more than that he was upon it accounted righteous; not that God so honoured the work of faith, but that he so rewarded it, as being the condition annexed to the promise of justification. His faith was not his righteousness, but God so rewarded his exercise of faith, as that open it he reckoned (or imputed) that to him which was his righteousness, viz. the righteousness of him in whom he believed as revealed unto him in the promise.

### Galatians 3:7

Ver. 7. *They which are of faith;* those who are believers, and receive Jesus Christ, as exhibited and tendered to them in the gospel, trusting not to any righteousness of their own, arising from their obedience to the works of the law; *they are the children of Abraham*, considered as the father of the faithful, that is, they are justified as Abraham was justified; who was justified, not by his circumcision, but upon his believing in Christ exhibited to him in the promise; not by working, but by imputation. This argument came very close to the Jews, whose great glorying was in having Abraham to their father; for it is in effect a saying, that they were no true children of Abraham, none of that seed to whom the promise was made, if they expected justification from the works of the law, which Abraham never had nor expected.



### Galatians 3:8

Ver. 8. The Holy Ghost in Scripture (by whose inspiration the Scripture was written) foreseeing, or knowing, the counsels and designs of God, that the heathen (when the fulness of times as to them should come) should be justified through faith in Christ, preached the same doctrine before unto Abraham; so as it is no new doctrine; the gospel which we now preach unto you, was long since revealed unto Abraham, who saw Christ's day, and rejoiced, Joh 8:56. To prove which, he quoteth the promise, Ge 12:3, where God tells Abraham, that in him all the nations of the earth should be blessed; which quotation of it by the apostle in this place informeth us, that it is to be understood of those spiritual blessings which are in Christ Jesus. For all the nations of the earth were no otherwise blessed in Abraham, than as Christ (who is called *the desire of all nations*, and he in whom *the Gentiles* should *trust*, and *a light to enlighten the Gentiles*) descended from Abraham.

### Galatians 3:9

Ver. 9. Those that believe in Jesus Christ with such a faith as the gospel doth require, they, and they alone, are blessed with spiritual blessings, justified from the guilt of sin, *with Abraham*; that is, in the same manner that Abraham, the father of the faithful, and who himself was a believer, was justified; which was not (as was before said) by his circumcision, or by any works that he did, but by imputation upon his believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, exhibited and held forth in the promise made to him.

### Galatians 3:10

Ver. 10. The argument is this: Those that are under a curse cannot be under the blessing of justification: but those that are under the law are under the curse. This he proves out of the law, De 27:26, where those are pronounced *cursed, who continue not in all things written in the book of the law to do them*. To be under the law, is, under the covenant of works, or under the expectation of life and salvation only from obedience to the works of the law. These (he saith) *are under the curse*: the reason of which the apostle gives us, Ro 8:3, because it is made *weak through the flesh*.

Could man perfectly fulfil the law, he might expect life from it, and salvation from his obedience to it; but the law curseth him that continueth not in all that is written in it: *If a man keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all*, Jas 2:10, and as liable to the wrath of God as if he had broken it in many things. Hence it necessarily followeth, if no man can keep the law of God perfectly, that all under the law must be under the curse, and consequently cannot be blessed in faithful Abraham.

### Galatians 3:11

Ver. 11. The apostle, by another argument, proveth that sinners are not justified by works. He grants, they may be justified by their good and blameless living before men, so as that they may have nothing to say against them, but he says they cannot, by such works, be *justified in the sight of God*. His argument is from the opposition that is between faith and works. He proveth, from Hab 2:4, that we are justified by faith; where the prophet saith, that *the just* (or righteous man) *shall live by faith*; fetch his life from faith, live his spiritual life by faith, and obtain eternal life by faith, the life of his righteousness shall be by faith.

### Galatians 3:12

Ver. 12. The law saith nothing of faith in the Mediator; though faith in God be commanded in the first precept, yet faith in Christ is not commanded by the law as that by which the soul shall live. For that which the law saith is: *Do this and live: The man that doeth the things contained in the law, shall live in them*; life, in the law, is promised to those who do the things which it requireth; not to them who, have failed in their performances, yet accept of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Redeemer which God hath sent, and believe in him who justifieth the ungodly. For that by the life promised to the observation of the law, not a temporal life only is to be understood, but eternal life also, is plain from our Saviour's application of it to the young man, inquiring about the way to eternal life, Mt 19:16,17 Lu 10:28.

### Galatians 3:13

Ver. 13. If the law curseth all those who continue not in all things contained in the law, (as the apostle had said, Ga 3:10, and proved from De 27:26), it might be objected: How will believers then escape more than others; for none of them continue in all that is written in the law? The apostle here obviateth this objection, by telling the Galatians, that, as to believers, Christ had *redeemed* them from this curse. The word generally signifies delivering; here it signifies a deliverance by a price paid. This was *by being himself made a curse for us*, not only execrable to men, but bearing the wrath and indignation of God due for sin: *for so it was written, De 21:23: He that is hanged is accursed of God;* that is, hath borne the wrath or curse of God due to him for his sin. The apostle applying this to Christ, teacheth us, that Christ also, hanging upon the cross, bare the curse of God due to the sins of believers; in whose stead, as well as for whose good and benefit, he died. And indeed he could no other way redeem believers from the curse of the law, but by being made himself a curse for them. Some think, that under the law he who was hanged was made a curse, not only politically, but typically, as signifying that curse which Christ should he made on the behalf of the elect.

### Galatians 3:14

Ver. 14. The apostle, by *the blessing of Abraham*, here, understands those spiritual blessings of justification, reconciliation, and adoption, which came to Abraham upon his believing, and the imputation of righteousness thereupon unto him. *Christ* (he saith) *was made a curse for us*, that all those blessings through him *might come on the Gentiles;* and so all the nations of the earth might be blessed in him. Particularly, that the Gentiles *might receive the promise of the Spirit;* which promise is not to be interpreted so narrowly, as only to signify its miraculous gifts, but to be extended to all those gifts and habits of grace which are the effects of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers, whether sanctifying or sealing them; which Holy Spirit is received upon persons' believing: see Ga 4:6 Ro 8:13.

### Galatians 3:15

Ver. 15. *Though it be but a man's covenant:* the word here translated *covenant*, διαθηκη, is ordinarily translated *testament*; see Mt 26:28. It signifies in the general, an ordering or disposing of things; more specially, a testament; which is the disposition of the testator's goods after his death. Now, (saith the apostle), I here argue according to the ordinary methods and doings of men, who have such a respect for a man's testament, as that, *if it be once confirmed*, according to the methods of law and civil sanctions of men, or rather by the death of the testator (for a testament is of no force while the testator liveth, Heb 9:17); nor will men alter the will or last testament of a deceased person, though it be not as yet confirmed according to the methods of human laws.

*No man disannulleth, or addeth thereto; no man*, that is, no just man, will go about to disannul it, or add to it, nor will any just government endure any such violation of it. Hence the apostle argueth both the certainty and unalterableness for the covenant of grace with Abraham, and until the death of Christ it was but a covenant, or a testament not fully confirmed, but yet unalterable, because the covenant of that God who cannot lie, nor repent; but by the death of Christ it became a testament, and a testament ratified and confirmed by the death of the person that was the testator; therefore never to be disannulled, never capable of any additions. Those words, *or addeth thereto*, are fitly added, because these false teachers, though they might pretend not to disannul God's covenant, holding still justification by Christ; yet they added thereto, making circumcision, and other legal observances, necessary to justification; whereas by God's covenant, or testament, confirmed now by the death of Christ, faith in Christ only was necessary.

### Galatians 3:16

Ver. 16. *Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made;* the promises, Ge 12:3 22:18; in the one of which places it is said: *In thee;* in the other: *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.* He saith, *promises*, either because of the repetition of the same promises, or taking in also other promises.

*He saith not: And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ:* some may object against the apostle's conclusion, that the

promise respected only *one*, and that was Christ; because God said not *seeds, as of many, but seed*; whereas the term *seed* is a noun of multitude, and signifieth more than one; besides that the Hebrew word, which is used Ge 22:18, admitteth not the plural number. But it is answered, that though the word translated *seed* admitteth not the plural number, yet had God intended more than one, he could have expressed it by words signifying children, or generations, &c.

Secondly, that the term *seed*, though a noun of multitude, yet is often applied to a single person; as Ge 3:15, where it also signifieth Christ; *Seth* is called *another seed*, Ge 4:25; and so in many other places. Some think that by *seed* he meaneth believers, and so interpret it of Christ mystical; and that the scope of the apostle in this place is to prove, that both the Jews and Gentiles were to be justified the same way; because they were justified in force and by virtue of the promise, which was not made to many, but to one church, which was to consist both of Jews and Gentiles, for (according to the prophecy of Caiaphas, Joh 11:52) Christ died, that he might *gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad*. The promises made to Abraham, were but the exhibition of the eternal covenant of grace, made between the Father and his Son Christ Jesus (who was in it both the Mediator and Surety); which covenant was promulgated, as to Adam and Noah, so to Abraham, in these words: *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be called*, that is, in Christ. From whence the apostle proveth, that there is no justification by the works of the law, but in and by Christ, and the exercise of faith in him.

### Galatians 3:17

Ver. 17. *The covenant, that was before confirmed of God in Christ:* the word translated *covenant*, is the same as before; ordinarily signifying one's disposal of things in his last will and testament. Which name is given to the covenant of grace, with respect to the death of Christ; for though Christ as yet had not died, yet he was, by virtue of the covenant of redemption, and in God's counsels: *The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*, Re 13:8. This (he saith) was *in Christ*, (as Abraham's promised seed), *confirmed of God* to Abraham, by God's *oath*, Heb 6:17,18; by frequent repetitions of it; by such solemn rites as covenants use to be confirmed by, Ge 15:17,18; by the seals of circumcision, Ge

17:11 Ro 4:11; by a long prescription, &c.; though it received indeed its final and ultimate consummation by the death of Christ, yet it was before many ways confirmed.

*The law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul: the law was given four hundred and thirty years after the giving this promise to Abraham: though, Ge 15:13, the round number of four hundred years only be mentioned, which are to be counted from the birth of Isaac; yet, Ex 12:40, they are reckoned (as here) four hundred and thirty years, from Abraham's going out of Canaan, Ge 12:4; from whence to the birth of Isaac were twenty-five years, Ge 21:5, compared with Ge 12:4; from the birth of Isaac till Jacob was born, sixty years, Ge 25:26; from thence till Jacob went down into Egypt, one hundred and thirty years, Ge 47:9, where they abode two hundred and fifteen years. Hence the apostle concludes, that it was impossible that the law, which was not given till four hundred and thirty years after the confirmation of the promise, *should make the promise confirmed of no effect.**

### Galatians 3:18

Ver. 18. *If the inheritance of the heavenly Canaan, typified by the earthly Canaan, the promise of which was made to Abraham, be to be obtained by the fulfilling of the law, and yielding obedience to it, then it is no more of the promise.* It is much the same with what the apostle said before, Ro 4:14; and with what he had said, Ro 11:6: *If by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work.* He shows, that there is an opposition between *grace* and *work*, the *law* and the *promise*; that which is of grace, and of the promise, is of free love; that which is of works, and the law, is wages, and a reward of debt.

*But* (saith the apostle) *God gave the inheritance to Abraham by promise; he of his free love engaging himself thereunto.*

### Galatians 3:19

Ver. 19. *Wherefore then serveth the law?* Some might say: To what

purpose was the law given? As if there could be no use of it unless it were available to justification.

*It was added because of transgressions;* it was (saith the apostle) given after the promise, not to supply something wanting as to justification, to prescribe some works that must be added; but either to restrain sin, 1Ti 1:9, or to show and discover sin, to make men see that they stood in need of Christ: see Ro 7:13.

*Till the seed should come to whom the promise was made:* till Christ the promised Seed should come, who *is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth*, Ro 10:4; upon whose coming the law contained in ordinances ceased. That Christ is here to be understood by *the seed*, is plain by the addition, *to whom the promise was made*. Some here understand by *the seed*, Christ and the church, (which both make up Christ mystical), and interpret this text by Eph 2:14, till the Jews and Gentiles should be both made one. This law (he saith) *was ordained by angels*. Luke, Ac 7:38, speaks of the law as published by one angel: the apostle, Heb 2:2, calls it, *the word spoken by angels*. We read of no angels, Ex 19:20, nor of any of the saints; yet, De 33:2: Moses saith God *came from Sinai, with ten thousand saints*. The law was given either by the ministry of an angel, or by God attended with angels.

*In the hand of a mediator;* that is, (say some), under the power of Christ the Mediator; but by *the mediator* is rather to be understood Moses, which agreeth with De 5:5, where Moses telleth the Jews, that he *stood between the Lord and them at that time, to show them the word of the Lord*; nor is Christ any where called the Mediator of the old, but of the new testament, Heb 8:6 Heb 12:24.

### Galatians 3:20

Ver. 20. This is a text acknowledged by all interpreters to be very obscure; not so much as considered in itself, (for all know, that a mediator speaks one that goes in the middle between two persons that are at odds, so cannot be of one), as in regard of the connection of it with what went before; where he had told us, that the law was given *in the hand of a mediator*. There are various senses given of this verse, and the variety much ariseth

from men's different understanding of the mediator in whose hand the law was given. To me the apostle seems to magnify the promise above the law, in that the promise was given to Abraham immediately by God, (who is one in essence), but the law was given not immediately by God, but by Moses as mediator, who in that action was a type of Christ. And God thereby showed, that the law would bring no man to life and salvation without the one and only Mediator Christ Jesus. Christ, indeed, is the Mediator of the new testament, he mediated for it, he mediates in it; but it was men's transgression of the law that brought them in need of a Mediator, sin being the only thing that separateth between God and man.

*God is one;* and there had been no need of mediating between him and man, but for the law which man had transgressed. Those that by *the mediator*, Ga 3:19, understand Christ, make this the sense: That as a mediator supposeth two parties at odds, so Christ's being Mediator speaks him to have respect to Jews and Gentiles. But this interpretation seems to make Christ the Mediator between Jews and Gentiles, whom (the apostle saith) he *made both one*, breaking down the partition-wall, Eph 2:14; but we do not find the name of Mediator upon this account any where given unto Christ. Many other senses are given, but the first mentioned seemeth the most probable, viz. that God made use of no mediator in giving the promise, but only in giving the law, which evidenced that justification was not to be by it; nor had there been need of a true Mediator under the gospel, but for the law, men's transgression of which brought in a need of a Mediator; which proved that justification could not be by the law.

### Galatians 3:21

Ver. 21. *Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid:* though it be thus, yet there is no such opposition between the law and the promises, as that either of them make the other useless. Far be it from me (saith the apostle) to assert any such thing! They are not contrary to one another but subservient to one another.

*For if there had been a law given which could have given life; for if there had been a law which could, by our perfect performance of it, have given us a righteousness, wherein we might have stood righteous before God, then righteousness should have been by the law; then men might have*



hoped to have been justified and accepted of God by me for such obedience; then indeed the law had been against the promises, they holding forth another righteousness, viz. the righteousness of God from faith to faith.

### Galatians 3:22

Ver. 22. *But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin:* it pleased God to give a law, which, if Adam had continued in his estate of innocence, might have given life; but considering man in his lapsed state, that now is not possible: Ro 2:10: *There is none righteous, no not one:* and Eph 2:3: *We are all children of wrath.*

*That the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe;* that the promises of life and salvation might be given to those who, according to the new covenant of the gospel, should receive and accept of the Mediator, and the terms of salvation which God offers to us in the gospel; where these promises are exhibited upon condition of believing. Though, upon our first reflection upon it, it may seem strange to us, that God, having in his eternal counsels fixed the salvation of man upon a covenant of grace, and his believing in Jesus Christ, should in time first propound a covenant of works: Do this, and live; yet, upon second thoughts, this will appear necessary; for till man was a transgressor by breaking the law, and violating the first covenant, there was no room for a Mediator, no cause for men's applying themselves to a Mediator. God therefore first gave out the covenant of works, and suffered man to break it; and then he revealed the Mediator to lapsed man; that so they who should believe in him might obtain the promise of life, to which by their fall they had forfeited their right.

### Galatians 3:23

Ver. 23. *Before faith came;* before the covenant of grace, or the doctrine of the gospel, or Christ himself, was revealed.

*We were kept under the law;* the apostle either speaks of all mankind, of whom it is true, that until God's revelation of the covenant of grace, they

had no other way of salvation made known to them than by the law of works; or else of the Jews, to whom, though before Christ there was a revelation of the gospel, yet it was more dark and imperfect, so as they *were kept under the law*, but few apprehending any other way of justification than by the works of the law.

*Shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed;* but the apostle saith they were but *shut up* under it; God never intended it as that by the observance of which they should be saved; but as even then, to those whom he intended to save, he made a more secret revelation of his gospel, so he had now more fully and plainly revealed the way of salvation which he had from eternity established.

#### Galatians 3:24

Ver. 24. *The law*, both the law contained in ordinances and the moral law, *was our schoolmaster*; serving us in the same stead that a schoolmaster in a school doth, who only fitteth children for higher degrees of learning at universities.

*To bring us unto Christ:* the ceremonial law showed us Christ in all his types and sacrifices; the moral law showed us the absolute need of a Mediator, as it showed us sin, accused and condemned us for it; and it showed us no help either for the guilt of sin contracted, or against the power of it.

*That we might be justified by faith;* so that God's end in giving us the law was, that we might be fitted for Christ, and obtain justification by believing in him.

#### Galatians 3:25

Ver. 25. After that Christ, the object of saving faith, was in the fulness of time revealed, and the gospel, which is the doctrine of faith, was fully revealed and published, the time of our nonage was over.

### Galatians 3:26

Ver. 26. All you that believe, whether native Jews or Gentiles, are the children of God by adoption, through faith in Jesus Christ, Joh 1:12: so that you need not run back to the law to look for help and salvation from that; but only look unto Christ, to whom the law was but a schoolmaster to lead you; who being fully and clearly revealed, you may have immediate recourse to, by faith; and need not to make use of the Jewish schoolmaster, as hoping for justification from the observances of the law.

### Galatians 3:27

Ver. 27. *Baptized into Christ*, may either be understood of receiving the sacrament of baptism; which who receiveth, is not only baptized in the name of Christ, and into the profession of Christ; but is sacramentally, or in a sign, baptized into Christ; or else (which, considering what followeth, seemeth much more probably the sense) it may signify a being not only baptized with water, but with the Holy Ghost and fire. Of those thus baptized, he saith, that they *had put on Christ*; they had accepted of and received Christ for their justification, and for their sanctification. We have the like phrase, Ro 13:14.

### Galatians 3:28

Ver. 28. *There is neither Jew nor Greek*; in the business or justification, the case of Jews and (Greeks is the same. This he saith, that the Galatians might not think themselves disadvantaged from their not being under the law, as the schoolmaster that should lead them unto Christ.

*There is neither bond nor free*; neither doth Christ consider the qualities and circumstances of persons, whether they be servants or free men; for though they be servants, Christ hath made them free, 1Co 7:22 Eph 6:8 Col 3:11.

*There is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus*: neither hath Christ any respect to sexes: the male children under the law had many privileges; but it is all a case under the gospel, whether persons be males or females, Jews or Gentiles, rich or poor, servants or masters, bond-men

or free-men.

### Galatians 3:29

Ver. 29. Lest these Galatians should be discouraged, because the promise was made to Abraham and his seed, and they were not the seed of Abraham; he tells them, if they were Christ's, that is, if they truly believed in him, and were implanted into him, that then they were the seed of Abraham, that seed to which the promise was made; and though not heirs of Abraham according to the flesh, yet heirs according to the promise: see Ro 9:7,8.

### Galatians 4:1

#### Chapter Summary

Ga 4:1-3 The Jews were for a while held under the law, as an heir under his guardian till he be of age.

Ga 4:4-7 But Christ came to redeem those that were under the law, and to give both to Jew and Gentile the adoption, and consequently the freedom, of sons.

Ga 4:8-10 Paul therefore reproveth the Galatians, who from serving idols had been received of God, for falling back to the bondage of legal observances.

Ga 4:11-20 He expresseth his fears and tender regard for them, and calleth to mind their former respect and good will to him, from which he admonisheth them not to be seduced in his absence.

Ga 4:21-31 He allegorically describeth the Jewish and Christian churches under the types of Agar and Sara, and

inferreth that we, being children of  
the free-woman,  
are free.

Ver. 1. The apostle had before determined, that the whole body of such as believed in Jesus Christ, were that seed of Abraham to which the promise was made, and so heirs of the promises made to him; yet so, that, as it is among men, though a child be a great heir, and lord of a great estate, yet while he is under age he is used like a servant; so the time of the law being as it were the time of believers' nonage, those who lived in that time were used like servants.

#### Galatians 4:2

Ver. 2. The heir, (mentioned in the former verse), though he be an heir of a great estate, yet is not presently possessed of it; but he is by his father kept under tutors and governors, until the time which he hath appointed when he will be pleased to release him from his pupillage, and settle some part of his inheritance upon him.

#### Galatians 4:3

Ver. 3. Such children were all believers, the seed of Abraham; from the first designed to a gospel liberty, but that was not to be fully enjoyed, until the fulness of time should come when God intended to send his Son into the world; and during the time of their nonage they were kept under the law, as a tutor and governor, leading them unto Christ. He chiefly intendeth the ceremonial law, which, Ac 15:10, Peter calleth *a yoke, which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear*. He calls these ordinances *the elements of the world*; so also Col 2:20: he means that discipline by which God instructed, and under which God by Moses at first tutored, the world, that is, the Jews, who were that part of the world to whom God pleased to make his oracles known. He calls those ritual observances, elements, or rudiments, because they were the first instructions God gave believers, leading them to Christ; like the first elements or rudiments in grammar learning.

#### Galatians 4:4

Ver. 4. *But when the fulness of the time was come; the time,* which answered the time appointed of the earthly father, mentioned Ga 4:2; when that time came in which God had designed to bring his people into the most perfect state of liberty, which in this life they are capable of.

*God sent forth his Son,* who was existent before, (being brought forth before the mountains or hills were settled, Pr 8:25), but not *sent forth* until this fulness of time came. And then *made of a woman,* conceived in the womb of the virgin, by the power of the Holy Ghost overshadowing her.

*Made under the law;* to which, as God, he was not subject, (being himself the lawmaker), but he subjected himself. He was born in a nation, and of a parent, under the law; he was circumcised, and submitted to the ceremonial law; he in all things conformed his life to the rule of the law, and subjected himself to the curse of the law, *being made a curse for us.* Nothing of this is questioned, except the last; which yet appears also to have been necessary by what followeth in the next verse, for how else could he have redeemed those who were under the law; and this agreeth with what we had, Ga 3:13.

#### Galatians 4:5

Ver. 5. This makes it appear, that Christ's being *under the law* must be understood as well of the moral as of the ceremonial law, that is, subject to the precepts of it, as well as to the curse of it; for if the end of this being born under the law, was to redeem those that were under it, that he had not reached by being merely under the ceremonial law; for the Gentiles were not under that law, but only under the moral law; and they also were to be redeemed, and to receive the great privilege of *adoption*, or rather, the rights of adopted children; which (some think) is to be understood here, rather than what is strictly to be understood by the term of adoption, viz. a right to be called and to be the sons of God. Others, by *adoption*, understand that full state of liberty of which the apostle had been before speaking, in opposition to that state of childhood and nonage in which believers were until the times of the gospel; for, Ga 5:1, we shall find that

that was a *liberty wherewith Christ made us free*: and indeed this last sense seemeth best to agree with what the apostle had before said, Ga 4:1-3, though the other senses are not to be excluded.

#### Galatians 4:6

Ver. 6. Lest the Jews should claim the adoption as peculiar to them, the apostle tells them that these Gentiles were also sons; and in confirmation of that, he saith, that God had sent *the Spirit of his Son* into their hearts: not that the Holy Spirit is not the Spirit of the Father, as well as of Christ; but he calleth him the Spirit of Christ, because he had made adoption the end and fruit of redemption; and redemption is every where made the work of the Son. The apostle saith, Ro 9:4, that the adoption belongeth to the Israelites: the Jews were the first people whom God dignified with the name of his *sons*, his *first-born*, Ex 4:22; and so many of them as believed also received the Spirit, Eze 36:27; but the full effusion of the Spirit was reserved to gospel times, and until the time that Christ ascended, Joh 7:39 16:7. After which the Spirit was poured out in the days of Pentecost, Ac 2:1-47, whose effects were evident, not only in power to work miracles, and speak with divers tongues, (which were not common to all believers), but also in a variety of spiritual gifts and habits, amongst which this was one, teaching them to cry, *Abba, Father*.

*Crying*, ( it is expounded, Ro 8:15, *whereby we cry*, that is, through whose influence and working in us we cry), *Abba, Father*, that is, Father, Father: which not only signifieth the Spirit's influence upon believers' words in prayer, first conceived in the heart, then uttered by the lips; but chiefly those habits of grace, by which we pray acceptably; faith and holy boldness, by which we call God Father; zeal and fervency, by which we are importunate with God, and say, Father, Father. Which were now not the privileges of Jews only, but of these Galatians also, who were by nature Gentiles, and strangers to God; and a certain evidence of their concern in the redemption of Christ, and that they also might expect salvation from him.

#### Galatians 4:7

Ver. 7. *Thou* that art a believing Gentile, as well as the believing Israelites, *art no more a servant*, not in that state of servile subjection to the law; *but*

*a son; but in a more excellent state of liberty, like unto that of sons that have attained to a full and ripe age. Christ told his disciples, Joh 15:15, that he did not call them servants, for servants knew not what their lord did; but he had freely communicated to them what he had received from the Father. The apostle here saith, they were sons, sons by adoption; which is the highest notion of freedom and liberty. And this entitled them to an inheritance: *if a son, then an heir of God through Christ*: which agreeth with Ro 8:17. And as it is with sons and heirs, though the inheritance cometh not fully to them till the death of the parent, yet while they live they are in a far better condition than servants; so the believing Gentiles, being made sons and heirs of God through Christ, though they were to stay a while for the inheritance reserved for the sons of God in the heavens, yet their state was much better than that of servants; for though they were obliged to serve the Lord, yet they served him without servile fear, and were no otherwise servants than sons are also servants to their father.*

#### Galatians 4:8

Ver. 8. *When ye knew not God,* as he is, or as ye ought to have known him, or as, since, you have known him; for even the heathen have some knowledge of God, Ro 1:21.

*Ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods;* you paid religious homages unto idols; which are gods, not by nature and essence, but only in the opinion of idolaters. Which was a more miserable bondage and servitude than the Jews were under, who knew the true God; though in the time when the church was like the heir under age, it was subject to the law contained in ordinances, and under the yoke of the law.

#### Galatians 4:9

Ver. 9. *After that ye have known God;* after that you are come to a true and saving knowledge of God in Christ, and know God as he is.

*Or rather are known of God;* or rather after you are received of God, approved of him, made through Christ acceptable to him, which is much more than a true comprehension of God in your notion and understanding.



*How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? How turn you back again to the legal services of the ceremonial law? Which he calleth elements, or rudiments, because they were God's first instructions given to his church for his worship, to which he intended afterward a more perfect way of worship. He calls them weak, because they brought nothing to perfection; and the observance of them was impotent as to the justification of a soul, as all the law is. He calls them beggarly, in comparison of the more rational, spiritual way of worship under the gospel. He saith that they desired to be in bondage unto these, because they would not see and make use of the liberty from them which Christ had purchased.*

*Objection.* It may be objected, that the Galatians were not educated in Judaism; how then doth the apostle charge them with turning back to them?

*Answer.* This hath made some think, that, by *the weak and beggarly elements*, mentioned in this verse, the apostle meaneth their Gentile superstitions and idolatries; but this is not probable, the apostle, all along the Epistle, charging them with no such apostacy. Others think, that he in this verse chiefly reflecteth on the believing Jews, who afterwards returned again to the use of the law. But why may not we rather say, that he calleth their fact a turning back, not so much with reference to their personal practice, as to the state of the church; which was once under those elements, but by the coming of Christ was brought into a more perfect state. So that for them who were called into the church in the time of this its more perfect state, for them to return to the bondage of the law, that was truly to turn back; if not to any practice of their own, which they had cast off, yet to a state of the church which the church of God had now outgrown.

### Galatians 4:10

Ver. 10. If we had any evidence that these Galatians were relapsed to their Gentile superstitions, these terms might be understood of such days, &c. as they kept in honour to their idols. But the apostle, throughout the whole Epistle, not reflecting upon them for any such gross apostacy (as returning to the vanities of the heathen in which they formerly lived); but only for Judaizing, and using the ceremonies of the Jewish law, as necessary to be observed, besides their believing in Christ, for

their justification; it is much more probable that he meaneth by *days* the Jewish festivals, such as their new moons, &c.; by *months*, the first and the seventh month, when they religiously fasted; by *times*, their more solemn times, such as were their feasts of first-fruits, tabernacles, &c.; and by *years*, their years of jubilee, the seventh and the fiftieth year. His meaning is, that they took themselves to be under a religious obligation to observe these times as still commanded by God.

#### Galatians 4:11

Ver. 11. Paul knew that, with reference to himself, he had not laboured in vain; he might say with Isaiah, Isa 49:5: *Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorified.* He had told the Corinthians, that he knew he should be a sweet savour to God, as well in them that perished as in them that should be saved, 2Co 2:15. But he speaks with reference to them. A faithful minister accounteth his labour lost when he seeth no fruits of it upon the souls of his people. Nor was Paul afraid of this as to the sincerer part of this church, who truly believed, and were justified, but he speaketh this with reference to the whole body of this church. That which he feared, was their falling back from their profession of Christianity to Judaism; as judging the observation of the Jewish days necessary by Divine precept to Christians. Nor doth he speak of the observation of such days, as it was their duty in obedience to the moral law to observe, which commandeth the observation of a seventh day for the weekly sabbath, and gives a liberty for setting apart other days, and the commanding the observation of them, to take notice of and acknowledge God in emergent providences. But he only speaks of days imposed by the ceremonial law, and men's religious observation of them, as being tied to it by a Divine precept, by which they made them a part of worship. We have a liberty to set apart any day for God's worship, and magistrates have a liberty to set apart particular days for the acknowledgment of God in emergent providences whether of mercy or judgment; but none hath a power to make a day holy, so as that it shall be a sin against God for all to labour therein, much less hath any a liberty to keep Jewish holy-days.

#### Galatians 4:12

Ver. 12. *Be as I am; for I am as ye are;* be as friendly to me as I am to

you: see the like phrase, 1Ki 22:4. But how doth the apostle say they had not injured him at all, when it is manifest they had defamed him?

*Answer.* He had forgiven, or was ready to forgive, this to them; he had no desire or design to be revenged on them. Or in this particular thing of Judaizing, for which he had been reflecting upon them, they had done him no personal injury; it was only his care for and love to their souls, which had drawn out this discourse from him; not any particular prejudice to them, or any desire he had to take any revenge upon them, for any personal injury done to himself.

#### Galatians 4:13

Ver. 13. The Scripture having not given us a particular account of Paul's circumstances when he first preached the gospel to the Galatians, we are at a loss to determine what those infirmities were which Paul here speaketh of, more than that he calls them *infirmities of the flesh*: by which may be understood, either the baseness and contemptibleness of his presence, (which the false teachers at Corinth objected to him, 2Co 10:10), or some bodily sickness which Paul had at that time, (as some of the ancients guess), or his sufferings for the gospel, which were those infirmities wherein he chose to glory, 2Co 11:30.

#### Galatians 4:14

Ver. 14. *And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected;* the apostle saith they were so far from injuring him, (as he had said, Ga 4:12), that they had expressed great kindness to him: for though, when he first came amongst them to preach the gospel, he was a man of no great presence; but, in the judgment of some, vile and base; or was full of bodily weakness and disease, was persecuted by men; yet they did not reject nor despise him, for those temptations he had in the flesh: by which he means, the same things he before meant by infirmities, for both bodily weaknesses, and sufferings for the gospel, are temptations, or, as the word signifieth, trials.

*But received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus;* nay, (saith he),

you were so for from rejecting or despising me upon that account, that (on the contrary) you received me as if I had been an angel; yea, if Jesus Christ himself had come amongst you, you could not have been more kind to him than you were to me. This he tells them, partly, to let them know, that what he had spoken was not out of any ill will or prejudice to them; partly, to retain their good will, that they might not show themselves uncertain and inconstant in their judgments and affections; and partly, (as the following verse testifieth), to show the levity of some of them, who had too much forgotten their first judgment of him, and value for him.

#### Galatians 4:15

Ver. 15. Some understand the *blessedness* here spoken of in a passive sense; you were then a blessed and happy people, receiving the doctrine of the gospel in the truth and purity of it; what is now become of that blessedness? But both the preceding and the following words seem to rule the sense otherwise, viz. Where is that blessedness which you predicted of me? You called me then blessed, and showed me such a dear affection that you would, if it would have done me good, have parted with what was dearest to you.

#### Galatians 4:16

Ver. 16. What hath now altered your mind, or made you have a worse opinion of me? Wherein have I offended you or done you any harm? I have done nothing but revealed to you the truth of God; am I therefore become your enemy? Or do you account me your enemy on that account?

#### Galatians 4:17

Ver. 17. *They;* the false teachers, that have perverted you as to the faith of the gospel.

*Zealously affect you;* pretend a great warmth of affection for you.

*But not well;* but in this they do not well, nor for a good end.

*They would exclude you from our good opinion and affection.*

*That ye might affect them;* that they might have all your love and respect; and so, by the ruin of our reputation with you, they might build up their own reputation.

### Galatians 4:18

Ver. 18. *It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing:* the apostle, in the former verses, had been speaking of a great zeal, or warmth of affection, (for that zeal signifieth), which these Galatians had for and declared towards him, when he first preached the gospel amongst them; and also of a great warmth and degree of affection which these false teachers had pretended to this church. These words are so delivered that they are applicable to either of these; but the latter words seem to make them most properly applicable to the former; so the term *always* is emphatical: There was a time, when you were very warm in your love to me; the cause being good, your warmth of affection ought not to have abated, but continued always, *and not only* while you saw me, and I was *present with you*.

### Galatians 4:19

Ver. 19. By calling them *little children*, he both hints to them that he was their spiritual father, and had begotten them to Christ; and that they were as yet weak in the faith, not grown men, but as yet little children: and also hints to them, the tender affection he had towards them, which was the same as of a mother to her little children: though they did not own and honour him as their spiritual father, yet he loved them as his *little children*.

*Of whom I travail in birth again;* for whom I am in as great pain, through my earnest desire for the good of your souls, as the woman is that is in travail for the bringing forth of a child.

*Until Christ be fully and perfectly formed in you;* that is, till you be brought off from your Judaism, and opinion of the necessity of superadding the works of the law to the faith of Christ in order to your justification, and be rooted in the truth and established in the liberty of the gospel, with which Christ hath made you free.

### Galatians 4:20

Ver. 20. *I desire to be present with you now;* I wish circumstances so concurred that I could be present with you.

*And to change my voice;* that I might use my tongue towards you as I saw occasion; either commending, or reproofing, or exhorting, as I saw cause.

*For I stand in doubt of you;* for I do not know what to think of you; I am afraid of your falling away from the profession of the gospel to Judaism.

### Galatians 4:21

Ver. 21. *Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law;* you that cannot be content to receive Jesus Christ alone, for justification; but have a mind to maintain a necessity of obedience to the law of circumcision, and other Judaical rites; *do ye not hear the law,* that law which curseth every one who continueth not in all that is therein written to do it? Or rather, the story which follows; which is taken out of one of the books of the law, which the apostle makes a mystical revelation of the Divine will, that there should come a time when circumcision should be cast out.

### Galatians 4:22

Ver. 22. The substance of this is written, Ge 16:1-16, where we read of Abraham's having Ishmael by Hagar his bondwoman; and Ge 21:2, where we read of the birth of Isaac, whom he had by Sarah, who was his wife.

### Galatians 4:23

Ver. 23. They were both (in a sense) *born after the flesh*, viz. in a natural way and course of generation: but *after the flesh* is plainly, in this verse, opposed to *by promise*; and the meaning is, that Ishmael, the son of Hagar, was not that son of Abraham to whom the promise was made, that

*in him all the nations of the earth should be blessed:* see [Ge 15:4 17:19](#). Isaac is said to have been born after the *promise*, either because God gave Isaac to Abraham, in completion or fulfilling of the promise made to him, that he should have an heir out of his own loins; or because the mighty and miraculous power of God was seen in his production, enabling Abraham at those years to beget, and Sarah to bear, a child, when both their bodies were as dead.

### Galatians 4:24

Ver. 24. *Which things are an allegory:* that is called *an allegory*, when one thing is learned out of another, or something is mystically signified and to be understood further than is expressed. The Scripture hath a peculiar kind of allegories, wherein one thing is signified by and under another thing. The thing here signifying, was Abraham's wife and concubine, Sarah and Hagar.

*For these are the two covenants;* the apostle saith, these signified *the two covenants*, for that is the meaning of *are*: so as here we have one text more where the verb substantive is put for signifieth; and it will be hard to assign a reason why it should not be so interpreted in the institution of the Lord's supper, notwithstanding the papists' and Lutherans' so earnest contending to the contrary. The very word is here used, *διαθηκαι*, that is used in the institution of the Lord's supper. Here it is, *these are the two covenants* or testaments; there, *this is the new covenant*. The apostle calls them *two covenants*, ( whereas they were but one), with reference to the time of their exhibition, and manner of their administration, in which they much differed. Nor must we understand the apostle as signifying to us by these words, that Moses wrote the history of Sarah and Hagar with such a design and intention; but only that that history is very applicable to the two covenants, and we shall find, [Ga 4:27](#), the apostle justifying this application from the authority of the prophet Isaiah. And hereto he complied with the general sense of the Jews, who judged that there was not only a literal, but a mystical sense also, of those histories of the patriarchs.

*The one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar:* the one covenant was that of the law delivered from mount Sinai, this was like Hagar; for as Hagar was herself a bondwoman, and so her child did

partake of the condition of the mother, and Hagar bare a bondman or servant; so the law (which he calls a covenant, because of the stipulation of obedience from the people to the will of God revealed and declared) left those that were under it in a state of bondage or servitude.

#### Galatians 4:25

Ver. 25. *Agar*, the bondwoman, fitly represented *Mount Sinai*, the mountain in Arabia, from which the law was given: and *Jerusalem which now is* answereth to Mount Sinai; for as in Mount Sinai the law was given in a terrible manner, so now Jerusalem is the seat of the scribes and Pharisees, who are the doctors of that law, and rigidly press the observation of it, by which the Jews are kept *in bondage*. The apostle speaketh not here of the civil servitude that the Jews were in under the Romans, to whom they were now tributaries, but of that religious servitude in which the scribes and Pharisees kept them to their legal services.

#### Galatians 4:26

Ver. 26. The new covenant, or the dispensation of the gospel, or the Christian church, *which is above*, or from above, which answereth to Sarah, and is said to be *above*, because revealed from heaven by Christ, sent out of the bosom of the Father, not as the law was revealed upon earth, upon Mount Sinai. Hence apostates from the doctrine of the gospel, are said to turn from him who *speaketh from heaven*, Heb 12:25. Or else it is said to be *above*, because it is the *assembly of the firstborn written in heaven*, Ga 4:23: hence the gospel church is called *the heavenly Jerusalem*, Ga 4:22. Of this gospel church the apostle saith, that it is *free*; i.e. free from the yoke and bondage of the ceremonial law, or from the covenant and curse of the law. Which church, he saith, *is the mother of all* believers, they embracing the same faith, and walking in the same steps; from whence it was easy for the Galatians to conclude their freedom and liberty also from the law.

#### Galatians 4:27

Ver. 27. *It is written*, Isa 54:1. Some think that the apostle doth but allude to that of the prophet; and that the sense of the prophet was only to comfort the Jews, whose city, though it should be for a present time



barren, thin of inhabitants, during the time of the Babylonish captivity; yet it should be again replenished with people, and be more populous than other cities. But the apostle seemeth rather to interpret that prophecy, than merely to allude to it; so that verse is one of those prophetic passages about the calling of the Gentiles, of which are many in that prophet. In this sense, the Gentiles are to be understood under the notion of the woman that was *barren* and *desolate*. The church of the Jews is represented under the notion of a woman that had a husband and children. The prophet, by the Spirit of prophecy, calleth upon the Gentiles, that brought forth no children to God, and to whom God was not a husband, to rejoice, and to cry out for joy, for there should be more believers, more children brought forth to God, amongst them, than were amongst the Jews: so as the church of the Gentiles are compared to Sarah, who was a long time barren, but then brought forth the child of the promise, the seed in which all the nations of the earth were to be blessed.

#### Galatians 4:28

Ver. 28. Isaac was the promised seed, Ge 21:12 Ro 9:7: the apostle tells the Galatians that the believing Gentiles were (*as Isaac*) *the children of the promise*. Isaac being born, not by virtue of any procreative virtue in his parents, which was now dead in them, Ro 4:19, but by virtue of the promise, and by a power above nature, was a type of the believing Gentiles, who are a spiritual seed, and that seed to whom the promise was made, being the members of Christ by faith: so as the Jews had no reason so much to glory as they did, that Abraham was their father, for those amongst them that believed not were but his carnal seed, believers only were the spiritual seed, *the children of the promise*; to which the believing Gentiles had the same claim with the believing Jews, and a much better than those of them that believed not in Christ.

#### Galatians 4:29

Ver. 29. As it was in Abraham's time, Ishmael, who was born in a mere carnal and ordinary way of generation, persecuted Isaac, by mocking at him, Ge 21:9, who was born by virtue of the promise, and the mighty power of God, enabling Sarah at those years to conceive, and Abraham to beget a child; *even so it is now*, the carnal seed of Abraham, the Jews, persecute the Christians, which are his spiritual seed. From whence we

may observe, that the Holy Ghost accounteth mockings of good people for religion, persecution. So Heb 11:36: *Others had trial of cruel mockings*; and we know these were one kind of the sufferings of Christ. By this also the apostle doth both confirm what he had before said, in making Hagar a type of the Jews, and Sarah a type of the Gentiles, the Jews persecuting the seed of Christ, as Hagar's seed persecuted Isaac.

### Galatians 4:30

Ver. 30. We read, Ge 21:10, that when Sarah saw Ishmael mocking at her son Isaac, she was not able to bear it, but speaketh to her husband Abraham, saying: *Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even Isaac.* The principal design of the apostle seems to be, by that type of the ejection of Ishmael out of Abraham's family, to let them know the mind and will of God:

1. Concerning the exclusion of the law from a partnership with Christ and the gospel, in the justification of sinners before God.
2. Concerning the rejection of the Jews, upon the calling of the Gentiles.
3. Concerning the total destruction of the Jewish church and nation, for their persecution of Christ and the Christian church.

### Galatians 4:31

Ver. 31. The church of the Gentiles was not typified in Hagar, but in Sarah; from whence the scope of the apostle is to conclude, that we are not under the law, obliged to Judaical observances, but are freed from them, and are justified by faith in Christ alone, not by the works of the law. By this conclusion the apostle maketh way for the exhortation in the following chapter, pressing them to stand fast in their liberty.

### Galatians 5:1

## Chapter Summary

Ga 5:1 Paul exhorteth the Galatians to maintain their  
Christian liberty,

Ga 5:2-6 and showeth that by being circumcised they  
would

forfeit their hopes in Christ,

Ga 5:7-12 he disclaimeth the preaching of circumcision  
himself,

and condemneth it in others.

Ga 5:13-15 He adviseth them not to abuse their liberty,  
but to serve

one another in love, which  
comprehendeth the whole law.

Ga 5:16-18 The opposition between the flesh and the  
Spirit,

Ga 5:19-21 the works of the flesh,

Ga 5:22-24 the fruits of the Spirit.

Ga 5:25,26 Advice to walk in the Spirit, and not in  
vain glorious

emulation.

Ver. 1. The *liberty* here spoken of, is a right which a person hath to action, that he may do or forbear the doing of things at his pleasure, as he apprehends them suitable or not, without the let or hinderance of another. This is either in things of a civil nature, or of a spiritual nature. The former is not understood here, for it is none of *the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free*, for subjects to be free from the lawful commands of princes, or children to be free from the laws of their parents, or servants to be free from the commands of masters. There is hardly any book in the New Testament wherein obedience of this nature, in things that are lawful, is not either exemplified as our duty in Christ and the apostles, or urged by very strong arguments. The *liberty* here, is that freedom from the law, of which the apostle hath been speaking all along this Epistle: from the curse of the moral law, and from the co-action of it; and principally from the ceremonial law contained in ordinances. This is the liberty which Christ hath purchased for us, and in which the apostle willeth all believers to *stand fast*; not being *again entangled with a yoke*, which God had taken off from their necks. The apostles, in their synod, Ac 15:10, had called it *a yoke*, which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear.

## Galatians 5:2

Ver. 2. It is manifest that the apostle is speaking here concerning circumcision, looked upon as necessary to justification, now under the gospel state. For under the Old Testament undoubtedly Christ profited the fathers, though circumcised; yea, Christ undoubtedly profited Timothy, even under the gospel, though he was circumcised, Ac 16:3, that being done to prevent a scandal, and during a time whilst, for the gaining of the Jews to the Christian faith, the Jewish ceremonies, though dead, were (as it were) kept above ground, unburied for a time. But for men, after a sufficient time indulged them for their satisfaction concerning the abolition of the ceremonial law, still to adhere to it, and religiously to observe the rites of it, as in obedience to a Divine precept, and as necessary, over and above faith in Christ for justification, was indeed to deny Christ, and disclaim his sufficiency to save, who *is able to save to the utmost them that come to God by him*, Heb 7:25; and besides whom there is no name given under heaven, by which men can be saved, *neither is there salvation in any other*, Ac 4:10,12; and who *is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth*, Ro 10:4. So that to join any thing with Christ, and faith in him, for the justification of the soul before God, is plainly to deny and disclaim him, and to make him insignificant to us. This Paul affirms with an apostolical authority and gravity: *I Paul say unto you.*

## Galatians 5:3

Ver. 3. This must be understood either of the Gentiles only, who were never under any obligation to circumcision, or of such as were circumcised, with an opinion that it was necessary at this time to justification and salvation. Of these the apostle saith, that by this they made themselves *debtors to do the whole law*; they were obliged to one part of the law, they must also be obliged to all the other parts of it. Besides that circumcision was an owning and professing subjection to the whole law; as the receiving the sacrament of baptism is a professed subjecting ourselves to the whole gospel.

*Objection.* But (may some say) ought not then all Christians to observe the

law?

*Answer.*

1. Not the ceremonial and political law, which were peculiar to the Jewish church and state.
2. It is one thing to be under an obligation to our utmost to fulfil the law, another thing to acknowledge ourselves debtors to the law.

*Objection.* But did not the fathers, then, by being circumcised, acknowledge themselves debtors to the law?

*Answer.* Yes, they did acknowledge themselves bound to the observation of the law, and to endure (upon the breaking it) the curse of it: but they were discharged from this obligation by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was made a curse for them, that he might redeem them from the curse of the law. But if any disclaimed Christ, (which, whosoever added any thing to his righteousness and to faith in him, as to the justification of the soul, did, as the apostle had said in the former verse), they laid themselves under an obligation to fulfil the whole law of God, if they would be saved.

#### Galatians 5:4

Ver. 4. The word here translated *become of no effect*, is used Ro 3:3. By those who *are justified by the law*, are to be understood such as seek or desire to be justified by the law, for actually none is so justified. The sense is: Whoever seeketh to be justified by the works of the law, he disclaimeth the righteousness of Christ; to him Christ's death signifieth nothing, nor is of any virtue at all. For he had told us before, Ga 2:21: *If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain: and Ro 8:3,4: *What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, &c.* The very end of Christ's coming and dying was to supply us with a righteousness, which (apprehended by faith) should be reckoned to us as ours, wherein we might stand before God. Which end of Christ's death had been frustrated, if, through our flesh, there had not been such a weakness or impotency in the*

law as to justification. So as if any still looked for justification by performance of the law, as such made the death of Christ in vain, because if such a thing could have been done that way there had been no need of Christ's dying; so they also made it, which was not in vain in itself, yet in vain and of no effect to their souls, because Christ would not be a partial cause in the justification of a soul.

*Ye are fallen from grace;* and they, by this, renounced the grace of God exhibited in the gospel, and fell from the grace of it. For by *grace* here is not to be understood a state of grace, (from which none can fall totally and finally), but the grace of the gospel; by which is signified the free love of God in it exhibited, offering Christ to sinners for righteousness.

#### Galatians 5:5

Ver. 5. *For we;* we Christians, who have truly embraced Christ; or, (as others think), we that are turned from Judaism to Christianity, and so are more concerned in the law, which was not given to the Gentiles, but to us Jews: yet, *through the Spirit,* by the guidance and direction or the Spirit, or through the operation of the Spirit in us, *we wait for the hope of righteousness;* that is, we hope for righteousness; that righteousness whereby we shall be made righteous before God; or, (as some will have it), the crown of righteousness: I had rather understand it of righteousness itself, that having been all along the argument of the apostle's discourse here.

*By faith;* not by our observance of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ.

#### Galatians 5:6

Ver. 6. Under the new testament established in Christ, and confirmed by the death of Christ, there is no difference between Jew and Gentile; there is but one way of justification, one of salvation, for them both; and that is, by believing in Christ Jesus; which faith is not an idle, inactive, inoperative faith, but such a *faith as worketh by love,* both towards God and towards men, in an obedience to all the commandments of God: yet is not the soul justified, nor shall it stand righteous before God, in and for this obedience,

which neither is faith, nor goeth before it, but followeth it, as the true, proper, and necessary effect of it.

#### Galatians 5:7

Ver. 7. This was once your faith, your profession, and according to this you directed the course of your life and actions; who hath hindered you in your course, or turned you out of your way, or given you a check in your race; and hath made you disobedient to, or to swerve from, the truth which you formerly owned and professed.

#### Galatians 5:8

Ver. 8. *This persuasion;* this new opinion into which seducers have misled you, which, by embracing it, you have made yours.

*Cometh not of him that calleth you;* is not from God, who hath called you out of darkness into marvellous light, unto fellowship with himself, into a state of grace and favour with him, and to the hopes of eternal life; and who yet calleth you by his gospel: it must therefore be from the devil and his instruments, who go about to seduce and pervert you.

#### Galatians 5:9

Ver. 9. This is a proverbial expression, which (as others of that nature) is applicable in more cases than one. The apostle made use of it, 1Co 5:6, to persuade that church to purge their communion, by casting out the incestuous person: he maketh use of it here to persuade them to take heed of admitting any principles of false doctrine, which he compareth to leaven, (as our Saviour does, Mt 16:6,12), and that very fitly, both in regard of the sour and of the diffusive nature of it; the latter of which is here chiefly intended; the truths of God having such dependence one upon another, that he who erreth in any one doctrine of faith, seldom continueth long sound as to other points.

### Galatians 5:10

Ver. 10. *I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded:* the apostle (according to his usual method) sweeteneth his sharp reproof of this church for their deviations from the faith of the gospel, with a declaration of his good opinion of them; declaring that he had a confidence in them, that through the grace of God they would be reduced to the truth, or kept from wandering from it, and that in matters of faith they would be all of the same mind.

*But he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be;* and for those who endeavoured to seduce and pervert them, God should reward them according to their works. He seems to aim at some particular false teacher, (whose name he concealeth), who gave this church this trouble.

### Galatians 5:11

Ver. 11. It should seem by what the apostle saith in this verse, that some of these false teachers had quoted the apostle for them, as if he himself had preached circumcision; possibly taking advantage from his circumcising Timothy, not distinguishing between what was done by Paul as of liberty, and to avoid the offence of the Jews, and what they pressed as necessary to be done (besides believing in Christ) for justification. Now, (saith the apostle), *if I yet preach up circumcision as necessary to be observed, why do I yet suffer persecution?* Why am I then persecuted by the Jews, as one apostatized from their religion?

*Then is the offence of the cross ceased:* by *the cross*, he either means the cross of Christ; then the sense is: It is my opposing the observance of their law, that more offendeth them than my preaching of Christ crucified. Or else he meaneth the afflictions which he suffered for the sake of Christ and the gospel; (in which sense the term is used, Mt 16:24 Lu 9:23 14:22); then the sense is, that all sufferings for the owning and preaching of Christ are at an end; let us but yield the Jews that point, (that Christians are obliged to the observance of the law of Moses), the great quarrel between them and us is at an end; but their daily persecuting of me is a sufficient demonstration that I do not preach up circumcision.



### Galatians 5:12

Ver. 12. I wish that God would some way or other put an end to these that trouble you. This Paul speaketh not out of hatred to their persons, but out of a zeal to the glory of God, and a just indignation against these men, who had so much hindered the salvation of the members of this church. And it is not improbable that the apostle here spake by the Spirit of prophecy, as knowing God would cut them off; so that his and the like imprecations of holy men in Scripture are not to be drawn into precedents, or made matters for our imitation, unless we had the same discerning of spirits which they had, or the same Spirit of prophecy and revelations from God as to future things. But how far it is lawful or unlawful for ordinary persons, whether ministers or private Christians, to pray against God's or his church's enemies, is a question for the arguing which this place is too narrow.

### Galatians 5:13

Ver. 13. *Ye have been called unto liberty;* a liberty from the covenant of the law, and the curse of the law, as Ga 3:13; from servile fear, as Lu 1:74; and from sin, Ro 6:7.

*Only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh;* but you must take heed that you do not abuse this liberty by making it an occasion for sin, so as from thence to conclude, that you may give your flesh more liberty in obeying the lusts of it: you must not think, that the gospel hath set you at liberty from the obedience of the law; the gospel liberty to which you are called, doth not set you free from the duty of love, either to God or men. Therefore *by love serve one another.* Our Christian liberty neither freeth us from the serving of God, nor from our mutual serving each other by love, according to Ro 8:8: *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another.*

### Galatians 5:14

Ver. 14. The whole will of God, containing our duty towards men, is reducible to this one thing, *love*; for whatsoever God hath commanded us to do towards men, is but a branch from this root, and must flow from love

as its principle. Or, the whole will of God concerning man is fulfilled in this one thing of love; where love to God is not excluded, but supposed, as the root of our love to our neighbour; for our neighbour is to be loved for God. Thus Ro 8:8: *He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law:* and 1Jo 4:20, the apostle proveth, that a man cannot love God unless he loveth his brother: and 1Ti 1:5: *The end of the commandment is charity.* Yet what the papists would conclude from hence, (viz. that it is possible for a man to fulfil the law because it is possible for him to love his neighbour), doth by no means follow; for the apostle (1Ti 1:5) telleth us, this love must proceed *out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.* Mr. Calvin observeth well, that the apostle here mentioneth love to men as the fulfilling of the law, in opposition to the false teachers; who made the fulfilling of the law to lie in the observance of the ceremonies of the law, whereas the great thing which the law of God requireth is *love, out of a pure heart, good conscience, and faith unfeigned.* So that he who believeth with a faith unfeigned, and, out of that principle, with a pure heart and a good conscience, loveth his neighbour as himself, shall be by God accounted to have fulfilled the law; for love is the end of the law.

#### Galatians 5:15

Ver. 15. This lets us know, that there were great contentions and divisions amongst the members of this church, whether (which is probable) occasioned by their differences in and about the doctrine of justification, or upon other accounts, we are not told; but upon whatever account they were raised, they were contrary to that serving one another in love, to which the apostle had exhorted them. Nor did they terminate in a mere dislike of and displacency to each other, but broke out into overt acts, more becoming dogs than Christians, and therefore it is expressed under the notion of biting and devouring. The issue of which, the apostle prophesieth would be a consuming one another; they being actions that had a natural tendency to this end.

#### Galatians 5:16

Ver. 16. *Walk in the Spirit;* the apostle having, Ga 5:13, cautioned them

against turning the grace of God into wantonness, by using their liberty as an occasion to the flesh; here he directeth them to the best means for the avoiding thereof, viz. *walking in the Spirit*. Where by *Spirit* he doth not mean our own spirits, or the guide and conduct of our own reason; for the term *Spirit*, set (as here) in opposition to the *flesh*, is in no place of Scripture understood of any other than the Holy Spirit of God, which dwelleth in and influenceth believers, guiding them both by a rule from without, (which is the word of God, given by its inspiration), and by its inward motions and operations. Walking, signifieth the directing of their whole conversations. The phrases *in the Spirit*, and *after the Spirit*, Ro 8:1, seem to be of the same import, unless the alteration of the preposition signifieth, that Christians are not only to look to the word of God dictated by the Holy Spirit as their rule, and to listen to its dictates, but also to look up to the Holy Spirit for its strength and assistance; and implieth a promise of such assistance. The sense is: Let your whole conversation be according to the external rule of the gospel, and the more inward motions, directions, and inclinations of the Spirit of Christ, dwelling and working in you, and moving you to the obedience of that word.

*And ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh;* this doing, though the flesh be yet in you, and you will find the lustings and warrings of it, yet you shall not fulfil the sinful desires and lustings of it; that is, sin, though it be in you, shall not be in dominion in you; it shall not reign in your mortal bodies: Ro 6:12: *Let not sin reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.*

### Galatians 5:17

Ver. 17. By *the flesh* and *the Spirit*, we cannot so much understand the sensitive and rational appetite; for these two appetites are not so contrary, but that in many things they agree well enough; and we are enemies not only in our sensitive part, to spiritual things, but εν τη διανοια, in our mind and rational part also, Col 1:21. And some of *the works of the flesh*, which are afterward mentioned, Ga 5:19-21, (such as *idolatry, heresies, &c.*), cannot be referred to the sensitive part. But by these terms are either to be understood the unregenerate part of man; or rather, that carnal concupiscence which we derived from Adam, and is seated in our rational as well as sensitive appetite; which opposeth itself to the Divine rule, and

to the dictates and motions of the Spirit of God.

*The flesh lusteth against the Spirit;* this concupiscence moveth strongly against the directions of the Spirit.

*And the Spirit against the flesh;* and the Holy Spirit of God, dwelling in the saints, moveth us potently against the propensions and inclinations of the flesh.

*And these are contrary the one to the other;* for they are two contrary principles, and work contrarily in their motions and inclinations.

*So that ye cannot do the things that ye would;* so that even the best of God's people cannot at all times do either what they should do, (according to the precept of the word), or what they would do, according to the bent of their regenerate part.

#### Galatians 5:18

Ver. 18. To be *led of the Spirit*, and to *walk in the Spirit*, are the same thing; and differ only as the cause and the effect. To be *under the law*, is to be under the curse of it, or coercion of it, and an obligation to the performance of the ceremonial law. The reason is, because the Spirit is a Spirit of adoption and liberty; and where it is, it teacheth to serve the Lord without fear from a principle of freedom and ingenuity.

#### Galatians 5:19

Ver. 19. *The works of the flesh;* the products of the natural inclinations and propensions in the heart of man.

*Are manifest, which are these;* he saith, these are *manifest*, the filthiness of them appears by the light of nature, by the checks of conscience men meet with for them; or else, it is manifest that these actions are not from the Spirit of God, (because of their contrariety to the Divine rule), but are from the corrupt part of man. These (he saith) are *adultery*, or the defiling of our neighbour's bed; *fornication*, which is the uncleanness of single

persons each with other; and all other species of *uncleanness*, or unclean conjunctions: *lasciviousness*; whatsoever wanton carriage, gestures, or behaviour lead to these acts.

### Galatians 5:20

Ver. 20. *Idolatry*; either the worshipping of the creature for God, or the worshipping of God in and by the creature, as by images, &c.

*Witchcraft*; the product of compacts with the devil; by virtue of which, the persons so contracting are assisted by the power of evil spirits to produce effects beside the ordinary course and order of nature, and for the most part mischievous to others. And not these gross crimes only are the fruits of the flesh, but also abiding *hatred* of our brethren in our hearts, enmities to others, as the word signifieth. The result of which are, *variance*; men's quarrellings and contendings one with another for little or no cause: *emulations*; people's endeavouring to hinder others of such good things as they see them desirous of: *wrath*; heats and immoderate passions of men one against another: *strife*; a continual readiness and proneness to quarrelling: *seditions*; dividing into parties, which in the state is called sedition, in the church, schism: *heresies*; that is, differing and false opinions in the grand doctrine of religion.

### Galatians 5:21

Ver. 21. *Envyings*; repinings at that good which is enjoyed by our brethren: *murders*; unjust taking away the lives of others, with any actions tending or subservient thereunto: *drunkenness*; immoderate drinkings: *revellings, and such like*; immoderate eatings; all abuses of the creatures of God beyond necessity, or a moderate delight.

*Of the which I tell you before*; I tell you of it before the day of judgment comes, when you will find that which I tell you to be truth.

*As I have also told you in time past*; as you know I have in my preaching to you in times past told you.

*That they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God; that they who ordinarily do these things, and do not only live in such practices, but die without repentance for them, shall never be saved: see 1Co 6:9,10 Re 21:7,8.*

### Galatians 5:22

Ver. 22. *The fruit of the Spirit;* those habits which the Holy Spirit of God produceth in those in whom it dwelleth and worketh, with those acts which flow from them, as naturally as the tree produceth its fruit, are, *love* to God, and to our neighbours: *joy*; the soul's satisfaction in its union with God, as the greatest and highest good; with an actual rejoicing in Christ, and in what is for his honour and glory, called a rejoicing in the truth, 1Co 13:6; and in the good of our brethren, Ro 12:15: *peace*; quietude of conscience, or peace with God, (of which peace of conscience is a copy), and a peaceable disposition towards men, opposed to strife, variance, emulations, &c.: *long-suffering*; opposed to a hastiness to revenge, and inclining us patiently to bear injuries: *gentleness*; sweetness and kindness of temper, by which we accommodate ourselves, and become mutually useful to each other: *goodness*; a disposition in us to hurt none, but to do all the good we can to all: *faith*; by *faith* seemeth here to be meant, truth in words, faithfulness in promises, and in dealings one with another.

### Galatians 5:23

Ver. 23. *Meekness*; forbearance of passion, rash anger, and hastiness of spirit: *temperance*; a sober use of meats, drinks, apparel, or any thing wherein our senses are delighted. Many of these are moral virtues, and such as some have attained to by moral discipline, the cultivating of their natures by education, and moral philosophy: yet they are also the fruits of the Spirit of God; such as it doth always work in the souls wherein it dwelleth (though in different measures and degrees): only the moral man thus comporteth himself from principles of reason, showing him the beauty and comeliness of such a conversation, and aims no Ligher in it, than a happiness of converse in this life, his own honour and reputation. But the spiritual man, doing the same things, aimeth at a higher end (the glorifying of God, and saving his own soul); and doth these things from a

fear of God, out of love to him, and out of faith, as seeing in them the will of God.

*Against such (saith the apostle) there is no law; no law to accuse or to condemn them; for these are things which the law commandeth to be done, and are acts of obedience to the law. So as those who do these things are led by the Spirit, and are not under the condemning power or curse of the law.*

#### Galatians 5:24

Ver. 24. *They that are Christ's;* those who are ingrafted into Christ by faith, united to him, and so his members; *have crucified the flesh;* by virtue of a power derived from the cross of Christ, have got their unregenerate part in a great measure mortified; *with the affections and lusts;* with the inordinate desires, affections, and passions of it: not that they have wholly put off these, (they are men still), but the inordinateness of them is corrected, mortified, and subdued.

#### Galatians 5:25

Ver. 25. *If we live in the Spirit;* if (as we profess) there is a union between the Holy Spirit of God and us, so as that Holy Spirit is to its the principle of our life, and we live more from him than from any principle in ourselves; *let us also walk in the Spirit;* let us manage all our conversation according to the guidance and direction of the same Spirit. Operations naturally follow the principle of life from which they proceed, so that as those who only live in the flesh, walk in and after the flesh, and its inclination; so those who live in the Spirit ought to produce, and will produce, effects suitable to the cause of them, and the principle from which they flow.

#### Galatians 5:26

Ver. 26. *Let us not be desirous of vain-glory:* ambition or vain-glory is a natural corruption, disposing us to boast and commend ourselves, and to

seek the honour and applause of men.

*Provoking one another;* this is an effect of the former, disposing us, out of hope of victory, to challenge others to a contest with us. Or it may be understood of provoking others by injuries and wrongs done them; which is contrary to the duty of love.

*Envyng one another;* not repining at the good of others; either desiring their portion, or being troubled that they fare so well. Possibly this verse might more properly have been made the first of the next chapter, (as Luther maketh it), where the apostle goeth on, pressing further spiritual duties common to all Christians.

## Galatians 6:1

### Chapter Summary

Ga 6:1 Paul adviseth them to reform the faulty with gentleness,

Ga 6:2 and to bear one another's burdens.

Ga 6:3-5 A caution against vanity.

Ga 6:6-8 He exhorteth to be liberal toward spiritual instructors,

Ga 6:9-11 and not to be weary in doing good,

Ga 6:12,13 He showeth the carnal views of those who preached

circumcision,

Ga 6:14-17 and his own professed dependence on Christ only,

regardless of the world.

Ga 6:18 He concludeth with a prayer.

Ver. 1. In the term *brethren*, there is a secret argument persuading the duty which he is pressing, because Christians, particularly members of the same church, are all brethren. By persons *overtaken in a fault*, he means such as do not make a trade of open and scandalous sinning, (for such must be rebuked sharply), but such as may be sometimes through infirmity overborne, and run down with a temptation to sin. By those *that are spiritual*, he means not only the pastors and governors of the church,



(though this care and duty is much incumbent upon them), but such as have received the Spirit of Christ; more especially such as were more knowing in the ways of God, and had spiritual habits more confirmed in them; in which sense *spiritual* is used in 1Co 3:1.

*Restore such an one in the spirit of meekness:* the word translated *restore*, signifies to put again into joint, or into right order and place. Sin is an inordinate action, and putteth the soul that committeth it out of its due order and place. He willeth the brethren that are spiritual to use all due means to put such a member in joint again, but not to do this roughly, and with passion, and severe correction, but meekly, so as may be most probable to win the sinner's soul.

*Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted;* having an eye and respect to themselves, as neither being free from sin, nor from temptations to sin, dealing with others as they would have others deal by them.

### Galatians 6:2

Ver. 2. *Bear ye one another's burdens;* it is a general precept, and may be either understood with reference to what he had said in the former verse, so it hints our duty: though we discern our brethren to have fallen into some sin or error, yet if we discern that they are sensible of their lapse, and their sin is not a pleasure, but a burden to them, though we ought not to bear with them or connive at them in their sins, yet we ought to sympathize with them when we see their sin is become their load and burden, under which they groan and are dejected. Or else more generally, as a new precept commanding us to sympathize with our brethren under any lead of trials and affliction which God shall lay upon them. And so it agreeth with that precept, Ro 12:15. By *the law of Christ*, he means the will of Christ revealed in the gospel; particularly the law of love, so much enjoined by Christ, Joh 13:15, 33-35 15:12. Which is not called the law of Christ because first given by him, (for himself maketh it the sum of the ten commandments), but because he received it and vindicated it from the corruption of the Pharisees' interpretation, Mt 5:43,44; because he so often urged it, and so seriously commanded and commended it to his disciples; and set us the highest precedent and example of it, and hath by his Spirit written it in the hearts of his people.

### Galatians 6:3

Ver. 3. It is a general maxim, and the truth of it is obvious to every one that readeth it, for supposing a man to be *nothing* of what he thinks himself to be, he must needs *deceive himself* in nourishing and entertaining such an opinion of himself. For the dependence of it upon what the apostle had said before, it is obvious. Pride, and men's high opinions of themselves above what they ought, are the cause of their censoriousness and morosity in dealing with other offenders; which modesty would not suffer in them, if they apprehended themselves to be as weak, and as much exposed to temptations, as others are. It is pride and overweening opinions of ourselves, that make us despise or neglect others under their burdens, and so forget the law of Christ; the apostle therefore properly addeth this precept for humility and modesty to those former precepts.

### Galatians 6:4

Ver. 4. *Let every man prove his own work:* the apostle, by a man's *own work* here, understands his own actions and manners, which he would have every man to busy himself to search, try, and examine by the Divine rule, whether they be conformable to the will of God, yea or no; *and then*, he saith, *shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another;* a man shall (if he findeth his work such as is agreeable to the will of God) have a cause to rejoice in himself; not in the merit or perfection of his works, but in his own works; not in others; that is, he shall rejoice in something which God hath wrought in and by him, and not in others. This the apostle wisely propounds, as a means to bring a man to know his own measures; it being a great error for men to measure themselves by the measures of other men, their perfections by others' imperfections.

### Galatians 6:5

Ver. 5. That is, God will judge every man in the last day, according not to what others have done, but to what he himself hath done, 1Co 3:8. Therefore every one is concerned to *prove his own work;* for at last his

eternal joy and rejoicing, or sorrow and mourning, shall be according to what he himself hath wrought, not according to what others have wrought. If ever they enter into the joy of heaven, they shall rejoice in their own work. And if eternal sorrow be their portion, they shall groan under their own burdens; they will not be the sins of others, but their own sins, which will sink them into eternal misery. For though superiors shall answer to God for the sins of their inferiors, yet it shall not properly be for their inferiors' sins, but for their own sins, in neglecting to warn and to reprove them, and to do what in them lay to have hindered them in their sinful courses.

### Galatians 6:6

Ver. 6. *Let him that is taught in the word:* the word here translated *taught*, signifieth catechised; and is the same word from which that word is derived; but it here signifieth *taught*, catechising being but a mode or species of teaching.

*Communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things;* the precept is concerning the maintenance of ministers, which is fitly expressed by the term *communicate*, because as the people distribute to their ministers things temporal, so the ministers distribute things spiritual. The *good things* here mentioned are temporal good things, such as may be useful to the teacher for him to uphold himself and family. The text teacheth us, that it is the will of God that ministers should be maintained at the charge of the church to which they minister, and it is but an act of justice, for they do but communicate temporal things to those who communicate to them much more valuable things.

### Galatians 6:7

Ver. 7. *Be not deceived; God is not mocked:* this to terrify those who find out vain and false excuses to save their purses; he adviseth them not to cheat themselves, for though they might deceive men, yet they could not deceive the all-seeing and heart-searching God.

*For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap;* further to

encourage them to this communicating, he mindeth them, that what they distributed in this nature, was no more lost than the seed is which the husbandman casteth into the ground; which in its season springs up, and returneth into the husbandman's hand with increase. This metaphor of sowing is made use of also, Pr 11:18 2Co 9:6, to express men's actions; and lets us know, that our actions, when done, are not done with; but as our bodies shall rise again, so what we have done in the flesh shall be revived and judged; whatsoever, either for quantity or for quality, men sow, the same shall they reap: as to quantity, he had said in 2Co 9:6, that he who *soweth sparingly* should *reap sparingly*, and he who *soweth bountifully* should *reap bountifully*: as to quality, he here further addeth: (see Ga 6:8).

### Galatians 6:8

Ver. 8. *For he that soweth to his flesh;* he that layeth out his estate, or spendeth his time and talents, for the gratifying of the flesh; *shall of the flesh reap corruption;* shall or may reap some carnal satisfaction, of a corruptible, dying, perishing nature.

*But he that soweth to the Spirit;* but he who layeth out his estate, or spendeth his time, strength, talents, whatsoever God hath given him, for the glory of God, in obedience to the commands, motions, and dictates of the Spirit, or the revelations of the Divine will; *shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting;* he shall not of merit, but of grace from the Spirit, reap everlasting life, reward, and satisfaction. So that as in the world, that man doth not suffer loss that layeth out his money, time, or strength about good things of a valuable and enduring nature; but he only who layeth them out about things perishing, and transitory, and of a corruptible nature: so that man shall not lose his estate that layeth it out for the maintenance of the gospel, and upholding the ministry of it; for he *soweth to the Spirit*, and shall thereof reap eternal life and salvation: he only loseth his estate, &c., who spendeth it to gratify his lusts, and please his flesh, for all the return which he shall have, will be in poor, sensible, perishing good things, which perish with the using, and will be of no significancy to him beyond this life.

### Galatians 6:9

Ver. 9. *Let us not be weary in well doing:* we have the same precept, 2Th 3:13. As the not executing of judgment speedily imboldens sinners, and encourageth them to go on in courses of sin, so God's delaying the rewards of the righteous, often proveth a temptation to good men to be weary of well doing. Against this the apostle cautioneth us here, by minding us, that there is a *due season* for all things (which is best known to the wise God); and assuring us, that though, as we see not the husbandman presently reaping as soon as he hath sown, but waiting patiently in hope that in a due season he shall reap; so we, though we be not presently rewarded, yet in God's season shall as certainly reap as he doth. But he also mindeth us, that if we will reap we must not *faint*, but go on and persevere in our course of well doing; otherwise we can no more expect to reap, than the husbandman can that hath sown well, but out of impatience, before the time cometh for him to reap, shall go and plough up again all that he hath sown: see Eze 33:13.

### Galatians 6:10

Ver. 10. *As we have therefore opportunity;* as we have objects before us, or as God gives us time and ability.

*Let us do good unto all men;* let it be our business to harm none, but to supply the necessities of all men; either with our spiritual advice and counsels, with all the assistance we can give them that may any way be of spiritual profit or advantage to them; or with our worldly goods, ministering to their necessities.

*Epecially unto them who are of the household of faith;* but all in an order, preferring Christians before others; those that belong to the church, (which is called *the house of God*, 1Ti 3:15 1Pe 4:17, and *the household of God*, Eph 2:19), before such as have no such relation to the church.

### Galatians 6:11

Ver. 11. Paul made use of the hands of others in the writing some others of

the Epistles, as appears from Ro 16:22, and sometimes he himself only wrote the salutation, 1Co 16:21: but he tells them he wrote this Epistle to them wholly with his own hand, that he might thereby more commend his love to them and care over them.

### Galatians 6:12

Ver. 12. The apostle here reflecteth upon those false teachers who had perverted this church, and discovereth their hypocrisy under all their pretences of good will to them. These are those who (he saith) desired *to make a fair show in the flesh*; that is, to make a fair show to the world, as men very devout, which formalists and persons over zealous for rituals ordinarily do. These would *constrain*, were very urgent to persuade, these believers *to be circumcised*; not out of any love they had to the law of God, or to the souls of these Galatians, but *only* to avoid *persecution*; for as the Jews were more favourable to such Christians, who, together with the doctrine of Christ, observed also their rites and legal ceremonies; so we are told by so of the ancients, that some of the Roman emperors, by their edicts, gave liberty to the Jews, in the provinces subject to them, to use their own religious rites: now all who were circumcised went under that notion, so had more liberty than those who were not circumcised, who were persecuted both by the Jewish and the heathen magistrates. The apostle saith, that these false teachers, who so zealously urged circumcision upon this Gentile church, did it for the avoiding the danger of persecution; which they saw would follow their standing fast in their gospel liberty, and not bringing themselves under the law: which persecution, he tacitly hinteth, ought not to be so industriously shunned and avoided, because it was for Christ's sake, who had endured the cross for them.

### Galatians 6:13

Ver. 13. In this the hypocrisy of your false teachers discovereth itself, that whereas, by their being circumcised, they had declared themselves debtors to the whole law, and under an obligation entirely to keep it if they would be saved, yet they themselves did not keep it; only they were very zealous for this one thing, not out of any love they had to the law, but that they

might glory of you, as their converts, being by them persuaded to be circumcised.

#### Galatians 6:14

Ver. 14. For my part I have no such ends, I have no ambition to glory in you as my converts; all that I desire to glory in, is in the doctrine of the gospel, and my sufferings for the propagation of it, and my conformity to Christ in suffering for preaching the gospel. By the cross of Christ *the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world*; I care no more for the world than it careth for me; the world despiseth and contemneth me, and the doctrine of the cross which I preach and publish in it, and I contemn it, with all its vain pomp and splendour. And this I do through the *cross of Christ*, remembering how the world dealt with Christ, and how little he regarded the world: or, through the grace of Christ, who hath enabled me to it, for the particle translated *by whom*, may be indifferently translated by whom or by which.

#### Galatians 6:15

Ver. 15. Under the gospel state as settled by Christ, with reference to salvation, it is of no moment whether a man be a Jew or a Gentile; but whether a man be regenerated or not, and be renewed by the Holy Ghost, so as old things with him be passed away, and all things be become new. He had said the same, Ga 3:28 5:6. See also 2Co 5:17. Under the law, indeed, there was something in circumcision, as it was God's covenant in the flesh to that people to whom he gave it, and the uncircumcised were strangers to the covenants of promise, and aliens to the church of God; but under the gospel, circumcision and uncircumcision are of no significancy; God neither regardeth any for the former, nor rejecteth any for the latter, he only looketh at the heart and inward man, whether that be renewed and sanctified, yea or no.

#### Galatians 6:16

Ver. 16. *And as many as walk according to this rule;* he either meaneth

the rule of Scripture, the whole word of God; or the doctrine which he had taught them throughout this Epistle, or what he had said in the words immediately going before, where the apostle had given them this rule, not to regard either circumcision or uncircumcision, or any thing in the flesh, but only the change of their hearts. To these he either prophesieth *peace and mercy*, or he prayeth *peace and mercy* for them; under which large terms he comprehendeth all good things, whether internal or external.

*Upon the Israel of God;* upon the true Israelites, whom he calleth *the Israel of God;* hereby intimating and confirming the truth of what he had said, Ro 2:28,29, and what our Saviour had said of Nathanael, Joh 1:47, calling him *an Israelite indeed*, because in him was *no guile*; and establishing a distinction between such as were so really, and those who were only Israelites in name, because descended from Jacob, to whom God gave the name of Israel. Hereby also checking the vanity of the Jews, who gloried in the name of Israelites, and thought there could no water come out of the fountains of Israel which God would cast away. The apostle doth not promise, or prophesy, mercy and peace to all Israelites, but only to the Israel of God; that is, to believers, that received and embraced Jesus Christ offered in the gospel.

#### Galatians 6:17

Ver. 17. *Let no man trouble me*, either with questions about circumcision, or with imputations as if I were a friend to their opinion, of the necessity of adding to the doctrine of faith, circumcision and other observances of the law.

*For I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus;* I sufficiently declare my judgment to the world, suffering for my profession, and preaching the gospel. These sufferings he calls *the marks of the Lord Jesus*, because he endured them in testimony to the gospel, as well against the Jews its against the Gentiles.

#### Galatians 6:18

Ver. 18. The apostle closeth this Epistle with this prayer, as he generally



concludeth all his Epistles, with wishing them grace, *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*; under which he comprehendeth all the effects of the free love of God upon believers' souls, for the sake, and in and through the merits, of the Lord Jesus Christ: this he prayeth that they might feel in their hearts, and that it might be in their spirits, to quicken, strengthen, comfort, and establish them, according to the different manifestations of the Spirit of grace. Ver. 19. It hath been said before, that we are not to look upon these dates of apostolical Epistles as part of holy writ, for in some of them there are manifest mistakes; but most think that this Epistle was written from Rome, while Paul was a prisoner there, who are in part guided to it from Ga 6:17, thinking that it was written at a time when Paul was there suffering imprisonment. But of this there is no certainty.

## Ephesians 1:1

### THE ARGUMENT

Ephesus was the most considerable city of the lesser Asia; famous, first for sin, witchcraft, Ac 19:19, idolatry (especially the worship of Diana, Ac 19:24), and persecution, 1Co 15:32 1Co 16:9; then for piety, having received the gospel by Paul's preaching, Ac 18:1-28, and showed great zeal, Ac 19:17,18, &c.; Re 2:2,3; but, lastly, it was noted for coolness and declining, Re 2:4, leaving her *first love*. The apostle seems to have foreseen this as like to come to pass among them by means of false teachers, *grievous wolves* that would not spare the flock, Ac 20:29, and some that would arise from among themselves *speaking perverse things*, Ac 20:30. Hereupon he not only admonished the elders of the church to look to themselves and all the flock, Ac 20:28; but afterward, when a prisoner at Rome, out of his care of these Ephesians, and concern for them, he writes this Epistle to them, to confirm and settle them in the faith they had received, and persuade them to a holy conversation, as best suited to a holy gospel. In the Epistle there are two principal parts:

1. Doctrinal, in the first three chapters, where he lays down and commends to them the doctrine of the grace of God in election, redemption, vocation, justification, adoption, Ga 1:1-23, illustrating it by the deplorable condition in which before their conversion they had been, Ga 2, and assuring them of the truth of their call, by asserting, against all objectors and cavillers, his apostleship with respect to them Gentiles, and his commission from God to *preach among them the unsearchable riches of Christ*, Ga 3:1-21.
2. Practical; in which he exhorts them to walk worthy of their calling in the diligent practice of Christian duties, whether more general, and which concern all believers, or special, such as belong to them in their several relations, especially economical, Eph 5:1-33 and Eph 6:1-24.

### Chapter Summary

Eph 1:1,2 After saluting the Ephesians,  
Eph 1:3-6 Paul blesseth God for his spiritual blessings on those whom he had chosen in Christ, and

predestinated to the adoption of children,  
Eph 1:7-10 for our redemption by his grace, according to his revealed purpose of gathering together all in one under Christ,  
Eph 1:11,12 for the inheritance already obtained by those who first trusted in Christ,  
Eph 1:13,14 and for the Spirit given to after believers, as an earnest of the same.  
Eph 1:15-19 He declareth his continual thankfulness to God for their faith, and his prayers that God would perfect them in the knowledge of those things which concerned their state in Christ,  
Eph 1:20-23 whom God had raised up, and exalted to be the supreme Head of his body the church.

Ver. 1. *The faithful*; this may be understood either:

1. By way of restriction, of those that are sincere and constant to Christ, and so not only saints by profession, but true to their profession; or rather:
2. By way of explication: he defines those saints he spake of, and calls them *faithful in Christ* here, whom he called saints before.

*Christ Jesus*; the Author and Fountain of that holiness which denominates them saints.

### Ephesians 1:2

Ver. 2,3. *Blessed be*; i.e. thanked, praised. We bless God when we praise him for, and acknowledge him in, his excellencies or benefits.

*Who hath blessed us*; hath vouchsafed or communicated, all spiritual blessings to us. God blesseth us when he doeth good to us: and so the word *blessed* is taken in a different sense from what it was in the former clause.

*With all*; of all sorts or kinds.

*Spiritual blessings*; in opposition to temporal and worldly, which the

carnal Jews principally expected, and the law mostly promised, (De 28:1-14), and which were but types and shadows of those spiritual blessings which immediately relate to the spiritual life and salvation of believers.

*In heavenly places*; Gr. supercelestial, or heavenly: understand either:

1. Things; and then it seems to be the same as spiritual blessings, only in other terms. Or:
2. Places, in opposition to earthly places, particularly the land of Canaan, in which God had formerly promised to bless his people. These spiritual blessings are in heavenly places, because, though they reach us here on earth, yet they are derived to us from God and Christ in heaven, and in heaven only have their full perfection and consummation hereafter.

*In Christ*; by or through Christ; upon the account of whose merit, and by whose efficiency, these spiritual blessings are derived from God to us. Or, in Christ as our Head, the repository and seat of all Divine blessings, from whom they flow down upon us as his members, receiving all we have out of his fulness. He seems to have respect to the promise made to Abraham, Ge 22:18: That in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed; pointing out Christ as that seed, and those blessings as spiritual. See Ac 3:25,26.

#### Ephesians 1:4

Ver. 4. God blesseth us with all spiritual blessings *according as he hath chosen us*; election being the fountain from whence those blessings come, so that God doeth nothing for us in carrying on the work of our salvation, but what he had in his eternal counsel before determined.

*Chosen us*; separated us in his purpose and decree from others, (whom he left out of that gracious act of his will), and determined that we should be holy and unblamable, &c.

*In him*; either:

1. By and through Christ, (as in the former verse), for his sake, and upon the account of his merit as the procuring cause, not of our election, but sanctification; q.d. God hath chosen us, that we should be made holy and unblamable by Christ. Or rather:
2. In Christ, as the foundation on which he would build us, (his spiritual house), and by which both we might be united to God, and he communicate his influence and grace to us; or as our Head, by which he might convey grace, and strength, and life to us as Christ's members.

*Before the foundation of the world;* either before God's decree of creating the world, or rather, before his executing that decree in the actual creation of it; i.e. from eternity, when neither we nor the world had a being.

*That we should be holy and without blame;* by inherent grace begun in regeneration, and carried on in sanctification and mortification in this life, though not perfected till the other. Holiness in us is declared here to be not the cause, but the effect of our election; we are chosen that we may be holy, not because we are, or God foresees we will be holy.

*Before him;* in the sight of God, who is not deceived with an outward appearance, but looks to the heart.

*In love;* as a principal part of our sanctification, and the best evidence of the fear of God in us, and our obedience to the whole law.

### Ephesians 1:5

Ver. 5. *Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children;* having appointed us unto a state of sonship and right to glory. This seems to be more than the former, a greater thing to be the sons of God, and heirs of heaven, than to be holy.

*By Jesus Christ;* as Mediator, and Head of the elect, and the foundation of all spiritual blessings vouchsafed them, and so of this relation into which they are brought, by being united to him. The adopted children come into that state by the intervention of the natural Son.

*To himself; either:*

1. In himself, i.e. looking no farther than to himself for the cause of and motive to his adopting them. Or:
2. *To himself*, (according to our translation), i.e. to God. Or, rather:
3. For himself (as the Syriac renders it); God would have the honour of having many adopted children that shall all call him Father.

*According to the good pleasure of his will;* his sovereign grace and good will, as the only spring from which predestination issued, God being moved to it by nothing out of himself.

#### Ephesians 1:6

Ver. 6. *To the praise of the glory of his grace: glory of his grace,* by a usual Hebraism, for glorious grace, i.e. large, abundant, admirable. The praise of this grace the apostle makes the end of God's choosing and predestinating us to the adoption of children. God hath chosen us, &c., and therein manifested his grace to us, that such as it is in itself, such it may be acknowledged to be; and therefore praised and adored by us.

*Wherein;* in, or through, or by the same grace out of which he chose us.

*He hath made us accepted in the beloved;* having chosen us in Christ, he likewise favours us, is well pleased with us in Christ, to whom we are united, whose members we are, and in whom God looks upon us. We are hateful in ourselves as sinners, but accepted in Christ as sons.

#### Ephesians 1:7

Ver. 7. *In whom;* in Christ, God-man, the immediate worker of this redemption; for though the Father and the Spirit concurred to it, yet the redeeming work was peculiarly terminated in the Second Person. The other two Persons have a right of propriety to redeem us; Christ only a right of propinquity, as assuming our nature, and being of kin to us.

*We;* we elect, before mentioned.

*Have redemption;* freedom from the wrath of God, and curse of the law, to which we are obnoxious, and consequently the power of sin and tyranny of Satan, as the effects of the former.

*Through his blood;* i.e. by the sacrifice of his death upon the cross, where his blood was shed. This was the price of redemption paid to God for us, and wherewith his justice being satisfied, we could no longer be detained under the custody of the devil, or the dominion of sin.

*Even the forgiveness of sins;* redemption is not formally forgiveness, but causally, forgiveness being the effect of it; and it is mentioned not as the only or adequate, but the prime and principal fruit of redemption, and upon which the other depend.

*According to the riches of his grace:* what he called glorious grace, Eph 1:6, here he calls *riches of grace*, meaning plentiful and superabundant grace, by a phrase frequently used by him elsewhere in the same sense, Ro 9:23 2:4,7.

### Ephesians 1:8

Ver. 8. *Wherein,* in which grace before mentioned, *he hath abounded toward us;* i.e. out of abundance of grace in himself, (called *riches of grace*, Eph 1:7), he hath bestowed upon us wisdom and prudence. The like expression we have, 1Ti 1:14.

*In all wisdom;* this denotes either, the perfections or excellency of it, being instead of all other wisdom, and more excellent than all else; or *all* in comparison of what was under the Old Testament. They then had Divine truths revealed but by parts and parcels, and so a more sparing measure of spiritual wisdom; but under the gospel, believers have it more fully and largely, the Spirit of wisdom and revelation being poured out on them.

*Wisdom and prudence;* either the doctrine of the gospel, which contains

more perfect and higher wisdom than that the Greeks sought after, 1Co 1:22, and for lack of which they counted the gospel *foolishness*; or rather, by *wisdom* is understood that knowledge or faith whereby we receive spiritual truths revealed to us, and to be believed by us, so as to their excellency, and have our hearts affected with them; and by *prudence*, the knowledge of the rule of our duty, with skill to govern ourselves according to it: and so *wisdom* is no other than faith, and *prudence* the same in effect with holiness; the former relates to the things we are to believe, the latter to the things we are to do. In the working these two in the soul, consists inward and effectual calling, which the apostle mentions in this verse, as he doth the outward likewise, by the preaching the word of the gospel, in the next.

### Ephesians 1:9

Ver. 9. *Having made known unto us*; having revealed to us outwardly by the preaching of the gospel; inwardly, by the illumination of the Spirit.

*The mystery of his will*; the whole doctrine of grace and salvation by Christ, which is a secret to others, and had still been so to us, had not God discovered it to us in the gospel.

*According to his good pleasure*; the good pleasure of God is the fountain of all spiritual blessings which flow out to us, as well as it is of our being first chosen and appointed to be the subjects of them.

*Which he hath purposed in himself*; this signifies a firm, settled will in God, either merely of God, and moved by nothing out of himself, or his keeping this purpose in himself till the time appointed for the publication of it.

### Ephesians 1:10

Ver. 10. Some copies join the last clause of the former verse with this, leaving out the relative *which*, and concluding the sentence at *good pleasure*, and then read: *He purposed in himself, that in the dispensation, &c.*; but most read it as our translators have rendered it, only some



understand an explicative particle, to wit, in the beginning of this verse, to wit, *that in the dispensation, &c.*; but either way the scope of the words is the same, viz. to give the sum of that *mystery of God's will*, mentioned before.

*In the dispensation;* in that administration or distribution of the good things of God's house; which he had determined should be in the fulness of time. It is a metaphor taken from a steward, who distributes and dispenseth according to his master's order to those that are in the house, Lu 12:42. The church is the house of God, God himself the Master of the family, Christ the Steward that governs the house; those *spiritual blessings*, mentioned Eph 1:3, are the good things he gives out. These treasures of God's grace had been opened but to a few, and dispensed sparingly under the Old Testament, the more full communication of them being reserved till the fulness of times, when they were to be dispensed by Christ.

*The fulness of times;* the time appointed of the Father for the appearance of Christ in the flesh, (according to former promises), the promulgation of the gospel, and thereby the gathering together in one all things in Christ. It is spoken in opposition to the times and ages before Christ's coming, which God would have run out till the set time came which he had pitched upon, and believers expected: see Ga 4:2,4.

*Gather together in one;* to recapitulate; either to sum up as men do several lesser numbers in one total sum, which is the foot of the account, but called by the Greeks the head of it, and set at the top; or as orators do the several parts of their speeches in fewer words; thus all former prophecies, promises, types, and shadows centred, and were fulfilled, and as it were summed up, in Christ: or rather, to unite unto, and gather together again under, one head things before divided and scattered.

*All things;* all intellectual beings, or all persons, as Ga 3:22.

*In Christ;* as their Head, under which they might be united to God, and to each other.

*Which are in heaven;* either saints departed, who have already obtained salvation by Christ, or rather the holy angels, that still keep their first

station.

*Which are on earth;* the elect of God among men here upon earth in their several generations. The meaning of the whole seems to be, that whereas the order and harmony of God's principal workmanship, intellectual creatures, angels and men, had been disturbed and broken by the entering of sin into the world; all mankind, and many of the angels, having apostatized from him, and the remnant of them being in their own nature labile and mutable; God would, in his appointed time, give Christ (the Heir of all things) the honour of being the repairer of this breach, by gathering together again the disjointed members of his creation in and under Christ as their Head and Governor, confirming the good angels in their good estate, and recovering his elect among men from their apostate condition. Though it be true, that not only believers under the Old Testament were saved, but the elect angels confirmed before Christ's coming, yet both the one and the other was with a respect to Christ as their Head, and the foundation of their union with God; and out of whom, as the one, being lost, could not have been restored, so the fall of the other could not have been prevented, nor their happiness secured.

### Ephesians 1:11

Ver. 11. *In whom we;* we apostles and others elect of the Jewish nation, *we who first trusted in Christ,* Eph 1:12.

*Have obtained an inheritance;* are called, or brought into the participation of an inheritance, or have a right given us to it as by lot: in allusion to the twelve tribes having, in the division of the land of Canaan, their inheritances assigned them by lot. He shows that they did not first seek it, much less deserve it, but God cast it upon them: their lot fell in the heavenly inheritance, when others did not.

*Being predestinated;* this, as well as the forementioned privileges, was designed to us by eternal predestination, and though it be free, and without our procuring, yet in respect of God it is not casual, but of his ordering.

*Who worketh all things,* powerfully and effectually, *after the counsel of his own will;* i.e. that infinite wisdom of God, which is always in

conjunction with his will, whereby he acts wisely as well as freely, and though not by deliberation, which falls beneath his infinite perfection, yet with his greatest reason and judgment.

### Ephesians 1:12

Ver. 12. *That we should be to the praise of his glory;* either:

1. Passively, that the excellency and greatness of God's wisdom, power, grace, mercy, &c. might be shown forth in us by our being predestinated, called, sanctified, saved: or rather:
2. Actively, that we, by the holiness, obedience, and fruitfulness of our conversations, suitable to such privileges, might manifest and set forth the glory of him that vouchsafed them to us.

*Who first trusted in Christ;* who were the fruits of the New Testament church, the gospel having been first preached to the apostles by Christ himself, and by them to the Jews, (their own nation), and having been first believed by them.

### Ephesians 1:13

Ver. 13. *In whom ye also;* here is a defect of the verb in the Greek, which may be supplied either from Eph 1:11, which seems to be the principal verb in the sentence, and then it must be read: *In whom ye also have obtained an inheritance;* or from Eph 1:12, *trusted*, which is the nearest verb; so our translation: *In whom ye also trusted;* but neither way makes any difference in the scope of the words.

*Ye;* ye Ephesians and other Gentiles.

*The word of truth;* the gospel, so called, either:

1. By a usual Hebraism, from the true word; or:
2. By way of eminency, as containing the most excellent and necessary of

all truths, the doctrine of righteousness and life by Jesus Christ; or:

3. With respect to the law and its shadows, the truth and substance of which is held forth in the gospel.

*The gospel of your salvation:* both in respect of the matter contained in it, the doctrine of salvation, and in respect of its efficiency, as being the means whereby God works faith, and brings to salvation, Ro 1:12 Heb 2:3.

*In whom also after that ye believed; in whom* either is to be referred to believers; q. d. After ye believed in Christ: or to sealing; and then it shows by virtue of whom this benefit of sealing is bestowed, viz. by virtue of Christ.

*Ye were sealed with that holy Spirit;* ye were secured and ascertained of your right to the inheritance; which we may understand to be done either by the Spirit's impressing upon the soul the image of God in the work of regeneration, or (because that cannot so well be understood to be after believing) rather by his testimony in men's own consciences afterward; whether immediate, by an overpowering light shining into the soul, and filling it with assurance of its interest in Christ and heaven; or mediate, enabling a man to discern that image of God in his soul, by which the Spirit bears witness to his interest in the inheritance, and assures him of it: see Eph 4:30 Ro 8:16 Ga 4:6.

*Of promise;* because the Spirit's coming was before promised, or because he verifies and confirms the promises in and to the hearts of believers.

#### Ephesians 1:14

Ver. 14. *Which is the earnest of our inheritance:* the Spirit, given to and dwelling in believers by his gifts and graces, is the earnest or pledge whereby their inheritance is secured to them; as men are secured the payment of a promised sum, by a part given beforehand in earnest for the rest.

*Until the redemption of the purchased possession;* either:

1. The redemption of the possession is put for the possessing of the redemption, (by an hypallage), viz. full and final redemption from sin, and death, and hell, and Satan; which redemption though perfectly wrought by Christ, is but in part applied in this life, and is to be fully enjoyed in the other: or rather:
2. (Though to the same sense), To the full and final redemption in the end of the world, of all God's people, who are here called his *purchased possession*: see the same word so taken, [Ac 20:28](#) [1Pe 2:9](#).

*Unto the praise of his glory*; the final salvation and complete redemption of God's people, will be especially for the glory of God, [2Th 1:10](#).

### Ephesians 1:15

Ver. 15. *After I heard*; he was an eye-witness of their first believing, but here he speaks of their increase and constancy in the faith since, of which he had heard by others.

*Of your faith in the Lord Jesus*; i.e. not barely a belief of Christ's excellencies, but a belief of his being their Saviour, their receiving and relying on him as such, and so a believing in him as the immediate object of their faith, and him by whom they believed in God, [1Pe 1:21](#).

*And love unto all the saints*; this is added to show the truth of their faith, which works by love.

*Love to the saints* is mentioned, as an evidence of their love to God; and to *all the saints* to show the sincerity of that love, in its not being partial, but respecting all saints, and therefore saints as saints.

### Ephesians 1:16

Ver. 16. *Cease not to give thanks for you*; for your faith and love, and all the spiritual blessings God hath bestowed upon you.

*Making mention of you in my prayers*; I not only acknowledge what ye

have received, but pray that what is yet lacking in you may be made up.

Ephesians 1:17

Ver. 17. *That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ;* he is the God of Christ not according to Christ's Divine nature, but his human, and as Mediator, in which respect he was subject to the Father.

*The Father of glory;* the most glorious Father, and the Author of all glory and glorious things, and to whom all glory is due.

*May give unto you the spirit of wisdom;* a greater measure (for some they already had) of faith, (as Eph 1:8, where it is called *wisdom*), or of the knowledge of the things of God, whereof the Spirit is the Author. God is said to give or send the Spirit, where the Spirit works effectually; and, so to give the Spirit of wisdom, where the Spirit effectually works that wisdom.

*And revelation:* by *revelation* he means not extraordinary, such as the prophets had, but ordinary, such as was common to believers, and expresseth the manner of the Spirit's working this wisdom, that he doth it by removing the covering or veil of natural ignorance, (Ps 119:18 Lu 24:45), shining into the mind, and making it see what before it saw not; sometimes new objects, sometimes new excellencies in objects before known. Thus the Spirit works not only in the beginning of faith and spiritual knowledge, but in its further progress he lets in new light into the mind, and removes some remaining degree of natural darkness.

*In the knowledge,* or acknowledgment, which may imply an owning, approving, and embracing things before known.

*Of him;* i.e. God or Christ, or God in Christ: and so either he declares here wherein the wisdom he mentioned consists, viz. the knowledge of God and Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge: or rather, the end of that wisdom and revelation, viz. the acknowledgment of God or Christ, when we so know him, as to own him as ours, to embrace, and love, and wholly subject ourselves to him, Col 1:9,10.

## Ephesians 1:18

Ver. 18. *The eyes of your understanding being enlightened,* viz. by that *spirit of revelation:* and so this clause explains the former. What the eye is to the body, that the understanding is to the soul. He prays for a further degree of illumination for them.

*That ye may know what is the hope of his calling;* either:

1. The object of hope, the thing hoped for, as Col 1:5 Ga 5:5; and then the meaning is, what it is to the hope of which God hath called you by the gospel. Or:
2. The grace of hope: q. d. That ye may know how great, and sure, and well grounded that hope is, which by the gospel is wrought in you.

*And what the riches of the glory;* the glorious riches, or the abundant glory; *riches of glory,* and *riches of grace,* Eph 1:7, and *riches of glory,* Ro 6:23.

*Of his;* because he is the Father of it: he gives this glory as the Father of glory. As men give inheritances suitable to their estates, so God, as the God of glory, and Father of glory, gives a glorious inheritance.

*Inheritance;* heaven, called an *inheritance* both in respect of believers' title to it by virtue of their adoption, being heirs of God; and in respect of the perpetuity of their enjoying it, on which account it is called an *eternal inheritance,* Heb 9:15.

*In the saints;* or, among the saints, those, namely, that are perfect, who alone are possessed of the inheritance, which saints on earth have only in hope.

## Ephesians 1:19

Ver. 19. *And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe;* he means that power of God which is put forth in the whole of

our salvation, from first to last: not that absolute power whereby he can do whatsoever is possible to be done; but his ordinate power, or power joined with his will, whereby not only he will work in raising us up at last, and finally saving us, but hath wrought in begetting faith in us, and doth work in still preserving that faith, (1Pe 1:5), and carrying us on in the way of salvation. And this he speaks for the encouragement of the Ephesians, that they should not fear falling short of the riches of the glory of the inheritance mentioned, seeing God, who hath by his power brought them to Christ, is able likewise by the same power to bring them to glory.

*According to the working of his mighty power:* some point the words after *us-ward*, and read them, *who believe according to the working of his mighty power, &c.*; and then the meaning must be, that the working faith in believers, is an instance of his mighty power; he hath shown his power in working faith, and therefore will show it in the remainder of salvation which is to follow. But our translation favours the former sense, and then, as in the preceding clause he shows the greatness of God's power, so in this latter the efficacy of it in its actual operation, particularly the raising up Christ from the dead.

### Ephesians 1:20

Ver. 20. *Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead;* i.e. the power God exerciseth toward believers is such as that was whereby he raised up Christ from the dead.

*And set him at his own right hand;* hath invested him with the greatest honour, dignity, and power, as princes set the next in honour and authority to themselves at their right hands: see Mt 20:21.

*In the heavenly places;* in the highest heaven, called *the third heaven*, 2Co 12:2, and *paradise*, 2Co 12:4.

### Ephesians 1:21

Ver. 21. *Principality, and power, and might, and dominion:* these terms are sometimes applied to magistrates and men in authority here in the



world, Tit 3:1 Jude 1:8 sometimes to angels; to good ones, Col 1:16; to evil ones, Eph 6:12 Col 2:15; though with allusion to powers in the world, or because by them God puts forth and exerciseth his power and dominion. By these, then, the apostle understands good angels, as Eph 3:10; or, comprehensively, all sorts of powers, both visible and invisible, as Col 1:16 1Pe 3:22.

*And every name that is named;* lest any might think he had not named all above whom Christ is exalted, he adds this, to take all in.

*Every name,* that is, every person, and every thing which hath a name; whatever hath any dignity or excellency.

*Not only in this world, but also in that which is to come;* because, though it hath a being at present, yet it is future to us who are not yet possessed of it. Either this clause relates to Christ's sitting at his Father's right hand, and then it notes the perpetuity of his reign, that his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, Lu 1:33; or rather, to the words immediately going before: q. d. If there be any name, any dignity, or excellency, not known in this life, and which shall be known in the other; yet, be they what they may, Christ is above them all.

### Ephesians 1:22

Ver. 22. *All things;* either all his enemies, as Ps 110:1, all except the church, which is said to be his body; or all things more generally, of which he spake before, angels and men; all are made subject to Christ, 1Pe 3:22.

*Hath put all things under his feet;* put them into a perfect and full subjection to him.

*Objection.* All things are not yet put under him.

*Answer.*

1. All things are so put under him that he can do with them what he please, break all his enemies in pieces when he will, though for many reasons he yet doth it not.

2. They are begun to be subjected to him, and by degrees shall be further subjected, till they be perfectly and absolutely subjected unto him, *de facto*, as already they are *de jure*.

*And gave him;* appointed, or constituted, or made him.

*To be head;* a mystical head; such a one not only as a king is to his subjects, to rule them externally by his laws, but such as a natural head is to the body, which it governs by way of influence, conveying spirits to it, and so causing and maintaining sense and motion in it, Eph 4:16 Col 2:19.

*Over all things;* either:

1. God hath chiefly, and above all before mentioned, given Christ to be the Head of the church; q. d. Though he be King and Lord of all, yet God hath made him the only proper Head to the church only; God hath set him above principalities and powers, but especially hath appointed him to be the Head of the church. Or:
2. *Over all things* may be meant, for the communication of all good things to the church, and performing all offices of a Head to her; a Head to the church, with a power over all things for her good.

*To the church;* the catholic church, or whole collection of believers throughout the world, and in all ages of it. *things under his feet;* put them into a perfect and full subjection to him.

*Objection.* All things are not yet put under him.

*Answer.*

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*To the church;* the catholic church, or whole collection of believers throughout the world, and in all ages of it.

### Ephesians 1:23

Ver. 23. *Which is his body;* i.e. a mystical one, whereof every member is influenced by the Spirit of Christ the Head, as in the natural body the members are influenced by spirits derived from the natural head.

*The fulness of him;* the church is called the fulness of Christ, not personally, but relatively considered, and as Head of the church. The head is incomplete without the body; Christ in his relative capacity as a Head, would not be complete without his mystical body the church.

*That filleth all in all;* lest Christ should be thought to have any need of the church, because of her being said to be his fulness, it is added, that she herself is filled by Christ. Christ fills all his body, and all the members of it, with the gifts and graces of his Spirit, Eph 4:10.

## Ephesians 2:1

### Chapter Summary

Eph 2:1-3 Paul setteth before the Ephesians their former corrupt heathen state,

Eph 2:4-7 and God's rich mercy in their deliverance.

Eph 2:8-10 We are saved by grace, not of works, yet so as to be created in Christ unto good works.

Eph 2:11-18 They who were once strangers, and far from God, are now brought near by Christ's blood; who having abolished the ritual law, the ground of distinction between Jew and Gentile, hath united both in one body, and gained them equal access to the Father.

Eph 2:19-22 So that the Gentiles are henceforth equally privileged with the Jews, and together with them constitute a holy temple for the habitation of God's Spirit.

Ver. 1. *And you hath he quickened;* this verb *quickened* is not in the Greek, but the defect of it may be supplied from Eph 1:19, thus: *The greatness of his power to us-ward, and to you that were dead in trespasses and sins;* the remaining part of that chapter being included in a parenthesis, which, though long, yet is not unusual. Or rather, as our translators and others do, from Eph 2:5 of this chapter, where we have the word *quickened*. It imports a restoring of spiritual life by the infusion of a vital principle, (in the work of regeneration), whereby men are enabled to walk with God in newness of life.

*Who were dead;* spiritually, not naturally; i.e. destitute of a principle of spiritual life, and so of any ability for, or disposedness to, the operations and motions of such a life.

*In trespasses and sins:* the preposition *in* is wanting in the Greek by an ellipsis, but the expression is full, Col 2:13; this dative case therefore is to be taken in the sense of the ablative. By these words he means either all sorts of sins, habitual and actual, less or greater; or rather, promiscuously and indifferently, the same thing several ways. expressed. Sin is the cause

of spiritual death; where sin reigns, there is a privation of spiritual life.

Ephesians 2:2

Ver. 2. *Wherein in time past ye walked;* conversed in a continual course of life. They were alive *to* sin, when dead *in* sin; or by sin dead to spiritual good.

*According to the course of this world;* either according to the age of the world that then was, or men then in the world, or according to the custom and mode, the shape and fashion, of the world. The same word here translated *course* is rendered *world*, Ro 12:2:

*Be not conformed* (configured or fashioned) *to this world*, i.e. to the ways and manners of it. So here, *according to the course*, is, according to the ways of men in the world, both in manners and religion.

*According to the prince;* the devil, or, as Mt 12:24,26, *the prince of devils*.

*Of the power; power for powers,* as they are called, Eph 6:12: those devils, or powers of darkness, are marshalled under him as their prince, who sets up a kingdom to himself in opposition to Christ.

*Of the air;* that are in the air, this lower region, (by God's permission), that they may be ready and at hand to tempt men, and do mischief in the world. Or, that work so many effects in the air, raise storms and tempests, &c., as in the case of Job and his children.

*The spirit that now;* even at this time, since the coming of the gospel, still continues to work.

*Worketh in;* effectually works in; rules, and governs, and acts them, 2Ti 2:26.

*The children of disobedience,* by a Hebraism; they that are addicted to disobedience, i.e. obstinate sinners.

### Ephesians 2:3

Ver. 3. *Among whom also we all;* we apostles and believers of the Jews. Either Paul by a *coenosis* reckons himself among them, though not guilty with them; or rather, though he were not an idolater as the Ephesians, yet he had been *a blasphemer, and a persecutor*, 1Ti 1:13; and though he were blameless as to the righteousness of the law, Php 3:6, yet that was only as to his outward conversation, and still he might fulfil the desires of a fleshly mind.

*Had our conversation;* walked in the same way after the course of the world, &c.

*In the lusts of our flesh:* *flesh* is here taken more generally for depraved natures, the whole principle of corruption in man.

*Fulfilling the desires of the flesh;* the inferior and sensitive faculties of the soul, as appears by the opposition of the *flesh* to the *mind*.

*And of the mind;* the superior and rational powers, to denote the deprivation of the whole man even in his best part, and which seems to have rectitude left in it: to the former belongs the *filthiness of the flesh*, to the latter that of the *spirit*, 2Co 7:1: see Ro 8:7 Ga 5:19-21.

*And were by nature;* not merely by custom or imitation, but by nature as now constituted since the fall.

*The children of wrath,* by a Hebraism, for obnoxious to wrath; as sons of death, 1Sa 26:16, for worthy of or liable to death.

### Ephesians 2:4

Ver. 4. *Rich in mercy;* abundant. Riches of mercy here, as riches of grace, Eph 1:7; see Ps 51:1 86:5.

*For his great love;* the fountain from whence his mercies vouchsafed to us proceed; riches of mercy from great love: God shows mercy to us miserable creatures in time, because he loved us from eternity, viz. with a

love of good will.

*Wherewith he loved us,* both Jews and Gentiles; there being the same original cause of the salvation of both.

Ephesians 2:5

Ver. 5. *Hath quickened us;* hath raised us up from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, not only in our justification, in which God frees us from our obnoxiousness to eternal death, and gives us a right to eternal life, who before were dead in law, (though this may be included), but especially in our regeneration, by the infusion of a vital principle.

*Together with Christ;* either:

1. God, in quickening Christ, hath also quickened us; Christ's quickening, or receiving his life after death, being not only the type and exemplar of our spiritual enlivening or regeneration, but the cause of it, inasmuch as we are quickened, as meritoriously by his death, so effectively by his life: Christ, as having died and risen again, exerciseth that power the Father gave him of quickening whom he will, Joh 5:21. Or:
2. In Christ as our Head virtually, and by the power of his resurrection actually. Or:
3. By the same power whereby he raised up Christ from the dead, Eph 1:20. See the like expression, Col 2:13.

*(By grace are ye saved);* some read the words without a parenthesis, supplying by whose, and so refer them to Christ, *quickened us together with Christ, by whose grace ye are saved;* but if the parenthesis stand, yet here seems to be a connection with the foregoing words, at least a reason of the apostle's bringing in these; for having mentioned God's *great love*, Eph 2:4, as the cause of their spiritual enlivening here, which is the beginning of their salvation, he infers from thence that the whole of their salvation is of grace, i.e. alike free, and as much out of God's great love, as the beginning of it, viz. their quickening, is.

### Ephesians 2:6

Ver. 6. *And hath raised us up together;* either this may be understood of a further degree of spiritual life in the progress of sanctification vouchsafed to believers in this world; or rather, of the resurrection of the body, which is said to be raised together with Christ, because it is to be raised by the same power that raised him up, and by virtue of his resurrection, in which we have fellowship with him, as being united to him.

*And made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus,* as our Head, and representative. Our spiritual enlivening (Eph 2:5) we have not only fundamentally in Christ when restored to life, but actually begun in ourselves in our effectual calling; but the resurrection of our bodies, and our sitting in heaven, we have not as yet actually fulfilled in ourselves, yet have it in Christ our Head, who rose for us and we in him, and sits in heaven for us, and we in him may be said to sit there too, by reason of our union with him, and being members of him.

### Ephesians 2:7

Ver. 7. *That in the ages to come;* in all succeeding generations while the world continues.

*He might show, &c.;* as in an instance or specimen, 1Ti 1:16: q.d. God's *kindness to us* believers in this age, since Christ's coming, is such an instance of *the exceeding riches of his grace*, as may be an encouragement to future generations to embrace the same Christ in whom we have believed.

*Through Christ Jesus;* by and through whom God conveys all saving benefits to us.

### Ephesians 2:8

Ver. 8. *For by grace,* the free favour of God, as Eph 2:5, *are ye,* even ye Ephesians, Gentiles, who had not such promises made to you as the Jews



had, Eph 2:12, *saved*, from first to last, from your calling, Eph 2:5, to your glorification, Eph 2:6.

*Objection.* How are believers said to be saved, when they are not yet glorified?

*Answer.*

1. Because Christ their Head is glorified.
2. Because their salvation, begun in their effectual calling, shall be as certainly accomplished in them as it is begun in them, and perfected in their Head, Christ.

*Through faith;* by which ye lay hold on the grace offered you in the gospel. Faith is not considered here as a work done by us, but as an instrument or means applying the grace and salvation tendered to us.

*And that not of yourselves;* not for your own worth, nor by your own strength.

*It is the gift of God;* that ye are saved is the gift of God, and therefore free and purely by grace.

*God* is opposed to self: *gift* relates not merely to faith immediately preceding, but to the whole sentence.

### Ephesians 2:9

Ver. 9. *Not of works;* any works whatever, and not only works of the ceremonial law: for if they only were excluded, the opposition between God and man, grace and works, were not right, which yet we find so often elsewhere; (see Ro 11:6); men might not be saved by works of the ceremonial law, and yet still be saved by works, and of themselves.

*Lest any man should boast;* glory in their own works or worth, as men are apt to do when they think they have any thing of their own which contributes to their salvation see Ro 3:27 4:2.

## Ephesians 2:10

Ver. 10. *For we,* we believers, both Jews and Gentiles, are his workmanship; not only as men, but especially as saints, which is the proper meaning here. The Israelitish people formerly were God's work, De 32:6 Isa 43:21 44:21; so are believers under the gospel, being new creatures, Ga 6:15. The apostle confirms what he said before, that *by grace we are saved,* and *not of works,* in that we are God's workmanship, and are formed by him ere we can do any good work; and his forming us in our regeneration is a part of the salvation mentioned Eph 2:8.

*Created in Christ Jesus;* who, as our Head, enlivens us, as members united to him by faith. As the first creation was by Christ as the Second Person in the Trinity, Joh 1:3, so the second creation is by the same Christ as Mediator, the Lord and Head of the new creation, in whom we live, and move, and have our new being, and not in ourselves, 2Co 5:17.

*Unto good works:* as the immediate end for which we are new-created. We receive our new being that we may bring forth new works, and have a carriage suitable to our new principle.

*Which God hath before ordained;* or rather, as the margin, prepared, i.e. prepared and fitted us for them, by enlightening our minds to know his will, disposing and inclining our wills, purging our affections, &c.

*That we should walk in them;* i.e. that we should glorify God in a holy conversation, agreeable to that Divine nature, whereof we are made partakers in our new creation.

## Ephesians 2:11

Ver. 11. *In the flesh;* either:

1. Carnal, unregenerate, as Ro 8:8,9. Or rather:
2. Uncircumcised in the flesh, as well as in heart, Eze 44:7; such as neither

had the grace signified, nor the sign representing it.

*Who are called Uncircumcision*, by way of reproach; to be uncircumcised being the badge of them that were not Israelites, and so were not in the number of God's people.

*By that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands*; i.e. by those that are circumcised; the abstract here, as in the former clause, being put for the concrete. He means the carnal Jews, who had the circumcision of the flesh which was made with hands, but not that of the heart, Ro 2:29, *made without hands*, Col 2:11.

### Ephesians 2:12

Ver. 12. *That at that time ye were without Christ*; i.e. without knowledge of him, or interest in him. This is the foundation of all other miseries, as Christ is the foundation of all saving good, and therefore the apostle begins with this.

*Being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel*; the church of God, confined formerly to the Israelites: their church and state was the same body, and God the founder of and lawgiver to them in both respects.

*And strangers from the covenants of promise*; those covenants in which the great promise of Christ and salvation by him was made. The covenants were several, as that with Abraham, and that by Moses, and differ in some accidents, but the promise in them was one and the same, which was the substance of each.

*Having no hope*; viz. beyond this life; as they could not but be who were without Christ, and without the promises.

*And without God*; not without some general knowledge of a God, but without any saving knowledge of him, as not knowing him in Christ: or they lived as without God, neglecting him, and being neglected by him, and suffered to walk in their own ways.

*In the world*; which is the congregation of the wicked, and is here

opposed to the church.

### Ephesians 2:13

Ver. 13. *But now in Christ Jesus;* either in the kingdom of Christ, or gospel administration, Ga 5:6; or, ye being in Christ, united to him by the Spirit and faith. Being *in Christ*, here, is opposed to being *in the world*, Eph 1:12.

*Ye who sometimes were far off;* far from God, from his church, from his promises, &c., having no communion with him by his Spirit. He means a spiritual distance, yet seems to allude to Isa 49:1,12; those Gentiles there mentioned being estranged from God in their hearts, as well as removed from his people in place.

*And made nigh;* brought into a state of communion with God and his people, and participation of their privileges, and right to the promises.

*By the blood of Christ;* the merit of his death expiating sin, (which caused this distance), and so making way for their approach to God, and enjoyment of gospel blessings.

### Ephesians 2:14

Ver. 14. *For he is our peace;* i.e. Peace-maker, or Mediator of peace, both between God and man, and between Jew and Gentile. He is called *our peace*, as elsewhere our righteousness, redemption, salvation. God is said to reconcile us, 2Co 5:19, but Christ only to be our peace.

*Who hath made both one;* i.e. one body, or *one people, or one new man*, Eph 3:15.

*And hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;* having taken away the ceremonial law, which was as a wall of separation between Jew and Gentile, as appears in the next verse. It seems to be an allusion to that wall of the temple which parted between the court of the people into which the Jews came, and the outmost court, that of the Gentiles, who,

when they came to worship, might not come into the other court, and were excluded by this wall.

### Ephesians 2:15

Ver. 15. *Having abolished;* abrogated, taken away the power of binding men.

*In his flesh;* not the flesh of sacrificed beasts but his own flesh: before he mentioned his blood, and now his flesh, to imply the whole sacrifice of Christ, comprehending his flesh as well as blood. The ceremonies had their accomplishment in Christ, and so their abolishment by him.

*The enmity;* by a metonymy he so calls the ceremonies, which were the cause and the sign of enmity between Jew and Gentile: the Jews hated the Gentiles as uncircumcised, and the Gentiles despised the Jews for being circumcised.

*Even the law of commandments contained in ordinances:* either, by *the law of commandments*, the apostle means the law of ceremonial rites, and by the word which we render *ordinances*, he means doctrine, and then (the word *contained* not being in the Greek) the sense is, that Christ, by his doctrine or commandments, abolished those ceremonial rites: the word *commandments* seems thus to be used, De 16:12 1Ki 2:3 Eze 18:21. Or else (which yet comes to the same) the word rendered *ordinances* signifies such ordinances as depended upon the sole will of the lawgiver; and is, Col 2:14, taken for ceremonial ones, and so is to be taken here. This the apostle seems to add, to show what part of the law was abrogated by Christ, viz. nothing of the moral law, but only the ceremonial.

*For to make,* or create, or form, in opposition to abolish.

*In himself;* by union with himself, as the Head, in which the several members agree.

*Of twain;* two bodies, or two people, Jews and Gentiles.

*One new man;* i.e. new body, or new (viz. Christian) people. As the body

of a commonwealth is one civil person, so the body of the church is in a like sense one person.

*So making peace,* between Jew and Gentile, having taken away those ceremonial laws, which were the cause of the difference between them.

### Ephesians 2:16

Ver. 16. *And that he might reconcile both unto God;* another end of Christ's abolishing the ceremonial law, viz. that he might reconcile both Jew and Gentile (all the elect together) unto God: and in this respect especially he is our peace.

*In one body;* either both people united as one mystical body, or rather this *one body* here, is the body of Christ offered up to God as the means of reconciliation, Col 1:22.

*By the cross;* i.e. by the sacrifice of himself upon the cross.

*Having slain the enmity thereby;* the enmity between God and man, by the expiation of sin, the cause of it. Of this enmity the ceremonial law was a witness, Col 2:14, as well as a sign of that between Jew and Gentile.

### Ephesians 2:17

Ver. 17. *And came;* partly in his own person, as to the Jews, and partly by his apostles, whom he appointed to preach the gospel to the Gentiles: so 2Co 13:3.

*And preached peace to you which were afar off;* far from the knowledge of the truth, from Christ, and salvation by him, as Eph 3:13.

*And to them that were nigh;* nigh in comparison of the Gentiles, nigh by the knowledge of God and his law, and the promises of the Messiah: see Isa 57:19.

### Ephesians 2:18

Ver. 18. *For through him,* as our Mediator and Peace-maker, who hath reconciled us to God, *we both have access,* are admitted or introduced, *by one Spirit unto the Father;* by the Holy Ghost, who is our Guide to lead us to the Father, as Christ is the way by which we go to him, Joh 14:6. As there is but one Mediator through whom both Jews and Gentiles come to God, so but one and the same Spirit, Eph 4:4.

### Ephesians 2:19

Ver. 19. *Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners;* such are they that may dwell in a city, but are not free of it. He means the same as Eph 3:12, they were not now *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, &c. But fellow citizens with the saints;* members of the same spiritual society or corporation with other saints, patriarchs, prophets, &c. The church of God is compared to a city, of which every saint is a member or free-man, Php 3:20.

*And of the household of God:* the church is here compared to a house, as 1Ti 3:15. They are said to be of the household that belong to it, but especially the children. Among men, servants are counted domestics; but with God, none but his children.

### Ephesians 2:20

Ver. 20. *And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets;* the foundation which the apostles and prophets laid by their preaching, viz. Christ, whom they held forth as the only Mediator between God and man, the only Saviour and head of the church: see 1Co 3:11.

*Foundation,* in the singular number, to imply the unity of their doctrine centring in Christ: *apostles and prophets,* whose office was to preach, not kings and patriarchs.

*Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone;* as both supporting the building by his strength, and uniting the several parts of it, Jew and

Gentile: see Mt 21:42 Ps 118:22. They that are of chief authority are called the corners of a people, as sustaining the greatest burden, 1Sa 14:38 Isa 19:13.

*Objection.* If Christ be the corner-stone, how is he the foundation?

*Answer.* The same thing may have different denominations in different respects; Christ is called a *foundation*, 1Co 3:11, a *corner-stone*, 1Pe 2:6, a *temple*, Joh 2:19, a *door*, Joh 10:7, a *builder*, Mt 16:18; so here again a *corner-stone*, and yet laid *for a foundation*, Isa 28:16.

### Ephesians 2:21

Ver. 21. *In whom;* or upon whom, viz. Christ the foundation.

*All the building;* whatsoever is built on Christ the foundation, and so all particular believers, as the several parts of the building.

*Fifty framed together;* joined and united both to Christ the foundation by faith, and to each other by love.

*Groweth;* either:

1. Ariseth; the building goeth on till it comes to be a temple. Or:
2. It notes the stones or materials of the house to be living ones, receiving life from Christ, 1Pe 2:5. Growth supposeth life. The verb is in the present tense, to signify that the builders are still at work, and this temple not yet finished.

*Unto an holy temple;* in allusion to the temple at Jerusalem; whereas the holy of holies was a type of heaven, so the temple itself was a type of the church, both as it was the place of God's presence, and of his worship.

*In the Lord:* either this must be joined to *groweth*, and then it is a pleonasm, the antecedent being here repeated, though the relative had been expressed, and it implies the growth of believers (the materials of this spiritual building) to be from Christ; or it may be joined with *holy*, and



then it signifies that they have their holiness from Christ; or it may be read, *holy to the Lord*, and then it expresses the nature of this temple, that it is undefiled, consecrated to the Lord, and meet for him.

### Ephesians 2:22

Ver. 22. *An habitation of God*; a temple where God may dwell. Not only the whole collection of believers is called the temple of God, but particular churches and particular saints are so called, because of God's dwelling in them by his Spirit: see 1Co 3:16,17 6:19.

*Through the Spirit*: this may relate either to the words immediately going before, *an habitation of God*, and then the meaning is, an habitation or temple in which God dwells by his Spirit; or to the verb *builded*, and then they import the building of them into a temple to be the operation of the Spirit, working that faith and love in them whereby they are united to Christ the foundation, and to the several parts of the building.

### Ephesians 3:1

#### Chapter Summary

Eph 3:1-6 Paul, in bonds for preaching Christ to the Gentiles, showeth that the mystery of their calling, heretofore hidden, had been revealed to him,

Eph 3:7-12 that by his ministry God's gracious purpose might be universally known, and the Gentiles be assured of their acceptance by faith.

Eph 3:13 He desireth his Ephesian converts not to be discouraged at his sufferings on their account,

Eph 3:14-19 and prayeth that God would strengthen their faith and knowledge of the infinite love of Christ.

Eph 3:20,21 He giveth glory to God for his power in the church by Christ Jesus.

Ver. 1. *For this cause*; i.e. that ye may be further confirmed in the faith of Christ, and more and more built up in him as *an habitation of God*, Eph 2:22.

*The prisoner of Jesus Christ;* for Christ's sake, for asserting his cause and honour: see 2Ti 1:8 Phm 1:1,9.

*For you Gentiles;* for your cause and salvation; having preached and declared the grace of God to be free, and to belong to you Gentiles as well as to the Jews, (the middle wall of partition being taken away), and so equalled you with them. There is no small difference among expositors about the connection of these words: the fairest and easiest seems to be, either:

1. That the substantive verb *am* be here supplied, and the word read, *I Paul am the prisoner of Jesus Christ;* q.d. I have for some time been and still am the prisoner of Jesus Christ. Or:
2. That this verse be joined to the Eph 3:14, (all the rest, Eph 3:2-13, being included in a parenthesis), where he begins with the same words as here; and so we may read it thus, Eph 3:1:

*For this cause I Paul, the prisoner,* &c.; and then, Eph 3:14, I say: For this cause I bow my knees, &c., viz. praying that ye may be strengthened with might by his Spirit, &c.; i.e. that they might be more and more built up on Christ, on whom they were founded, and had begun to be built.

### Ephesians 3:2

Ver. 2. *If ye have heard;* this doth not imply doubting, but rather the apostle takes the thing for granted; q.d. Seeing ye have heard; and so some render it. See the like, 1Pe 2:3.

*Of the dispensation of the grace of God:* either by *grace* he means his apostleship, as Ro 1:5 Ga 2:9; or the free grace of God for salvation revealed in the gospel which he was to preach; and then by *dispensation* we must understand his commission or ordination of God to that work, via. to publish that grace whereof the ministers of the gospel are the dispensers, 1Co 4:1.

*Which is given me to you-ward;* to you Ephesians and other Gentiles, for whom particularly I am appointed an apostle, Ac 9:15 26:17,18 Ga 2:7.

### Ephesians 3:3

Ver. 3. *By revelation;* not by man, but immediately, Ac 9:15 Ga 1:12.

*He made known unto me the mystery;* viz. of calling the Gentiles to salvation by faith in Christ, without the works of the law, Eph 3:6.

*As I wrote afore;* in the two former chapters of this Epistle.

### Ephesians 3:4

Ver. 4. *When ye read;* or, unto which attending.

### Ephesians 3:5

Ver. 5. *Which in other ages;* in the times before Christ's coming in the flesh.

*Was not made known unto the sons of men:* that the Gentiles should be called was formerly known and foretold, but not as since, viz. as to the time and manner of it, and the means whereby it should be effected.

*Prophets;* New Testament prophets, Eph 4:11 Ro 12:6 1Co 14:1,3.

*By the Spirit;* either by the Spirit's being poured out on the Gentiles, it was known that they should be co-heirs with the believing Jews; or rather, by the Spirit instructing the apostles and prophets, and immediately acquainting them with this mystery.

### Ephesians 3:6

Ver. 6. *That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs;* i.e. have an equal right to the heavenly inheritance with the believing Jews.

*And of the same body;* the same mystical body whereof Christ is the Head.

*And partakers of his promise;* the great promise of the covenant, which comprehends all the rest under it.

*In Christ;* in whom all the promises have their accomplishment, 2Co 1:20.

*By the gospel;* as the means or instrument by which God works faith, whereby they are made partakers of the promise, fellow heirs, &c.

### Ephesians 3:7

Ver. 7. *According to the gift of the grace of God;* either according to the free gift of God, and which was given merely of grace; or by *gift* he understands all those several gifts (as of knowledge, utterance, &c.) which were the necessary qualifications and furniture of an apostle for the due discharge of his office, all which were freely given to him.

*Given unto me by the effectual working of his power;* whereby God made him a preacher of the gospel, who had been a persecutor of believers, and wrought effectually by the Spirit with his preaching for the conversion of thousands, and spreading the gospel in many countries; and likewise wrought miracles for the confirmation of the truth, and conviction of hearers, Ac 19:12 28:8.

### Ephesians 3:8

Ver. 8. *Who am less than the least of all saints;* this the apostle speaks considering his former estate in Judaism, when he persecuted the church of Christ: so 1Co 15:9 1Ti 1:13,15. Thus modest is the apostle, when speaking of himself, and not of his office.

*The unsearchable riches of Christ;* all that grace of Christ which he was to make known to the Gentiles in his preaching, *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption,* 1Co 1:30.

### Ephesians 3:9

Ver. 9. *To make all men;* all those to whom the apostle was sent.

*See;* or, to enlighten them; i.e. ministerially, Ac 26:18; as to enlighten them principally belongs to Christ, Joh 1:9.

*What is the fellowship of the mystery;* or communication of the mystery, viz. concerning the salvation of the Gentiles without circumcision, or the works of the law which God now made known by Paul's ministry, contrary to what the Jews believed.

*Which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God;* not revealed to men as to the circumstances and manner of it, but hid in the mind and purpose of God: see the like, Eph 1:9.

*Who created all things by Jesus Christ;* this may be understood either of the first creation, or the second, or immediately of the first, and by that of the second; as God created all things at first, (and so both Jews and Gentiles), and gave them their being, by Christ, Joh 1:3; so he recreates, regenerates, and gives them a new being, by Christ, that they may be of the same body under him: see the like, 2Co 4:6.

### Ephesians 3:10

Ver. 10. *Principalities and powers in heavenly places;* good angels, Col 1:16 1Pe 3:22.

*Might be known by the church;* not effectually, as a teacher or instructor of angels present in church assemblies; but objectively, as a mirror in which they might behold and contemplate the manifold wisdom of God.

*The manifold wisdom of God:* exceedingly, or many ways, various. The Divine wisdom is in itself one simple thing, but appearing in so great variety of works, it is said to be various. This may be best understood of the whole economy of men's redemption, and God's governing his church in several ages, the several forms of the church, the various ways of revealing the Divine will, the different measures of light let out in different

times, the different dispensations of the covenant of grace before the law, under the law, under the gospel, to the Jews, to the Gentiles, &c.

### Ephesians 3:11

Ver. 11. *According to the eternal purpose:* all that God doeth in the work of our redemption, whereby he sets forth his manifold wisdom, he doeth according to what he had from eternity purposed to do, and therein likewise shows his wisdom, to which it belongs to order and determine things before the doing of them, and then to do them as they have been ordered.

*Which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord;* not only as the eternal Wisdom of the Father, but as designed in God's decree to be the Head of the church, and he by whom God would in time execute his eternal purpose.

### Ephesians 3:12

Ver. 12. *In whom;* or by, or through whom, or into whom being ingrafted and incorporated.

*We have boldness,* or freeness of speech. It signifies that liberty and spiritual security, whereby we come to God as to a Father, in the freedom of children, not the fear of slaves, Ro 8:15 Ga 4:6 1Jo 3:21.

*And access;* not only in prayer, but all the communion we have with God by faith in Christ, 1Pe 3:18.

*With confidence;* either securely without fear, (as before), or with confidence of acceptance with God, and obtaining what we ask.

*By the faith of him;* i.e. faith in him, as Ro 3:22: see the like, Mr 11:22.

### Ephesians 3:13

Ver. 13. *Wherefore I desire;* I pray you. This is an exhortation to the Ephesians, not a prayer to God, for that follows, Eph 3:14.

*That ye faint not at my tribulations for you;* the truth I have preached to you being the cause of my sufferings, and your salvation (to which they tend as a means to confirm your faith) being the end of them.

*Which is your glory;* either he means, that their not fainting, or not falling away from Christ, by reason of his sufferings, was their glory; or rather, that his sufferings were their glory, in that he did by them seal the truth of the doctrine he had preached, being still ready to suffer for what he delivered to them.

#### Ephesians 3:14

Ver. 14. *For this cause;* this may be referred either to the former verse (Eph 3:13): *For this cause, viz. that ye faint not, &c.*; or rather to the 1st verse (Eph 3:1), the apostle here resuming what he had been beginning there.

#### Ephesians 3:15

Ver. 15. *Of whom;* either of God, or rather of Christ, last mentioned.

*The whole family,* or kindred, the church of God being his household, Eph 2:19.

*In heaven and earth;* all the saints, both which are already in glory, and which yet live upon the earth, wherever or whoever they be, Jews or Gentiles.

*Is named:* to be named, or called, implies the thing as well as the name, Isa 7:14 Lu 1:35. The whole family is named of Christ; i.e. of him they are, as well as are called, Christians, and the church of God. The Jews boasted of Abraham as their father; but now all believers, even Gentiles, are one family of God's people, and upon them the name of Christ is called.

### Ephesians 3:16

Ver. 16. *The riches of his glory;* i.e. the abundance of his power: see Ro 6:4.

*To be strengthened with might;* further degrees of spiritual strength, proceeding from God's power as the fountain.

*By his Spirit;* as the immediate worker of all inherent grace.

*In the inner man;* the reasonable powers of the soul as renewed by grace, the same as *heart* in the next verse, and *spirit*, 1Th 5:23: see 2Co 4:16.

### Ephesians 3:17

Ver. 17. *That Christ;* on whom this Spirit (who must strengthen you, as being a *Spirit of might*, Isa 11:2) resteth, Isa 61:1

*May dwell in your hearts;* may intimately and continually possess and fill, not your heads only with his doctrine, but your affections with his Spirit: see Joh 14:23.

*By faith;* whereby ye not only believe Christ's truth, but receive and apprehend himself, and which is the means by which ye have union and communion with him.

*That ye, being rooted and grounded in love:* either he means:

1. Our love to God and our neighbour; and then he prays that their love might not be slight and superficial, but strong and firm. Or:
2. God's love to us; and then he prays that the Ephesians, who had already tasted God's love to them in Christ, might be more fully strengthened in the persuasion of that love.



### Ephesians 3:18

Ver. 18. *May be able to comprehend,* more fully and perfectly to perceive and understand, *with all saints,* which are or have been, *what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height,* the immense vastness, dignity, and perfection; either:

1. Of redemption by Christ, extending both to Jew and Gentile, and so the mystery before mentioned. Or rather:
2. Of the love of Christ, as follows.

### Ephesians 3:19

Ver. 19. *And to know,* sensibly and experimentally to perceive in yourselves, *the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge;* which, though it may in a greater degree than hitherto be known and experienced, yet never can be in this life fully and absolutely understood and comprehended: see Eph 3:8, and the like expression, Php 4:7.

*That ye might be filled with all the fulness of God;* all that fulness of knowledge, faith, love, holiness, and whatsoever it is with which God fills believers gradually here, and perfectly hereafter, when *God shall be all in all,* 1Co 15:28.

### Ephesians 3:20

Ver. 20. *Now unto him;* i.e. God the Father.

*That is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think;* and therefore is able to stablish you to the end, and do all for you that hath been desired. *According to the power that worketh in us; the exceeding greatness of his power,* Eph 1:19; whereby God works faith, and preserves to salvation, 1Pe 1:5, and enables to bear afflictions, 2Ti 1:8.

## Ephesians 3:21

Ver. 21. *Unto him be glory in the church;* the whole church of Jews and Gentiles. The church only knows the mystery and partakes of the benefits before mentioned, and therefore the church only can rightly glorify God for them.

*By Christ Jesus;* either in Christ, in whom the Father hath displayed all his love to us; or rather *by* (according to our version) Christ, as the Mediator between God and us; by whom we offer up our services to God, praises as well as prayers, Ro 1:8 7:25. Throughout all ages; or, through all generations.

## Ephesians 4:1

### Chapter Summary

Eph 4:1-6 Paul exhorteth to those virtues which become the Christian calling, particularly to unity,  
Eph 4:7-16 declaring that Christ gave his gifts differently, that his body the church might be built up and perfected in the true faith by the co-operation of the several members with one another, and with him their Head.

Eph 4:17-21 He calleth men off from the vain and impure conversation of the heathen world,

Eph 4:22-24 to renounce the old, and to put on the new, man,

Eph 4:25 to discard lying,

Eph 4:26,27 and sinful anger.

Eph 4:28 To leave off dishonest practices, and to gain by honest labour what they have occasion for,

Eph 4:29 to use no corrupt talk,

Eph 4:30 nor grieve God's Spirit.

Eph 4:31,32 To put away all expressions of ill-will, and to practise mutual kindness and forgiveness.

Ver. 1. *The prisoner of the Lord;* in the Lord, a Hebraism: it is as much as, for the Lord: see Eph 3:1.

*Beseech you that ye walk worthy;* proceed constantly and perseveringly in such ways as suit with and become your calling, 1Th 4:7 1Pe 1:15: see the like expression, Ro 16:2.

*Of the vocation wherewith ye are called;* both your general calling, whereby ye are called to be saints, and your particular callings, to which ye are severally called, as Eph 5:1-33 and Eph 6:1-24.

### Ephesians 4:2

Ver. 2. *With all lowliness,* or humility; submissiveness of mind, whereby we esteem others better than ourselves, Php 2:3. A virtue peculiar to Christians, unknown to philosophers: see Ac 20:19 Col 3:12,13.

*And meekness;* whereby we are not easily provoked, or offended with the infirmities of others: this is opposed to peevishness, as the former to pride.

*With long-suffering;* whereby we bear with greater or repeated injuries, 2Co 6:6.

*Forbearing one another;* or supporting, i.e. bearing with the infirmities, frowardness, or moroseness of others, so as not to cease to love them, and do them good.

*In love;* not out of any carnal affection, or for our own advantage, but out of love, which is wont to make men patient and long-suffering, 1Co 13:4.

### Ephesians 4:3

Ver. 3. *The unity of the Spirit;* either unity of mind, or spiritual unity, as being wrought by the Spirit, and then he means that unity he spoke of, Eph 2:14-16, and Eph 3:6, whereby is intended the mystical body of Christ.

*In the bond of peace;* i.e. in peace as the bond which keeps the members or parts of the church together, which by dissensions are dissipated and scattered. The first step to this unity is humility, for where that is not, there

will be no meekness nor forbearance, without which unity cannot be maintained.

#### Ephesians 4:4

Ver. 4. *There is one body;* i.e. the church of Christ, Eph 1:23: see Col 3:15.

*And one Spirit;* the self-same Spirit of Christ in that body by which all the members live and act, 1Co 12:11,13.

*Even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;* one inheritance in heaven, to the hope of which ye are called, Col 1:12.

*Hope,* for the thing hoped for, as Col 1:5: see 1Pe 1:3,4.

#### Ephesians 4:5

Ver. 5. *One Lord;* Christ, viz. as Redeemer, Head, and Husband of the church, to whom, by God's appointment, she is immediately subject, 1Co 8:6 Joh 13:13 Ac 2:36.

*One faith;* i.e. one object of the faith of all believers, viz. the doctrine of salvation, which is but one.

*One baptism;* both as to the outward symbol, and the thing signified by it.

#### Ephesians 4:6

Ver. 6. *One God;* God is here taken personally for the Father, the other two Persons being before mentioned, Eph 4:4,5.

*And Father of all;* of all believers.

*Who is above all;* not only in the excellencies of his nature, but especially in his sovereign dominion over the church.

*And through all;* by his special providence, through all the members of the church.

*And in you all;* by inhabitation, and the conjunction of believers with him. Though the former two may be applied to God's universal dominion and providence over all the creatures, yet, the apostle speaking of the conjunction of believers in one Father, they are both to be restrained according to this last clause.

#### Ephesians 4:7

Ver. 7. *But unto every one of us is given grace;* either by *grace* he means gifts which are not common to all believers, but proper to some, according to their various functions and places in the church, Ro 12:6 1Co 12:11. Or rather, more generally, it comprehends also those graces which are common to all believers as such, faith, hope, love, zeal, &c.; which though they are of the same kind in all, and have the same object, yet they are received in different degrees and measures.

*According to the measure of the gift of Christ;* in that measure in which it pleaseth Christ to give them, who gives to some one gift, to some another; to some one degree of grace to some another: all have not the same, but need the help of those that have what they want.

#### Ephesians 4:8

Ver. 8. *Wherefore he saith;* the psalmist.

*When he;* Christ, God manifested in the flesh: and then what was spoken by the psalmist prophetically in the second person, is spoken by the apostle historically in the third.

*Ascended up on high;* Christ ascended up on high after his death, both as to place, in his human nature, into heaven; and chiefly as to his state, in his being glorified.

*He led captivity captive;* either led those captive who had taken us captive, or rather led them captive whom he had taken captive; *captivity* being here put for captives, as elsewhere poverty for poor, 2Ki 24:14. This Christ did when, having conquered sin, death, Satan, he triumphed gloriously over them in his ascension, Col 2:15. It is spoken with allusion to conquering princes or generals, who in their triumphs had their captives attending upon their chariots.

*And gave gifts unto men;* he alludes in this likewise to the custom of conquerors casting money among the people that were the spectators of their triumphs, or giving largesses to their soldiers. Christ upon his ascension sent the Holy Ghost on the disciples, Ac 2:1-47, and continues ever since to furnish his church with gifts and graces: see on Ps 68:18.

#### Ephesians 4:9

Ver. 9. *Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first?* The apostle interprets the psalmist, and concludes that David, when he foretold Christ's glorification, or ascending up to heaven, did likewise foresee his humiliation and descent to the earth: q.d. When David speaks of God in the flesh ascending up on high, he doth thereby imply, that he should first descend to the earth.

*Into the lower parts of the earth;* either simply the earth, as the lowest part of the visible world, and so opposed to heaven, from whence he came down, Joh 3:13 6:33,38,41,42,50,51; or the grave and state of the dead; or both rather, implying the whole of his humiliation, in opposition to his ascending, taken for the whole of his exaltation.

#### Ephesians 4:10

Ver. 10. *He that descended is the same also that ascended:* he saith not, he that ascended is the same that descended, lest it should not be thought that Christ brought his body with him from heaven; but, on the contrary, *he that descended is the same that ascended*, to show that the Son of God did not by his descent become other than what he was, nor the assumption of the human nature add any thing to his person, as a man is not made another

person by the clothes he puts on. Christ descended without change of place as being God, but ascended by changing place as man, yet, by communication of properties, whole Christ is said to have ascended.

*Far above all heavens;* all visible heavens, into the third heaven, or paradise. Ac 3:21 Heb 9:24.

*That he might fill all things;* all the members of his church, with gifts and graces. This began to be fulfilled, Ac 2:1-47, and still will be fulfilling to the end of the world: see Joh 7:39 16:7.

### Ephesians 4:11

Ver. 11. *And he gave;* distributed several gifts, (which are spoken of in general, Eph 1:7), according to his Father's appointment, who is said to set in the church what Christ is here said to give, 1Co 12:28.

*Objection.* Nothing is here said of gifts, but only of offices.

*Answer.* Christ never gave offices without suitable furniture; this diversity therefore of offices includes diversity of respective gifts.

*Apostles;* extraordinary officers, with an immediate call, universal commission, infallibility in teaching, and power of working miracles, appointed for the first founding the Christian church in all parts of the world, Mt 28:19 Ac 19:6.

*Objection.* The apostles were appointed by Christ before his death.

*Answer.* The apostle here speaks not of Christ's first calling them, but:

1. Of his fully supplying them with gifts necessary to the discharge of their office, which was after his resurrection, Ac 1:4 Joh 7:39. And:
2. Of their solemn inauguration in their office, by the pouring out of the Holy Ghost upon them in a visible manner, Ac 2:1-47.

*Prophets;* extraordinary officers who did by immediate revelation

interpret the Scriptures, 1Co 14:4,5, and not only such as did foretell things to come, Ac 11:27 21:10.

*Evangelists*; these were likewise extraordinary officers, for the most part chosen by the apostles, as their companions and assistants in preaching the word, and planting churches in the several places where they travelled. Such were Timothy, Titus, Apollos, Silas, &c.

*Pastors and teachers*; either two names of the same office, implying the distinct duties of ruling and teaching belonging to it; or two distinct offices, but both ordinary, and of standing use in the church in all times; and then *pastors* are they that are fixed to and preside over particular churches, with the care both of instructing and ruling them, 1Th 5:12 Heb 13:17; called elsewhere *elders*, and *bishops*, Ac 20:28 Php 1:1 1Ti 3:1 Tit 1:5,7 1Pe 5:1,2.

*Teachers*; they whose work is to teach the doctrine of religion, and confute the contrary errors.

#### Ephesians 4:12

Ver. 12. *For the perfecting of the saints*; either for the restoring and bringing them into right order, who had been, as it were, dissipated, and disjointed by sin: or rather the knitting together and compacting them more and more, both in nearer union to Christ their Head by faith, and to their fellow members by love: see 1Co 1:10.

*For the work of the ministry*; or, for the work of dispensation, i.e. for dispensing the word, and all those ordinances which it appertains to them to dispense; and so it implies their whole work. But there may be a trajection in the words, and then this clause is to be read before the former, and the meaning plainly is:

*For the work of the ministry*, which is to perfect the saints, and edify the body of Christ.

*For the edifying of the body of Christ*; the same in effect as *perfecting the saints*, viz. the building up the church, both in bringing in new members



to it, and strengthening those that are brought in already, in faith and holiness.

### Ephesians 4:13

Ver. 13. *Till we all come,* or meet; all we believers, both Jews and Gentiles, (who while in the world not only are dispersed in several places, but have our several degrees of light and knowledge), meet, or come together, in the unity of, &c.

*In the unity of the faith;* either that perfect unity whereof faith is the bond, or rather that perfect uniformity of faith in which we shall all have the same thoughts and apprehensions of spiritual things, to which as yet, by reason of our remaining darkness, we are not arrived.

*And of the knowledge of the Son of God;* or acknowledgment, i.e. not a bare speculative knowledge, but such as is joined with appropriation and affection.

*Unto a perfect man:* he compares the mystical body of Christ to a man, who hath his several ages and degrees of growth and strength, till he come to the height of both, and then he is a perfect man, or a man simply, in opposition to a child, 1Co 13:11. The church of Christ (expressed by a *man*, in the singular number, to show its unity) hath its infancy, its childhood, its youth, and is to have hereafter its perfect manhood and state of consistency in the other life, when, being arrived to its full pitch, it shall be past growing.

*Unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;* either actively, that measure of stature or age which Christ fills up in it, or hath allotted to it, Eph 4:7; or rather passively, that measure which, though it do not equal, yet it shall resemble, being perfectly conformed to the fulness of Christ. As in Eph 4:12 he showed the end of Christ's appointing officers in his church, so here he shows how long they are to continue, viz. till their work be done, the saints perfected, which will not be till they all come to the unity of the faith, &c.

## Ephesians 4:14

Ver. 14. *That we henceforth be no more children;* i.e. weak in the faith, unstable in judgment, *children in understanding,* 1Co 14:20; such as need teaching, and strengthening: see Ro 2:20 1Co 3:1 Heb 5:13.

*Tossed to and fro;* light and unconstant, like ships without ballast, tossed with every wave.

*And carried about with every wind of doctrine;* not only shaken and staggering as to our faith, (as in the former clause), but carried about to errors for want of judgment, by false doctrines, here compared to violent winds.

*By the sleight of men;* their sophistry, whereby they easily seduce those that are unskilful, as men easily cheat children in playing at dice, from whence this metaphor is taken.

*Cunning craftiness;* their skilfulness in finding out ways of deceiving, whereby they can make any thing of any thing.

*Whereby they lie in wait to deceive,* viz. as in ambush; the word here used, is translated *wiles*, Eph 6:11, against which the apostle would have them fenced with *the whole armour of God*, and seems to signify a laying in ambush, or assaulting a man behind his back; a secret and unseen way of circumventing, a laying wait to draw them that are weak from the truth.

## Ephesians 4:15

Ver. 15. *But speaking the truth in love;* or, following the truth in love: q.d. Not only let us not be seduced by the craftiness of men, but constantly adhere to, and persevere in, the belief of the truth, joining love with it, in which two the sum of Christianity consists; and this will be a means of our growing up, and being no more children.

*May grow up;* this is opposed to being children; we are not to stand at a stay, but grow to maturity, Heb 6:1.

*In all things;* in knowledge, faith, love, and all the parts of the new man.

*Into him which is the head, even Christ;* our growth must be with respect to Christ our Head, as the end of it; we must grow in our acknowledgment of him, and dependence on him, as he by whom we are influenced, and from whom all our proficiency and strength proceeds; so that whatever increase we make, must tend not to the magnifying ourselves, but exalting our Head.

### Ephesians 4:16

Ver. 16. *From whom;* Christ the Head, Eph 4:15.

*The whole body;* the mystical body, or church of believers, whereof every true saint is a member, Ro 12:4,5.

*Fitly joined together;* viz. in the right place and order, both in respect of Christ the Head, and of the members respectively. Some are eyes, some ears, some hands, some feet, 1Co 12:15,16.

*And compacted;* firmly knit, so as not to be separated.

*By that which every joint supplieth;* or, by every joint or juncture of administration; i.e. whose office is to administer spirits and nourishment to the body. *Bands* are added to joints, Col 2:19, which signifies the ligaments by which the joints are tied one to another, as well as the joints in which they touch.

*Question.* What are those joints and bands in the mystical body?

*Answer.* Every thing whereby believers are joined to Christ, or to each other as Christians; especially the Spirit of Christ, which is the same in the Head and all the members; the gifts of the Spirit, chiefly faith, whereby they are united to Christ, and love, whereby they are knit to each other; the sacraments, likewise, church officers, Eph 4:11, &c.

*According to the effectual working;* either the power of Christ, who, as a Head, influenceth and enliveneth every member; or *the effectual working*

of every member, in communicating to others the gifts it hath received.

*In the measure of every part;* according to the state, condition, and exigence of every part, nourishment is conveyed to it meet for it; yet more to one and less to another, according as more is required for one and less for the other, and so to all in their proportion. Or else as each part hath received, so it communicates to others; all have their use and helpfulness to others, but not all alike, or in the same degree.

*Maketh increase of the body:* either *body* here redounds by a Hebraism, and the sense is, the body (mentioned in the beginning of the verse) maketh increase of itself; or, without that redundancy, *increase of the body* is an increase meet and convenient for the body.

*Unto the edifying of itself:* the apostle here changeth the metaphor from that of a body to this of a house, but to the same sense, and shows the end of this nourishment they ministered from one member to another, viz. not its own private good, but the good of the whole body, for the benefit of which each part receives its gifts from Christ the Head.

*In love;* either by the offices of love, or it denotes the impulsive cause, whereby the members are moved thus to promote the common increase of the body, viz. love to the Head and each other.

#### Ephesians 4:17

Ver. 17. *This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord;* I beseech or adjure you by the Lord: see the like, Ro 12:1 Php 2:1.

*That ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind;* their minds themselves, and understandings, the highest and noblest faculties in them, being conversant about things empty, transient, and unprofitable, and which deceive their expectations, and therefore vain, viz. their idols, their worldly enjoyments, &c.

#### Ephesians 4:18

Ver. 18. *Having the understanding;* the mind as reasoning and discoursing, and so their ratiocinations and discourses themselves.

*Darkened;* as to spiritual things.

*Being alienated from the life of God;* not only strangers to it, (for so are those creatures which are not capable of it), but estranged from it; implying, that in Adam originally they were not so.

*The life of God;* a spiritual life; that life which God commands, and approves, and whereby God lives in believers, and they live in him, Ga 2:19,20; and that both as to the principle of life, and the operations of it.

*Through the ignorance that is in them;* that ignorance which is naturally in them is the cause of their alienation from the life of God, which begins in light and knowledge.

*Because of the blindness of their heart;* or rather hardness: the Greek word signifies a *callum* or brawniness in the flesh, which is usual in the hands of labourers. Either this is set down as another cause of their estrangement from the life of God, or as the cause of their ignorance, which, though in part it be natural to them, yet is increased to further degrees by their own hardness and obstinacy, shutting their eyes voluntarily against the light.

#### Ephesians 4:19

Ver. 19. *Who being past feeling;* having lost all sense and conscience of sin: a higher degree or effect of the hardness before mentioned, 1Ti 4:2.

*Have given themselves over unto lasciviousness;* voluntarily yielded themselves up to the power of their own sensuality and lasciviousness, so as to be commanded by it, without resisting it.

*To work;* not only to burn with inward lusts, but to fulfil them in the outward acts.

*All uncleanness;* all sorts of uncleanness, even the most monstrous, Ro

1:24,26,27 1Co 6:9 Ga 5:19.

*With greediness;* either with covetousness, and then it respects those that prostituted themselves for gain; or rather with an insatiable desire of still going on in their filthiness.

Ephesians 4:20

Ver. 20. *But ye have not so learned;* so as to walk as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of your minds, &c.

*Christ;* the doctrine of Christ, or rule of life prescribed by him.

Ephesians 4:21

Ver. 21. *If so be that ye have heard him;* either heard Christ speaking to you in the gospel, Heb 12:25, and then the sense will be the same as in the following clause; or heard him preached to you, and then it may refer to the outward hearing of the word.

*And have been taught by him;* or taught *in* him; *in* or *by*, as Col 1:16 Heb 1:2; and then this relates to the power of the word, and the impression made by it upon the heart: q.d. If ye have not only heard of him by the hearing of the ear, but have been effectually taught by the Spirit to know him, and receive his doctrine, Isa 54:13 Joh 6:45.

*As the truth is in Jesus;* as it really is, and hath been taught by Christ himself, both in his doctrine and example, viz. what is the true way of a Christian's living; as in the following verses: see Joh 17:17 Tit 1:1.

Ephesians 4:22

Ver. 22. *That ye put off;* a usual metaphor, taken from garments (implying a total abandoning, and casting away, like a garment not to be put on again): it is opposed to putting on, Eph 4:24, and is the same as mortifying, Col 3:5, crucifying, Ga 6:14.

*Concerning the former conversation;* the former heathenish life and manners, Eph 2:2. He shows how they should put off their old man, viz. by relinquishing their old manners; the same as putting off *the old man with his deeds*, Col 3:9.

*The old man;* the pravity of nature, or nature as depraved.

*Which is corrupt;* or, which corrupteth, i.e. tends to destruction, Ga 6:8; or, which daily grows worse and more corrupt by the fulfilling of its lusts.

*According to the deceitful lusts;* i.e. which draw away and entice men, Jas 1:14; or which put on a show and semblance of some good, or promise pleasure and happiness, but lurch men's hopes, and make them more miserable.

#### Ephesians 4:23

Ver. 23. *And be renewed;* viz. more and more, being already renewed in part.

*In the spirit of your mind;* i.e. in your mind which is a spirit: see 1Th 5:23, 2Ti 4:22. He means the superior powers of the soul, where regeneration begins, and which the philosophers magnified so much, and thought so pure.

#### Ephesians 4:24

Ver. 24. *And that ye put on;* the salnc metaphor of a garment as before, to show the intimateness of the new man with us, and its being an ornament to us.

*The new man;* i.e. a new disposition or constitution of the whole man, called the *new creature*, 2Co 5:17, and a *divine nature*, 2Pe 1:4.

*Which after God;* after God's image.

*Is created in righteousness and true holiness; either righteousness may relate to the second table, and holiness to the first, and so both contain our duty to man and to God; or righteousness may imply that Divine principle in us, whereby we perform our whole duty to God and the creature, and holiness that which denieth all mixture of corruption in our duty to God and man.*

*True; sincere and sound. As righteousness and holiness are opposed to lusts, Eph 4:22, so true here, to deceitful there.*

#### Ephesians 4:25

Ver. 25. *Wherefore putting away lying; all fraudulency and dissimulation, and whatever is contrary to truth.*

*Speak every man truth; not only speak as things are, but act sincerely and candidly.*

*For we are members one of another; i.e. to or for one another, and therefore must be helpful to each other.*

#### Ephesians 4:26

Ver. 26. *Be ye angry and sin not: by way of concession, rather than by way of command: q.d. If the case be such that ye must be angry, yet see it be without sin.*

*Let not the sun go down upon your wrath; if your anger is excessive, (for so this word signifies, being different from the former), yet let it not be lasting; be reconciled ere the sun go down.*

#### Ephesians 4:27

Ver. 27. *Do not give advantage to the devil to possess your hearts, and put you upon more and greater evils: see Lu 22:3 Joh 13:27 Ac 5:3.*



Ephesians 4:28

Ver. 28. *Let him that stole steal no more;* stealing is understood largely for seeking our own gain by any way, defrauding others, whether by taking away, or unjustly detaining what is theirs.

*But rather let him labour;* i.e. diligently and industriously, as the word imports. Idleness is condemned as tending to theft.

*Working with his hands;* as the only instrument by which most arts and trades are exercised.

*The thing which is good;* not in any unlawful way, but in an honest calling.

*That he may have to give to him that needeth;* that he may have not only whereupon to live, and prevent stealing, but wherewith to help those that want, Lu 21:2.

Ephesians 4:29

Ver. 29. *Let no corrupt communication;* unprofitable, unsavoury, not seasoned with the salt of prudence, Col 4:6: see Mr 9:50.

*To the use of edifying;* Gr. to the edification of use, by an hypallage, for, *to the use of edifying*, as our translators render it, implying, that the great use of speech is to edify those with whom we converse. But the same word translated *use*, signifies likewise profit, and necessity, and, by a Hebraism, this (as the latter substantive) may be instead of an adjective, and the words translated, to useful, or profitable, edifying, or, (according to the marginal reading), *to edify profitably*, with little difference of sense from the former: or, to necessary edifying; and then it respects the condition and necessities of the hearers, to which our discourse must be suited by way of instruction, reprehension, exhortation, or consolation, as their case requires.

*That it may minister grace to the hearers;* by which some grace may be

communicated to or increased in them, by instruction, reprehension, exhortation, &c.

#### Ephesians 4:30

Ver. 30. *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God;* viz. by corrupt communication. The Spirit is said to be grieved when any thing is done by us, which, were he capable of such passions, might be matter of grief to him; or when we so offend him as to make him withdraw his comfortable presence from us: see Isa 63:10.

*Whereby ye are sealed;* set apart or marked for, and secured unto the day of redemption; see Eph 1:14 2Co 1:22: so, Eze 9:4, they are marked that are to be delivered; and Re 7:3, the servants of God are sealed that were to escape the following plagues.

*Unto the day of redemption;* i.e. full and final salvation at the resurrection: see Lu 21:28 Ro 8:23.

#### Ephesians 4:31

Ver. 31. *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger;* these all seem to relate to the inward affection, as the two following to the effects of it in the words.

*Bitterness* may imply a secret lurking displeasure at another, or rather a confirmed and permanent one; *wrath*, the first boiling up of the passion, which affects the body in the commotion of the blood and spirits; and *anger*, a greater height and paroxysm of the same passion, or an eager desire of revenge: see Col 3:8.

*And clamour;* such inordinate loudness as men in anger are wont to break out into in their words.

*And evil speaking;* either with respect to God or man, though the latter seems particularly meant here; railing, reviling, reproaching, &c., the ordinary effects of immoderate anger.

*With all malice;* maliciousness, or malignity of heart, in opposition to kindness and tenderness, Eph 4:32: see Ro 1:29 1Co 5:8 14:20 Tit 3:3.

### Ephesians 4:32

Ver. 32. *And be ye kind;* sweet, amiable, facile in words and conversation, Lu 6:35.

*Tender-hearted;* merciful, quickly moved to compassion: so we have *bowels of mercies*, Col 3:12.

*Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you;* be placable, and ready to forgive, therein resembling God, who for Christ's sake hath forgiven you more than you can forgive to one another.

### Ephesians 5:1

#### Chapter Summary

Eph 5:1,2 Paul exhorteth to the imitation of God, and of the love of Christ,

Eph 5:3,4 to avoid fornication and all uncleanness,

Eph 5:5,6 which exclude from, the kingdom of God, and draw down God's wrath on unbelievers,

Eph 5:7-14 with whose works of darkness Christians, that have better light to inform and influence them, should have no fellowship,

Eph 5:15-17 to walk with prudence and circumspection,

Eph 5:18-20 not to drink wine to excess, but to be filled with the Spirit, singing psalms, and giving thanks to God,

Eph 5:21 and being in due subordination to one another.

Eph 5:22-24 The duty of wives toward their husbands,

Eph 5:25-33 and of husbands toward their wives, enforced by the example of Christ and his church.

Ver. 1. *Be ye therefore followers of God;* particularly in being kind, and forgiving injuries, Mt 5:45,48; so that this relates to the last verse of the former chapter.

*As dear children;* viz. of God. Children should imitate their fathers, especially when beloved of them.

### Ephesians 5:2

Ver. 2. *And walk in love;* let your whole conversation be in love.

*As Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us;* viz. to die for us, Ga 2:20, as the greatest argument of his love, Joh 15:13 Ro 5:8.

*An offering and a sacrifice to God:* either *offering* signifies a meat-offering, which was joined as an appendix with the bloody sacrifice; or rather more generally, all the oblations that were under the law; and the word *sacrifice* either restrains it to those especially in which blood was shed for expiation of sin, or explains the meaning of it: q.d. Christ gave himself an offering, even a sacrifice in the proper sense, i.e. a bloody one.

*For a sweet-smelling savour;* i.e. acceptable to God; alluding to the legal sacrifices, (see Ge 8:21 Le 1:9), and intimating those other to have been accepted of God, only, with respect to that of Christ; and that as Christ dying to reconcile sinners to God was acceptable to him, so our spiritual sacrifices are then only like to be accepted of him, when we are reconciled to our brother, Mt 5:23,24.

### Ephesians 5:3

Ver. 3. *But fornication;* folly committed between unmarried persons, especially men's abuse of themselves with common strumpets, a sin not owned as such among the heathen.

*And all uncleanness;* all other unlawful lusts whereby men defile themselves.

*Or covetousness;* either an insatiable desire of gratifying their lusts, as Eph 4:19; or rather an immoderate desire of gain, which was usual in cities of great trade, as Ephesus was: see Eph 5:5.

*Let it not be once named among you;* not heard of, or not mentioned without detestation: see Ps 16:4 1Co 5:1.

*As becometh saints,* who should be pure and holy, not in their bodies and minds only, but in their words too.

#### Ephesians 5:4

Ver. 4. *Neither filthiness;* obscenity in discourse, *filthy communication,* Col 3:8.

*Nor foolish talking;* affectation of foolish, vain speech, (whether jocose or serious), unprofitable, to the hearers.

*Nor jesting;* either the same as the former, as may seem by the disjunctive particle *nor*, which may be by way of explication; or (which is of kin to it) scurrility in discourse, which is many times, by them that are addicted to it, called by the name of urbanity, or jesting: for all that jesting is not here condemned appears by 1Ki 18:27 Isa 14:11.

*Which are not convenient;* viz. for saints.

*But rather giving of thanks;* i.e. to God for mercies received, which will better cheer up and recreate the mind than foolish talking and jesting can.

#### Ephesians 5:5

Ver. 5. *Nor covetous man, who is an idolater;* because he serves Mammon instead of God, loves his riches more than God, and placeth his hope in them.

*Hath any inheritance;* without repentance; for he speaks of those that persevere in such sins, whom he calls children of disobedience, Eph 5:6.

*In the kingdom of Christ and of God;* not two distinct kingdoms, but one and the same, which belongs to God by nature, to Christ as Mediator. By this phrase he intimates, that there is no coming into the kingdom of God but by Christ.

### Ephesians 5:6

Ver. 6. *Vain words;* false and deceitful, which cannot secure to you the impunity they promise you, bearing you in hand, either that those things are not sins, or not so dangerous.

*The wrath of God;* viz. in the other world.

### Ephesians 5:7

Ver. 7. With those children of disobedience, who continue in the forementioned sins: see Job 34:8 Ps 50:18.

### Ephesians 5:8

Ver. 8. *For ye were sometimes darkness;* the same as in darkness, Ro 2:19 1Th 5:4; viz. the darkness of sin, ignorance, unbelief. The abstract being put for the concrete, shows the greatness of that darkness in which they were.

*But now are ye light in the Lord;* either now, being in Christ, ye are light, or rather, ye are enlightened or made light by Christ, being furnished with spiritual knowledge, faith, purity, and holiness.

*Walk as children of light;* a Hebraism; *children of light,* for those that are in the light, 1Th 5:5: q.d. Let your conversation be suitable to your condition and privileges: see 1Jo 1:7.

### Ephesians 5:9

Ver. 9. *The fruit of the Spirit;* either in the fruit or work of the new nature, or of the Holy Ghost, by whom we are made light in the Lord: see Ga 5:22.

*In all goodness;* either a general virtue in opposition to wickedness, or benignity and bounty.

*Righteousness;* in opposition to injustice, by covetousness, fraud, &c.

*Truth;* in opposition to error, lies, hypocrisy. He shows what it is to *walk as children of light*.

### Ephesians 5:10

Ver. 10. Searching what the will of the Lord is, and approving it by your practice as the rule of your walking, Ro 12:2.

### Ephesians 5:11

Ver. 11. *Have no fellowship with;* not only do not practise them yourselves, but do not join with others in them, by consent, advice, assistance, or any other way whereby ye may be defiled by them.

*The unfruitful;* by a meiosis, for bringing forth evil fruit, destructive, pernicious, Ro 6:21 Ga 6:8.

*Works of darkness;* wicked works, so called because they proceed from darkness in the mind, the ignorance of God, and men are put upon them by the devil, the prince of darkness, and because they are afraid of the light.

*But rather reprove them;* or convince them, viz. not only by your words, Le 19:17 Mt 18:15, but especially by your actions, which being contrary to them, will both evidence them to be, and reprove them as being, works of darkness.

### Ephesians 5:12

Ver. 12. *For it is a shame even to speak of those things;* much more to have fellowship with them in them.

*Which are done of them in secret;* the darkness adding boldness, as if what men did not see, God did not observe.

### Ephesians 5:13

Ver. 13. *But all things;* or all those things, viz. those unfruitful works of darkness, which are to be *reproved*.

*Are made manifest;* i.e. in the minds and consciences of the sinners themselves.

*By the light;* the light of doctrine in verbal reproofs, and of a holy life in real and practical ones.

*For whatsoever doth make manifest is light;* or, it is the light which manifests every thing, viz. which was before in the dark. The apostle argues from the nature and office of light; q.d. It is the property of light to discover and manifest what before was not seen, and therefore it becomes you who are light in the Lord to *shine as lights in the world*, Php 2:15, that ye may by your holy conversation convince wicked men of their wickedness, and deeds of darkness, which they did not before perceive in themselves.

### Ephesians 5:14

Ver. 14. *He saith;* either God by the prophets, of whose preaching this is the sum; it may allude in particular to Isa 60:1. Or, Christ by his ministers, in the preaching of the gospel, who daily calls men to arise from the death of sin by repentance, and encourageth them with the promise of eternal life.

*Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead;* the same thing in two



different expressions. Sinners in some respects are said to be asleep, in others, to be dead. They are as full of dreams and vain imaginations, and as unfit for any good action, as they that are asleep are for natural; and they are as full of stench and loathsomeness as they that are dead. Here therefore they are bid to awake from sin as a sleep, and to arise from it as a death. The meaning is, that they should arise by faith and repentance out of that state of spiritual death in which they lie while in their sins.

*And Christ shall give thee light;* the light of peace and joy here, and eternal glory hereafter. The apostle intimates, that what is the way of Christ in the gospel should likewise be the practice of these Ephesians, whom he calls *light in the Lord*, viz. to reprove the unfruitful works of darkness, and awaken sleeping, dead sinners, and bring them to the light of Christ.

#### Ephesians 5:15

Ver. 15. *See then that ye walk circumspectly;* being called to reprove the evil conversation of others, see that ye walk exactly and accurately yourselves, avoiding extremes and keeping close to the rule. See the same word rendered *diligently*, Mt 2:8, and *perfectly*, 1Th 5:2.

*Not as fools;* who are destitute of spiritual wisdom, and through carelessness fall into sin or error, though in the light of the gospel.

*But as wise;* those that are taught of God, and are endued with wisdom from above.

#### Ephesians 5:16

Ver. 16. *Redeeming the time;* or, buying the opportunity: a metaphor taken from merchants, that diligently observe the time for buying and selling, and easily part with their pleasure for gain; q.d. Deny yourselves in your ease, pleasure, &c. to gain an opportunity of doing good.

*Because the days are evil;* either wicked, by reason of the wickedness of those that live in them, or troublesome, full of difficulties and dangers, by

reason of men's hatred of you, and so either depriving you of the opportunity of doing good, or exposing you to hazards for doing it.

### Ephesians 5:17

Ver. 17. *Understanding*, diligently considering, *what the will of the Lord is*, in the understanding of which your chief wisdom consists.

### Ephesians 5:18

Ver. 18. *Wherein*, in which drunkenness, *is excess*; profuseness, lasciviousness, and all manner of lewdness, as the effects of drunkenness, Pr 23:29, &c.

*But be filled with the Spirit*; the Holy Spirit, often compared to water; or the joy of the Spirit, in opposition to being filled with wine, Ac 2:13, and that carnal mirth which is caused by it: q.d. Be not satisfied with a little of the Spirit, but seek for a greater measure, so as to be filled with the Spirit. See Ps 36:8 Joh 3:34 Joh 4:14.

### Ephesians 5:19

Ver. 19. *Speaking*, &c.; in opposition to the vain chaff and lewd talkativeness of drunkards over their cups.

*To yourselves*; Gr. in yourselves, i.e. among yourselves, both in church assemblies and families.

*In psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs*; under these names he comprehends all manner of singing to mutual edification and God's glory. The particular distinction of them is uncertain, but most take *psalms* to be such as anciently were sung with musical instruments; *hymns*, such as contained only matter of praise; *spiritual songs*, such as were of various matter, doctrinal, prophetic, historical, &c.: see on Col 3:16.

*Singing and making melody in your heart*; not only with your voice, but

with inward affection, contrary to the guise of hypocrites.

*To the Lord;* to the glory of God, not for the pleasure of the sense, or for gain, &c.

### Ephesians 5:20

Ver. 20. *Giving thanks always:* God still by fresh mercies gives fresh occasion for thanksgiving, and we must accordingly continue our thanksgiving through the whole course of our lives without weariness.

*For all things;* all sorts of mercies, among which afflictions may be reckoned, as working for good to them that love God, Ro 8:28.

*Unto God and the Father;* i.e. unto God even the Father, the Fountain of all our good.

*In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;* in whose name, and by whose merit, all good things are given to us, and by whom we offer up all our prayers, and praises, and spiritual services, that they may be accepted of God.

### Ephesians 5:21

Ver. 21. *Submitting yourselves one to another,* viz. to those to whom ye ought to be subject in natural, civil, or church relations.

*In the fear of God;* either for fear of offending God, the Author of all power, who commands this subjection; or so far as is consistent with the fear of God, and so in those things which are not forbidden of him.

### Ephesians 5:22

Ver. 22. *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands;* yielding honour and obedience to them.

*As unto the Lord;* for the Lord's sake who hath commanded it, so that ye cannot be subject to him without being subject to them: see 1Ti 2:12.

### Ephesians 5:23

Ver. 23. *For the husband is the head of the wife;* superior to her by God's ordination in authority and dignity, as the head in the natural body, being the seat of reason, and the fountain of sense and motion, is more excellent than the rest of the body.

*Even as Christ is the head of the church:* see Eph 1:22 Col 1:18. The particle *as* notes not equality, but likeness, Christ being the Head of the church in a more excellent way than the husband is of the wife.

*And he is the saviour of the body;* i.e. Christ is the Saviour of his church, implying that so likewise the husband is given to the wife to be a saviour to her, in maintaining, protecting, and defending her; and therefore the wife, if she regard her own good, should not grudge to be subject to him.

### Ephesians 5:24

Ver. 24. *As the church is subject to Christ,* viz. with cheerfulness, chastity, humility, obedience, &c.

*So let the wives be to their own husbands;* in imitation of the church's subjection to Christ, as a pattern of their subjection to their husbands.

*In every thing;* understand, to which the authority of the husband extends itself.

### Ephesians 5:25

Ver. 25. *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church,* viz. with a sincere, pure, ardent, and constant affection. As they resemble Christ in the honour they have of being the heads of their wives, so they must likewise in performing the duty of loving them, under which all

matrimonial duties are comprehended.

*And gave himself for it;* whereby he testified the greatness of his love.

### Ephesians 5:26

Ver. 26. *That he might sanctify;* purify from its filth, and consecrate unto God: implying the whole translation of it out of a state of sin and misery into a state of grace and life, consisting in the remission of sin, and renovation of nature.

*And cleanse it;* or, cleansing it, importing the means whereby he works the former effect.

*With the washing of water,* viz. in baptism, in which the external washing represents seals, and exhibits the internal cleansing from both the guilt and defilement of sin by the blood of Christ, Heb 9:14 Re 1:5.

*By the word;* the word of the gospel, especially the promise of free justification and sanctification by Christ, which received by faith is a means of this sanctification, and without which the external washing is ineffectual; the sign, without the word whereof it is a seal, being no sacrament.

### Ephesians 5:27

Ver. 27. *That he might present it to himself;* hereafter in heaven; that the whole church of the elect may be present with him, 2Co 5:6,8 1Th 4:17.

*A glorious church;* perfect in knowledge and holiness, shining with a heavenly glory, and fully conformed to himself, 1Joh 3:2.

*Not having spot;* spot of sin, in allusion to spots in garments.

*Or wrinkle;* any relic of old Adam, in allusion to wrinkles in the body, which are signs of old age, and imply deformity.

*Or any such thing, viz. which is contrary to the beauty of the church, and might make her unpleasing to Christ her Husband.*

*Without blemish; without any fault to be found in her. He seems to allude to the sacrifices, which were to be without blemish, Le 1:3: see So 4:7.*

### Ephesians 5:28

Ver. 28. *So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies; with the same kind of love wherewith they love their own bodies. The woman at first was taken out of the man, and on that account the wife may be said to be a part of her husband.*

*He that loveth his wife loveth himself; either this explains the former, and himself here is the same as their own bodies before; or it adds to it, and is as much as, his own person, the wife being another self, one flesh, the same person (in a civil sense) with her husband.*

### Ephesians 5:29

Ver. 29. *No man; none in his right senses; or no man hates his flesh absolutely, but the diseases or miseries of it.*

*His own flesh; his body.*

*Nourisheth and cherisheth it; feeds and clothes it, and supplies it with things necessary for it.*

*Even as the Lord the church, which he furnisheth with all things needful to salvation.*

### Ephesians 5:30

Ver. 30. *We are members of his body; his mystical body.*

*Of his flesh, and of his bones; as Eve was of Adam's, Ge 2:23; only that*

was in a carnal way, this in a spiritual, as by the communication of Christ's flesh and blood to us by the Spirit we are united to him, and members of him.

### Ephesians 5:31

Ver. 31. *For this cause;* because the woman was formed of the flesh and bones of the man. He refers to Adam's words, Ge 2:24.

*Shall a man leave his father and mother;* as to cohabitation, and domestic conversation; or, let a man rather leave his father and mother than not cleave to his wife. The apostle doth not cancel the obligations of other relations, but prefers this before them.

*They two shall be one flesh;* i.e. one body, or one man, viz. by the marriage bond, whereby each hath power over the other's body, 1Co 7:4.

### Ephesians 5:32

Ver. 32. *This is a great mystery;* either, this that was spoken before of a marriage union between Christ and the church, and its being of his flesh and of his bones, is a great mystery, and so in the latter part of the verse the apostle explains himself. Or, this that was said of the conjunction of Adam and Eve was a great mystery, (i.e. a great secret in religion), as being a type of Christ's marriage with his church; though not an instituted type appointed by God to signify this, yet a kind of natural type, as having a resemblance to it.

### Ephesians 5:33

Ver. 33. *Nevertheless;* q.d. Setting aside this mystery; or, to return to my former exhortation.

*Love his wife even as himself;* as her that is one flesh with him.

*Reverence her husband;* or fear, yet not with a servile, but ingenuous fear,

and such as proceeds from love.

## Ephesians 6:1

### Chapter Summary

Eph 6:1-3 The relative duties of children,

Eph 6:4 and parents,

Eph 6:5-8 of servants,

Eph 6:9 and masters.

Eph 6:10-17 Paul exhorteth the brethren to resist spiritual enemies by putting on the whole armour of God,

Eph 6:18-20 and by perseverance in prayer, which he requireth for all saints, and particularly for himself, that he might preach the gospel with due boldness.

Eph 6:21,22 He commendeth Tychicus,

Eph 6:23,24 and concludeth with good wishes to all sincere Christians.

Ver. 1. *Obey your parents;* with inward reverence and promptness, as well as in the outward act.

*In the Lord;* either, because the Lord commands it; or, in all things agreeable to his will: see Eph 5:21 Ac 5:29.

*For this is right,* or just, every way so, by the law of nature, of nations, and of God.

## Ephesians 6:2

Ver. 2. i.e. A special promise annexed to the particular duty commanded. There being promises added to only two commandments, viz. the second and this fifth; that which is annexed to the second commandment is a general one, and which relates to the whole law, but this a special one, and which respects this commandment in particular.



### Ephesians 6:3

Ver. 3. *That thou mayest live long and happily.* This promise is still fulfilled to believers, either in the thing itself here promised, or in a better way, God's giving them eternal life.

### Ephesians 6:4

Ver. 4. *Provoke not your children to wrath;* viz. by unreasonable severity, moroseness, unrighteous commands, &c.

*But bring them up in the nurture;* or correction, as the word signifies, Heb 12:6-8.

*And admonition;* this denotes the end of the former; instruction in their duty must be, as well as correction to drive them to it.

*Of the Lord;* the Lord Jesus Christ; and so it is either that admonition which is commanded by him, or whereby they are brought to be acquainted with him.

### Ephesians 6:5

Ver. 5. *Servants;* these servants were generally slaves: Christian liberty doth not take away civil servitude.

*Be obedient to them that are your masters;* whether good or bad, as 1Pe 2:18, is expressly said.

*According to the flesh;* as to your outward state, not as to your souls and consciences.

*With fear and trembling;* either with reverence and fear of offending them, and being punished by them, see Ro 13:4; or rather, with humility, as appears by Ps 2:11 1Co 2:3 2Co 7:15 Php 2:12: compare Ro 11:20.

*In singleness of your heart;* sincerity, and without guile.

*As unto Christ, who hath commanded this obedience, and whom ye obey in yielding it to your masters.*

Ephesians 6:6

Ver. 6. *Not with eyeservice;* not merely having respect to your masters' presence, and looking upon you in your work.

*As men-pleasers;* such as make it their only business to please their masters, right or wrong, and ingratiate themselves with them, though by offending God.

*But as the servants of Christ;* as becomes the servants of Christ, or as those that are the servants of Christ, and seek to please him.

*Doing the will of God;* performing obedience to your masters not barely as their will, but God's will, who requires it, as Eph 6:5.

Ephesians 6:7

Ver. 7. *With good will doing service;* not grudgingly or as of constraint, but freely and cheerfully.

*As to the Lord, and not to men;* not only regarding men your masters, but Christ your great Master. That which is done for the worst masters, and in the hardest things, is service done to Christ, when out of love to him servants bear their masters' folly or cruelty.

Ephesians 6:8

Ver. 8. *Whatsoever good thing any man doeth;* viz. as the servant of Christ and as unto the Lord.

*The same shall he receive of the Lord;* the reward of the same, by a metonymy.

*Whether he be bond or free:* Christ regards not those differences of men at the present, nor will in the day of judgment, 1Co 7:22 12:13 Ga 3:28 Col 3:11.

### Ephesians 6:9

Ver. 9. *And, ye masters, do the same things unto them;* not the same in special, which belong only to servants, but in general, which concern you no less than them, viz. do your duty to them with good will, with an eye to God and Christ, &c.; or rather, do your duty mutually to them, according to your condition and calling, Col 4:1.

*Forbearing threatening;* or rather, (as in the margin), moderating, or remitting; i.e. do not carry yourselves angrily to them, (which appears in vehement and frequent threatenings), when ye may otherwise maintain your authority over them.

*Knowing that your Master also is in heaven;* and therefore too strong for you, though you may be too hard for your servants.

*Neither is there respect of persons with him;* he is just as well as powerful, and will neither spare you because you are masters, nor punish them because they are servants: see Ac 10:34 Ga 2:6 Col 3:25.

### Ephesians 6:10

Ver. 10. *Be strong;* or, strengthen yourselves; i.e. be courageous, and constant in the practice of your duty, against the devil and all his assaults.

*In the Lord:* not in yourselves, but in the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom your strength lies, and from whom by faith you may obtain it: see Php 4:13 2Ti 2:1.

*And in the power of his might;* or mighty power, see Eph 1:19: q.d. Though your own strength be but weakness, yet Christ's power is mighty, and he can communicate enough to you.

### Ephesians 6:11

Ver. 11. *Put on the whole armour;* get yourselves furnished with every grace, that none be wanting in you, no part naked and exposed to your enemies.

*Of God;* i.e. not carnal, but spiritual, and given by God: see 2Co 10:3,4 1Th 5:8.

*That ye may be able to stand;* either to fight, or rather to overcome. He that loses the victory is said to fall; he that gains it, to stand: see Ps 89:43.

*Against the wiles of the devil:* the devil useth arts and stratagems, as well as force and violence, and therefore, if any part of your spiritual armour be wanting, he will assault you where he finds you weakest.

### Ephesians 6:12

Ver. 12. *We wrestle not;* not only, or not principally.

*Against flesh and blood;* men, consisting of flesh and blood, Mt 16:17 Ga 1:16.

*But against principalities, against powers;* devils, Col 2:15: see Eph 1:21.

*Against the rulers of the darkness of this world;* either that rule in the dark air, where God permits them to be for the punishment of men; see Eph 2:2: or rather, that rule in the dark places of the earth, the dark minds of men, and have their rule over them by reason of the darkness that is in them; in which respect the devil is called *the god of this world*, 2Co 4:4, and *the prince* of it, Joh 14:30. So that the dark world here seems to be opposed to *children of light*, Eph 5:8.

*Against spiritual wickedness;* either wicked spirits, or, emphatically, spiritual wickednesses, for wickednesses of the highest kind; implying the intenseness of wickedness in those angelical substances, which are so

much the more wicked, by how much the more excellent in themselves their natures are.

*In high places;* or heavenly, taking heaven for the whole *expansum*, or spreading out of the air, between the earth and the stars, the air being the place from whence the devils assault us, as Eph 2:2. Or rather, *in* for about heavenly places or things, in the same sense as the word rendered heavenly is taken four times before in this Epistle, Eph 1:3,20 2:6 3:10; being in none of them taken for the air; and then the sense must be, that we wrestle about heavenly places or things, not with flesh and blood, but with principalities, with powers, &c.

*Objection.* The Greek preposition will not bear this construction.

*Answer.* Let Chrysostom and other Greeks answer for that. They understood their language best, and they give this interpretation.

### Ephesians 6:13

Ver. 13. *In the evil day;* times of temptation, and Satan's greatest rage: see Eph 5:16.

*Having done all;* all that belongs to good soldiers of Jesus Christ, all that we can do being little enough to secure our standing.

*To stand;* as conquerors do that keep the field, not being beaten down, nor giving way.

### Ephesians 6:14

Ver. 14. *Stand therefore:* standing here (in a different sense from what it was taken in before) seems to imply watchfulness, readiness for the combat, and keeping our places, both as to our general and particular callings: if soldiers leave their ranks they endanger themselves.

*Having your loins girt about with truth:* having exhorted to put on the whole armour of God, he descends to the particulars of it, both defensive

and offensive. We need not be over curious in inquiring into the reason of the names here given to the several parts of a Christian's armour, and the analogy between them and corporal arms, the apostle using these terms promiscuously, 1Th 5:8, and designing only to show that what bodily arms are to soldiers, that these spiritual arms might be to Christians; yet some reason may be given of these denominations. He begins with the furniture for the loins, the seat of strength, and alludes to the belt or military girdle, which was both for ornament and strength; and so is *truth*, understood either of the truth of doctrine, or rather, (because that comes in afterward under the title of the sword of the Spirit), of soundness, and sincerity of heart, than which nothing doth more beautify or adorn a Christian. He alludes to Isa 59:17: see 2Co 1:12 1Ti 1:5,19.

*And having on the breastplate of righteousness;* righteousness of conversation, consisting both in a resolvedness for good, and repentance for evil done, which is as a breastplate (that piece of armour which covers the whole breast and belly) to a Christian; that resolvedness against sin fencing him against temptation, and the conscience of well-doing against the accusations of men and devils: see 1Co 4:3,4 1Jo 3:7.

#### Ephesians 6:15

Ver. 15. *Your feet shod;* in allusion to the greaves or military shoes with which soldiers covered their feet and legs. A Christian's way lies through rough places, through briers and thorns, and therefore he needs this piece of armour. He must be prepared to hold the faith, and confess Christ in the most difficult times.

*With the preparation of the gospel of peace;* with that furniture which the gospel affords him, which being a *gospel of peace*, and bringing the glad tidings of reconciliation to God by Christ, prepares men best to undergo the troubles of the world: see Joh 16:33.

#### Ephesians 6:16

Ver. 16. *Above all;* chiefly, Col 3:14; this he sets, as the principal part of the Christian armour, against the greatest temptations, fiery darts, 1Pe

5:8,9 1Jo 5:4.

*Taking the shield of faith:* faith, as receiving Christ and the benefits of redemption, is compared to a shield, (under which soldiers were wont to shelter themselves against their enemies' darts), as being a sort of universal defence covering the whole man, and guarding even the other parts of our spiritual armour.

*Fiery darts;* it seems to be an allusion to the poisoned darts some barbarous nations were wont to use, which inflamed the bodies they hit. By them he means all those violent temptations which inflame men's lusts. These fiery darts of temptations faith is said to *quench*, when, by the help of grace obtained of Christ, it overcomes them.

*Of the wicked;* the devil, Mt 13:19.

Ephesians 6:17

Ver. 17. *Take the helmet of salvation: salvation, for the hope of salvation, 1Th 5:8.* This follows faith, and is of kin to it. Soldiers dare not fight without their helmet: despair, to which the devil tempts us, makes us quit our combat; whereas hope of salvation makes us lift up our heads in the midst of temptations and afflictions. This likewise alludes to Isa 59:17.

*The sword of the Spirit;* either the spiritual sword, the war being spiritual, and the enemy spiritual, or rather the sword which the Spirit of God furnisheth us with, and makes effectual in our hands.

*Which is the word of God;* the doctrine of God in the Scripture, called a *two-edged sword*, Re 1:16 2:12; which enters into the soul, and divides between the most inward affections, Heb 4:12, and cuts the sinews of the strongest temptations, Mt 4:4,7,10; and conquers the devil, while it rescues sinners from under his power. This relates to Isa 49:2.

Ephesians 6:18

Ver. 18. *Praying always;* i.e. in every opportunity, so often as our own or

others' necessities call us to it, 1Th 5:17.

*With all prayer and supplication;* prayer, when opposed to supplication, seems to signify petitioning for good things, and supplication the deprecating of evil, 1Ti 2:1.

*In the Spirit;* either our own spirit, with which we pray, so as not to draw nigh to God with our mouth only, as Isa 29:13; or rather, the Holy Spirit of God, by whose assistance we pray, Ro 8:26,27 Jude 1:20.

*Watching thereunto;* to prayer, in opposition to sloth and security: see Mt 26:41 Col 4:2 1Pe 4:7.

*With all perseverance;* constancy and continuance in prayer in every condition, adverse as well as prosperous, though prayer be not presently answered, Lu 18:1.

*And supplication for all saints;* not only for ourselves, but for our brethren in the world, none being in so good a condition but they may need our prayers.

### Ephesians 6:19

Ver. 19. *Utterance,* or speech, viz. both the things I am to speak, and the faculty of speaking as becomes the matter I deliver.

*That I may open my mouth;* or, in or unto the opening of my mouth, i.e. full and free profession of the truth, without shame or fear.

*Boldly;* either, freely and confidently, the same as before in other words; or, openly and plainly, in opposition to speaking closely and in secret, Mr 8:32 Joh 11:14; and so it may have respect to the removing of his bonds, which were the present impediment of his so speaking.

### Ephesians 6:20

Ver. 20. *For which I am an ambassador in bonds;* for which gospel I still



continue, though a prisoner, in the embassy committed to me by Christ.

*That therein I may speak boldly;* this may imply not only free speaking, but free acting in all things whereby the gospel may be propagated.

### Ephesians 6:21

Ver. 21. *But that ye also,* as well as other churches, *may know my affairs,* how I am used by the Romans in my bonds.

*How I do,* or rather, what I do, i.e. how I behave myself: see Ac 28:30,31.

*Faithful minister:* *minister* is here taken in a large sense, for any that labour in the gospel, such as were not only ordinary pastors, but evangelists and apostles themselves.

### Ephesians 6:22

Ver. 22. That ye might not *faint at my tribulations,* Eph 3:13. It might be a comfort to them to hear that Paul was well used, (setting aside his bonds), and had liberty to preach to those that came to him.

### Ephesians 6:23

Ver. 23. He prays for their continuance and increase in these graces, which already were begun in them.

### Ephesians 6:24

Ver. 24. This is more extensive than the former, he prays here for all true believers every where.

*In sincerity;* or, with incorruption, i.e. so as that nothing can draw them off from the love of Christ, and so it implies constancy as well as sincerity.

Written from Rome unto the Ephesians by Tychicus.

## Philippians 1:1

### THE ARGUMENT

Paul, being called of the Lord to preach the gospel in Macedonia, having touched at Neapolis of Greece, came to Philippi, the first city, in regard of its situation, within that part of Macedonia, on his way from *Samothracia* (Ac 16:11,12) into that country, through Amphipolis and Apollonia, to Thessalonica. Appian describes this Philippi to be seated on a little hill near the foot of the Pangæan mountain, in old time called Crenides, from the fountains and gold mines adjoining, and Datus or Dathus, from the treasure, agreeing with the island Thasus near it; afterwards enlarged and fortified by Philip king of Macedon, who therefore gave it the name of Philippi, as a frontier town within his dominions on the confines of Thracia. Yet afterwards it fell into the hands of the Romans, and became memorable for the victory which Augustus and Antony obtained there over Brutus and Cassius; and in Paul's time it was a *colony*, Ac 16:12,21. But there is no evidence from Scripture, or the most authentic civil history, that it was (as a learned man would have it) the metropolis of Macedonia when this Epistle was written to it. For it doth not appear that it had so much as a proconsul, or deputy, (as in some other colonies of Macedonia), Ac 16:12, but rather that the magistrates and military officers (Ac 16:20,22,35,36,38) show themselves to be of an under city, which (some affirm) did depend on the great mother city Thessalonica, in a civil sense, and some centuries after (say others) in an ecclesiastical. However, it received Paul, who planted the gospel here; who now being prisoner at Rome, (probably the first, not second time), Php 1:7,13,14,16, with 2Ti 4:6, and having received by *Epaphroditus*, their messenger, Php 2:25, their acceptable and liberal present, Php 4:18, and understood from him their constancy in the doctrine they had received, (though it seems some affecting pre-eminencies did trouble them), he doth most pathetically, as full of paternal affections towards them his dear children, move them to persevere in faith and godliness; and not to be at all discouraged by his present sufferings, but to live as becomes the gospel, in humility and unity; intimating his tender love and care of them in designing to send Timothy to them, and then to come and visit them; whom he cautions to beware of seducers, who might else pervert them in mingling the law and gospel: whereupon he quickens them to a heavenly conversation in the exercise of several graces; and, expressing his thankfulness for their repeated bounty, concludes with his

salutations and apostolical blessing.

### Chapter Summary

Php 1:1,2 Paul saluteth the Philippians,  
Php 1:3-7 and testifieth his thankfulness to God for  
their uninterrupted fellowship in the gospel,  
Php 1:8 his affection for them,  
Php 1:9-11 and prayers for their spiritual  
improvement.  
Php 1:12-20 He informeth them that his bonds at Rome  
had turned out to the advancement of the gospel: which  
many were thereby induced to preach, though with  
different views,  
Php 1:21-24 that, considering how serviceable his life  
might be to the cause of Christ, though for himself it  
were happier to die, he was doubtful in his choice,  
Php 1:25,26 but that he knew he should soon be at  
liberty to visit them again for their comfort,  
Php 1:25-30 He exhorteth them to walk worthy of their  
profession, and to be steady and unanimous in the  
faith, for which they had already been fellow sufferers  
with him.

Ver. 1. Paul and Timotheus; i.e. the author and approver, intimating the  
good agreement between Paul and Timothy, whom they well knew, to gain  
their fuller assent to what should be written, Mt 18:16: see 1Co 1:1 2Co  
1:1.

*The servants of Jesus Christ;* in a special manner being wholly and  
perpetually dedicated to his more immediate service in the ministry of  
reconciliation, Ac 13:2 Ro 1:1 1Co 4:1 2Co 5:18 Ga 1:1 Jas 1:1.

*To all the saints in Christ Jesus;* i.e. all the community of church  
members at Philippi, called out of the world to Christ, sanctified,  
separated, and dedicated to him, by a credible profession of faith in him  
and obedience to him, 1Co 1:2 Eph 1:1 Col 1:2; the apostle now being  
well persuaded of their perseverance, Php 1:6,7.

*With the bishops and deacons:* from the Syriac version it is rendered

presbyters and ministers. And there appears no cogent reason why we should not adhere to the exposition of ancient and modern interpreters, who understand the apostle writing in the plural number, particularly, to the church and her officers living in this city, as meaning the two orders of ordinary standing officers, which are appointed for the church, and not the church for the officers. By the former of which are meant such pastors and teachers as did agree in name, office, and power with the bishops during the apostles' times, as they collect from several other scriptures besides this, compared together, viz. Ac 20:17,20,25,28, with Ac 11:30 1Co 4:1 12:28 1Th 5:12,13 1Ti 3:1-8 5:17 Tit 1:5,7 Heb 13:17 Jas 5:14 1Pe 5:1,3 3Jo 1:1,9: these, whether bishops or elders, having the oversight, rule, guidance, feeding of the people, preaching of the word, and administration of the sacraments or mystical ordinances of the gospel, committed to them in common. By the latter, those to whom the special care was committed for serving of tables, the Lord's table and the poor's, together with a receiving and orderly disposing and distributing the collected alms and other goods of the church given to pious uses, according to their own discretion, taking advice of the pastors, for the support and benefit of the poor members of the church who needed as to this temporal life, to orphans, widows, yea, and strangers, especially of the household of faith, that their bodily necessities might be supplied, Ac 6:2, &c. with Ro 12:7,8 Ro 15:25-27 16:1 1Co 12:28 2Co 9:1,2,12 1Ti 3:8, with 1Pe 4:11 Ga 6:10,11 Php 2:1,25,30, with Php 4:18 Jude 1:12. "But two learned doctors amongst us have opposed this and made it difficult, the one by restraining the word *bishops* to diocesans, and the other by enlarging the word *deacons* to note their presbyters. He would have no such order of presbyters as now in the apostles' days; this would have deacons then to be only temporary, not standing officers in the church; and so they agree not. The former finding Clement and Polycarp agreed with the apostle here, as to two distinct orders of bishops and deacons, going upon an unproved supposition that Philippi was then a metropolis, he would, without any satisfactory evidence to one that doubted, infer the bishops here were diocesans; however, the forementioned scriptures compared, all prove the words *bishop* and *elder* in the apostles' days, to be used promiscuously, only the word elders, or presbyters, more frequently than that of bishops; conceiving that the office of presbyters was not in use till after-ages, though he assigns not the time how and when it came in. So that in effect he would have Philippi to be a mother church (that then had several daughter churches) in her infancy. Whereas the apostle writes to those who

were church officers in that city, yet he would have them none of that order which we now call presbyters; thinking, whatever the apostle writes of laying on the hands of the presbytery, there were then no presbyters ordained in the church: which is a singular opinion, of holding all the places in the New Testament where presbyters are named, precisely to intend diocesan bishops in distinction from them who are only deacons, allowing the office of deacons, and the continuance of it, to be appointed therein, when that of elders (acknowledged to be superior) is not. But if, according to this novel tenet, there were not then preaching presbyters, that were not metropolitans or diocesans, how could diocesans have presbyters under them? And if they had none, what should denominate them properly diocesans? When it seems to be of the formal reason of a diocesan, to be chosen out of presbyters, or to have them to govern. And if the diocesan bishops were then as the apostles, who must the pastors and teachers be? 1Co 12:28,29 Eph 4:11,12. Exhorting, teaching, ruling were then present offices, which the apostles *ordained in every church*, Ac 14:23. Cenchrea was no diocess or metropolis, neither was Aquila's and Priscilla's house, Ro 16:3,4 1Co 16:19, yet are said to be *churches*, in the plural number, 1Co 14:33,34. If metropolitanical or diocesan, how hath not the Scripture the name or thing? This appears not to be agreeable to the apostle's way who writes particularly to churches in cities, towns, and countries, as to the Hebrews. He distinguisheth Thessalonica, in directions from Macedonia and Achaia, 1Th 1:7,8; Colosse and Laodicea, Col 4:13. And as there were bishops, plural, in this city of Philippi, so more doing the office in Thessalonica. 1Th 5:12, which was in Macedonia too. And would it not look oddly: Ye Christians of Macedonia are examples to all the Christians of Macedonia? In Colosse were more bishops or presbyters, because there is mention made of Epaphras and Archippus, Col 4:12,17. And would it not appear strange, when they were charged, upon persons being sick, to send for the elders of the church, to conclude the intent of the injunction was to send for all the diocesans of the metropolis? Jas 5:14. If so he would likely have enjoined them to have called the elders of the churches, not of the *church*, of which, in the singular, at Jerusalem Paul and Barnabas were received, *and of the apostles and elders*, Ac 15:4, who were all present at Jerusalem, Ac 21:18, which, under the Roman power, was not the metropolis of Palestine, but Caesarea was chief. The latter, contradictory to the former doctor, and to the office of the Church of England for ordaining of deacons, would have the term *deacons* to note the order of presbyters, looking upon deacons only as temporary and

occasional trustees, whose office Paul in his Epistle did not so much as hint, thinking it unreasonable by *deacon* in those Epistles to understand any other office than that of presbyters as now used. Whereas the word *deacons* being analogous and put absolutely here, in contradistinction to *bishops*, should, according to right reason, be expounded in the most famous and distinctive signification, wherein, no doubt, Luke, a good Grecian, and Paul's companion at Philippi, used it in the Acts, (Ac 6:3,4, &c.), written after this Epistle; unto which special import we should rather understand Paul using it here, for those who were not mere occasional and prudential temporary officers, but such as were to abide in the church: wherein, upon the multiplying of disciples, the bodily necessities of the poor saints, always with us, Joh 12:8, did require such who should have the peculiar care of these committed to them, Ac 20:34,35. We find the apostle in his Epistles evidently enough appointing and describing such a special ministry, yea, and giving directions about it as a distinct branch from prophecy and teaching, if we compare places, Ro 12:6-8, with Ro 15:26,27 16:1 2Co 8:19 9:1,2,12; and what is said in this Epistle, Php 2:25,30 4:18; answerable to Luke's history of the Acts, and to what is written by Peter, 1Pe 4:11; taking in what Paul wrote to Timothy about this office, in distinction from his who was to be apt to teach, that he should be grave, temperate, giving proof of freedom from covetousness, of conversation blameless, having a faithful wife, and governing his family (that he may be hospitable) orderly, 1Ti 3:8-13, qualified to distribute, as in the texts forementioned, &c. The Church of England, in her ordination, hath reference to this special office, when yet it calls deacons, ministers; declaring there, 'It appertains to the deacon's office to assist the presbyter in distribution of the elements, gladly and willingly to search for the poor, sick, and impotent, that they may be relieved. Praying that they may be modest, humble, and constant in their ministration.'

### Philippians 1:2

Ver. 2. The evangelical salutation, as Ro 1:7 Eph 1:2 2Pe 1:2; praying for the free and undeserved favour of God the Father to them, as the fountain, Jas 1:17 together with all inward and outward blessings, flowing thence through Christ the procurer of them.

### Philippians 1:3

Ver. 3. As in most of his Epistles, (viz. Ro 1:8 1Co 1:4 2Co 1:3 Eph 1:3 Col 1:3 1Th 1:2 2Th 1:3 2Ti 1:3), he begins with thanks to God; and here, *my God*, i.e. *whose I am, and whom I serve in the gospel of his Son*, Ac 27:23, with Ro 1:9, whom the Jews and Gentiles do not so acknowledge.

*Upon every remembrance of you;* intimating that he ever bore them upon his heart to God with delight.

### Philippians 1:4

Ver. 4. As in praising of God, the Author of all that grace they had received, in every solemn prayer, so in continuing his fervent and assiduous requests unto God always, 1Th 5:17, for them all: the term *all* being used three times emphatically: compare Lu 2:37 Ro 1:9.

### Philippians 1:5

Ver. 5. Your being joined with us and other Christians in the communion of Christ, and glad tidings of salvation by him, 1Co 10:16,17 1Pe 4:13 1Jo 1:3,7; evidenced by the communication of your bounty, Ga 6:6 Heb 13:16; your stedfastness and perseverance in all Christian duties from the first time of your receiving the gospel.

### Philippians 1:6

Ver. 6. *Being confident of this very thing;* i.e. having thanked God for what he had done and did for them, he expresseth his firm persuasion and charitable hope of their perseverance for the future.

*That he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it;* not from any thing in themselves more than others, but because God the Father, (who is not weary of well-doing), having begun the work of faith in them Php 2:13, with Joh 6:29, who else were dead in sins, as the Ephesians, Eph 2:1, he would preserve and carry on that internal and spiritual work in the



fruits of real Christians, and not leave it imperfect, Ps 138:8 Isa 64:8; but would make it perfect, or perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle them in it, those words being of the same import in Scripture with *perform it*, connoting the difficulty of it.

*Until the day of Jesus Christ*; i.e. either until the day of their death, when the spirits of just men are made perfect, and Christ appears to their particular judgment, Heb 12:23, not as being perfect while here in this state, Php 3:12; or rather, until the day of Christ, or latter day, at judgment, 1Co 1:8 1Th 4:15; when they shall be acknowledged to be blameless, to the glory of Christ, who hath carried them through all, and fulfilled the work of faith in them, and glorified them, 2Th 1:11, and who are his glory, 2Co 8:23.

### Philippians 1:7

Ver. 7. *Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all*; i.e. consonant to the law of equity and charity, Ac 4:19 1Co 13:7 Col 4:1, with 2Pe 1:13. It behoves me to pass this judgment on you all, upon good grounds.

*Because I have you in my heart*; not barely in that he had them as it were engraved upon his heart, 2Co 3:2,3 7:3; for he could live and die with them, whom he did continually present unto God (as before).

*Inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace*; but in that (for which they had gotten so much of his cordial affection) they were co-partners with him in the like precious faith, 2Pe 1:1; and holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, Heb 3:1; as children of light, 1Th 5:5; walking in faith and love, 2Th 1:3; maintaining the communion of saints, in showing the reality of the same grace with him, in that, as Php 1:29, it was given to them *in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake*. Which he reckoned they did in compassionately and seasonably supporting and relieving of him in his imprisonment, whereby the gospel was defended, and what he had preached of it was confirmed, by his becoming a real patron of it, in holding fast the profession and ratifying the confession of his faith, in glorying that he was counted worthy to suffer them for the name of Christ, Ac 5:41 1Pe 4:15,16;

wherein they did by all honest means succour him, and showed themselves companions with him, Php 4:14 Heb 10:33.

### Philippians 1:8

Ver. 8. Confirming what he had before written, he appeals to God in the heavens, who searcheth the heart and trieth the reins, as in some other Epistles, Ro 1:9 2Co 1:23, with 2Co 11:31 Ga 1:20 1Th 2:5,10; and as Job, Job 16:19; by making a solemn protestation, or oath, to put the matter out of doubt, Heb 6:16, and giving them assurance, (as he lawfully might in this way for God's glory, and their good, De 6:13), of the sincerity and intensesness of his hearty affections towards every one of them, Php 2:26 4:1 with 2Co 9:14.

*In the bowels of Jesus Christ;* not out of any carnal, selfish, or worldly respects; but a really Christian, spiritual, and tender love, seated in the inward parts of this sanctified apostle, Jer 31:33; by the same Spirit that united him unto Christ, who loves his spouse with no common love, but is the spring and procurer, and great exemplar, of that affectionate Christian love, which, like him, they are to exert from the very root of their hearts, purely, unfeignedly, and fervently, *without dissimulation*, Ro 12:9 1Pe 1:22; imitating God and Christ, (Lu 1:78), as Paul here, in the highest degree of dearest affection, did love the Philippians, and elsewhere the Thessalonians, 1Th 2:7,8,11.

### Philippians 1:9

Ver. 9. *And this I pray:* having praised God for their attainments, he returns, (as Php 1:4), in token of his love, to his great petition for them.

*That your love may abound;* viz. that their love both to God and man, showed in their bounty to him, might, as a rising stream from its springing fountain, yet further flow out, and more abundantly communicate itself in all Christian offices, and not abate, (as it seems it afterwards did among the Ephesians, Re 2:4), as our Saviour foretold it would (to in some, Mt 24:12, (see 2Ti 1:13 2Ti 4:10), but continue increasing to the end, 1Th 3:12.

*Yet more and more in knowledge;* being founded on a sound and *saving understanding* of the things of God, and ourselves, Joh 17:3 Ro 3:20 Eph 1:17, with Eph 4:13 2Pe 3:18; and an acknowledgment *of the truth which is after godliness*, Tit 1:1.

*And in all judgment;* in the practical judgment, or internal sense, and particular experience, taste, and feeling the testimony of the Spirit in the heart concerning the grace of God, and adoption, Ro 5:1,5 8:16,17 14:17; when there is not only a right notion in the head, but a true sense and savour of spiritual things in the heart, Heb 5:14; which is when knowledge is not only an empty cloud in the air, but becomes effectual by falling down in a kindly shower upon the heart, warmed with the love of God, and the virtue of Christ's resurrection, as he after gives his own experience, Php 3:10, like David's, Ps 34:8.

### Philippians 1:10

Ver. 10. i.e. To the ends he subjoins, namely, *that ye may approve things that are excellent*; that upon a due expense of circumstances in a judicious trial, upon rightly discerning the differences of things not obvious to every eye, so as to choose and approve those things that are really to be preferred, being the best, Ro 2:18 1Th 5:21 surpassing all desirable things besides, Eph 3:19, as being most acceptable unto God, Ro 12:2.

*That ye may be sincere;* and be upright, Pr 11:20. It is all emphatical word in the original here, being borrowed either from such things as are tried by being held up at the beams of the sun to see What faults or flaws are in them, whether without fraud, or else from such as are clarified by the heat of the sun; and notes here, that Paul would have them to be uncorrupt and impartial in heart and life, in faith and manners; free from prevailing corruptions, of *pure minds*, 2Pe 3:1; purged from the old leaven, 1Co 5:6-8; not suffering the knowledge of Christ to be mixed with traditions and human inventions, but endowed with evangelical simplicity in the sight of God, 2Co 1:12 1Ti 1:5 5:22.

*And without offence;* not erring from the main scope and design of Christianity, or stumbling, so as either actively or passively to trouble and

offend either themselves or others in the heavenly course, but working so prudently, as to give no just occasion of scandal, or laying a snare for one or other, Mt 18:7 Ac 24:16 1Co 10:32; abiding blameless to the coming of Christ, 1Th 5:23.

*Till the day of Christ:* see on Php 1:6; repeated here to engage them unto serious thoughtfulness of that day.

### Philippians 1:11

Ver. 11. *Being filled with the fruits of righteousness;* i.e. not only bringing forth some single, yea, or singular fruit, but replenished, plurally, with the fruits of righteousness, Ac 9:36 Col 1:10; elsewhere called the *fruits of the Spirit*, Ga 5:22 Eph 5:9; in all goodness and truth, as well as righteousness. These are such good works as are not (whatever the papists conceive) causal of righteousness, but are, through the Spirit, (who regenerates the persons, and directs the internal and external actions of those who walk in the steps of the faith of their father Abraham, Ro 4:12), wrought by supernatural grace in the heart *joined unto the Lord*, with whom they are *one spirit*, 1Co 6:17.

*Which are by Jesus Christ;* and without whom, from their own stock and strength, till they be ingrafted into him, Joh 15:1,5, *trees of righteousness*, of the Lord's planting, Isa 61:3, and *his workmanship, created unto good works*, Eph 2:10, they cannot bring forth fruits, and do such good works as are acceptable unto God, 2Co 13:5; but Christ living and dwelling in them by faith, Ga 2:20 Eph 3:17, and God working in them *both to will and to do*, Php 2:13, they *can do all through Christ*, Php 4:13, so that they shall be accepted in him.

*Unto the glory and praise of God;* not being empty vines, bringing forth fruit to themselves, Hos 10:1, but to the eternal honour of him who hath called them, Mt 5:16 1Co 10:31 Eph 1:6,12,14 1Pe 2:12 1Pe 4:11 Re 5:13.

### Philippians 1:12

Ver. 12. *But I would ye should understand, brethren:* to obviate the

insinuations which false teachers and others might make use of from Paul's sufferings, to obstruct the cordial entertainment of those glad tidings he had brought, and to discourage those who did obey the truth, he doth by this friendly compellation (which he often useth) kindly entreat them to consider well, *that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel*; that his imprisonment, and what other troubles from without did befall him in his apostolical office, whereby the overruling providence of God so ordered, that they did (contrary to the intention of his persecutors) rather advantage than hinder the progress of the gospel, increase than decrease the church, since he had opportunity two years, in his own hired house, of teaching with freedom the things of Christ, Ac 28:30,31; whereupon he would not have the Philippians discouraged, but rather comforted, as the Corinthians, 2Co 1:5-7: for:

1. His iron chain in the cause of Christ was more an honour to him, even in the emperor's court, Php 4:22, or guard chamber, Ac 28:16, or judgment hall, Mt 27:27 Mr 15:16 Joh 18:28,33; than those glittering golden ones which others were ambitious to wear, Ac 5:41 Jas 2:2; it being apparent there, and elsewhere, to courtiers, citizens, Jews, and foreigners, that he did not suffer as an evil-doer, 1Pe 2:19,20 3:14; only for the Lord's sake, Eph 3:1 4:1; whose power in his confinement did work in and by him, who approved himself faithful, which, when inquiry was made concerning his suffering, gave occasion to communicate some notions of Christ, and glad tidings of salvation by him.

### Philippians 1:13

Ver. 13,14. *And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds*; and here again, contrary to the expectation of those persecutors, who designed to make havoc of the church, his innocent carriage and constancy in bearing the cross, had all influence upon the greater part of *the brethren* (not according to the flesh, Ro 9:3, but) in the service of Christ.

*Are much more bold to speak the word without fear*; pastors, and teachers, who had been timorous at the first, were greatly imboldened to shake of

carnal fear, and to profess and preach Christ crucified, or the cross of Christ, 1Co 1:18,23, which is *the power of God to salvation*, Ro 1:16, more confidently than ever; as he and Barnabas had done elsewhere, Ac 13:46; and as Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, who were but secret disciples before Christ's sufferings, upon his death owned him openly for their Lord, Mt 27:57, with Joh 19:39.

### Philippians 1:15

Ver. 15. He doth here tacitly answer an exception which might be made; It were better some of them were silent, than preach so boldly as to procure him hatred, and lessen his reputation;

1. By granting there was somewhat in the allegation, yet it did not conclude against this, that his suffering was advantageous to promote the gospel.
2. By distinguishing of those who were hollow-hearted and false, from an envious principle, designing to disparage this excellent person, who having done much in the lesser Asia and Greece, did now, in the head city of the world, when in prison, also gain proselytes, courtiers and others, for the receiving of Christ; and those were sincere and true-hearted brethren, joining with him in the cause of Christ, and assisting him from true love to Christ, and him his apostle, to get the truth of Christianity entertained in the love of it. The former were evil works, both as to their principle and end, Php 3:2; the latter acted sincerely in both respects, 2Co 2:17.

### Philippians 1:16

Ver. 16. This distinction he did amplify and explain here, by particularly showing the ill motive, manners, and end of the worst sort of preachers, from an ill affection of hatred, emulation, and wrath, 2Co 12:20 Ga 5:20; with an intemperate zeal to render Paul suspected and despicable in the eyes of the church; and to occasion in the emperor a more severe persecution, and heighten the accusers' rage against Paul, and to gain

applause to themselves, and vex his soul under outward troubles.

### Philippians 1:17

Ver. 17. Then intimating the genuine principle and good end of the better sort, who were moved from a prevailing affection to God, the edification and salvation of souls; cordially joining with Paul in carrying on the same design that he did, who was appointed of God, Ac 23:11 1Th 3:3; both by doctrine and obedience, active and passive, to defend the gospel, unto which he was admirably called to be a minister, yea, and here a patron, Ro 1:1 Eph 3:7 with 1Co 1:1; and, as it were, to tread the devil under foot (as Tertullian speaks) in his own house. Intimating from all this, that however the former did with an ill mind, in man's judgment, as circumstances then were with Paul, (some of which we are ignorant of), the latter with a pious desire, preach the gospel; yet the event proved, by the good hand of God, beneficial to promote the gospel: and so it may happen still, when some false brethren, moved by blind ambition and intemperate zeal, may snatch a weapon out of the gospel to vex good and godly pastors in their promulgation of it.

### Philippians 1:18

Ver. 18. *What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in, truth, Christ is preached:* q.d. It doth not follow, that these different intentions of the preachers should hinder the spreading of the gospel, and therefore it should not abate either your confidence or mine in the cause of Christ, since, by the overruling providence of God, that is carried on, both by the one and the other; not only by those who in truth preach the word faithfully, Jer 23:28 Mt 22:16, from a principle of love, (as before), to the same good intent with myself; but also by those who, though they act (as in Php 1:15) out of envy and ill will to me, for base ends under a fair show, 1Th 2:5, yet they occasionally and accidentally, not by any direct causality, do promote the interest of Christ.

*And I therein do rejoice;* and upon this account, that there is so good an effect, as the making known of Christ for the salvation of sinners, I have matter of present joy.

*Yea, and will rejoice;* yea, and hereupon for the future, though some should continue to do that in itself which might aggravate his affliction, yet it should not take his joy from him eventually; however directly and of itself it tend to it, yet indirectly and by accident, God disposing, it should issue well for the furtherance of the gospel.

### Philippians 1:19

Ver. 19. *For I know that this shall turn to my salvation:* rendering a reason of what went before, (as the causal particle notes), he doth here oppose his knowledge to the envious preachers' opinion, and his salvation to the affliction they did exercise him with; so that he was fully persuaded, that the trouble they had given, or should give to him, (though in the nature of the thing it had a tendency to take him off from the defence of the gospel, and so to hazard his soul, or, if he stood in defence of it, Nero would persecute him to death), would, upon sure ground, work for his good, Ro 8:28, even the great good, the salvation of his soul; yea, and for some time, (compare Php 1:25), the safety of his life here, Ac 27:34 Heb 11:7. His prison should be an ark to him resting on God's promise, so that he could go on boldly and cheerfully in bearing his testimony to Christ with *the helmet of salvation*, Eph 6:17.

*Through your prayer;* having an interest in their prayers as a means of support, which he intimates they would continue to help him with, 2Co 1:11, as much as if he had downright asked an interest in them, Heb 13:18.

*And the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ;* yea, in the use hereof, that he might have a great measure of the Spirit, promised to those that ask him, Lu 11:13, he looks higher, not doubting but he shall have a renewed subsidy of grace continued to him from the same Spirit, which is in Christ Jesus his Head, Ro 8:9 Ga 4:6; thereby he should be helped in his infirmities, Ro 8:26 1Co 12:11; and receive *grace for grace*, Joh 1:16, out of his fulness, who had not *the Spirit by measure*, Joh 3:34; whereupon, whatever his enemies conceited, he should have undersupplies secretly communicated, like those from the head to the members, which would be effectual and victorious to deliver him from every evil work, and preserve him to the heavenly kingdom, 2Ti 4:18.



## Philippians 1:20

Ver. 20. *According to my earnest expectation and my hope;* he allegeth and explaineth the ground and certainty of his knowledge and persuasion of his enemies' disappointment, and all succeeding well with him, trusting *in the living God,* 1Ti 4:10, who in all death-threatening afflictions hath upon his word engaged himself to support all those that hope in his mercies, Ps 33:18,19 37:7,9 Ps 147:11. Then be sure, when his sincere servants, assisted by his Spirit, wait for his deliverance with their necks stretched out, (as the word here notes), being raised from past experience, intensely and wistly looking for his appearance, shall be able each to say as the apostle intimates.

*That in nothing I shall be ashamed;* negatively, he shall not be left to do any thing which may justly bring him under reproach. His well-grounded hope would not make him ashamed. Ro 5:5, with Ro 8:25; but upon this account he shall have wherewith to answer him that should reproach him, Ps 119:41,42,46 Lu 9:26 2Ti 1:12.

*But that with all boldness;* positively, that he should continue constant in a courageous owning of the truth, and acknowledging of his Lord every way, whether he was delivered from or to death.

*As always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death;* as in the former years of his ministry he had been supported, yea, and victorious, in freely speaking for Christ, preaching and defending of his gospel, Ac 9:27 Ac 14:3, with as much courage as any other, Ac 4:13,29,31, with 2Co 11:21 Ga 6:17: so now he was humbly confident, in his present sad circumstances, Christ should be magnified, (not that himself can become greater), i.e. before men, his glory should be rendered greater and more illustrious, and acknowledged with praise, whether he lived or died, Ro 14:8; yea, in the earthen vessel of his body, 2Co 4:11, (about which he was not solicitous, having resigned it entirely to Christ), either in his enlargement and preaching of the doctrine of Christ, or in his being offered up and sealing it by his martyrdom.

### Philippians 1:21

Ver. 21. Some read it: For Christ is my gain in life and in death; or: For Christ is to me both in life and in death advantage. Both acknowledge it to be brought in as a reason of Paul's hope in life and death; and of his indifferency, in submission to God's pleasure, in life and death, intimating it was all one to him, so Christ was magnified in his body, whether it were by life or by death. They who follow our translation, do expound the proposition disjunctively; the former referring to the honour of Christ, and the latter to the salvation of Paul, which is understood by the name of *gain*. Some understand the former branch efficiently, q. d. I derive myself from Christ, unto whom I am united, he being the principle of it, as Ga 2:20; but others rather objectively and finally, q. d. As I have hitherto made it the business of life to serve Christ in preaching his gospel, so, if he continues my life, I purpose that in my living body, by preaching his gospel, and suffering for his name, as he requireth, he shall be glorified. Then, for the latter branch, if I die, in bearing testimony to Christ, it will be gain to myself, in that I shall be with Christ, which is better for me, Php 1:23, being *present with the Lord*, 2Co 5:8, in whom my *life is hid*, Col 3:3. So that death would not impoverish, but enrich him. They who choose the latter reading, take the proposition conjunctively, to the sense that he accounted gain to him, to have the honour of Christ magnified in his body, whether it happened to him to live or die, since he faithfully served him living or dying, and owned himself to be his both ways, Ro 14:8. He was not (as he saith elsewhere, Ac 20:24) moved with accidentals; neither counted he his *life dear to him to testify the gospel of the grace of God*; reckoning he had no life, but from Christ, whom he made it his business to serve and enjoy; so that if he continued in the body, Christ would gain, in that he designed to spend his life for the edification of his church; and if he died in that cause, Christ would gain by his death, in that his truth would, by the blood of him, who was a martyr, be further sealed, and his interest promoted, and his glory advanced; and he himself would gain, since upon his departure he should be advanced *to be with Christ*, Php 1:23, who alone makes his faithful servants happy in life and death.

### Philippians 1:22

Ver. 22. *But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour:* some, from

the various use of the Greek particles, render this first clause interrogatively; But whether to live in the flesh were worth the while? Or more profitable? (understand, than to die). The apostle having intimated the equality and indifferency of his mind in an entire submission to the will of God, whether that glorifying of Christ by his life or that by his death were more eligible, is upon deliberation, finding the advantage to Christ and himself, upon expense of circumstances either way, in an equal balance, weighing one thing with another: living in the flesh, i.e. abiding here in this mortal body, which he thus expresseth by way of diminution, Ga 2:20 1Pe 4:1; in opposition to, and comparison of, dying for and in the Lord, and so being with him, Php 1:23.

*Yet what I shall choose I wot not;* he seems, loving the Philippians as himself, to be at a loss what to determine, if God should permit him his choice, whether by labouring in his ministry for rite good of their souls he should bring more fruit to Christ, or by suffering, that which would arise from the blood of a martyr, who himself should receive a crown, 2Ti 4:8.

### Philippians 1:23

Ver. 23. *For I am in a strait between two;* because he knew not what to choose for the best, he was held in suspense, Lu 12:50 Ac 18:5, as one drawn both ways with weighty reasons, which he amplifies with respect to himself and the church, that Christ might be honoured in both: his love to the enjoyment of Christ and the edification of his members constraining him on each hand; the former was more delightful to him, and the latter more profitable for them.

*Having a desire to depart;* being held not only with a bare inclination, but an ardent and perpetually active desire, to loose from this clayey tabernacle, Ps 42:1,2 Ec 12:7 Lu 2:29 12:36 2Co 5:1,4 2Ti 4:6: so to depart as to abide in a better place.

*And to be with Christ; which is far better;* upon being absent from the body to be present with Christ, 2Co 5:8, in paradise, Lu 23:43 1Th 4:17; so to leave the body as to live with and enjoy him in heaven, is by far much better for me.

### Philippians 1:24

Ver. 24. However, with respect to the church, by his staying here in this mortal body he persuades himself, knowing the subtlety of false apostles, who would enter in as *grievous wolves*, Ac 20:29, it was necessary to strengthen them and other churches in the faith of Christ.

### Philippians 1:25

Ver. 25. *And having this confidence;* viz. being persuaded of what went immediately before, how useful the continuance of his life, for a further time in this world, would be to the church of Christ, and particularly to them, he determines (as should seem) with more than probable conjecture; though, upon supposition it should be otherwise, he gives them abundant satisfaction in their adhering to Christ, Php 1:27 2:17.

*I know;* even with a well grounded knowledge, either by a prophetic Spirit, from a particular revelation such as he had sometimes before had, Ac 16:9,10 23:11, or the sanctifying Spirit witnessing with his spirit, Ro 8:16, strengthening his faith and persuasion, helped by their faith and prayer, Php 1:19, compared with 1Pe 1:8.

*I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;* to these ends, that, by his personal presence with them, he might by his ministry further their faith in Christ, their joy in the Holy Ghost, and more abundant glorying in the power of Jesus Christ, for his safety, and being restored to them, as we see in what follows; and Eph 4:1, with 2Ti 4:17, we find, from his first imprisonment at Rome, (when likely this Epistle was written), he was delivered, and for some years restored to the churches which he had planted.

### Philippians 1:26

Ver. 26. Here, in confidence of being again with them, and staying with them, he expresseth an admirable affection to them, that he can be content for a time to be deprived of the glorious sight of Christ, that he might see

and serve them, and that under persecution; that they might, upon his return to them, more abundantly glory together, not in themselves, but, Christian-like, in Christ Jesus, the author of that doctrine he had preached to them, the Captain of their salvation, and the common Head of Christianity.

### Philippians 1:27

Ver. 27. *Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ:* q. d. In the mean time, whatever becomes of me, that which is for your part solely incumbent on you, who are brought into the fellowship of the gospel, is to demean yourselves truly agreeable to that state. The original phrase, as afterwards in this Epistle, Php 3:20 4:8, and elsewhere, Ac 23:1, imports, that their deportment should be answerable to their citizenship, that they should behave themselves as might be most to the public good of the society to which they do relate, not being of the world here, any more than their Head, Joh 15:19 17:16. Their course of life should be every way answerable to their high calling, Eph 4:1 Col 1:10 1Th 2:12; bringing forth fruit meet for repentance.

*That whether I come and see dost, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs;* intimating, that it did behove them constantly to adorn the gospel, in the exercise of Christian courage, unanimity, and patience, as well when he was distant from them, as when among them to oversee them: not as if he doubted of returning to them for their greater edification, but further to satisfy them as to his entire submission unto God's pleasure on his journey, or at home, 2Co 5:6,8; and to excite them to shake off sloth, and to discharge their duty with all diligence, which would greatly cheer his heart.

*That ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel:*

1. By their stedfast endeavour after a sweet, close, holy, lasting union amongst themselves. For *one spirit*, one soul or mind, here seem to imply one understanding enlightened by the sanctifying Spirit, and one heart, as an inward, uniting principle, which must upon no temptation be changed: compare Php 2:2 3:16 4:2; with Ro 12:16 1Co 1:10 2Co

13:11 Eph 4:2,3 1Pe 3:8; according to our Savior's prayer. Joh 17:11,20-23, which was heard, Ac 1:14 2:16 4:32 5:12. Nor only by their union in heart and mind, but:

2. Their mutual helpfulness in action, as spiritual champions joining their forces together, for the defence of their royal charter, the maintenance of the main principles of Christianity, against all troublers of the church, and subverters of the evangelical faith, 1Co 9:24,25 Ga 5:13 Eph 6:14, with 2Ti 4:7.
3. A courageous spirit under sufferings from their most malignant gainsayers and persecutors, who do wittingly and willingly oppose the truth, and them professing of it, as Simon Magus and others did, Ac 8:18-21 1Ti 1:20 2Ti 1:15.

### Philippians 1:28

Ver. 28. *And in nothing terrified by your adversaries*: the original word which the apostle useth, imports, they should not be appalled or affrighted, as men and horses are apt to be when furiously charged by their deadly enemies, but stoutly receive them, keeping their ground, Mt 10:28 Lu 12:32.

*Which is to them an evident token of perdition*; considering, on the one hand, their most pertinacious rage, it is no other than an evident and convincing argmment, or certain forerunner, of the adversaries' utter ruin, Ex 22:22-24 Ro 2:8,9 2Th 1:5-9.

*But to you of salvation*; but, on the other hand, to sound believers, who behave themselves as becomes the gospel, a manifest demonstration of their everlasting welfare and glory, Mt 5:10 Mt 10:32,39 Ro 2:7,10 Eph 3:13 2Th 1:6,7.

*And that of God*; by the disposal of the all-wise and righteous Governor, who may for a time permit his or his people's adversaries to domineer, Job 1:12 Pr 16:4; but being *a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*, Heb 11:6, will of his grace lenify the sharpness of the cross, enable believers to hold out against all the opposition of their enemies, make them *partakers*

*of his holiness*, and bring them to glory, Heb 12:10,11 2Ti 2:11,12: which might abundantly comfort the Philippians, as others, Ga 6:17.

### Philippians 1:29

Ver. 29. *For unto you it is given*; be adds a further argument to move them unto that he had exhorted, from God's freely bestowing, of his mere grace, what he had required of them.

*In the behalf of Christ*; upon the account of Christ's merit and mediation; not that they could have either evangelical faith, or patience, by virtue of their own strength, Php 4:13.

*Not only to believe on him*; that they did not only believe Christ, but believe on him, was not from any power of their own, Joh 6:37,44, but of God's free gift, Eph 2:8, as they had an instance amongst them in Lydia, Ac 16:14; unto her and others was this victorious grace of faith freely given by the hearing of the word, which was not unto many others that heard, Mt 13:11 2Th 3:2 Tit 1:1; and as the grace itself was given, so was the exercise of it.

*But also to suffer for his sake*; upon the account of Christ, patience was given; so that *to suffer*, here, doth not only import a power to suffer, but actual suffering; not only the habit of faith, but the act of believing, even as the fruits of trees at the first creation were produced, as well as the trees which had a power to bear them: wherefore, if, by the grace of God, and Spirit of faith, they were empowered actually to believe, Mr 9:24 1Co 15:10 2Co 4:13, having *trust through Christ God-ward*, 2Co 3:4; and upon the same account they were continually enabled to suffer, not simply, but in bearing testimony to Christ, Ac 5:41 1Pe 3:14 4:16; they might be of good comfort and courage, to the daunting of their adversaries.

### Philippians 1:30

Ver. 30. And be heartened to partake with him in the like trials he sustained when amongst them, Ac 16:19-24, and which he now was enduring at Rome, Php 1:13; an example of suffering unto them, if they

would but await the blessed issue of his agony.

## Philippians 2:1

### Chapter Summary

Php 2:1,2 Paul earnestly recommends to the Philippians mutual love and union,  
Php 2:3 lowliness of mind,  
Php 2:4-8 and that charitable condescension for the good of others, exemplified in the life and death of Christ,  
Php 2:9-11 for which God had exalted him to be Lord of all.  
Php 2:12,13 He exhorteth them to carefulness in working out their own salvation,  
Php 2:14,15 to obey the will of God cheerfully and universally, that so they might distinguish themselves from the rest of the world by a bright example of virtue,  
Php 2:16-18 and by their steadiness give him, cause to rejoice in the success of his labours, who would gladly lay down his life to serve them.  
Php 2:19,20 He hopeth to send Timothy to them shortly, whom he greatly commendeth,  
Php 2:21-30 as he doth the affection and zeal of Epaphroditus, whom he sendeth, with this Epistle.

Ver. 1. The apostle, reassuming his exhortation in the former chapter to unanimity, Php 1:27, doth here, by way of inference from what went immediately before, press them in a very affectionate manner, with a kind of rhetorical relation, and obtestation, as it were, adjure them.

*If there be therefore any consolation in Christ;* if any such exhortation, (as the word is rendered, Ac 13:15 1Th 2:3 1Ti 4:13), in the name of Christ, might avail with them to cheer him and one another by their loving concord and being unanimous. Or as we, rendering it *consolation*; ( so Ro 15:4 2Co 1:4); *If*, which he may well suppose, and strongly affirm that he took it for granted, the main body of them had in some measure found by his ministry, what he here moves them to complete, (compare Php



1:6,7,27), in expectation to find more of what they had experimented, whatever indisposition might have crept upon some by the insinuations of the false apostles; yet, this *consolation in Christ* may be considered either:

1. Actively: q.d. If ye would comfort me afflicted, in the concerns of Christ, or if ye have any Christian comfort which doth only proceed from those that are in Christ, (not from moral philosophy), or which is wont to be in those who worship the same Christ, let me his apostle be a partaker thereof. Or:
2. Passively, 2Co 7:4,6 Phm 1:7: If you, being in Christ, find any consolation against your afflictions, forasmuch as you have received it by my ministry, we, being both in suffering circumstances, should be further comforted by a sweet agreement.

*If any comfort of love;* the Syriac renders it, any speaking to the heart, any solace from good and comfortable words did reach your hearts, Joh 11:19,31 1Co 14:3 1Th 2:11 5:14, cheered with the love of God or Christ, or the brethren: or refreshed with my love to you, Php 1:8,9; or would that I should be comforted with your love to me, (as he himself and others were with the gracious affections of the Corinthians, 2Co 7:7), which ye ought unfeignedly.

*If any fellowship of the Spirit;* if ye have any communion with me in the graces of the Spirit, and *stand fast in one spirit*, Php 1:27, and would show that you do persevere in *the same Spirit*, 1Co 12:4, which acts in all the members of the mystical body of Christ, that do in him their Head partake of it.

*If any bowels and mercies;* if ye are duly affected with any real sympathy and commiseration towards me in my bonds for Christ, such inward affections as were moving in him towards them; Php 1:8, with Lu 1:78 2Co 7:15 Col 3:12; the latter word emphatically expressing the sense of the metaphor in the former. Then he, having thus pathetically urged these arguments, and closely followed them to embrace the matter proposed, puts them upon.

## Philippians 2:2

Ver. 2. *Fulfil ye my joy;* viz. the exercise of those graces he had been joyful for, which would be an addition to that joy he had for them, and the making of it much more abundant, contributing as much as the friends of the Bridegroom here can to the completing of it, Joh 3:29.

*That ye be like-minded;* which is when they believe and affect the same things, agreeable to the mind of God, Php 3:15 Ac 4:32 Ro 12:16 2Co 13:11.

*Having the same love;* having the same mutual sincere charity, Eph 4:2 Col 3:14.

*Being of one accord;* being unanimous in their honest designs, Joh 17:22 1Pe 3:8.

*Of one mind;* agreeing as to the main in the same judgment and opinion, to promote the interest of Christ, 1Co 1:10 Ga 5:7,10.

## Philippians 2:3

Ver. 3. Here, the better to engage them to embrace what he had so pathetically exhorted them to, he doth dissuade them from animosity, an affectation of applause, and self-seeking; and direct them to modesty and self-denial.

*Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory;* intitating, they should by no means indulge all inordinate affection to strive and quarrel with one another, provoking each other by an ambitious emulation to cross or excel others; this arguing a carnal temper, opposite to true Christianity, Php 2:14 Ro 2:8 Ga 5:16,24,26, being the very bane of true Christian concord, Ro 13:13 Jas 3:16, and destructive to faith, Joh 5:44 2Co 12:20.

*But in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves;* but cherish and exercise true Christian modesty and meekness, (which is of another kind than that the heathen philosophers did prescribe), in a due preference of each other, Mt 11:29 Ro 12:10 Eph 4:2 5:21 1Pe 5:5; as the

apostle himself gave example, 1Co 15:8,9.

*Question.* If any say: How is this consistent with what the apostle writes to them to think of *praise* and *good report*, Php 4:8, and of himself, *not a whit*, and *nothing, behind the very chiefest apostles?* 2Co 11:5 12:11; and further, how can some think others better than themselves in truth, unless they reckon good evil and evil good? I answer,

1. Be sure Christian modesty and real humility, with prudence and mildness, are very commendable graces, and *in the sight of God of great price*, 1Pe 3:4. And therefore what he doth afterwards exhort to in this Epistle, doth very well agree with what he doth write here; where:
2. He is treating of grace and godliness, whereas in those places to the Corinthians he writes of some certain gifts, which, by reason of the insinuations of false apostles against him, he was necessitated, in magnifying of his apostolical office and authority, 2Co 10:8, to mention, being as it were compelled to it by the ingratitude of some of them at Corinth who had been influenced by the false apostles, 2Co 12:5,6; yet you may see there, he doth not glory of himself, or his person, but acknowledges his infirmities, 2Co 11:30, and that unfeignedly, speaking the truth every where, 2Co 12:6, which he makes evident to them from the nature of the thing itself, 2Co 10:12,13,15,16 12:12; appealing to God, as witness in the case, 2Co 11:31, referring all the glorying the, put him upon, to the grace of God through Christ, 1Co 15:10 2Co 11:31, when they had cast contempt on his ministry, 2Co 10:10-13,18. So that in respect of gifts and external privileges, wherein are distinctions of superiors and inferiors, Php 3:4, he doth not urge that every Christian should prefer every other to himself, wherein it is evident there is a real difference; but in respect of the persons, the honesty and piety of others in God's sight, (lest a man, by thinking himself something when he is nothing, should deceive himself; Ga 6:3), since in his judgment they may be endowed with some hidden quality we know not of, and be accepted with him. Hence:
3. Our estimation and preference of others to ourselves, who as Christian brethren are obliged to serve one another, Ga 5:13, is not taken simply, and with an absolute judgment, as if it were necessary to give them the pre-eminence in all things: but, as to this, that a man may think there is

some defect in himself, which it may be is not in another; or with a suspense; Perhaps he is not better in truth, but considering my heart is deceitful, and possibly he may be more without guile, I judge it not meet to prefer myself to him God-ward; but seeing mine own black legs, and being bound in love to confess mine own and cover the infirmities of my brother, who labours to walk answerably to his profession, it is safe for me to prefer him, who may have some good latent which I have not, and whereupon he is to be esteemed by me. Wherefore:

4. The right management of the duty which the apostle calls for to preserve unanimity, depends upon a right and due estimation of God's divers gifts and graces which flow from *the same Spirit*, 1Co 12:4, and a humble sense of our own infirmities: so that however one Christian may excel with some singular endowments, yet he ought to think they were not bestowed upon him that he should be puffed up, or value himself above what is meet upon that account before God, being he hath received them of God, 1Co 4:7, but judge himself for his own defectiveness and faultiness, which will afford himself matter of abasement and humility; when yet with respect to others, whose hearts he knows not, he in charity thinketh the best, 1Co 13:4,5; and if in this case he should be mistaken, his modest apprehensions would be acceptable to God (designing to approve that which he doth) and profitable to himself. To engage theIn further unto Christian concord, he here directs them as to their aim and scope, (according to the import of the word), that it should not be their own private interest, but the common good of Christianity, becoming those who have true Christian love, 1Co 10:24 13:5; not as if he did disallow providing for their own, 1Ti 5:8, or studying to be quiet, and doing their own business, 1Th 4:11; but that every member of Christ, while he considers his own gifts, graces, honour, and advantage, would remember that he is not born only to serve himself or Pharisaiically to conceit well of himself in the contempt of others, Lu 18:11; but also, and that much rather, he should consider his relation to the Head, and every other member of the body, and so consult the gifts, graces, honour, and edification of others, especially when more eminently useful, knowing that members should have the same care one for another, 1Co 12:24-28.

## Philippians 2:4

Ver. 4,5. *Let;* most translations do express the causal or rather illative Greek particle, which ours doth here omit as an expletive. However, the apostle doth urge them to the exercise of self-denial, mutual love, and a hearty condescension to one another, from the great example of Jesus Christ, 2Co 8:9: that so the mind which was in Christ may be perceived in us, who, if spiritual, judge all things and have the mind of Christ; being enlightened by the same Spirit, we do judge as he coming in the flesh did: or: Let the same affection be found in you that was really in him, Mt 11:28 Joh 13:15.

## Philippians 2:6

Ver. 6. *Who,* i.e. relative to Christ Jesus, the eternal Son of God by nature, very God extant with his Father before the beginning, Joh 1:1 Ga 4:4 1Ti 3:16 6:14-16 Tit 2:13; the express image and character of his Father's person, which implies a peculiar subsistence distinct from the subsistence of his Father, Joh 8:42 2Co 4:4 Col 1:15 Heb 1:3; concerning whom, every word that follows, by reason of the Socinians, and some Lutherans, is to be well weighed.

*Being;* i.e. subsisting, in opposition to taking or assuming, Php 2:7; and therefore doth firmly prove Christ pro-existing in another nature to his so doing, namely, his actual existing of himself in the same essence and glory he had from eternity with the Father, Joh 1:1,2 17:5 2Co 8:9 Re 1:4,8,11.

*In the form of God;* to understand which clearly:

1. The word *form*, though it may sometimes note somewhat outward, and so infer the glory of Christ's miracles, yet we do not find it any where so used in Scripture: it is true it is once used there for the outward visage, Mr 16:12, which had excelling splendour and beauty, giving occasion to conceive majesty in the person, Mt 27:2 2Pe 1:16, (however, his resplendent garments could not be accounted *the form of God*, ) yet being, Luke saith, Lu 24:16, the eyes of the persons which saw were holden, that for a time they could not acknowledge him, it

argues that the appearance Mark speaks of noted only an accidental form.

2. Whereas the *being* or subsisting Paul here speaks of, respects (what the best philosophers in their most usual way of speaking do) the essential form, with the glory of it, since the verbs, in other scriptures of the same origin, signify somewhat inward and not conspicuous, Ro 12:2 2Co 3:18 Ga 4:19; especially when there is a cogent reason for it here, considering *the form of God*, in opposition to *the form of a servant* afterward, and in conjunction with equality to God, which implies the same essence and nature, Isa 40:25 46:5, it being impossible there should be any proportion or equality between infinite and finite, eternal and temporal, uncreate and create, by nature God and by nature not God, Ga 4:4,8, unto which the only living and true God will not suffer his glory to be given. Neither indeed can he *deny himself* who is *one*, and besides whom there is no other true God, or God by nature, De 4:35 6:4 2Ti 2:13; *who only doeth wondrous things*, Ps 72:18: for to all Divine operations a Divine power is requisite, which is inseparable from the most simple essence and its properties.

*Being*, or subsisting, *in the form of God*, imports not Christ's appearance in exerting of God's power, but his real and actual existence in the Divine essence, not in accidents, wherein nothing doth subsist: neither the vulgar nor learned do use to say any one doth subsist, but appear, in an outward habit; why then should any conceit the apostle means so? The Gentiles might speak of their gods appearing; but then, even they thought the Deity was one thing, and the habit or figure under which, or in which, it appeared was another Ac 14:11: so that *subsisting in the form* intimates in the nature and essence of God, not barely, but as it were clothed with properties and glory. For the apostle here treats of Christ's condescension, proceeding from his actual existence, as the term wherein he is co-eternal and co-equal to God the Father, before he abated himself with respect unto us. For he says not the form of God was in Christ, (however that might be truly said), that the adversaries might not have occasion to say only there was somewhat in Christ like unto God; but he speaks of that wherein Christ was, viz. *in the form of God*, and so that form is predicated of God, as his essence and nature, and can be no other thing. None can rationally imagine that God was an external figure, wherein Christ was subsisting. For subsistence implies some peculiarity relating to the substance of a

certain thing, whence we may conclude the Son to be of the same (not only of like) substance with the Father, considering what significantly follows. He *thought it not*, esteemed, counted, held (so the word is used, Php 2:3 3:7,8 1Th 5:13 2Th 3:15 1Ti 1:12 1Ti 6:1 Heb 10:29 11:26), it not *robbery*, it being his right by eternal generation; i.e. he did not judge it any wrong or usurpation, on that account of his *being in the form of God*, to be equal to his Father, being a subsistent in the same nature and essence with him. From openly showing equal majesty with whom he did not for a time abstain, in that he could reckon this robbery, as if such majesty were that which did not agree to his nature, ever presupposing this inherent right, to his great condescension, or abasing himself, which follows as the term to which: or, he resolved for a time not to show himself in that glory which was his own right, but freely condescended to the veiling of it. He did not really forego (neither was it possible he should) any thing of his Divine glory, being the Son of God still, without any robbery or rapine, equal to his Father in power and glory, Joh 10:33 1Jo 5:7,20.

*Thought it not robbery*; Paul doth not say, (as the Arians of old would pervert his sense), he robbed not, or snatched not, held not fast equality with God; or, (as the Socinians since), Christ thought not to do this robbery to God, or commit this rape upon God, so as that he should be equal to him, but acknowledged he had it of the free gift of God, chopping in the adversative particule, *but*, where it really is not: whereas we read not in the sacred text, he *thought not to do this robbery*, but, he *thought it not robbery* to be equal to God; which two are vastly different, even as much as to have the Godhead by usurpation, and to have it by nature. In the former it is, q.d. Christ did not rob or snatch away the equality; in the latter, the equality which Christ had with God, he thought it no robbery; he reputed not the empire he might have always continued in the exercise of, equal with the Father, as a thing usurped, or taken by force (as one doth hold that he hath taken by spoil, making show of it). For when he had said he had subsisted in the form of God, he could (before he condescended) say also, he was equal to God, i.e. the Father, without any robbery, rapine, or usurpation. And if Socinus urge that it is absurd and false in any sense to say, God thought he had robbed, or taken by robbery, the Divine essence; then this contradictory, God thought not he took by robbery the Divine essence, is rational and true; as when it is said, God cannot lie, or God changeth not, as 1Sa 15:29 Isa 55:8 Mal 3:6. What things are denied of God, do not imply the opposites are affirmed of him. The particule *but*,

which follows in its proper place before *made himself of no reputation*, may be fairly joined with this sense. For if Christ should know that by rapine and unjust usurpation he was equal to God, (as likely the attempt to be so was the sin of our first parents, which robbery of theirs Christ came to expiate), he had not emptied himself, nor vouchsafed to abase himself.

*To be equal with God;* neither is Christ said to be equal to God only in respect of his works, (which yet argue the same cause and principle, Joh 5:19,21,23,26,27 10:37), but absolutely, he thought it not robbery to be altogether equal with God, as subsisting in the same nature and essence, the original phrase connoting an exact parity. All the things of Christ (though he chose to have some of them veiled for a time) are equal to God; so some expound the neuter plural emphatically, (as usual amongst the Greeks), to answer the masculine singular foregoing, to express the ineffable sameness of the nature and essence of the Divine subsistents. It may be read: He counted it no robbery that those things which are his own should be equal to God, i.e. the Father; or rather, that he himself should in all things be equal or peer to God. For had Christ been only equal by a delegated power from God, why should the Jews have consulted to kill him, for making himself equal with God? Which with them was all one as to make himself God, Joh 5:18 10:33. But that he spake of his eternal generation, as owning him for his own Father, with whom he did work miracles, even as the Father did in his own name, by his own power, of himself, for his own glory: neither will the evangelist's saying: *The Son can do nothing of himself*, Joh 5:19, infer an inequality with the Father, when what he doth is equally perfect in power and glory with the Father's, whence, as son, he hath it by nature. For (looking lower) though every son receives from his father human nature, yet he is not less a man than his father, or his father more a man than he; the son having a being of the same perfection which is naturally in both. However the Father, to whom Christ is in subordination as the Son, and in office a servant, undertaking the work of mediation, may be said to be greater than the Son, that can only be understood with respect to the order of their working, if we compare texts, Joh 14:28 16:13-15. Neither, when Christ accounted it not robbery to be equal with God, is he said (as the adversaries urge) to be equal to himself, but to another person, viz. God the Father. Things may be equal which are so diverse, that yet they may be one in some common respect wherein they agree: wherefore when Christ is said to be equal with the Father, he is distinguished from him in person and subsistence, yet not



in essence, wherein it is his due to be his equal, and therefore one.

### Philippians 2:7

Ver. 7. *But*; some expound this particle as a discretive, others an adversative, or redditive.

*Made himself of no reputation*; i.e. most wittingly emptied himself, or abated himself, of the all fulness of glory he had equally with God the Father, that, considering the disproportion between the creature and the Creator, he, in the eyes of those amongst whom he tabernacled, appeared to have nothing of reputation left him, Da 9:26. It is not said the *form of God* was cut off, or did empty itself; but he who did suffer *in* the form of God, made himself of no account, did empty, abate, or abase himself, (so the apostle elsewhere actively and passively useth the word, 1Co 11:15, with 2Co 9:3), and that indeed while subsisting in the form of God, (according to agreement, Zec 6:15 13:7), not by laying aside the nature of God, but in some other way, i.e. his own way, kept secret till he was pleased to manifest it, Ro 16:25 Col 1:26; by freely coming in the flesh, 1Ti 3:16 Heb 10:7; which is such an astonishing wonder, and mysterious abasement, as gains the greatest veneration from his saints. Thus for a little time laying aside, at his own pleasure withdrawing, and going aside from his glorious majesty, he lessened himself for the salvation of his people. He had a liberty not to show his majesty, fulness, and glory during his pleasure, so that he could (as to our eyes) contract and shadow it, Joh 1:14 Col 2:9. His condescension was free, and unconstrained with the consent of his Father, Joh 3:13; so that though the Scripture saith: *The Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands*, 1Ki 8:27 Isa 66:1 Mr 5:7 Ac 7:48, yet the Son of the Highest can, at his own pleasure, show or eclipse his own glorious brightness, abate or let out his fulness, exalt or abase himself in respect of us. However, in his own simple and absolute nature, he be without *variableness* or *shadow of turning*, Jas 1:17 being his Father's equal, and so abides most simple and immutable; yet respectively to his state, and what he had to manage for the redemption of lost man, with regard to the discovery he made of himself in the revelation of his Divine properties, the acknowledgment and celebration of them by the creatures, he emptied himself, not by ceasing to be what he was before, equal with his Father, or laying down the essential form of God, according

to which he was equal to God; but by taking *the form of a servant*, wherein he was like to men, i.e. assuming something to himself he had not before, viz. the human nature; veiling himself, as the sun is said to be veiled, not in itself but in regard of the intervening cloud, Mt 27:39-45; what could hinder that he should not manifest his excellency now more, then less clearly; men one while acknowledging and praising it, another while neither acknowledging nor praising of it, then again praising of it, yet more sparingly? He, by taking the form of a mean man, might so obscure the dignity of his person, as to the acknowledgment of him to be the Son of God, equal with his Father, that in vouching himself to be so he might be accounted a blasphemmer; Joh 10:36; and, during that appearance, not seem to be the Most High; even as a king, by laying aside the tokens of his royalty, and putting on the habit of a merchant, when all the while he ceaseth not to be king, or the highest in his own dominions. Hence the Most High may be considered, either in regard of his nature, wherein he holdeth the highest degree of perfection, or in regard of those personal acts he performs in the business of our salvation. In the former, Christ is the Most High; in the latter, our Mediator. So *the form of God* was the term from which, and *the form of a servant* the term to which, he moved in his demission, or abasement; which did not simply lie in an assumption or union of the human nature to the Divine, for this doth abide still in Christ highly exalted, but in taking the form of a servant, which with the human nature he took, by being *sent forth, made of a woman, under the law*, Ga 4:4, but by his resurrection and glorification, lest that relation or habit of a servant, (being such a one who was also a Son, and a Lord, Heb 1:2, with Heb 3:6), when yet he retains the human nature still. As therefore he was *of the seed of David according to the flesh*, Ro 1:3, though before he had not flesh; so he took the form of a servant in the likeness of man, according to his human nature, although before he took that form he could not have human nature: he did not annihilate any thing he was before, only, of his own accord, bowed down himself, and veiled his own glory, in taking our nature, therein to be a servant unto death.

*And took upon him the form of a servant*; taking, (in the Greek, without any copulative *and* before it), in opposition to being, or subsisting; he *was* in the form of God, which he had before, and *took* this, which he had not then, into the unity of his subsistence, by a personal union, Heb 2:16. He was the servant of God, Isa 42:1 Mt 20:28, in the whole work of his condescension, which was gradual, else the apostle's art to engage the

Philippians to condescension had not been cogent from Christ's example. For:

1. He being increate, did assume to himself a created (not angelical, but) human nature with no reputation, in that regard taking *the form of a servant*, wherein he was like a man, as the next clause explains this. It was an infinite, inconceivable condescension of the Son of God, to take our nature into union with himself, whereby he who was very God, in all things like unto his Father, became like unto us in all things, sin only excepted, Ro 8:3 Heb 2:17. Hence:
2. He did not immediately advance the nature he took into glory, but became a servant in it to his Father, to perform the most difficult service that ever God had to do in the world; he was not only *in the likeness of sinful flesh*, as soon as a man, Ro 8:3, of the seed of Abraham, Heb 2:11-16; but subject to the law, Lu 2:42,51 Ga 4:4, in a mean condition from his birth, despicable in the judgment of the world, his mother poor, &c., Isa 53:2,3 Mt 2:14 8:20 13:55 Mr 6:3 Lu 2:7,22,24 22:27; so that in finishing his work he was exposed to scorn, Ps 22:6,7 Isa 53:1,2; however, all the relation of his service was to God the Father, as his antecedent correlate.

To the further clearing of what went before, the apostle adds, *in the likeness*, or habit, *of men*, without any copulative particle, by apposition for fuller explication, (compare forecited parallel places), connoting his employment, (rather than condition), having a true body and a reasonable soul for this purpose, according to the prophecy, to be servant to his Father, Isa 42:1. And if the adversaries say: He only took on him the form of a servant, when he suffered himself to be beaten, &c.; it is easily answered: These were only consequents upon the form of a servant; one may be a servant, and yet not beaten; and when they so treated our Saviour, he accounted it dealing with him as a malefactor, Lu 22:52. Christ obeyed not men, but God the Father, to whom alone he was servant, when made man, Ps 40:6-8. It is the nature of lord and servant, to relate to each other. Every servant is a man (brutes are not servants). Labouring in service accompanies the human nature, which is common to Christ with other men, on whom it crept by the fall: Christ regards none others' will but the will of his Father, how hard soever it was, even to the laying down of his life for the reconciling of his church to him. And be sure he died as

a man, and not only in the habit of a servant. Only in human nature could he (as it follows without a particle in the Greek) be made like unto men, or in the likeness and habit of men. The Hellenists do use words of similitude, when they design sameness, or the thing itself, and that indeed essentially. For however it be urged, that likeness be opposed to the same, and that which is true, Joh 9:9, yet not always; as one egg is like to another, there is convenience in quality, and that in substance is included. Christ is like to other men in human properties, and an afflicted state, so that sameness of nature cannot be denied, Ro 8:3 Heb 2:16,17; or rather sameness of kind, though not of number, it being by a synecdoche to be understood generally, Ge 1:3 Mt 1:16 Joh 1:14 Heb 4:15 1Jo 1:1 1Jo 4:2,3. The properties of human nature are of the essence he took, who was found in habit as a man, when yet he was separate from sinners, 2Co 5:21, with Heb 7:26; yet the apostle's business here, is not of Christ's sinlessness in that condition, but of his condescending love, in taking on him that condition, being sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, yet without sin. It is a likeness of nature to all men, and not a likeness of innocency only to the first, Ge 5:1, that Paul here speaks of: And as it is said, Joh 1:14: *The Word was made flesh*; so here, Christ is *made in the likeness of men*, that we may understand it is the same numerical person, who was *in the form of God*, that was made man; the abasement of God-man being so great, that he was made like to man, i.e. to mere and bare man, though he was more. Nor only did he appear in many forms, (as might be under the Old Testament), or was joined to man, but personally assumed a true body and a reasonable soul, and so was very man, as well as very God. For when it is not said simply made man, but with that addition, *in the likeness*, it is done to a notable limitation of his station on each part; on God's part it imports, Christ did not lay aside the Divine nature, but only (veiled) his majesty and power; on man's, to exclude sin, viz. that he was true man, yet only like to all other men. But what is now the natural affection of all men from the fall of Adam, and is an infirmity and abatement, as to that, he was without sin, and only in the likeness of sinful flesh.

### Philippians 2:8

Ver. 8. To be *found* is a mere Hebraism, not unusual in the New Testament, not importing any question of the thing, but only the thing certainly happening beyond expectation. It notes here, not his being

apprehended of the soldiers when betrayed by Judas, being before his humble obedience, but his being, and really appearing to be, (as the Greek word is elsewhere used, Php 3:9 Ge 5:24 2Co 5:3 Ga 2:17 Heb 11:5, with 1Pe 1:7), as a man, simply considered, among men, which was before his being scourged, &c. consequent upon his apprehension. Now being made man, not reserved for a time, like the angels, for heaven itself and the view of angels; neither, from the privilege of the first man, (which Adam could not keep), did he reserve himself for the inhabiting of Paradise only: but, after the manner of men, he stayed in this earth amongst and conversed with them, and therefore is said to be *in the fashion* of men, or *as a man*; whereby his habit and deportment is more especially expressed, as his essence in the foregoing phrase.

*Man*, here, is considered according to what is proper unto human nature, not having the article prefixed, as if it connoted the first man, Adam, only *man* as man; the particle *as*, here, not intimating only likeness, without reality of nature, (as the Marcionites conceited), but as a confirming and assuring particle, noting certainty, Joh 1:14. Some indeed take *fashion* more strictly, as noting only the external figure of Christ's body; others, more largely and commodiously, for the whole outward species of human nature: whence the truth of the human nature shined out, not only in the figure and matter of the body, with true flesh and bones, the habit of his members, mouth, eyes, &c., that he might be seen and touched, 1Jo 1:1, as he himself allegeth, Lu 24:39 Joh 20:20,27, growing *in wisdom and stature*, Lu 2:52; but his labouring with hunger, thirst, and weariness, eating, drinking, sleeping, watching, speaking, gestures, being moved with pity, sorrow, joy, weeping, in all which his human nature was evidenced of God, and easily found of men who conversed with him, Joh 4:29 9:11 18:22. What the Socinians urge, that this gainsays his being incarnate, from Samson's saying, *I shall be weak, and be as another man*, Jud 16:7,11; there is no strength in the allegation, that Samson, of Dan's tribe, Jud 13:2, should be compared with Christ coming from heaven, (as they themselves do not deny), *found in fashion as a man*: because Samson, being stronger than a hundred men, if he were dealt so and so withal would become as other men, (for that is the import of the words), no stronger than any other man, Jud 16:17; whereas here, it is not said as one, any, or every, but simply *as a man*: and from those in power dying as other men, Ps 82:7. When they scoffingly ask: Doth it evidence these to be incarnate? It is answered: Though he who was strong as many became weak as any one

man; they who live in power die in weakness, as other men do, and are not said to be incarnate: yet he who, being equal with God, took on him the form of a servant, and was in this world a very man, may very well be said to be incarnate, 1Ti 3:16.

*He humbled himself;* he doth not say he was humbled or depressed by the just judgment of God, but of *himself*, voluntarily, on his own accord, without any constraint. He did really submit himself to the will of his Father, unto whom he was a servant, both in regard of the Divine nature, which he veiled, and also the human in his whole life, Lu 1:48, both outwardly and inwardly, Php 2:5, in thoughts and affections, as well as actions and passions: wholly yielding his own will and appetite to God, by a patient subjection to affliction, not in showing humility only, but really undergoing it. For we find this low degree of his humiliation opposed to his superexaltation, in the following verse, and agreeing with what Isaiah prophesied of him, Isa 53:7, expounded by Philip, Ac 8:32.

*And became obedient unto death;* without the copulative in the Greek, and expressing the manner of his humiliation, being of his own free will, and not by any force; made *obedient*, i.e. to God, (*Not my will, but thine be done*), to others, parents and magistrates, for God, according to the prescript of his law and will, in his life-time *unto death*, and in death; *unto* being taken here, not exclusively, but inclusively, for the further amplification of the obedience, Mt 26:42 Joh 4:34 8:29,46 Heb 10:9. Had he staid in his life for degrees of obedience, his condescension had been admirable, but that he should submit to a penal and painful death, (taking in his burial, and abiding in a separate state till the third day), this is stupendous: aggravated by the shame of dying on *the cross*, willingly and meekly yielding himself, though a *Son*, to that ignominious, cursed death, De 21:23 Ac 5:30 Ga 3:10,13 Heb 12:2; far more reproachful than beheading, hanging, or burning; out of unspeakable love, to bring us nigh unto God, Ro 5:19 Col 2:14 1Pe 2:24 3:18. Upon these considerations, how should Christians in mutual love condescend to each other!

### Philippians 2:9

Ver. 9. *Wherefore;* some take this particle illatively, connoting the consequent of Christ's exaltation, upon his antecedent humiliation, as

elsewhere, Joh 10:17 Ac 20:26 Heb 3:7 2Pe 1:10; the apostle showing the sequel of his sufferings to be glory, according to that of Lu 24:26. This the Ethiopic version favours. Christ respecting not himself, but us, and our good, the glory that he had eternally, but veiled for a time, emerging (as the sun out of a cloud) upon his finishing the work his Father gave him to do, Joh 17:5 Ro 9:5. Others take the particle causally, intimating Christ's meriting his own exaltation and our salvation, and his accepting of superexcellent glory as a reward of his unparalleled obedience, though he might have challenged it by virtue of the personal union, Heb 13:20, with Heb 12:2: obedience superior to angels' required a recompence superior to their glory, and Christ might, upon his exquisite obedience, demand his own mediatory glory, as being our Head, and that being the beginning and cause of ours. However, whether the particle of order note that of consequence, or causality, or both, there is no need of controversy, (because of the communication of properties), since the person of Christ, as God-man, was glorified.

*God also hath highly exalted him;* the Greek elegancy imports superexalted, or exalted with all exaltation, answering to his gradual humiliation; above the grave in his resurrection, the earth in his ascension, and above the heavens, at his Father's right hand, upon the throne of his glory, to judge the world, Eph 1:20-22 4:10.

*And given him a name:* some take *name* literally, restraining it to *Jesus*, but those letters and syllables are not above every name, it being common to others, Ezr 2:2 10:18 Hag 1:1 Ac 7:45 Col 4:11 Heb 4:8, though upon a different account it was to Christ, even before his incarnation, Lu 1:31. Others, for the name of the only begotten Son of God the Father, Joh 1:14, (with Heb 1:4, and Heb 5:8), who was more eminently manifested in his exaltation, to angels and to men, than before. Others, not for any title, but the thing consequent upon his humiliation, surpassing that of all creatures, potentates on earth, and angels in heaven, Eph 1:20,21. Name imports power, Ac 3:6 4:7 Re 5:12; of the Christ, the Saviour, Mt 12:21 Joh 4:42 Ac 4:11,12 10:43, at God's right hand, where he living to intercede, makes all comfortable to us, who in his name alone do believe, pray, praise, and do all that shall find acceptance, Mt 18:20 28:19 Joh 1:12 3:18 14:13 Ro 10:13,14 Col 3:17. Power to confer all for the good of his church being given him upon his death, when with respect to the creatures he received a glory, not in regard of himself, and in itself, but in regard of its patefaction

to others; from which glory, during the time of his humiliation, he had by a voluntary dispensation abstained; and the exercise of that authority conferred upon him as Mediator in that human nature, he had so obediently subjected himself to the cross. Though as God there was a manifestation, yet there was no intrinsical addition of glory; he did as man receive the name, or glory, he had from all eternity as God. So that the name or glory given relates to him according to both natures, as Mediator, God-man: not as God, so he could not be exalted at all, being the Most High; not as mere man, so a creature is not capable of Divine worship, which in what follows is expressly required to be given to him, who is superexalted by God's right hand, above every name, and every thing known by any name, Ac 2:24,33,36 5:31 1Co 15:25 Re 17:14, with Re 19:16.

### Philippians 2:10

Ver. 10. *At the name of Jesus;* in the old translation by bishops in Queen Elizabeth's time, (and some say in the manuscripts of this), it is *in* the name. However, in ours now, it is not appositively, *at* the name Jesus; but constructively, *of* Jesus, intimating, that the power, glory, and majesty of him who hath that name, unto which every knee is bowed, is that name which is above every name; which would not hold true, if the name were taken for the very word *Jesus*, that (as before) being common to others in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, yea, and English. Besides, neither in letters, nor syllables, nor sound, nor time, hath that word any thing above other words.

*Every knee should bow:* bowing of the knee is meant metonymically, and metaphorically, because some of those hereafter named, from whom the homage is due, have neither knees nor tongues, yet must, either willingly or by constraint, yield subjection and obedience to the sovereign authority of Christ, here and hereafter, Mt 11:27 28:18 Joh 5:22,23 Ac 3:15; all creatures being made subject to him, Heb 2:8. Some of the papists, searching for their subterraneous, fictitious purgatory, would restrain it to men, but that would straiten and diminish the august glory of Christ, exalted above every name, who had, even here in his humiliation, homage from unclean spirits, Mr 5:6,7,10,12 Lu 8:31 Jas 2:19; how much more when at his tribunal his consummate glory shall be manifest to all! Which the apostle hath ultimately a reference to, according to the evangelist, Mt



16:27 24:30. Then shall his equality with his Father, and his superlative glory as Mediator, be manifested to all, good and bad, angels as well as men, who shall be subjected to his sovereign Majesty, as the Lord God omnipotent; the good willingly, and the bad by constraint, Isa 45:23 Ac 17:31 Ro 2:16 14:10,11 2Co 5:10.

*Of things in heaven;* good angels, from whom he had homage and service here, Ps 97:7 Mt 2:13 4:11 Lu 1:30,31 2:13 Heb 1:6 at his resurrection, and ascension, Mt 28:6 Ac 1:11 much more in his glory, Mt 24:31 25:31 Eph 1:21,22 Col 1:16 2:10 2Th 1:7 and the spirits of just men made perfect, Heb 12:22,23 Re 4:6, &c.; Re 5:9,10.

*And things in earth;* good men willingly, Ps 110:3 Ac 10:33 1Jo 5:3; and bad by force, Ps 2:9 Lu 19:27 Heb 2:14.

*And things under the earth;* either the dead, who are hid in the earth, and shall be raised by the power of Christ, in, or upon them, Ac 24:15; or, devils, and wicked souls; for though devils move in the air by God's permission, Eph 2:2; yet hell is the place prepared for them, and the wicked, Mt 7:23 25:41 Lu 8:31 2Pe 2:4 Jude 1:6. Upon Christ's exaltation, all things above, and in the world, are subjected to his dominion. If it be said: On the earth, and under it, they rebel; I answer: They are bound to obey, Mt 4:9,10, and will be forced to submit to the penalty for disobedience. Christ doth at present exercise a sovereignty over bad men and devils, in limiting and punishing them as he pleaseth, Job 1:11,12 Lu 4:34,35 Lu 8:32 19:27 2Pe 2:6 Re 2:10.

### Philippians 2:11

Ver. 11. By *tongue*, not only every language, people, and nation is meant; because it is to be understood, as before particularized, of angels as well as men, for though angels properly, and by nature, want tongues, (as well as knees, which are both here joined, and must not be severed, in the worship given to Christ), yet in their manner of speaking to men, under an extraordinary dispensation, they may use them, (or that which is equivalent), 1Co 13:1; and, in a way proper to them, can *confess*, or express, their adoration of Christ, Re 7:9-12, either with delight, or by a forced subjection, Re 6:16, and acknowledge that he is Lord, i.e. of glory,

Ro 11:36 1Co 2:8 8:6, the Son of God, 2Co 4:5 Heb 1:2,4, having only power to command the soul and conscience, Jas 4:12, and to save, Heb 7:27, being *Lord both of the dead and of the living*, Ro 14:9.

*To the glory of God the Father*; some render, in the glory of the Father. Either in that the honour of Christ redoundeth to the honour of the Father, Pr 10:1, with Joh 5:23 Eph 1:6: or the Father doth most glorify the Son in his exaltation, who had most glorified him in his humiliation, Joh 12:28, with Joh 17:5,6.

### Philippians 2:12

Ver. 12. *Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed*: having confirmed the example of Christ's admirable condescension and affection from the glorious issue of it, he doth here reassume his exhortation, with a friendly compellation, commending their former sincere endeavours to obey the gospel (so Php 1:5, and Php 2:15) in following Christ, Mt 11:28, and moving them to persevere in obedience and love to God and man.

*Not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence*; that it might be evident, whether the eye of their pastor were upon them or not, a prevailing love to Christ, and their own souls' welfare, was prevalent with them; but especially, being he was now detained from them, and might be jealous of some defects in them, Jas 3:2 1Jo 1:8, did engage them more than any thing to embrace his exhortation, which he enlargeth in other words.

*Work out your own salvation*: he moves them as saints, Php 1:1, in whom God would perfect his work begun, Php 2:6, having given them to believe and suffer, Php 2:29, that they would seriously and earnestly busy themselves in those things, which on their parts are necessary to salvation, as Joh 6:27 Heb 6:9, and without which it cannot be had, as Php 1:10 Mt 24:13 Col 3:10,12, &c.; 1Ti 1:18,19 6:19 2Ti 2:5 4:7,8 2Pe 3:17; yea, press on in the way to their own salvation, as he moved, 1Ti 4:16, not that they should not be solicitous about others, for that mutual care is implied, as elsewhere required, Heb 3:13 10:24; but that every one should strenuously go on towards the mark with a special regard to himself, and the temptations he may meet with, knowing he must bear his own burden,

Ga 6:1,5, and therefore should take heed lest he fall. The papists' arguings hence that our actions are sufficient and meritorious causes of salvation, are altogether inconsequent. For the apostle doth not say our actions work out salvation, but: *Work out your own salvation*, which is much different. It were absurd to say, because the Jews were enjoined to eat the passover with loins girt, that loins girt were eating of the passover. Indeed, what the papists urge is contrary to this doctrine of Paul, who doth elsewhere place blessedness in remission of sins, and shows eternal life is the gift of God, Ro 4:6,7 6:23; and we are saved by grace, not of works, Ro 3:20,24,25 4:16 Eph 2:8 Tit 3:5 and contrary to the main scope of the apostle, which is to beat down pride and conceit of deserving, and persuade to humility. He drives at this, that we should not be idle or lazy in the business of salvation, but work together with God, (yet as instruments, in whom there is no strength which is not derived from him), that we may evidence we do not receive his grace in vain, 2Co 6:1,2. But this co-operation doth not respect the acquiring or meriting of salvation, which is proper to Christ alone, and incommunicable to any others, Ac 4:12, who cannot be said to be their own saviours: this co-operation, or working out, respects only the application, not the performing of the payment, which Christ hath abundantly perfected: but the embracing of the perfect payment, is not that which can be the cause and foundation of right for which it is deservedly conferred; but only the way and means by which we come to partake of salvation.

*With fear and trembling*; i.e. with a holy care to do all acceptably: he doth by these two words mean not any servile fear and slavish despondency, arising from doubting, Php 4:4, but only a serious, filial fear, implying a deep humility and submissiveness of mind, with a reverential awe of the Divine Majesty, and a solicitude to avoid that evil which is offensive to him and separates from him. We find these words used to the like import, Ps 2:11 Da 5:19; Da 6:26 Ro 11:20 with 1Co 2:3 2Co 7:5 Eph 6:5; connoting that, after the example of Christ, we should be humble, and though we distrust ourselves, yet we are to trust solely to God, (as an infant may be afraid, and yet cling fast to and depend upon, begging help of, the parent, going over a dangerous precipice), for the accomplishment of our salvation.

### Philippians 2:13

Ver. 13. That they might not be negligent in working out their salvation with humility, from any conceit or carnal confidence any might have that they could believe and repent when they pleased, imagining their wills to be as pliable to good as evil; the apostle urgeth the effectual grace of God, as a powerful inducement and encouragement to embrace his exhortation.

*For it is God which worketh in you:* they should not despond of any attaining salvation, or think they did labour in vain in the diligent use of means, and should altogether fall under the dominion of sin, considering, though they were free agents, yet the efficiency and sufficiency was of God, Ro 6:13,14 1Co 4:7 2Co 3:5; who worketh within them powerfully and effectually, carrying on the work through all difficulties and obstacles, with victorious efficacy, till it be wrought, Php 1:6 Isa 41:4 Heb 13:20,21: God worketh not only by suasion to gain assent, but by a special energy effecting what he would have us to do.

*Both to will:* and not only in a general way, Ac 17:28, but in a special way, making us willing, Ps 110:3, remotely in regard of the principle, nextly in regard of the act: circumcising the heart, De 30:6; taking away the heart of stone, and giving a heart of flesh, Eze 11:19 36:26,27; causing light to shine out of darkness, 2Co 4:6; and so renewing the will, to choose that which is savingly good, the natural bent of which, before the influence of this insuperable grace, stands another way, Joh 8:44, viz. to will and do contrary: yet he doth not necessitate by any compulsion, but powerfully, yet sweetly, and suitably to man's free faculty, incline the will to that which is good, Joh 6:37,44, i.e. to a certain effect. For the will influenced to will that it doth perform, it undoubtedly wills somewhat that is certain, and so is determined by God.

*And to do;* to do that which is savingly good. Whereupon being made willing, it hath not only an inclination, and doth not only exert a wounding, but, being moved by God's insuperable grace, 1Co 3:7, that will is effectual, and is the very deed, where the command of the will is executed to the glory of God, as the author. As in alms, not only doth God incline the will to relieve the poor, but further contributes special gracious aids to perform what was (deliberated, which evinceth that it is from another principle than ourselves. It is not, that ye may be able to will, and may be

able to do; but he worketh *both to will and to do*: which connotes the very act itself; that ye will to believe, obey, pray, persevere, and that ye do believe, obey, pray, persevere: of unwilling, he makes willing; and further, *to will and to do*. It is true, to will, as it is an act of the will, is ours by creation; and to will well is so far ours, we being made effectually willing by God's grace: yet not ours, as though of ourselves we begin to will, or go on, but it is of him who worketh in us. Not that we cannot will well, but that of ourselves we cannot will well. The precept therefore requiring our obedience does not show what we can or will of ourselves, but what we ought to will and to do by God's special help. But though God work in us obedience, yet we obey, we ourselves act, being acted of God.

*Of his good pleasure*; not for any previous disposition in any of us, but of, or according to, his own good pleasure, Lu 10:21 Eph 1:5,9,11 2:8 2Th 1:11, with 2Ti 1:9. In working out our own salvation, the very beginning in the will, as well as the perfection, is ascribed to the efficacy of God; his good pleasure is the procreating and helping cause of this work on the will, and not the will's good pleasure.

#### Philippians 2:14

Ver. 14. *Do all things without murmurings*; the apostle here subjoins to his exhortation to condescension and humility, a dissuasive from the opposite vices, moving them to do all that was incumbent on them as Christians without private mutterings, secret whisperings, and complainings, which might argue their impatience under the yoke of Christ, while put upon doing or suffering such things; either reflecting on God's providence, as the Israelites of old, Nu 11:1, &c.; 1Co 10:10; reckoning they had hard measure: or rather, (here considering the context), grudging at others, as the Greeks and Jews had done, Lu 5:30 Joh 6:41,42 Ac 6:1; yea, and some of the disciples were found guilty of this ill temper against their Master, Joh 6:61. Christian charity disallows grudgings, 1Pe 4:9 Jude 1:10; and also *disputings*; hot and eager contests and quarrellings about those things wherein the life and main business of religion is not concerned, but the unity of the Spirit of holiness is opposed, Mt 18:1 Mr 9:33 Lu 9:46 Ro 14:1 2Co 12:20, with 1Ti 1:6 2:8.

### Philippians 2:15

Ver. 15. *That ye may be blameless and harmless;* that ye behave yourselves so that none can justly reproach you, Lu 1:6 and though you cannot altogether put to silence foolish men, Joh 15:25 1Pe 2:15, yet they cannot have any just cause to stain your reputation; but you may be found sincere, simple, void of guile, Mt 10:16 Joh 1:47 Ro 16:19 1Pe 2:1, with 1Pe 1:14.

*The sons of God, without rebuke;* without such spots and blemishes as are inconsistent with your adoption, or sonship, Eph 5:27. Sons of God, in regard of their relation, should be careful, as much as may be, that they do not expose themselves to the biting reproofs of those carping neighbours who are not of their Father's family, So 4:7 Mt 5:48 Eph 1:4 Jude 1:24.

*In the midst of a crooked and perverse nation;* who show by their lying in wickedness, 1Jo 5:19, and the uncured spots, yea, even plague sores, upon them who have notoriously corrupted themselves, that they are a perverse, crooked, untoward, and adulterous generation, De 32:5 Ps 125:5 Mt 12:39 Ac 13:8,10.

*Among whom ye shine as lights in the world;* in conversing with such a sort of men, ye either do, or ought, unanimously to show yourselves to be light in the Lord, Mt 5:14,16 Eph 5:8,15; enlightened by the Sun of righteousness, Mal 4:2, to give a more clear light, that however the uncivil wicked would bespatter you, and cast reproach upon you in the necessary exercises of religion; yet, you not suffering as murderers, thieves, busybodies, &c., 1Pe 4:4,15,16, you will then, especially if Christ's faithful ambassadors, show yourselves to be not such lantern or torchbearers as accompanied treacherous Judas, Joh 18:3, (however the ill men you live among may reckon you no better), but such light-bearers under Christ, (the Seventy use the word for stars, Ge 1:16 Da 12:3 Re 1:16,20), as irradiate the world; not a house, as a candle doth, but the world, as stars do, Re 12:1.

### Philippians 2:16

Ver. 16. *Holding forth the word of life;* carefully bearing before you, and

stedfastly showing, not only by your profession, but conversation, the Lord Jesus Christ, 1Jo 1:1, whose gospel is the word of life, in that *it is the power of God to salvation*, Ac 13:26 Ro 1:16. He doth not say, holding forth carnal institutions, nor human traditions; but that word, wherein is to be had *eternal life*, Joh 5:39 6:68.

*That I may rejoice in the day of Christ:* he quickens them from the consideration of the glorious joy he should have in their salvation, at the day of Christ, (see Php 1:6), when he and they should, of God's free grace, receive an abundant reward, viz. of his ministry and exhortation, and of their embracing it, and working out their salvation by God's special assistance.

*That I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain;* for it would be evident to his, as well as their, everlasting comfort, when he should see them, that his laborious ministry amongst them had not been frustrate, or fruitless in the Lord, Mt 25:21 1Co 3:8,9 15:58. Then, in a more glorious way they would be his *joy and crown*, than they were at present, Php 4:1.

### Philippians 2:17

Ver. 17. *Yea, and if I be offered:* that he might further confirm and encourage them in their duty, he doth not here conclude the certainty of his death, at his first imprisonment, having expressed before some confidence of his surviving it, Php 1:19,25; but, in imitation of Christ, *the good Shepherd*, Joh 10:11, to demonstrate his constant affection to them, (as he doth to others, 2Co 12:15 1Th 2:8), he argues upon supposition of his own death, which might afterwards happen, 2Ti 4:6; using an elegant allegory, borrowed from legal offerings, Le 2:6 Nu 15:5,7 Nu 23:4 Jud 11:13; to show that he could cheerfully lay down his life for their salvation; not for reconciling them to God, for that was done before by Christ's own offering up himself, Heb 7:27, a sacrifice of a sweet smell unto God, Eph 5:2; but whereby they might be confirmed in the faith sealed with his blood, for bearing witness to Christ, precious to God, Ps 116:15. The Greek word he hath here, is borrowed from the usage in sacrificing, of pouring wine or oil upon the victim, Ex 30:9 2Ki 16:13 Jer 19:13, when that which was poured forth was called the drink-offering, to the confirming of covenants.

*Upon the sacrifice; by sacrifice,* he means either specially their alms, prepared by them, and presented by Epaphroditus, for supporting him in his sufferings, and in the person of the apostle offered up unto God, Php 4:18 2Co 9:12; or, more generally, the Philippians' conversion, because sanctified by a principle of faith, and so made a sacrifice. For he doth more than once write of believers being offered, and resigned to God, under the notion of a sacrifice, Ro 12:1 15:16; and so doth another, 1Pe 2:5.

*And service of your faith;* to bring them unto which by his ministration, was a very pleasing service to him, who by pouring out his blood in this martyrdom, would confirm the doctrine of the gospel, or new covenant, and fix it more strongly in the hearts of them and others of God's chosen people.

*I joy;* whereupon he expresseth his joy and delight in that, which, upon this supposition, would in the issue be so much to their honour and advantage, when it should seem good to the Lord. They would reckon it no small honour, to have him, the apostle that planted the gospel amongst them, satisfied in their vouching of the truth, which therefore could not but be profitable to the establishing of them in it, who had cordially embraced it.

*And rejoice with you all;* whereupon he doth heartily congratulate with each of them, the meanest as well as the greatest of them, who would be so privileged.

### Philippians 2:18

Ver. 18. *For the same cause also do ye joy;* he expects the like affection and sympathy in every one of them, that upon the account of his sufferings they would the more readily, cheerfully, and courageously believe in and suffer for Christ: considering the difference between death threatened by man, for our sticking close to God, Mt 10:28, and denounced for slipping aside from God, in whole or in part, 2Th 1:5.

*And rejoice with me;* and that would be a congratulation of him, who should account their being established in the faith with mutual love and unity, a fulfilling of his faith, as before, Php 2:2.



### Philippians 2:19

Ver. 19. *But I trust in the Lord Jesus;* diverting from his former exhortation, the more to comfort them, he expresseth his good hope (which in respect of the object we translate *trust*) in the Lord Jesus, exalted above every name, that he would be pleased, some way or other, to afford him such liberty, notwithstanding his restraint.

*To send Timotheus shortly unto you;* that he should, within a little while after the arrival of Epaphroditus, now upon his return, despatch Timothy to them.

*That I also may be of good comfort;* not for their further benevolence, but for the composing of their spirits, and settling of their affairs, which to him, solicitous of their souls' welfare, (as in a like case for others, 1Th 2:19, with 1Th 3:5), would be great satisfaction.

*When I know your state;* when he should be certainly acquainted how things went with them; who might justly expect his sympathy, Ro 12:15 1Co 12:26 2Co 11:28,29.

### Philippians 2:20

Ver. 20. *For I have no man likeminded;* for which purpose I have designed Timothy, who joins with me in this Epistle, and is most of the same mind with myself, endued with the same Spirit, faith, and love; finding none of like soul to him with myself, in desiring your prosperity, and so have pitched upon him.

*Who will naturally care for your state;* who, being cordial to me and you, will, without regard to lucre, ingenuously and sincerely, above all the rest I have here, propagate the kingdom of Christ amongst you, and promote your salvation in watching for your souls, as one that must give an account, that he may do it with joy, Heb 13:17.

## Philippians 2:21

Ver. 21. He doth here further commend Timothy, compared with the generality of those who with him did attend the ministry of the gospel at Rome, where it seems (whatever the papists pretend) Peter did not then preside as metropolitan. When he saith *all*, he doth not necessarily imply every individual besides Timothy, (though, as before, he knew not one like-minded as he was), but almost all, (as the universal sign is elsewhere synecdochically taken, Jer 6:3 Mt 10:22 Mr 1:5), or the most part of those then employed in the ministry, who were then at liberty, and whose inclinations, probably, he had inquired into.

*Seek their own;* did, though not simply and absolutely, yet after a sort, seek their own profit, ease, safety, pleasure, and satisfaction; called *their own*, in regard of their civil right, and the world's opinion, but yet at God's disposal, Hag 2:8. These they did (as John Mark in another case) prefer to a long and tedious journey, for the service of Christ, unto Philippi.

*Not the things which are Jesus Christ's;* so that they did postpone the glory of Christ, the safety and edification of the church there, to their own things. Wherefore he doth not mean it absolutely, that they did not seek the things of Christ, or that they did deny Christ, for it is apparent, even when he penned this Epistle, Php 1:13,14, with Ac 28:14,15, and Ro 1:8, there were many that did seriously seek Christ; but comparatively, and in a sort, they did not seek the things of Christ so intently as they should, 1Co 10:24,33, but failed as others did in other cases, Mt 26:58 2Ti 4:16; not as if all minding of their own things were denied to Christ's ministers, 1Ti 3:4,5 5:8; but they did slip their necks from under the yoke, and did not mind the glory of Christ in the church of Philippi, as he did.

## Philippians 2:22

Ver. 22. However others were found in some respects defective to the service of Christ, yet he appeals to their experience of the integrity and fidelity of Timothy in conjunction with himself, when he preached the gospel amongst them, and afterwards, Ac 16:1 17:15 18:5 Ac 19:22 20:4; which he amplifies and illustrates by a simile, when he saith, *as a son with*

*the father;* q. d. Just as a genuine and obedient son is wont to retain the spirit of his father that begat him: and Paul doth metaphorically call Timothy his *own son*, begotten by the gospel, 1Ti 1:2, his *dearly beloved Son*, 2Ti 1:2, and *faithful in the Lord*, 1Co 4:17, *likeminded* with himself, Php 1:1; with whom he had not only preached, but *served in the gospel*, Php 1:1, given himself wholly to the thing. He doth not say, served me, or under me, but *with me* in the gospel, i.e. to advance the glory of Christ in promoting the gospel, by helping with Paul, and labouring, working the work of the Lord, as Paul also did, and being sometime a sufferer under restraint for that service, as Paul himself, Heb 13:23, for the gospel, which is not a domination, but ministration, wherein this great apostle owns Timothy as his fellow minister.

#### Philippians 2:23

Ver. 23. *Him therefore I hope to send presently;* seeing the matter was thus, he thought not of any other to employ in the service of their faith, but hoped, i.e. *in the Lord Jesus* as Php 2:19, in a short time after his present writing, to send this excellent, humble, and approved young man, who would naturally care for their concerns, Php 2:20.

*So soon as I shall see how it will go with me;* even without any delay, (though as yet, to accompany Epaphroditus, he could not spare him, who was so useful to him in his bonds, to take care for things necessary to the propagation of the gospel, in the ample city of Rome), from the hour he should come to a certainty what would be the issue of his present imprisonment, which if it should end in his being offered up, he had satisfied them before, as it would be for his own advantage, Php 1:21, so, by the providence of God, no disservice to their faith, Php 2:17,18; from which, with ready submission to God's will, whatever occurred, it seems he had a greater inclination to conceive a good hope of freedom.

#### Philippians 2:24

Ver. 24. *But I trust in the Lord;* so he expresseth his strong persuasion, as the word we translate *trust*, being seldom used, but when the thing trusted imports the object.

*In the Lord;* i.e. Jesus, whom he doth absolutely and eminently call Lord, being so *highly exalted* above all others, Php 2:9, not only here, but elsewhere, Php 2:29 3:1 4:1,4,10; on whom he doth wholly depend, and to whom he doth submit for the issue.

*That I also myself shall come shortly:* before he had suggested his persuasion of abiding with them, Php 1:25, and here, that he might satisfy them he had not changed his mind, he adds for their comfort, that they might not be discouraged in their sufferings, what apprehensions he had, after a while, of being set at liberty (if God pleased); and if so, he would have them conceive, soon after he had done what was necessary at Rome, (for him who had care of all the churches), he designed to follow Timothy to them.

### Philippians 2:25

Ver. 25. *Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus;* in the mean time he gives them an account why he esteemed it needful to send back Epaphroditus (whom some, but without sufficient warrant, would have to be the same with Epaphras, Col 1:7 4:12 Phm 1:23) unto them, not as if he had failed in doing what he was intrusted with, but for other weighty reasons.

*My brother and companion in labour;* he would have them to know he had nothing to blame him for, but all in his commendation, whom in the common faith he owned to be his Christian brother, and fellow helper, or fellow worker in the business of the gospel, as he calls others in the like circumstances, Ro 16:3,21 2Co 8:23 Col 4:11 1Th 3:2 Phm 1:24.

*And fellow soldier;* and a faithful and a constant associate with him in the Christian warfare, 2Co 10:4 1Ti 1:18 Phm 1:2, under Christ their Captain, against all the assaults of the devil, and the carnal world, which are continually warring to destroy real Christianity.

*But your messenger;* but your apostle, which must be understood largely, as it is sometimes put for any evangelist, deacon, or minister of the gospel, Ro 16:7,9, well rendered by us in this place *messenger*, compared with

Php 4:18 2Co 8:22,23; not being a special apostle of Christ, Mt 10:2, but an officer of the church at Philippi, delegated by them to carry relief to Paul.

*And he that ministered to my wants*; unto whom, it seems, he did not only deliver the present for his support according to his trust and commission, wherein he faithfully served the church, but also, as their public minister, greatly help Paul the prisoner in what he stood most in need of, which Paul could not but value, being the Romans were so mild as to permit him, a captive, so good attendance and assistance; yet, to declare his affections to the church at Philippi, he chose rather to deny himself his necessaries, than not to comfort them in remitting their faithful messenger, so greatly desiring their welfare, with this letter to them.

#### Philippians 2:26

Ver. 26. *For he longed after you all*; he gives them the first reason of his present sending, not that Epaphroditus was unwilling to stay longer with him, but because he was greatly concerned for all of them of the church at Philippi, who had his heart, as they had Paul's, Php 1:8 4:1 Ro 1:11; solicitous to be with them to do their souls good.

*And was full of heaviness*; especially, considering their great affection to him, whom they had intrusted in this service, he was in such distress for them, that his spirits were even ready to fail him (as Mt 26:37) from sympathy, 2Co 11:29.

*Because that ye had heard that he had been sick*; knowing how much the certain report of his dangerous sickness in those circumstances, when they could understand nothing of his recovery, would affect them.

#### Philippians 2:27

Ver. 27. *For indeed he was sick nigh unto death*; by reason he was really taken with such a disease, as in its own nature was mortal, and in its tendency brought him even to death's door, as Isa 38:1.

*But God had mercy on him;* but God, who is the great Physician, and unto whom it belongs to show mercy unto those who address to him, (without whom bodily physicians can do nothing), by compassionating of him in his misery, was pleased to restore him to health, as 2Ki 20:5,6. But if any say: Would it not have been great mercy to have taken him from the miseries of this life, which are here prolonged? Consider Php 1:21. It may be answered:

1. Death itself, as it is a privation of life, and opposite to nature, was not desirable by Paul any more than by our Saviour, but might be looked upon as a kind of misery, not to be preferred to life looked upon in itself, but with respect to another, viz. as it is a passage to eternal life; so it is desirable for that life into which it leads the godly, and so is to be preferred to the miserable condition of this life. Paul speaks here of mercy respecting the former, considering that this life itself is a favour of God, for the service of him, and our neighbour. Further:
2. God's mercy here respects not only the grievous sickness of Epaphroditus, but the joint affliction that the loss of him would be both to the Philippians and to Paul, in thus juncture, as we may see from what follows.

*And not on him only, but on me also;* what power had Paul for working of miracles, was chiefly to convince infidels, and he could only exert it when God saw good for his own glory. Therefore he magnifies God's mercy here in a more ordinary way, as a return to prayer, when he was so afflicted for his colleague's illness; being upon an office of kindness and compassion, his loss would be in its tendency a ground of so much sorrow to the church, as well as to himself.

*Lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow;* his Christianity had not extinguished his natural affections, but if the church had then been bereft of Epaphroditus, it would have added the affliction for his loss to his affliction by his suffering for Christ, it would have doubled his affliction, (yet somewhat in a different sense from that, Php 1:16), it being an ill temper not to be grieved for the affliction of the church, Am 6:6; yet all our affections are to be moderated according to the will of God.

### Philippians 2:28

Ver. 28. *I sent him therefore the more carefully;* after his recovery, without delay, denying myself the comfort of his society, I have despatched him away to you.

*That, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice;* to the end that he whom you looked upon as dead might seasonably appear among you in person, and cheer you up in your troubles for him and me.

*And that I may be the less sorrowful;* and that I, who, by reason of your kindness to me, have occasioned his absence from you, might upon his safe return to you have somewhat to alleviate my grief, 2Co 6:10.

### Philippians 2:29

Ver. 29. *Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness:* hereupon, having given his due character, he chargeth them all, officers and people, to entertain him as a servant of the Lord, (as Christ would have them receive his servants, Mt 10:40,41, even with all spiritual joy), as sometimes the Galatians had received him, Ga 4:14.

*And hold such in reputation;* yea, as it becometh saints, Ro 16:2, to have such in esteem very highly for their work's sake, 1Th 5:13.

### Philippians 2:30

Ver. 30. *Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death;* by reason he was so zealous about the work of the ministry in the general, or in special to carry on that service, as the church's messenger, he was intrusted with, Php 4:18, not only in conveying their benevolence on so long and hazardous a journey, for the relief of the Lord's prisoner, which Christ would own and reward as his work, Mt 25:39,40, but in attending him (whom he was sent to visit) in his confinement, both within doors and abroad, as occasion required, (for it seems the Romans were so generous as to give free egress and regress to his visitants, Ac 28:30), whereby he contracted that forementioned disease that hazarded his life.

*Not regarding his life;* the preservation of which with respect to the work he was about, he did not consult, (Joh 12:25,26), but made little account of it, (as Es 4:16), yea, did even despise it in the service of Christ, as the original word doth import, being borrowed from those whose lives are hazarded in being cast to be devoured by beasts in the theatre, which he himself, by sad experience, sometime knew the meaning of, 1Co 15:32.

*To supply your lack of service toward me;* so faithful was he to his trust for the honour of his Lord, that to the very utmost of his strength, yea, and beyond it, that which he reckoned those who sent would have done themselves had they been present, (considering what the gospel requires, Ga 6:2 Heb 13:3), that he, Onisephorus-like, 2Ti 1:16, according to his measure made supply of in their absence.

### Philippians 3:1

#### Chapter Summary

Php 3:1-3 Paul exhorteth to rejoice in the Lord, and to beware of the false teachers of the circumcision,  
Php 3:4-6 showing that as a Jew he had better grounds of confidence than they.

Php 3:7-11 But that he disclaimed them all, trusting only to the justification which is of God by faith, and hoping to partake of the resurrection through Christ.

Php 3:12-14 He acknowledgeth his present imperfection, and that he was still anxiously striving for the prize,

Php 3:15,16 exhorting others to be like-minded,

Php 3:17 and to follow his example.

Php 3:18,19 For many were enemies to the gospel, being earthly minded,

Php 3:20,21 but his conversation and views were heavenly.

Ver. 1. Finally; moreover, or as to what remains, i.e. by way of conclusion to the antecedent matter, and transition to the general exhortation, he here premiseth to the subsequent admonition.



*My brethren;* willingly repeating the title of *brethren*, to show the respect he had for them, and to sweeten that he was about to subjoin.

*Rejoice in the Lord;* he moves them (as we, with almost all, do translate it) not as saluting or bidding them farewell, Lu 1:28 2Co 13:11; but to rejoice in the Lord, as Php 4:4, either connoting the object matter of their joy, compared with Php 3:3, or rather the efficient, importing for and according to the will of the Lord, in a manner agreeable to the pleasure of him who affords a ground of rejoicing in the midst of your tribulations and afflictions; considering his mercy, Php 2:18,27,29, they might taste how good the Lord is, as elsewhere, Ps 37:4 Jer 9:24, with Ro 5:11 2Co 10:17 1Th 5:16 1Pe 1:8; and so not after a carnal and worldly, but spiritual and Christian manner, to cheer up themselves in him, when the world frowns most, Ps 4:6,7.

*To write the same things to you;* writing of the same things cannot be referred to any other epistles which he wrote to the Philippians, but to those things which, while present with them, he had delivered to them by word of mouth, as Php 4:9: compare Isa 28:10 Ro 15:15 2Pe 1:12 1Jo 2:21.

*To me indeed is not grievous;* for my part, I do not do it with regret, nor account it tedious, (as some teachers do), as if I were ashamed of it, that I should do any thing superfluous, or not necessary, in writing again the same things for the matter of them, that I had before preached to preserve you from falling, as others have done, Php 3:18.

*But for you it is safe;* because this repetition of the same doctrine, though in another way, is pertinent to your edification, (yea, as some read, it is necessary), it is greatly advantageous for your stability in the faith, and to caution and keep you in safety, from the insinuations of false teachers, that I now give you a brief memorial in writing of those things, that you may be cautioned, and they may not, especially in this day of adversity, slip out of your memories, or be lost.

### Philippians 3:2

Ver. 2. Beware; he cautions all, both officers and people: and though the

original word doth signify to look with mind and eye, yet it is also frequently rendered, to take heed, Mr 8:15 12:38 8:9,23,33 1Co 16:10 2Jo 1:8.

*Of dogs;* of those dogs, (with the article emphatically proposed), a metaphor borrowed from those voracious, fierce, impure animals, whose price was not brought into the Lord's house, De 23:18 Pr 26:11 Isa 66:3 2Pe 2:22; to connote the false apostles, who endeavoured to corrupt the gospel with Judaism and profaneness, even antichristianism; compare Ps 22:16,20 Mt 7:6 15:26 Re 22:15. Some think the apostle may allude unto the proverbial speech: Take heed of a mad dog, forasmuch as false teachers, being acted as with a certain madness, would bite Christ and his apostles, and tear his body; and these mad dogs were the more dangerous, in that they did not bark so much as bite. Hence they say, Take heed of a dumb dog and still watcher. There were of several sorts, enemies to the cross of Christ, Ga 5:12 1Th 2:14,15; some more secret, as Absalom against Amnon, 2Sa 13:22, pretending contrary to their practice, 2Ki 8:13 13:22. Our Saviour bade his disciples beware of such, Mt 10:17, which he found to be of this temper, Ps 22:16,20 55:15; though some of them were but dumb dogs, Isa 56:10: some such there were amongst the Philipplians, who, notwithstanding their fair pretext, were enemies to the cross of Christ, did secretly disparage his true apostle, and tear his flock: see Php 3:18, with Php 1:15,16.

*Beware of evil workers;* such as pretended to labour in promoting the gospel of Christ, but secretly were doing mischief amongst Christians, not serving the glory of Christ but their own bellies, Php 3:18,19; being, as he elsewhere calls them, *deceitful workers*, 2Co 11:13, glorying in the flesh, Ga 6:13.

*Beware of the concision;* by an elegant allusion to the name circumcision, which rite the Jews did glory in, and some false teachers of Christianity, after the time of reformation, did urge as necessary to salvation, and require it from others, Ac 15:1 Ga 5:2,4 Ga 6:12. These Paul here, in a holy sarcasm, charges the Philipplians to take heed of, under the contemptible name of *the concision*, or cutting off, intimating that the exterior part of that typical work, which was done in the cutting off the foreskin, was now, from the coming of Christ, altogether made a mere cutting off the skin, condemned by God in the heathens, as a profane

incision, Le 19:28 21:5, where the LXX. use the same preposition in the compound word, the apostle here doth in contempt of the thing; which could now bring nothing of profit, nothing of holiness, nothing of honour to any Christian, could no more avail or advantage a man now, than if it were conferred on a beast, being no seal of the covenant now, but a stickling for that rite (when abolished by Christ) which was a mere rending of the church, and in that effect a cutting off from it, Ga 5:10,12. And the apostle doth three times significantly repeat this word, *beware* of these enemies to Christian purity and unity, to show how necessary it was to avoid their insinuations, against which he is more sharp in his Epistle to the Galatians.

### Philippians 3:3

Ver. 3. In opposition to and confutation of *the concision*, he speaks of himself, and all true believers in the fellowship of the gospel, partakers of the same grace and Spirit with him, Php 1:5,7 Php 2:1; and saith, *we*.

*Are the circumcision;* using a metonymy, are the circumcision now acceptable, and not displeasing to God, i.e. we are what is really signified by it, and therefore as to the main intent of it are the circumcised (it being usual to put circumcision for circumcised, Ac 11:2 Ro 3:30 4:12 15:8 Ga 2:7,8,9,12 Col 4:11 Tit 1:10): he doth not mean with respect to carnal circumcision, i.e. which is outward in the flesh, but which is inward in the Spirit, Ro 2:28,29, made without hands by the circumcision of Christ, with whom we are buried in baptism, Col 2:11,12; and being Christ's are Abraham's spiritual seed, and heirs of the promise, Ga 3:29.

*Which worship God in the spirit;* i.e. who have cut off all carnal confidence of salvation in any external services, (which they of the concision contend for), and do worship God, not with carnal, but spiritual worship, such as now under the gospel he doth require, Joh 4:23,24 Ro 1:9; from a renewed heart (Joh 3:8 1Pe 3:15; yielding peculiar adoration to the Lord our God, with a sincere mind, and by the assistance of his Spirit in the exercise of faith and love, Ro 8:5,6,26,27 Eph 3:16,17 6:18 Heb 10:22; according to the same rule he hath prescribed, Php 3:16, with Ro 12:1,2 Ga 6:16, in and through Christ, Heb 13:15.

*And rejoice in Christ Jesus;* in whom alone (not in Moses also, as false teachers would join them) glorying we trust for acceptance with God, 2Co 5:9 Ga 6:14; in communion with whom is ground of rejoicing through Christ, who is the substance or body of Mosaic shadows, Php 3:9.

*And have no confidence in the flesh;* and not rest, or trust, or place our hope in any carnal or external privilege or performance, or any other besides Jesus Christ, to commend us to God, Ga 3:2, 11-13.

### Philippians 3:4

Ver. 4. *Though I might also have confidence in the flesh:* to prevent any cavil about what he said, as if he did magnify Christ, and forbear glorying in those external privileges they did so much bear themselves upon, out of envy to them for what they had; he here argues upon supposition, (as elsewhere, to cut off occasion from boasters, 2Co 11:12,18,21,22), that, if it were lawful, and would turn to any good account, to confide in the flesh, he had the same ground the impostors had, and might build up that in himself which he had destroyed in others, Ga 2:18.

*If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:* yea, and to compare things by a just balance, if any of those he had justly taxed, or any other in conceit might hold his head higher in that way, he could produce not only as much, but much more ground of trust in those external rites, &c. as he that was most excellent; only that it was in vain, and of no value, Php 3:7.

### Philippians 3:5

Ver. 5. *Circumcised the eighth day;* or, there was, or I had, the eighth day circumcision; so it may by a usual supply of the verb be read, (as also what follows), without a metonymy. He begins with his birth privilege, intimating that he was not proselyted, but born within the pale of the church, and dedicated to God under the seal of the covenant at the day of God's appointment, Ge 17:12.

*Of the stock of Israel;* not sprung from ethnic parents, not an Ishmaelite,

or Edomite, but a genuine Israelite, Ro 11:1 2Co 11:22.

*Of the tribe of Benjamin;* of that more honest division where the temple stood, Jos 18:28, of the tribe of Benjamin, the son of beloved Rachel, and his father's darling, Ge 44:20; under God's special protection, De 33:12, forward in the reformation, Ezr 1:5.

*An Hebrew of the Hebrews;* a true descendant by Jacob from Abraham the father of the faithful, called an Hebrew, (Eber joined not in building Babel), Ge 10:21,25 14:13 1Sa 4:6; signifying that he was of the truly ancient lineage which retained the Hebrew tongue, Joh 8:33,39 Ac 22:2 Ro 4:12 2Co 11:22.

*As touching the law, a Pharisee;* by religion and stricter observation of the law, according to the prescript most in vogue, of that sect which for learning, knowledge of the Scripture, and reputation for holiness, was the most eminent, Ac 26:5; yea, and his father was of this order before him, Ac 23:6.

### Philippians 3:6

Ver. 6. *Concerning zeal;* not lukewarm, but exceedingly fervent in the strictest observances of the Pharisaic order, which was much in external devotion, Lu 18:12, very solicitous for proselytes, Mt 23:15,25. Herein he was above his equals for years, being exceedingly zealous of the traditions of the fathers, Ga 1:14, (and his zeal had been very commendable had it been in a good matter, Ga 4:18), that which the false apostles contended much for.

*Persecuting the church;* which he showed all manner of ways in his rage against the church of Christ, conceived by the Pharisees to be opposite to the law of Moses, Ac 9:1 22:3,4 26:9-12 Ga 1:13.

*Touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless;* he rises higher yet in his personal obedience; he might have been a zealot in his sect, and yet a hypocrite, if not of a scandalous life; but it seems, in the external observation of those things which the ceremonial or moral law did prescribe, he was, in the eye of man, of a blameless conversation,

resembling Zacharias and Elisabeth, Lu 1:6. Men could not tax him, he had behaved himself so conscientiously, Ac 23:1; yet when he had his eyes opened, he found here was no such matter of confidence for him before God, 1Sa 16:7 1Co 4:4. This external performance he found, when enlightened, was far short of internal and perfect obedience, Ro 7:7; and therefore he saw it necessary to change the ground and foundation of his confidence, all that he before rested on, unto Christ alone, 1Co 3:11 2Co 5:17; not seeking to receive honour from men, but that from Christ only, Joh 5:44.

### Philippians 3:7

Ver. 7. Having argued how he might have had as great a plea for confidence of his acceptance with God as any, if it would have held from the recited particulars, he now shows, how advantageous soever they had, in the judgment of others as well as himself, been reckoned to be, before he was effectually called, yet, since the scales fell off his eyes, that he could discern the truth, he was so far from accounting them profitable, that indeed he accounted them prejudicial; so far from an advantage, that they were a damage to him, looking for salvation by Christ alone, Mt 21:31 Ro 9:30. They were but as pebbles that hide the Pearl of price, Mt 13:46; as ciphers to this figure, that can make any thing valuable, therefore by Paul preferred to all before.

### Philippians 3:8

Ver. 8. *Yea doubtless*; he very emphatically, in the Greek, expresseth his stronger resolution upon further deliberation.

*And I count all things*; as he had reckoned and rated when he was first wrought upon to entertain Christ, so at present he did not alter his judgment, in the valuation of any thing he had rejected; yea, he speaks universally, what he did but indefinitely, using the present tense with a discrete particle: he disesteemed, not only his Jewish privileges and exercises before, but his Christian after conversion, as of any worth to commend him to God, or as any matter to be rested on for his justification before God; showing he did not ascribe his being accepted to eternal life,

unto his own works after he was renewed, and now had so many years served God in his apostolical ministry, performed such excellent works, planted so many churches, gained so many souls to Christ, passed through perils for the name of Christ. He remarkably puts in *all*, not only which he had before recited, but to all works as such whatsoever, yea, and to all whatsoever could be thought on besides Christ.

*But loss;* whatever they be in themselves, they are but loss or damage, of no worth to me, as to any dependence on them for acceptance with God.

*For the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord;* compared with the surpassing worth and excellency in the fiducial, experimental (as is plain from what follows) knowledge of Jesus Christ, in his person, offices, and benefits, wherein an eye of faith can discern transcendent mysteries, Isa 53:2 Joh 17:3 1Jo 5:20 1Ti 3:16 1Pe 1:12; to be adored by the sincere servants of so excellent a Lord, Mr 5:30,33; to have an interest in whom, and to enjoy whom, every thing besides is despicable.

*For whom I have suffered the loss of all things;* for whom (he adds) he did not only account them loss, (as Php 3:7), in his judgment and readiness to lose them, but he actually sustained the loss of them, Ac 20:23 1Co 4:13 2Co 11:23, &c.: as to any plea for his acceptance, he suffered them all to go in this case, which he could not do till God, of his rich and insuperable grace, wrought this resolution in him, by his Holy Spirit; then he willingly did it.

*And do count them but dung;* yea, and upon a right stating of the accounts he reckoned he was no loser by the exchange, in that he did esteem them, in a just balance, *comparing spiritual things with spiritual*, 1Co 2:13, in point of trust, those excellent things with an excellent Christ, to be no better than dung, as we with the Syriac and others translate the word; or dogs', meat, refuse cast to the dogs, with others; and might agree with the gust of those, Php 3:2, whom he calls *dogs*, Mt 15:26 Mr 7:27. Those much conversant in Greek authors do criticise largely upon the word, which is acknowledged on all hands to import things, if not loathsome, yet vile and contemptible, as chaff, &c.; and so not absolutely, but in their respect, did Paul account all things in comparison of Christ, even our good works proceeding from a heart sanctified but in part; he doth not mean of the substance, but quality of the trust or merit placed in them; not in

themselves, but in regard of confidence in them, as to pardon and acceptance with God: not in point of sanctification, but justification, the apostle is here speaking to. So to rely upon them would not only comparatively, but positively, be greatest loss, as keeping from Christ, who is the greatest gain, for which the loss of all besides was to be sustained.

*That I may win Christ;* that he might gain him, and be assured of an interest in him, whom he had above described in his state of humiliation and exaltation, and enjoy communion with him, Mt 11:28 Lu 14:26,33 2Co 4:6 1Jo 5:12; of whom he would receive more, and for whom he would do more, aiming at the making of Christ himself his own, by some kind of propriety, 1Co 1:30.

### Philippians 3:9

Ver. 9. *And be found in him;* a learned interpreter reads it actively, and may find, or recover, in him, all my losses. But following our own translation: by winning of Christ, the apostle doth not only mean the profession of the faith of the gospel, but his union with Christ, and participation of him, which, in the judgment of the all-seeing God, will answer all damages, when a man comes to stand in judgment at his tribunal here or hereafter, Ro 8:1; this being the only course can be taken to be *found of him in peace* at the last, 2Pe 3:14, for out of him is to be *under the curse*, Ga 3:10 Eph 2:3,12,13. It is necessary, therefore, that a man be implanted into him, who in his priestly office acted in our name towards God, Heb 5:1 10:7; and that he abide in him, our Head, Joh 6:56 15:4 Eph 5:30 Col 2:6,7 1Jo 5:12, and not be found in himself.

*Not having mine own righteousness;* that we might more fully understand his meaning of being found in Christ, he defines it negatively and positively, by distinguishing of a twofold righteousness, supposing one necessary to his acceptance with God:

1. Inherent, within him, which he called his *own*, as being personally performed by him.

*Which is of the law,* he describes it to be in a conformity to the law, and



the righteousness which the law requires, and those works of it, which if a man do, loving God with all his heart, he shall live in them, Ro 2:13 3:27,28 10:5. He makes no distinction of any works done by him before or after conversion, but declares he dare not adventure to be found in any personal inherent righteousness of his own, as to the special end of his justification before God, Ga 3:10-12. He doth not say, not having good works, unto which he was created in Christ Jesus to walk in them, Eph 2:10; but, *not having mine own righteousness*; he could not trust to any thing within him, as to his standing before God; however he was now enlightened, and acted by a better principle, having a better end than while a Pharisee, he could not upon that account have confidence towards God, no more than Noah, who was a prophet and preacher of righteousness, and in his generation, as to his inherent righteousness, the most perfect and just man; or Abraham, Ge 15:6 Ro 4:3; or David, Ps 130:3 143:2. But:

2. He stays upon a righteousness without him, which is not his own by any acquisition of his, but the righteousness of another, Tit 3:5-7, viz. of Christ, without which he would not be found, and in which he would be found, i.e. *that which is through the faith of Christ*, having him for its object; which he doth elsewhere oppose to the deeds of the law, or works of righteousness that he had done, Ro 3:28 Ga 2:16 Tit 3:5; as he doth believing unto doing, which describe these two sorts of righteousness, in the one of which he would be found at his trial for justification, in the other he would not, Ro 1:17 10:5,10,11.

Hence, he doth by the following expression signify more clearly the righteousness he stays himself upon, and wherein he would be found at God's tribunal, viz. the same righteousness which Noah had an eye upon (typified by the ark) when, by preparing an ark, he became *heir of the righteousness which is by faith*, Heb 11:7: *the righteousness which is of God by faith*; not his own, but counted unto him for righteousness; as unto Abraham, who *believed God*, Ro 4:3; as unto David, unto whom God imputed righteousness without works, Ro 4:6. This righteousness of God which he imputes upon believing, is not originally the believers' own inherent righteousness, but the righteousness of another in another, and theirs only derivatively from him, in whom believers are *made the righteousness of God*, 2Co 5:21 (who are not said to be made the mercy of God): unto them, being *in Christ Jesus*, he is *made righteousness*, 1Co 1:30, yea, *the righteousness of God*, Ro 1:17, (these are spoken of by the

apostle distinctly, as here, so elsewhere, Ro 10:3, with Ro 9:30,31), as not only freely given and imputed of God, but as being only of value in the judgment of God to justify, because performed by him, who is not only man but God, Ac 20:28 Ro 3:21,24,25 10:3. Not that it can be meant of the essential righteousness of God; for the righteousness by the faith of Christ, Ro 3:22, or that which constitutes them righteous in God's sight, upon their receiving of Christ and being implanted into him, was that obedience which he yielded unto God for them, voluntarily doing and suffering his will, Joh 15:13 Ro 5:6-8 Php 2:8 1Ti 6:13 Heb 9:14. For this obedience in their stead being fully performed by him who had the Divine and human nature conjoined in himself, was of infinite value, so that his mediatorial righteousness being some way imputed to those who are found in him, they are found righteous before God in his just judgment, as living members of Christ, to whom they are united by the Spirit and faith, Joh 6:56 15:4 Eph 5:30,32 Col 1:27. This mystical head and body making but one Christ, and thereupon his righteousness is reputed theirs (and thereby they are set right with God) in such a measure as is meet for it to be communicated from Head to members, who partake of the thing imputed, the righteousness which satisfied the law, and therefore most proper to justify against it, and answer the demands of it. And in that it is said to be *the righteousness of God by faith*, we consider faith as the means whereby we came to be interested in it. Faith itself is not the righteousness, which is *upon*, not in the believer, Ro 3:22, entering into judgment with God; but the righteousness which believers find in Christ, which was ordained of God to denominate them righteous. The law (which requires obedience) having its end in nothing but the righteousness which satisfied it, called the righteousness of Christ, Ro 10:4, with Tit 2:13 2Pe 1:1; wherein the law is established, Ro 3:31, and its righteousness fulfilled, Ro 8:4; inherent graces are not called the righteousness, but our own, Mt 5:20 Lu 21:19 Ro 10:8 2Co 8:8 Col 1:4 1Pe 1:21. Christ is so far righteousness as he is the end of the law, and that he is in the satisfaction itself, not in remission, which is an effect of it.

### Philippians 3:10

Ver. 10. *That I may know him;* as consequent upon the former he had by winning of Christ, he doth here insist upon sanctification, which would result from faith's exerting itself in a further saving, experimental

knowledge of Christ, to be found in whom, he undervalued all besides conformity to Christ in holiness, being to have communion with him in righteousness, 1Co 1:30; God having appointed those who are found in Christ, to be conformed to his image in holiness, Ro 8:29 2Co 3:18. This saving knowledge is expressed elsewhere in Scripture by the senses, Joh 10:4 2Co 2:14 4:6 Eph 1:18 1Pe 2:3. All and only those found in Christ, do so know him, Joh 5:20 6:46,69 Heb 8:11; and desire so to know him, Php 1:9, that they may have a lively sense of his power, communion, and conformity.

*The power of his resurrection;* the power of his resurrection in us; i.e. from the death of the soul, under a privation of spiritual life, and the image of God, unto newness of life, by the effectual working of the same Spirit which raised Christ himself from the dead, Ro 6:4,10 Eph 1:20 2:5,6; called *the first resurrection*, Re 20:5; when the soul is raised from under the dominion of sin where it lay.

*The fellowship of his sufferings;* by communion of Christ's sufferings, is not meant of bearing a part in the merit of his personal sufferings, but of being partaker of his sufferings in his members, or mystical body, whether inward or outward, (though this chiefly), Mt 20:23 Ac 9:4 Ro 8:17 2Co 1:7 4:10,11 Ga 5:24 Col 1:24 2Ti 2:11,12.

*Being made conformable unto his death;* some read, while made conformable to his death, not only in dying to sin, Ro 6:5,6, but in being conformed to his image in suffering, Ro 8:29; dying daily, or always living ready to be delivered to death for Jesus' sake upon his call, Ro 8:18 2Co 4:11. Such was his Christian temper, that he could cheerfully go through sufferings by reason of some communion and conformity he had in them with Jesus Christ.

### Philippians 3:11

Ver. 11. Being found in whom, after justification and sanctification, he doubts not to be glorified, (by a figure of a part, resurrection of the body, for the whole), though he expresseth himself as one that must pass through difficulties ere he attain not only to a spiritual resurrection from sin, but a glorious one of the body from the grave, even such a one as will be an

elevation or ascension of the body united to the soul, not only exempted from the grave, but exalted into the air, to be for ever with the Lord, 1Th 4:14,17; from whom he was assured no death should separate him, Ro 8:38,39 2Ti 4:8; who lived by faith in expectation of the time and the manner of it, 1Co 15:14,19,30,32 1Pe 1:6,7, that he should be then completely holy in his measure as Christ himself is.

### Philippians 3:12

Ver. 12. *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect:* by an elegant anticipation and correction, lest any should conclude from what he had written, as if he were now arrived at the height he aimed at in the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, and a full and perfect stature in that body, or almost at the very pitch, he doth here make a modest confession of his not attainment, (whatever false apostles might pretend to), 2Co 10:12 12:6,7; but of his earnest desire and utmost endeavour to be raised to the complete holiness he was designed to, *in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*, Eph 2:6.

*But I follow after;* he did pursue with all vigour, as those labouring in the agonistics, with all his might and main, not desponding of obtaining the goal, 1Co 9:26, with 2Co 4:8; with groanings and longings after utmost perfection, 2Co 5:4,6,7 2Pe 3:12; as those perfected in glory, Heb 12:23.

*If that I may apprehend that;* if that, or whether that, (not as intimating any uncertainty, but his more earnest contending for holiness in the Christian race), I may lay hold on that attainment to be as holy as men shall be at the resurrection.

*For which;* even as, or *for which,* ( as we render it well so, Php 4:10), i.e. for which end, or for this purpose, to be perfectly sanctified and glorified at the resurrection.

*I am apprehended of Christ Jesus;* he was at his effectual calling laid hold on by Christ, being found in whom, he was striving after perfection. This *apprehended* is a metaphor borrowed from those that run in a race, one taking hold of another to draw him after to win the prize as well as himself. He eyed Christ having taken him into his hand, as one that would

not suffer him to be plucked out by any opposers, Joh 10:28. He knew that Christ, having brought him nigh unto God, and undertook to work such a measure of holiness in him, one day would completely glorify him, so that, whatever he passed through, nothing should be lost, Joh 6:39.

### Philippians 3:13

Ver. 13. *Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended;* he repeats, in somewhat a different manner of expression, what he had written in the former verse, with a friendly compellation, gently and kindly to insinuate a caution against the false teachers' suggestion about perfection in this state, from the instance of himself, so eminently called to be an apostle of Christ, (1Co 10:12), who, after all his labours and sufferings for his sake, did reckon he had not yet arrived to the height of what he was called to.

*But this one thing I do;* but he would have them to understand that he was so intent upon this one thing, for which he was brought by the Spirit into communion with Christ, as if there were not any thing else worthy of his thoughts: as Ps 27:4 Lu 10:42.

*Forgetting those things which are behind;* like a true spiritual racer, not minding what he had received by grace from him who had took hold of him, or how much he had run of his Christian race, reckoning it was much short of the whole, or the main intended by Christ in taking hold of him.

*And reaching forth unto those things which are before;* but straining forward, as it were, with all his force and skill, casting himself like a dart towards the mark, so running that he might obtain (1Co 9:24) all and the whole, that was his particular portion for ever, to be received from God, as the purchase of Christ, even the total that God had in and by Jesus Christ designed him, and in Christ bestowed upon him, out of his rich grace, as his special allotment.

### Philippians 3:14

Ver. 14. *I press toward the mark;* he did not look back, Lu 9:62, nor was lazy, but did follow hard, with an eager pursuit, (Mt 11:12), after the

perfection that was in his eye; not erring from, his main scope; considering what he had received was but in part, he did still press for more, upon that ground that Christ had apprehended him for more, as if he were stretching out his hands to lay hold of it.

*For the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus;* trusting he should, through grace, be kept all along, maugre all difficulties, in the hand of Christ, till upon his account he should be fully possessed of all that was aimed at, even that which is styled the prize, or victorious palm of our high calling; and the Christians' may well be termed a high calling, considering their heavenly birth when called, and laid hold of by Christ, Joh 1:13, and the purchased inheritance eternally settled upon such spiritual, high-born princes, Eph 1:14 Re 1:6; who are by one oblation *perfected for ever*, Heb 10:14; which will appear most glorious when they are raised up in Christ, who will then give out all the salvation he hath called us unto.

### Philippians 3:15

Ver. 15. A learned man reads it from the Greek to this purpose: As many therefore as are perfect, let us think this; and if ye think any thing otherwise, even this also God will, or may, reveal to you, (besides what we have attained to), to walk by the same rule, to think the same thing: conceiving it not congruous to the sense, or syntax, but alien from all manner of speaking, to translate it imperatively: *Let us walk by the same rule*. But following our own translation:

*Let us therefore, as many as be perfect;* from the instance of himself, imitating Christ, in loving condescension and lowliness of mind, Php 2:3,5, worshipping God in the spirit, and not having confidence in the flesh, Php 3:3, in the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, Php 3:10, pressing forward to absolute perfection, he here doth with himself encourage as many rulers and ruled who were settled in the fundamentals of Christianity, and who had made progress in holiness, to mind that main business of religion, for the prevention of what might ensue upon exasperating differences; whereupon he styles them comparatively perfect in the way, not in the heavenly country, 1Co 13:10; which doth not disagree with what he said before, if we further distinguish of a perfection:

1. Of integrity and sincerity, which some call of parts; as a perfect living child, that hath all the parts of the parent, so, upon the new birth, every real believer receiving *grace for grace*, Joh 1:13,16.
2. Of maturity, proficiency or degrees where grown to a full stature in Christ; here relatively and comparatively to others, who are more rude, ignorant, and weak brethren, since, in regard of their progress in godliness, they are not taken up with childish things, 1Co 13:9-11, with 1Co 14:20; but are grown more adult, and no more children, 1Co 2:6 Eph 4:13,14 Heb 5:13,14 6:1; which he doth elsewhere, in regard of their experimental knowledge, call *spiritual*, Ga 6:1, who here *worship God in the spirit*, Php 3:3: as many as are sincere, of whatsoever stature, whether bishops, deacons, or private Christians.

*Be thus minded*; he would have them to be so minded as he himself was, in renouncing all carnal confidence, acknowledging their gradual imperfection, and still to be striving and contending to a fuller measure of holiness, till they come to be consummate in Christ.

*And if in any thing ye be otherwise minded*; and if any, through ignorance of Christ and themselves, conversing with those ready to mislead them, should be of any other persuasion in some things only, considering the different attainments of the strong and weak, and thereupon the variety of sentiments, whence would spring some differences not only in opinions but practices amongst them, (which yet hindered not their agreement in what they were attained to),

*God shall reveal even this unto you*; he hoped Christ, who had already called or apprehended those sincere ones, would in due time rescue them from so dangerous an error, 1Jo 2:20,27, if they would attend upon him in the use of means to come to the knowledge of the truth, with faith and prayer, yielding up themselves to be taught of him.

### Philippians 3:16

Ver. 16. *Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained*; however, let us, or we ought to, walk in obedience to Christ, love to him and each other, according to the light we have already received, trusting he would make

known his mind more clearly to us. Our using the light we have well, is the ready way to have more: it behoves us, then, to live suitably to that degree of the knowledge of Christ we have attained, 1Jo 2:3-5 but still within our lines, with regard to the same rule.

*Let us walk by the same rule:* whether in this metaphorical allusion the apostle do borrow his phrase from architects, soldiers, or racers, is not much material. Be sure he had an eye to that *same rule* which was well known to them, and by which he regulated himself, and therefore it was such a canon as really had a Divine stalp upon it, that very canon in exact conformity whereunto God's Israel might be sure of the best peace, Ga 6:16 Php 4:7. The unerring word of God, exemplified in the condescending love of Christ, whom he had proposed to their imitation, in whom he was found, and the fellowship of whose sufferings he desired to know more perfectly, being heavenly-minded, in opposition to those who became enemies to his cross, Php 3:18,19: With Ga 6:14,15; the rule of faith, love, and a Christian life, or heavenly conversation, which he doth elsewhere call a walking in the Spirit, and according to the Spirit, in opposition to walking in and after the flesh, Ro 8:1,5 Ga 5:16.

*Let us mind the same thing:* in like manner, all of us who are spiritual, grown Christians, should be so affected, being of one accord, one mind, and one judgment, in imitation of Christ; so far that the adult, or better grown Christians, should not despise the weak or less grown, neither should they judge the adult; but in the fundamental articles, those main principles of the Christian institution wherein we all agree, in that common salvation towards which we all press, agreeable to the analogy of faith, we should still be perfecting holiness in the fear of God, by the same rule of faith, and loving and mutual condescension, by the unity of our judgments in the main business of religion, the concord of our affections, the concurrence of our ends, our consent and delight in the same truth: we should declare to the church of God, in our differences Christ is not divided, but in the variety of persuasions in lesser matters, (not fundamental), the purity, holiness, and peace of the church is still preserved, Php 2:14. The main principles attained wherein dissenting parties agree, being the measure of all other doctrines, to hold nothing inconsistent with the majesty or truth of the foundation; to walk circumspectly, and in order, according to that wherein is a harmony; not to break our rank, or leave our station, contrary to received prescripts;



wherein every Christian is to exercise a judgment of discerning for himself, Ro 14:23, and not impose on each other, (as that sort of Christian Jews who did compel the Christian Gentiles, Ga 2:14,15, &c.) superadding no preter-evangelical doctrine, Ga 1:8,9; to live godly, agreeably to known truths; to serve God soberly and prudently, (with due moderation), in our places, consonantly to *the measure of the rule God hath distributed to us*, 2Co 10:13, holding the truths wherein we agree in love, unity, and constancy. It being more reasonable that the many truths wherein we agree, should cause us to join in love, which is a Christian duty, rather than the few opinions wherein we disagree, should cause a breach in affection, which is a human infirmity.

### Philippians 3:17

Ver. 17. *Brethren, be followers together of me;* he doth here not only propound his own single example to the brethren at Philippi, as he doth to others elsewhere, 1Co 4:16, implying the limitation there expressed, viz. as he and others were followers of God and Christ, 1Co 11:1 Eph 5:1 1Th 1:6 2:14; but, by a word expressing joint consent, he would have them to be fellow imitators or fellow followers of him and others in what he had exhorted them to, yea, with one heart.

*And mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample;* so they would be like other churches which he had planted, that had an eye upon his example; whom he would have them accurately to observe, following their faith, and *considering the end of their conversation*, Heb 13:7, agreeing with his, and Timothy's, (who joined with him in this Epistle), and other's, in opposition to those who were causal of division, Ro 16:17 1Co 1:12, even such as he describes, Php 3:18,19; who did not lord it over God's heritage, but were ensamples (in faith, love, and humility) to the flock, 2Co 1:24 1Ti 4:12 Tit 2:7,8 1Pe 5:3.

### Philippians 3:18

Ver. 18. He doth, as in a parenthesis, according to our Bibles, allege reasons for his proposals.

*For many walk;* there were not a few who did at present walk otherwise, being *evil workers*, Php 3:2, not to be imitated or followed, Mt 7:22,23.

*Of whom I have told you often;* of which, as a faithful watchman, he had again and again given them warning.

*And now tell you even weeping;* and now also by this present writing, out of great compassion to their immortal souls, he did repeat it again with tears in his eyes.

*That they are the enemies of the cross of Christ;* they were such who did in the general (whatever they might under a fair show pretend) oppose the gospel of Christ, yea, did in effect under the cloak of profession, that which was in a tendency to evert the true Christian doctrine, discipline, and holiness. They did go about to mingle the law and the gospel, to join Moses with Christ for justification, as Php 3:4, &c.; Ga 2:21, and so undervalue redemption from the curse, Ga 3:13 5:2,4. In special, these Epicureans (as it should seem they were by the following character, rather than real Christians) might rightly be called enemies, because they did seem by their sensuality to restore the kingdom to those whom Christ had on his cross openly spoiled of it, Col 2:15, that they might gratify the Jews in urging the necessity of circumcision; so undermining the virtue and merit of Christ's passion, defirming the end of it, as the Jews did him in it, and in times of trial avoid persecution, Ga 6:12,14, they showed themselves by interpretation really to be enemies to Christ crucified, 1Co 1:23,24 2:2.

### Philippians 3:19

Ver. 19. *Whose end is destruction;* their condition will at last be miserable, as he had limited above, Php 1:28, of their being under the dismal *token of perdition*; their end will be *according to their works*, 2Co 11:15. However they may live delicately at present, in gratifying their sensual appetites, be free from persecution, admired and respected by many, and please themselves in their present course, yet their fruit and wages at the last cast will be dreadful, Ro 6:21,23 Ga 6:8 Re 18:8 19:20,21.

*Whose God is their belly;* the great business of these is, their sensuality, their good eating and drinking; they mind the pleasing of their carnal appetite, as if it were their God, 2Pe 2:13,18 3:3; instead of our Lord Jesus Christ, really they serve their own belly, Ro 16:18, love their pleasures indeed more than God, 2Ti 3:4.

*And whose glory is in their shame;* yea, they boast of those things whereof they ought to be ashamed, thinking it reputation they have got many to imitate them, Joh 5:44 12:43 they are puffed up with that which should rather make them to blush, 1Co 5:2, as being attended at last with confusion.

*Who mind earthly things;* however under the colour of Christianity, they at present are taken up in the pursuit of their sensual and earthly enjoyments. The Greek word comprehends the actions and operations of the mind, will, and affections, importing they did inordinately mind, favour, and relish sublunary accommodations, Ro 8:5, the profits, ease, bounty, pleasure, and glory of this world, preferring them in their hearts to the things of Christ.

### Philippians 3:20

Ver. 20. *For our conversation is in heaven;* he here adds a further reason why he would have them to be fellow followers of him, and such-like as he, because though they were not already in heaven, yet their citizenship was there, the privileges of that city did belong to them, who, according to the municipal laws of that corporation (which cannot lose its charter or be discorporated) whereof they were free denizens, made it their business to demean themselves with minds above the earth, Php 1:27 2Co 4:18 Eph 2:6 Col 3:1 accounting nothing inconvenient to any one of them, which was for the advantage of the whole community; they set their affections on things above, Joh 14:2 2Co 12:2-5 Heb 13:14.

*From whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ;* and reason good, for from thence, or from that place, in the heavens, or heaven, they stedfastly expect him who is both Lord and Christ, Ac 1:11 1Co 1:7 1Th 1:10 2Ti 4:8 Tit 2:13, to come not only as their judge, 2Ti 4:8, but as their heart-comforting Saviour, Heb 9:28.

## Philippians 3:21

Ver. 21. *Who shall change our vile body;* who shall transform the body of our humility, or our lowliness, i.e. our lowbrought body, the singular for the plural, our humble and mean bodies, which depend upon and are beholden to our eating and drinking, and the actions which follow thereupon, that do humble and lower them, Lu 1:48; now, it may be, languishing with pains, sickness, and many infirmities, perhaps cooped up in a noisome prison, and, it may be, an unclean dungeon, sown in dishonour and weakness in the grave, 1Co 15:43.

*That it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body;* that they may be conformed to Christ's incorruptible, impassible, and immortal body, and so glorious, 1Co 15:51-53, in their proportion agreeing with the blessed body of our Lord when he shall appear, 1Jo 3:1-3, and they shall see him with the eyes of their bodies, made like unto his, Job 19:26,27 Col 3:4, not in equality, but only in respect of the same qualities that his body hath, 1Co 15:51,52 1Th 4:17. A conformity agreeable to that of head and members, that like as the sun is the fountain of all that glory which the stars have, so shall our Lord and Saviour Christ's glory be of all our glory, Da 12:3 Mt 16:27 1Co 15:40,41 2Co 4:14 Re 21:11,23. But we must not imagine that our bodies shall be raised to the same height and degree of glory that his is: and therefore in regard of that power and majesty which is included in the body of Christ from the hypostatical union, our bodies will not be conformable, or made like to his; but in glory which he obtained from his resurrection. For the body of Christ may be considered either:

1. In its nature, and so there will be an agreement betwixt the bodies of saints and Christ's body; or:
2. In regard of its subsistence in the person of the Word, and so there will be none.

For it is impossible that the saints should be raised up to the same union with the Godhead which Christ hath. But however their bodies may be tormented here, by unreasonable persecutors, then they shall be like to his glorious body.

*According to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself:* how incredible soever this may appear to be unto carnal reason, Ac 17:32 26:8, yet he who thought it no robbery to be equal with God the Father, and therefore can do what he pleaseth, Lu 18:27, can, by the same Divine power whereby he himself was raised from the grave, Joh 5:21,26,29 Eph 1:19,20, subject all things to himself, destroy death and the grave, 1Co 15:24-27 Heb 2:8,14, raise them up to the throne of his glory, Mt 19:28, and make them like the angels in glory.

## Philippians 4:1

### Chapter Summary

Php 4:1 Paul excitemeth to steadfastness in Christ,  
Php 4:2 and after some particular admonitions,  
Php 4:3,4 exhorteth generally to religious joy,  
Php 4:5 moderation,  
Php 4:6,7 trust in God with prayer,  
Php 4:8,9 and to every branch of moral goodness.  
Php 4:10-14 He testifieth his joy in the care shown by the Philippians for his supply in prison, though being always content he was above want,  
Php 4:15-17 and commendeth their former liberality to him, not for his own sake, but for the good that would redound to them from it.  
Php 4:18,19 He acknowledgeth the receipt of their late bounty, assuring them that God would both accept and reward it.  
Php 4:20-23 He giveth glory to God, and concludeth with salutations, and a blessing.

Ver. 1. Therefore; this particle connotes that which follows to be inferred by way of conclusion from what he had premised in the close of the former chapter, in opposition to the shame of the earthly-minded, concerning the glory of the heavenly-minded.

*My brethren;* he affectionately owns them to be his brethren in the common faith, Tit 1:4.

*Dearly beloved;* those who, not being enticed by the insinuations of seducers, did adhere to him, had his sincere affections, Php 2:12.

*And longed for;* whose safety and felicity every way he most heartily desired, Php 1:8 2:26; with Ro 1:11 1Th 3:6.

*My joy;* intimating how their faith and holiness did at present afford matter of rejoicing to him, Php 1:4,7,8, with 1Th 2:19,20.

*And crown;* he was not ambitious of man's applause, but accounted them his honour and glory, the great ornament of his ministry, whereby they were converted to Christ, (as elsewhere in Scripture a crown is taken figuratively, Pr 12:4 14:24 16:31 17:6), 1Th 2:19; the reward which had some similitude with the honour they had who were victorious in a race, Php 2:16,17; as Jas 1:12 1Pe 5:4 Re 2:10 Re 3:11.

*So stand fast;* he exhorteth them not barely to stand, but so to stand that they did not fall, 1Co 10:12. Hereupon he adds, *in the Lord;* i.e. considering their relation unto Christ, they would derive power and virtue from him, into whom they were implanted, to persevere, conformably to his will, in Christian concord, till they were made like to him, Php 3:21, with Php 1:27 Joh 15:4,7 1Co 15:58 16:13 Ga 5:7 Eph 6:11,14.

*My dearly beloved;* in whom looking upon them, (the more to fix them), he pathetically and rhetorically repeats his endearing compellation *beloved*.

#### Philippians 4:2

Ver. 2. *I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche:* after his general persuasive to perseverance, he doth here particularly by name with great affectionateness importune two women, who had been very useful in that church for the furtherance of the gospel, that they would come to a better understanding of each other, and the interest of religion amongst them, who received the gospel upon Paul's preaching, Ac 16:13.

*That they be of the same mind in the Lord;* as he had moved all to love,

unity, and amity, (as it became disciples of Christ), Php 2:2; so he doth here especially move them unto unanimity, according to the mind of the Lord, and his way, for the sake of him whose honour is to be preferred to all private concerns, Ro 15:5.

### Philippians 4:3

Ver. 3. *And I entreat thee also, true yoke-fellow;* he subjoins his most importunate request to some eminent person who did faithfully and sincerely draw in the same yoke of Christ with him, even such another in that church at Philippi, (whom they well knew from the freedom he used when he planted the gospel amongst them, or might more distinctly know from Epaphroditus), as he had represented Timothy to be, Php 2:20. Some, both ancient and modern, would have this to be Paul's own wife, whom he left behind; but seeing it doth not appear that when he wrote this Epistle he had ever staid above two months at Philippi, he elsewhere reckons himself amongst the unmarried, 1Co 7:8, and wished those who had the gift of continency to continue so, under the sharp persecution of the church, for which he was frequent in journeying, labours, and prisons, 2Co 11:23, there is no cogent argument to evince that he was then married, however he had liberty to have had a wife, as well as Peter and others: see Mt 19:29 22:28, with 1Co 9:5. Some conceive by *yoke-fellow* here is meant the lawful husband of one of the forenamed honourable matrons: others, one called by that proper name in Greek; but the epithet annexed doth not so well suit. It may suffice to say it was an intimate colleague and sincere companion of Paul's, who was alike affected with him, drawing in the same yoke, for the furtherance of the gospel, his genuine helper; whose special aid, by advice, prayer, and otherwise, he solicited on the behalf of those pious women, who aforesaid (though not by public preaching in the church, which he elsewhere disallowed, 1Co 14:34,35 1Ti 2:12, but privately) had not only wrought, but earnestly striven together with him, by teaching youth, and other women, good things, Tit 2:3,4 putting themselves in hazard with him, in that difficult work he had amongst them, and enduring troubles with him for the propagation of the gospel, Php 1:27 Ac 16:13; as Phebe, and Priscilla, and Mary, elsewhere, Ac 18:2,3,26 Ro 16:1-3 1Ti 5:10 2Ti 4:19; in offices proper to their sex.

*Clement*, probably, was some church officer of Roman extract in that

colony at Philippi; whether he, about whose order in the catalogue of Roman bishops historians dispute, there is no certainty.

*And with other my fellow labourers;* the rest, whom he doth not name, but only describe by the assistance they gave him in the holy work of the gospel, probably were other church officers.

*Whose names are in the book of life;* whose names he did in charity apprehend to be enrolled in heaven, as our Saviour speaks to the rejoicing of his seventy disciples, Lu 10:20. We are not to think there is any material book wherein their names were written, but that he useth it as a borrowed speech, intimating his persuasion of them, (as of the election of others, 1Th 1:4, with 1Pe 1:2), that their life was as certainly sealed up with God, as if their names had been written in a book for that purpose; looking upon them by their fruit as truly gracious persons, whom God had effectually called according to his purpose, Ro 8:28,29,33; which is a book written, Ex 32:32 Isa 4:3 Eze 13:9 Da 12:1 Re 3:5 13:8 20:12 21:27; wherein the Lord knows who are his, 2Ti 2:19.

#### Philippians 4:4

Ver. 4. He doth here, considering the importance of Christian cheerfulness, which he had twice before put them upon, Php 2:18 3:1, stir them up to true rejoicing, not only by repetition of the injunction, but by extending the duty to all times, and under all conditions. For though there be woe to the enemies of Christ's cross, who laugh at his followers, Lu 6:25; yet they who are really found in him, have evermore ground of rejoicing, for all the benefits of God they have through him, and the far more excellent they do expect to receive upon his account, Joh 16:33 1Co 1:31 1Th 5:16 1Pe 1:8.

#### Philippians 4:5

Ver. 5. *Let your moderation be known;* exercising an even temper of mind, in governing the sensual appetite, with modesty, patience, and gentleness, in opposition to all impetuosity and inordinacy of affections, yea, to all excess and exorbitances in words and actions.



*Unto all men;* both in the eye of the church, and those without, according to our Saviour's sermon and example, Mt 5:16,39-41 17:27; not rigorously insisting upon our own rights, but with due self-denial putting the best construction upon the words and deeds of others; not troubling our hearts, Joh 14:1; banishing that solicitude about the good things of this life, which he doth in the next verse caution against: so 1Co 7:29-32.

*The Lord is at hand;* considering the cogent motive of the Lord's approach, as Heb 10:25 Jas 5:8; not only in regard of his Deity, whereby he reigns amongst his enemies, Ac 17:27 Jer 23:29; nor in regard of his special aids to his servants: Ps 14:5; but in regard of his coming to judgment, and setting all things right in a just distribution of rewards and punishments, to comfort his children, and confound those that disobey him, Mt 18:34,35 Mr 10:29,30 Col 3:24 Col 4:1 Heb 10:37 1Pe 3:8,9 Re 22:20. But still we must remember, when we conceive of the Lord's being at hand in regard of death and judgment, we must not take our own but God's measures, in waiting our appointed time during his pleasure, Mt 24:36 Ac 1:7.

#### Philippians 4:6

Ver. 6. *Be careful for nothing;* he dissuades not from a spiritual care, arising from a good principle, according to a right rule, for a good end; this care of diligence, in a due manner, within our own sphere, is incumbent on us, both for spirituals and temporals; as Php 2:20; with Ro 12:11 2Co 11:28 12:14 2Th 3:10 1Ti 5:8 2Ti 2:15: yet he earnestly dissuades from and prohibits all carnal solicitude, or carking, distrustful, worldly care, which doth divide and, as it were, split the heart in pieces; that anxious solicitude which doth torture the mind with such thoughts as our blessed Lord will not allow so much as one of them to be predominant in his real disciples, Mt 6:25, because such immoderate, distracting care, is on our part a disparagement to our heavenly Father's good providence, Mt 6:32; with Ps 55:22 127:1,2 Mt 4:18,19 1Pe 5:7. The remedy against which he doth here subjoin.

*But in every thing;* but in all things, or in every occurring necessity, whether prosperous or adverse; sacred or civil, public or private: some render it, every time, in every condition, on every occasion.

*By prayer;* by petition or appreciation of good to ourselves or others; mercies, or blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal.

*And supplication;* and by a deprecation of evils felt or feared, wrath and judgments deserved.

*With thanksgiving;* with a grateful acknowledgment of mercies received, benefits conferred, and deliverances vouchsafed; implying that no prayer is acceptable to God, without this ingredient of thankful resentment of his favours.

*Let your requests be made known unto God:* our affectionate desires should be opened to God, and poured forth before him; not that he is ignorant of us or our wants in any circumstances, but that he accounts himself glorified by our addresses to him, in seeking to be approved and assisted of him in every condition.

### Philippians 4:7

Ver. 7. He adds, as an encouragement to prayer, *the peace of God*, who was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, so that upon believing and obeying the gospel, they who really do so are reconciled to him, 2Co 5:19,20, and at peace with him, Ro 5:1, through Christ, who leaves and gives peace to his, Joh 14:27. It is then *the peace of God*, in that he is the object, the donor, the author of it, by his Spirit, to those who persevere in the communion of Christ, as in Php 4:9, have the God of peace with them, and a sense thereof in their own spirits.

*Which passeth all understanding:* how it transcends a finite understanding, may be answered:

1. In that he who hath perceived it, before he had done so, could not sufficiently conceive in his own mind what at length it might be, 1Co 2:9: hence:
2. After it is perceived, it cannot be that any one should esteem and express the power and virtue of it, according to the worth and

excellency of the matter. Not that the peace should affect the heart, the will without the intervention of the understanding; since it is said to keep the heart and mind; and, Re 2:17, the *white stone* given to believers (whereby this peace is signified) is of that kind, *which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it*; and it is no new thing in Scripture, to say that doth exceed all understanding, which human understanding doth not so distinctly conceive as to be able to express it, as Eph 3:19. So man's mind doth receive that which is taken into admiration, that it perceives something always to remain, which it hath notice of, yet cannot so perceive as to express the whole of it.

*Shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus*; wherefore they who are really interested in this peace shall be kept as in a garrison, 1Pe 1:5. So their whole souls shall be in safety against the assaults of Satan, their affections and reasoning shall be so kept in order, that, through Christ, they shall not finally fall.

#### Philippians 4:8

Ver. 8. As to what remains, he doth, with the fair compellation of *brethren*, furthermore propose to their serious consideration, living in the neighbourhood of the Gentiles, what he doth here, hastening to a conclusion, heap up and fold together: especially, *whatsoever things are true*, agree with truth and doctrine, in word and conversation, which show candour and sincerity of conscience, both with reference to believers and to infidels, Ps 15:2 Eph 4:14,15,25.

*Honest*; venerable and grave, as *becometh the gospel*, Php 1:27, to adorn the gospel of God our Saviour, Ro 12:17 13:13 Tit 2:10; avoiding what may argue levity or dishonesty in gesture, apparel, words, and deeds, 2Co 7:2.

*Just*; giving what is due to every one by the law of nature, or nations, or the country, without guile, and not injuring any one, Ru 3:13 Ne 5:11 Mt 22:21 Ro 13:7,8 Col 4:1 1Ti 5:8 Tit 1:8 2:12.

*Pure*; keeping themselves *undefiled in the way*, Ps 119:1, from the pollution of sin, 1Joh 3:3, and the blemishes of filthy words and deeds,

Eph 4:29 5:3-5.

*Lovely;* whatsoever may gain the real respect of, and be grateful to, good men, in an affable deportment acceptable to God, Tit 3:2.

*Of good report;* whatsoever is in a tendency to maintain a good name; not to court vain-glory or popular applause, Ga 1:10, but that which may be for the honour of Christ, and the reputation of the gospel among the Gentiles, Ro 15:2 1Pe 2:12; in agreement with the word of God; otherwise we must pass through evil as well as good report, Lu 16:15 2Co 6:8.

*If there be any virtue, and if there be any praise;* and upon supposition there be really any other commendable practice amongst any, any praiseworthy deportment.

*Think on these things;* diligently consider and prosecute these things.

Philippians 4:9

Ver. 9. *Those things, which ye have both learned;* he recommends to their serious practice not new things, but those weighty matters which they had before learned of him when preaching amongst them.

*And received, and heard;* yea, and approved as worthy to be kept.

*And seen in me;* and that all things might be more lively and affecting, with an increase of words, he moves with this, that his doctrine was exemplified by his own practice when amongst them, (as he had hinted before, Php 3:17,) expressing the same thing by his life which he did by his word, 1Ti 4:12 1Pe 5:3.

*Do;* whereupon he would have them to be doers also of the same things, 1Th 1:6 2:13 Heb 13:7 Jas 1:22.

*And the God of peace shall be with you;* and in this practice you have comfort from the presence of the God of peace, (as above, Php 4:7,) who will embrace and prosper you, being reconciled to you in Christ, and at peace with you: so Ro 15:5,33 16:20 2Co 13:11 1Th 5:23.

### Philippians 4:10

Ver. 10. *But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly;* he signifies that he had been much raised in true spiritual (not carnal) joy, that the Lord had by his Spirit wrought in them such enlargedness of heart, as did show itself in their care of him for the sake of Christ. What follows, a learned man writes, may be rendered, that now at last, ye could bring to maturity the care of me; for whom indeed ye had been careful, but had not the ability. The apostle's phrase is borrowed from trees, which in the winter season keep their sap within the bark, in the spring and summer grow green, and yield their fruit: so was the Philippians' care of Paul, suffering in Christ's cause; for the Greek word we translate *flourished again*, or revived, is sometimes used actively, and transitively. So in the Seventy, Eze 17:24; with the apocryphal writer, APC Sir 1:18 11:22 50:11: and so it may be expounded here, not only of reviving, growing green, and budding again, (which is less than the thing is), but of bringing forth fruit. For their care of Paul was in their heart, but by reason of troubles it could not exert itself, or yield fruit, but only in the season, (as Mt 21:34), which the apostle, softening his speech, allegeth as an apology for them: he doth not say there was not any opportunity in respect of himself, but a seasonableness in respect of them; they being destitute of a faculty of bringing forth fruit, Php 4:17, (which yet they always nourished in their most intimate affections towards him), till the present, when at length they had a seasonableness and an ability given them of God, to the perfecting of that fruit for the apostle. For what we translate *wherein*, may, as Php 3:12, be translated, for where: compare the use of the particle and article, Mt 18:4, with Mt 26:50 Ro 5:12.

### Philippians 4:11

Ver. 11. *Not that I speak in respect of want:* he doth anticipate any conceit they might have, as if he had a mean soul, and his joy were solely for the fruit of their care he had received in the supply of his want, as the same word is elsewhere used, Mt 12:44.

*For I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content;*

because he knew better things; being instructed at a higher rate, he had practically learned to rest satisfied with his own lot, 2Co 11:27, accounting God's allowance a sufficiency to him in any condition, 1Ti 6:6,8. How adverse soever his state was, he had attained to such equanimity that he could be content with such things as he had, Heb 13:5, and cheerfully and patiently submit to God's most wise disposal of him, knowing his most righteous and tender hearted Father would never leave nor forsake him, having already given him greater things than any of these sublunary ones he could stand in need of, Ro 8:32.

### Philippians 4:12

Ver. 12. He explains the equality of his mind he had through grace attained to, in a free submission to God, either in the absence or affluence of external good things.

*I know both how to be abased;* in a mean and ignominious state, he had spiritual skill to exercise suitable graces without murmuring, or repining when trampled on, 1Co 4:11 2Co 11:27; having entirely resigned his will to the will of God.

*And I know how to abound;* in a higher state, had in much esteem, and well accommodated.

*Every where and in all things I am instructed;* yea, in all circumstances religiously initiated and taught, fortified against temptations on all hands.

*Both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need;* when faring well, and having a large revenue, to be temperate, 1Co 9:25, humble, and communicative, 1Ti 6:18. When hungry and poor, not to be distressed, but confident our heavenly Father will provide enough in his season, Mt 6:32 7:11 2Co 4:8, giving an elixir at present that will turn all into gold.

### Philippians 4:13

Ver. 13. Having written of the great things he had learned, that it might not

be attributed to his proud conceit, or give occasion to any others' vanity to boast, (as he had recourse before to the Divine efficiency to will and do, Php 2:13), he rests solely for power upon Christ, being found in whom, when he saith he *can do all things*, we are not to understand it absolutely, but restrictively to the subject matter he had before mentioned in the precedent verses, intimating he could by the Lord's help use well both prosperity and adversity: or, all those things the Lord called him to and put him upon. Not, as the papists urge, that any mere man since the fall is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God; but that he by faith being united to Christ, by the power of his Spirit dwelling in him, hath in the Lord righteousness and strength, Isa 45:24; and thereupon hath a sincere respect to all God's commands, as David had, Ps 119:6; so also had Zacharias and Elisabeth, Lu 1:6; in opposition to Pharisaeal obedience: not by any power he had of himself, but through Christ strengthening of him, so that God would accept of his sincere performance (though not every way perfect) of what was incumbent on him.

#### Philippians 4:14

Ver. 14. Lest any should suspect, from what he had suggested of his contentment, that he was not much affected with their liberality, but might have done as well without as with it, and they might have spared their bounty and labour, he doth prudently commend their Christian commiseration, (as the phrase is, Ac 10:33), and give them to understand how acceptable their seasonable supply was to him, who did so joyfully resent their kindness to him, in that it was well-pleasing to God, Ro 12:15; they did so effectually sympathize and take a share in the oppression he sustained for the cause of Christ, 2Co 1:7, and remember him in his bonds as if it were their own case, Heb 13:3 Re 1:9.

#### Philippians 4:15

Ver. 15. He amplifies the present favour the Christians at Philippi had vouchsafed to him, by a thankful recollection of their former liberality.

*In the beginning of the gospel;* soon after he had preached and planted the good things of salvation amongst them, Php 2:22 Ac 16:12,13,40.

*When I departed from Macedonia;* comparing their first benevolence with other churches, when leaving of Macedonia, Ac 18:5 2Co 11:9.

*No church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only;* none of the rest of the churches had, for the spiritual things received of him in his ministration, distributed of their carnal or temporal, (though that was their duty beyond dispute, 1Co 9:7,11,13,14 Ga 6:6 1Ti 5:17,18), but they alone: which might at once commend their Christian liberality, and evince that he in preaching of the gospel was not mercenary, not having exacted a reward from others, but preached the gospel freely, 2Co 11:7.

#### Philippians 4:16

Ver. 16. They, for their parts, were most commendable in this matter, that when he was in Thessalonica, the mother city, (not above twenty-five miles distant), their care for his comfortable livelihood was more than once manifested, he passing again and again through Macedonia, 1Co 16:5 2Co 1:16; which argues his thankful resentment of the constant purpose of their mind to succour him upon all occasions.

#### Philippians 4:17

Ver. 17. Neither would he have any of them to think, as if his commendation of them were any oblique insinuations, with design to draw something more from them; he would have them to understand he did not seek himself, or theirs for his use, (as elsewhere, 1Co 10:33 2Co 12:14), but his great intent was, that they themselves might of God's grace have the fruit of their charity they had showed to him, Php 1:11 4:10; which, in the balancing of the accounts, (by accepting as it were of Christ's will, Pr 19:17 Mt 10:42 25:35,36,40), will turn to their best advantage.

#### Philippians 4:18

Ver. 18. He further testifies his thankfulness from the effect their gratuity



had upon him, by three words here which declare the same thing, viz. that he was abundantly satisfied, having all that he could wish, even enough and more; so that he did not expect any thing more than what he had already received by their faithful messenger Epaphroditus; which he further commends from its great acceptableness to God, in allusion to the sweet odours in the sacrifices that God himself took pleasure in, Le 2:1,2 3:16 Heb 13:16; so that that present God himself would accept through Christ, as if it had been offered to himself, 1Pe 2:5. It is true, the Socinians, to lessen the meritoriousness of Christ's sacrifice of himself, which the apostle mentions, Eph 5:2, with respect to Ge 8:21, would by this text corrupt that: but the truth is, it hath nothing like with that, for the benevolence and gratuity of the Philippians is said by Paul to be *an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, &c.*; but it is not said that the Philippians themselves did give themselves and dour of a sweet smell, as it is said Christ gave himself *for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour*; which being once offered for all, was sufficient to take away sin, Heb 10:10,12. And therefore their reasoning is fallacious from that parity they suggest. It is true, believers and their good works are as sweet odours, Ro 12:1, acceptable, but in Christ, 1Pe 2:5, because they please God only for him, for his sake and merit. But Christ, because he doth appease God himself, who smells a savour of rest in his sacrifice, which all others under the law did but shadow, receiving their efficacy from his: Christ did it by himself, believers and their services are only acceptable in him.

### Philippians 4:19

Ver. 19. *But my God*: see Php 4:3: he saith *my God*, because he imputeth and owneth that to be done to himself which is done according to his mind unto any of his ambassadors, he having received the gift from their hand by Paul.

*Shall supply all your need*; will, in a gracious return to Paul's prayer, abundantly answer (yea, above all he could ask or think) all their expectations, Ps 41:1-3, with 2Co 9:8,10.

*According to his riches in glory*; agreeably to his own fulness and rich mercy, Ps 24:1 1Co 10:26 Eph 2:4; gloriously, or *riches of his glory*, Eph

3:16, and goodness, Ro 2:4 9:23; sustaining and defending them liberally and powerfully here, to his own glory, and taking them hereafter into everlasting glory.

*By Christ Jesus*; through the mediation of, and by virtue of their communion with, Christ Jesus.

### Philippians 4:20

Ver. 20. From thanking of the Philippians, the holy man passeth to a giving of thanks unto God, the first cause, that they might not be elated. He had *my God*, Php 4:19; now, *our Father*; not only adoring him as Maker of all, but as Father of all the faithful as well as of Paul, being born of him in Christ, Joh 1:12,13, through whom he takes a fatherly care of them, Mt 6:32. Christ saith, *my Father*, Joh 20:17, as being his only Son by eternal generation; and he allows believers to say *our Father*, as being his children by adoption. Unto whom they are obliged to ascribe praise, and always to give thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Eph 5:20. And this indeed hath been their practice, which should be ours, Ro 1:25 9:5 11:33,36 16:25,27 Eph 3:21 1Ti 1:17 1Pe 4:11 5:11 2Pe 3:18 Jude 1:25 Re 1:6, &c. It intimates, their hearts being full with the glory of God, their pens and months were enlarged accordingly, exciting others to the like doxologies. To almost all which in the forecited places (as here) *ever and ever* is added, connoting absolute eternity, and joining past, present, and future ages together. This form of *Amen*, affixed in the close, doth signify how his heart did give, and rejoiced to give, all blessedness to our Father in Christ, as rejoicing that he is so blessed a God.

### Philippians 4:21

Ver. 21. He doth friendly embrace and wish happiness to all and every sanctified one who is a member of Christ, hath entirely resigned up to him, and doth abide in him. Then shows, that most probably his colleagues and fellow labourers in the Christian church at Rome, (calling such elsewhere *brethren*, 1Co 1:1 Col 1:1 4:7 Phm 1:1,7,20), Php 1:14 2:25 1Co 16:20, do so likewise.

### Philippians 4:22

Ver. 22. The rest of the Christians at Rome do the same; more especially they of Nero the emperor's own family and court, his domestics, Php 1:13. It seems there were some there truly pious and Christian: but however some conceit, there is no real evidence that Seneca was of that number; he being not a courtier, but a senator, who left no real token (we know of) that he was a Christian.

### Philippians 4:23

Ver. 23. He concludes this (like his other Epistles) much as he began, (see on Php 1:2), praying the same grace of the Lord might abide with them, which he had prayed to them all, Php 1:1.

*Amen;* not at all doubting, but with full confidence trusting, all should be firm, as he had prayed.

*It was written to the Philippians from Rome by Epaphroditus.*

## Colossians 1:1

### THE ARGUMENT

God having a church planted in the city of Colosse, (by some since called Chone), situated at the conflux of the rivers Meander and Lycus, in the neighbourhood of Laodicea and Hierapolis, Col 4:13, in Phrygia of the lesser Asia; whether at first only by the preaching of Epaphras, one of them who was *a servant of Christ, and faithful minister*, Col 1:7 4:12; or by Paul himself, who (we learn from Luke that accompanied him) *had gone throughout Phrygia*, Ac 16:6, and again, *over all the country of Phrygia in order*, Ac 18:23, having staid for a season in Asia, where he wrought miracles, and was complained of for turning away much people from idolatry *almost throughout all Asia*, Ac 19:11,22,26; we may leave undetermined. But whoever was God's prime instrument in planting the gospel here, upon Paul's being advertised by Epaphras, (Col 1:8 Col 4:12 Phm 1:23), that weeds sprang up to choke the good seed; as he was careful for the Philippians during his imprisonment, so for the Colossians, that they might not be perverted by those Judaizing false teachers who mingled Moses with Christ, stickling for the necessity of abrogated ceremonies to salvation, Col 2:4,8, &c., varnishing their doctrines with notions of vain or abused philosophy, did seek to introduce a superstitious worship grounded on human traditions, Col 2:8,18, &c.; but, reposing all their hope of salvation in Christ alone, persevere in that doctrine they had received according to his mind, and in the practice of real holiness with heavenly affections, both personally and relatively in heart and life, craving help of God; unto whom, having blessed God for the grace wrought in them, he doth recommend them in his own and brethren's salutations, contracting as it were the matter he had more fully written to the Ephesians, that Epistle and this, as the Evangelists, explaining each other.

### Chapter Summary

Col 1:1,2 After saluting the saints at Colosse,  
Col 1:3-8 Paul testifieth his thankfulness to God for the good account he had heard of their faith and love,  
Col 1:9-14 and his continual prayers for their improvement in spiritual knowledge, right practice, and thanksgiving to God for the benefits of redemption by his Son.

Col 1:15-20 He showeth them the exalted nature and mediatorial office of Christ,  
Col 1:21,22 by whom they, who were once enemies, were now reconciled, if they continued true to the gospel,  
Col 1:23-29 whereof he Paul was made a minister to

preach to the Gentiles.

Ver. 1. Paul; he who of a persecutor was become a preacher, and that amongst the Gentiles laid aside his Hebrew name Saul and made use of this, which was more familiar amongst the Gentiles, viz. *Paul*, Ac 13:2,3,9.

*An apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God;* one of those extraordinary persons immediately deputed by the special command of our Lord himself, with sovereign authority to preach the gospel, and establish his church, which is the highest charge God ever gave to men, Mt 10:2 Lu 6:13 1Co 12:28 Ga 1:12: See Poole on "Eph 1:1". See Poole on "Eph 4:11".

*And Timotheus our brother;* he joins Timothy, as elsewhere Sosthenes, 1Co 1:1, by the title of *brother*, as being of the same faith, labouring in one and the same work, which might be more for their satisfaction.

### Colossians 1:2

Ver. 2. To the saints: See Poole on "Php 1:1".

*And faithful brethren in Christ:* See Poole on "Php 4:21".

*Which are at Colosse:* see the Argument: (See Poole on "Col 1:1".)

*Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:* See Poole on "Eph 1:2", and See Poole on "Php 1:2".

### Colossians 1:3

Ver. 3. We give thanks to God: See Poole on "Php 1:3". He doth here take in Timothy and others, in acknowledging of God's grace to them, which might express his great good-will to them.

*And the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;* describing God, to whom they render thanks both absolutely and relatively, as the Father of Jesus Christ,

according to both natures: See Poole on "2Co 1:3", and See Poole on "Eph 1:3".

*Praying always for you;* always when they did address themselves to God by prayer making mention of them, as he also wrote to the Philippians: See Poole on "Php 1:3,4".

#### Colossians 1:4

Ver. 4. He instanceth in principal graces, as the matter of his thanksgiving, beginning with *faith*, described and differenced from the special object of it, *Christ Jesus*, implying not a bare knowledge or assent, but a trust in him alone for salvation; so Ro 1:8. Understanding this saving grace with the consequent was wrought in them, as he heard it was in the Ephesians, and Philemon, it, was a cogent motive to engage them in solemn thankfulness to God: see on Eph 1:15, compared with Phm 1:5. He joins *love*, or charity, *to all the saints*, with faith to our Saviour, because they are in effect inseparable, there being no real embracing of Christ without loving of him, and all his members for his sake, Ga 5:6 2Ti 1:13: not as if believers were not to show love or charity to others, who are of the same nature, and so bear the image of God, for this Christ requires of them, Mt 5:44,45; but by how much the nearer any are brought to God by sanctification, by so much the more a special love is to be showed to them, as fellow citizens, of the household of God, and the household of faith, Ro 15:26, with Ga 6:10 Eph 2:19.

#### Colossians 1:5

Ver. 5. *For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven:* hope here, in this description of it, seems chiefly by a metonymy to be put for the glorious eternal salvation hoped for, Ro 8:24 Eph 1:18 which may also include that lively grace whereby we lay hold of eternal life contained in the promise, Tit 1:2. This indeed is set before believers here to encourage them to fly unto Christ for refuge, Heb 6:18, and reserved in heaven for them, 1Pe 1:4; which may well quicken in Christian love all the members of Christ in every condition; yet not with a mercenary of affection, 2Co 5:14, as if any by offices of Christian love to brethren could merit what is laid up for

those who exercise faith, love, and hope, but that God of his mere grace and undeserved love is pleased to reward such as diligently seek him, and thereby gives an exact evidence of his admirable liberality, Heb 11:6, which will abundantly weigh down those light afflictions they sustain here, 2Co 4:17.

*Whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;* hereupon he puts them in mind of the means whereby they attained to this good hope when they first embraced the gospel, viz. by hearing, Ro 10:14, *the word of truth*, eminently, 2Co 6:7 Eph 1:13; not only because it is the word of Jesus Christ, who is *the truth, and the life*, Joh 14:6, but because the gospel (which is here put appositively) is the most excellent of all truths, surpassing all in philosophy, and the law, Joh 1:17.

### Colossians 1:6

Ver. 6. *Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world;* and passing the narrow bounds of Judea, unto all or most of the regions of the world, Col 1:23 Mt 24:14 Ac 2:5 Ro 1:8 10:18. So admirable was the progress of it east, west, north, and south, well nigh over the world as it was then known to the Greeks and Romans; whereupon the apostle might well write, Christ was *believed on in the world*, 1Ti 3:16: as Christ had said he was the light of the world, and, by a figure of part for the whole, would upon his death draw all men to him, Joh 12:32,46. Yet let not the Rhemists, or any other Romanist, think that the promulgation of the mysteries of the gospel then is any proof of the verity of the Romish religion in these latter ages, when by tyranny they impose for doctrines the traditions of men: they do not bring forth that genuine fruit which the Colossians did.

*And bringeth forth fruit;* viz. becoming the gospel, (as the Philipplians did, Php 1:27), and true repentance, Mt 3:8 13:23 Joh 15:16; and real holiness, abiding in the hearts and lives of men, and effectually working in them that believe it, Isa 55:10 Ac 5:14 Ac 6:7 12:24,16,17,20 1Th 2:13; which the practical religion of the papists generally bears no proportion to, being contrary to that.

*As it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it;* which from the first receiving of the gospel, was found growing amongst the true converts at Colosse, though it should seem false teachers crept in to choke the good fruit with their tares.

*And knew the grace of God in truth;* however, they who had real experience of the grace of God and the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, Ps 3:8, did hold, bringing forth fruit in old age, Ps 92:14.

#### Colossians 1:7

Ver. 7. *As ye also learned of Epaphras:* to maintain the truth, it did much concern them to have a good opinion of him, who was an eminent instrument in communicating it to them, and therefore Paul doth here very opportunely commend Epaphras, in opposition to those false teachers, who likely might insinuate somewhat to his disparagement.

*Our dear fellow servant;* the respect they bare, and relation he stood in to them, being dearly beloved of him for his sincerity in promulgating the gospel; and being engaged with them in the service of the same Master, Col 4:7 Re 6:11.

*Who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;* his office, which he discharged with fidelity and affection unto them. He did with all honesty and integrity, as became one intrusted by his Master Christ, discharge what was incumbent on him for their good, Col 4:13 Joh 12:26 1Co 4:1,2 Eph 4:12 1Ti 4:6 Heb 13:17.

#### Colossians 1:8

Ver. 8. Having with kindness and delight reported to Paul and Timothy, &c., what a spiritually fervent affection, not moved by carnal considerations, but inwrought by the Spirit, Ga 5:6,22, arising from a renewed heart, 1Ti 1:5 2Ti 1:7, they had for Christ, for the gospel, the apostle, and all that did love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, Ga 6:10 1Pe 1:22,23.

#### Colossians 1:9

Ver. 9. *For this cause we also;* he doth here suggest the motive mentioned



in the precedent verses, viz. their faith and love, Col 1:4,5, and their special love to him, Col 1:8, why he and his brethren had them so much upon their hearts: See Poole on "Eph 1:15-17".

*Since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you:* it seems, from the time they were refreshed with these things they did (as he exhorts the Colossians here, Col 4:2) always upon all solemn occasions wait upon God for the Colossians' spiritual prosperity, as Paul himself did for the Philippians: See Poole on "Lu 18:1". See Poole on "Ro 12:12". See Poole on "Php 1:4". See Poole on "Php 1:9". See Poole on "1Th 5:17".

*And to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will;* and the subject matter of their instant prayer was, that they might attain to a more distinct, clear, and practical knowledge of the mind of God in Christ, and a greater measure of conformity to what he requires in the gospel, Col 1:6 Eph 5:15-17.

*In all wisdom;* in (rather than with) all necessary knowledge of the things of faith and manners, according to the prescript of the gospel: for sapience or wisdom doth properly respect the most excellent things, and such we learn most distinctly and satisfactorily from the revealed will of God, which we have in the Bible: this is that which Paul and other holy men spoke as taught of God amongst the perfect or grown Christians, in opposition both to the wisdom of man and of the world, 1Co 2:4,6, being agreeable to the will of God, Job 28:28 Pr 28:7 Joh 6:40 1Th 4:3. And with this Christian wisdom some would render the following words, in *spiritual prudence*, but if we render it *understanding*, or intelligence, it may be expounded to the same sense; for which there may be very good reason, for the philosopher doth sometimes by the Greek word mean that power or habit whereby men judge aright of things presented conducing to happiness, so as upon a due expense of circumstances to discern the good from the evil, the true from the false, and the real from the apparent: such a gift as Paul prays the Lord would give unto Timothy, 2Ti 2:7, compared with 1Co 1:5, that they might rightly distinguish between the simplicity and purity of the gospel, and those false glosses and colours that false teachers went about to sophisticate it with; not be without understanding his some who followed our Saviour, Mt 15:16 what course they should take in the practice of piety, but be able to discern the times, 1Ch 12:32, and other circumstances, Ps 39:1 50:23 Ec 5:1 Lu 8:18; for the ordering their actions aright, so as they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour

in all things, as becomes the gospel, Eph 1:8, with Php 1:10,27 Col 4:5 Tit 2:10. Ignorance then can be no mother of true devotion, nor the inventions of men acceptable service to the living God, whose will alone is the rule of his worship.

### Colossians 1:10

Ver. 10. *That ye might walk worthy of the Lord:* they prayed for the above mentioned gracious habits, that the Colossians might exercise them in a course of life as it becomes those who are effectually called by the gospel to be the sons of God, and the servants of Christ; suitable to the members of the body of Christ: See Poole on "Eph 4:1". See Poole on "Php 1:27"; compared with Ro 16:2 1Th 2:12 2Th 1:11. As the word God alone ordinary connotes the Father, so Lord doth Christ; answerable to whose wisdom, holiness, and example, Christians professing a relation to him, and expecting benefit by his purchase, should behave themselves; so that the papists cannot from this walking *worthy of the Lord* justly infer a merit of condignity, behaving ourselves as Christians being so far from any merit or desert of ours, that it is a debt, we being indispensably obliged to do so, practice being the end of our knowledge. And this cud we are to respect *unto all pleasing*, i.e. designing and endeavouring not in one thing only, or in few things, but in all things whatsoever are incumbent on us, we may find acceptance with our Lord and Master, Col 3:20 1Co 7:32 10:31 1Th 2:4 Heb 12:28: all should be great and generous, such as may best like our Lord, keeping themselves from the defilements of the age, Re 3:4.

*Being fruitful in every good work;* particularly fructifying, which in the sense may be joined with being *filled*, Col 1:8: *being fruitful* is a metaphorical expression borrowed from fruit-bearing trees, unto which godly men and real Christians are compared, Ps 1:3 Joh 15:8; and *every good work* is the fruit which these plants of the Lord, having his Spirit as the seed remaining in them, 1Jo 3:9, do bring forth of every sort from a right principle, 1Ti 1:5, according to rule warranted by God, Isa 29:13 Ga 6:16; or having a call from him, for his glory: see 2Co 9:8 Php 1:11 2Th 2:17 Heb 13:21.

*And increasing in the knowledge of God:* the Colossians were not yet perfect in knowledge, and therefore they prayed that they might go on, and grow in grace and knowledge of God and Christ, 2Pe 3:18, the best here knowing but in part, 1Co 13:9; therefore they desired these Christians, as the Philippians, Php 3:10,12, and the Ephesians, Eph 4:13, might come to their stature: see on the texts.

## Colossians 1:11

Ver. 11. *Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power:* whereunto that they might be enabled, it was needful to pray for a power from above, for the best Christians here below are but infirm as well as imperfect, not able to perform what is required of them for doing and suffering the will of God till strengthened: See Poole on "Php 4:13", compared with Re 7:17. We have here great need of *all might*, special aids of God, to discharge difficult duties, to mortify strong corruptions, to contemn worldly allurements, to repulse frequent temptations, to bear manifold crosses, and to improve daily mercies, derived from exceeding great and mighty power; See Poole on "Eph 1:19". See Poole on "Eph 1:20". See Poole on "Eph 3:16"; an excellent glorious power, 2Co 4:7,13, needful to consummate and complete, as well as begin, the work of grace, 2Th 1:11; a great reality (and not a metaphor) to sincere converts and sound believers.

*Unto all patience;* every way to bear the things which come hard upon them or continue long. Philosophy, with all its prescriptions, is ineffectual to form the soul to true patience and contentment under sufferings, it must be given on the behalf of Christ, Php 1:29, to a believer, to suffer patiently in tongue and heart, without a prevailing mixture of passion, so that evils do not make all impression upon him, but he doth possess his soul with patience to the end.

*And long-suffering with joyfulness;* which he could not do with a becoming Christian cheerfulness, when, surcharged with a weight of troubles, he finds himself sinking, if he were not supported with the hands of Heaven, which relieve with present comfort, and raise up to believe a future reward, Mt 5:12 Ac 5:41 Ro 5:3 1Co 11:32 2Co 1:5 Heb 11:27 12:10,12 Jas 1:2,4.

## Colossians 1:12

Ver. 12. *Giving thanks unto the Father;* he passeth from petitioning, Col 1:9, to thanksgiving to God the Father, upon the consideration of his grace

manifested in his Son for our redemption. In the Ephesians, Eph 1:3,4, he began with election, here with effectual vocation; he acknowledgeth God the Father to be the object and author of what was wrought for us by his Son, and in us by his Spirit.

*Which hath made us meet;* who hath made us capable of communion with himself, or ready and fit, which implies that by nature we are unready and unfit; so that merit cannot be drawn hence, and the Rhemists have done ill, contrary to the translation of the Syriac, to translate it, made us worthy: one copy hath, who hath called us. The original word, in that we follow, seems to be an idiom of the apostle (as the learned think) borrowed from the Hebrew; we find it used only in one other text by the apostle, 2Co 3:5,6; and there he shows we are insufficient for, and incapable of, saying good things, till God do capacitate us by making us *accepted in the beloved*, Eph 1:6; we cannot understand things of the Spirit of God, nor affect God, Joh 12:39 Ro 8:5 1Co 2:14, till God do draw and capacitate us, Joh 6:44,45 Phm 2:13, and form and work us by his Spirit unto this selfsame thing, Ro 4:17 2Co 5:5.

*To be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light;* to have a part in the lot of the purchased inheritance with them that are sanctified, Ac 26:18 Eph 1:14. The apostle seems to allude to the land of Canaan, wherein a portion was assigned to every one by lot for his inheritance, that being a type of the rest which remaineth to the people of God, Heb 4:9; and this is here said to be *of the saints in light*, as allegorically connoting the joy and glory of that state and place, in opposition to the power of darkness.

### Colossians 1:13

Ver. 13. *The power of darkness*, which signifies the sadness and despair of the damned, Eph 6:12 Jude 1:8, that they who are made meet to walk in the light *as children of the light*, Eph 5:8, are eternally freed from. The word which the apostle useth to express God's delivering of believers from the power of sin and Satan is very emphatical, signifying a gratuitous freedom, where a stranger hath delivered him from slavery who did not deserve it, nor then desire it, Mr 3:27 Lu 1:74,79 Eph 2:2,5,6 Heb 2:14,15, though he was held fast as in fetters of iron. And which is more, he adds another word, *hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son;*

intimating he did not leave us as Adam was before the fall, but transport us without any precedent will of ours, by the effectual call of his insuperable grace, Joh 6:44, 1Th 2:12 1Pe 2:9, from the dominion of Satan, into that of his own Son, the Son of his love, Mt 3:17 17:5 Eph 1:6, amongst his subjects and servants, where he reigns, in his kingdom of grace, Mt 13:11, where Christ dwells in the heart by his Spirit, that is united to him by faith, Eph 3:17 Eph 4:12,13 Heb 12:22,23; and of glory indeed in our Head, Col 1:24, with Eph 2:6, by right of adoption, Ro 8:17, and hope of salvation through him promised by the omnipotent and true God, Ro 8:24 1Th 5:23,24 Tit 1:2; who may well call it *the kingdom of his dear Son*, in that he admits none into it but by the mediation of his Son, who makes his subjects willing, Ps 110:3, and received this government of his Father, Mt 28:18 Lu 22:29 Eph 1:6,7; of whose dear Son Paul hath more to say, to the comfort of his faithful subjects at Colosse, and every where.

#### Colossians 1:14

Ver. 14. *In whom;* i.e. in the person of Christ alone God-man, deputed of his Father to die for our salvation, Ac 4:12 20:28.

*We;* as we are in him, made meet, Col 1:12.

*Have redemption;* we have eternal deliverance, Heb 9:12, effected by a full ransom paid, 1Co 6:20 7:23 1Pe 1:18,19. For the freeing us indeed out of a state of sin and misery, Joh 8:36, or eternal death the wages of sin, Ro 6:23 16:20; so that by redemption here is not meant barely laying down the price, Lu 2:38, nor consummate redemption at the last, Eph 1:14 4:30, but efficacious redemption.

*Through his blood;* upon the account of Christ's offering himself an expiatory sacrifice to God, without which *is no remission*, Heb 9:22 Re 5:9; effusion of his blood, by a synecdoche, takes in his humiliation to the death of the cross, and the pains of the second death he underwent for us, Isa 53:5,6 Ac 2:24 Ga 3:13 Php 2:8.

*Even the forgiveness of sins;* plenary remission of offences is by apposition to, or follows, redemption as a necessary effect, Col 2:13 Lu 1:77 Ac 10:43, by a metonymy transferring the cause to the effect: to see

more: See Poole on "Eph 1:7".

### Colossians 1:15

Ver. 15. Having touched on the benefit of Christ's sacrifice, which implies his human nature, he doth here rise higher, to set forth the dignity of his person, (which made it satisfactory), both with respect to his Father and the creature. As to the former, he styles him his *image*, which is not to be understood of an artificial, accidental, or imperfect *image*, as that of the king on his coin, or as man was the feeble image of God, Ge 9:6 1Co 11:7 Col 3:10; for the apostle's arguing Christ's dignity to redeem, would have no force in it, if Christ were no more than a mere man; but of a natural, substantial, and perfect image: as Seth was the natural image of his father Adam, of the same substance with him, Ge 5:3; so Christ, the eternal Word, the only begotten Son of God by nature, Joh 1:1,18, (See Poole on "Php 2:6"), very God of very God, Joh 17:3,5, doth exactly resemble, perfectly and adequately represent, his Father, of whose person he is the express character, or perfect image, Heb 1:3. Yet more distinctly Christ is the image of God, either:

1. As he is the Second Person in the blessed Trinity, from an intrinsical relation to the Father, in regard of the same essence with him by eternal generation before the world was made. He being eternally in the Father, and the Father in him, Joh 14:10; so he is in respect of his Father his essential image, and in regard to us as invisible as the Father himself; no creature could be the eternal image of the Creator, as that Son of the only true God, *the living God*, was, and is, Mt 16:16 Joh 6:69, in respect of his Father.
2. As he is God-man, in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily, Col 2:9, whereby he doth infinitely exceed and surpass angels and men at first, Heb 1:5,6 2:5. The apostle in this place doth not say simply Christ the image of God, but *of the invisible God*, (considered personally), i.e. the Father; because the Father cannot be known to us but in his Son, as in an image, in which he would represent or manifest himself to be seen or known, Joh 1:14,18 Joh 14:8,9 2Co 4:4. And in this latter respect (which imports the manifestative, not essential image) is Christ the image of his invisible Father unto us; unto whom, in all his

offices and works of mediation, the attributes, affections, and excellencies of God clearly shine forth, they being otherwise incomprehensible and invisible by a creature: but Christ is the complete image of them, in a transcendent way; for as they are in him, they are incommunicable to any mere creature, and therefore he is the image of *the invisible God*, in that he makes him visible unto us. God is a pure Spirit, without body, or bodily parts, but yet was clearly manifested in Christ tabernacling amongst us, Joh 1:14 1Ti 3:16: he represents him to us in his understanding and wisdom, Pr 8:14,15; almightiness and eternity, Isa 9:6 Joh 1:1 8:58, permanency and unchangeableness, Heb 1:11,12 13:8, omnipresence and omniscency, Joh 2:24,25 13:18 Re 2:13. Not (as the Lutherans strangely imagine) that Christ is omnipotent with the omnipotency of the Divine nature, or omniscient with that omniscency, as if the manhood did instrumentally use the attributes of the Godhead; but such perfections are really inherent in and appertaining to the manhood, by virtue of its union with the Divine nature in the Second Person of the Trinity, that though they are vastly short of the attributes which are essential to the Godhead, yet they are the completest image of them, and such as no mere creature is capable of. Hence it is said, *we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten Son of God*, who did further represent and manifest his Father to us, in the works of creation and preservation which he did, Joh 1:3 5:19 Heb 1:10. Hence the apostle in this verse considers the dignity of Christ, with respect to the creature, adding to the forementioned intrinsic, an extrinsic royalty, *the first-born of every creature*, which a learned man would render, begotten before all the creation, or born before every creature, which is a Hebrew phrase. The Greek scholiast and several of the Greek fathers go this way; not as if the ineffable generation of Christ had any beginning, as some falsely conceived Christ to be made in time, just in the beginning before the world, by whom as an instrument all the rest were created; but the apostle doth not say he was first made, or first created; but, Col 1:17, was, or did exist, *before all things* besides; (as John Baptist said, *he was before me*, Joh 1:15); and therefore none of the rank of all them, but of another, viz. equal with his Father, whose image he was, above all that was made or created: he was not created at all, though first-born, or first-begotten, yet not first-created, (being distinguished here from created, as the cause from the effect), as it refers to him that begets, so it may to only begotten, Christ being so begotten as no other was or could be, Pr 8:22 Mic 5:2 Heb

1:5,6, even from eternity. The word *first* may either respect what follows, and so notes order in the things spoken of, he who is first being one of them, 1Co 15:47; or things going before, in which sense it denies all order or series of things in the same kind: as God is first before whom none, Isa 41:4 43:11 Re 21:6; so Christ may be said to be first-born because the only begotten Son of his Father, Joh 1:14: so the apostle may consider him here in order to establish the consideration of him as Mediator and Head of his church, Col 1:18; he speaking before, Col 1:16, of those things more generally whose creation are assigned to him, in contradistinction to those of the church or new creation, Col 1:18. Agreeably to our translation, *first-born of every creature*, ( note, here is a difference in the Greek, between first-born *of* and *for*, Col 1:18), we may consider:

1. Negatively. It is not to be understood properly for the first in order, so as to be one of them, in reference to whom he is said to be the first-born. But:
2. Positively, yet figuratively in a borrowed speech: so primacy and primogeniture may be attributed to him in regard of the creatures:
  - a) By a metonymy of the antecedent for the consequent; he who hath the privileges of enjoying and disposing of his father's goods and inheritance, is accounted the first-born, Ge 27:29 Ga 4:1; so is Christ, being Owner, Lord, and Prince of every creature, as he is God-man, or ordained to human nature, he hath the preeminence of the whole creation, and is the chief, Ps 2:7,8 Heb 1:2,6. The heir amongst the Hebrews was reckoned the prince of the family, and so amongst the Romans the heir was taken for the lord: so God said he would make David his *first-born*, Ps 89:27, compared with Job 18:13 Isa 14:30 Jer 31:9. This sovereign empire which Christ hath over all the creation, and the parts of it, is by his primogeniture, or that he is first-born, since there is left nothing that is not under him, Heb 2:8, (as Adam in this lower world, in regard of his dominion, the state of innocency, might be first-born of them created for him), for the apostle brings in the next verse as the fundamental reason of this assertion.
  - b) By a consideration of Christ in God's eternal decree and purpose, as



the common womb of him who is God-man, and all creatures; being *fore-ordained before the foundation of the world*, 1Pe 1:20, he may be looked upon as the first-born amongst those who are predestinated to be conformed to his image, Ro 8:29, with Eph 1:4,5; for upon this account he is the first-born of the first-born creatures or church, (but this, as hinted before, is considered more specially, Col 1:18), Heb 12:23, therefore the first-born of all others: and this may be one respect in which he is before them, Col 1:17, with Pr 8:22; yea, all of them of the old, as well as the new creation. The Socinians are so daringly bold as to restrain this extensive expression of *every creature*, or all the creation, to the new creation of men or the faithful only, by perverting some texts of Scripture to strain them that way; when it is plain by what follows, the Spirit of God means all created beings, either in the first or second world, Christ being the principal cause both of the one and the other; the apostle, by the general term *every creature* simply, without any additament, doth import all created things, viz. the heavens and the earth, with all that is made in them: neither angels, nor inanimate and irrational creatures, are excluded; as in the apostle's reason immediately following this expression.

### Colossians 1:16

Ver. 16. *For by him were all things created:* he proves Christ to be before and Lord over every creature, more excellent than them all, with a prerogative other princes want, for none of them is a creator of his subjects, who were not made by him or for him, as all creatures without exception were made by and for Christ. The apostle here is as cautious as may be, lest by speaking of Christ as *the firstborn of every creature*, he should seem to put him in the order of creatures, which he shows do depend upon him for their creation and preservation, since he brought them out of nothing into being, and therein doth sustain them.

*By him;* in whom they have their beings, live and move, Ac 17:28. Some render the particle *in*, rather than *by*. But they disclaim the philosophical notions about Platonic ideas, only conceive all to be made *in* Christ, as the exemplary cause, whom God had in his eternal decree set up as the pattern of all perfections, being his image, according to which it was agreed, in the

council of the Trinity, man should be made, Ge 1:26. But the most do, according to our translation, render it (as a Hebrew phrase) *by*, ( being of the same import with that in the end of the verse), or through, which is expressive of the principal efficient, not the instrumental cause, for all the things made were produced out of nothing into being immediately by him, Joh 1:3,10 Heb 1:8,10: he might well be Lord over them all, who was the first founder of them, Ac 10:36 1Co 8:6; and whatever the adversaries allege, it is plain in Scripture that *by* is used of the principal cause, Col 1:1 Ro 11:31,36 1Co 1:1 1Co 12:8,9 2Co 1:1 Ga 1:1 1Th 4:2 2Th 3:12.

*Were all things created*: creation is simply, universally, and absolutely attributed to him; for whatever subtillies some would suggest, *all things created by him* is equivalent to he created all things; compare Ps 96:5 102:25, with Isa 44:24 48:13 Jer 10:12 Ac 17:24, with Ro 11:36: (like 1Co 1:9, with 1Th 2:12).

*That are in heaven, and that are in earth*: the apostle speaks extensively of all proceeding from not being into being, both generally and distributively, agreeably to the common expression of *all things* that were made at the beginning, Ac 4:24: though in Scripture, where mention is made of the creation, heaven and earth be not always expressed, Isa 40:26 Mr 10:6 13:19 Ac 17:24 Ro 1:20 2Pe 3:4 Re 4:11; but here, where all things in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, are expressed, it is evident that heaven and earth are together comprehended.

*Visible and invisible*: these two adjuncts of visible and invisible do divide all creatures whatsoever, there being nothing made that is not one or the other.

*Whether they be*: all enumeration is particularly made of the latter, which for their excellency (if any) might seem to be exempted (by those in danger of being beguiled to the worshipping of angels) from the state and condition of being created by Jesus Christ; particularly, *thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers*; those he here names, as elsewhere, Ro 8:38 Eph 1:20,21 3:10 6:12, in the abstracts for the concretes, the invisible inhabitants of the world. I know some would have dignities in human policy to be meant, as Tit 3:1 2Pe 2:10 Jude 1:8; but it is more rational, with the generality of ancient and modern interpreters, as Col 2:15, to expound these titles of incorporeal and angelical creatures,

whether by an emphatical synonyme, angels generally, by a metonymy, being ministers of the heavenly state; or more probably, as should seem from the scope of the place, by such a subdivision of invisibles as the apostle did conceive there was, according to the properties wherein they were eminent, and the offices whereunto they were delegated of God, which he expressed disjunctively by borrowed titles from the distinctions of men in dignities and offices here below, as dukes, earls, lords, and other magistrates; the Scriptures elsewhere intimating distinctions amongst the spiritual ministers attending the commands of the heavenly Majesty upon his throne, represented shadowed by the cherubims, Ge 3:24 Ex 25:18,22 1Sa 4:4 2Sa 6:2 1Ch 28:18 Ps 80:1 Isa 37:16 Eze 1:13; denominated archangels and princes, Da 10:13,21 1Th 4:16 Jude 1:9; which imply some distinctions and orders amongst angelical beings, but what that is we know not, (whatever is disputed in the Roman schools from the spurious Denys), and therefore having no ground from Scripture, account it no better than curiosity to inquire, and rashness to determine.

*All things were created by him:* after his enumeration and distribution of things created, the apostle doth, for further confirmation, repeat the universal proposition or assumption, with a preposition expressive of the same absolute efficiency of causality that is attributed to God the Father and the Holy Ghost; all created things being made *by* him, i.e. by Christ, whose works without are undivided from those of the other Persons in the Trinity; they were all brought out of nothing into being by him, not by angels.

*And for him;* which is more fully proved from his being the final (as well as efficient) cause of them; they all had their being in respect of him or *for* him, i.e. his glory, Ro 11:36, to manifest his Divine power and infinite goodness, Joh 5:17,23 Joh 17:5; he is their end as well as founder, Re 5:13; the apostle affirms the same of him that is affirmed of the Father, Job 9:8 Pr 16:4 Isa 44:24; he made them all for his own sake. The Socinians, in derogation to Christ's Divinity, would restrain, limit, and narrow what Christ saith here in this verse to the new creation, or reparation, but against manifest reason. For:

1. The words *creature* and *creation* in the foregoing verse and this, are used absolutely, as was before suggested, and so *created* here repeated twice, and joined with the word *all*, and therefore to be understood, as

elsewhere, absolutely of the old or first creation, Mr 10:6 13:19 16:15  
Ro 1:20,25 1Co 11:9 1Ti 4:3 Heb 4:13 2Pe 3:4 Re 10:6; for when it is  
used of the second creation, or restoration, the restrictive additament of  
*new* is joined with it, Isa 65:17,18 2Co 5:17 Ga 6:15 Eph 2:15 4:24, not  
left indefinitely as here.

2. In parallel places, the making and founding of the old creation is ascribed to Christ, both negatively and positively, Joh 1:3 Heb 1:3,10; not one thing is excepted, and therefore should not be restrained to men.
3. It is most evident from the context the apostle doth in this verse discourse of creation, in contradistinction to what he speaks of afterwards in (Col 1:18,20), when he comes to treat of Christ as Head of his church, and we have no reason to charge the apostle with a useless repetition further.
4. The apostle's significant enumeration and distinction of things created, doth evidence that he understood the subject, the creation, in the most extensive and unlimited consideration of it. He reckons up material as well as immaterial things, and those in heaven, which needed no restoration, as well as those on earth, which did, being polluted with sin. Those angels who had not put off the honour of the first, did not belong to the new creation; having not divested themselves of their original integrity, they needed not to be reinvested with that they never lost: and devils cannot be ranked among new creatures, neither can wicked souls, Mt 25:41 Re 22:15; neither are there new and old orders of angels; so that the dominion Christ is here (as elsewhere) asserted as founder of, is the whole, not only the new creation, Re 5:13.

### Colossians 1:17

Ver. 17. *And he is before all things:* to obviate all exceptions to what he had said before, the apostle doth expressly assert (what was implied before) Christ's pre-existence to all the things that were created, and therefore that he himself was not made, but eternally begotten, and so did exist, and was actually before all creatures in causality, dignity, and time; which proves his eternity, (consonant to other scriptures, Pr 8:22 Isa 44:6  
Mic 5:2 Joh 1:1 17:5 Re 1:8,11,17 Re 22:13), because before all things

there was nothing but proper eternity, Ps 90:2.

And by him all things consist: then follows this further argument of Christ's excellency and perfection, that he is not only the Creator or Founder, but likewise the Supporter or Upholder, of all things whatsoever are created, yea, even of the most excellent and useful of them, who in him do live and move, Ac 17:28 Heb 1:3: he being the conservant as well as procreant cause of the heavens and earth, with all things therein, because in respect of God it is the same action which is continued in conservation and providence whielt was in creation, not breaking off the same influence which was exerted in producing them out of nothing into being, Isa 46:4 Joh 5:19.

### Colossians 1:18

Ver. 18. And he is the head of the body, the church: having spoken of Christ in reference to the creatures in general, or old creation, showing how he is the Creator, Preserver, and Governor thereof, the apostle doth here speak of him with a special reference to his church, or the new creation, whereof he shows here, (as elsewhere: See Poole on "Eph 1:22,23", with Eph 4:15, and Eph 5:23), that he is the Head and Governor, his chosen and called being the proper subjects of his special kingdom, the choice body, unto which he doth more peculiarly relate, Col 1:24, for the guiding and governing of it, he being that to it which the head is to the natural body, and more especially in the two former respects:

1. Of their union to God, which was chiefly designed and expressed in those words, who is the beginning, i.e. the first foundation or principle of their union to God, whereupon the first corner-stone of the church's happiness is laid, he being the beginning of the second creation, as of the first, Re 3:14. And:
2. Of their restoration from sin and death, being brought into that first-designed happiness, which is the great intention of that union, as appears from the following expression, the firstborn from the dead, in a special distinction from the dead, here too of the creature, Col 1:15.

The apostle doth not tautologize, but what he spoke of Christ there with

respect to the creature, he doth here speak of him with respect to his church, as 1Co 15:20,23 Re 1:5. By the particule from is implied not only that he was before the dead, but that he was numbered amongst the dead in respect of that nature wherein he was once dead; from which he was demonstrated to be first-born; his resurrection with a glorious body (Php 3:21) being a kind of new birth, whereby upon the reunion of his holy soul and body he was born from the womb of the grave, the Head in regard of the members: resurrection is called a regeneration, Mt 19:28; and as there is a gracious resurrection of the soul upon effectual calling in conversion, so there is a glorious regeneration of the body in the resurrection, Lu 20:36, in contradistinction to Lu 20:34. Christ is the first-born of these, in reference to God, Ac 26:23 1Co 15:20,23; as the first-fruits, or first ear of this blessed harvest, that was carried up into the sanctuary, and offered in due season to the eternal Father, until the rest do become ripe: and in reference to the dead, i.e. in the Lord, 1Co 15:18 1Th 4:14 Re 14:13; from whom he first rose in regard of time fully and perfectly; and of whom, in regard of dignity and dominion, Ps 89:27 Ga 4:1, he is chief, and Lord, (hath the pre-eminence, as it follows), and is first in regard of causality of those dead in him, standing in relation to him their Head, Ro 11:15, with 1Co 15:20, who shall be perfectly raised by virtue of his resurrection. And however it be said, both in the Old and New Testament, some were before raised; yet he was the cause of his own resurrection, as none others were, or can be. He properly rose, and that by his own power, Ps 110:7 Joh 10:17,18; others were and will be raised by his. In regard of the sort and kind of resurrection, he it was first which was not imperfect, as others, or Lazarus, who was raised but to return to his former state of mortality; but perfect, Christ rose to die no more, Ro 6:9 Heb 9:28. He was the first that rose as a public person, Head of his Church, the Second Adam, representing all his members, 1Co 15:21,22, who are raised together with him spiritually, virtually, and representatively, Eph 2:6 1Pe 3:21: those actually raised before in another sort were like singular ears of corn, by occasion more timely gathered for a special instance of Divine power, but Christ was the first that ever rose in the nature and quality of the first-fruits duly gathered, to sanctify and consecrate the whole harvest of the dead in him, who shall one day be raised to a conformity unto him, Php 3:21. The Socinians, from this metaphorical expression of Christ's being the first-born from the dead, and fetching in that passage where it is said: Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee, Ac 13:33, do oppose Christ's natural and eternal Sonship, but very inconsequently and absurdly; for:

1. Christ was properly the Son of God before his resurrection from the dead, he did not then receive that relation by it, as other texts clearly prove, Ps 2:7 Pr 30:4 Mic 5:2 Joh 1:1 17:5.
2. If his resurrection had been a begetting of him, then would he have begotten himself, so been Father and Son to himself, because he raised himself.

As to that other text they allege, things are sometimes said to be done then, when only manifested and declared to be done: then was Christ the first of all the dead that was born, and raised again in incorruption, declared to be the Son of God with power, Ro 1:4, according to the prophecy: q.d. This day I have manifested thee by raising of thyself to be my natural Son, whom I begat from everlasting. Be sure he hath the primacy and pre-eminence, as it follows. That in all things he might have the pre-eminence; which some expound as the end and intention of Christ the agent, that he might obtain the primacy, Ro 14:9 2Co 5:15, or hold the first place in all things; whether more generally, according with the common scope of the apostle in the precedent verses, compared with Col 2:10 Joh 5:25,29 Eph 1:22; or more specially, amongst his brethren and all the members of his mystical body, Ro 8:29, with 2Co 5:17,18; but this is not material, because all things are brought under his empire. Others, because the primacy doth belong to him by undoubted right, and that he, being Head of his church, did ultimately design to save it, and so to glorify his Father, do expound it rather as the event, consequent, and conclusion from the antecedent, which is the end of the work, so as that, or in such a sort as, he actually is declared to be the first, or he holds the primacy in the old and new creation. According to the agreement with his Father, he is such a one as not only hath all manner of privileges, that any in this or the other world do, or may be supposed to, excel in; but also with a pre-eminence, a primacy in all, above what any one hath in any thing he may glory of.

### Colossians 1:19

Ver. 19. A learned man reads it: For all fulness pleased to dwell in him. Others: He liked, or approved, that all fulness should dwell in him, bringing instances for that construction of the word it pleased.

For it pleased the Father; it is true the word Father is not in the Greek text, nor in the oriental versions, but is well understood and supplied from the context, Col 1:12, where the apostle gives thanks to the Father, and then describes his dear Son in the following verses, and here in this adds a cogent reason why he should be the Head of his church, since the Son of his love, (in whom he is well pleased, Mt 3:17), is he alone in whom he likes to dwell with all fulness or all fulness, doth will to abide.

That in him should all fulness; here is another all, and a fulness added to that all; an all for parts, a fulness for degrees; a transcendency in all, above all. It is of the Father's good pleasure that Christ, not here considered simply, as the Son of God, but respectively, as Head of his church, and Mediator, should be the subject of this all fulness, which is not directly that of his body mystical, Eph 1:23. But:

1. Originally, the fulness of the Godhead, whereby he hath an all-sufficiency of perfections for his mediatory office upon the mystical union, which none other hath or can have, Col 2:9 Joh 1:14: of which more distinctly in the next chapter.
2. Derivatively, a fulness of the Spirit and habitual grace, Lu 1:80, with Joh 1:16,33 3:34; holiness, wisdom, power, perfectly to finish his work, Joh 17:4 19:30, and other excellencies for the reconciling (as it follows) and actual influencing of his body, Ps 130:7,8 Mt 28:18 Joh 5:20 Ro 1:4 1Co 5:4; with 2Co 12:9 Eph 1:20-22 Heb 7:25,26 Re 5:6,12.

Dwell; and this all fulness doth not only lodge in him for a time, but resideth and abideth in him; it is not in him as the Divine glory was awhile in the tabernacle of Moses, and the temple of Solomon, but dwells constantly in him, not as a private person, but a universal principle; as Head of the body, (as well as reconciler), to fill up the emptiness of man with the abundant grace that perpetually resideth in him.

### Colossians 1:20

Ver. 20. Some, from the Greek, would (not have that clause we read in a parenthesis to come next the copulative and, but) have it: And by himself



he should reconcile unto himself (in or to himself) all things, (having made or obtained peace through the blood of his cross), I say, &c. But the reading of that sentence in the parenthesis after, or before the reconciliation of all things, as we do, because of the next following distribution, is not very material as to the sense of the thing, redemption, Col 1:14, or rather, the manner or means of reconciliation unto God by Christ, in whom the fulness of all Divine and human perfections was sealed for the bringing of heaven and earth together.

Having made peace through the blood of his cross: God the Father, for bringing enemies nigh unto himself in the kingdom of his dear Son, Col 1:13,19,21, was in him, 2Co 5:18,19, who having took on him the seed of Abraham, Heb 2:16, and because without shedding of blood there could be no remission, or being brought nigh, Eph 2:13 Heb 9:12,22,23, according to his Father's ordination and agreement with him for the expiation of sin, became obedient unto death, that cursed death of the cross, Isa 53:5 Ga 3:13 Php 2:8; and by that bloody sacrifice of himself, there once perfected, Heb 9:14 10:10,14, obtained peace: that by a figure being put to express his most perfect merit, as being the finishing of his obedience and passion, Col 2:14 Ro 3:25 5:10 Eph 2:16 Heb 9:12.

By him; which alone could satisfy his offended Father's demands: angels could not shed blood which was necessary to make peace and reconcile enemies; and though some false apostles might seduce to the worshipping of them, their obedience could not be meritorious.

To reconcile all things unto himself; God designing an atonement to himself. i.e. God the Father, (and, by consequence, to the whole Trinity), did it by Christ, in whom all fulness dwelling there was a proper fitness upon his Father's call, Isa 42:1,4,6, with Heb 9:1-28, for so perfect a work as to take away the enmity of those alienated from God, and to bring them into favour again. The great inquiry is about the extent of this reconciliation, because the apostle mentions all things (rather than all persons); and then, having emphatically repeated by him, viz. Christ as God-man, and none other, Ac 4:12, he adds a distribution of all things, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. To answer which, all things may be understood, either:

1. Restrictively to the subject, the universal church of which Christ is the

Head; so he doth not mean all things whatsoever, unlimitedly, but with respect to the subject matter, as, Col 1:21, all things which being alienated from God are reconciled to him; i.e. whatsoever things are reconciled are by him reconciled, all relating to the subject matter of reconciliation, (as all made to creation, Col 1:16), all the real subjects of his kingdom, whether gathered and gone to heaven before in hope of the Messiah to come, or now and hereafter shall be gathered, Ac 15:11 Ro 3:25 Eph 3:15 Heb 11:39,40 12:23: yet this doth not altogether satisfy some, by reason of the sublimity of the apostle's word in the distribution; and ordinarily in Scripture, by things in heaven are meant the angels, whose natural seat it is, spirits of just men made perfect being advanced thither only by God's gracious vouchsafement. Or:

2. Largely, as comprehending the good angels, especially if upon the foundation of reconciliation considered strictly, we take reconciliation here more generally, (as the apostle doth in his Epistle to the Ephesians, expatiating more upon this matter there than he doth here, writing more concisely and contractedly), for recapitulation, (or analogical reconciliation), bringing all under one head, the recomposing or reuniting of creatures terrestrial or celestial, upon the atonement for sinners by Christ; so that all his subjects, those that divide the state of his kingdom, are at an agreement amongst themselves and with each other; God did so by Christ conjoin miserable men with himself, that now also the holy angels are conjoined, they come under the same Head, Christ, Col 2:10 Eph 1:22, whom they worship as at his first, so second coming, Lu 2:13,14 Heb 1:6.

As men cleave to him by faith, so the angels by vision (1Ti 3:16) look upon him their Head; yet is he not their Redeemer, Col 1:14 Eph 1:3; not partaking of their nature, they are not his members as believers are (as God is the Head of Christ, yet is not he a member of God, 1Co 11:3); Christ beareth a more special relation to them, than he doth unto these principalities and powers, Eph 5:23,30,31; however, they, being under a hypothetical possibility of falling, should seem to have need of a preventive kind of reconciliation, upon that account, if their standing is otherwise secured to them, they abiding in their purity could not be friends to impure creatures, Ge 3:24; but upon the satisfaction of their Lord, their distaste and dissatisfaction is removed, they being reduced into a corporation, under Christ, with those whom he hath reconciled, Eph 1:10.

As they, to the glory of the supreme Majesty, rejoiced when Christ came to seek these lost ones, so they are ministers to them that he hath made willing, Heb 1:14; they delight in the ministry of reconciliation, Eph 3:10 1Pe 1:12, attend the service with their brethren, (in doing their office), Re 19:10 22:9, further the work, Ac 8:26, rejoice when it takes effect, Lu 15:10, and carry those that are perfected to the place of their own residence, Lu 16:22, to their own innumerable assembly in the heavenly Jerusalem, Heb 12:22; waiting on Christ, (according to the typical representatives, Ex 25:19 26:1 1Ki 6:23,29), with those that are with him, and made like to him at his throne, Mt 22:30 Mr 12:25, where he sits as the Son of man, and the holy angels (as he saith) are continually ascending and descending upon him, Joh 1:51: he fills them, as the rest of his subjects, all in all, Eph 1:21,23; they have grace by way of participation, having it from him their Head, who hath it of himself, Joh 5:26. So that upon the matter, this reconciliation of things in heaven, seems most to accord with Eph 1:9,10, and is not much unlike that in Eph 2:13,16; that which is separately said there by his blood, Col 1:13, and by the cross, Col 1:16, is here conjoined by the blood of his cross. There is making peace in one simple word; here, (in the Greek), in a compounded one. There, that he might reconcile both unto God; here, that he might reconcile all things unto himself, i.e. God. There he speaks only of men on earth being reconciled amongst themselves, because they had also been reconciled to God; if we take in angles also under those all, we have an allowance from that forecited Eph 1:10; yea, and in favour of the larger acceptation of reconciliation here, it may be considered that the whole creation which was put into disorder and subjected unto vanity, is in earnest expectation of the fruits of this gracious reconciliation, in being brought to a perfect harmony, to the glory of him who is all in all, Ro 8:19-23, with 1Co 15:58.

### Colossians 1:21

Ver. 21. And you, that were sometime alienated: the particle and, by a Hebraism, is put for therefore, or wherefore, leading the Colossians from the doctrines he had proposed, to consider their own estrangement from God and the things that please him, before they were effectually called by the gospel, being then in such a miserable condition as others were in a state of corrupted nature. See Ps 5:9 Ro 6:19 1Co 6:11 Eph 2:1,3,11,12.

And enemies; not only in their outward deportment had they no

communion with the true God, but inwardly they hated God as an enemy, and they were hated of him as his enemies; by their willing and nilling that which was contrary to him and his pleasure, in opposing his revealed will, Joh 15:18,21 Ro 1:29,30 5:10 8:7 Jas 4:4.

In your mind by wicked works; this enmity was predominant in their mind, or cogitation, or carnal reasoning, not receiving or comprehending the things of the Spirit of God, 1Co 2:14; that leading power of their souls being darkened, Eph 4:18, there was an enmity against God, so that they neither could be subject to God's law, Ro 8:7, under the prevalency of that corrupt reasoning which was so intent upon their corrupt courses, Ge 6:5, that then they thought not of peace with God.

Yet now hath he reconciled; yet such was the unconstrained compassion of God, that now while sinners, (in a divided sense), Ro 5:10, they were actually reconciled; now, not before, not from eternity in his decree, nor meritoriously when upon the cross, 2Co 5:19: he doth not mean simply the action, of such virtue, necessary and efficacious to make reconciliation, and the appeasing of God's displeasure; but compriseth the effect of it also when it is wrought in time, 2Co 5:20, and the enmity in the subject is actually removed.

### Colossians 1:22

Ver. 22. In the body of his flesh through death; the means whereby their reconciliation to God was purchased, (which they had particularly applied by faith, Col 1:4), was the sacrifice of that fleshy (not fantastical) body which Christ had assumed, subject to the condition of an animal life, being capable of suffering and mortal, (not refined and immortal, as after his resurrection, Ro 5:10 1Co 15:44,53), 2Co 5:14 Php 2:16, with Heb 10:5,10 1Pe 2:24 1Pe 3:18. Christ's death was not only for our good, but in our stead thereby offering himself to God, he satisfied Divine justice, and his sacrifice, giving himself for us, was a sacrifice of a sweet smell to God, Eph 5:2. To present you holy and unblamable and unreprouvable in his sight; before whom believers cannot make themselves to stand holy, but Christ doth upon the account of his sacrifice for them; so that through the veil of his flesh, Heb 10:19,20, God doth look upon such as having neither spot nor wrinkle, without blame or blemish: see Eph 1:4 5:27. Unto whom

Christ is made righteousness, he is also made sanctification, 1Co 1:30. Those who are washed are sanctified, 1Co 6:11. The end of reconciliation is restoration or sanctification, Lu 1:74,75 2Co 5:15 Tit 2:14 1Pe 2:24; inchoatively here, with a perfection of parts, Heb 13:21, and consummatively hereafter, with a perfection of degrees, 1Co 13:10 Eph 4:13 Php 3:11,12.

### Colossians 1:23

Ver. 23. If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled: this if doth not import the believers' continuance in faith to depend merely upon their own free-will, or a carnal doubting of being kept to salvation, 1Pe 1:5, but infers that they are then reconciled to God when they do indeed persevere in the faith; implying that by reason of the seducers amongst them all and every one might not really have that sound faith they would be thought to have. Wherefore the apostle engageth them to prove their faith, whereby only they can have peace with God, Ro 5:1, to be real, by taking care it be well founded and firm, Mt 13:23, as a house built on a sure foundation, a tree well rooted, Eph 3:17,18 Heb 13:9.

And be not moved away from the hope of the gospel; and be not as temporary believers which have no root, Lu 8:13, or as those who want anchorhold are tossed to and fro, Eph 4:14, and put off from that hope of eternal life, set before us in the gospel, which is sure and certain, Heb 6:18,19, built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Eph 2:20, the sweet promises of eternal life.

Which ye have heard; not the works of vain philosophy which leave the minds of men unsettled, but the plain and solid doctrines of Christ, wherein the believers at Colosse had been instructed, Col 1:7.

And which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; and which the faithful apostles, according to the commission of Christ, had promulgated to every creature beneath the heavens, i.e. every rational creature here below, i.e. to all men, collectively, or nations in the world, as Col 1:6 Mt 28:19 Mr 16:15. Creature with the Hebrews doth eminently signify man, by an antonomasia, or a synecdeche, putting the general for a particular. In the original it is, in all the creature; and so it may be, in all

the world, (creature being sometimes used for the system of the world, Ro 8:19-21), in opposition to Judea, i.e. in those other parts of the earth which the Greeks and Romans knew to be then inhabited: under heaven, which is a pleonasm, but of the greatest emphasis, as Ac 4:12.

Whereof I Paul am made a minister; and the more to confirm them in what he had said, he adds of this gospel of reconciliation so spread, he was immediately called, Ga 1:1, and constituted to be a minister for the promulgation of it amongst the Gentiles, it being, with others, most notably committed to him, 2Co 5:19 1Ti 1:11.

### Colossians 1:24

Ver. 24. Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you; he confirms his call to the ministry of the gospel from his cheerfulness in his present sufferings, so that they should not be discenraged, being it highly contented him to witness and seal his doctrine by bearing his cross for them, Re 5:2,3 2Co 7:4; see Ph 1:14,20 2:17. The Jews hated him and persecuted him because of his communion with the Greeks and other Gentiles, which occasioned his imprisonment at Rome, Col 2:1 4:3,18 Ac 21:28,29 26:17,18 Eph 3:1; yet this did not deter him from his office, but he took pleasure in doing his duty. Ac 5:41 2Ti 2:10, gladly spending himself and being spent for their souls, 2Co 12:15, for their edification and consolation, 2Co 1:6,7 Php 1:13,14.

And fill up; and, the copulative, is used as causal; fill up, not simply, but in one's turn, implying a contradistinction between what Christ suffered for the apostle, and what the apostle suffered for Christ. Christ in his rank suffered what was necessary for my redemption; now I, in my turn, (by his gift, Php 1:29), undergo what afflictions are useful for his glory. He purchased salvation by his cross, I advance his kingdom and cause by my combats.

That which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh: one learned man renders this clause, what remains concerning the afflictions for Christ in my flesh; however, if we conceive of things distinctly, we may retain our own translation, considering Paul's filling up is either:

1. With respect to Christ; so he doth not mean what Christ suffered in his own proper person during his tabernacling here; for neither Paul nor any other penman of the New Testament doth use the term affliction, to express the sufferings of Christ whereby he appeased God's wrath and satisfied his justice: that he finished in his own person when he gave up the ghost, Joh 19:30, he perfected all completely, Col 1:14,22; nothing will be required from any believer upon that account, Ro 6:9,10 Heb 10:14; there be no remains upon that account, all was filled up by Christ himself. All can be imagined that Paul should mean in this respect, would be only from Christ's leaving an example, 1Pe 2:21: q.d. As Christ hath suffered for my salvation, so in like manner, following him, I bear his cross, suffering for his gospel and glory. Or:
2. With respect to Paul himself: the sense is, q.d. As I have borne a great part of afflictions for the name of Christ, and in his glorious communion, 2Co 1:5 Ga 6:17 2Ti 1:8,10; so in like manner I fill up the remains of them assigned to me a member of the mystical body, in conformity to the image of him who is the Head, Ro 8:18 1Pe 4:13. I do by little and little accomplish in my present sufferings (which make a part of it) the portion allotted to me in the same afflictions, which are accomplished and accomplishing in our brethren that are in the world, 1Pe 5:9, in time and degree according to God's counsel, (whereby the Head was preordained to suffer, Ac 4:28 1Pe 1:20), which apportioned to every member what share it is to bear, till it be perfectly confirmed to Christ, Php 3:10,12,21. These sufferings as Christians, 1Pe 4:13,14,16, (which the members undergo in their causes), may be said to be the afflictions of Christ:

(1.) Being for his cause and glory, the troubles they receive upon his account may be called his, the badges of his family and followers, Ga 6:17 Heb 11:26.

(2.) Because of the union between Head and members, 1Co 12:12; they being give, to the whole body, the wounds of his members are his, Ac 9:4,16, he doth sympathize with them; but as he finished his work of proper sufferings while in the flesh, so the apostle's expression intimates here, their sufferings shall not last longer than they are in the body, they need not fear any purgatory afterwards.

For his body's sake, which is the church: and while Paul suffered here, he adds another reason for the supporting and cheering of him, viz. the usefulness of his sufferings for the whole church, the mystical body of Christ, as Col 1:18; which consideration might sweeten his bitterest afflictions, not only because it was in their service, to further their faith, that he was so persecuted, but for their edification and consolation; this was the scope of his patience, Php 1:12-14, to encourage those who knew his testimony to embrace the truth, 2Ti 2:10. What the Rhemists and other papists infer hence, that the apostle satisfied for the sins of other believers by his sufferings, contributing to the church's treasury of satisfactions for temporary punishments, is altogether groundless. It is brutish to conclude, because he sustained afflictions for the edification of the church, that therefore he satisfied for the sins of the church; because he was spent for the Corinthians, that he answered for their faults, 2Co 12:15: he was not crucified for any, 1Co 1:13. To take Paul's sufferings satisfactory is to derogate from Christ's merit; none is without sin as Christ was, and as it is necessary for him that satisfieth, Pr 20:9. Christ's sacrifice became expiatory, being offered by the eternal Spirit, Heb 9:14; he having borne the sins of believers in his own natural body upon the cross, and that by himself, there needs no supplements (could any be found) from others, Joh 1:29 Heb 1:3,8 1Pe 2:24 1Jo 2:2. To conceit there is any need of human satisfactions as supplies to Christ's sufferings, is to cross the apostle's main drift here, Col 1:12-14, 20-22; he was far from satisfying for himself, Php 3:9,12, and shows that every man shall bear his own burden. Ga 6:5, however he should endeavour to honour Christ, and edify his church, 2Co 12:10.

### Colossians 1:25

Ver. 25. Whereof I am made a minister; see under what title he suffers for the church, because a minister, ( in the more general acceptation of the word), as Col 1:23, not (as one of the ancients saith) to give the price of redemption, but to preach. He looked not on his apostleship as a domination, but ministration, 2Co 5:18; and though in regard of his call he was an extraordinary apostle, yet he, (remembering his Master's injunction, Mt 20:26), no more than Peter did affect dominion or a lordship over Christ's heritage 2Co 1:24 1Pe 5:1-3, according to his singular and eminent call to be a minister and a witness, Ac 26:16. As he doth



elsewhere make mention of the minister of God, 2Co 6:4 1Th 3:2; of the New Testament, gospel, word, reconciliation, Ac 6:4 2Co 3:6 5:18,19 Eph 3:7; of Jesus Christ and of the Lord, Ro 15:8 1Co 4:1 Eph 6:20 1Ti 4:6; so he doth here, by reason of the union between the Head and the body, own himself to be constituted a minister of the church, which some, of a lower rank, like not now to be called.

According to the dispensation of God; and that by Divine vouchsafement and commandment, being called from persecution of the church to this ministry, Ac 9:15,16 1Co 4:1 2Co 5:19 Eph 1:1. Yea, and also for them at Colosse, who, being of the Gentiles, were in his commission, according to the gift of the grace of God given to him, Eph 3:7.

Which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; fully to preach the word of God amongst them, as well as to the Romans and others, Ro 15:19, and so to fulfil the prophecy, Zec 2:11, for the calling of the Gentiles by the promulgation of the gospel amongst them, Ac 22:21 Ro 1:5 11:13 1Ti 2:7; and so fulfilling God's word, by fully expounding the whole doctrine of salvation amongst them, and promoting of it to the end of his life.

### Colossians 1:26

Ver. 26. Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations; viz. that holy secret of godliness, Col 2:2,3 4:3 Mt 13:11 Ro 16:25,26 1Co 2:7 Eph 3:3,4,6,8,9,10; see 1Ti 3:16 Re 14:6; which doth not consist in beggarly elements, Ga 4:9, or vain speculations, which these Colossians are cautioned to avoid, Col 2:8, however varnished; but is to them who are saved, the power of God, Ro 1:16 1Co 1:18,19, and the wisdom of God, 1Co 1:24, which lay hid in God before the world, 1Co 2:7 2Ti 1:9 Tit 1:2 1Pe 1:20: yea, and after God had to our first parents, and so to his people the Jews, given some glimpse of this mystery, which yet the Gentiles of several ages were ignorant of, and many of the Jews, yea, the most knowing of them did not, for many generations, know that the Gentiles without circumcision, &c. were to be admitted into the church, Ac 10:28: the prophets were very inquisitive to know the meaning of it, but yet they also were much in the dark, 1Co 2:9 1Pe 1:10,11; yea, the angels did not know this hidden mystery, till revealed by the church, Eph 1:10.

But now is made manifest to his saints; but now God that revealeth secrets, Da 2:28, hath opened his bosom counsel about this affair most

clearly, so that his glory, by those that really fear him, may be seen with open face as in a glass through Christ, Mt 13:11 Mr 4:11 Joh 8:47 15:15 Ac 16:14 1Co 2:10,16 2Co 3:18; all necessary to salvation being made conspicuous and clear to them, 1Pe 2:9.

### Colossians 1:27

Ver. 27. To whom God would make known; he refers the manifestation purely to God's good will and pleasure, as Christ himself doth, Mt 11:26,27 Lu 10:21; so in the like case, Re 9:18; that having mentioned saints, none might conceit it was for foreseen faith, but the Colossians might value their privilege, reverently receive that grace which was not given to all: in short, to restrain curiosity why God would not do it otherwise or sooner, he cuts the knots of all questions, only by signifying his sovereign pleasure, he would make it known to them; elsewhere, this mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, Eph 1:9, which was not to be touched till he thought meet to make it known.

What is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: some refer the glory to mystery, as glorious mystery, because it lets forth Divine glory, and promiseth it to believers, Lu 2:14; others, and the most, rather to riches, and that either as its epithet, (Col 1:11), the glorious riches of this mystery, or noting the subject, for salvation of the church amongst the Gentiles, Eph 1:18 3:7,8. It is usual with the apostle to use the word riches to set forth abundance, Ro 2:4, 11:33 Eph 1:7: here, for the praise of the gospel, he would signify a very great and most abundant glory, far surpassing any former ministration, 2Co 3:8,18. In the law those riches (Eph 2:7) were not only imperfectly and obscurely discovered, but scatteredly with broken beams, as the sun in water when the water is disturbed; one attribute shining out in one work, another in another; but now the harmony of the Divine attributes in man's redemption shines out most fully, clearly, and gloriously, contracted in Christ, who is the object and revealer of the mystery by his Spirit, the glory whereof breaks forth with much more splendour amongst the Gentiles, Ro 15:7-9 1Co 2:10 2Co 3:9,18; all glory before was but a shadow to this. Col 2:17 2Co 3:18 Ga 3:1 Heb 10:1.

Which is Christ in you; which is Christ, amongst, for, or in them, i.e. who not only was preached amongst them, but whom they possessed, and who dwelt in them by faith, Eph 3:17; the revelation being accompanied with

the power of the Spirit in the translating them by his glorious power from the kingdom of darkness into his kingdom, Col 1:13 Lu 17:21 Ga 2:20 4:19 Eph 3:5,7.

The hope of glory; so is not only the object, 1Ti 1:1, but the ground of their expectation of glory, he in whom the mystery begins and ends, 1Ti 3:16; out of whom all are hopeless of being happy, Eph 2:12, and in whom all have strong consolation, Heb 6:18.

### Colossians 1:28

Ver. 28. Whom we preach: here he shows that the subject of his and other ministers' preaching was Christ, (as he had before described him), in whom alone hope of glory was to be had, Ac 4:12 1Co 2:2 Ga 5:4 1Jo 1:3.

Warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; the manner of it was by admonishing and instructing all, in all the Christian wisdom that Christ required, that they might avoid sin and do their duty. He means all collectively, not distributively; of the generals of each, not each one of those generals; excluding none from the communion of so great a benefit, having no acceptance of nations or persons, making no exception of any condition, but inviting all men to Christ, holding forth this light of the gospel to whosoever would receive it, while God did vouchsafe life and strength to them, in the most taking way, Ac 20:21,27,31 Ro 1:14-16 1Ti 3:2 2Ti 2:24 2Ti 3:16 4:2 Tit 1:9.

That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; and the end and aim he and others of his mind had in preaching of this matter in such a manner was the same with Christ's, Col 1:22, to put them into such an estate by their labours that they might, through Christ, appear at a throne of grace without confusion, 2Co 11:2 Php 3:12,15 Heb 5:14.

### Colossians 1:29

Ver. 29. To perform which, saith he, I earnestly endeavour and take pains to weariness, as a husbandman, 2Ti 2:6, contending as one in an agony, 1Th 5:12, by his grace which was with me (1Co 15:10) in power; not by

my own strength or wisdom to do or suffer, but by his effectual aids, enabling me for his service which might, Col 1:11 Ro 15:15-21 1Co 9:25-27 Eph 1:19,20 3:7 Php 4:13.

## Colossians 2:1

### Chapter Summary

Col 2:1-3 Paul testifieth his solicitude for the churches which had not seen him, that they might be united in love, and attain a perfect knowledge of the Christian revelation,

Col 2:4-7 not being seduced from their stedfastness in the faith,

Col 2:8 nor corrupted through philosophy and human traditions.

Col 2:9-12 He showeth that they were already complete in Christ. having attained the true circumcision figured in baptism,

Col 2:13,14 that God had quickened the with Christ, and both abolished the law of ordinances, that was against them,

Col 2:15 and also spoiled principalities and powers.

Col 2:16-23 He therefore urgeth them not to submit to legal ordinances, which were but a shadow of Christ; nor to the worship of angels, and other vain practices of human devising.

Ver. 1. For; this causal particle refers to what he had said just before in the former chapter.

*I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you;* the certainty of which truth, for the evidence of his unfeigned affection to them, he heartily wishes they might be certified what a combat he sustained for them, by reason of that opposition he met with in his ministerial labours. This filled him with inward fears and cares, and encompassed him with outward troubles, as 2Co 11:23-30 2Ti 2:10, wherein he addressed himself to God for them by earnest prayers, as Col 4:12 2Th 1:11, desiring the assistance of their prayers, Ro 15:30 Heb 13:18: these, with his travels, writings, &c.,

might well be called a *conflict*, Php 1:30.

*And for them at Laodicea;* which he had not only for the saints at Colosse, but for their neighbours, liable also to the impression of the same or the like seducers, at Laodicea, definitely, to whom he designed this Epistle might be imparted, Col 4:16.

*And for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;* and indefinitely, for as many Christians, especially in Phrygia, as had not seen him bodily present amongst them, or heard him preach with a lively voice; whether, because it is said he twice passed through all Phrygia, where Colosse and Laodicea were situate, Ac 16:6 18:23, he had been personally at these cities, is not determinable from the copulative here, (which possibly may be used as a particle to separate these from those who had not conversed with him), neither is it of much importance. It should seem Paul was acquainted with Philemon, (a Colossian or Laodicean), his wife and family, Phm 1:1,2.

### Colossians 2:2

Ver. 2. *That their hearts might be comforted:* whereas false teachers did endeavour to adulterate the Christian institution, the striving of the apostle's holy soul here was, as in the former chapter, Col 1:28, to this end, that they might be complete and established Christians to the last.

*Being knit together in love;* and as a proper means conductible to this good purpose, he would have them be joined or compacted together, be all of a piece, in the affection and exercise of love.

*And unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding;* and to attain to a well-grounded, powerful, evangelical faith, which he sets forth lively by an elegant increase of words, both in regard of the acts and the object of it, which is called a mystery to be believed, 1Ti 3:9, upon its being revealed. The sense of that which he heartily desires is that they might have:

1. All abundance of understanding with full satisfaction in these main principles of the gospel they are called to assent to. Signifying faith is

no blind, but a certain intelligent persuasion; to distinguish it from uncertain opinion, Joh 6:69 Ro 4:21 1Th 1:5 Heb 6:11 10:22.

*To the acknowledgment:*

2. An inward consent, and vital owning, a cordial embracing of the fundamental truths of the gospel, Eph 4:13,14 Heb 6:1, in opposition to those vain speculations and traditions which deluded many. He calls this *the mystery of God*, or a Divine mystery, (no human invention), as before, Col 1:26,27; and so vindicates the dignity of faith and the excellency of the gospel, asserting it to be a mystery of God, not only as the object, but revealer of it; for the Father reveals Christ, Col 1:27 Mt 16:17 Eph 3:3, as Christ doth the Father, Mt 11:27 Joh 1:18.

Whereas it is said, *and of the Father, and of Christ*; this first *and* here needs not be rendered as a copulative, but as exegetical, or as expletive, and may be read, even, or to wit, or both, its (a learned man observes) the Greeks and Latins usually do when the copulative is to be repeated, the name of God referring commonly to the Father and the Son; as elsewhere, *God, even the Father*, Col 1:3 1Co 15:24 2Co 11:31 Eph 1:3 Php 4:20. So the former *and* here may be read; q.d. The mystery not of God, abstractedly considered; but, I would have you be united and all one, in the acknowledgment of the whole mystery of God, i.e. both of the Father and of Christ.

### Colossians 2:3

Ver. 3. *In whom*: this may relate either to the Divine mystery, wherein are in abundance all necessary doctrines to consolation and salvation stored up, respecting the foregoing verse; compare 1Co 2:7 Eph 3:3,4; in opposition to the vain show of wisdom seducers did boast of; or, (as the most ancient and modern take it), to Christ, the immediate antecedent: *in whom*, (as we render it), i.e. in Christ, considered either:

1. As the object, which being rightly known, we may have all wisdom and perfect knowledge to salvation: he speaks not here of all that Christ knoweth, he reveals not all that in the gospel to us, but what we must know of him that we may be saved. Or:

2. As the subject, because *all the treasures of wisdom in order to salvation, are not only known and found out in Christ, but also are hid*, do dwell and abide in him as the fountain, what he can give to us for our consolation and perfection.

It had been little pertinent for Paul to have said that all these deep things of God (1Co 2:10) were known to our Lord; but that they are found in him, do dwell in him, are all stored up, displayed, and set forth in him, to be seen *through the veil, that is to say his flesh*, Heb 10:20, or the infirmity of his cross. The series of the apostle's discourse, comparing Col 2:8,9, shows it to be thus understood of Christ as the subject and fountain of all saving wisdom, in opposition to the comments of human wisdom which the false doctors did boast of. Continuing the metaphor, he shows from what fund the treasures of saving knowledge may be drawn: by *treasures* intimating the excellency and abundance thereof; there was some store in the tabernacle of Moses, but very small compared to the abundance certainly to be found in Christ, all else of no worth to the excellency of the knowledge of Christ for consolation, Col 2:2 Php 3:8; things to be believed and practised are, by way of eminency, *Christian wisdom and knowledge*. The *treasures* of which, how and when hid, is to be well considered, because in our translation, and in almost all others, the Greek word we render *hid* is by trajection put next to the relative *whom*, whereas it is indeed in the original the last word in the verse, and seems to be expressive rather of what was hid before Christ than what is hid in him. For, as a learned man saith, hidden treasures, as such, seem to be like hidden music, of no regard; or like the hidden talent, Lu 19:20. It not being so easy to think that the apostle in this Epistle teaches, that the secrets which had lain hid from the wise men of the world in the ages past, now were made bare, brought into light, and made known even to babes by Christ, Col 1:26,27, with Lu 10:21; and having just before, Col 2:2, spoken of the understanding and acknowledgment of the mystery of the Father and the Son, what should the riches of glory to the knowledge of the mystery be, but the treasures of wisdom now revealed, heretofore hid, of which continuedly a little after he says that all the fulness of the Godhead dwells in him bodily, i.e. personally, not in a shadow, as it were hid in a cloud, but in flesh that may be really seen and touched? So that it should seem best to retain *hid* as it is placed in the Greek, to this sense; q.d. In Christ are, and dwell in the greatest fulness, all the treasures of wisdom, hid

under the law, which are therefore called a mystery, secret, or hidden thing from ages and generations, Col 1:26,27, now made manifest to his saints, they are now not hid in Christ, but made known amongst the Gentiles as God willed. Not then hidden riches, i.e. treasures of wisdom and knowledge of this mystery as of hid treasure, but out of Christ, and before Christ amongst the Jews: for Christ himself is that mystery Col 4:3, not hid after his appearance, but manifested, and manifesting the Father, Joh 1:18. However, if any will rather choose to read, as if in Christ were at present hid all treasures, it is to be understood, stored up, not exposed to the view of every eye, being as in a rich cabinet, not to keep them from being known to men, but rather to make them more precious and desirable. For Christ came when sent of his Father to spread this heavenly wealth. He is the Sun of righteousness, Joh 1:9: the unbelieving must thank themselves if, where he is truly preached, he be hid to them, and his arm be revealed but to a few, Isa 53:1 2Co 4:3,4: it is their own blinding that they do not savingly discern what is displayed in Christ. Wherefore both may be true in divers respects:

1. Consider the thing in itself, objectively; so treasures of wisdom are evidently laid up in Jesus Christ, and manifested upon his appearance, 1Ti 3:16 Tit 2:11. But:
2. With respect to the eyes and perceptions of men, subjectively, as naturally obscured and corrupted by sin; so natural men, or mere animal men, perceive not in Christ the riches of wisdom and knowledge which are in him as our Mediator, when they look upon him as having no beauty or comeliness for which they should desire him, Isa 53:2; he, as crucified, being to the Jews *a stumbling-block* and to the Gentiles *foolishness*, when he is to those of them who are called, *the power of God, and the wisdom of God*, 1Co 1:23,24. The Lutherans' inference hence, that omniscency agrees to Christ's human nature, is altogether inconsequent; both (as before) because the apostle's business here is not to acquaint us what Christ himself knoweth, but what is to be known by us, which may be found treasured up in him.

*Treasures* here in him not being considered absolutely, but comparatively to all the knowledge of men and angels. Yet, from a supposal of an infinite knowledge in Christ, who is God-man in one person, it followeth not that the soul of his human nature knoweth all things.



#### Colossians 2:4

Ver. 4. *And this I say;* here he suggests the ground of his insisting upon the excellent treasures of the saving knowledge of Christ, and the ample description of him.

*Lest any man should beguile you;* to this end, that he might fortify them against delusion by paralogisms, or sophistical and false reasonings, fallacious arguing, (as the word notes, Jas 1:22), under a colourable pretence and *show of wisdom*, Col 2:8,18,23. With enticing words; set off with rhetorical suasions and embellishments, intimating the prevalency of such blandishments, with fair words and good speeches to seduce the simple, if the heart were not established with grace, Ro 16:18 Eph 4:14 5:6 Heb 13:9; and therefore, esteeming the excellent knowledge of Christ, and being found in him, Php 3:8,9, they should beware of whatever, under a show of religion, is introduced to seduce them from *the simplicity that is in Christ*, 2Co 11:3.

#### Colossians 2:5

Ver. 5. *For though I be absent in in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit:* to prevent any surmise that his distance at Rome might take him off from minding of them at Colosse, he shows that the great affection he bare to them did oblige him to interest himself in all their concerns, (*the care of all the churches* being incumbent on him, 2Co 11:28), and therefore that his bodily confinement at Rome did not hinder his presence with them in spirit. Not that we can conclude, that by some extraordinary operation of the Holy Ghost God gave him now and then a clear prospect of what they did, as he did to Elisha of Gehazi's behavior, 2Ki 5:26; and to Ezekiel in Babylon of the secret actions of the Jews in Jerusalem; but that he was with them as with the Corinthians, 1Co 5:3, when distant in body his thoughts and affections were exercised about them.

*Joying and beholding your order;* as it follows there is moving of fears lest they should be insnared, so of joy understanding their *order*, i.e. their good estate, constitution, and consent in orderly walking and discipline,

1Co 14:10 1Th 4:1 5:14.

*And the steadfastness of your faith in Christ;* and the firmament of their faith in Christ, it being (if genuine) as firm as the firmament itself; stable as the heavens and heavenly bodies, keeping their constant stations and regular courses, and admitting nothing heterogeneous into them: all heavenly truths are as fixed stars in this orb. Seeing all grace, because Divine, hath an establishing proverty; so faith coming from the eternal mountains, all graces being connected in faith, which is a kind of firmament to them all, it comes to pass that faith, in actuating any true grace, gives a strength and further growth to every other grace.

Colossians 2:6

Ver. 6. Having cautioned them against sophistical seducers, and commended them for that order and sound faith he understood to be amongst them, he here infers an exhortation to continuance in both, especially in the latter, with respect to the person of Christ, according as he had before described him: for he doth not say: As ye have received the doctrine of Christ, or concerning Christ, but: *As ye have received Christ himself,* as Joh 1:11,12 1Jo 5:11,12, in whom is all treasured up for salvation. He adds not only *Jesus*, (who came to save his people from their sins), but *the Lord*, intimating they should not therefore suffer any rules of faith or life to be imposed upon them by any other whatsoever, but should be persuaded to abide *in him*, whom they had embraced, and order their conversation according to his mind, 1Th 4:1, knowing that he is *the way, the truth, and the life*, Joh 14:6; being led by his Spirit, and deriving virtue to go on in this orderly walk and persevere in the faith.

Colossians 2:7

Ver. 7. *Rooted and built up in him;* showing how they should abide and persevere in the faith, by continuing in him as branches do in the root, Joh 15:4, and resting upon him as a building upon the foundation, Isa 28:16 1Co 3:11 Eph 2:22.

*And stablished in the faith;* and being firm and settled in the faith, as 1Pe

5:10; he adds this, not only to clear the metaphorical expressions before, but to show that they should be growing stronger as to the internal habit, Ps 92:13,14. He repeats as it were in a parenthesis, *as ye have been taught*; upon the matter, the same with *as ye have received Christ* in the former verse; for greater caution to them, who might be apt to have itching ears, that they should not be listening to any novel doctrines, but abide in the faith of Christ.

*Abounding therein with thanksgiving*; setting down with themselves, according to the superabounding grace they had, Ro 5:20, with 1Co 4:8, to abound and increase therein, 1Co 15:58 2Pe 1:8; having herein all the saving knowledge desirable, without need of the addition of aught any other way; being thankful to God that he had revealed such a Christ, his Christ, to them, for they could not have a better or another.

### Colossians 2:8

Ver. 8. *Beware*: the apostle, after his exhortation, considering their danger from seducing spirits lying in wait to deceive by their sleight and craftiness, 1Ti 4:1,2, doth here reinforce and enlarge his caution he had before suggested, Col 2:4, to engage to a heedful avoidance of all seduction from Christ.

*Lest any man spoil you*; lest their souls should be made a prey, and they be carried for a spoil by those worst of robbers that beset Christ's fold, 2Co 11:20 Ga 6:13.

*Through philosophy*; either through the abuse of true philosophy in bringing the mystery of Christ under the tribunal of shallow reason, or rather through erroneous, though curious, speculations of some philosophers, as Plato, Pythagoras, Hesiod, &c. then in vogue, which the Gnostics afterwards (who, thinking themselves enriched with the notions of other heretics, would be thought the only knowing persons) dressed up Christ with, not like himself. Their philosophy being a falsely so called science or knowledge, 1Ti 6:20, whatever show of wisdom it might seem to carry along with it, Col 2:23, it was not really profitable; but a *vain deceit*, or seduction, as several take the next clause appositively, and the conjunction expositively; yet, if we consider what follows, we may

understand another general imposture, viz. superstition, seeing *vain deceit, after the tradition of men*, is so like that superstition our Saviour doth rebuke in the Pharisees, Mt 15:9, several branches of which the apostle doth afterward in this chapter dispute against, Col 2:16-23: superstition might well be called *deceit*, from the cheat it puts upon men and the notation of the Greek word, which imports a withdrawing men from the way. Christ, and from his way of worship prescribed in his word; and *vain* it is as well as a deceit, since it is empty and unprofitable, not accompanied with God's blessing, nor conducing to the pleasing of him, but the provoking of him, Ps 106:29,43. Being led by no other rule than *the tradition of men*, which is the same with the precepts of men, Mr 7:8, which God likes not, Isa 8:20 28:13 Joh 20:31 Ac 26:22 2Ti 3:15,16; he would not give place to human traditions in his house, nor to *the rudiments of the world*, ( in allusion to grammar, wherein the letters are the elements or rudiments of all literature), i.e. the ceremonies of the Mosaical law, containing a kind of elementary instruction, for that seems to be the apostle's meaning, comparing this verse with Col 2:20 and Col 2:21, and other places, Ga 3:24, these being but corporeal, *carnal*, and sensible *ordinances*, suitable to a *worldly sanctuary*. Heb 9:1,10, not to be imposed in that spiritual one which Christ hath set up, Joh 4:23,24 Ga 5:2. Whatsoever philosophical colours or Pharisaical paint they might appear in, they are *not after Christ*: we say a false picture of a man is not after the man, being not taken from or resembling his person, but clean another; such descriptions of him, as were not taken from the life and truth that was in him. And therefore he who is Head of his church, and likes not to be misshaped or misrepresented, will not accept of homage from those of his own house, in a livery that he hath not given order for, Le 10:1 Jer 7:31 2Co 5:9, how specious soever it may be in the wisdom of this world and the princes thereof, 1Co 2:6,7.

### Colossians 2:9

Ver. 9. For; the causal particle induceth this as an argument to enforce the caution immediately foregoing, against those who did seek to draw from Christ by philosophy, as well as urging the ceremonial law; else the apostle's reasoning were not cogent unless against both.

*In him*; it is evident that the Lord Jesus Christ himself, whom he had described and but just now named, is the subject, the person of whom he speaks, and in

whom is seated, and unto whom he attributes, what followeth, Col 1:19 Joh 1:4 1Ti 4:16. He doth not say, in his doctrine, whatever Socinians cavil, as if they would render the apostle absurd, and not to agree with himself in what he asserts of Christ's person before (as hath been showed) and after in the context. It is plain this relative *him*, respects not only Col 2:8, but Col 2:11, &c. in whom the believing Colossians are said to be *complete* as their *Head*, both in the former chapter, and soon after in this. Would it not be absurd to say, Christ's doctrine is the head of angels? We are crucified in the doctrine of Christ? Buried and quickened together with his doctrine? The hand-writing of ordinances was nailed to the cross of doctrine? Is a doctrine the head of principalities and powers? Can a doctrine be buried in baptism? &c. To silence all the earth, that they should not restrain it to Christ's doctrine only, what he asserts of his person, Paul, after Christ had been several years in heaven, put it in the present tense, *dwelleth*, not dwelt, (as 2Ti 1:5), in regard of the person eternally the same, Heb 13:8; for his argument had not been cogent, to contain Christians in the faith of Christ, and their duty to him, to have alleged, in the doctrine of Christ now in heaven hath dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (could propriety of speech have allowed it); but from the other respect, because in their very flesh (the body of Christ, now an inhabitant of the heavens) the very Godhead, in the whole fulness thereof, personally, from the moment of his incarnation, doth yet dwell. What will not the faithful perform and work out with their utmost faith, that they may never suffer themselves to be rent from spiritual and mystical union with him, in whom they understand that even they themselves shall be also divinely filled, Col 2:10, i.e. in their measure be made *partakers of the Divine nature*, 2Pe 1:4.

*Dwelleth* imports more than a transient stay for a few minutes, or a little while, even abiding in him constantly and for ever, as dwelling most usually notes, 2Co 6:16. That which doth thus perpetually abide in his person, as denominated after the human nature, is all the fulness of the Godhead, viz. that rich and incomprehensible abundance of perfections, whereof the supreme and adorable nature is full; so that indeed there is not at all any perfection or excellency in the Divine nature but is found abiding in him. And after no common or ordinary way, but by a hypostatical or personal union of the Godhead with the manhood in Christ; which is not by way of mixture, confusion, conversion, or any other mutation; but *bodily*, to exclude that inhabitation which is only by extrinsical denomination. It being an adverb, doth denote the manner as well as the subject; wherefore when he speaks of the temple of his body, Joh 2:21, that doth not fully reach the apostle's meaning here: but it must be expounded personally, since in the Greek that which signifies with us a body, and so our English word body, is put for a person, Ro 12:1 2Co 5:10 Re 18:13: somebody or nobody, i.e. some person or no person. There is a

presence of the Godhead general, by essence and power; particular, in the prophets and apostles working miracles: gracious, in all sanctified ones; glorious, in heaven, in *light which no man can approach unto*, 1Ti 6:16; relative, in the church visible and ordinances, typically under the law, and symbolically in the sacraments: but all these dwellings, or being present in the creature, fall short of that in the text, viz. *bodily*, connoting the personal habitation of the *Deity* in, and union of it with, the humanity of Christ, so close, and strait, and intimate, that the Godhead inhabiting and the manhood inhabited make but one and the same person, even as the reasonable soul and body in man make but one man. The way of the presence of the Deity with the humanity of Christ is above all those manners of the presence of God with angels and men. The Godhead dwells in him personally, in them in regard of assistance and energy: Godhead notes the truth of it; Christ was not only partaker of the Divine nature, 2Pe 1:4, but the very Godhead dwells in him: it is not only the Divinity (as the Socinians, following the Vulgar Latin in this, would have it) but the Deity, the very nature and essence of God. Now it is observable, though in God himself Divinity and Deity be indeed the same, Ro 1:20, and may differ only from the manner of our conception and contemplation; yet here, when the enemies to Christ's Deity might by their cavilling make more use of the word Divinity, (as when the soul of man is said to be a divine thing), to insinuate as if it here noted only the Divine will exclusive to the other attributes, (which exclusion the term *all* doth significantly prevent), the apostle puts in Deity or *Godhead*. Then lest Christ might (as by the Arians) be deemed a secondary God, or (as some since) a made god, inferior to the Father, he saith *the fulness of the Godhead*, which speaks him perfect God, coequal with the Father: further, connoting a numerical sameness of essence between the Godhead of the Father and the Son, *all* the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth in him. There is not one fulness of the Father and another of the Son, but one and the same singular Godhead in both, Joh 10:30. The fulness of the manhood in Adam and Eve were not numerically the same, but the Godhead of the Father and the Son is: yet is not the manhood of Christ co-extended and commensurate with the Godhead (as some Lutherans conceit); but where the manhood is, or Christ as man is, or hath his existence, there the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily: so that this fulness is extended as the manhood only in which it is, and not as far as the Deity in which this derivative fulness is not as in its seat, though it be all originally from it, but inherently or subjectively in Christ.

## Colossians 2:10

Ver. 10. *And ye;* ye saints and holy brethren, Col 1:2, who have received Christ, Col 2:6,7, and so are mystically united to him, in whom dwelleth all fulness (as you have heard); being in him, having one Spirit with him, as members with the head, Ro 8:1,9 Eph 1:23, *are complete;* are implete, or filled, and so mediately and causally complete from the all-fulness that is in your Head, yet not immediately and properly complete with it (as some have been apt to think). But *in him* ye have that completeness and perfection which is reckoned and made over to you and accepted for you to justification, so that *of his fulness* ye receive, *and grace for grace*, Joh 1:16 1Co 1:30 2Co 5:21 Eph 1:6 Php 3:9; derive in and from him all spiritual blessings, Eph 1:3; so that every one hath *grace sufficient*, 2Co 12:9, to do all things incumbent on him, through Christ strengthening him, Php 4:13. It is true there is here in this state no being complete or perfect actually, as to glorification, yet, virtually and seminally, that may in a sort be said of true believers not only in regard of their Head, but in regard of their certain hope of being saved in Christ, yea, and indeed as to the earnest, the seed and root of it, having already that life which shall never have an end, Joh 3:36 4:14 Ro 5:2 Eph 4:30 2Th 2:13 Heb 9:15 10:14 1Pe 1:3,4 1Jo 5:12.

*Which is the head of all principality and power:* the apostle, for consolation of the saints, and in opposition to those who did endeavour a withdrawing from Christ to the worshipping of angels. Col 2:18, doth further infer, from the personal union, the dignity of the human nature of Christ, in regard of the good angels, which are here meant by *principality and power*, by reason of their excellency by nature and grace, and their authority delegated to them by God over other creatures, Mt 24:36 2Co 11:14 1Ti 5:21. Christ having the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him bodily, is Head unto the good angels in regard of his excellency and eminency above them, who are far below him in perfection, Eph 1:21 Heb 1:4; the best of them are *ministering spirits* and *subject to him*, and so under his authority and at his command, Mt 13:41 16:27 24:31 Eph 3:10 Heb 1:14 1Pe 3:22 Re 1:1 22:16.

## Colossians 2:11

Ver. 11. *In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands:* he removes what they who are addicted to superstition might suggest, as if there were somewhat defective to a completeness in Christ, by showing there was no need of any addition to what he required in the gospel; for that they might most plausibly urge of circumcision, as being the seal of the old covenant, and an obligation to the whole law, Ga 5:3, which some pressed as necessary to salvation, Ac 15:1,24, he here shows was altogether needless now, that they were sanctified and had the thing signified by it, the circumcision of the heart, Ro 2:28,29 Php 3:3, and were complete in Christ without it; yea, that the urging of that and other ceremonies now, was a pernicious error, tending to annihilate the cross of Christ, and overthrow the whole mystery of his grace. It is true it was appointed to the Jews, a figure of a thing absent; they therefore who retain that figure after the coming of Christ, deny that to be complete which it doth figure, and so abolish the presence of the truth; by stickling for the shadow, they let go the substance, viz. the circumcision not made by the operation of man, but of God; not with the knife of Moses, but the word of Christ, *sharper than any two-edged sword*, Heb 4:12: and if we compare this with the verse following, and Php 3:3, the apostle intimates that baptism is the same to us Christians which circumcision was to the Jews; and that is often ascribed to the external administration, that is only the internal operation of the Spirit, as Ro 6:3,4 Ga 3:27,28 Tit 3:5 1Pe 3:21. Now though there was during the shadow of it, Heb 10:1, under the Old Testament, the circumcision of the heart, as well as under the New, De 10:16 30:6 Jer 4:4; yet under the New Testament Christ the substance (who was only before in the promise) being now exhibited, having abolished the old symbol and instituted baptism in the room of it; that with the hands in the flesh, Eph 2:11, which they who *received not the promise*, i.e. the Messiah promised, used, Heb 11:39, was to be no more urged, now the benefit by the merit of his obedience unto the death of the cross, whereby he circumciseth from sin, might be enjoyed, as was signified by baptism, appointed to this end, Mt 28:19 Ac 2:38 Ro 6:3,4 Ga 3:27 1Pe 3:21.

*In putting off the body of the sins of the flesh:* hence he doth illustrate this spiritual circumcision by describing the parts of it, beginning with the mortification of the old man, corrupted nature, containing not only the



body and senses, but the soul tainted with the defilements of sin, Col 3:5 Ro 6:6 Ga 5:19-21,24 Eph 4:22. The body of sins which do mostly exert themselves in the flesh, every member and power while unregenerate being active in the committing of sin, till the new man be put on, Eph 4:24, and the dominion of it be subdued; not by any natural part which a man hath of himself for that purpose, but by the circumcision of Christ, not properly that whereby he himself was circumcised in the flesh the eighth day, but that which he hath indispensably required to have admission into his kingdom, Joh 3:3, and which he himself is the worker of, doth procure by his merit, and effect by his Spirit, which all the suasion of the sublimest philosophers, and devotion of superstitious ones, cannot do.

### Colossians 2:12

*Ver. 12. Buried with him in baptism:* he shows that in Christ they who are found have not only the thing signified, but right to the outward sign and seal, viz. baptism, in the room of circumcision abolished; the death and burial of Christ is not only the exemplar, but the cause of the death of the old man, signed and sealed in baptism: or, *by baptism into death*, Ro 6:3,4, analogically, or symbolically, or sacramentally, when the Lord, together with the external sign, conferreth his grace signified by that sign; for even then the sins of such a one are buried with Christ so as they shall appear no more, either to his eternal condemnation, or in their former dominion, Ro 6:6,9,14.

*Wherein also ye are risen with him;* in or by which baptism becoming effectual, having mortified the body of sin, like as Christ was raised from the dead, ye are quickened and raised to *newness of life*, Ro 6:4 Ga 3:27-29 Eph 4:23,24 5:14,26,27 Col 3:10,11. By virtue of Christ's resurrection, a spiritual and mystical one is produced in you, which hath a resemblance and analogy to his.

*Through the faith of the operation of God;* not of yourselves, but *through faith*, Eph 2:8, and that wrought in you by the energy or efficacy of God, Joh 6:29 Php 1:29 2:13 Heb 12:2.

*Who hath raised him from the dead;* who did exert his power in raising up Christ from the dead: compare Ro 4:24, with Eph 1:19,20. This faith is not

only wrought by God, as the circumcision without hands, but it doth respect that wonderful power of God put forth in the raising of Christ, as the subject, which he mentions by way of congruity, speaking of our resurrection, and of Christ's. And he specifieth faith rather than love or other graces which are wrought also by God, because in this grace, which is the constitutive part of the new creature, God comes in with a greater irradiation upon the soul, being it hath not one fragment or point of nature to stand upon; carnal reason and mere moral righteousness being opposite to it, whereas other graces are but as the rectifying of the passions, and setting them upon right objects.

### Colossians 2:13

Ver. 13. *And you, being dead in your sins:* he further shows they had no need of *circumcision in the flesh*, Eph 2:11, having all in Christ for justification as well as sanctification, though they (as well as the Ephesians, see Eph 2:1,5) were by nature spiritually *dead in sins*, deprived of the life of grace, and separated from the life of glory.

*And the uncircumcision of your flesh;* and having the foreskin of their flesh in paganism; which was true literally, but, considering the internal circumcision, Col 2:11, the apostle's expression here is to be expounded of the internal corruption of our nature, the uncircumcised heart, original corruption derived unto all by carnal propagation, which is predominant in the unregenerate. These being dead as to the life of grace, Mt 8:22 Joh 5:25 Ro 8:7 1Co 2:14 1Ti 5:6.

*Hath he quickened together with him;* you who were strangers from the life of God, Eph 4:18, hath he now quickened or revived to a spiritual life with him here, and hereafter to eternal life, 1Co 15:22.

*Having forgiven you all trespasses;* having freely pardoned to you (the word noting a free affection to give and forgive, 2Co 2:10 Eph 4:32) all your sins, after as well as before baptism, which is the sign and seal of it, Ps 103:3; so that the Spirit of Christ doth not only infuse a principle of grace, and implant a living and abiding seed to work out vicious habits, but God, upon the account of Christ's plenary satisfaction, doth freely remove all the guilt that binds over to eternal death, and doth not impute to

believers any of their sins in whole or in part, but treateth them as if they had committed none at all, Mt 26:28 Ac 10:43 Eph 1:7 Heb 9:15, and will remember them no more, so that when they are sought for they shall not be found, Jer 31:34 50:20 Heb 10:17. What the papists say of the fault being remitted, when the punishment may be exacted either in whole or in part, that they may have a pretence for human satisfactions, (the groundlessness of which was hinted, Col 1:24), is a mere figment of the schools, against Scripture and reason.

### Colossians 2:14

Ver. 14. *Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us:* having just before manifested God's grace in the free forgiveness of all their trespasses, he doth here adjoin the foundation and means of this remission, viz. "Wiping out the bill of decrees", as one reads; or effacing and cancelling "the handwriting that was against us, which was contrary to us in traditions", as another, pointing after chirograph or handwriting: upon the matter in the explanation there will be no difference from our reading of it. Sin, in Scripture, is frequently accounted a debt, and the acquitting, the pardoning of it, Mt 6:12 Lu 11:4 13:4: as the debtor is obliged to payment, so the sinner to punishment; only it is to be remembered, that though a private creditor may forgive his debt, yet unless the conservator of public justice do exempt an offender against the law, he is not acquitted, but is still under an obligation, bond or handwriting, having, as they under the Mosaic law, professed allegiance, Ex 24:7, which upon default was an evidence of this guilt to avenging justice. The law prescribed by the ministration of Moses was appended with many ceremonial ordinances, to the observation of all which circumcision did oblige: this obligation interpretatively was as a handwriting which did publicly testify a man's native pollution, and was a public confession of his sin and misery, as washings did testify the filth of his sins, and sacrifices, capital guilt to them who lived under it, and did not perform it; that they were accursed, Ga 3:10,19, under a *ministration of death*, 2Co 3:7,9; while by laying their hands on the sacrifices, they did as it were sign a bill or bond against themselves, whereby conscience of guilt was retained, Heb 10:2,3, and a conscience of sin renewed, so that the heart could not be stablished in any firm peace, Heb 9:9 10:1; but they did confess sin to remain, and that they did want a removal of the curse by a

better sacrifice. Upon the offering up of this, the law of commandments was blotted out, cancelled or abolished, even that *contained in ordinances*, saith the apostle elsewhere; see [Eph 2:15](#), compared with, [Col 2:16,20,21](#); and therefore there is no condemnation to them that are circumcised with the circumcision of Christ, being found in him, [Col 2:11](#), with [Ro 8:1 7:4](#).

*Which was contrary to us*; so that however the law, which was in itself holy, just, and good, through sin became in some sort contrary, or subcontrary, to us, in that it did serve to convict, and terrify with the curse for our default, [Ro 7:5,9](#), aggravating all by its ceremonies, and shutting the gate of God's house against the Gentiles, of whose number the Colossians were, *strangers from the covenants of promise*, [Eph 2:12](#); yet this obligation was abrogated and annulled by the death of Christ, as the apostle expresseth it with great elegancy, having not only said that the debt was wiped out, defaced by the blood of Christ being drawn over it, as they used to blot out debts or draw red lines across them; but he adds, *and took it out of the way*; taken out of the way, as the debtor's bond or obligation is, being cancelled and torn to pieces, so that there is no memorial or evidence of the debt doth remain, all matter of controversy being altogether removed. Yet, if it may be, to speak more fully and satisfactorily, he annexeth, *nailing it to his cross*; what could be more significant? Implying that Christ, by once offering himself a sacrifice on the cross, had disarmed the law, and taken away its condemning power, [Ro 7:4 Ga 3:13](#). It being customary (as learned men say) of old, especially in Asia, to pierce cancelled obligations and antiquated writings with nails; Christ by his plenary satisfaction did not only discharge from the condemnation of the law, [Ro 8:1,34](#), but he did effectually, with the nails with which he himself was crucified, by interpretation, fasten the handwriting of ordinances to his cross, and abolished the ceremonial law in every regard, since the substance of it was come, and that which it tended to was accomplished, in giving *himself a ransom for all*, [1Ti 2:6](#), to the putting away of sin, [Heb 9:26](#), and obtaining eternal redemption, [Heb 9:12](#).

### Colossians 2:15

Ver. 15. *And having spoiled*; some render it, seeing he hath stripped or made naked, as runners and racers used to put off their clothes.

*Principalities and powers*; hence some of the ancients read putting off his flesh (possibly by the carelessness of some scribes, writing that which signifies flesh instead of that which signifies principalities, in all the authentic copies); but besides that Christ hath not put off the human nature, only the infirmities of the flesh, [2Co 5:16 Heb 5:7](#), it doth not agree

with what follows. One conceits that by *principalities and powers* are meant the ceremonies of the law, because of the Divine authority they originally had; and that Christ unclothed or unveiled them, and showed them to be misty figures that were accomplished in his own person. But I see no reason thus to allegorize, for it is easy to discern the word is borrowed from conquering warriors having put to flight and disarmed their enemies, (as the word may well signify disarming, in opposition to arming, Ro 13:12 Eph 6:11,14), and signifies here, that Christ disarmed and despoiled the devil and his angels, with all the powers of darkness. We have seen that by *principalities and powers* are meant angels, Col 1:16, with Ro 8:37 Eph 1:21; and here he means evil ones, in regard of that power they exercise in this world under its present state of subjection to sin and vanity, Lu 4:6 Joh 12:31 2Co 4:4 Eph 2:2 6:12 2Ti 2:26; whom Christ came to destroy, and effectually did on his cross defeat, Lu 11:22 Joh 16:11 1Co 15:55 Heb 2:14 1Jo 3:8; delivering his subjects *from the power of darkness*, Col 1:13, according to the first promise, Ge 3:15.

*He made a show of them openly;* yea, and Christ did, as an absolute conqueror, riding as it were in his triumphal chariot, publicly show that he had vanquished Satan and all the powers of darkness, in the view of heaven and earth, Lu 10:17,18.

*Triumphing over them;* even then and there where Satan thought he should alone have had the day by the death of the innocent Jesus, was he and his adherents triumphed over by the Lord of life, to their everlasting shame and torment. What the papists would gather hence, that Christ did, in this triumphant show upon the cross, carry the souls of the patriarchs out of their Limbus, i.e. their appointment to hell, is a mere unscriptural fiction; for those that he made show of in his victorious chariot are the very same that he spoiled to their eternal ignominy and confusion.

*In it:* some render this, (as in the margin), in himself, or by himself, i.e. by his own power and virtue and not by the help of any other; the prophet saith he trod the winepress alone, and had not any of the people with him, Isa 63:3; yet it seems here better to adhere to our own translation, *in it*, considering what went before of *his cross*, that he triumphed over Satan on it or by it, because the death that he there suffered was the true and only cause of his triumphs; there he trod Satan under his feet, there he set his seed at liberty, and they who go about to bereave them of it, and bring

them into bondage, do no other than restore to Satan his spoils.

### Colossians 2:16

Ver. 16. *Let no man therefore judge you;* he infers none should be condemned: none condemns another for exercising Christian liberty; none hath power to judge and censure herein: q. d. Suffer not any one (he excepts none) to impose upon you that, as necessary in the use and practice of it, which is not *after Christ*, Col 2:8, not warranted by his law of liberty, Ro 14:3,4 Ga 5:1 Jas 1:25. Paul himself would not be imposed on, 1Co 6:12 7:23 Ga 2:5,11,14, &c.; he would not (as one of the words doth note) be domineered over by any, or suffer any to exercise authority over him, who held the Head, and owned Christ to be Lord of the conscience, and sole dictator of what way he will be served in.

*In meat, or in drink;* he therefore would not have the practice of ceremonials obtruded, instancing in some, as the difference of meats and drinks, in the use or not use of which (now after Christ had nailed those decrees to his cross) superstitious ones would, from the antiquated rites of the Jews and Pythagorean philosophers, place holiness in, and add them to the Christian institution.

*Or in respect of an holy-day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days;* or the difference of festivals and sabbaths, whether annual, or monthly, or weekly, from the Levitical institutions.

### Colossians 2:17

Ver. 17. *Which are a shadow of things to come;* which, as they were but obscurer representations or shadowy resemblances of future benefits procured by Christ, Heb 8:5 9:11 10:1, whatever temporary glory they had from the former institution, *till the time of reformation*, Heb 9:10, yet that was done away, and they now had none, in respect of the glory that excelleth and remaineth, 2Co 3:10,11. So that this doth no way gainsay the sacraments now of Christ's own institution, which may be called figures and shadows, not of things future, of Christ not yet come, but as already exhibited, whom they manifest to the mind and faith to be present, to those

who rightly partake of them: we cannot say he condemns all distinctions of meats and drinks, viz. bread and wine in the Lord's supper; or of days; only the decrees and ordinances of Moses, or any other which the false teachers cried up, that were not after Christ.

*But the body is of Christ;* who is really the substance and antitype of all the Old Testament shadows, which have completion or accomplishment in him, Joh 1:17 Ro 10:4 Ga 4:10-12; as all the promises were in him yea and Amen, Da 9:24 2Co 1:20; all was consummated in him, Joh 19:30, who came in the place of all the shadows. He is *Lord of the sabbath*, Mt 12:8, and therefore, having broken the devil's head-plot by his propitiatory sacrifice, and entered into his rest, ceasing from his own works of redemption by price, as God did from his of creation, Heb 4:10, he did away (2Co 3:7,11) all that was typical and ceremonial of the old sabbath, (as other types of himself); keeping only that which was substantial, for a holy rest of one day in seven, and appointing that in commemoration of the Father's work and his to be, from his resurrection, observed on the first day of the week, for the edification of his church; which he honoured by his appearance amongst his apostles on that day, and that day seven-night after, which proceeded originally from his instituting of that day (to prevent dissension) for public worship in Christian assemblies. Some have observed that the Jewish doctors did foresay: That the Divine Majesty would be to Israel in a jubilee, freedom, redemption, and finisher of sabbaths: and that four sabbaths did meet together and succeed each other at the death and the resurrection of Christ, viz.

1. The sabbatical year of jubilee, Lu 4:19.
2. The high sabbath, Joh 19:31.
3. The seventh-day sabbath, when his body rested in the grave.
4. The first day of the week, when he rose a victorions conqueror of the devil, and had all put in subjection to him, unto whom all the rest did refer, and therefore they were to disappear, upon his estating his people in a rest which the law could not; whereupon his people are obliged in public adoration and praise to commemorate him on the first day of the week, or the Lord's day, to the end of the world, 1Co 16:1,2 Re 1:10.

## Colossians 2:18

Ver. 18. *Let no man beguile you of your reward:* the original compound word, peculiar in the New Testament to Paul, and that in this Epistle only, (and not very frequent in other authors), hath occasioned interpreters here to render it variously, some joining the next following word with it, and some (as we read it) to that which follows after. The simple word is, Col 3:15, read *rule*, or judge, and it may be rendered intercede. Yet Paul doth not elsewhere use this word simply or in composition where he speaks of judging and condemning, Ro 2:1; however, it is borrowed from those who were judges or umpires in their games, the apostle most likely alluding to those, who through favour or hatred determined unjustly, to the defrauding those victors of their prize or reward to whom it was due. Hence some would have the import to be agreeable to our translation; Be careful these unjust arbiters do not defraud you of gaining Christ, and *deceive you*, ( as Mt 24:4 Eph 5:6 2Th 2:3), by prescribing false lists and giving you wrong measures, and so judging against you. One renders it: Let no man deceive you with subtle argument, who pleaseth or delights himself in humility; another: Let no man take your prize; others: Let no man master it or bear rule over you at pleasure; let none take upon himself, or usurp to himself, the parts or office of a governor or umpire over you. The apostle labours to fortify the true followers of Christ against such superstitious subtle ones, who by their artifice did assume a magisterial authority (without any sure warrant from God) to impose their traditionary and invented services upon them, and determine of their state, accordingly as the papists do at this day. One learned man thinks the apostle had not used this word here, but for some notable advantage, viz. because the simple word may signify to intercede as well as to judge; it made wonderfully to his purpose in this composition, (as he uses *concision*, Php 3:2), to disparage those seducers who did, from some notions of the Platonists, labour to gain credit to that opinion that the angels were intercessors between God and man.

*In a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels;* covering their imperious spirit by being volunteers in humility, or by a pretence of voluntary, uncommanded humility, alleging it would be presumption in them to address themselves immediately to God, and therefore they would pay a religious homage to angels, as of a middle nature between God and them, presuming they would mediate for them: an instance to express all



that invented worship, which, how specious soever it may seem to be, hath no warrant from Christ, who alone can procure acceptance of our persons and services. He expects that his disciples should assert his rights, and the liberty with which he hath made them free, against the traditions of self-willed men, and no more to solemnize for worship, than teach for doctrines, the traditions of men, Mt 15:2,6,9. We must not, under any pretext of humility, presume to know what belongs to our duty and God's service better than Christ doth, showing us that he alone is the true and living way, and we may come boldly by him, Mt 11:28 Joh 14:1,6 Eph 3:12 Heb 4:16 Heb 10:19,20. And therefore the adoring and invocating of angels as heavenly courtiers, whatever the papists out of a show of humility do argue, is not after Christ, but against him.

*Intruding into those things which he hath not seen:* yea, and for any one to assert it, and the like, is to be a bold intruder upon another's possession, a thrusting a man's self into the knowledge and determination of that which is above his reach, Ps 131:1, and he hath no ground at all for, but doth pry or wade into a secret which a man cannot know. The apostle useth a Platonic word against those who did indulge themselves out of curiosity in the opinions of the Platonists about angels, the worshippers of which, amongst those who were professed Christians in Phrygia, were so tenacious of their error that they were not rooted out after the third century, when a canon was made against them under the name of Angelici, in the council of Laodicea near Colosse.

*Vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind;* the first rise of such foolish presumption, was a being rashly puffed up with the sense of their flesh, a deluded mind moved by some carnal principle, setting out things with swelling words of vanity, wherewith in truth they have no acquaintance, and whereof they have no experience, 1Ti 1:7.

### Colossians 2:19

Ver. 19. *And not holding the Head:* here the apostle suggests, that those things he had before taxed did proceed from hence, that they let go the Lord Christ himself, Col 2:8,9, from whom all truths are to be derived, and consequently he is all truth itself, Joh 14:6; not to adhere to him is the spring of all apostacies, lie being the Head: see Eph 4:15,16.

*From which all the body;* whence is communicated and distributed such influence to the body, the church, as is necessary to all the sensations and motions thereof.

*By joints and bands having nourishment ministered;* being in all its members fitly framed together by the Spirit, Eph 2:21,22, and united by faith, Eph 3:17, hath a continual subsidy of life and vigour.

*And knit together;* and fastened together in a spiritual union, which joineth all believers to their Head, and each of them to the other in him, 1Co 10:17 12:12,20,25,27.

*Increaseth with the increase of God;* whereupon, to mutual edification in love, it groweth with a Divine growth and spiritual increase, arising from the efficacy of God, and tending to his glory; being filled with the influences of his grace, 1Co 3:6, it is established and strengthened by little and little, in light and purity, and all graces, till it attain to the measure of its perfect stature in Christ Jesus our Lord; whereas an increase in the traditions of men, and the inventions of flesh, do only blow it up with wens and imposthumes, to the disfiguring, deforming, and destroying of it.

### Colossians 2:20

Ver. 20. *Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world:* here the apostle doth further argue against all impositions of superstitious observances, obruded as parts of Divine worship, whether in reviving those abrogated, or setting up new ones, upon supposition of their union with Christ their Head, and their being dead in him as to all beggarly elements from which he had freed them by his death, Ro 6:3,5 7:4,6 Ga 4:9,10,11, with Col 2:19; no uncommanded worship or way of worship being after Christ, Col 2:8, in whom they were *complete*, Col 2:10, being *buried with him in baptism*, Col 2:12, having nailed those ritual ordinances to his cross, as antiquated or out-dated, Col 2:14.

*Why, as though living in the world, are ye are subject to ordinances?* Why should they, who held the Head, Col 2:19, as if they lived in the old world with those *children in bondage*, Ga 4:3, before Christ came, be subject to

ceremonial observances? q.d. It is most injurious that they should impose this yoke upon you, (Ac 15:10), ye are most foolish if ye submit your necks; for God would not have a ceremonial worship which he himself instituted to be abrogated, that a new one should be invented by men. If the Head of the church like not the reviving that worship he hath laid aside, be sure he will not approve of any new one which he never appointed. The apostle is not here speaking of the magistrates' ordinances about things indifferent in their use, for the real good of the civil government, but of the way of worshipping God by religious abstinences, &c.

### Colossians 2:21

Ver. 21. Which he doth here by way of imitation, upbraiding of them, elegantly recite in the words, phrases, or sense of those imposing dogmatists, whose superstition and lust of domineering over the consciences of Christians is taxed, in the gradation which the well skilled in the Greek judge to be in the original. For though the first, and which we render *touch not*, be sometimes so rendered, yet, considering here the coincidency or tautology will, so rendered, make with the last, the sense of it, as the most judicious and learned have evidenced, seems to be, eat not, as noting they did forbid the eating, i.e. using certain meats at their ordinary meals; (against the reviving of which imposition above, Col 2:16, as will bring in a new one of like import, the apostle elsewhere expresseth himself, Ro 14:17 1Co 8:8 1Ti 4:3); obtaining which, they proceeded to forbid the not tasting, and then the not handling, or touching of them with the hand, as if that would defile. It being more not to taste than not to eat, and likewise more not to touch with the finger than not to taste. Expressing the ingenuity of such superstitious imposers, that they heap up one thing upon another to the burdening of consciences, not knowing where to make an end in their new invented external devotions and observances, which, as snares, do first bind fast, and in tract of time strangle. He speaks of these as distinct from those, Col 2:16, they being for antiquated rites which had been of God's appointment, these for innovations of man's invention, as is apparent from the last verse.

### Colossians 2:22

Ver. 22. *Which all are to perish with the using:* he adds his reasons why, under the Christian institution, acceptable worshipping of God doth not consist in such observances, both because meats, drinks, garments, &c. are designed unto the benefit of man, for the preserving of his temporal life, and are consumed in their use. They cannot, in or by themselves, either make a man holy or render him unclean, Mt 15:11 Mr 7:19 Ro 14:17 1Co 6:13 1Ti 4:3; they all come to corruption, or are consumed in doing us service, they cannot otherwise be of use; which may evince that all the benefit we receive from them doth only respect this mortal life, it not being imaginable that what perisheth in our use should be of any force to the life of our soul, which is immortal and incorruptible. And therefore to urge the reviving of antiquated ordinances, or bringing in such like new ones, is to corrupt or consume the creatures without any spiritual advantage, whereupon such impositions must needs be destructive; and because of the apostle's stronger argument, they are not after Christ, but after the precepts and decrees of men, compare Col 2:8, which is our Lord and Master's argument against the innovations of the Pharisees, Mt 15:9, agreeing with the prophet, Isa 29:13. To bring in additional of uncommanded worship, or rites and ways of it, is forbidden of God, De 12:32 Joh 14:26 16:13 Re 22:18; who (according to the purport of the second commandment) must be worshipped in a manner peculiar to him and appointed by him; and theretbre worship not appointed, i.e. not commanded, is forbidden by, him, who will accept of no homage from Christians in the business of religion, unless it be taught by him, and not by men only.

### Colossians 2:23

Ver. 23. *Which things have indeed a show of wisdom:* by way of concession the apostle here grants that the precepts and doctrines of men about religious abstinences had a *show of wisdom*; and it was but a mere show, a bare pretext, a specious appearance, a fair colour of wisdom, which is of no worth, not the reality and truth of Christian wisdom, however it might beguile those that were taken more with shadows than substance, Col 2:3,4,8,17.

*In will-worship;*

1. In arbitrary superstition, or human invention, or selfwilled religion,

rather than Divine institutions; as all the ancients, and almost all the moderns, do interpret that word, it having no good, but an ill character; accounting the compound word here which we render *will-worship*, of no better import, as to the ordainers of worship, than the two simple words of which it is compounded, expressing human arbitrariness and worship, Col 2:18, (even as the apostle doth, by a compound word which signifies peace making, Col 1:20, understand the very same thing which he expressed by the two simple words of which it is compounded in another Epistle, Eph 2:15), it being rational to conceive, considering the apostle's drift in the context, that by *will-worship* he doth connote the same here, that by willing in worship he doth asunder there. For though a performing those acts of worship willingly, which God himself hath commanded, be necessary, and commendable in his willing people, Ps 110:3, and they cannot be acceptable otherwise; yet when the will of man, in contradistinction to the will of God, is considered as constitutive of that worship which is offered to God of a man's own brain and devising, without God's warrant, then that will-worship is hateful to God, and the more voluntary the more abominable. It being most just, that not in what way we will and choose, but only in that way which he willeth and chooseth, we should worship him with acceptance; which should be our greatest care, 2Co 5:9. We know, amongst men, those persons of honour that give liveries to their servants, would discard such of them as should come to attend them in new ones of their own devising, though those servants might be so foolish as to conceit those of their own devising were more expressive of their humble respects. Much more is worship of man's devising distasteful to the all-wise God, who sees through all colours, and though he loves a willing worshipper, yet he hates will-worship.

*And humility;* however it be palliated:

2. With a pretended demission of mind, or an affectation of humility, as if more self-abasement were designed in such an arbitrary way of worship; like those hypocrites in their fasts, who put on mortified looks and a neglected garb, with disguised countenances, Mt 6:16, showing themselves most submissive to the orders of their superiors in that way of man's devising.

*And neglecting of the body;* wherein the more superstitiously devout do

labour to outdo others:

3. In punishing, not sparing, neglecting, or afflicting the body; as some monks at this day in the papacy, in denying it that with which nature should be supplied.

*Not in any honour*, which a learned man thinks the apostle would have read as included in a parenthesis, as conceiving the series of his discourse requires these to be joined, viz. *neglecting of the body* as to what pertains *to the satisfying of the flesh*. So by *not in any honour*, is not here meant a sparing of the body in order to real sanctification, temperance and continence, in opposition to the dishonouring of the body by luxury, as Ro 1:26, with 1Co 6:18-20 1Th 4:4 Heb 13:4. That honour of the body the apostle doth elsewhere require, he doth here oppose to the seducers' pretended mortifications. For their religious abstinence was not from that which occasioned luxury, only from some certain sorts of meat, the use of which no way defiles the body, nor violates in any manner the holiness and honour it ought to be kept in. Others read, neglecting the body, which is in no esteem.

*To the satisfying of the flesh*; for pampering the flesh. Not in any esteem, i.e. with God, or not in any humour to God, but in a tendency only to make *provision for the flesh*, as Ro 13:14. Others take *honour* for regard; q.d. In no regard to the supplying of nature with that which is due to it. Others take honour for having a care of, 1Ti 5:3; q.d. Neglecting the body in taking no care of it, or not at all valuing the things that are requisite to the due nourishment of it: this is somewhat generally received; having no care that the body may have that which will satisfy nature. And if the last phrase, which we translate *to the satisfying of the flesh*, seem not so well to express moderate satiety, we should consider it is said in a good sense, God *filled the hungry with good things*, Lu 1:53, and Christ *filled* the multitude, Joh 6:12; yea, the use of the word in authentic Greek authors may be found to note a moderate as well as immoderate filling, i.e. in a good sense, for a satiety (or enough) that is not vicious.

Colossians 3:1

## Chapter Summary

Col 3:1-4        The apostle exhorteth to be heavenly-minded,  
Col 3:5-11     to mortify carnal lusts, and to put away all malice and ill dealing in respect of one another, as becometh Christians.  
Col 3:12-17    He recommendeth brotherly kindness, charity, and other general duties,  
Col 3:18        the relative duties of wives,  
Col 3:19        and husbands,  
Col 3:20        of children,  
Col 3:21        and parents,  
Col 3:22-25    and of servants towards their masters.

Ver. 1. *If ye then be risen with Christ:* having refuted superstitious observances placed in things earthly and perishing, and called them off from shadows to mind the substance; he doth, upon supposition of what he had asserted before, Col 2:12,13, here infer that, since they were risen again with Christ, it did behove them to set about the duties required of those in that state: not of the proper resurrection of the body, which, while here below, can only be in our Head by virtue of the mystical union, as in regard of right the members of Christ are said to *sit* with him *in heavenly places*, Eph 2:6, signified and sealed by baptism: but the metaphorical and spiritual resurrection from spiritual death, which is regeneration, Ro 6:4 Tit 3:5, wrought by the same Spirit which raised Christ, and whereby renewed Christians live in certain hope of that proper resurrection of their bodies, which Christ hath procured.

*Seek those things which are above:* hereupon he urgeth them, (in the same sense our Saviour doth command to seek his kingdom, Mt 6:33), with diligence to pursue heaven and happiness as the end, and holiness as the means to the attaining of it; to have their *conversation in heaven*, Php 3:20.

*Where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God:* while the apostle speaks of God after the manner of men, we must take heed of the gross error of the Anthropomorphites, who did imagine God to sit in heaven in the shape of a man. Some indeed, who abhor such a gross imagination, yet conceive that because more generally the heaven is God's throne, and shall be so for

ever, Jer 17:12 La 5:19 Mt 5:34, that he hath a particular throne in heaven, whereon he doth show himself specially present, as in his temple, 1Ki 22:19 Ps 11:4; and so, though Christ is set properly on the right hand of this throne, Heb 1:3 8:1 12:2 Re 3:21; but because the conception of such a particular material throne, with extension of parts and proper dimensions, may (besides other inconveniences) misguide our apprehensions, and occasion adoration to the creature, which should be terminated on God alone, who is a pure Spirit; and whereas sitting is not taken properly, since Stephen saw Christ *standing*, Ac 7:55, and is opposed to the ministration of angels, which have no bodies or bodily parts, Heb 1:13; by most it is taken metaphorically, importing that Christ hath all real power and dominion put into his hands, connoting his authority and security from his enemies, who are put under his feet, Mt 28:18 1Co 15:25, is crowned with majesty, glory, and honour, Heb 1:3 2:9, enjoying all blessedness in a most transcendent way, Ps 16:11 110:1 Ac 2:33,36; having the human nature filled with abilities to execute all when he entered into glory, Isa 16:5 Lu 22:29,30 24:26 1Co 15:43 Re 19:6; where he resides possessed of all in safety, Ac 3:21 Re 3:21. It was above whither Christ ascended by a local motion from a certain where here below into a certain where above; so that whatever the Lutherans argue from Christ's glorious ascension and session, to prove Christ's body a ubiquitary, or every where present, is inconsequent, since it is in heaven where he wills that believers should be to behold the glory that his Father hath given him, Joh 17:24: wherefore,

### Colossians 3:2

Ver. 2. *Set your affection on things above:* that the hearts of believers here might be where their treasure is, the apostle here repeats his exhortation, using another word, importing they should intensely mind things above, Ro 8:5, viz. the inheritance *reserved in heaven* for us, 1Pe 1:4, with heart and affections, together with all that Gcd hath appointed to be a furtherance to the enjoyment of it; not curiously to search the deep things of God, which cannot be found out, but to mind things above with sobriety, Ro 12:3.

*Not on things on the earth;* taking off the mind and heart from all that is opposite to heavenly things, viz. not only those human, carnal ordinances and ceremonies, Col 2:22, with Php 3:18,19, but also from the eager



pursuit of the pleasures, profits, and honours of this world, which the men of it do inordinately desire, Col 3:5, with Mt 6:33 Ga 5:24, and are carried away with, Tit 2:12 Jas 4:4 2Pe 1:4 1Jo 2:17. Christians should not be, to the neglect of things spiritual; however, they are obliged, in a due subordination, to take care of themselves and families for these things below, so far as to put them into a capacity of raising them more heavenward.

### Colossians 3:3

Ver. 3. *For ye are dead;* the apostle adds another reason why the believing Colossians should not be earthly-minded, because they were dead, not absolutely, but in a certain respect, viz. of sin, and the world.

1. In regard of that carnal, corrupted, sin-infected life, received from our first parents by carnal generation, the life of the old man, altogether depraved, the real members of Christ are dead: see Col 2:11,12,20 Ro 6:2,4,6-8,11 7:9 2Co 5:14,17 Ga 5:24.
2. In regard of the world, by communion with Christ their Head, Ps 22:15 Isa 26:19 Ga 6:14 2Ti 2:11 1Pe 4:1,2.

*And your life is hid with Christ in God;* and their spiritual life, (opposed to the life of sin), which is received by their receiving of Christ, the life they now live by faith, quickened together with Christ, Col 2:13 Joh 11:25,26 14:6 Ga 2:20 Heb 10:38 1Jo 5:11,12; this is *hid with Christ* by virtue of their union with him, as Christ is in God by union with the Father; Christ in God, and our life in Christ, Joh 17:21, because in him the the springs of our spiritual life, which in and by our regeneration, renovation, and sanctification is communicated to us; and its progress in fruitfulness till it arrive to perfection, Php 3:10,14.

### Colossians 3:4

Ver. 4. *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear;* which will be, according to the purpose and promise of God, with whom it is laid up, Col 1:5, when Christ by whom they live shall so appear that they shall be like him, 1Jo 3:2, and be taken to be with him in the heavenly inheritance, 1Pe

1:4; then their conformity to him, began here, partly in holiness and partly in sufferings, Ro 8:18, shall be completed at last in glory and felicity, Php 3:21 Heb 11:26,35.

*Then shall ye also appear with him in glory;* and then shall these adopted children be brought into glory with him, Heb 2:10, out of whose hands none shall be able to pull them, Joh 10:28; but however the world look upon them as despicable, Joh 16:2, and sometimes they are so in their own eyes, wherein ofttimes there be tears, so that they can see but as *through a glass, darkly*, Ps 31:22 1Co 13:12; but then they shall see Christ face to face, all tears shall be wiped away from their eyes, Re 7:17, and at the last day they shall shine as the sun in glory, Mt 13:43 1Co 15:43,53 2Th 1:7,10,12.

### Colossians 3:5

Ver. 5. That they might not think he, who had given check to superstitious abstinences, was for the indulging of any carnal affections, he infers here, how the exercise of truly Christian mortification was incumbent on those who were dead to sin and had their life hid in Christ. Neither is it any incongruity, that they who are in a sort already dead should be exhorted to mortification, if we do but distinctly consider of mortification, and what they are to mortify, or endeavour to make dead.

1. As to mortification; which may be considered either as to its inchoation, when, upon effectually calling, a mortal wound is by the Spirit of God given to the old man, or to the habit of sin, which will in the end or consummation be a total privation of its life, though as yet it be but partial. It is not in regard of this inchoative mortification, which was begun upon their effectual calling, that the apostle exhorts the saints at Colosse in this verse to mortify. But mortification may be considered as to its continuation, and the carrying on the life of grace, in the making dead all that is contrary to it; even the renewed person should be continually solicitous to have the old man killed outright without any reprieve. This is it that the apostle put the believing Colossians upon, not to spare any remaining ill dispositions or depraved habits of the old man; but by the assistance of the Spirit, (for it is not a natural, but spiritual work), Ro 8:13 Ga 5:24, continually to resist to the killing of it, or putting it to death: never to desist in this war.

2. As to the earthly members of it. The apostle expresseth the object of

mortification, or what they are to mortify, by their *members upon the earth*; not as if he designed to put them upon a dismembering of their bodies, or a deadening of those bodily natural parts whereby the sex is distinguished, Ro 6:13, (though, agreeably to his own practice, he would have the body kept under and brought into subjection, 1Co 9:27), but upon subduing inordinate motions and carnal concupiscences, as is evident from the particular vices following, which, taken as collected and heaped up together, may well pass under the notion of a body. He had before in this Epistle mentioned *the body of the sins of the flesh*, Col 2:11; this he might say not only metonymically, by reason such lusts do reside in the natural body and members of it, Ro 6:6,12,19; but (and that chiefly) metaphorically, the mass of corrupt nature dwelling in us is compared to a person, the *old man*, or old Adam, or body of sin, Col 3:9 Ro 6:6 7:24 Eph 4:22; and, continuing the metaphor, the parts of this corrupt body are called *members*, and our members, the whole body of the old man being made up of them, which are said to be *upon the earth*, as being inclined to earthly things and employed about them, taking occasion from sensual objects here below to get strength, unless we be continually upon our watch to abolish all that contributes to the life of the old man in the particular members; viz. *fornication*: see the parallel place, Eph 5:3, with 1Co 6:9, where he begins with this, as most turbulent, understanding by it not only the outward act, but the inward affection, which the heathens were apt to reckon no fault, though the Spirit of God in the Scripture do greatly condemn it, Mt 5:28 Ro 1:29 1Co 5:1 6:18 7:2 10:8 1Th 4:3.

*Uncleanness*: see Eph 5:3: impurity which is more unnatural, whereby they dishonour their own bodies, Ro 1:24,27 Ga 5:19 1Th 4:7 Re 17:4.

*Inordinate affection*; that passion which some render softness, or easiness to receive any impression to lust, i.e. the filthy disposition of a voluptuous, effeminate heart, delighted with lascivious objects, Ps 32:9 Ro 1:26,27 1Co 6:9, with 1Th 4:3,5.

*Evil concupiscence*; that concupiscence which in nature and measure is excessive, being an irregular appetite, and an undue motion against reason, especially against the Spirit, Ga 5:17.

*And covetousness*; and an immoderate desire after and cleaving to the

things of this world, either in propping for them, or possessing of them to the feeding of other lusts, and so estranging the heart from God, Ec 5:10 Lu 12:18; trusting in riches rather than in the living God, Job 31:24 Mt 6:24 1Ti 6:17.

*Which is idolatry;* upon which account it may pass under the title of *idolatry*, as the covetous person is an idolater; see Eph 5:5; and further he might reckon covetousness to be idolatry, because nothing was more execrable in the judgment of the Jews than idolatry was, it being ordinary with the Hebrews to note sins by the names of those most detested; as *rebellion against God by witchcraft*, 1Sa 15:23, not that it is so formally, but that the Spirit of God may show how odious an incorrigible obstinacy of mind against God is unto him. Hence, considering the odiousness of these vices, the apostle would have us not to content ourselves to cut off some branches of them, but to grub them up by the roots.

### Colossians 3:6

Ver. 6. Especially remembering how the indulging or sparing any of them will be of dreadful consequence; see Eph 5:6; for however they may by carnal men be looked upon as little faults, which God will overlook of course, yet they do certainly incur Divine displeasure, and will bring most inevitable judgments upon those unpersuadable, rebellious, and contumacious ones, who would be thought God's children and yet remain incorrigible, Mt 24:38,39 1Co 6:9 Ga 5:21.

### Colossians 3:7

Ver. 7. *In the which;* some render it, amongst whom; but, alas! They lived amongst such disobedient ones still; therefore we do better render it *in which*, i.e. sins or vices.

*Ye*, the now believing Colossians, *also walked some time;* had heretofore practised and exercised; and had not only been infected with the venom of them, in descending from polluted parents, but *lived in them*, were servants to them, Ro 6:17,19, while in a sensual course of life they were carried away with them, 1Co 12:2, before their conversion, when they did live and reign in their mortal bodies, Col 1:21 1Co 6:11 Eph 2:3,11,12 5:8.

### Colossians 3:8

Ver. 8. *But now ye also put off all these:* having minded them of their former condition under paganism in a state of sin, while they served various sensual lusts, he doth here in their present circumstances under Christianity in a state of grace, show them that, now they professed to *walk as children of light*, Ro 13:12 Eph 5:8, with 1Th 5:5,8, they were more strongly obliged to lay aside those inordinate affections which were more spiritual Eph 4:22; some of which he doth instance in, viz. *anger*; whereby he doth not mean the passion itself, Eph 4:26, with Eph 4:31, but the inordinacy of it, being a vindictive appetite to hurt another unjustly for some affront conceived to be given or occasioned by him.

*Wrath; indignation*, Ro 2:8, a sudden, hasty, and vehement commotion of the offended mind apprehending an injury, when it shows itself in the countenance in a manner and measure unbecoming a Christian, as in them who with rage thrust Christ out of the city, Lu 4:28,29, with Eph 4:31.

*Malice*; connoting both the evil habit and the vicious act: now though this word be taken oftentimes more generally, for that mischievous vitiosity and venom which runs through all the passions of the soul, reaching to all sins, 1Co 5:8 14:20; yet here it seems to be taken more specially, for a secret malignity of rooted anger and continued wrath, remembering injuries, meditating revenge, and watching for an occasion to vent it, being much the same with that which the apostle in a parallel Epistle calls bitterness, Eph 4:31, compared with other places, Ge 4:5 Ro 1:29 Tit 3:3 1Pe 2:1. After he had urged the laying aside of heart evils as the cause, he moves to the laying aside those of the tongue, viz. *blasphemy*, which in a like place we render *evil speaking*, Eph 4:31; the original word, according to the notation of it, doth signify the hurt of any one's good name, which when it respects God we do more strictly call blasphemy. When it respects our neighbour, though more largely it be so, defamation, Ro 3:8 1Co 4:13 Tit 3:2; yet more strictly, if it be done secretly, it is detraction or backbiting; more openly, reviling or slandering, Mt 15:19 Mr 7:22 1Ti 6:4.

*Filthy communication out of your mouth*: obscene discourse, dishonest talk, should not come into the Christian's mouth, Col 4:6; see on Eph 4:29

5:4: wanton, lewd, and unclean speeches should not proceed from a Christian's tongue, 1Co 15:33.

### Colossians 3:9

Ver. 9. *Lie not one to another*: here he puts them upon laying aside that vice which violates the ninth commandment, being opposite to truth in word and work: see Eph 4:25, where he doth more fully urge the putting away lying, from the same argument that follows here: a lie being no other than that voluntary expression by word or deed, which accords not with the conception of the mind and heart, on purpose to deceive those with whom we do converse; contrary to the principles of a new creature, because God, after whose image he is renewed, hates it more than any vice, since it is contrary to truth, and proceeds from the father of lies, Ps 5:6 15:2 Pr 12:22 Joh 8:44 Re 21:8,27. They who in conversation do most stomach to be told of it, are most ordinarily guilty of it. But the apostle requires Christians indeed to put away all fraud and fallacy in commerce with men and one another, (as well as converse with God), that there may be in all due circumstances a just representation of that without which is conceived within, Eph 4:15 Jas 3:14.

*Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds*: the apostle subjoins his reason from the parts of regeneration or sanctification, viz.

1. Mortification, which he reassumes under an elegant metaphor, (intimating his solicitude to have the foregoing and the like vices to be wholly laid aside, as much as was possible in this life), borrowed from the putting off old and worn garments, which did as it were crawl with vermin; intimating that if the old man, as the cause, were put off with loathing, then those inordinate affections and actions which did proceed from it would also be removed; see on Ro 6:6,11, with Eph 4:22: if that which is born of the flesh and contrary to the Spirit, Joh 3:6, with Ga 5:17, then inordinate affections and lusts, Ga 5:24.

(To see number 2: See Poole on "Col 3:10").

## Colossians 3:10

Ver. 10. *And have put on the new man:* (To see number 1: See Poole on "Col 3:9").

2. Vivification, or renovation; this he connecteth with the former, continuing the metaphor. As in natural generation the expulsion of the old form is attended with the introduction of the new, so in spiritual regeneration, having put off the old Adam they had put on the new, i.e. Christ, not only sacramentally, Col 2:12,13 Ga 3:27, but really, being new creatures in Christ Jesus, 2Co 5:17 Eph 2:10, renewed in the inward man, Ro 7:22 2Co 4:16; See Poole on "Eph 3:16", See Poole on "Eph 4:24"; and endowed with a new frame of heart and a new spirit, Eze 11:19 Joh 3:5,6, new qualities and affections.

*Which is renewed in knowledge;* the understanding being savingly enlightened, and the will powerfully inclined by the victorious working of the Spirit, Eph 1:18-20; See Poole on "Eph 4:23", with Php 2:13 2Th 2:13,14; and brought to more than a speculative, even to a lively and effectual knowledge, 1Jo 2:3.

*After the image of him that created him;* agreeable to the impress of him that had new framed or created them in Christ Jesus, 1Co 15:49 1Pe 1:15,16, by the *renewing of the Holy Ghost*, Tit 3:5: for as the natural image of God consisted in knowledge and righteousness; so it was requisite that the spiritual image restored by grace should consist in the rectifying of the faculties of the soul, the understanding with spiritual knowledge, and the will with a spiritual inclination to embrace the things that please God; in communion with whom sanctified souls do take in hand a new course of life, and move therein, in a spiritually natural way.

## Colossians 3:11

Ver. 11. He prevents the reasoning of those, who did not neglect regeneration, and place religion in more externals, showing that in the new man, or true sanctification, and real Christianity, there was sufficient to save us, in communion with Christ, without those external observances false teachers did stickle for as necessary.

*If there there is neither Greek nor Jew;* God, in effectually calling persons into a state of regeneration, had no regard to those known distinctions then in the world, of those who were born of the Gentiles or the seed of Abraham, Mt 3:9 Joh 8:39 Ro 2:11 10:12 Ro 11:7,11,12: See Poole on "Ga 3:28".

*Circumcision nor uncircumcision;* he works upon those who are not circumcised, as well as on those who are circumcised, now Christ is come, Ga 5:6 6:15, since which the posterity of Japheth, constituting the greater part of the Gentile church, do  *dwell in the tents of Shem*, according to Noah's prophecy, Ge 9:27, compared with Balaam's, Nu 24:24. Shem and Ham are not excluded, yet (a learned man observes) the faith of Christ from the ages of the apostles hath flourished most hitherto in Europe, and the parts of Asia where Japheth's lot lay; and as of old some of the latter might, so we know of the former many of late have passed into America. Upon the apostle's adding *Barbarian, Scythian*, without conjunction either compulative or disjunctive, some have inquired whether these two should be balanced in the like opposition with the former? And it may be said, there is no more necessity for such exactness here, than elsewhere in the like form of speech, Ro 8:39 1Co 3:22: and the most think here is an increase of the oration, understanding by *Scythian* (which is now more strictly the Tartarian) the most barbarous of the Barbarians. Yet, because the Grecians sometime accounted the world, besides themselves, (who were polished with human learning and philosophy), Barbarians, if any think there ought to be an opposition between the *Barbarian* and *Scythian*, then by *Barbarian* (i.e. in the philosophers' reckoning) may be understood the Jews; by *Scythian*, the Gentiles. So *Jew, circumcision, Barbarian*, as in a parallel, are opposed to *Gentile, uncircumcision, Scythian*. For Scythians being numerous, thereby some used to express the *nations*, ( as Symmachus translates Ge 14:9, Tidal king of the Scythians), and so reckon the whole world might be divided into the Jews and Scythians, no otherwise than into circumcised and uncircumcised.

*Bond nor free;* as to acceptance with God in Christ, the distinctions of people were abolished with their observances and polities, because, some where they were more free, having milder laws; some where they were more servile, having more severe laws, which was an indifferent thing now as to their being in Christ, concerned to submit to certain honest laws,



ordinances of magistrates, 1Pe 2:13, though not Judaic or judicial ones. In every condition, high or low, whether of service or freedom, Ac 10:34,35 1Co 7:20-22, whosoever hath put on the new man in Christ is accepted. Neither the eloquence of the philosopher nor the rudeness of him who is uncultivated, neither the liberty of the freeman nor the bondage of the slave, doth further or obstruct the work of the new creation.

*But Christ is all, and in all;* but they that are truly interested in Christ, have really put him on, they are certainly privileged with that which answers all, they are indeed the blessed with faithful Abraham, whether they be of his seed according to the flesh, yea or no, Ps 32:2 Ga 3:7-9; having *put on Christ*, Ro 13:14, they are all *complete in him*, Col 2:10. He is all things to and in all those who are renewed, both meritoriously and efficaciously, 1Co 1:30 15:10 Ga 2:20: being by faith one with him who hath all, they have all, Eph 3:17, either for their present support or their eternal happiness, Ac 4:12.

### Colossians 3:12

Ver. 12. *Put on therefore:* as he had mentioned some particular vices of the old man they were to put off, Col 3:8, he doth here infer, that they might be complete in Christ, there be particular virtues and graces of the new man they are to put on, or, being new creatures, continually to exercise themselves in.

*As the elect of God, holy and beloved;* chosen of God before all time, and effectually called in time from the rest of mankind; see Joh 15:16 Ro 8:29,30 Eph 1:4,5 2Th 2:13: saints not only by oblation, but renewed by the sanctifying Spirit, Col 1:2 1Pe 1:2; beloved with a gratuitous and special love of complacency, Joh 14:21 Ro 1:7 1Th 1:4.

*Bowels of mercies;* he would have us put on, i.e. exercise, (being sanctified by the Spirit), mercy, not simply, but according to the Hebrew phrase, *bowels of mercies*, i.e. tendernesses of compassions, resenting the miseries of our brethren, as sharing with them in their sufferings, from our very heart: see Lu 6:36 Ro 12:15 Ga 6:2 Eph 4:32 1Pe 3:8.

*Kindness;* courtesy and goodness, Ga 5:22; endeavouring to succour one

another in all offices of benignity, 2Co 6:6 1Pe 5:14.

*Humbleness of mind*; a sincere (not an affected) lowliness of spirit: See Poole on "Eph 4:2", See Poole on "Php 2:3".

*Meekness*; gentleness and mildness, receiving one another with an open heart and pleasant countenance: see Ga 5:13,23 6:1 1Th 2:7.

*Long-suffering*; patience, bearing affronts and outrages, with other vexatious afflictions, without exasperation, abiding sedate after many wrongs offered, Col 1:11 Ac 5:41 2Ti 2:10 4:2 1Pe 4:16.

### Colossians 3:13

Ver. 13. Forbearing one another; clemency towards each other, not only in undergoing affronts, but a suspending to take advantage from the infirmities of others, so as not to irritate them to passion, or to take them tripping, so as to aggravate their failings, Pr 16:32 1Co 4:12 Ga 6:2 Eph 4:2 2Th 1:4.

*And forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any*; yea, and if one hath any just complaint against another, mutually passing it by amongst ourselves: we render *forgiving one another*, that which in the Greek is forgiving ourselves; and indeed he that doth see the need he hath of pardon himself, will pass by the fault of his brother, (so ourselves here is put for *one another*), Mr 10:26 Lu 23:12.

*Even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye*; considering the exemplar cause here added as a motive to mutual forgiveness, viz. our Head the Lord Jesus Christ forgiving of us, who are bound to conform to him in forgiving others; See Poole on "Mt 6:14". See Poole on "Mt 18:32", See Poole on "Mt 18:33". See Poole on "Mr 11:25,26, See Poole on "Joh 13:14". See Poole on "Eph 4:32", See Poole on "1Pe 2:21", yea, the strong to indulge and gratify their weak brethren in smaller matters for their good, Ro 15:1-3.

## Colossians 3:14

Ver. 14. *And above all these things put on charity:* that which we render *above*, as surpassing all, some read upon, or over, and some, for all these things, viz. the graces he exhorted them to be clothed with. Both agree, that mutual Christian love or charity is the chiefest garment the new man can put on, being the livery of Christ's disciples, Joh 13:35. But in prosecuting the allegory under the former notion, there is some danger of being over fine; and therefore it may be very pertinent to understand the putting on or exercising of charity, for the performance of the other graces and exercises, this being that which sets them on work with reference to their several objects, engaging to sincerity in their actings, without which the motions of the new man are no way acceptable; this links them together, and so is in a sort, as the apostle says elsewhere, a fulfilling of the whole law, Ro 13:8,9 Ga 5:14, with Mt 22:39,40; being the subjects of this hearty and regular affection of love to God and our neighbour, are inclined by it to do good continually, and to avoid the injuring of another in any respect. Not that there is any fulfilling of the law perfectly in this state, as the papists argue impertinently from what follows of charity, that it is *the bond of perfectness*, or, by an hypallage or Hebraism, the most perfect bond, therefore we are justified by it, and so by the works of the law before God. For:

1. Love, or charity, itself is not perfect, and so the very best of the new creatures who have put it on, however they may be perfect with a perfection of integrity or parts, yet not with a perfection of maturity or degrees, absolutely, while in this life;

See Poole on "Ec 7:20". See Poole on "Ro 7:18", See Poole on "Ro 7:19". See Poole on "Ga 5:17". See Poole on "Php 3:12", See Poole on "Php 3:15". See Poole on "Jas 3:2", &c.

2. Upon supposition that charity in a new creature doth in some sort perfectly fulfil the law, from the time he is endowed with it of God's grace, and a man hath put it on; he could not by it be justified from the breach of God's law before, he being a transgressor of it in time past, 1Jo 1:8,10.
3. That perfection of which charity here is said to be the bond, doth most likely respect the integrity and unity of the members of the church,

holding the Head, being knit together in one body;

See Poole on "Col 2:2", See Poole on "Col 2:19". See Poole on "Eph 4:16": the Greek word we translate *bond* here, noting such a collection and colligation of parts whereof a body is composed; and in one Greek copy it is found written, the bond of unity. As a prevailing love to God, and to those who bear his image, for his sake, doth bind up the other graces in every regenerate soul, so it doth the true members of the body of Christ one to another, being the best means for the perfecting of them under Christ their Head, who hath upon that account expressly required mutual love amongst his followers, Joh 15:12 1Jo 3:23 4:21: and the cogent reason hereof is, (as above in Joh 4:10,11), God's loving of us; and then indeed, when we entirely love God and his children, we show our love to be the bond of perfectness in returning love to him and his; when by this reciprocal affection both ends of the band of love do meet and are knit together, we become one with God, and in him, through Christ, as one soul amongst ourselves, walking in love according to his commandment, Ac 4:32 Eph 5:2 1Th 4:9.

### Colossians 3:15

Ver. 15. *And let the peace of God;* he doth not say the peace of the world, but *the peace of God,* or, as some copies, the peace of Christ; be sure, without the mediation of Christ we can have no peace with God; he alone hath *made peace,* Col 1:20, with Col 2:14; he is *our peace,* making it with God and amongst ourselves, to whom he hath preached it, Ac 10:36 Eph 2:14-17, and whom he hath brought into the bond of it, Eph 4:3; *the Lord of peace* himself, who always gives it where it is enjoyed, Joh 14:27 2Th 3:16. It is then the peace of God through Christ; see Php 4:7,9; by faith in whom we have peace in our own hearts with God, Isa 32:17 Ro 5:1, and Ro 14:17, and with one another, Joh 17:21 Ro 15:6,7,13. That the members of Christ may live in this peace, 2Co 13:11, the apostle here enjoins, as we render the word, let it *rule in your hearts*: the Greek word (both simple here, and compound, Col 2:18) is no where else to be found in the New Testament but in this Epistle, and it may signify either to arbitrate, or to mediate: our translation and the generality of interpreters take it in the former notion, for to arbitrate, or to rule, govern, sway, or moderate by way of arbitration, as he who sat judge, or umpire, to adjudge

the reward in the agonistics. So the import of the apostle's injunction is, let it regulate, govern, superintend, or give law to the rest of the affections of the new man; let it be mistress and governess of all your motions, to keep them in due respect, and withhold them from attempting any thing disorderly, and to overweigh disinclinations to the Divine pleasure or the good order of Christian community. The Arabic version is, let it be as the centre. Yet one learned man, conceiving the apostle doth here, as before, Col 2:18, glance upon the false apostles, (who would insinuate the mediation or intercession of angels), thinks because the word signifies also to mediate, intercede, or interpose, the apostle's meaning may be, let the peace of God be to you instead of all conceited angelical mediators or intercessors, which would derogate from him that made peace, Col 1:20, nailing what hindered to his cross, Col 2:14; let that preponderate with you in your hearts to overbalance any thing that can be suggested to the contrary.

*To the which also ye are called in one body;* considering the Divine vocation, or the call of God, Ro 12:18 1Co 7:15, and the condition or unity of the body into which ye are called under Christ your Head, 1Co 10:16, 12:12,13,25,26 Eph 4:4. He adds, *and be ye thankful;* be ye gracious, or amiable, of an obliging temper (as some render the word, passively); or rather, as we take it, actively, *be ye thankful*, i.e. to God and Christ, and Christians; be mindful of the benefits ye have received, giving thanks to God always for all things, Eph 5:20, and behaving yourselves as becomes the gospel.

### Colossians 3:16

Ver. 16. *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom:* one learned man conceives Paul to have written this first clause of the verse as in a parenthesis, joining in the sense what next follows to *be ye thankful* in the foregoing verse; another would have the parenthesis to begin from Col 3:14. The thing here exhorted to, is the plentiful inhabitation of the doctrine of the Bible, more especially of the gospel, that it may take up its residence and abide in our souls, which comes from the spiritual incorporation or mixing of it with faith, Heb 4:2; without which it may enter in as a stranger, but will not abide; it may cast a ray, or shine, but is not comprehended and doth not enlighten, Joh 1:5 2Co 4:4; it may afford

some present delight, Mr 6:20, but not lasting. The apostle would have the word to be diligently searched, heartily received, and carefully observed; a child may have it in his memory, that hath it not in his heart: this indwelling of the word imports a regarding, as well as a remembering of it, Ps 1:2 Joh 5:39 20:31 Ac 17:11 2Ti 3:15-17. If all the saints at Colosse were concerned in this exhortation, the papists oppose the Spirit of God in excluding (those they call) the laity from familiarity with the Scriptures in their mother tongue, being that all Christians are; here indispensably obliged to instruct and warn themselves, (according to the original word), as well as each other mutually, see Eph 5:19. Then the use of the word, and the manner of expressing their thankfulness to God amongst themselves, is in singing to his praise *psalms, and hymns and spiritual songs*. He doth not say, *teaching and admonishing* from these, (as elsewhere, Ac 8:35 28:23), but *in* them; implying it is a peculiar ordinance of Christ for Christians to be exercised in holy singing, as Jas 5:13, with an audible voice musically, Ps 95:1,2 100:1,2 Ac 16:25, as foretold, Isa 52:8, with Ro 10:14. Some would distinguish the three words the apostle here useth from the manner of singing, as well as the matter sung; others, from the Hebrew usage of words expressed by the seventy, in the book of Psalms; yet, whoever consults the titles of the Psalms and other places of the Old Testament, they shall find the words used sometimes promiscuously; compare Jud 5:3 1Ch 16:8,9 2Ch 7:6 23:13 2Ch 29:30 Ps 39:3 45:1 47:1 48:1 65:1 105:1,2 Isa 12:2,4 42:10; or conjunctly to the same matter, Ps 30:1-12, 48:1-14, 65:1-13, 66:1-20, Ps 75:1-10, 83:1-18, 87:1-7, titles. Hereupon others stand not open any critical distinction of the three words, yet are inclined here to take *psalms* by way of eminency, Lu 24:44; or more generally, as the genus, noting any holy metre, whether composed by the prophets of old, or others since, assisted by the Spirit extraordinarily or ordinarily, Lu 24:44 Ac 16:25 1Co 14:15,26 Jas 5:13. Here for clearness' sake two modes of the psalms, viz. hymns, whereby we celebrate the excellencies of God and his benefits to man, Ps 113:1-9: Mt 26:30; and odes or songs, which word, though ordinarily in its nature and use it be more general, yet here synecdochically, in regard of the circumstances of the conjoined words, it may contain the rest of spiritual songs, of a more ample, artificial, and elaborate composure, besides hymns, Re 14:2,3 15:2,3; which may be called *spiritual* or *holy songs* from the efficient matter, or end, viz. that they proceed from the Holy Spirit, or in argument may agree and serve thereto; being convenient they be so called from the argument, as opposed to carnal, sensual, and worldly

ditties.

*Singing with grace in your hearts;* and then that this holy singing be not only harmonious and tunable to the ear, but acceptable to God, it is requisite it do proceed from a gracious spirit, or grace wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, and the inhabitation of the word, Isa 29:13 Mt 15:8.

*To the Lord;* to the honour of God through Christ our Lord, Lu 1:46,47 Joh 5:23 1Pe 4:11.

### Colossians 3:17

Ver. 17. *And whatsoever ye do:* here the apostle give a universal direction how in every capacity, both personal and relative, in every motion, a Christian may do all so as to find acceptance with God.

*In word or deed;* and that is in his expressions and actings, viz. comprehending his internal as well as external operations; his reasonings and resolutions within, as well as his motions without; the thoughts of his heart, as well as the words of his tongue and the works of his hand; to take (care as much as possible that all be *in the name of the Lord Jesus:* elsewhere writing the same thing, the apostle adds *Christ,* Eph 5:20. Plato could say: Not only every word, but every thought, should take its beginning from God; but he understood nothing of the Mediator, of the love of him and the Father: but Christians know, as there is salvation in no other name, Ac 4:12, so there is no acceptance of their persons and performances in any other name than in his in whom they believe, Php 2:10 Heb 10:19,20 1Jo 5:13; and therefore in all their desires they are to respect him, Joh 14:13,14 15:3,16 16:23,26; looking for his authority and warrant, Mt 18:18-20 Mr 11:9 1Jo 5:14; following his example, Mt 11:29 16:24 Joh 13:15 1Pe 2:21-24 1Jo 2:6; in all they set about, desiring strength from him, Ps 71:17 Ac 4:7,10 1Co 15:10 Php 4:13 2Ti 2:1; living by faith upon him, Ga 2:20 Heb 10:38 2Pe 1:2,3; waiting upon him, worshipping and serving of him, according to his prescription, Mic 4:5 Mt 28:19,20 Ac 2:42,43 2Ti 2:19; for his sake, Mt 19:29 24:9 Ac 9:16 Re 2:3,13 3:8; to his honour and glory, Ps 31:3 1Co 10:31 Re 4:9,11 5:12,13 11:13. Endeavouring to render hearty *thanks unto God and the Father,* i.e. to God the Father: the Syriac and Arabic do omit the conjunction

copulative; however, it is to be understood expositively of God the Father of Christ, and our Father, who doth embrace us as his children.

*By him;* by or through Christ, Eph 5:20 Heb 13:15, the only Mediator.

### Colossians 3:18

Ver. 18. The apostle, entering upon an exhortation to relative duties, begins first with that which wives owe to their husbands to whom they are married, by reason this relation is the first in nature, and the fountain whence the rest do flow, Ge 2:22 Ps 127:3 128:3 Pr 5:15,16. That which he requires is self-submission in every thing, see Eph 5:22, expressing a subjection with reverence, Eph 5:24,33 1Pe 3:1. The God of order made the woman inferior, Ge 2:18,22 3:16 1Co 11:7-9 1Ti 2:13 Tit 2:5; yet her submission is not to be servile, as that of a handmaid, but conjugal, as of a meet companion.

*As it is fit in the Lord;* suitable to God's institution, in a becoming manner, agreeable to the mind of Christ, Ac 5:29 1Pe 3:7.

### Colossians 3:19

Ver. 19. The husband's duty is *love*, which the apostle doth ever inculcate from the most obliging considerations when he speaks of this relation; see Mt 19:6 1Co 7:3, with Eph 5:25,33; to sweeten on the one hand the subjection of the wife, and to temper on the other hand the authority of the husband.

*And be not bitter against them;* who, that upon his authority he may not grow insolent, the apostle forbids him frowardness with his wife, thereby requiring a conversation with her full of sweetness and amity: wrath and bitterness is to be laid aside towards all others, Col 3:8, with Eph 4:31, much more towards his own wife, in whom he is to joy and delight, Pr 5:15,18,19 1Pe 3:7.



### Colossians 3:20

Ver. 20. By *children* he understands both males and females.

*Obey your parents;* he requires them to yield humble subjection to those that brought them forth, or have just authority over them; see Ex 20:12 Eph 6:1; paying reverence to them, Le 19:3 Heb 12:9; observing their holy and prudent prescriptions, Lu 2:51; showing piety and kindness to them in all grateful offices, 1Ti 5:4, and submitting to their parental discipline, Jer 35:6 Heb 12:9.

*In all things;* in whatsoever is agreeable to the mind of the supreme Governor, who is absolute Sovereign, Ac 4:19 5:29.

*For this is well pleasing unto the Lord;* and this upon the most cogent reason imaginable, because it is not barely pleasing, but *well pleasing*, or very acceptable, *to the Lord*, who arms parents with authority over their children, Eph 6:1-3.

### Colossians 3:21

Ver. 21. *Fathers, provoke not your children to anger:* and to moderate the parental authority, that they may exercise it Christianly, he allows not parents to do that which is in a direct tendency to irritate or move the passions of their children merely for their own pleasure, without a principal regard to God's glory, and their children's profit, Heb 12:10. Indeed, he seems here more strictly to guard fathers against mal-administration of their power in this extreme than he doth elsewhere, when writing upon the same subject, Eph 6:4, considering the original word he here puts the negative upon, to engage them to lay aside rigour in their government, (as well as unwarrantable indulgence), and that upon a very weighty reason, drawn from the end, *viz. lest they be discouraged;* lest some children, who might with a moderate hand be reduced to obedience, should be (as it were) dispirited, by the roughness of their father's discipline, and even pine away with grief, or grow desperate.

## Colossians 3:22

Ver. 22. *Servants:* the apostle knowing how hard the condition of servitude was, both under the Jews and Gentiles, lest any believers in that mean condition should disgust so strict a subjection, especially to unbelieving masters, and cast off the yoke by breaking their covenants, to the disturbance of human society, and the disparagement of the Christian institution, he takes a special care to sweeten the harshness of it to all those indefinitely whose lot it was, by recommending the duties of it to them from the consideration of the acceptableness of them to God, who of his unconstrained grace would vouchsafe to them the noblest reward.

*Obey in all things your masters according to the flesh:* wherefore Christianity requires that servants of all sorts should readily receive and cheerfully execute all the commands, (see Col 3:20), in things lawful and honest, of those of both sexes, whom God in his wise providence hath given a just authority over them *according to the flesh*; ( see also Eph 6:5); which expression is not only for distinction from the Father and Master of spirits, Heb 12:9, but for mitigation of their servitude, in that their earthly master's power reacheth only things corporeal and temporal, not the conscience and things that are eternal, which might be some comfort, that the servitude would not last long, and in the mean time they were God's free-men, 1Co 7:22, whom they might *serve with the spirit in the gospel of his Son*, Ro 1:9.

*Not with eye-service;* yet their masters after the flesh, in those civil things wherein they had power to command, were not lightly to be respected or served to the eye, or only to be observed while their eye was upon them, Eph 6:6.

*As men-pleasers;* as if regard were to be had to the pleasing of men, and not to the pleasing of God, who searcheth the heart, and by his gospel (which they should adorn) expects they should remember his eye is ever upon them, Tit 2:9 1Pe 2:18.

*But in singleness of heart, fearing God;* and expects that, in a holy awe of him, they should do all that is incumbent on them, in the sincerity of their souls, (see Eph 6:5,6), with more regard to God than man.

### Colossians 3:23

Ver. 23. Yea, courageously and cheerfully, from the very soul, not constrainedly and murmuringly, though they be froward and their commands harsh; making account it is Jesus Christ, (who hath power over soul and body, Mt 10:28), not mortal men only, or in and for themselves, whom you serve, (see Eph 6:7), have an eye unto this Sovereign Lord, in the servile office your masters on earth do employ you.

### Colossians 3:24

Ver. 24. *Knowing*, being fully persuaded of this undoubted truth, *that of the Lord*, who superintends all your services, (not for any merit of yours), Eph 6:8, the recompence which your Master in heaven hath purchased, Eph 1:14,18, shall be freely settled upon you whom he hath adopted into his family, Ro 8:17 Ga 4:7 Eph 1:5; for in those duties you Christianly perform to masters of the same mould with yourselves, he really looks upon you as his own servants, (see Eph 6:6), yea, and free-men, 1Co 7:22; so that, as Onesimus, Phm 1:10, ye may more cheerfully submit to your masters' yoke, according to the command and for the sake of Christ, who reckons what you do upon that account as done to himself, Mt 25:40, and will instate you in that eternal inheritance, to which neither you nor any mortal man had naturally any right at all.

### Colossians 3:25

Ver. 25. *But he that doeth wrong*; but if the reward will not engage to a right discharge of these relative duties, the injurious person, *whether he be bond or free*, Eph 6:8, an inferior servant or a domineering master, who doth violate the rules of right, agreeing with the law natural and eternal, *shall receive for the wrong which he hath done*; shall have the just recompence of that injury, whereby he wrongs his correlate; the penalty apportioned to his fault, Ro 2:6 2Co 5:10 2Pe 2:13.

*And there is no respect of persons*; from the impartiality of Divine justice, *there is no respect of persons with God*, Ro 2:11, or with Christ, in the

place parallel to this, Eph 6:9, who is so righteous a Judge that he is not swayed by the outward circumstances and qualifications of men, whether potent or poor, Le 19:15 Job 34:19: he seeth not as man seeth, he looketh not on the outward appearance, but on the heart, 1Sa 16:7: in the distribution of justice, he will put no difference between the mightiest monarch and the most enslaved peasant; the purloining servant, and oppressing master shall certainly receive answerable to their doings from his impartial hand: the mean one who is at present abused without relief, and the great one who doth tyrannize without control, shall one day have right, and be reckoned with by *the righteous Judge*, 2Ti 4:8, who will show to all the world that he will honour those that honour him, and lightly esteem those that despise him, 1Sa 2:30, and that he is the avenger of all those that are wronged, 1Th 4:6 2Th 1:6.

## Colossians 4:1

### Chapter Summary

Col 4:1           The duty of masters towards their servants.  
Col 4:2-4        A general exhortation to perseverance in prayer,  
Col 4:5           discreet conduct,  
Col 4:6           and well-ordered speech.  
Col 4:7-9        The apostle commendeth Tychicus and Onesimus, by whom he sent this Epistle,  
Col 4:10-18     and concludeth with divers salutations, and a blessing.

Ver. 1. That this verse doth refer to the foregoing chapter, and that it was unadvisedly divided from it, is generally agreed.

*Masters*: having put servants upon their duty, he doth here engage all those who have a just right over servants to mind their own duty toward those under their command.

*Give unto your servants that which is just*; though your extract or estate hath advanced you above them in human society, yet you have the same nature and infirmities that they have, and (as in the foregoing verse) must

appear with them before the same Judge and rewarder at the same tribunal. And the apostle doth elsewhere, Eph 6:9, require of masters in their superior relation, what he doth of servants in their inferior one, to *do the same things*, i.e. not the particular offices of their servants, but, according to general rules of right reason, that which, by the law of God, nature, and nations, is common to and incumbent on all relatives, Ro 13:7,8 Ga 5:13 Eph 6:9. As he doth here require masters to do their servants right, give to them that which is their due for soul and body, Ge 18:19 Ex 12:44; with respect to work, that it be neither too much nor too little, Pr 12:10 29:21; to food, that it be convenient for nourishment, not luxury, Pr 27:27 31:15 Lu 12:42 15:17; wages, Ex 2:21 Jas 5:4; and recompence, De 15:13.

*And equal*; ye are likewise to give them that which is equal, or equitable, as well as just, which implies you should not be cruel to them, or discourage them; as you expect they should serve you with good will, so you should govern them wisely, and be good and gentle to them, Ps 101:2 1Pe 2:18, who are faithful, allowing them seasonable rest and refreshment, De 15:14, not despising their prudent answers, Job 31:13,14, but showing them favour in sickness as well as in health, 2Ki 5:5,6 Pr 14:35 Mt 8:6.

*Knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven*; and that upon this weighty reason, intimated before, that he above, whom you serve, will treat you as you do them; this you may be assured of, Eph 6:8,9. If you expect favour at his hands, when he comes to distribute rewards and punishments, show it now to your inferiors, who will then appear as your fellow servants, when you must give an account of your stewardship, Mt 24:49-51, with Lu 16:2.

#### Colossians 4:2

Ver. 2. *Continue in prayer*; persevere or hold on strongly in prayer with fervency: we are apt to grow sluggish and indisposed, and therefore have need of quickening to this duty, Lu 18:1 Eph 6:18.

*And watch in the same*; endeavouring to keep the heart in all fit seasons unto this, as a help to the precedent and subsequent duties, Ps 5:3 Mr 13:33, &c.; Ac 12:12 Ro 12:12 1Th 5:17 Jas 5:16 Re 3:2.

*With thanksgiving;* with acknowledgment of thanks for what we have already received, Ps 116:12,13 1Th 5:18.

#### Colossians 4:3

Ver. 3. *Withal praying also for us;* not only putting up petitions for themselves, but also interceding for Paul, and others with him, especially Timothy, mentioned in the salutation, Col 1:1,7 Ro 15:30 2Co 1:11 Php 1:19 2Th 3:1 Phm 1:22.

*That God would open unto us a door of utterance;* that God would vouchsafe to us freedom of speech: See Poole on "Eph 6:19".

*To speak the mystery of Christ;* effectually to preach the mystery of Christ: see Col 1:26,27 2:2 Mt 13:11 1Co 16:9 Eph 1:9.

*For which I am also in bonds: for which I am an ambassador in bonds,* or, in a chain, Eph 6:20; i.e. with the soldier that kept him in his own hired dwelling, Ac 28:16,20,30,31.

#### Colossians 4:4

Ver. 4. That I may manifest, or open and clear, it in due circumstances, as becomes an able minister of Christ, Ro 1:15 1Co 2:4 1Co 9:16 with 2Ti 2:15 4:2.

#### Colossians 4:5

Ver. 5. *Walk in wisdom;* let your course of life be managed with all Christian prudence, that you may not any way disparage the Christian institution, 2Sa 12:14 Ro 2:23,24, with 1Ti 6:4; with your innocency *be wise as serpents*, Mt 10:16; see Eph 5:15: yet, while you become all things to all to gain some, 1Co 9:20-23, you must take heed of such a compliance, whereby you may wound your consciences, Ex 34:15 Eph 5:11; and, on the other side, of such a contempt of them without just cause as may provoke them to persecute you. Paul was wary in his reasoning

with those who were not Christians, and would have others to be so, Ac 17:24,25, &c., with 1Co 5:12,13; not denying any of them what is due to them by Divine and human rights, Mt 22:21 Ro 13:7 1Pe 2:13.

*Toward them that are without;* considering they are not of the household of faith, Ga 6:10, as you profess to be, you should be more circumspect, that you do not give occasion of offence to them, 1Ti 5:14, as well as take care you be not infected with their practices, 1Co 5:6, but endeavour to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, Tit 2:10.

*Redeeming the time;* showing your prudence, say some learned men, in gaining time by honest craft, to secure you from spiritual dangers to your souls, or divert those who have power from persecutions: taking the expression proverbially. And for that purpose cite a passage in the prophet from the Septuagint, Da 2:8. Others, and the most, import of the original words, take time for opportunity, or the fitness it hath for some good; and the participle we render *redeeming*, to import either morally, (not physically, which is impossible), a recalling or recovery of time past that is lost, by a double diligence in employing what remains; or a buying up the present time, i.e. parting with any thing for the improvement of it to our spiritual advantage; or a buying it out, i.e. a rescuing it, as it were, out of the hands of Satan and the world, which by distracting cares and tempting pleasures do occasion often the misspending of it: see Eph 6:16.

#### Colossians 4:6

Ver. 6. *Let your speech be alway with grace:* because discourse is the tenderest part of our converse with men, especially those without, and ought to be managed with the greatest circumspection, upon occasions in every fit season, in imitation of Christ, who entertained those that did converse with him with gracious words, Lu 4:22, you should endeavour so to speak when called, that the hearers may conceive your discourse doth proceed from a gracious spirit, or grace in the heart, Col 3:16, teaching your mouth, Pr 15:23,24, with meekness of wisdom, Jas 3:13, using knowledge aright, Pr 15:2, being in its tendency gracious, Ec 10:12; not ungrateful, (as tinctured with gall or venom), but ministering grace to the hearers, Eph 4:29.

*Seasoned with salt;* even as meat duly powdered with salt (Mt 5:13) becomes acceptable to the discerning palate, so to the ear that trieth speech, fitly spoken words (Pr 25:11) are of a grateful savour, cleansed from corruption, Job 33:3 Mr 9:50.

*That ye may know how ye ought to answer every man;* to this purpose chiefly in the main points of Christianity, that in a gospel becoming manner, you may be able to give *a reason of the hope that is in you* (to those that ask you) *with meekness and fear*, Mt 7:6 1Pe 3:15, courteousness and sincerity, Eph 4:25, free from those evils of speech he had before enjoined them in this Epistle to put away, Col 3:8.

#### Colossians 4:7

Ver. 7. *All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you:* the apostle drawing to a conclusion, that he at so great distance might certify them of his love to them, and care for them, doth here acquaint them that with this Epistle he was sending two persons of integrity, for their satisfaction and his, viz. Tychicus, an Asiatic, their countryman and his fellow traveller, Ac 20:4, whom he sometimes sent to others, 2Ti 4:12 Tit 3:12, who would give them to understand what circumstances he was in, and all his affairs: see Eph 6:21,22.

*Who is a beloved brother;* whom he recommends to them as being a good man, a brother, as Timothy, Col 1:1, and Epaphroditus, Php 2:25, beloved of the people.

*And a faithful minister;* and whom he had experimentally found to be a faithful deacon, in the larger acceptance, or *minister*, i.e. of Jesus Christ, and his messenger.

*And fellow servant in the Lord;* and owned as his colleague, or *fellow servant in the Lord*, that they might more kindly receive him.

#### Colossians 4:8

Ver. 8. *Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose;* who was Paul's



messenger to them, as to let them know how it was with Paul, so to this end:

1. *That he might know your estate;* that he might clearly understand, how their matters stood, (as Eph 6:22), especially with respect to spirituals, Col 2:1,5.
2. *And comfort your hearts;* and cheer up their spirits, (as Eph 6:22), that under the temptations of Satan, and tyranny of persecutors abroad or at home, they might not be discouraged, 2Co 4:17.

### Colossians 4:9

Ver. 9. *With Onesimus,* whom he adjoins to Tychicus. Some, because of his following commendation, think him to be another person different from the fugitive servant of Philemon; but the most, comparing the description here with the circumstances in the Epistle to Philemon, Col 4:10,16, &c., conclude him to be the very same, taking Philemon for a Colossian.

*A faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you;* there, as here, being expressly called a *beloved brother*, yea, and, which may answer to faithful, Paul's spiritual son, who (whatever he had been) would be profitable and a benefit to Philemon, whom Paul would have to receive him as his own bowels. And that which might commend him to the Colossians was, that he was one of that city, or the same birth with themselves.

*They shall make known unto you all things which are done here;* these two persons of credit (upon the apostle's testimony) in their different circumstances, might, as joint witnesses, give them a full and certain account how things went with the church, and particularly with Paul, now a prisoner at Rome.

### Colossians 4:10

Ver. 10. *Aristarchus my fellow prisoner saluteth you:* here he doth wish prosperity to them, Lu 10:5, in the name of others, beginning with those of the circumcision, viz.

*Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica,* who had been his fellow traveller, Ac 19:29 20:4 27:2; yea, and now his fellow prisoner, and fellow labourer, Phm 1:24.

*And Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas;* and John Mark, who was nephew to Barnabas, Ac 12:12 13:13; and having sometime displeased Paul by his departure and accompanying his uncle Barnabas, Ac 15:37,39, yet afterwards repented, and was reconciled to Paul, 2Ti 4:11 Phm 1:24; being profitable to him tbr the ministry as an evangelist.

*Touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him:* concerning this same Mark, Paul had given orders to them, as well as to other churches, (who otherwise, likely, might be prejudiced against him for leaving Paul and his company in Pamphylia, Ac 13:13), that if he came amongst them, they should entertain him kindly, who as Peter's spiritual son, 1Pe 5:13, did elsewhere also salute those who were scattered. Some conceive from the *commandments* here they had *received*, that Barnabas had written to the Colossians in commendation of his cousin Mark.

### Colossians 4:11

Ver. 11. *And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision;* a third person of those who had been Jews mentioned in this salutation, is Jesus, surnamed Justus, (probably from his just conversation), whether the same with him mentioned in Luke's history of the Acts, Ac 28:7, is not evident. The Greeks use Jesus for the Hebrew Joshua, Heb 4:8, it being common with them to more than one. However, the Christians, since the resurrection of Christ, out of reverence to their Lord and Master, (who is God as well as man), have forborne to call their children by the name of Jesus.

*These only are my fellow workers unto the kingdom of God;* these three alone, i.e. of the Jews, (as for Timothy, his father was a Greek or Gentile, Ac 16:1,3, and others were Gentiles, Ac 28:28), were assistant to hint at Rome (where it seems Peter was not) in expounding and preaching the gospel, enlarging the kingdom of grace in converting of souls, Mt 4:23 Mr 4:11.

*Which have been a comfort unto me; the carrying on of which work did administer matter of great consolation to him in his bonds.*

#### Colossians 4:12

Ver. 12. *Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you: after he had given them the good wishes of some of the Jews, he doth here give the like from some of the Gentiles, beginning with Epaphras, whom he had before commended, Col 1:7,8, and doth here recommend him as born and bred amongst them, devoted to their service, in being the servant of Christ, as Paul, separated to the preaching of the gospel, Ro 1:1, yea, a fellow prisoner with the apostle upon that account, Phm 1:23.*

*Always labouring fervently for you in prayers; and, as it became such a one, faithful in his office, not diverted by distance of place or length of time, was night and day contending zealously with prayers to God for their spiritual, temporal, and eternal welfare, as Ro 15:30.*

*That ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God; that they might attain a sufficient perfection in all that which God would have them reach to: See Poole on "Col 1:28,29". See Poole on "Php 3:15". The distance between Colosse and Philippi, &c. render it improbable, whatever a learned man conceits, that Epaphras should be the same with Epaphroditus.*

#### Colossians 4:13

Ver. 13. *For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you; for, saith the apostle, though I am not privy to his secret prayers, yet I can bear him witness, and do give him mine own testimony, that he hath a most ardent and special affection for you Christians at Colosse.*

*And them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis; yea, and for those also in your neighbour cities; see the arguement, and Col 2:1; viz. Laodicea, the last of the seven churches, to whom excellent epistles were written, recorded by John the divine, Re 1:11 3:14; and Hierapolis, or the holy city, about six miles distant from the former, say geographers.*

#### Colossians 4:14

Ver. 14. *Luke, the beloved physician;* whether this Luke was the same with him that penned the Gospel and the Acts, because the apostle here gives him no higher a commendation, some doubt. But others, and the most, conclude that as Matthew from a publican became an apostle, and others from fishers of fishes, fishers of men, so Luke from a physician of the body became a physician of souls, and that this was the very person who was Paul's perpetual and individual companion in his travels, 2Ti 4:11 Phm 1:24; considering from his style he was an excellent Grecian, (very fit for a physician), and made use of proper medical terms, Ac 15:39 17:16: and here the apostle calls him *beloved*, as he had done Tychicus, Col 4:7, and elsewhere his fellow labourer, who only of those that were not prisoners stuck to him, 2Ti 4:11. Some think it to be Luke whose praises are celebrated in the gospel, or evangelical churches, 2Co 8:18; others would have that to be Barnabas, or some other: his practising of physic was no more inconsistent with being an evangelist than Paul's tent-making with being an apostle, 2Th 3:8.

*And Demas, greet you;* he adds a third in this salutation from others, and that is Demas, who hitherto did persevere, and that as one of his fellow labourers, Phm 1:24; though it should seem, afterwards, when the persecution grew hotter, he did for some worldly respect leave Paul, and depart unto Thessalonica, 2Ti 4:10.

#### Colossians 4:15

Ver. 15. *Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea;* having saluted the Colossians, in the names of others, circumcised and uncircumcised, he desires them in his own name to salute the Christians in the church at Laodicea.

*And Nymphas;* and some pious man called Nymphas, probably living either in the country near the city of Laodicea, or some eminent Christian of chief note in the city. The masculine article adjoined shows this person to be a male, and not a female, as some have inconsiderately reckoned.

*And the church which is in his house;* and the company of believers, either

of his own family or neighbourhood, who did, under his protection or inspection, meet to worship God according to his appointment, Ro 16:1,5 1Co 16:15,19.

#### Colossians 4:16

Ver. 16. *And when this epistle is read among you:* the apostle takes it for granted, that, when this Epistle came to their hands, it would be publicly read in a solemn assembly of the church, or brethren, convened to that purpose, as elsewhere usual. For indeed he doth strictly enjoin and adjure the Thessalonians, under the penalty of the Lord's displeasure, that the Epistle or letter which he wrote unto them should be read unto all the brethren, 1Th 5:27: it being an indispensable duty of Christ's disciples, to search the Scriptures, Joh 5:39, and there solemnly to read them in the assembly for the edification of all ministers and people, old and young, De 17:19 Ps 1:2 119:9 Mr 13:37 Ac 13:15 17:11,12 18:26-28 Ro 15:4 1Ti 4:13,15.

*Cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans:* hence (as it follows) the apostle (who it is likely had not an opportunity at Rome to have a copy of it transcribed) chargeth them at Colosse, to see or take care after the reading of this same Epistle amongst themselves, that, a copy of it being prepared for that purpose, it might, as from him, be also solemnly read or rehearsed in a public assembly of the Christians at Laodicea.

*And that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea;* and he further chargeth those to whom he wrote at Colosse, that they should take care that the Epistle (as we rightly with the generality of ancients and moderns render it) from Laodicea, be read amongst them. The Ethiopic version (as we have it thence in the Latin) reads, send it to Laodicea, that the Laodiceans also may read it, in the house or congregation of Christians there. The Vulgar Latin, that ye likewise may read the Laodicean Epistle, or the Epistle of the Laodiceans. Whence some of old and of late would have it thought, that St. Paul wrote a distinct Epistle to the Laodiceans. In favour of this opinion, some bad man, out of this Epistle to the Colossians, and that to the Ephesians, patched up and forged a short, but gross and trifling, Epistle, and fathered it on the apostle, though very dissonant from his character and style; whereupon it hath been rejected as spurious and apocryphal by the learned fathers, and the second council of Nice; and since by the learned on all hands, except some few of the papists, and except quakers, who printed a translation of it, and plead for it. Some papists urge this, to argue that the church gives the Scripture authority

amongst Christians. But though she is bound to preserve the books of Divine authority, it doth not belong to her to authenticate them, or prescribe them as the rule of faith; that were no less than to outrage the majesty of the Author. Others allege it, as being lost, and thereupon would infer the canon of Holy Scriptures to be defective. But supposing, yet not granting, that Paul had written an Epistle to the Laodiceans, which had not come down to us, it were altogether inconsequent that the canon of Scriptures we have doth not contain all things necessary to salvation. Some, still harping on the Vulgar translation of the Laodicean Epistle, (though that in common speech might argue they wrote it rather than received it), would fancy that it was the Epistle Paul wrote to the Ephesians; but Tertullian did brand the impostor Marctan for changing the title of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. Others conceit it may be understood of Paul's Epistle to Philemon, whom Paul calls his fellow labourer, likely exercising his ministry in the neighbour city of Laodicea, which was sent by Onesimus, and for the sake of Onesimus, who was a Colossian, was to be read at Colosse. Others, because Luke is mentioned, [Col 4:14](#), that it was an Epistle of his to the Laodiceans; but of that there is no evidence. Neither is it probable that Paul would in this Epistle to the Colossians have saluted the Laodiceans, had he written a distinct Epistle to them. Wherefore it is most rational to understand it, not of an Epistle of Paul written to the Laodiceans, but as our Bibles, according to an authentic copy, have, with the Greek fathers, faithfully translated and represented it, written *from Laodicea*. Some conjecture it to be the First Epistle of John, which they conceive was written from the city of Laodicea. Others think it was the First Epistle to Timothy, from the inscription or subscription of a long time put at the end of it, as if written from Laodicea. But against that it may be excepted, there is no mention of Pacatiana, in the writers of the first age, but only in after-times, dividing the Roman empire into provinces; and some say this was first mentioned in the ecclesiastical records in the fifth synod at Constantinople. Further, there be several passages in the Epistle itself do intimate that it was written from some place in Macedonia, if we consult [Col 1:3](#), with [Col 3:14](#) [4:13](#), not from Laodicea. Some think it to be meant of the Epistle from Laodicea, wherein they would answer the Colossians; how probably I determine not. Wherefore it is most probable, that the Epistle was written from Laodicea, to Paul at Rome; either by the church there, or some of her officers, which (likely he in straits of time enclosed, and) he would have read, as helpful to the edification of the Colossians, for the better clearing of some passages in this Epistle to them, wherein he had obviated such errors as he might hear seducers were attempting to disseminate amongst them.

### Colossians 4:17

Ver. 17. He also enjoins them to advise or advertise *Archippus*, whom he doth elsewhere call his *fellow soldier*, i.e. minister in the gospel, [Phm 1:2](#),

on his and Timothy's behalf, to see to, or be mindful of, the nature of that excellent ministry he had undertaken, Ro 11:13 Eph 3:7 1Ti 4:6; yea, and to be more heedful, Ac 20:28,29 1Pe 5:1,2, considering the authority of the Lord Jesus, in whose name he had been called to it, and intrusted with it, Mt 9:38 Php 1:17 1Ti 5:1,21; having been colleague to Epaphras, or in his absence newly received into this sacred charge, to encourage him to a faithful discharge of his duty therein, to fill up all the parts of his office, and leave none of them unperformed: see Col 1:25 1Co 9:16,17 1Ti 4:16, with 2Ti 4:5.

### Colossians 4:18

Ver. 18. *The salutation by the hand of me Paul:* the apostle having them on his heart, and here (as elsewhere) likely having used an amanuensis to pen the body of his Epistle, to prevent fraud and forgery he doth subscribe his salutation and apostolical benediction with his own hand, which was well known, Ro 16:22 1Co 16:21 Ga 6:11 2Th 2:2 3:17 Phm 1:19.

*Remember my bonds;* importuning them to be very mindful of his imprisonment in their prayers, Col 4:3 Heb 13:3, imitating his constancy and patience if called to suffer; see Php 1:14; his sufferings being an excellent seal to the truth of his gospel, and his ardent affection to them and other Gentiles, for whose sake he was in bonds.

*Grace be with you;* then earnestly praying that the special grace and favour of God the Father in the Lord Jesus Christ might be ever present with them: see Ro 16:24 1Co 16:23,24 Php 4:23. In testimony of the reality of his desire, and assurance to be heard, he concludes (as elsewhere) with *Amen*.

(Written from Rome to the Colossians by Tychicus and Onesimus.)

## 1 Thessalonians 1:1

### THE ARGUMENT

The apostle Paul, being more especially the minister of the uncircumcision, and preacher of the Gentiles, in his progress through their cities and countries comes to Thessalonica, a chief city in Macedonia, for thither he was called in a vision, Ac 16:9, *A man of Macedonia prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.* In obedience to which he loosed from Troas, and came to Samothracia, from thence to Neapolis, and from thence to Philippi, where he abode certain days, Php 1:12; and after passing through *Amphipolis and Apollonia, came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews, Ac 17:1*, whither, as his manner was, he went, and preached that Jesus was the Christ. Whereupon *some believed, and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.* But the Jews which believed not raised a persecution against him, whereupon the brethren sent him and Silas away to Berea, 1Th 1:10, where he also went and preached in the Jews' synagogue. But the unbelieving Jews of Thessalonica following him to Berea, he was conducted thence to Athens; and from thence, it is thought by some, he writes this Epistle to the Thessalonians, as is asserted in the postscript. Wherein he gives account of the great success of his preaching among them, for which he gives thanks to God, and makes an honourable mention of them in several places. But because they were new converts, and met with persecution from their own countrymen for the gospel's sake, the apostle was the more solicitous for them, to confirm them in the faith they had received. Whereupon he endeavoured once and again to come to them himself, but some way or other was hindered by Satan, as he tells them, 1Th 2:18. And therefore he sends to them Timothy in his room, to know their faith, and to establish them in it; who bringing an account thereof to him, and of their state, he writes this Epistle to them, according to the account he received by Timothy, and his own observation and knowledge while he was amongst them. Particularly:

1. He gives thanks for the eminency and operation of the graces of God in them, for the special presence of the Holy Ghost in his ministry amongst them, for their exemplary faith and conversation, 1Th 1:1.



2. He puts them in mind of his ministerial labours and personal conversation among them, of the malicious carriage of the Jews both against Christ and his apostles, and particularly against himself, whereof he knew they themselves were eye-witnesses; and declares his present rejoicing and glorying in them, 1Th 2:1-20.
3. He next gives the reason of his sending Timothy to them, and speaks of the good account he gave of them, and the great refreshing and comfort he received thereby; and that he was greatly desirous to see their face; and prays that they might increase in love, and be established in holiness, 1Th 3:1-13.
4. He then proceeds to exhort them about their personal walking, according to the directions and commandments he had given them from the Lord Jesus. And he instanceth in marriage chastity, righteousness in dealing, brotherly love, peaceable carriage, minding their callings, and diligence therein; and not to mourn inordinately for them that die in Jesus, as knowing that they shall rise from the dead, and meet the Lord in the air, as well and as early as those that shall be found alive at his coming, 1Th 4:1-18.
5. He next describes the manner of Christ's coming, that it will be sudden and unexpected, whereby many will be surprised in their security; and therefore exhorts these Thessalonians to be watchful, sober, and armed for that day, which will be to them a day of salvation which they had been appointed to. And then he exhorts them to duties belonging to their church state, and communion; to have a high esteem for their guides and teachers; to warn, support, and comfort one another; not to retaliate evil for evil, &c. And so, in the close of the Epistle, recommends them to God in prayer, begging they would also pray for him, and salute one another, and communicate this Epistle to all the brethren; and so concludes with his usual salutation.

This is the substance of the Epistle.

As to the place whence it was written, we need not inquire, whether it was, as is expressed in the postscript, from Athens; or from Corinth, as Grotius and others imagine.

As to the time, it was surely not long after Paul's coming from Thessalonica; for indeed the present state of the Thessalonians did require that he should not long delay it, as his secret affection to them would not suffer it neither.

And as to the order of the Epistle, that that which is called the Second Epistle should be really the first, and by some carelessness misnamed and misplaced, is a bold, groundless conjecture of Grotius, and needs no confutation.

But this is more probable, that it was the first Epistle that the apostle wrote to any church, though other Epistles are in order set before it. The gospel was more early preached here than at Corinth or Rome, as appears in the Acts of the Apostles, and the success of it was more sudden and eminent than in any other city, and their persecutions more, whereby they might obtain an Epistle from the apostle before any other church.

### Chapter Summary

1Th 1:1 The salutation.

1Th 1:2-4 Paul showeth his thankful remembrance of the Thessalonians in his prayers on account of their faith, charity, and patience,

1Th 1:5-10 applauding them for their exemplary reception of the gospel, and improvement under it.

Ver. 1. *Paul and Silvanus*: why not Paul the apostle, as in some other Epistles? Because his apostleship was not doubted of by them, they had such an eminent seal of it upon their hearts; and there was no false apostles among them to question or deny it. And he joins *Silvanus* with him; whom Peter calls *a faithful brother*, 1Pe 5:12, and was a minister of the gospel joining with himself in that work among the Corinthians, 2Co 1:19, as also among these Thessalonians, as appears, Ac 17:4, though there called by contraction of his name, or by another name, *Silas*; who is also mentioned, Ac 15:22, as one *chief among the brethren*, and sent by the church of Jerusalem to accompany Paul and Barnabas to Antioch; and stiled a prophet, Ac 15:32; and chosen by Paul to accompany him rather than Mark, Ac

15:40. And being an instrument with himself in converting these Thessalonians, and being also in their love and esteem, he joins his name with his own in the Epistle.

*And Timotheus;* his name is Greek, for *his father was a Greek*, but his mother *a Jewess*, Ac 16:1, whose name was *Eunice*, 2Ti 1:5. He was brought up in the Jewish religion, instructed from a child by his parents in the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament, but instructed by Paul in the faith of Christ, whom therefore he calls his *son in the faith*, 1Ti 1:2, *well reported of by the brethren*, Ac 16:2; whom Paul laid hands upon with other elders to separate him to the work of the ministry, and the office of an evangelist, and thereby had a *gift of God* bestowed upon him, 2Ti 1:6; called by Paul his *συνεργος*, or *work-fellow*, Ro 16:21, and particularly in the conversion of these Thessalonians, together with Silvanus, as appears, Ac 17:14. He abode with them when Paul was persecuted from them, as there we find; and was sent to them from Athens afterwards by Paul to know their state, and strengthen their faith, 1Th 3:1,2. And thereupon, that his Epistle might obtain the greater respect, he joins his name also in it; as he doth also in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, in his Epistle to the Philippians, and to the Colossians. He being Paul's companion in his ministry among the Gentiles in their first conversion, and a man of great name in the churches, he therefore so frequently joins his name with his own. And also that he might show their consent in the truth they delivered to the churches, which might the more confirm their faith in theirs.

*Unto the church of the Thessalonians;* the church inhabiting Thessalonica, which was a chief city in Macedonia, a metropolis, famous for antiquity, largeness, pleasant situation, and commerce. *Plin. lib. 1Th 4:10*. First called Thessalia, and being conquered by king Philip, was called Thessalonica. Philippi was also another great city of Macedonia, where was planted another church, to whom the apostle writes; whereby we may see that God had a great work for Paul here, when he called him in a vision to go to Macedonia.

*Which is in God the Father;* not as the Son of God is in the Father, to be one substance and essence with him; nor as the human nature is in the Divine nature of Christ, to be one person with the Father; but it imports either their forsaking false gods

and joining themselves to the worship of the true God, as in 1Th 1:9, *ye turned from idols to serve the living and true God*; called therefore in a distinction from them: *God the Father*: or else their worshipping God according to the revelation made of him in the gospel, where he is called Father. But in a sense differing from what Plato or Homer, and other heathens, understood when they called the chief God, Father; either with respect to their inferior deities, of whom they styled him Father, or the works of creation proceeding from him as his offspring. And their being in him may yet imply more than this; which is their being joined to God in covenant, as their God and Father; and so believing in him, established upon him as their foundation, and as their centre resting in him. It may also further imply their union and communion with God through the Spirit, whereby the saints are said to abide in God, and to dwell in him, and he in them, 1Jo 2:27,28, *yea, to be in him who is the true God*, 1Jo 5:20.

*And in the Lord Jesus Christ*; these two are put together, because there is no access to God the Father, no true worship of him, no union or communion with him, and so no being in him, but through Jesus Christ. And by both they might see the blessed state they were now brought to by the gospel; being before strangers to God the Father and Jesus Christ, but now in them. And though being in God the Father is first mentioned, yet in the order of nature we are first in Christ, and through him in God the Father. And the apostle the rather asserts this of them, because the gospel came to them not in word only, but in power. And hereby he gives them the character of a true church of Christ, what it is, at least what it ought to be; for to be in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ, imports more than literal knowledge, dogmatical faith, or outward profession.

*Grace be unto you, and peace*; this the apostle calls his salutation with his own hand, *which is my token*, saith he, *in every epistle, so I write*, 2Th 3:17. Read 1Co 1:3 2Co 1:2, &c. And under the Old Testament the Jew's usual salutation was: *Peace be to you*; under the New it is: *Grace and peace*. Peace comprehends all blessings; and grace or favour, the spring out of which they flow. The grace of God is now said to have appeared and to shine forth, Tit 2:2, and the church of God to be blest with all spiritual blessings, Eph 1:3; so that now the apostle Paul salutes the churches with *grace and peace*; and the apostle Peter adds: *Grace and peace be multiplied unto you*, 2Pe 1:2. *Mercy*

*unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied, Jude 1:2. Or if we take *grace* for grace inherent in us, as sometimes it is taken; and *peace* for the inward tranquillity of mind, heart, and conscience; the text may bear it. Yet the former rather meant *to you*, to you that are in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ: not to infidels out of the church; grace to *you*, and peace.*

*From God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ;* wherein are showed grace and peace in their original, *from God;* and not from God absolutely considered, but as *our Father:* as a Father he conveys the blessings of grace and peace to his children; but yet not immediately, but through *Jesus Christ*, as merited by his blood, and procured by his intercession. The Holy Ghost is not mentioned, though he must be understood; but he is rather considered as the actual conveyer of these blessings, than the original or procurer of them. And the three Persons work in the same order in the work of redemption as of creation, though more distinctly.

### 1 Thessalonians 1:2

Ver. 2. *We give thanks to God;* after his salutation he adds his thanksgiving and prayer for them. He saw in them an eminent seal of his apostleship, and effect of his ministry, and advantage to the gospel in their example, and so gives thanks. And his thanks is to God, because the success of the gospel was more from his blessing than his own ministry.

*Always;* πάντοτε, that is, in a constant course; or *affectu*, though not *actu*, by a grateful sense he had of it continually upon his heart.

*For you all;* for he had a good report of them all from Timothy, 1Th 3:6, and we find not one reproof in this First Epistle to any one, as in the Second.

*Making mention of you in our prayers;* he adds also his prayer for them, wherein he made mention of them by name, as some understand the words, μνησθαι ὑμῶν ποιοῦμενοι. Prayer and thanksgiving ought to go together, especially in the ministers of the gospel, and in the work of their ministry. And thus the apostle practised towards other churches also, as Ro 1:8 Php 1:3,

&c.

### 1 Thessalonians 1:3

Ver. 3. *Remembering without ceasing;* the occasion of his constant thanksgivings was his constant remembering of that grace of God that did so abound and work powerfully in them, not as if he had always an actual remembrance of it, but he did not forget it, the habitual sense of it was continually in his mind, and was often actually in his thoughts, especially in his approaches to God; and that is all which is meant in the original word, ἀδιαλείπτως. While the apostle was with them he saw this in them, but being now absent he remembered it; and with such a practical remembrance as stirred up his heart to thanksgiving. That is a good memory where is treasured up matter of prayer and thanksgiving.

*Your work of faith;* or the work of the faith of you, that is, their faith and the work of it; whereby he intimates their faith was true and real; a faith *unfeigned*, 2Ti 1:5; *the faith of God's elect*, Tit 1:1; and so distinguished from a dead faith, Jas 2:26. They *received the work in much affection, with joy of the Holy Ghost;* they *turned from idols to the service of the true God;* they waited for the coming of Christ, &c.; here was the work of faith.

*And labour of love;* a labour to weariness, as the word imports; laborious love. True faith hath its work, but love hath its labour; and when faith worketh by love it will work laboriously. Whereby the apostle declares the reality of their love, as well as their faith; it was unfeigned love, yea, fervent love, the labour of it went forth towards that true God whom they now worshipped, that Jesus Christ on whom they now believed, and to the saints that were now their fellow brethren, 1Th 4:10; and particularly to the apostle himself, as in other ways, so particularly in the pains and labour that some of them took to conduct and travel along with him from Thessalonica to Athens, Ac 17:15.

*And patience of hope:* the apostle had mentioned before their *faith and love*, and now their *hope*; which are called the three cardinal or theological graces, all mentioned together by him, 1Co 13:13; and by which we have all our communion with God on earth. And as their faith had its *work*, and love its *labour*, so

their hope had its *patience* as the fruit and product of it. There is a patience with respect to an expected good, and with respect to an incumbent evil; and both produced by hope. The former is more properly called μακροθυμια, or length of mind, consisting in waiting for and expectation of some desired good; the latter is υπομονη, consisting in patient suffering, or abiding under some present evil. Their former patience is mentioned in 1Th 1:10, they *waited for his Son from heaven*. The latter in the second chapter, 1Th 2:14, *Ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen: as they* (i.e. the churches of Judea) *have of the Jews*. This latter is here specially meant in the text; and for which he gives God thanks, 2Th 1:4. And hope produceth the former patience, as it looks upon the expected good as that which will come at last; and the latter patience, as it looks upon the suffered evil as that which will not always continue. And when with respect to both these the mind of man is kept sedate and quiet, this is the *patience of hope*.

*In our Lord Jesus Christ;* or, of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the efficient and author of this hope, and of their faith and its work, and love and its labour: or, *in our Lord Jesus Christ*, as here rendered; and so he is the object of this hope, 1Co 15:19 1Ti 1:1. And by this the Christian's hope is distinguished from all other. All hope worketh patience. The husbandman's hope to receive the former and latter rain, maketh him wait for it with patience, Jas 5:7; the hope of the merchant, for the return of his adventure; the hope of the heir, for his inheritance; but the Christian's hope worketh patience as fixed upon Christ: other hope resteth upon the things of this lower visible world, but this is as an anchor sure and stedfast, entering within the veil, where Christ is entered as a forerunner, &c., Heb 6:19,20. Faith and love both have Christ for their object; but considered as present; but the patience of hope in Christ respecteth something future, some revelation of him, and salvation by him, which is yet to come. *If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it*, Ro 8:25.

*In the sight of God and our Father:* these words are not in the Syriac or Arabic version. And they respect either the apostle's thanksgiving and prayer for them, and his remembering the grace of God in them when he solemnly approached God's presence; for in all duties of worship we come before God, and present ourselves in his sight, and their graces he before mentioned, he

remembered them to God, and presented them to his view: or they respect the omniscience of God, that their work of faith, labour of love, &c. were all in God's sight, and he was a delighted spectator of them: or, lastly, they may respect the sincerity of their hearts in all the actings of their faith, love, and hope; they did all this in the sight of God. As the apostle asserts his sincerity in his ministry by this: *We speak as in the sight of God*, 2Co 2:17. And thus the apostle mentions their graces, not as the heathen orators, who made great encomiums of virtue to the praise of men, but to the honour and praise of God.

#### 1 Thessalonians 1:4

Ver. 4. Another ground of his thanksgiving for them. By the manner of their receiving the gospel, and the evident operation of the graces of God's Spirit, the apostle knew their election of God. We cannot know election as in God's secret decree, but as made manifest in the fruits and effects of it. As there is a knowledge of things *a priori*, when we argue from the cause to the effect, so *a posteriori*, when we argue from the effects to the cause. And thus the apostle came to know their election. Not, we hope it, or conjecture it, but we know it; and not by extraordinary revelation, but by evident outward tokens. And if the apostle knew this, why should we think they themselves might not know it also; and the words may be read: Ye knowing your election of God. And election imports the choosing of some out of others; for election cannot comprehend all. Some deny all eternal election of particular persons, and make it a temporal separation of persons to God in their conversion; but is not this separation from a pre-existing decree, God doing *all things after the counsel of his own will*? Eph 1:11. Or, they will yield an eternal election of persons, but only conditional; one condition whereof is perseverance to the end. But the apostle asserts their election at present, before he saw their perseverance.

#### 1 Thessalonians 1:5

Ver. 5. The former part of the verse asserts the reasons on which the apostle built the knowledge of their election, which is the manner of the gospel's coming to them.



*Our gospel* because preached by him and others to them; or intrusted with them *εγεννηθη εις υμας*.

*Came not unto you in word only, but also in power;* confirmed by miracles, and had powerful operation upon your hearts. The power of God went along with our ministry, which did not with the false teachers, 1Co 4:19; and *the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power, 1Co 4:20*.

*And in the Holy Ghost;* either in gifts of the Holy Ghost which ye received, or that power which ye felt from the gospel upon your hearts was through the Holy Ghost: that they might not think it was their ministry, or the word alone, that had this power upon them.

*And in much assurance;* ye giving full assent to the truth of the gospel, without doubting on your part; or preached to you with much confidence and assurance on our part. The former sense is best. And there is an allusion in the word to a ship riding upon the sea with a full gale, and not turned out of its course by a contrary wind. Your faith triumphed over the waves of all objections, disputes, or hesitations of mind. For doubtings of mind do much hinder the power of the word upon the heart. And this assurance they had from the Holy Ghost.

*As ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake;* we did not carry ourselves among you like ordinary men, but by our laboriousness and zeal in preaching, our patient suffering for the gospel we preached, by our holy conversation, by our denial of ourselves in labouring with our hands amongst you, and by our great tenderness and affection to you, you might perceive that we were men sent of God, and our ministry was from heaven, and that we sought not yours, but you; whereby you had an advantage to entertain the gospel preached by us with greater assurance. And in all these things we had respect to your salvation. And for the truth of all this, he appeals to their own knowledge, and that mighty presence and assistance of God in their ministry among them; as they could not but perceive it, so it was all for their sake.

*And ye became followers of us;* as you received our gospel in the power of it into your hearts, so you showed it forth in your conversation, becoming followers or imitators of us in our

patient and cheerful sufferings, and our holy and self-denying carriage. The doctrine of the gospel which we taught you, we practised it before your eyes, and you followed us therein; though before you walked according to the course of the world, and were followers of the religion and manners of the heathen. The examples of ministers ought to be teaching as well as their doctrine.

*And of the Lord;* we have followed the example of Christ, and ye followed us. So that as you believed on Christ as your Saviour, so you followed his commands and examples as your Lord and Master; as he exhorts the Corinthians: *Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ,* 1Co 11:1.

*Having received the word in much affliction:* though affliction and persecution attended the word, yet you received, it; and this receiving was not only into your heads by knowledge of it, and into your hearts by all effectual believing it, but into your practice by a walking according to it. For receiving the word, in the Scripture phrase, comprehends all this in it.

*With joy of the Holy Ghost;* though afflictions attended you, they did not deject your spirits, but you had joy in your hearts by the Holy Ghost; who usually doth give forth his joy most to the saints when under suffering, which is one instance of the gospel's coming to them not in word only, but in the Holy Ghost, as was said before. The glad tidings of the gospel did more comfort them, than all their sufferings did cast them down.

### 1 Thessalonians 1:7

Ver. 7. As ye followed our example, and of the Lord, so ye were examples yourselves, and such great examples that influenced all the believers both of Macedonia and Achaia. Your example reached beyond the confines of Thessalonica, unto the believers of all Macedonia, yea farther, to the believers of all Achaia. And though the Philippians of Macedonia received the gospel before you, as appears in the story, Ac 16:1-40, yet ye exceeded them, and became examples to them in your faith and patience, &c.

## 1 Thessalonians 1:8

Ver. 8. How could they be examples to persons so remote, amongst whom they had no converse? The apostle here resolves it. It was by way of report. Things that are eminent, and done in eminent places, such as Thessalonica was, easily spread abroad, either by merchants, travellers, or correspondence by letters. And this report is compared to a sound that is heard afar off, that made an echo, as the word implies. And that which *sounded out from you* was *the word of the Lord*. The word is said to sound by the voice of the preacher, 1Co 14:8,9 Ga 6:6, and by the practice of the hearers. The mighty power and efficacy of it was made known abroad, *not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place*; not strictly every where, but here and there, up and down in the world. As it is said of the apostles' ministry, Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world, Ro 10:18; the report of the gospel went farther than the preachers of it, and their receiving the gospel sounded abroad far and near. And not only the word, but *your faith to God-ward is spread abroad*, ἐξέληλυθεν. Your faith being so eminent, it was spoken of far and near. That ye believed so soon at our first entrance, as 1Th 1:9; and though we had been shamefully treated at Philippi a little before our coming to you, and persecution followed us and the gospel we preached to you, yet ye believed, and your faith was eminent in the fruits and operations of it also, as was mentioned before, and is afterwards in the Epistle. And it was faith *God-ward*; it rested not upon men, no, nor only the Man Christ Jesus, whom we preached to you, but upon God himself though through Christ ye became worshippers of the true God, and believed on him with an exemplary faith.

*So that we need not to speak any thing*, either of the manner of our preaching the gospel, or of your manner of receiving it. Where men's deeds speak and commend men, words may be silent. And the apostle might have thought it needful to have divulged these things abroad for the advantage of the gospel, and the examples of others, if he had not been prevented by the report already spread abroad. The good examples of the people may ease their ministers of some labour in spreading the gospel.

## 1 Thessalonians 1:9

Ver. 9. *For they themselves show of us, what manner of entering in we had unto you: the believers of Macedonia and Achaia do speak of these things απαγγελουσιν, openly, whereby it is evident the word of the Lord sounded forth to them from you, and they, without any information from us, declare the great entertainment you gave us and our gospel at our first entrance among you.*

*And how ye turned to God from idols;* particularly your forsaking your former idolatry, when you worshipped idols, that were either the images or shapes of the true God, formed by men; or men whom they deified, and set up as gods, and worshipped them and their images; or inanimate creatures, as sun, moon, and stars, or whatever creature they found beneficial to them, the heathens made idols of them. These *ye turned from:* though it was by the power of God and the gospel upon your hearts, yet it was an act of your own. And though it was the worship of these idols you had been trained up in, and wits generally practised, yet you turned from it. And as to the manner of it, *how* ye turned from these idols, as in the text; that is, how readily, how sincerely, how speedily, with a holy indignation of them: or, *πως, how,* that is, by what means; meaning by our entrance amongst you, and the power of our gospel upon your hearts, according to that prophecy, Isa 2:20,21, which refers to gospel times.

*To serve the living and true God;* to serve with religious worship proper to God; though the papists would confine the Greek word δουλευειν to some lower worship they give to saints or angels; or it may signify the whole service of God. And here the apostle speaks of their religion in the positive part, the former being negative. *The living God,* so called in opposition to idols, which were either images without life, or inanimate creatures, or men that were dead whom they worshipped; or *living,* because God is so eminently, being life essentially, originally, eternally, immutably, and derivatively to all things that live. *As I live, saith the Lord,* as if none had life but himself, Isa 49:18, &c. And called the *true God* in opposition to false gods. The heathen gods had no deity but what men gave them by worshipping them. They were not gods by nature, Ga 4:8, and so not true. And as these things are spoken to show the power of the gospel, so in a way of commendation, that they did not only turn from idols, but did serve the true God; many profess the true God, but serve him

not. As also they denote their privilege, that they served a God that could save them, which their idols could not.

### 1 Thessalonians 1:10

Ver. 10. *And to wait for his Son from heaven:* this is added to show the further power of the gospel upon them, they had not only faith to God-ward, as was said before, but to Christ-ward. They did not only turn to the true God, in opposition to the heathen, but to the Son of God as the true Christ, in opposition to the unbelieving Jews. For though he was the Son of David after the flesh, yet he was the Son of God also; and not by creation, as the angels are called the sons of God, nor by adoption, as the saints are, but by eternal generation, though the Man Christ Jesus by his personal union is the Son of God. And their faith respecting the Son of God, was their waiting for him from heaven; not that their faith consisted only in this, but it suited their present state of affliction to wait for Christ's coming as a deliverer and rewarder, therefore here mentioned by the apostle; and their faith, hope, love, and patience may all be included in it. They believed that he was gone to heaven, and would come again, which are two great articles of the Christian faith. And though there was nothing in sense or reason, or any tradition, to persuade them of it, yet they believed it upon the apostle's preaching it. And though the time of his coming was unknown to them, yet their faith presently put them upon waiting for it. And the certain time of his coming is kept secret, that the saints in every age may wait for it. Though he will not come till the end of the world, yet the saints ought to be influenced with the expectation of it in all generations that do precede it. It is to their advantage to wait for it, though they live not to see him come. And here the apostle concludes his account of the glorious effects of the gospel upon these Thessalonians; that which follows in the chapter is by way of doctrine concerning the Son of God.

*Whom he raised from the dead:* he mentions his resurrection from the dead after his sonship; for he was there *declared to be the Son of God with power*, Ro 1:4. And: *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, applied to Christ's resurrection, Ac 13:33. Or the apostle mentions it to confirm their hope of his coming again. Had they heard of his death, and not of his rising

again, they could not have expected his coming from heaven. It is used as an argument by Paul to the Athenians, that Christ will come again to judge the world by God's raising him from the dead, Ac 17:31. And these believers also might comfortably expect their own resurrection, seeing that he himself is already risen, at his coming; and so be supported under their present sufferings, though they should reach to the killing of the body.

*Even Jesus:* he that was before called the Son of God, is here called *Jesus*, or Saviour; a name that might more endear him to them, than by calling him the Son of God. And he mentions a great act of his salvation in the next words, and therefore here properly called Saviour; and when he comes, he will come to his people's salvation, Heb 9:28.

*Which delivered us from the wrath to come:* if we read the word as our translation hath it, *delivered*, it looks to what Christ hath already done and suffered for our deliverance. If in the present tense, as the Greek now hath it, it implies a continued act: he is delivering us from the wrath to come, either by his intercession, or by supplies of his grace delivering us from the power of sin and temptations, and so preserving us in a state of salvation. Or if we read the word in the future tense, who will deliver us, as we often find the present tense both in the Hebrew and Greek to have a future signification, it refers to his last coming; and therefore the saints need not be afraid of the terror of that day, but wait for it; for though the wrath to come is greater than ever yet brake forth in the world, Ro 2:5, yet a drop of it shall not fall upon them. Though they may meet with temporal afflictions and chastisements at present, and may be assaulted by the wrath of men, yet they shall be free from the wrath to come. And this will be done by a powerful rescue of Christ, as the word imports,  $\rho\upsilon\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu$ , notwithstanding all the danger and difficulty that may attend it.

## 1 Thessalonians 2:1

### Chapter Summary

1Th 2:1-12 Paul setteth forth in what manner he had preached the gospel to the Thessalonians,

1Th 2:13-16 and they had received and suffered for it.

1Th 2:17,18 He showeth his desire of coming to them, and the cause which had hitherto prevented him,

1Th 2:19,20 testifying his joy and satisfaction in them.

Ver. 1. *For yourselves;* αυτοι, which some read, they themselves, &c.; and then the words refer to the believers in Macedonia and Achaia, mentioned before, 1Th 1:9,10. Or, if we read, ye yourselves, he appeals to their own experience and knowledge.

*Know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain;* κενη, was not vain, or empty, without fruit; our very first preaching had great success. Though the gospel is always either the savour of life unto life, or of death unto death, yet if no good fruit spring from a man's ministry, it may be said to be vain; as the prophet complains: *I have laboured in vain,* Isa 49:4. Or, as some, our preaching was not about things vain and unprofitable.

### 1 Thessalonians 2:2

Ver. 2. Here the apostle begins a new discourse, giving an account more particularly of himself, and of his carriage among them, which he mentions as a subordinate reason why his ministry was so successful; for the evil example of ministers often spoils the success of their ministry. And what he speaks would savour of vain-glory, but that he had therein a holy end; as he excuseth his boasting to the Corinthians and other churches upon the same account. And he first mentions his carriage in the discharge of his ministry among them. A little before his coming to them he had *suffered*, and was *shamefully entreated*, at *Philippi*, where he and Silas were beaten, thrust into an inner prison, and set in the stocks as a couple of villains, Ac 16:23,24; yet this did not damp their spirits, nor discourage their coming and preaching to them.

*We were bold;* επαρρησιασαμεθα, we used great confidence and liberty of speech, we were not afraid to speak the gospel

freely, notwithstanding our sufferings. The same he asserts, 2Co 3:12. And this becomes the gospel, and will be to the advantage of it, and is most commendable in a time of persecution.

*In our God;* depending upon his protection and help, who is our God, and who sent and called us to the work of the gospel, and particularly in Macedonia: and to show he was not bold beyond his call and duty, or the rules of truth and sobriety.

*To speak unto you the gospel of God;* the glad tidings of salvation by Jesus Christ; which gospel, though we have called it ours because preached by us, yet it is *the gospel of God*, as being the original author and ordainer of it.

*With much contention;* with much agony: which is either to be taken actively, for their great earnestness and zeal in speaking, as Lu 13:24; or passively, for the perils they encountered therein, Php 1:30: by both which the Thessalonians might be induced, though not enabled, to believe. As he elsewhere calls the ministry *a warfare*, 1Ti 1:18, and *a fight*, 2Ti 4:7, (the very word used in the text), with respect to the difficulties and dangers attending it, or the opposition of false teachers; they contending for the faith, Jude 1:3.

### 1 Thessalonians 2:3

Ver. 3. *Our exhortation;* whereby he means either the whole gospel he preached, by a synecdoche, or particularly that which is hortatory; what was first taught doctrinally was followed with exhortations to faith and practice. The decrees of the council at Jerusalem are called an exhortation, Ac 15:31; when Paul, and others with him, were desired to preach in the synagogue, the rulers said: *If ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on*, Ac 13:15; but taken more strictly, Ro 12:8, in a distinction from prophecy and teaching.

*Was not of deceit;* this refers either to the doctrine taught by them; it was true, not fallacious, not a devised fable, and did not issue out of any error of judgment; and so the apostle gives a reason why they were so bold in preaching it, because they knew it was all truth. Or to their sincerity in preaching; We did not use any impostures, we designed not to seduce men, as the false



apostles did, but we really sought your conversion and salvation.

*Nor of uncleanness; εζ ακαθαρσιας.* If this refers to the doctrine preached, it denotes the purity of it, which did not tend to gratify the flesh, as that of the Nicolaitanes and Libertines, &c. If we refer it to the manner of their preaching, it denotes the purity of their hearts; they were not acted by any impure lusts in their preaching, as covetousness, pride, or vain-glory. Nor in guile; this seems to be mentioned before, and therefore some expositors refer the two former expressions to the matter that they taught, and this only to the manner, which is most probable. They had no cunning designs upon them, to make merchandise of them, as the false apostles did; but approve their hearts to God, and make themselves manifest to every man's conscience in the sight of God. And the apostle allegeth all this as a further reason of his boldness in preaching, for sincerity breeds boldness; or as some cause also of his great success, for uprightness is usually attended with a blessing; or as an argument to these Thessalonians to continue their affection to him, and to abide in the doctrine preached to them, for suspicion of insincerity in the preacher hinders the efficacy of the word upon the people.

#### 1 Thessalonians 2:4

Ver. 4. *But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel:* this verse gives the reasons of what the apostle spake in the former about his sincerity. The one is taken from his trust; God intrusted him with the gospel, to preserve it from corruption by error, therefore his *exhortation* or doctrine *was not of error or deceit*, but he preached the gospel in simplicity and purity; he did not, he durst not, adulterate or corrupt it, for it was committed to his trust; as he calls the gospel his trust, 1Ti 1:11. And the sense of this great trust kept him also from *uncleanness* and *guile* in the discharge of his ministry. And he had this trust by God's appointment or approbation, God approved of him for this trust, and that upon knowledge and judgment, as the word signifies, *δεδοκιμασμεθα*, and as he speaks, 1Ti 1:12, *he judged me faithful, putting me into the ministry*. Not so before his conversion, being a *persecutor, blasphemer*, &c.; but God fitted him by extraordinary revelations, gifts, graces, and made him faithful, and then put him into the ministry, and intrusted

him with the gospel. And because he speaks in the plural number, *we were allowed of God, &c.*, therefore Silvanus and Timotheus, yea, and other apostles and ministers, are to be understood as comprehended with him in this trust.

*Even so we speak;* that is, as men thus approved of by God, and intrusted with the gospel, that we may faithfully discharge our trust, and be able to give a good account of it, as stewards of their trust, 1Co 4:1,2.

*Not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts:* this is another reason of their faithfulness and integrity, mentioned in the foregoing verse, which was the sense of God's omniscience, knowing and trying their hearts. Trying imports more than mere knowing, it is a knowledge upon search and proof, as gold and silver are known by the touchstone. And though God trieth the hearts of all men, yet especially such as are intrusted with the gospel. Or these last words may have a more immediate reference to the foregoing; we speak not as pleasing men, because we know God trieth our hearts. And this confirms what he said before concerning his exhortation, that it was not of deceit, uncleanness, or guile. If it had, he would have so preached as to please men; the opinions, the lusts, the practices of men. In some cases the apostle did seek to please men, 1Co 10:33, *even as I please all men in all things*. But he pleased not men when it stood in competition with his pleasing God; *we speak, not as pleasing men, but God*. Otherwise the rule takes place with all, Ro 15:2: *Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification*. Ministers of the gospel are Christ's servants by office, and, as servants, they are to please their own Master. *If I pleased men,* saith Paul, *I should not be the servant of Christ,* Ga 1:10. And this made the apostle have regard not only to his doctrine and outward conversation, but the inward aim and intentions of his heart, as knowing God tried his heart. And expecting the reward of his labours more from God than men, he therefore sought to please God rather than men, and approve his heart unto him. And herein he reflects upon those false apostles that sought to please men, preached up the law of Moses to please the Jews; or others, that preached and abused the doctrine of the gospel to gratify the lusts of men.

## 1 Thessalonians 2:5

Ver. 5. In the forlner verses the apostle had asserted his integrity more generally; here, and in the next verse, he instanceth in particulars. He vindicates his ministry from the guilt of three vices which too often attend it; flattery, covetousness, and vain-glory.

*For neither at any time used we flattering words:* first, flattery, εν λογω κολακειας; or, we were not, i.e. conversant, in a word of flattery, as in the Greek; our word was not a word of flattery, as if we sought to please men. When we ascribe to men good things that they have not, or above what they have, or when we applaud or extenuate the evil that is in them, we flatter them. This is reprov'd often in the false prophets of the Old Testament, Isa 30:10 Eze 13:10,18; and in the false teachers in the New. The flattery of ministers is, their preaching of smooth things, rather to please than profit; when they avoid just reproofs, and searching truths, and close applications, that they may not displease; and affect wisdom of words, and rhetorical discourses, that they may please: when they either conceal some part of truth, or pervert it, that people may think their doings better than they are, or their state better than it is.

*As ye know:* their words in preaching being an overt act, they themselves could judge of, and therefore the apostle doth appeal to their own knowledge in that.

*Nor a cloak of covetousness, God is witness:* in what they could not know, which was their inward aims and designs, he appeals to God, which is a form of swearing; and in all oaths men solemnly do concern God therein; the same in effect that is called protesting, 1Co 15:31. And that wherein he thus appeals is, that he had no covetous design in his ministry, which he calls *a cloak of covetousness*; which lies either in undue withholding what we have, or inordinate desire of more. The latter is here meant, as the Greek word imports. And the word *cloak* is a metaphor as the word is translated here, and Joh 15:22: as that covers the inner garments, so when bad designs are covered with specious pretexts, this we call a cloak. The word in the text, εν προθασει πλεονεξιας, is often used, Mt 23:14 Mr 12:40 Lu 20:47, and sometimes rendered *occasion*, but for the most part *pretence*, and so to be understood here; and in heathen authors

sometimes used for accusation. And this is contrary to what is said of false prophets, 2Pe 2:3: *Through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you.*

### 1 Thessalonians 2:6

Ver. 6. *Nor of men sought we glory*: this is the third vice he vindicates his ministry from. The word *glory* first signifies some excellency in any subject; secondly, this excellency as displaying and manifesting itself; thirdly, the opinion and esteem thereof in the minds of men, as the Greek word imports, and so taken in the text: we did not seek men's honour, high esteem, or applause; we sought them not in the inward bent of our thoughts, or the studies of our mind, nor in the outward course of our ministry and conversation, to form them so as to gain glory from men. Though honour and esteem was their due from men, yet they did not seek it. Honour is to follow men, men not to follow it. This Christ reprov'd in the scribes and Pharisees, that in their prayers, alms. fasting, affected habits, and titles, they sought the praise of men, Mt 6:1-34. *How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?* Joh 5:44. Every man ought, with reference to actions honourable and praiseworthy, and a good name is a blessing; but to seek honour, that is the evil. And as the apostle did not seek it himself, so he forbids it to others, Ga 5:26: *Let us not be desirous of vain-glory, &c.*; and notes some false teachers as guilty of it, 2Co 10:12. It is a vice directly opposite to humility, unbecoming a man as man, and highly dishonourable to God, and contrary to the gospel. The heathens cherished it as the spur to great achievements, it is one of Tully's rules for the institution of princes; but the Christian religion, that gives all glory to God, condemns it. And yet we may seek the vindication of our name, when thereby we may provide for the honour of the name of God, as the apostle Paul often did.

*Neither of you, nor yet of others*; he adds this to show that this was their general practice among others as well as these Thessalonians; they were not guilty of flattery, covetous designs, or seeking the glory of men among any churches, or in any place; their practice in their ministry was uniform, and in all places upright and sincere.

*When we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ;* or, we were able to be in, or for, a burden, a Hebraism. By burden some understand authority: q.d. We might have used our ministerial authority more than we did, whereby to get greater honour and respect to our persons among you. And indeed all authority and honour have their weight and burden. Others by *burden* understand maintenance. And then he means, we might have been chargeable to you, according to the power given by Christ to his apostles to reap carnal things from them to whom they sowed spiritual things. And at the first sending them forth in Judea, it was so ordained by Christ, that they should be maintained at the people's charge: see 1Co 9:1-27. But they were so far from covetousness, that they took not all that was their due, and what they might of their outward substance, and from seeking their own honour, that they did not use what authority they might to procure it among them; for they laboured with their hands night and day, that they might not be chargeable, 1Th 2:9; though they might have challenged not only maintenance, but honourable maintenance, 1Ti 5:17.

### 1 Thessalonians 2:7

Ver. 7. *But we were gentle among you:* he next gives account of their carriage more positively: and first he speaks of their gentleness among them; ηπιτοι, the Latin takes it for νηπιτοι, infants, we were as infants to you, as nurses are as infants with their infants, and children with children. This is one of the fruits of the Spirit, Ga 5:22; it stands opposite to moroseness, austerity, and roughness of temper, and is commendable in all, especially in ministers, 2Ti 2:24; and was eminent in Christ, as was prophesied of him, Isa 40:11 42:3; and the contrary he reproveth in James and John, Lu 9:54,55. It springs from humility, meekness, and patience; as the contraries are pride, passion, and frowardness. In some cases sharpness and severity may be needful; prudence is to direct, therefore, our carriage. The apostle had now to do with young converts, and under the trial of persecution; and not apostates and obstinate sinners, against whom we find he was sometimes severe and sharp, as Jude required, Jude 1:22,23.

*Even as a nurse cherisheth her children;* and he represents this gentleness by that of a nurse to her children; not of a hired nurse,

but a mother nurse, Nu 11:12, who useth all tenderness towards them, beareth with their frowardness, condescends to the meanest offices and employments, and draws out her breasts to them, and lays them in her bosom, and all this to cherish them. And she doth this not out of hope of gain, but out of motherly affection. Thus, saith the apostle, were we gentle among you. As he converted them to Christ, he was their spiritual father, but his gentleness was like that of a mother, nursing her own children. He considered their weakness in their first believing, and bore with it; their many infirmities, temptations, afflictions that were upon them, had compassion over them, and supported them under them, and cherished them with the sincere milk of gospel truths; and he did all this not for gain, but out of sincere affection and a willing mind. Some extend the word we render *nurse* to the brute creatures themselves, especially birds, that hatch, and then cherish their young with the warmth of their own body, and care in feeding them: τροφος, the word signifies a feeder, and so may have a more general signification: see Job 39:14.

### 1 Thessalonians 2:8

Ver. 8. A further account of their behaviour among them. The former verse showed their great gentleness, this their great love; expressed, first: In their affectionate desire of them; as the Latin phrase, *cupidissimus fui*, imports love to the person. And it was the desire of their salvation, first in their believing, and then perseverance and progress in faith. It was themselves, not their goods, they desired; as Paul elsewhere saith: *We seek not yours, but you*. Secondly, In the effect of it, which was imparting the gospel to them, whereby they might be saved; which is amplified by two things:

1. That they did this willingly, not out of mere necessity, with a backward mind; the word is εὐδοκοῦμεν, we were well pleased to preach, and with complacency of mind.
2. That they were willing to impart their souls to them; that is, to hazard their lives for them in preaching to them, as Ac 16:1-40; the same word signifying both the soul and life, and he that dies for another gives his life to them. Or, it may refer to their labours and hardships, whereby they endangered their lives for them, *labouring night and day*, 1Th 2:9. Others

understand the words only as an expression of their great affection to them; a man imparts his soul to the person whom he entirely loves, as Isa 58:10; when a man gives relief to a person in want out of love and compassion, he imparts his soul in what he gives. So did they in the gospel thus preached. And the word imparting is used to express relief to the wants of the body, Ro 12:8; and the gospel is the bread of life to give relief to the soul, and used in this sense also, Ro 1:11. The apostle may here further allude to mothers that are nurses, who impart not only other food, but their milk, which is their blood, to cherish their children.

*Ye were dear unto us;* or, ye have been beloved of us; wherein the apostle more plainly declares their love to them as the ground of all their labours and perils in preaching to them; yea, it may reach to all that he had said before concerning their carriage among them, all was from love.

### 1 Thessalonians 2:9

Ver. 9. To make good what he had asserted before about their integrity in preaching the gospel, that it was without covetousness, and vain-glory, &c., and about their great affection to them therein, he appeals to their own memory.

*Our labour and travail:* *labour*, in what we suffered, attended with care and solicitude of mind, as the word imports; and *travail*, in what we did, attended with weariness, as some distinguish of the words.

*For labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you;* this refers to some bodily labour they used, which I find not mentioned in the story while they were at Thessalonica, though Paul did practise it at Corinth, Ac 18:3. To prevent scandal and misconstruction that may arise from receiving maintenance, and in case of the church's poverty, the apostle would refuse it; but without respect to these he pleaded it at his due, 1Co 9:1, &c. And his refusing was no work of supererogation, as the papists plead hence; for in such cases it was a duty with respect to the honour of his ministry; so that it ought not to pass into a rule, either that ministers in no case may labour with their hands to get their bread, or that they ought so to

do always, as some would conclude hence, and preach freely. However, he commends them that they forgot not the labour and travail they underwent for their sake, and that both *night and day*, which implies assiduity and diligence, as 1Th 3:10 Ps 1:2 Lu 2:37; and so to be taken here. Though it may signify their spending part of the night as well as the day in some bodily labour, (the same we read 2Th 3:8), yet not to be understood as if they spent the whole night and day therein; for how then could they have preached the gospel to them, as he here addeth; and they would take nothing of maintenance from *any* of them, or be chargeable or burdensome to them; not from the poor, to whom it might really be a burden, nor from the rich, who yet might be backward, and account it a burden.

### 1 Thessalonians 2:10

Ver. 10. The former verses gave account of their carriage in the ministry, this here of their Christian conversation; *holily*, with respect to God; *justly*, with respect to duties commanded towards men; and *unblamably*, in denying themselves in lawful liberty to avoid all occasion of blame from any of them. And for the truth of this he appeals to themselves; yea, to God himself. There is the witness of men, and the witness of conscience greater than of men, and the witness of God greatest of all, 1Jo 3:20. He appeals to them as witnesses about their external actions, and to God about the integrity of their hearts; and he doth this not in a way of boasting, but to be an example to them, and as a further reason of the great success of his ministry. The conversation of ministers hath great influence upon the success of their labours.

### 1 Thessalonians 2:11

Ver. 11. Besides his public ministry, he dealt more privately with them, as Ac 20:20; and that in a way of exhortation and comfort; by exhortation to quicken them, and by comfort to support them under troubles both outward and inward. And he did this as a father to his children, with much earnestness, compassion, and love, yea, and authority also. He was before represented as a mother, 1Th 2:7; and here as a father, whose work and duty is to exhort, counsel, and comfort his children privately at home; so



did he as well as publicly, for he was their spiritual father, as he begat them to Christ by the gospel, as he tells the Corinthians also, 1Co 4:15. As before he represented his gentleness, so here his fatherly care. Or, at their first conversion he carried it with gentleness as a mother, but afterwards used his fatherly authority. And in this he appeals to their own knowledge also, calling their own consciences to bear witness to what he speaks, that it might leave the greater impression upon them.

### 1 Thessalonians 2:12

Ver. 12. In the Greek text the word *charged*, mentioned in the former verse, begins this verse; μαρτυρομενοι, it signifies testifying: some read it, we obtested, which is as much as beseeching; others, contested, which is a severe charge, containing a threatening, as Ex 19:21: *Charge the people*, saith God to Moses; in the margin: Contest the people, or wish the people. It is a charge here which the apostle gives solemnly in the name of God to them, calling in the witness of God to it.

*That ye would walk worthy of God;* that is, suitably to the nature of that God who is the true and living God. That you may walk like a people who belong to such a God, and express the virtues of this God in your conversation, 1Pe 2:9; or, suitably to the great mercy and glorious privileges you have received from him, which he mentions in the following words.

*Who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory;* or, who is calling you; then by God's kingdom and glory we must understand the future state of heaven: though they were not yet possessed of it, yet by the gospel God had called them to it, as Php 3:14 1Pe 5:10. Or, *who hath called you*, as we read it; then he means their present state since they believed and obeyed the call of the gospel, they were brought thereby into God's kingdom and glory; or, his glorious kingdom, wherein the glory of God, especially the glory of his grace, mercy, love, and wisdom, eminently shine forth. Hereupon a Christian's calling is termed a *high calling*, Php 3:14; a *heavenly calling*, Heb 3:1. And they being called by God out of Satan's kingdom into this glorious kingdom, the apostle chargeth them to walk worthy of God and this calling, by having a conversation suitable thereunto, Eph 4:1 Col 1:10; to walk according to the laws of

this glorious kingdom they were already brought into, and suitably to the glory of heaven that they were called to the hope of.

### 1 Thessalonians 2:13

Ver. 13. The apostle having given the reasons on his part and his fellow ministers', why the gospel had such effect upon them, he next proceeds to show the reason on their part, for which he giveth God thanks. And that is, from their manner of receiving it; though this, as well as the former, are but subordinate reasons.

1. They *heard* it; some will not do that; and therefore the apostle here calls it a word of hearing, a Hebraism, as Ro 10:17: *Faith cometh by hearing*.
2. They *received* it: the word importeth a receiving with affection, as Joseph the virgin Mary to his wife, Mt 1:20.
3. They *received it not as the word of men*, which we receive sometimes doubting, sometimes disputing it; or believing it only with a human faith, upon grounds of reason, as the dictates of philosophy, or on the reports of men, and without the impression of the authority of God upon our minds; or when we receive the word of God because of the eloquence or learning of the preacher, and the affection we bear to him, or admiration of his person; or, as the papists, we believe it because the church believeth it.

*But as it is in truth, the word of God;* with a divine faith, ready subjection of our souls to it, and with reverent attention, as a word that is from heaven; which the apostle positively asserts in way of parenthesis.

*As it is in truth,* or truly, they believed, so he dispersed the word to them, and so they received it. And for this cause he gave thanks to God. Having mentioned before the subordinate reasons of the efficacy of the word, he now mentions the principal, which is God himself. That any receive the word as the word of God, it is not from the preachers so much as from God. And it is a great cause of thanksgiving to God, when ministers find a people receive the word with a Divine faith, which is not done

without Divine grace: then they see the fruit of their ministry, for which they ought to give thanks. Which effectually worketh also in you that believe: the powerful working of God is usually expressed by this word, Eph 1:19 Php 2:13; and the working of Satan also, Eph 2:2. Men possessed with the devil are called *energumeni*. And where the word is believed and received as the word of God, there it hath this energy, or worketh effectually, so as to promote love, repentance, self-denial, mortification, comfort, and peace, &c. The apostle had mentioned before their *work of faith, labour of love, patience of hope*, 1Th 1:3; and all from hence, their receiving the word as the word of God, and so retaining it.

### 1 Thessalonians 2:14

Ver. 14. This proves the assertion of the foregoing verse, as the illative *for* doth show. They were *followers of the churches in Judea*, which showed the word wrought in them effectually. Though the greatest part of the Jews believed not, yet many did, and hereupon we read of churches in Judea. Though there was before but one national church, yet now in gospel times the churches were many. And believing in Christ they are called churches *in* him, gathered together in his name, into his institutions, and by his Spirit; and these Thessalonians became *followers* or imitators of them, or in the same circumstances with them. The churches among the Jews were the first planted, and the Gentile churches followed them, conforming to the faith, worship, and order that was first in them, yea, and imitating their faith and patience in suffering.

*For ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen;* the Jews that believed suffered from the unbelieving Jews of their own country; so did these Thessalonians. But whether the apostle means only the Gentiles of Thessalonica, or the Jews that dwelt there and were born among them, is uncertain; for the persecution mentioned Ac 17:1-34, was chiefly from the Jewish synagogue, though the Gentiles might also join with them therein.

*Even as they have of the Jews:* they suffered *as* the churches of Judea, namely, in the same kind, as Heb 10:32-34; and in the same cause, and with the same joy, constancy, and courage. And

here Christ's words are fulfilled, that a man's enemies shall be those of his own house, Mt 10:36.

### 1 Thessalonians 2:15

Ver. 15. *Who both killed the Lord Jesus;* no wonder then though they have persecuted you, and the believing Jews their countrymen. They killed the Lord Jesus by the hands of Pilate, crying: *Crucify him, crucify him.* Though it was by God's determinate counsel, and the Roman power, yet by the Jews' malice they killed him; Mt 21:38: *This is the heir; let us kill him.*

*And their own prophets;* of their own nation, and directed and sent particularly to them of God; so that it was no new thing in them thus to do. Not that these individual Jews who persecuted Paul killed the prophets, but they were of the same nation, the same blood, and of the same spirit with them, and were *the children of them, that killed the prophets,* as our Saviour charged them, Mt 23:31. The spirit of persecution was natural to them, it descended from one generation to another; their kings were guilty of it, their priests, their false prophets, and the common people. And though better things might be expected of the Jews than any other people, yet thus they did. And it was not only because of the new doctrine or worship that the apostle preached, for they killed their own prophets before them; but it was their love to their lusts, hatred of reproof, enmity to holiness, &c., that was the cause. And Christ himself chargeth them with the same things, Mt 23:37: *O Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, &c.;* and foretells it as that which they would yet practise, Mt 23:34.

*And they please not God;* by the figure called meiosis; it is meant they highly displeased God, and were haters of God, and hated, and now rejected, of him. Though they had the advantages and reasons to please God above all other people, having had the law and ordinances of his worship among them, yet they pleased not God, and particularly in their persecutions of the gospel and the apostles, though they might think that therein they did God good service, as Joh 16:2.

*And are contrary to all men;* contrary in their worship, laws, and customs. Or rather, *contrary to all men,* in hindering the course

of the gospel appointed for men's salvation. And despising all other nations in comparison of themselves, they were apt to be seditious, and raise tumults every where, and to disdain familiarity and common friendship with the Gentiles.

### 1 Thessalonians 2:16

Ver. 16. *Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved:* their contrariety to all men is expressed particularly in this instance; they forbade the apostles to preach to the Gentiles, which were the greater number of men; though they opposed also their preaching to the Jewish nation: for the Jews could not endure to hear that the Gentiles should be received into the church, or into special favour with God; as appears by Christ's sermon in the synagogue, Lu 4:28, and in the apostle's apology for himself at Jerusalem, Ac 22:21,22. And their forbidding them implies, not an act of authority, for they had it not, but their hindering them what they could, and stirring up the people and rulers against them, as Ac 17:6.

*To fill up their sins alway;* to cause it to rise up to such a measure and degree as will at last bring destruction. Though this was not their intention, yet through the just judgment of God it was the event. They killed the prophets; but killing Christ, and persecuting the apostles, and hindering the salvation of mankind thereby, this filled up their sin. The expression alludes to what is said of the Amorites, Ge 15:16, and foretold by Daniel, Da 9:27, called *the consummation*. As here is a perfecting of holiness, and filling up of grace, so also of sin. And sin against the gospel ripens sin more than against the law. And because they made a constant progress in sin, they are said to fill it up; *Fill ye up the measure of your fathers*, Mt 23:32.

*For the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost:* first they filled up their sin, and then comes this wrath, or that wrath foretold by Daniel, Da 9:27; and by our Saviour, Mt 23:38. It was their last destruction by the Romans. God's wrath broke forth upon them several times before, but not to the utmost till now. Or, to the end, as in the Greek. In former punishments God removed his wrath and restored them again, but this continues to the end. Or, some, by the end, understand only the perfection and consummation of this wrath. And its coming may be read in the

Greek, it hath prevented them; as bringing them to judgment beforehand in this world; as the destruction of the old world, Sodom, and Jerusalem, were figures and forerunners of the last judgment. And yet this doth not contradict what the apostle speaks, Ro 11:1-36, and many of the prophets, concerning their calling into the faith and church of Christ before the end of the world. Also we must understand it with an exception of the remnant of God's election that was amongst them.

### 1 Thessalonians 2:17

Ver. 17. The apostle here makes his apology, for his so soon departing from them, and his continued absence. They were under great sufferings for receiving the gospel he had preached, and for him therefore to leave them so soon as he did, (as appears in the story, Ac 17:1-34), and not presently to return, might discourage their hearts and make them question his love.

1. For his leaving them, he tells them it was not voluntary, but forced by the persecution of the Jews, he being sent away in the night by the brethren to Berea, Ac 17:10; and therefore he calls it a taking away, rather than a going away from them. And (as the Greek word imports) it was:
2. A thing grievous to him, as children that are bereft of father and mother, and left orphans, are greatly troubled. And he was afflicted as a father bereft of children; so were these Thessalonians to him, having begotten them to Christ by the gospel.
3. It was but *for a short time*, for the time of an hour; when he left them, he intended but a short stay from them, only to avoid the present storm: others think he means by the words his sudden leaving them before he took solemn leave of them.
4. He left them *in presence, quoad faciem*, as to outward sight, not in heart: the proper genius of true lovers, who are present with each other in soul when separated in body.
5. He tells them of his endeavours to see their face; and that the more abundantly, because he came away so suddenly from them. And lastly, he did this with great desire, his endeavours

herein were acted with great affection.

### 1 Thessalonians 2:18

Ver. 18. This he adds further to satisfy them of his real affection to them, that he attempted to come to them *once and again*, that is, often, as Ne 13:20 Php 4:16. And that they might be assured it was not his fellow ministers' desire only to come, therefore he expresseth his own name particularly in a parenthesis (*even I Paul*). Or by his saying, *even I Paul*, he assures them concerning his own desire to come to them; at least I Paul, though others did not so; as the French Bible reads it. And he had come to them had not *Satan hindered* him, either by raising up disputes against the gospel at Athens by the philosophers there, which he was concerned to stay and answer, Ac 17:18; or else by stirring up wicked men to lie in wait for him in the way: or by raising tumults, as the Jews did at Berea, whereby he was constrained *to go as it were to the sea*, Ac 17:14; or by sowing dissensions in other churches, which detained him to end them. Or by what way it was, is somewhat uncertain; but being thus hindered it made his desire the more fervent by the opposition. And hereby we see Satan's enmity to the gospel, especially to churches newly planted, that they might not take rooting.

### 1 Thessalonians 2:19

Ver. 19. Here the apostle gives the reason of his desire to see them. He first calls them his *hope*; that is, the master of his hope, that among others they should be saved in the day of Christ. Secondly, his *joy*: he at present rejoiced in their ready and sincere receiving the gospel preached by him. Thirdly, his *crown of rejoicing*, which signifies the triumph and height of joy: and seeing he mentions the *presence* and *coming of Jesus Christ*, he looks to the crown that he should receive at that day, which he speaks of, 1Co 9:25; and these Thessalonians, among others, would help to make up this crown of rejoicing to him. And in the words we may observe an eminent gradation, as also that the crown of ministers will arise not only from Christ, but from their people also.

## 1 Thessalonians 2:20

Ver. 20. He redoubles the expression, to show his great affection, and complacency of heart in them; or to show that they more than others were this occasion of rejoicing to him. And he mentions *glory* as well as *joy*, for the great success of his ministry among them would redound to his glory in the day of Christ; as Da 12:3: *They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.* Or, they were his glory at present, a glory to his ministry, and a seal to his apostleship.

## 1 Thessalonians 3:1

### Chapter Summary

1Th 3:1-5 The apostle showeth that out of his great care for the Thessalonians he had sent Timothy to comfort and strengthen them in the faith,

1Th 3:6-8 whose good report of them had been a great consolation to him in his distresses.

1Th 3:8-10 He testifieth his thankfulness to God, and earnest desire to see them,

1Th 3:11-13 praying God to guide him to them, and for their increase in love and holiness unto the end.

Ver. 1. The apostle proceeds upon the same argument to confirm his love to them, and care of them, that they might not doubt of it because of his long absence from them. Therefore he tells them, that though he could not come himself, yet he sent Timothy to them from Athens; which we find not mentioned in the Acts by Luke: and his love herein is commended the more:

1. Because he sent him out of a strong impulse of affection, he could not *forbear* any *longer*, or bear, it was a heavy burden to him till he had done it, as the word imports.
2. He was content *to be left at Athens alone* by parting with Timothy, though his company was so desirable and useful to him at that time. And he was well pleased so to do for their sakes; εὐδοκῆσαμεν, he had a complacency of mind in so



doing, so much he preferred their good before his own contentment.

(To see numbers 3 and 4: See Poole on "1Th 3:2".)

### 1 Thessalonians 3:2

Ver. 2. (To see numbers 1 and 2: See Poole on "1Th 3:1".)

3. By the description he gives of him in the text: a man dear to him, and as his right hand in the service of the gospel. And his care of them is commended the more by sending so eminent a person to them.
4. From his end in sending him; which was *to establish them*, that through the fear of suffering, or any temptations, they might not forsake the faith they had received; *and to comfort them concerning their faith*: the word sometimes signifies to exhort, and the sense is good if we so read it; but because the faith they had embraced presented much matter of comfort to them, therefore our translation; well renders the word.

### 1 Thessalonians 3:3

Ver. 3. The apostle had mentioned before his great afflictions, and they knew well what he himself had suffered both at Thessalonica and Berea, Ac 17:1-34, and therefore might fear they might hereupon be shaken in their faith. And Timothy therefore was sent to comfort and establish them: God could do this without him, but the ministry is his ordinance he works by. And when he saith, *that no man should be moved*, it shows what is a Christian's duty, to be unmoved by sufferings for the gospel. The word here used by the apostle answers another word, used 2Th 2:2, which alludes to the waves of the sea shaken by the winds. Fears, and doubts, or hesitations of mind, do move and shake it, which the apostle sent Timothy to prevent, or remove. And besides, he addeth an argument of his own to confirm them, when he tells them, *ye know that we are appointed thereunto*. The word is used Lu 2:34 1Ti 1:9. But he means, we suffer afflictions according to the purpose and intention of God; they come not by chance, or merely from men's wrath and enmity,

but from the appointment of God. And whether the apostle speaks only of his own sufferings, and other ministers of the gospel, or of all saints in general, as Ac 14:22 Ro 8:17,36 2Ti 3:12, is uncertain; we may well understand it of both; so that he would not have these Thessalonians think it strange, as if some strange thing happened to them, 1Pe 4:12, whereby to be shaken in their minds.

### 1 Thessalonians 3:4

Ver. 4. The apostle having said that they knew they were appointed to sufferings, tells them here they knew it because he had told them of it. Paul, by some extraordinary instinct or revelation, often foresaw his sufferings, and God more generally told him of them at his first conversion, Ac 9:16; and he told them of them that they might reckon upon sufferings. A faithful minister will not only tell the people of the crown, but of the cross of Christ. And what he foretold of his sufferings, he tells them *came to pass*; whereby they might be strengthened further in their faith about the gospel he had preached to them, and not be offended at his sufferings, being foretold to them, as well as appointed of God.

### 1 Thessalonians 3:5

Ver. 5. The apostle here gives a further account of the reason why he sent Timothy to them, which was *to know* their *faith*, whether it continued stedfast under all their sufferings and temptations. He feared Satan, whom he calls *the tempter*, might have some way or other *tempted* them, either by false teachers to seduce them, or by sufferings to affright them. He was more concerned about the inward state of their souls, than their outward condition; and commonly temptations go along with persecutions. And the apostle, having bestowed great *labour* upon them, feared lest it might *be in vain*, that the tempter had prevailed. Satan's first work is to keep men from believing, his next is to destroy their faith: young converts are commonly most assaulted. Paul's heart was therefore very solicitous for them, so that (as he said before) he could not any longer forbear sending to know how it was with them.

### 1 Thessalonians 3:6

Ver. 6. We had before an account of Timothy's sending, now of his return, wherein we have the message he brought, and the effect thereof upon the apostle. The message may be considered:

1. As to its new coming:

*But now when Timotheus came, &c.;* so that this Epistle seems to be written presently upon his return.

2. As to the good account it brought of them: it *brought good tidings* (the same word is here used that expresseth in the Greek the glad tidings of the gospel) *of their faith*, that it continued still stedfast; and of their *charity*, or love, that they had love joined with their faith, and their faith working by love, which showed it was living, and of a right kind.

*And that ye have good remembrance of us always;* they forgot him not, though absent some length of time from them; and it was a *good remembrance*, joined with love and esteem of his person, and of his ministry amongst them; and it was *always*, which implies the constancy of it.

*Desiring greatly to see us;* and not satisfied with this good remembrance of him being absent, they greatly desired his presence, to see him and his fellow labourers. And to answer their love on his part, he addeth, *as we also to see you.* By all which he seeks to satisfy them of his continued care and remembrance of them, which was the effect of this message.

### 1 Thessalonians 3:7

Ver. 7. He was *comforted by this faith* of theirs *in all* his own *affliction and distress.* The faithfulness and constancy of a people is the great comfort of their teachers. *I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth, 3Jo 1:4.*

### 1 Thessalonians 3:8

Ver. 8. The comfort of their faith was so great that it would be as life to him, if they stood fast in it; which he calls a standing *fast in the Lord*. Life is not only the union of soul and body; comfort is the life of the soul, especially that which springs from Divine causes. And on the contrary, the apostacy and degeneracy of a people doth kill the hearts of their faithful teachers.

### 1 Thessalonians 3:9

Ver. 9. This is another effect of the message Timothy brought, it caused in the apostle great thanksgivings to God. First he rejoiced in their faith, and then gives thanks to God for that joy. The matter of his rejoicing was their faith, but the author and upholder of this faith was God; and in giving thanks to God for his joy, he gives thanks also to God for their faith from whence it sprang. The joy that ministers have in their people's faith should break forth into thanksgivings. And the apostle's thanks to God was beyond what he could return or express, as appears by the form of his speech:

*For what thanks can we render? &c.; as Ps 116:12: What shall I render unto the Lord? said David. And his rejoicing before God implies both the nature of it, it was divine and spiritual, and his respect to God therein, as David danced before the Lord with all his might, 2Sa 6:14; i.e. with a respect to God's goodness then declared Or the apostle might mean his joy was inward, before God, rather than before men.*

### 1 Thessalonians 3:10

Ver. 10. We have here the last effect of Timothy's message upon the apostle, it put him upon prayer for these Thessalonians; expressed by the assiduity of it, *night and day*, &c., that is, in a constant course; as we noted before, 1Th 2:9. And by the fervency of it, *exceedingly*, or excessively. The Greek word cannot well be Englished, yet is often used by the apostle when he would express any thing with an emphasis, as Eph 3:20, and in this Epistle, 1Th 5:13. And by the matter of it; *that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith*. Though his Epistles might avail towards it, yet his personal presence would do more. There is a peculiar blessing attends oral

preaching, more than reading. The like prayer he made with respect to the Romans, and upon the same account also, Ro 1:10,11. Though the apostle had before commended their faith, yet there was something lacking in it. No faith is made perfect at first; yea, the best faith may have some defects. And the word is used elsewhere to signify something that is wanting, or left behind, 1Co 16:17 Col 1:24. And their faith might be defective:

1. As to the matter of it, some mysteries of faith they might not yet understand; as the disciples did not, till after Christ's ascension; and some of the Corinthians a while doubted the doctrine of the resurrection, 1Co 15:12, &c.
2. As to the clearness of it, with respect to the truths they did already know and believe.
3. As to the lively operations and fruits of it.

The former defects are removed by doctrine, the last by exhortation and comfort, and the apostle desired to see their face on the account of both: and to *perfect* a thing is to make it complete, both as to parts and degrees. The word here used we find often in the New Testament, 2Co 13:11 Ga 6:1, &c.; and variously rendered in the several translations, but yet much to the same sense: the apostle being so suddenly driven from them, he left them as a house half built; but his affection to them was so great, that he longed to return to them for the perfecting of their faith, though he had met but a while before with such great perils at Thessalonica.

### 1 Thessalonians 3:11

Ver. 11. Here his prayer is expressed. The person to whom he prays is God himself, personally considered as God the Father, and relatively, when he styles him *our Father*: so ought believers to address themselves to God, not absolutely, but as to their Father. So Christ taught his disciples to pray: *Our Father*; and so the Spirit of adoption doth prompt the saints to pray: we come to God with greater freedom and confidence when we can come to him as a Father. And he prays also to Christ, whom he styles *our Lord Jesus Christ*. Whence we may have an argument that Christ is God, else he could not be the object of Divine worship:

not that we are to present our prayers distinctly to the Son without considering his union with the Father, nor to the Father distinctly from the Son, but to the Father in and by the Lord Jesus Christ; for so only we can consider him as our Father in prayer. And he speaks of Christ also in his relation to his people: *our Lord Jesus Christ*. And the thing he prays for is, that God would direct his way unto them; that the hinderances of Satan, whatsoever they were, might be removed, and the providence of God open him a way to come to them: the word *direct* signifies in the Greek to make straight, and, 2Th 3:5, is applied to the heart: *The Lord direct your hearts*, &c., which is setting the heart straight towards God; answering to the Hebrew word *Jashar*, which signifies to be upright, and is often used in the Old Testament. The French read it, *address our way*. And hence we learn our duty by the apostle's practice to pray to have our way in all cases directed by God.

### 1 Thessalonians 3:12

Ver. 12. *Increase and abound*; these two words denote an increasing and overflowing abundance. This is another thing he prays for; the former respected himself, this respected them. He desired to come to them to perfect that which was lacking in their faith, and he prays now for the abounding and increase of their love; not only to love one another, but *to increase and abound* in it; to increase the habits and abound in the fruits of love. They were under sore persecutions, and their love to one another was more necessary at such a time. And not only to one another, but to extend their love *towards all men*. Either all men in general; for love is a general duty we owe to all men: *Owe no man any thing but to love one another*, Ro 13:8; and therefore all our duty to men is comprehended under it. And the apostle requires this love to be added to brotherly kindness, 2Pe 1:7; yea, love is required to enemies, Mt 5:44, though not as enemies, yet as men. Or more particularly, believers; as sometimes *all men* is taken under that restriction, Tit 2:11.

*Even as we do toward you*: and he setteth before them his own love to them, both as a pattern and motive hereunto. Though the love of Christ is especially to be looked at, and is proposed often by the apostle Paul as the great argument of love to men, yet he mentions his own love to them here to show the constancy of his

affection to them though absent from them, and to show that he persuaded no duty to them but what he practised himself.

### 1 Thessalonians 3:13

Ver. 13. These words some refer only to the verse immediately preceding: by increasing and abounding in love, their hearts would be established *unblamable in holiness*. Which is true, for that holiness is justly to be suspected, at least is to be blamed, which is without love to men. And love itself is a great part of holiness; and who will blame holiness when it shines forth in love? Yea, it will be unblamable before God and men. And when God doth cause a people to increase in love, he doth hereby establish them in holiness that is unblamable; where love is wanting the heart is not established. The hypocrite will fall off in an hour of temptation, because he wants love; and though he may for a while make a fair show before men, yet he is not unblamable before God, who searcheth the heart: neither will he be found so at the appearance of Jesus Christ; which the apostle prays for here with respect to these Thessalonians, that they might be established *in holiness until the coming of Christ*; or that they might be found unblameable in holiness at his coming. Whereby the apostle signifies there is yet another coming of Christ, when there will a strict trial pass upon men, and therefore the saints should labour to be then found unblamable, or without spot and blemish, as 2Pe 3:14.

*At the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints;* whereof he gives a particular account in the next chapter. Others carry this verse as referring also to 1Th 3:10, where he desired to see their face to perfect their faith, that both by their faith and love they might be established unblamable in holiness.

### 1 Thessalonians 4:1

#### Chapter Summary

1Th 4:1-8 Paul exhorteth the Thessalonians to proceed in their endeavours to please God by a holy and just conversation.

1Th 4:9,10 He commendeth their love to one

another, entreating them to abound in it,  
1Th 4:11,12 and quietly to follow their  
respective callings.

1Th 4:13-18 And that they might not sorrow for  
the dead, as men without hope, he briefly  
describeth the resurrection of the just, and  
Christ's second coming.

Ver. 1. He descends to some particular duties about their  
walking, which he ushers in by a general exhortation in this first  
verse; wherein we may observe his style: he calls them *brethren*,  
and speaks to them with much condescension and earnestness,  
and in the name of Christ, &c. And the subject he insists on is  
their walking, the course of their life and conversation, which he  
describes by the rule of it, *as ye have received of us how ye  
ought to walk*; he refers them to the directions he had given  
them about it as the rule; for he did in his ministry not only open  
gospel mysteries, but explain moral duties. And not only to walk  
in them, but to *abound more and more*, to press forward to a  
greater exactness and excellency in their Christian conversation.  
And he here useth motives:

1. From the Person in whose name he speaks to them, which is  
*the Lord Jesus Christ*; for he was but Christ's minister and  
ambassador.
2. From the knowledge they had received of their duty, and  
therefore they could not plead ignorance.
3. Their walking as they had been instructed by him would  
*please God*.

### 1 Thessalonians 4:2

Ver. 2. This explains what he said before; what they had  
received of him about their walking he here calls  
*commandments*, not so much his own as the Lord's, as the word  
itself imports here used, and is expressed in the text.

*By the Lord Jesus*: though the apostle had authority, yet it was  
but derivative from Christ; and therefore not to walk as the



apostle had commanded would be disobedience to Christ himself. And he minds them of what they knew, that their knowledge might be exemplified in practice; for as faith, so knowledge, is dead which doth not influence the life; and they knew that he commanded them not in his own name, but in the name of Christ.

### 1 Thessalonians 4:3

Ver. 3. What in the former verse he called commandments from Christ, he here calls *the will of God*; or he had some further duties to lay before them, which he had not yet given commandments about, which were the will of God. There is the secret and revealed will of God, and his revealed will is about things to be believed or practised. The latter is here meant, so that the will of God is put figuratively here for the things he willeth, or commandeth of us. And that which the apostle first mentions is *sanctification*, which is often taken for holiness in general, which consists in men's conformity to the will of God both in the heart and life. But I think not so taken here, but for chastity, as opposite to the sin of uncleanness, as the apostle explains it in the next words. For to *abstain from fornication* is the will of God. And by it is meant all unchasteness, either of persons married or unmarried; and that either in the heart, or in speech, or in the eye, or lascivious gesture, as well as in the very act itself. It was a sin common among the Gentiles, especially the Grecians, and judged as no sin. And therefore it is particularly mentioned and forbidden to the believing Gentiles by the council of Jerusalem, lest they should apprehend it not to be an evil, Ac 15:20. For it is not so evident by the light of nature as many other moral evils; and therefore the apostle tells the Thessalonians that it is the will of God they should abstain from it, and that is a sufficient ground either of doing or not doing. This will of God is expressed in the seventh commandment, which though the Jews well knew, yet these new converted Gentiles might not yet so well understand. And therefore the apostle in his several Epistles to the Gentile churches doth dehort them from it, especially the Corinthians, 1Co 6:9, and that by many arguments. It is a sin which corrupts and effeminates the mind, captivates the heart, consumes the flesh, and wastes men's estates. So that this will of God that forbids it is a good will, Ro 12:2, as all the commandments of

God are said to be for our good, De 10:13.

#### 1 Thessalonians 4:4

Ver. 4. This is added as a means to prevent that sin. By *vessel* some understand the married wife, who is called *the weaker vessel*, 1Pe 3:7; and her husband is to possess her *in sanctification*, in chastity, as the Greek word may signify here.

*And honour*; for as marriage is honourable to all men, Heb 3:4, so to live chastely in a married estate is honourable also. For by whoredom man gets dishonour, *and his reproach shall not be wiped away*, Pr 6:33. Others by *vessel* understand the body, which is the vessel of the soul; the soul carries it up and down, useth it in the several functions of the vegetative, sensitive, and intellectual life. And so some understand the words of David to the priest, 1Sa 21:5: *The vessels of the young men are holy*, being kept from women; that is, their bodies. Fornication is said above all other sins to be a sin against the body, 1Co 6:18, and he that keeps his body chaste possesseth his vessel, keeps it under government; whereas by fornication we give it to a harlot, and that which is a member of Christ we make it the member of a harlot, 1Co 6:15; and though the words are directed properly to the masculine sex, the word *εκαστον* being masculine, yet under that the female is comprehended. And because the practice of this duty requires care, skill, and much watchfulness against temptations, therefore saith the apostle that every man may know how to possess his vessel in sanctification. To which is added, *and in honour*; for acts of uncleanness dishonour the body; Ro 1:24: *God gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies*, &c. God hath bestowed much curious workmanship upon the body, it is part of Christ's purchase, and, with the soul, is a member of Christ, a temple of the Holy Ghost, in all true saints, all therefore should be possessed with honour. Or it is to be kept to the honour and glory of God, as 1Co 6:20, and to be offered up a holy sacrifice to him, Ro 12:1.

#### 1 Thessalonians 4:5

Ver. 5. Any violence of affection we call passion, whether of

love, or anger, or desire, because the soul is passive, or suffers thereby. The Stoics said passions were not incident to a wise man; and: *They that are Christ's*, saith the apostle, *have crucified the flesh with the passions and lusts*, Ga 5:24. And *lust* is usually taken for all inordinate affection, either with respect to the object or degree; though the Greek word doth signify only desire, and is sometimes taken in a good sense, as Php 1:23; for, there are good lustings as well as evil, as Ga 5:17, *the Spirit lusteth against the flesh*; but here the word is taken in a bad sense, for the lust of uncleanness, which the apostle here calls *the lust of concupiscence*. The philosophers distinguish of the affections or passions of the soul, some are irascible, some concupiscible. The former are conversant about evil, to repel it or fly from it; the latter about good, either real or imaginary, to pursue it or embrace it. And the lusts of concupiscence are either of the mind or of the flesh, Eph 2:3: here we understand the latter, that fleshly concupiscence that is conversant about women, which if by *vessel* in the forlner verse is understood man's lawful wife, then he forbids all unchasteness even towards her; if the body, then he forbids all unchaste usage of the body in any kind, or towards any person whatsoever. And, to avoid fornication, he forbids lust that leads to it.

*Even as the Gentiles which know not God*; which the apostle useth as an argument to them: Though ye are Gentiles by nation as well as others, yet not in state, such as know not God. There is a natural knowledge of God, which the apostle speaks of, Ro 1:21, which the Gentiles had; and supernatural, which is by the Scriptures; to know the mind, will, nature, decrees, and counsels of God as they are there revealed: and the knowledge of God in Christ; this is meant in the text, and this the Gentiles had not, and therefore no wonder though they followed the lust of concupiscence, they wanted the rule of God's word to direct them, and that effectual knowledge of God, and presence of his grace, that would have restrained them from such lust. But these Thessalonians now, since their conversion by the gospel, were come to this knowledge of God, which they had not before, and therefore were not to live as before they did. Knowledge ought to influence our hearts and lives, and to sin against knowledge is the great aggravation of sin, and will make men more inexcusable. But yet where knowledge is wanting what wickedness will not men practise! The Gentiles were *alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in them*,

Eph 4:18. The Jews crucified Christ, and Saul persecuted the disciples, through ignorance, 1Ti 1:13. Much more are those Christians to be condemned, who, having more knowledge than the Gentiles, yet practise worse than they; as the apostle upbraids the Jews upon this account, Ro 2:27.

### 1 Thessalonians 4:6

Ver. 6. This some understand to be another part of sanctification, mentioned before, 1Th 4:3, taking the word *sanctification* in a more general sense. And as before he spake of chastity, so here of commutative justice in commerce and traffic; and the rather because Thessalonica was a city of great trade and merchandise, and it is true that sanctification doth comprehend this righteousness in it, and will restrain men from that which is opposite to it, which, as the apostle speaks, is going beyond and defrauding his brother. To *go beyond*, is that which we call overreaching; when in buying or selling we keep not a just measure, when we observe not a due proportion between the price and the commodity, considering it either in its natural worth, or in such circumstances as make it more or less valuable: or, to take advantage of another's ignorance or necessities, to take unreasonable profit: or, to break covenant with another, answering to the Hebrew word *Gnabhar*, used in this sense, De 17:2: the original word signifies to transgress, or go above the due bounds. And to *defraud* is, when, out of a covetous mind, we exact upon another beyond what is meet. Some refer the former word to injustice by force, and the latter by fraud, 2Co 7:2. And the evil is the greater because done to a *brother*. There is a brother by a common relation, and so all men that partake of human nature are brethren; or by special relation, which is either natural, civil, or spiritual. We may understand the word in all these senses, especially the last, that those that are brethren in Christ and in the faith, should not defraud one another. And when the apostle adds, *in any matter*, the word *any* not being in the Greek, we may better read it, in dealing, or doing; the word is general, and is to be restrained by the subject matter spoken of. There is another sense of the words, agreeable to the former verses, and the verse that follows, and so some understand the apostle as still speaking of chastity; and so here he forbids the invading another's bed, transgressing the bounds of marriage, whereby men go beyond or defraud their brother, usurping the

use of another man's wife, whom he hath no right to. And then *in any matter* we must read, in that matter which he had been speaking of before, or it is a modest expression of the act of adultery. The Hebrew *Bo* is often used in the Old Testament for carnal copulation, and thence the Greek βαινω and υπερβαινω, here used; and the other word, ψλεονεκτειν, denotes excessiveness in it, Eph 4:19. And the reason he adds is: *because the Lord is the avenger of all such. Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord, De 32:35 Ro 12:19. Whether we understand it of fraud, or overreaching in dealings, when man cannot right and relieve himself, the righteous God will avenge the unrighteousness of men; or of the fraud of the marriage bed, which is done in secret, and man cannot avenge himself, Heb 13:4.*

*As we also have forewarned you and testified:* and this the apostle saith he had forewarned them of, and testified. Though the light of nature told the heathen that God was an avenger of wickedness, Ac 28:4, and the heathen could say, Ἰεχει θεος εκδικον ομμα. God hath a revengeful eye; yet the apostle had in his preaching assured it. He had told them of Christ's coming to judge the world, when he would execute vengeance, Jude 1:15; and this they were before ignorant of: and though God sometimes takes vengeance in this world, yet he seems to refer to this last vengeance, because he speaks of it as that which he had forewarned them of, and testified in his ministry, and whereof they had not so clear a testimony in natural conscience.

#### 1 Thessalonians 4:7

Ver. 7,8. These two verses are added, as further arguments to persuade to that chastity he had spoken of, called *sanctification*, 1Th 4:3,4. The first is taken from their Christian calling, which is *not to uncleanness, but to chastity*, called *holiness*. When they were Gentiles in state, they lived in the lust of uncleanness, but they were now called by the power of the gospel, and brought to such a profession that did forbid and condemn it. And the author of their call is *God* himself, though the apostles and other ministers were the instruments. Whence he fetcheth this second argument, 1Th 4:8, that if this chastity he despised, or rejected, as we may read the text, it is not man, but God, that is despised. To despise a minister in a commandment he delivers from God is

to despise God himself, Lu 10:16, &c.; and the apostle doth here intimate, not to obey the commandment of God is a despising God. Or, that the apostle was despised by some because of the outward meanness of his person, or questioning his authority.

*Who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit:* this he adds as a third argument; so that what he had preached to them, was not from himself, but from the Holy Spirit. Or if by *us* he means these Thessalonians also, as some copies read it, he hath given you, &c., then he argues from the gift of the Holy Spirit they had received against living in the sin of uncleanness. This would be very disagreeable, not only to their holy calling, but the Holy Spirit God had given them. Or else these arguments of the apostle are to persuade to universal holiness, taking sanctification and holiness in a larger sense; and uncleanness, for all sin in general standing opposite thereunto. Sin is often spoken of in Scripture under the notion of filth, defilement, pollution, &c., and so was typed forth under the law; and to be cleansed from sin is a cleansing man from filthiness, 2Co 7:1; so that to live in sin, as the apostle argues, is to live in uncleanness, to contradict our holy calling, to despise God, and to walk contrary to the nature and dictates of his Holy Spirit.

#### 1 Thessalonians 4:9

Ver. 9. *But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you:* the apostle proceeds from chastity and justice to speak of brotherly love, which is love upon a spiritual ground; to love the saints as such, with respect to God as a common Father, and so all his children are brethren, 1Th 2:8,9; so Heb 13:1. And he persuadeth the practice of it by a loving and winning insinuation; Sure you are forward enough of yourselves; as he useth the same artifice, Ac 26:27,28 2Co 9:1; wherein the apostle tacitly commends them, and hereby would engage them to answer the commendation, and good opinion he had of them.

*For ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another;* what need I write to teach you that which you have already been taught of God? The saints have this promise, Isa 54:13 Jer 31:34; fulfilled, 1Jo 2:26,27; and this Divine teaching is always efficacious, for none teacheth like God. Not that all teaching of

men is to be laid aside, as some enthusiasts would hence infer, but that the apostle thought he had less need to teach that which God himself had so effectually taught them. Hereby we perceive that God's teaching doth not only enlighten the mind, but reacheth the affections, and especially inclines the heart to love, for God is love; and though they were taught other things of God besides this love, yet he mentions only this as the most proper work of the Spirit of God by the gospel; and though common love of man to man may be found in mere nature.

#### 1 Thessalonians 4:10

Ver. 10. As an evidence of the truth of their love for which he commended them, and that they were taught it of God, he gives a practical instance of it in this verse; else the apostle might have been thought to flatter, or to command a love that was without fruit; and therefore he saith not, ye profess it, but *ye do it*: so 2Co 8:11, *perform the doing of it*.

*Toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia;* which was a large province, wherein were planted many churches. Their love was not guided by interests, opinions, civil relations, or self-respects, but it reached to all that were brethren; and that in some real effect of it, in some work of charity, or liberality, or otherwise, not here mentioned, but we read of it, 2Co 8:1,2.

*But we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;* but, however, their love was not yet perfect, and therefore he beseecheth them to abound more and more; either meant as to the extent of it, not to confine it only to Macedonia, or as to the degree of it, to excel men in it, as the Greek word may be rendered: and the same word the apostle useth, and upon the same account, 2Co 8:7. Neither love, nor any other grace, is made perfect at once; even those that are taught of God, are taught by degrees. And love being a grace so suitable to the gospel, and their present suffering state, he therefore especially exhorts to a progress in it.

#### 1 Thessalonians 4:11

Ver. 11. *And that ye study to be quiet:* he exhorts to quietness,

and yet to be diligent; and probably he might see this needful, either by what he himself had observed amongst them, or by what he had heard of them, as appears by what he writes in his Second Epistle, 2Th 3:10,11. To be quiet is to be of a peaceable temper and carriage, as the Greek word ησυχάζειν importeth both; and stands contrary to strife, contention, division, either upon a civil or religious account. And to *study to be quiet*, because the thing may be difficult, especially in some circumstances of times, places, and persons. And the Greek word φιλοτιμεισθαι implies an ambitious study. Quietness we should pursue with a holy ambition, as that which is honourable to ourselves and our profession, Pr 20:3. The same word is used 2Co 5:9, where it is rendered *we labour*, &c. Study is properly the exercise of the mind, yet it here comprehends any kind of labour. This agrees with what the apostle elsewhere exhorteth to, Heb 12:14: see 1Pe 3:11.

*And to do your own business*: be next commendeth to them diligence, and that in our own business; and this he prescribeth as a good way for quietness, contentions often arising from meddling in the affairs of other men which concern us not; for which he rebukes some in this church, 2Th 3:11. But yet only to seek our own things is a great fault, and lamented by the apostle, Php 2:21. We are to concern ourselves in the affairs of others when called to it, and not otherwise; and then we may reckon them among our own things. A Christian's calling is either general or particular, and what falls not within the compass of one of these, is to be accounted not our own business. And our doing and suffering ought to be kept within the sphere of our calling; for to suffer otherwise, is to suffer as busybodies, which the apostle cautions against, 1Pe 4:15; as a bishop intruding himself into another's office, to which the word there alludes.

*And to work with your own hands*; this condemneth idleness, and living out of a calling; we are not only to keep within our own sphere, but to stretch forth our hands to work. The same precept he gives to the Ephesians, Eph 4:28, not to steal, but to work with their hands, that they may not only *eat their own bread*, 2Th 3:12, but have to give to him that lacketh. Not that there is no other work but that of the hands; the ministers of the gospel are excused from that, 1Co 9:6, but not from work; there is the work of the head, and the tongue, and the foot, and the lungs, as well as of the hands; but either under one species he



comprehends all, or it may be he fitteth his speech to the condition of the people to whom he writes, who generally had such occupations wherein they wrought with their hands, Thessalonica being a great place of trade. And the apostle speaks of the churches of Macedonia as a poor sort of people, 2Co 8:2, and liberal beyond their power; though some among them might be tempted to idleness by the charity of others to them, which, as some conceive, was the occasion of the apostle's thus writing. But if men have estates, and upon that account need not work, yet no man is to be idle: men's time, parts, or other talents are to be employed, and account thereof is to be given, Mt 25:19; and the unprofitable servant is cast into outer darkness, Mt 25:30. Some way or other every man is to work, and may work, for profit to himself and others, unless under some invincible impediment.

*As we commanded you*; he means, when he was with them. He might probably observe some occasion for this commandment. Industry is of good report with all; and by meddling in others' affairs, and unquiet carriage and idleness, they might dishonour their Christian profession among the heathen, which might be the chief reason of this commandment: and the apostle doth not act herein as a civil magistrate, commanding about civil affairs for the public welfare; but as a minister of Christ, with respect to a spiritual end, as appears by what follows.

### 1 Thessalonians 4:12

Ver. 12. He enforceth his commands by a twofold reason, the former is *ab honesto*, the other is *ab utili*. First:

*That ye may walk honestly*, or decently, as the word is rendered, 1Co 14:40.

*Toward them that are without*; that is, Gentiles, infidels, so they are described, 1Co 5:12 Col 4:5; as those that were received into the church of Christ are said to be *within*. The apostle would have them honour the gospel before the heathen in such moral actions which they did approve of, and were able to judge of, not understanding the higher mysteries of faith and gospel holiness; which he calls walking *in wisdom towaards them that are without*, Col 4:5. The other reason is *ab utili*:

*That ye may have lack of nothing;* or, of no man, have no need to beg of any man. It might offend and be a stumblingblock to the Gentiles, to see Christians to beg of any, and especially of themselves, for their necessary relief. Or, of nothing; that you may by your own labour be able to subsist, and not depend upon others, and so not be a burden to friends, or a scandal to strangers. For every man to subsist by his own labour, was the primitive law to Adam, Ge 3:19, commended often by Solomon in his Proverbs, and enjoined by the apostle to believing Christians, 2Th 3:10.

### 1 Thessalonians 4:13

Ver. 13. The apostle now proceeds to a new discourse, about moderating of their sorrow for the dead, not for all, but the dead in Christ. He had either observed their sorrow in this kind excessive, while with them; or else by Timothy, or some other way, he had heard of it. Wherein observe in general, he doth not condemn their sorrow, but the excess of it. Grace destroys not nature, but regulates it; nor reason, but rectifies it; nor takes away the affections, but moderates them; doth not make us Stoics, or stocks. Affections are good when set upon right objects, and kept within due bounds, and this Christianity doth teach, and grace doth effect. And to mourn for the dead, especially the dead in the Lord, is a duty that both nature and grace teach, and God requireth; and the contrary is reprov'd by God himself, Isa 57:1, and to die unlamented is reckoned as a curse, Jer 22:18,19. It is only then immoderate sorrow the apostle here means; and to prevent it, or remove it, gives many instructions and arguments. And he supposeth their ignorance might be a great occasion of it, and so instructs them about the doctrine of the resurrection, and Christ's personal coming again, which by the light of nature, while Gentiles, they knew nothing of, or were very uncertain in. And the apostle, because of his short stay among them, had not had opportunity to instruct them about these things, and therefore doth it here distinctly and fully; as he doth the Corinthians, hearing there were some among them, even of the church itself, that said there was no resurrection, 1Co 15:12. It is such a mystery to reason, that it is hard to believe it; and the most learned of the heathen doubted of it, and some exploded and scoffed at it, as we find, Ac 17:18,

even such as yet held the immortality of the soul. And hereupon in this verse the apostle doth assert two things in general to relieve them against immoderate sorrow.

1. He calls the death of the saints a *sleep*. (see Da 12:2 Lu 8:52 Joh 11:11 1Co 15:20,51), whether referring to those that are already dead, or do die, or that shall afterwards die; and why should they then excessively mourn? After sleep we know there is awaking, and by sleep nature is revived; and so it shall be with the saints in death. Hereupon the grave is called a bed, Isa 57:2; and the burying place, *cemeteryum*, a place of sleep. And:
2. There is hope in their death, as Pr 14:32; there is hope concerning their happy state after death, and hope of their resurrection, and seeing them again at Christ's coming; it is not an eternal farewell. This the apostle here intends. And they will be then seen in a more excellent state, and probably so seen then as that their Christian friends may know them; else the apostle's argument would not have so much strength, and so well suit the present case. The heathen and infidels buried their dead without this hope, as they are said to be without hope, Eph 2:12; and so were excessive in their sorrows, which they expressed by cutting their flesh, making themselves bald, doleful songs, and mourning ejulations, expressed sometimes upon instruments: and which the Jews had learned from them, as appears by God's often reprovng it, and Christ's putting out the minstrels, Mt 9:23,24; and as that which he forbade them, Le 19:28 De 14:1. And the apostle may refer to this in the text, as that which is not only grievous to nature, but dishonourable to a Christian's faith, hope, and profession. We are hereby the betrayers of our faith and hope, and the things we preach will seem false and feigned. *Cypr. de Mortalitate*. And though man is said to die without hope as to a return to his former state of life here, Job 14:7-10; yet not with respect to the life at the resurrection, in them that die in Jesus.

#### 1 Thessalonians 4:14

Ver. 14. As in the former verse the apostle made use of the hope of the resurrection, as an argument against immoderate sorrow,

so here he proves the resurrection by Christ's rising again, &c.

*For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again;* he supposeth they did believe that Christ died and rose again; it was that which he had taught them, and which they had received, as being the two first and fundamental points of the Christian faith, without which they could not have been a church of Christ.

*Question.* But how doth Christ's resurrection prove the resurrection of the saints? He being the eternal Son of God, might have a privilege above all.

*Answer.* This first shows the thing is possible, God hath already done it in Christ.

2. Christ rose for our justification, Ro 4:25; and in justification sin is pardoned which brought in death, and which alone by its guilt can keep under the dominion of death.
3. Christ rose not as a private person, but as the Head of the body, his church, Eph 1:4,20, &c., and so loosed the bands of death, and conquered the grave, for his people.
4. As *the first-fruits*, 1Co 15:20, which was a pledge and assurance of the whole harvest to follow.
5. God hath predestinated the elect, whom he foreknew, *to be conformed to the image of his Son*, Ro 8:29.
6. He is not complete without them, Eph 1:23.

Lastly: They *sleep in Jesus*, as the text speaks; not only live but die in him, Re 14:13, their union remains with Christ even in death.

*Even so them also which sleep in Jesus;* by which words also the apostle distinguisheth believers from all others; it is only they shall have the privilege of this blessed resurrection who sleep in Jesus. And perseverance in Christ to the end is here also intimated.

*Will God bring with him;* and though their resurrection is not expressed in the text, yet it is implied in this saying. By *God* is

meant, as some understand here, the Son of God, who is to come from heaven, 1Th 1:10, and who will bring the spirits of just men, made perfect in heaven, with him, and unite them to their bodies, which cannot be done without their resurrection: whereby the apostle gives another argument against excessive sorrow for the saints departed, they shall return from heaven again with Christ at his coming. Others understand it of God the Father, who will raise the dead, and then bring them to his Son, and bring them with him to heaven. Those that read the text, those that sleep, or die, for Jesus, and so confine it only to martyrs, restrain it to too narrow a sense.

### 1 Thessalonians 4:15

Ver. 15. The apostle here sets down particularly the manner of the Lord's coming, the method and order how all the saints shall then meet with him and with one another, which we find not so distinctly in any other scripture; and whereby he further prosecutes the argument he is upon.

*For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord;* that they might not think that what he speaks was either by some tradition from others, or an invention of his own; and that is ground enough for faith, to which our judgment and reason ought to be captivated.

*That we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep:* that which he saith here about the resurrection, Christ's coming, the ministry of angels, the sound of a trumpet, the voice of Christ at that day, we have it in the evangelists; but the method and order of all the saints meeting together, and meeting the Lord in the air, we find not in any express words before written; the apostle speaks it here by extraordinary revelation, which is the word of the Lord, though not then written. And this order is expressed:

1. Negatively. The saints then living upon earth shall not be with Christ sooner than those that were fallen asleep, and be caught up into the air while the others are in the grave; and the apostle speaks as if he should be one of that number: surely he could not think the coming of Christ should be in the age wherein he lived; he speaks otherwise, 2Th 2:2; or that his life

should be prolonged to that day; for the time of his *departure*, he saith, was *at hand*, 2Ti 4:6. But he looks upon the whole body of saints together, and himself as one of that number, and so speaks, *we which are alive and remain*, &c.; as in 1Co 15:51: *We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed*.

2. Affirmatively. *The dead in Christ shall rise first*, that is, before they that are alive shall be caught up into the air; they shall stay till the rest be risen: as 1Co 15:51: *We shall not all sleep, but be changed, and in a moment*; which the apostle calls *clothed upon*, 2Co 5:2, and which he rather desired than to be *unclothed*, 1Th 4:4: and then they that are dead in Christ shall rise, and be united to these in one visible body.

### 1 Thessalonians 4:16

Ver. 16. *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout*; the means which effect this. The word *shout* in the Greek signifies a command, or word of command; alluding to mariners or soldiers summoned to be ready with their assistance when called upon; and may refer to the angels whom Christ now summons to attend and assist in that day. And the evangelist speaks of the voice of Christ, Joh 5:28, which is there said to raise the dead. Whether this is an oral shout and voice from the mouth of Christ, or only an expression of his Divine power, whereby he shall awaken them that sleep out of their graves, is a question I shall not be curious about.

*With the voice of the archangel*: Christ is said to come with *all the holy angels*, Mt 25:31; and to *send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet*, Mt 24:31. But here is mentioned only the archangel and his voice, instead of all the rest, they all coming under his conduct. Though there be not such distinct orders of angels as the schoolmen affirm, yet there is order among them, as *archangel* implies. And whether he will put forth an audible voice or not at that day, or whether this archangel be not the same with Christ himself, who is *the Head of all principality and power*, Col 2:10, I leave it as doubtful; but, however, it is certain the angels shall be ministering to Christ at that day, especially in the resurrection of the elect, Mt 24:31, and severing the righteous from the wicked, Mt 13:41.

*And with the trump of God; as 1Co 15:52. And whether this is to be taken literally, and distinct from the shout and voice before mentioned, or used only to show forth the Divine power of God that shall gather all the elect together out of their graves, as the trumpet in war gathers the scattered army, or as the silver trumpets under the law assembled the congregation of Israel, I shall not be positive. And this is the account of the saints that are raised.*

### 1 Thessalonians 4:17

Ver. 17. Christ will have a church to the end of the world, and some will be found alive at his coming, and will be *caught up*, or snatched up, to denote its suddenness, it may be in the arms of angels, or by some immediate attractive power of Christ; and it will be *together with them* that are now raised from the dead; they shall all ascend in one great body, and it will be *in the clouds*; as Christ himself ascended in a cloud, Ac 1:9, and so will return again, Mt 24:30, he making the clouds his chariots, Ps 104:3.

*To meet the Lord in the air:*

1. To congratulate his coming, when others shall flee and tremble.
2. To put honour upon him; as the angels will also attend him for that end.
3. To receive their final discharge.
4. To be visibly joined to their Head.
5. To be assistants with him in judging of the world, and to reign with him upon earth.

And whether the last judgment will be upon the earth, or in the air, I shall not determine; but after this Christ and his saints shall never part. Their first meeting shall be in the air, and their continuance will be with him while he is in this lower world, and after that they shall ascend with him into heaven, and so be for ever with him. Augustine imagined that the saints that are found

alive shall in their rapture die, and then immediately revive, because *it is appointed to all men once to die*; but the apostle saith expressly: *We shall not all die, but we shall all be changed*, 1Co 15:51.

### 1 Thessalonians 4:18

Ver. 18. The apostle makes application of all this discourse to the end he designed, which was to comfort them under their sorrows for departed Christian friends; and he saith not, be ye comforted, but *comfort one another*, to put them upon the great duty of Christian sympathy; though this is a duty we owe to all, yet especially to the saints, and more especially of the same particular congregation. And funeral sorrows are usually most afflictive, and therefore need to be allayed with words of comfort; and not with any words, but, saith the apostle, *with these words*, or these things, as the Hebrew, the things or words that he had before laid before them. The philosophers used many arguments against the fears of death, and for comfort under funeral sorrows, but Christians should fetch their comforts from the Scriptures. These are the best, most solid, most durable, and universal, and therefore the apostle commends them to the believing Romans, Ro 15:4, as here to these Thessalonians particularly. These considerations, that those which sleep in Jesus shall rise again, and that we shall meet them again, and we and they shall be for ever with the Lord together, are a great relief against the sorrows of their departure hence. And the comforts arising hence may serve to support under other sorrows as well as these, which the apostle also might intend in the words.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:1

#### Chapter Summary

1Th 5:1-11 The apostle proceedeth to show that Christ's coming will be sudden, exhorting Christians to watch and be sober, so as not to be taken by surprise.

1Th 5:12,13 He beseecheth them to respect their spiritual guides,

1Th 5:14-22 and giveth, divers other precepts,



1Th 5:23-28 concluding with a prayer and salutations.

Ver. 1. But when shall these things be? Might some say, as the disciples asked Christ, Mt 24:3,36 Ac 1:6. He tells them: *It is not for you to know the times or the seasons*; not that they knew them in particular already, but there was no need they should know them. It may be some among them were too curious to inquire. He doth not say they could not be known, as being put into God's own power, as Ac 1:7; but, *ye have no need that I write of them*. The apostle, as in his preaching, so in his writing, had respect to what was most needful and profitable for the people: as when the disciples asked: *Are there few that be saved?* Christ answered them in that which was most needful to them, Lu 13:24: and so doth the apostle here; instead of acquainting them with the times and seasons, he puts them upon watchfulness, that they might not be surprised, as in the following verses; and to improve the knowledge they had already, which was this, that Christ's coming would be sudden.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:2

Ver. 2. By *times and seasons* then, before mentioned, he meant the time: of the Lord's coming, or he applies what he spoke in general to this particular, which he here calls *the day of the Lord*. And though they knew not the particular time, yet they did know this, it would be sudden and unexpected, coming *as a thief in the night*, Re 16:15: the comparison is to be restrained only to the suddenness of it; for his coming will be welcome, and so not as a thief, to all that believe. And it is called *the day of the Lord* here and elsewhere, 1Co 3:13 Php 1:6,10, and *that day*, 2Ti 1:18, not to be taken for a natural day, but a certain period of time. Any eminent manifestation of God, either in works of mercy or judgment, is called his day in Scripture, Isa 2:12 Jer 46:10. And so because Christ will be more eminently manifested now than ever before, therefore his coming is called his day; and that it would be sudden they did not only know, but *know perfectly*, or accurately; Eph 5:15, *circumspectly*: there could be only conjectures about the particular time: the influence hereof was powerful upon their hearts, and so they may be said to know it *perfectly*. In religion, knowledge is not perfect which is not

operative.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:3

Ver. 3. *For when they shall say, Peace and safety:* by these words the apostle proves that the day of the Lord will come unexpected, by the security that will be then found in the world. They say it in their hearts and practice, if not with their tongues. And he useth two words the better to express the greatness of this security, present peace, and no danger of sliding, as the words import. And as the effect of Christ's coming will be *destruction* to such, which will be *salvation* to others, Heb 9:28; so through their security it will be *sudden destruction*, which he describes under the similitude of *travail upon a woman with child*, which doth for the most part come of a sudden, and is the most exquisite pains in nature, and is often made use of in Scripture to set forth extremity of misery, Isa 13:8 Jer 13:21. And these pains come upon her unavoidably; so saith the apostle of these men's destruction, *and they shall not escape*, or in no wise escape, expressed in the Greek by two negatives, which do strongly affirm.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:4

Ver. 4. Lest these believing Thessalonians should be terrified in their minds by this discourse, he adds this by way of comfort to them, that they shall not be surprised as others; though they did not know the particular time of Christ's coming, yet it would not find them unprepared for it as the world would be; and the reason he gives is, because they *are not in darkness*.

*Darkness* is to be taken metaphorically; and so in Scripture it is taken either for sin, ignorance, or misery. The two former are here meant, especially ignorance. These Thessalonians were brought into the light of the gospel; they had the knowledge of Christ, and the way of salvation by him; particularly they knew of his coming, and the manner and ends of his coming, which the infidel world did not; and though Christ's coming would be to others as a thief in the night, yet not to them.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:5

Ver. 5. And because the night is the time of darkness, and the day of light, he therefore hereby describes their present state:

1. Positively: *Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day;* which is a Hebraism: Ye are partakers of a spiritual light, and this light is not the darker light of nature, or the light of prophecy, which the Jews had, compared to a lamp, 2Pe 1:19; but ye are *children of the day*, as the time of the gospel is called *day*, Ro 13:12 2Co 6:2.
2. Negatively: *We are not of the night, nor of darkness;* your state is exceedingly different from other Gentiles, and from what it once was, as the light is from darkness, and day from night: not as if there was no ignorance remaining in them, for the best men see but through a glass, darkly, 1Co 13:12; but the apostle compares them with their former estate when they were Gentiles, and with the Jews under the law; and with respect to their state in Christ, they were not children of the night, or, as to their state, of the night, but children of light, and of the day.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:6

Ver. 6. The apostle draws this inference from the foregoing verses in a twofold duty:

1. Negative; *Let us not sleep, as do others;* sleep is not proper for the children of the day, but of the night. And as the night and darkness are to be taken metaphorically, so the sleep. And though it hath several acceptations in Scripture, yet it is here taken for security. As the natural sleep binds up the senses, and men are not aware of approaching danger, so doth the sleep of the soul: it darkens the mind, stupifies the spiritual sense, that men prepare not for the coming of Christ, nor to avoid the destruction that will then come suddenly upon them. Ro 13:11,12, is a place parallel to this: *It is high time to awake out of sleep, &c. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. &c.*
2. Positive; *Let us watch:* watching stands contrary to sleep; the

senses are then in exercise, which were bound up by sleep. When the soul is watching, the faculties are in a spiritual exercise to apprehend both our interest and our duty, to take hold of that which is good, and to avoid the evil, the evil of sin and the evil of suffering. But watching here in the text especially refers to the coming of Christ, to prepare for it, that we may not be surprised as others will, and to be in a readiness *to be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless*, 2Pe 3:14.

*And be sober*: sobriety is reckoned to be one branch of temperance, and one of the fruits of the Spirit, Ga 5:23, and one link of the chain of grace, 2Pe 1:6. It hath its name in the Greek, signifying either soundness of mind, or continency of mind; a mind kept or held within its due bounds. It is usually taken for moderation in meats and drinks, setting bounds to the appetite; but it extends to all earthly things, as honour, riches, pleasures, to have our affections to them, our cares about them, our endeavours after them, kept within due bounds; and all this upon the account of Christ's coming, as a necessary preparation for it: see 1Co 7:29-31 1Pe 4:7. Sobriety and watching are here joined together, and so 1Pe 4:7 5:8. For as intemperance in meats and drinks makes the body dull and sleepy, so without temperance and sobriety the soul will be disenabled to watch.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:7

Ver. 7. The apostle enforceth the former duties of watchfulness and sobriety from the consideration of their present state. They that sleep choose the night to sleep in, and they that would be drunk choose the night for it: drunkenness being so shameful a vice, especially in the apostles' time, that men were ashamed to be seen drunk in the day-time; see Ac 2:15 Eph 5:12,13; and in ancient times they had their feasts in the night. Ye therefore that are not in the night of your former ignorance, ought neither to be found in the sleep of security nor in the sin of drunkenness, whereby may be meant also any kind of intemperance; for a man may be drnnk, and *not with wine*, Isa 29:9; drunk with pleasure, with cares, with sensual love and desires, with passion, and by spiritual judgments upon the soul, Isa 29:10.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:8

Ver. 8. The apostle here commands two spiritual duties, and the former is sobriety; which he mentioned before, 1Th 5:6, as a preparation for Christ's coming; but here, as that which was suitable to their present state, and as standing opposite to that drunkenness in the foregoing verse. It is not sufficient to abstain from vice, without practising the contrary virtue. The other duty is, putting on their spiritual armour. The former was to secure them against the good things of the world, the latter against the evil of it, that they be not overcome of either. The armour he mentions is spiritual. Soldiers have their breastplate and helmet for their bodies, so hath the Christian these for his soul. As the breastplate and helmet secure the principal seats of the natural life, the head and the heart, so doth the Christian's armour secure the life of the soul, and therefore these two pieces are only mentioned, as being most necessary. His *breastplate* is *faith and love*.

First, *faith*; in Eph 6:16, it is called a *shield*; here, a *breastplate*. Great things are ascribed to faith in Scripture; it is that whereby we are justified, adopted, united to Christ, have our hearts purified, &c.; but here it is to be considered as a defensive grace; and it doth defend as it assents to the doctrine of the gospel as true, particularly the doctrine of the resurrection, and the coming of Christ, with the effects and attendants thereof, before mentioned. And as it doth depend upon God's faithfulness and all-sufficiency to perform his promises, and applying them to ourselves for our support and comfort, so faith is a breastplate or defence; and as it is a defence against temptations, so particularly against that sudden destruction that will come upon the secure world, before mentioned.

Secondly, *love*; and love is joined with faith to show it to be a true and lively faith, when it *worketh by love*, Ga 5:6; and love, when it worketh, produceth many blessed effects, and particularly, as faith it will be a breastplate of defence. It will defend against the persecutions and afflictions of the world: *Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it*, So 8:7. Slavish fear will overcome us if we want love to defend against it, when true religion is under disgrace and persecuted in the world: love will defend against apostacy, and so help us to persevere to the coming of Christ, which the apostle

had been speaking of; and love being seated in the heart, is well compared to a breastplate that encompasseth the heart.

Thirdly, the other piece of armour is the *helmet*, so called in the Greek from encompassing the head; and this helmet is here said to be *the hope of salvation*. In Eph 6:17, we read of *the helmet of salvation*, but the hope of it is there to be understood, for salvation is no grace of the Spirit, and so, of itself, no part of a Christian's armour. Hope of salvation is of great use to a Christian many ways: it is a cordial to comfort him, a spur to quicken him, a staff to support him, a bridle to restrain him, and so also a helmet to defend him: and therefore no wonder that the apostle calls true hope *a lively hope*, 1Pe 1:3. And as itself is lively, so it is a defence to the life of the soul, as a helmet is to the life of the body.

*Hope deferred maketh the heart sick*, saith Solomon; but if quite disappointed and lost, the heart sinks and dies. Let afflictions and distresses break in like a flood, yet hope will keep the head above water; and if Satan assault the soul to drive it into despair, this hope of salvation will be a defence to it. So that the Christian's armour mentioned in this verse are *faith, love, and hope*, which divines call the three theological graces, and placed together by the apostle, 1Co 13:13. And these the saints, who are children of the day, are to put on, whereby they shall be armed for the coming of Christ with this *armour of light*, Ro 13:12, and against the destruction which will then surprise the children of the night.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:9

Ver. 9. *For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation:* some expositors make these words an argument to all the duties of holiness mentioned both in this and the foregoing chapters; and it is true, that the knowledge of our being elected, or appointed to salvation, doth not in the elect encourage to sin or sloth, as some affirm, but engage to all holiness: but I had rather restrain the words, and that either to the *hope of salvation*, mentioned immediately before, and then the sense to be this, we may well hope for salvation seeing God hath appointed us to it; or, to his whole discourse about the coming of Christ, and so they may give the reason why the dead in Christ must rise, and

must, with the living saints, meet the Lord in the air, and be for ever with him; yea, and why they need not fear the destruction that will come upon others at that day, and why they should be watchful for its coming, because, saith the apostle: *God hath not appointed us to wrath but to obtain salvation, &c.* Having spoken of two sorts of persons, the children of the day, and children of the night, and the sudden destruction of the one and salvation of the other at the coming of Christ, he here ascends to the first original of both, which is God's appointment, which is an act of God's sovereign will, determining men's final estates; which seems to be more than mere prescience or foreknowledge, an act of God's mind, as appears by Ro 8:29 1Pe 1:2, or more than appointing of the means and way of salvation; but not of persons to be saved, or of persons only materially, as to the number how many, but not formally, or individually, who they are that shall be saved; whereas the apostle writes of some *whose names are in the book of life*, Php 4:3, and that *from the foundation of the world*, Re 17:8, and *chosen before the foundation of the world*, Eph 1:4: otherwise, every man's salvation would depend more upon the uncertainty of man's will, than the eternal and immutable will of God; whereas whatever God works in man's salvation, is *according to the counsel of his will*, Eph 1:11; and God's counsel is certain, immutable, and eternal, extending not only to actions and means, but persons, Ro 8:29,30. Neither is this appointment of God grounded upon the foresight of man's faith; for if faith be the gift of God, this gift proceeds from God's counsel and fore-appointment; else men may say: That I may be saved I must thank God, but that I am saved I must thank myself: and hence there is a possibility for no man to be saved, and all the counsels of God in Christ to be made frustrate. But this is no place for controversy; only where God appoints to salvation, he appoints also to means, and without the means there is no attainment of the end, Eph 1:4 1Pe 1:2. And the apostle here makes salvation stand opposite to wrath; what before he called *destruction*, 1Th 5:3, he here calleth *wrath*, because God's wrath produceth it, and is manifested in it. And those that are saved are delivered from it; and the supreme reason is, because they were not appointed to it, but to salvation, and none that are appointed to the one are appointed to the other. The *vessels of wrath* and *of mercy* are set in an opposite distinction, Ro 9:22,23, and so in the text, to illustrate the mercy of God the more in them that are saved. And whereas the apostle calls it the obtaining of salvation, it implies

man's endeavours for it, though he be appointed of God to it; and speaking positively, not only of himself, but these believing Thessalonians also, he *hath appointed us to obtain salvation*, doth not this also imply that some good assurance of salvation may be obtained in this world.

*By our Lord Jesus Christ;* the decrees of salvation are executed in him, and by him; and *there is no salvation in any other*, Ac 4:12. And he saveth not only by his doctrine and example, as some have affirmed, but by his blood as the meritorious, and his Spirit as the efficient, cause of salvation. Whether the infinite wisdom of God could have found out another way I shall not inquire, but this it hath pitched upon, wherein mercy and justice are admirably glorified together, and the highest engagement imaginable laid upon men to love, serve, and honour their Creator. And as the freeness of God's grace is manifested in his appointing men to salvation, so the exceeding riches of it, in saving them by Jesus Christ. And whereas two things are necessary to it, the reconciling us unto God, and restoring his image in us, the former we have by the merit of his blood, and the latter by the operation of his Spirit; so that we have no ground for that fond opinion, that if men walk honestly and uprightly, they may be saved in any religion.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:10

Ver. 10. Some refer these words to the latter end of the foregoing chapter, where the apostle had spoken of the saints' death and resurrection, which is their sleeping and waking, as they are here called. And their being for ever with the Lord, is here called their living together with him. And lest it might be thought that none should be with Christ until they awaked at the resurrection, he therefore speaks of living with Christ even when we sleep. He had spoken of sleep in another sense, 1Th 5:6, as meant of security; but here meant of death, as it is taken 1Th 4:14. And as watching is set opposite to the former sleep, so here waking to the latter, which is a resurrection from death. And we hence gather that the soul doth not sleep with the body, but lives with the Lord when that sleeps in the grave; as the apostle expected to be with the Lord upon the dissolution of his body, Php 1:23, and he mentions it as the privilege of other saints as well as his own, 2Co 5:1. When we sleep we are with him only in our souls; when



we wake we shall be with him both in body and soul. And both these we have from Christ's death. If he had not died, heaven had been shut against our souls, for our entrance into the holiest of all is by his blood, and the veil of his flesh rent for us, Heb 10:19,20; and the grave would have shut up our bodies, and there would have been no resurrection; so that our living with Christ, both when we sleep and when we wake, springs out of his death. Others carry these words no further than the foregoing verse, showing how we are saved by Christ; saith the apostle, he *died for us*. As God appointed persons to be saved, and Christ to be the person to be saved by, so also to be saved by his death; with respect to his Father he is said to be *put to death*, 1Pe 3:18; with respect to his own freedom and willingness, he is said here to die for us. And his dying for us implieth the greatness of our guilt, and expresseth the greatness of his own love, Joh 15:13. He loved us, and thereupon would have us live with him; and he died that we and he may live together. And so he may be said to die for our salvation, the substance whereof consisteth in our living with him. To live with so glorious a Person, and a Person that is full of love to us, and shall then be perfectly beloved of us, and that stands in many near relations to us, and whose presence will have such a blessed influence upon us, and in such a place as heaven is, and that for ever, surely carries the substance of our salvation in it. And if this was the end of his death, surely it was more than to be an example of faith, patience, and submission to God, or to confirm to us the doctrine he preached; it was to satisfy Divine justice, and obtain the pardon of our sin, and merit for us the privilege of living with him.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Ver. 11. These words are an exhortation to the whole church of Thessalonica, to comfort and edify one another. Though the ministry is appointed to this by especial office, yet private Christians are to practise it to one another; the former doth it in way of authority, the latter in a way of charity.

*Comfort yourselves together:* the apostle had laid before them many comfortable truths, which they were to comfort one another by; and if we read the words, exhort one another, it refers to the necessary duties of religion he had mentioned in this

and the foregoing chapter.

*And edify one another;* and this follows from both the former, as alluding to a house that is built up by degrees: and so is every church the house of God; and consisting of living stones, every part is to seek the building up of the whole; and by mutual exhortation and comfort the whole may be edified. Christians, then, are to be blamed that only seek to edify themselves, and much more they who pull down, and divide, and destroy, instead of building up.

*Even as also ye do:* and what the apostle exhorted them to, they were already in the practice of; for which he here again commends them, as he had done upon several accounts before, not to flatter, but to encourage them to proceed, and to set before other churches their example for imitation.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:12

Ver. 12,13. The apostle spake before of their private duties as Christians to one another, now of their duties to their pastors and teachers, lest by what he had said they might think the ministry needless. It seems this church was settled under officers, which is called an organical church. And though the apostle himself was driven from them by persecution, yet they were not without ministers and teachers; and they owed a great duty to them, to which he doth lovingly exhort them. And he describes them not by the name of their office, as pastors, elders, or ministers, but by the work of it.

*Them which labour among you;* the word imports diligent labour, causing weariness, as 1Ti 5:17, *who labour in the word and doctrine;* which shows both the nature of the work of the ministry, it is laborious; and the duty of ministers therein, not to seek the honour and profit of the office, and refuse the labour of it; they have the work of teaching, and of oversight or government, and admonition, and all require labour.

*And are over you in the Lord:* the same word is used 1Ti 5:17, and translated *rule;* it signifies that superintendency and precedency, which the elders or ministers have over their respective flocks; and it is said to be *in the Lord*, either to

distinguish them from civil officers, or to show both the original, rule, and end of their office; it is from the Lord by institution, and to be managed according to his laws, and directed to his service and glory as its end.

*And admonish you:* the word is often used in the New Testament, Ac 20:31 Ro 15:14 Col 1:28 3:16; and signifies either the putting into the mind by way of instruction, or upon the mind by way of counsel, threatening, or reproof; and that either publicly or privately. Now the duty they owed to them is:

1. *To know them*, as in the former words; that is, to own them in their office, to have regard to their teaching, and to submit to their government, and to reward their labours; as knowing is often taken in Scripture to express the acts of the will and affection, and the actions also of the outward man, as well as of the mind; as Ps 1:6 101:4.
2. *To esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake;* υπερεκπερισσου see Ro 5:20 2Co 7:4. The words in the Greek carry such an emphasis as cannot well be expressed in English, importing esteem and love to an hyperbole; their love was to be joined with esteem, and esteem with love, and both these to abound and superabound towards them. We read of a *double honour*, 1Ti 5:17, which contains the whole duty of people to their ministers.

*For their work's sake;* whether of teaching, ruling, or admonition. Their work is in itself honourable, and work that tends to your salvation, and though their persons be meant, yet to esteem and love them for their work; or if upon any other account they deserve it of you, yet their work is to be the chief reason thereof; especially considering that their work more immediately respected them of this church rather than any others; and their labour was amongst them; or, as some read it, in you, to instruct, edify, and comfort your inward man.

*And be at peace among yourselves;* some copies read it, with them, αυτοις for εαυτοις, by a little alteration of the Greek word; and then it still refers to their teachers, they should be at peace, or live in peace, with them; for oftentimes dissensions arise between ministers and people, whereby their edification is hindered. But I rather follow our own translation; and so it is a

new duty of the people towards one another, to preserve mutual peace among themselves, and yet these words may respect the former. For if the people give honour and respect to their ministers, it may be a means to preserve peace among themselves: among the Corinthians, the applauding of some of their teachers, and the contempt of others, made great schisms and divisions amongst them. Our Saviour useth these very words to his disciples, Mr 9:50, from whence the apostle might take them. And the duty of peace he often presseth in his Epistles, Ro 14:19 1Co 7:15 2Co 13:11 Col 3:15 Heb 12:14; which was to prevent schism, which breaks the bonds of peace, and may make the labours of their teachers less successful.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:14

Ver. 14. *Now we exhort you, brethren:* some think the apostle now turns his speech to their teachers, whom he here calls *brethren* in a more peculiar sense, and because the duties here enjoined do more properly belong to the ministry. But others more truly judge he continues his discourse to the whole church, and the several members of it. The same duties are to be performed by both, though under a different obligation: as in the civil state all are to seek the good of the commonwealth, though the magistrates and the governors are more specially obliged by office.

*Warn them that are unruly;* or admonish, as the same word is rendered in the former verse, here meant of brotherly, there of ministerial, admonition; wherein great prudence is to be used, as to time, place, persons, manner: and the *unruly* are such as keep not their place, alluding to soldiers that keep not their rank and station, and they are called in the margin *disorderly*, and that:

1. In civil respects, when men live without a calling, or, being in it, neglect it, or intrude into other men's business, and perform not the duties of their civil relations.
2. In natural respects, when men follow not the light of nature, and fulfil not the law of natural relations.
3. In spiritual respects, when men neglect or transgress the rules

and order of their walking in their church state, either with respect to their teachers or one another. Admonition belongs to such, and is the first step of church censure when regularly performed.

*Comfort the feeble-minded;* ολιγοφυχους, or the pusillanimous, men of little souls, as the word imports, such as dare not venture upon hazardous duties, or faint under the fears or feeling of afflictions, or are dejected under the sense of sin, and their own unworthiness, or fears of God's wrath, and assaulted by temptations which endanger their falling.

*Support the weak;* αντεχεσθε an allusion to such as lift at one end of the burden, to help to bear it, answering to the word συναντιλαμβανεται, Ro 8:26: *The Spirit helpeth our infirmities*: and the weak are either the weak in knowledge, weak in faith, that understand not their own liberty in the gospel, Ro 14:1 1Co 8:9; and hereupon cannot practise as others do; their conscience is weak, 1Co 8:12; and so were in bondage to some ceremonial rites, when those that were strong stood fast in their liberty. These are to be supported, dealt tenderly with, and not to be despised, or rigorously used. Or, weak in grace, new converts, babes in Christ, tender plants, not well rooted in the gospel.

*Be patient toward all men*: this duty is universal; the former concerned only the saints. The word signifies longanimity, or long-suffering, and is often attributed to God, Ex 34:6 Ro 9:22. It consisteth in the deferring or moderating of anger, to wait without anger when men delay us, and to suffer without undue anger when they deal injuriously with us, whether they be good men or evil, believers or infidels, the strong or the weak, ministers or people.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:15

Ver. 15. These words seem directed to the guides of the church, who are called *overseers*, Ac 20:28, and therefore the apostle requires them to *see* that none render evil, &c. Or if to the whole church, as before, then it is a solemn charge which they ought to be all circumspect in observing. And the charge is:

1. Negative, not to *render evil for evil*; which is to revenge

themselves; and that is forbidden by the apostle, Ro 12:17,19 1Pe 3:9; and is the resisting of evil forbidden by our Saviour, Mt 5:39. But it is to be understood of private revenge rising out of malice, not of public censures, either civil or ecclesiastical, or of seeking reparations for injuries received in courts of justice according to law and equity. This private revenge cannot consist with that patience that he required towards all men in the foregoing verse, nor is it conformable to the example of Christ, 1Pe 2:23, nor to the Christian calling and profession, 1Pe 2:21.

2. Positive; good in itself, or that which is good to others, as the word is often taken, Mt 7:11 Lu 1:53 Ga 6:6; and so stands opposite here to the rendering of evil. And the word *follow* signifies an earnest following, which is sometimes taken in a bad sense, for persecution, Mt 5:11, and sometimes in a good sense, as Heb 12:14 1Pe 3:11; and to follow good imports more than only to do good, 1Pe 3:11, when the inward bent of the soul and the outward endeavours are towards doing good. And this ought to be *ever*, or always, that is, in all places, times, occasions, company. Man's course of life ought in this to be uniform, though his outward condition vary; sometimes to do good to the souls, sometimes to the bodies of men, and that either in a privative or positive good; preventing evil, or bestowing that which is good.

*Both among yourselves, and to all men: Do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith, Ga 6:10.* As they say of good, the commoner the better; but the contrary of evil. Christians stand in a special relation to one another, but in a common relation to all, and every relation ought to be filled up with good. As love is a common debt to all men, so the fruit of it, which is doing good. Our doing good should not be confined among Christians only of one way, opinion, or congregation; nor to men only under some limiting circumstances; but it should reach all men as we have ability, opportunity, and call, even enemies themselves, as our Saviour requires, Mt 5:44. This is to act like God, and may commend religion to all men, and is not to be looked upon as commended by way of counsel, as the papists say, but commanded by precept. And it is not enough not to do evil, but we must do good: not to save a man's life when we have power to do it, is to kill him, as Christ argues, Mr 3:4; so not to save a man's estate

when we may, is to steal from him.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:16

Ver. 16. Here the apostle adds more Christian duties, briefly expressed, and set close one to another; and they seem to have a mutual connection, but not so relative to others as those before mentioned, but personal to themselves. He begins with the duty of rejoicing. Joy is an affection of the soul springing from the hope or possession of some suitable good. And it is either natural, which is common to men with beasts, arising from that good that is suitable to their several natures; or spiritual, which is joy wrought by the Spirit, and exercised upon spiritual objects. And this the apostle here means, and is called rejoicing *in the Lord*, Php 4:4, and *joy in the Holy Ghost*, Ro 14:17; arising either from what spiritual good we already possess, or hope to possess, *exhibita et promissa*, Bernard; which is thereupon called a *rejoicing in hope*, Ro 5:2 12:12. The apostle speaks here of the duty indefinitely, only requires it to be *evermore*; so Php 4:4. Though God sometimes calls to mourning, yet it is no where said: Mourn evermore, because rejoicing ought to be in a more constant practice, and all spiritual mourning tends to it, and will end in it; and he commends it as seasonable to these Thessalonians, to support them under their present sufferings. The grounds of a Christian's joy always abide, and he is not only to retain it in the habit, but to mix it with all his sorrows and sufferings, as 1Pe 1:6: *Ye greatly rejoice, though for a season, in heaviness*: whereas carnal mirth is mixed with sadness, Pr 14:13. So that a Christian ought to rejoice in every condition, not only in prosperity but adversity, and especially when called to suffer for righteousness sake; as Mt 5:12 1Pe 4:13. It is not only allowed but commanded. This joy is one great part of God's kingdom even in this world, Ro 14:17; much more in the world to come. And therefore the apostle speaks of rejoicing evermore, whereas mourning is but for a time, and ends to the saints in this life.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:17

Ver. 17. This is a means to maintain our rejoicing, and therefore next mentioned. Prayer is a making known our requests to God,

Php 4:6. And it is either mental, in the heart only, as Hannah's was; or vocal, expressed with the voice; or, as some add, vital: so good works have a voice to bring down blessings, as men's sins cry for vengeance.

*Without ceasing*; not as the Euchites and Messalians of old, who hence thought no other duties were required, but always praying; but by the word in the text, is either meant a praying without fainting, as in the parable, Lu 18:1, and which the apostle calls a perseverance in prayer, Eph 6:18 Col 4:2; προσκαρτερεῖτε, or praying with strength, as the Greek word there imports, and so not to faint; so Ro 12:12. Or a praying in every thing, as Php 4:6: *In every thing let your requests be made known*, &c. Or, in every season, as Eph 6:18; to take hold of the seasons of prayer. Or, in all seasons and times, whether good or bad, yet still to pray. And all this is meant by the word in the text, which is also used 1Th 1:3 1Th 2:13 Ro 1:9; and implies in general no more but a constant course of prayer, so Col 4:2, to watch unto prayer, as that the course of it be not interrupted by any diversions. As also to preserve a heart disposed to pray at all times, and to mingle ejaculatory prayers with the several actions of our lives: our wants are continual, and God will be acknowledged in all our supplies, and therefore we ought to pray continually.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Ver. 18. *In every thing give thanks*: when we have obtained mercy by prayer, then we are to give thanks, and whatever we may pray for, that we ought to give thanks for. And so by that understand and limit the general expression in the text. We are not to give thanks when we fall into sin, for that we ought not to pray for; yet if we have the pardon of it, or get any good by it, we should then give thanks: and so may be said concerning affliction; we are to give thanks in every condition, either of prosperity or adversity. And with all our supplications, we are to join thanksgivings, Php 4:6 Col 4:2; and thanksgiving properly refers to some mercy received, whether privative or positive, temporal or spiritual, private or public, and we are in all these to give thanks. Though praising God may reach further, which is to adore the excellencies of his being as they are glorious in themselves, or the excellencies of his works as they are in themselves praiseworthy. And thanksgiving for mercy received



is:

1. A taking notice of it as coming from God.
2. Setting a due value upon it.
3. A sense of God's goodness and our own unworthiness.
4. Praising him for it.

*For this is the will of God:* some carry this as a motive to all the preceding duties; but rather to this last mentioned: as if this was in special the will of God, being a duty so much to his own glory and our good; and by *will* we must by a metonymy understand the thing willed, Eph 6:6 Col 4:12. It is required by the law of nature not written, which is part of God's will. The heathen are reproved for not being thankful, Ro 1:21; and they made laws to punish it, and accounted it the greatest reproach, *ingratum si dixeris omnia dixeris*. And it is required by the law of God that is written. The moral law requires it; and the ceremonial law required offerings by way of thanksgiving, which we call gratulatory. And the gospel requires it, it being one of the gospel sacrifices, Heb 13:15, and pleaseth the Lord better than the greatest of the legal sacrifices, Ps 69:30,31: and it being said to be the will of God in the text, it must needs be pleasing to him.

*In Christ Jesus;* either meant as this will of his is signified to us by him, not only by the law of nature, of Moses, but by Christ Jesus; and so it may be of greater force upon Christians, and hereby it is to be looked upon as one of the commandments of Christ also. Or we may understand it, upon the attempt of Christ, and the great love of God in him. Though thanksgiving is due for the least mercy, yet God's will especially requires it with respect to Christ. And so especially of Christians who partake of Christ, and the love of God in him; as the apostle here adds, εἰς ὑμᾶς.

*Concerning you;* or towards you in special: the heathens were obliged to thankfulness for rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, these common blessings; much more are Christians for the special blessings they receive by Christ Jesus.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:19

Ver. 19. That ye may be enabled to pray and give thanks, as before:

*Quench not the Spirit.* And, by the figure meiosis, he means, cherish the Spirit. The Spirit is compared to fire, Mt 3:11; and he came down upon the apostles in the similitude, of tongues of fire, Ac 2:3; but the Spirit himself cannot be quenched; he means it therefore of his gifts and operations; which are either ordinary or extraordinary. Many had extraordinary gifts in the primitive times, of healing, tongues, government, prophecy, &c.; those that had them, without question, should have taken care not, by any fault of their own, to lose them. Especially that of prophecy, which the apostle prefers before all others, 1Co 14:1, and mentions here in the following verse; and which the apostle exhorted Timothy to stir up in himself, 2Ti 1:6, as we stir up the fire to quicken it, so the word *αναζωπυρειν* imports. The like is required of ministers with respect to their ministerial gifts which are now given. But there are ordinary gifts and operations of the Spirit common to all Christians, as enlightening, quickening, sanctifying, comforting the soul: men by sloth, security, earthy encumbrances, inordinate affections, &c., may abate these operations of the Spirit, which the apostle calls the quenching it: the fire upon the altar was kept always burning by the care of the priests. Fire will go out either by neglecting it, or casting water upon it. By not exercising grace in the duties of religion, or by allowing sin in ourselves, we may quench the Spirit; as appears in David, Ps 51:10-12. Not that the habits of grace may be totally extinguished in the truly regenerate, yet they may be abated as to degree and lively exercise. Yet those common illuminations and convictions of the Spirit which persons unregenerate, especially such that live under the gospel, do often find, may be totally lost, Heb 6:4-6; and we read of God's Spirit ceasing to strive with the old world, Ge 6:3, and the scribes and Pharisees resisting the Holy Ghost, Ac 7:51, which were not persons regenerate. He may sometimes strive with men, but not overcome them. And there is a quenching of the Spirit in others its well as ourselves; people may quench it in their ministers by discouraging them, and in one another by bad examples, or reproaching the zeal and forwardness that they see in them.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:20

Ver. 20. Thereby we may quench the Spirit, which usually works upon men's minds and hearts by it. By prophecy is sometimes meant foretelling of things to come, and speaking by extraordinary revelation, 1Co 14:29,30; sometimes the Scriptures are so called, especially the Old Testament, 2Pe 1:21; and sometimes the interpretation and applying of Scripture, which is the same that we now call preaching, 1Co 14:3. And the duty with respect to it, is not to despise it, to set it at nought as a thing of no worth. The word is often used in the New Testament, Lu 18:9 Ac 4:11 Ro 14:3,10. But the apostle useth again the figure meiosis before mentioned, and means, prize, value, and highly esteem it, attend upon it, have great regard to it; it being an ordinance of God for instruction and edification, yea, and for conversion also, 1Co 14:24,25. Some despise it because of the outward meanness of the persons which prophesy; some, through a proud conceit of their own knowledge; some, by a contempt of religion itself. These Thessalonians had been commended for their great proficiency, and yet were still to attend upon prophesying in the church; which he calls *prophesyings*, in the plural number, referring either to the several prophets that prophesied, or to the several parts of their prophecy, or the times they prophesied. And the prophets were either such as prophesied only by an extraordinary gift, and immediate revelation, which some private members of the church had in those times, 1Co 14:29,30; or such as prophesied not only by gift, but office also, Eph 4:11.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:21

Ver. 21. *Prove all things*; this duty relates to the former; as they were to attend upon prophesyings, so to exercise a discerning judgment about what was prophesied; for *all things* is not to be taken here universally, but for doctrines and opinions in religion which were delivered by the prophets. The same which the apostle John requires: *Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, &c.*; δοκιμαζετε and it is the same word there which in this text we read *prove*; alluding to gold or other metals, which are tried in the fire, or by a touchstone, as some think. And though there was a peculiar gift of *discerning of spirits*, 1Co 12:10, yet it is the duty of every Christian to try men's spirits and doctrines

whether from God or no. The apostle speaks here to the saints in general, and so doth the apostle John, 1Jo 4:1. And men's doctrines are to be judged by the Scriptures as the standard of truth, as the Bereans were commended for searching the Scriptures about the apostle's doctrine, Ac 17:11; and the apostle prays for the Philippians, that they might discern things that differ, Php 1:10; and if they had not yet attained it as they ought, yet he prays that they might and not be always babes, but such as the apostle speaks of, who have their senses exercised in the discerning of good and evil, Heb 5:13,14: the people are to look upon them as their guides and leaders, as they they are called, Heb 13:7,17, and such as are to go before them in the searching and dispensing of truth; yet, because the best are but infallible, they ought to try their doctrine by the rule of truth. Which is that judgment of discretion which protestants allow to the people in their disputes with the papists against their doctrine of infallibility and implicit faith, which grounds the people's faith upon the authority of men, which ought to rest upon the authority of God. As we ought not easily to reject the authority and faith of the church, so not to believe with a blind faith, or obey with a blind obedience.

*Holdfast to that which is good*: the good here meant is truth, which is an intellectual good; the contrary to which is error, which is a mental evil. When we have proved men's doctrines and opinions, what we find agreeable to the Scriptures of truth we ought to hold fast. And though all truth hath a goodness in it, yet especially Divine truth, and the doctrine of the gospel, which the apostle calls, *that good thing* committed to Timothy, 2Ti 1:14. It is good with respect to the soul, and so better than any bodily good; and good that refers to eternity, and so better than any temporal good. Now this good we are to *hold fast*; to hold it fast against adversaries and all opposition, as some understand the word; to hold it as with both hands, against seducing doctrine, Satan's temptations, and the world's persecution. The same word is used concerning the good ground that held fast the seed of the word, Lu 8:15. So 1Co 11:2, we are to retain the truth, but not detain it, as the heathen are said to do, Ro 1:18, where we find also the same word as in the text. It is a duty much pressed by the apostles in their Epistles to the saints and churches that had received the gospel, that they would hold it fast, 2Ti 1:13 Tit 1:9 Heb 4:14 Re 2:13,25 3:3. And there is holding fast the truth as well in practice as opinion, and which

may be the ground of the name given to such as opposed the errors of antichrist before the word *protestant* was known, called *fast-men*.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:22

Ver. 22. To make this verse have its connection with the former, some expositors understand it of doctrines and opinions only; to take heed of opinions that seem erroneous, and not rashly to receive them without due examination. Though this sense is not to be excluded, yet the verse need not be confined to it, but to extend to practice also; as in worship to abstain from the show of idolatry; as to eat meat in an idol's temple was not always gross idolatry, but had some appearance of it, and therefore the apostle forbids it, 1Co 10:14. And so in civil conversation, not only to abstain from vice, but the appearance of it; as of pride, covetousness, drunkenness, whoredom, &c.; and that both with respect to ourselves, lest by venturing upon that which hath some show of evil, we step into the evil itself; and with respect to others, that we may not occasion the taking offence though not justly given, or do that which may any way encourage a real evil in them by that appearance of it which they see in ourselves; yet we ought not upon this account to forbear the discharge of any necessary duty. Some read the words: Abstain from all kind of evil, ἄπο παντος ιεδουζ πονηρου, and the Greek word is so used by logicians: but here to insist on particulars is infinite. And thus the apostle concludes all these positive duties with a general precept which he leaves with them at the close of his Epistle; having dehorted them from many evils, now he exhorts them to abstain from the appearance of them.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:23

Ver. 23. The apostle here concludes all with prayer, as knowing all his exhortations and admonitions before given would not be effectual without God; and he prays for their sanctification and preservation. Though they were sanctified already, yet but in part, so that he prays for further progress in it to perfection, which he means by *wholly*; a word no where used by the apostle but in this place, and variously rendered; some render it throughout, some, perfectly, some, in every part, some, in all

things, some, fully, and the French, entirely. It may refer to all the parts of holiness, and the degrees of holiness, and to the whole man in the several faculties of soul and body, expressed in the next words by *spirit, soul, and body*, that their whole man may be entirely separated and consecrated to God, offered up to him as a sacrifice, Ro 12:1; and hence we serve that not only the beginning, but progress in grace is from God. The apostle therefore prays for it to God, (whom he calls *the God of peace*, to enforce his exhortation to peace, 1Th 5:3), which confutes the Pelagians, who thought objective grace sufficient to sanctify, or that man's nature needs only at first to be excited by God, and then can go forward of itself, being only maimed, not totally corrupted by the fall. It is true, our faculties co-operate with God, but not of themselves, but as acted by his inherent grace and indwelling Spirit.

And what the apostle prays for:

1. That Christians should endeavour after, which is a progress in sanctification to perfection. We may also note, that true sanctification reacheth to the whole man, spirit, soul, and body.
2. Preservation, which we call perseverance, expressed here both by the subject and term of it. The subject is the whole man, branched into three parts, *spirit, soul, and body*, figured, at least resembled, by the three parts of the temple.

Consider man naturally; and then by *spirit* we mean his superior faculties, as the mind, conscience, rational will.

By *soul*, his sensitive appetite, with the affections and passions.

By *body*, the outward man, the tabernacle and instrument of the soul.

The Jewish rabbins and others think all these are expressed in the creation of man, Ge 2:7; *God formed man of the dust of the ground*, there is his body; *and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life*, or lives, *Nishmath Chaiim, Nephesh Chaijah*, that is, the faculties of the rational soul; *and man became a living soul*, that is, the animal and sensitive life. Neither is properly meant here the Spirit of God, for he saith, *your spirit*; nor the

sanctified part of the soul, for he prays for the preserving of their persons. Only observe, when he speaks of their spirit, he calls it their *whole spirit*. And by the figure zeugma, the word *whole* is to be carried also to *soul and body*; so that as he prayed their whole man might be sanctified, so their whole spirit, their whole soul, their whole body might be preserved; and the same word we find Jas 1:4, where it is rendered *perfect*, alluding to the perfect possessing of all inheritance or lot that belongs to a man. And by preserving, he means not so much the substance of the spirit, soul, and body, to preserve them in being, as to preserve them in holiness. And they are preserved, partly by being delivered from the sinful distempers that are naturally in them, as ignorance, vanity, impotency, and enmity in the mind, reluctancy and obstinacy in the will, inordinacy and irregularity in the affections, disobedience to the law of God and the regular commands of the soul in the body. If these prevail, they will bring destruction; as diseases prevailing destroy the natural life. And partly also by being supplied with that grace whereby they act regularly towards God, and are serviceable to the end of man's being, as supply of oil preserveth the lamp burning. And hereby we may understand, that not only the inferior faculties are corrupted in man's fall, but the superior and the supreme of all, else the apostle need not have prayed for the spirit to be sanctified and preserved, as well as the soul and body. And elsewhere he prays for a renewing *in the spirit of the mind*, Eph 4:23. Next we may consider this preservation with respect to the term of it, *preserved blameless unto the coming of Christ*: the same which the apostle means by being preserved to God's heavenly kingdom, 2Ti 4:18 2Pe 3:14. And those that are preserved to that day, are preserved to the end, and will be found blameless; and their whole man, spirit, soul, and body, being first sanctified, and then preserved, shall be saved and glorified. And the apostle insinuates in the word *αμεμπτως*, *blameless*, that strict discovery that will be made of persons at that day, wherein some will be blamed, and others be found without blame. And herein the apostle may have respect both to the teachers and ministers in this church, and the private members of it, that with respect to their several duties belonging to them they may be found blameless; and though, according to the strictness of the law of God, none can be without blame, yet, those that have been sincere, and have their sin pardoned, and their persons accepted in Christ, may be found blameless in the day of Christ: however, it is that which we should strive after.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:24

Ver. 24. We had in the former verse the apostle's prayer, here his faith; and he speaks it by way of consolation to them, that what he had prayed for God would effect. What need he then have prayed? Because God's decrees and promises, though immutable and infallible, yet are to be accomplished in a way of prayer. Prayer is our duty, and God's decrees and promises are no dispensation from our duty: besides, duties are more known to us than God's decrees; and God decree the means as well as the end. But what is it he saith God will do? It is not here expressed, and the word *it* is not in the original, but only *God will do*, God will effect. He had prayed God would sanctify them wholly, and preserve them blameless, &c.; and this he would do or effect. And he grounds his confidence partly upon God's calling them. For the apostle knew that God's *gifts and calling are without repentance; and whom he called, them he justified, and glorified*, Ro 8:30 11:29. And this the apostle saw in these Thessalonians, by that efficacy of the gospel upon their hearts, that they were effectually called and chosen, as 1Th 1:4; whence he concluded they should be at last wholly sanctified and finally preserved, which is a strong argument against final apostacy from a state of grace; though many that are outwardly called are never sanctified, much less wholly. But of this call the apostle speaks not here, at least not only. And partly also upon God's faithfulness, who had called them. He doth not say, God is able to do it, though that is true, but he is *faithful*, and *will do it*. Those that are effectually called are brought into God's covenant, where perfection and perseverance are promised, and God's faithfulness obligeth him to make good his covenant. It is an act of grace and mercy to call men; but when called, God's faithfulness is engaged to preserve them, and perfect the work begun: as, 1Co 1:8, the apostle tells the Corinthians, God will confirm them, to the end they might be blameless in the day of Christ; and his argument is, for *God is faithful, by whom ye were called*, &c., 1Th 5:9.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:25

Ver. 25. The apostle a little before had prayed for them, now he



begs prayers of them, as he doth of other churches, Ro 15:30 Col 4:3. Ministers and people need each others' prayers, and it is a mutual duty they owe to one another. Ministers are obliged by special office, people by common duty, with respect to the success of the gospel in general, 2Th 3:1, and their own edification by their labours. The apostle, as he did not think it below him to call these Thessalonians brethren, so neither to beg their prayers. Those that stand highest in the church may stand in need of the meanest and lowest; the head cannot say to the foot, I have no need of thee. Those that preach not the gospel, may yet promote it by their prayers; yet this gives no warrant to beg the prayers of saints departed, for which we have no precept, promise, or example, as we have for the other; and what is without faith is sin. It is at the best doubtful whether they know our state below, or can hear us when we pray; and certainly God never required us to pray upon such uncertainties, and it cannot be in faith.

#### 1 Thessalonians 5:26

Ver. 26. The apostle concludes several of his Epistles with greeting, or salutations, as men usually do at this day; sometimes with salutations from himself alone, sometimes from others, either particular persons, or churches which he sometimes names, as Ro 16:6, &c.; 1Co 16:19; and sometimes commends to the saints their saluting one another, as Ro 16:16 1Co 16:20; so here in the text. The persons to be saluted are *all the brethren*, that is, all believers incorporated into the gospel church, under one common Head and common Father; more particularly, those of this particular church. We call men brethren, sometimes upon a natural, sometimes a civil account; and why not much more upon a spiritual account? And as their love should reach to the brotherhood, 1Pe 2:17, so their salutation should reach all the brethren, poor and rich, high and low, bond and free.

*With an holy kiss; εφίληματι αγιω.* The rite or ceremony of men kissing each other was much used among the Jews, and in the Eastern countries, in their salutations, Ge 27:26 Pr 24:26 Lu 7:45; and thence it came to be practised in the churches of Christ as an outward symbol and token of love and friendship; which is not now practised with us amongst men, but is of the same signification with joining of hands; the uniting of lips or hands

together denoting the inward conjunction of the heart. The word in the Greek signifies love or friendship, and is called *a kiss of charity*, 1Pe 5:14. And though the ceremony is ceased, yet that which it signified is to be preserved in all churches, places, and ages. It was practised in the time of Justin Martyr, *Just. Mar. Apolog. 2.*, and Tertullian, *Tertul. de Oratione*; and called *oscutum pacis*, a kiss of peace; and used especially at their meeting together at the Lord's supper, their love feasts, and other solemn assemblies. It is called *a holy kiss*, to distinguish it from the treacherous kiss of Judas, or the lustful kiss of the harlot, Pr 7:13. And why it is not used among us now, we need say only, as concerning washing of feet also: *We have no such custom, nor the churches of Christ*; or, as the apostle speaks, Php 4:8: *Whatsoever things are lovely, and whatsoever things are of good report, &c.*

#### 1 Thessalonians 5:27

Ver. 27. The apostle having now finished the Epistle, lays a solemn charge upon them all, especially their elders and teachers, to have this Epistle published. He now being himself hindered from preaching to them, he sends this Epistle to them to be read to all. He wrote it for public use, and therefore would have none ignorant of it, whereby they might all understand what he had written about his great love and care of them, and the commendations he had given of them, and the instructions, admonitions, exhortations, and comforts that were contained therein, of great use to them all. And his charge herein is in a way of adjuration,  $\text{Ορκίζω υμας τον Κυριον}$ , imposing it on them as by an oath; as Abraham did upon his servant in the case of providing a wife for Isaac, Ge 24:3. And so the high priest said to Christ: *I adjure thee by the living God, &c.*, Mt 26:63; answering to the Hebrew word *Hishbagnti*, I adjure you; So 5:8: *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, &c.* It imports the requiring of a thing in the name and authority of God, with a denunciation of vengeance if it be not done. And all this charge is about the reading of this Epistle; as he commands the Epistle to the Colossians to be read in the church of the Laodiceans, and that from Laodicea to be read to them, Col 4:16, but not with that solemn charge as this is. Hence we may gather the duty of reading the Scriptures in the church assemblies, as the law of Moses was read in the synagogues. And, very early in the

Christian churches there were some appointed to be readers. Julian the Apostate was a reader in the church at Nicomedia. And if this was the first Epistle written by the apostle, as some suppose it, he lays this solemn charge first for the reading of this, to show the duty of the several churches to the rest of the Scriptures, as they should come to their hand. The word of God should dwell richly and plentifully in the people, and therefore reading it is necessary, together with expounding and applying it. And we hence also may prove against the papists, it ought to be made known to the people, even all the holy brethren, and not confined to the clergy; and to be read in their own tongue, for so, without question, was this Epistle read in a language which the people understood. The apostle was not for confining of knowledge, and keeping the people in ignorance, as those are who make it the mother of devotion.

#### 1 Thessalonians 5:28

Ver. 28. Having exhorted them to salute one another, he now sends them his own salutation; not in a lip compliment, as the mode now is, but in a serious expression of the desire of his soul: and this, or words to the same purpose, are his salutation in every Epistle, which he makes to be his *token*, 2Th 3:17. And by *grace* here he means favour and good will, rather than inherent grace: and all blessings which spring from grace, as sometimes all are comprehended under the word *peace*. Yet grace and peace are sometimes in his salutations both joined together. And though here Christ is only mentioned, yet in many other places God the Father is mentioned with him, 2Th 1:2 2Pe 1:2; yea, and God the Holy Ghost also, 2Co 13:14; and where they are not mentioned, yet are all to be understood, for in all works *ad extra* they cooperate. And because grace is so eminently manifested in the whole work of our salvation, therefore the apostle doth still mention it in all his salutations. And with this he concludes this Epistle, and with this St. John concludes the whole Bible, Re 22:21. And the seal added, not to shut up, but confirm the whole is: *Amen*; and is added as the voice of the whole church upon reading the Epistle, as some think, and not by the apostle himself.

*The first (epistle) unto the Thessalonians was written from Athens.* These postscripts to the apostle's Epistles are judged to

be added by some scribes that copied them out, and not by the apostle himself, as might be made evident; and they are not found in any Epistles but in St. Paul's alone. But as it is usual to date letters from the places where they are written, so is this dated from Athens. Hither he was conducted by some brethren after his persecution at Thessalonica and Berea, Ac 17:15, and here we read he stayed for some time; but that from thence he wrote this Epistle, either then, or any time after, is but conjecture; it is more probable he wrote it from Corinth, because he sends it from Timotheus and Silvanus, as well as from himself, and they came to him from Macedonia when he was at Corinth, as Ac 18:5.

## 2 Thessalonians 1:1

### THE ARGUMENT

(δευτερα. This is well called the Second or latter Epistle to these Thessalonians, for so it is; though Grotius would have it the first, if not sent, yet first written.)

The apostle being yet hindered from coming to them, and understanding some mistake of what he wrote in his former Epistle about the coming of Christ, he thereupon sends this Second Epistle; where, after his usual salutation, he gives thanks for them, and hearing of the continuance of their faith and patience under all their persecutions, he glories in them; and then comforts them by arguments taken from the righteous judgment of God, and the different manner and effect of Christ's coming, both to themselves and all the saints that believe, and to their adversaries, and all that knew not God, nor obeyed the gospel; and then prays for the perfecting of their faith to the glorifying the name of Christ, 2Th 1:1-12. But hearing they were shaken in their minds about the time of Christ's coming, as if it should be presently, in the age wherein they lived, he doth vehemently caution them against such a mistake: and tells them of a great apostacy, and the revelation of the man of sin, which innst precede that day, which he doth particularly describe in the manner and effects thereof: but speaks of these Thessalonians with thanksgiving to God, as such as God had chosen, and called to obtain the glory of the Lord Jesus; and then prays for their comfort and establishment, 2Th 2:1-17. He next proceeds to desire their prayers, both with respect to the success of the ministry, and the safety of the persons who were employed therein; and declares his confidence in them that God would establish them, and that they would obey the commandments they had received from them: and gives them some further commandments about such in the church as did walk disorderly; and so concludes his Epistle with prayers for their peace, and recommending them to the grace of Jesus Christ, 2Th 3:1-18.

### Chapter Summary

2Th 1:1,2 The salutation.

2Th 1:3-5 Paul certifieth the Thessalonians of the good opinion which, he had of their faith, love, and patience.

2Th 1:6-10 Of the righteous judgment of God in punishing their enemies, and recompensing their sufferings,  
2Th 1:11,12 and of his prayers that God would fulfil his gracious purpose in them.

Ver. 1,2. These two verses are the same as in the former Epistle, and therefore I proceed.

### 2 Thessalonians 1:3

Ver. 3. The apostle begins this Epistle as the former, with thanksgiving; only there he gave thanks for their faith, hope, and love, here he only mentions their faith and love; there for the efficacy of their grace, here for the growth of it. There he said only: *We give thanks* here he addeth:

*We are bound, and as it is meet;* as if he was obliged to give thanks for them now somewhat more than before, perceiving their grace did not only yet abide, notwithstanding all their persecutions, but increase and grow. But the apostle's thanksgiving here respects particularly these Thessalonians' growth. Not only the beginning, but growth of grace is from God; else why doth the apostle give thanks for it? As Php 1:6. Hence he is styled *the God of all grace*, 1Pe 5:10, weak and strong, first or second. The manner of its growth, whether by infusion of new degrees, as the first grace is infused, or by co-operating only with it, and so it is increased by exercise, is a question I leave to the schoolmen. However, growth is a duty, and commendable in churches. And the apostle mentions particularly:

1. Their growth in faith; and that a great degree, *υπεραυξανει*, it *groweth exceedingly*; it grows over and above, above the ordinary rate of growth, or the common pitch of faith. Their progress was from faith to faith, their assent to the doctrine of the gospel grew more firm and rooted, and the persuasion of their happy state in Christ was much confirmed and strengthened, with a more confident reliance on him; or their faith was extended to more objects by the increase of their knowledge.

2. Their increase in love; which he also expresseth by an emphatical word, *πλεοναζει*, which signifies increasing to more and more; their love grew in the habit, and abounded in the fruits of it. And this love he sets forth by the universality of it, and the reciprocalness of it, it was *the love of all to each other*; they all did love, and were all beloved of one another: there was no schism among them, as in some other churches.

Faith and love are two sister graces, and are always more or less together; only in the order of nature, faith is first, and worketh by love; but not first in time; and then afterwards, when it brings forth, love is *fides formata*, faith formed, as the papists speak. Hence some have said, that there was not one hypocrite or false Christian in this whole church. Now the apostle and his fellow ministers hereupon judged themselves bound to give thanks. Christians are obliged to give God thanks for the grace of God in others as well as in themselves; and especially the ministers of the gospel, for the people that have been converted by them, or are committed to them. Hereby the apostle's joy was increased at present, and his future glory might be advanced also.

## 2 Thessalonians 1:4

Ver. 4. In the former verse the apostle gave thanks for them, in this he glories in them; he gave thanks for them to God, and glories in them before men. Wherein Silvanus and Timotheus are to be understood as joined with him herein. Glorying includes in it high estimation of a thing, rejoicing in it, high commendation of it, and applauding ourselves in it; and it must be some great thing, either really or in opinion, and in which some way or other we ourselves are concerned. And glorying is a good or evil according to the matter or object of it. To glory in our *wisdom, strength, riches*, Jer 9:23; to *glory in men*, 1Co 3:21, in our own *works*, Ro 4:2, in what we have received as if not received, 1Co 4:7, *after the flesh*, 2Co 11:18, or in our *shame*, Php 3:19; all this glorying is evil. But to glory in God, Isa 41:16, *in his holy name*, 1Ch 16:10, *with God's inheritance*, Ps 106:5, in the knowledge of the Lord, Jer 9:24, in the cross of Christ, Ga 6:14, *in tribulation*, Ro 5:3, in Christ Jesus, 1Co 1:31, in hope, Heb 3:6, and of the success of the ministry in the church's growth, and their faith and patience, as here in the text; all this glorying is good: as

elsewhere he boasted or gloried in the Corinthians' liberality, 2Co 9:2; but his glorying in them was not to exalt himself, but to magnify the grace of God, and provoke other churches to imitate them.

*In the churches of God;* where the excellency of grace is known, and the commendation of it will be received and imitated; and not amongst carnal men, who scoff at true goodness. And it was the apostle himself, and Silvanus and Timotheus, that thus gloried in them. It adds to persons' commendation, when it is by men of great knowledge, wisdom, and goodness. And it was by such as well knew them, and understood their state; and being instruments in their conversion, were more concerned to glory in them than any other apostles or ministers. And their glorying in them, as it respects what he said of them in the former verse, so what he further adds in this, which is their *patience and faith in all their persecutions and tribulations*. Persecutions are properly sufferings for righteousness' sake: tribulations, any kind of suffering, as some distinguish. And it seems they had many of both, when he saith *all*, &c. And yet they endured them, that is, not only suffered them because they could not cast them off, but in the sense of the apostle James, Jas 5:11: *Behold, we count them happy which endure*; which is a suffering out of choice, and not mere necessity, as Moses did, Heb 11:25, when sufferings stand in competition with sin, or the dishonour of the Christian profession. Sufferings in themselves are not desirable, and the apostle did not glory in their sufferings, but in their *faith and patience*. As he before joined faith and love together, so here faith and patience; and as love springs from faith, so doth Christian patience, whereby it is distinguished from patience as a mere moral virtue found among the heathen, either that of the Stoics, Peripatetics, or Platonists. Faith and patience are well styled the two suffering graces, and therefore here mentioned by the apostle when he mentions their sufferings. Faith as it depends upon God, and sees love under afflictions, believes his promises, looks at the recompence of reward, &c., so it supports under suffering. And patience, as it keeps down passion, and quiets the soul under its burden, makes it to sit lighter, and gives advantage to the exercise of that grace and reason, whereby a Christian is strengthened under his sufferings. Now hereupon the apostle glories in them, as men are apt to do in the heroic acts of great conquerors; or the captain of an army, in the valiant performances of his soldiers.



## 2 Thessalonians 1:5

Ver. 5. These words seem to follow by way of argument, to comfort these Thessalonians under their sufferings:

1. By what they *manifest*, viz. *the righteous judgment of God*; they are a plain indication of it, or demonstration, as the word is used by logicians. And by *judgment* we must not here understand the judgments or afflictions God inflicts in this world; so that when God doth not spare, but chasten his own children, it is a token of his righteous judgment. But rather under understand it of the last judgment: when we see the righteous suffering such wrongs and injuries from wicked men, and they go unpunished, we may argue thence that there is a judgment to come; we cannot else well vindicate the righteousness, wisdom, goodness, and faithfulness of God in his governing the world: as Solomon so argued, when he saw so much unrighteousness in the very seat of justice; *I said in my heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time for every purpose and work*, Ec 3:16,17. And this judgment is called here *righteous judgment*, by way of eminency, as it is expressed by one word, δικαιοκρισια, Ro 2:5, (for all God's judgments are righteous):
  - (a) Because the wicked will then meet with justice without mercy, which is not so in any present judgments.
  - (b) Justice will then be clearly manifested, which now lies obscure, both with respect to the righteous and the unrighteous.

And in this sense the words carry an argument of comfort to the saints, under their present unjust, sufferings from their enemies. As to the same purpose the apostle speaks to the Philippians, Php 1:28.

2. The other argument of comfort is from the result of their sufferings, the great advantage which will arise out of them; they will be hence *accounted worthy of the kingdom of God*: not by way of merit, as the papists say; the Greek word in the text, in its usual acceptation, will not favour that opinion, it signifies no more in the active voice, than the Latin word *dignari*, which we English to deign, or vouchsafe; and yet we may allow the word to signify more here, not only that this kingdom

may be vouchsafed, but that ye may be meet or worthy to receive it; not that all their sufferings could deserve this kingdom, for the apostle saith, Ro 8:18: *I reckon the sufferings of this present time not worthy of the glory,* &c. There is no proportion between them, and so they cannot merit it, yet God may account those that suffer for this kingdom worthy of it, according to the grace of the new covenant in Jesus Christ, and as it hath a congruity with the nature of God, and his faithfulness in his promises; and so our translation renders the word, not that ye may be worthy of the kingdom of God, but *accounted worthy*; God of his free grace will account them worthy. The kingdom of God is propounded to men in the new covenant upon certain conditions, and those that perform them have a worthiness of right, as Re 22:14, but not of merit. But God enables men to perform the conditions, so that there is nothing on our part properly meritorious; yea, when we have performed them, yet our worthiness is to be attributed to Christ, and God's grace, and not to ourselves, else man would have whereof to glory. The Scriptures call *eternal life the gift of God*, Ro 6:23, and attributes salvation to grace, Eph 2:8. We must allow a worthiness only that is consistent with grace; but when we have done all we must say: *We are unprofitable servants.* Lu 17:10; and after all we have done and suffered for the kingdom of God, must pray, as Paul for Onesiphorus, that we *may find mercy of the Lord at that day*, 2Ti 1:18.

*For which ye also suffer*; the sense either respects their enemies, that it was upon the account of this kingdom that they persecuted them, having nothing else justly against them; or else their own aim and intention in suffering, it was for the kingdom of God. And hence we may learn that his kingdom is worth suffering for, and that in some cases it cannot be obtained without suffering: and he that then refuseth to suffer will be accounted unworthy of it; as he that doth suffer for it, as these Thessalonians, hath, upon the account of God's covenant, and the merits of Christ, not only the grace and mercy, but the justice and faithfulness, of God engaged to bestow it upon him. And also that we may and ought in our sufferings look to the reward, as Moses did, Heb 11:1-40.

## 2 Thessalonians 1:6

Ver. 6. By these words the apostle doth illustrate his argument for a

judgment to come, taken from the persecutions and tribulations of the saints. It is of necessity that God should be righteous, and recompensing is a necessary act of righteousness; but we yet see it not, therefore there is a judgment to come. And this recompence is both to the righteous and the wicked, the persecutors and persecuted. The former he here speaks first of: and to recompense tribulation to them that trouble the people of God, is a just recompence; it is according to the law of retaliation, whereof we have some instances in this world, as in Pharaoh, Adoni-bezek, Haman, &c.; and many others, whereof we have a large account in the history of the church and her persecutors; but this will be more fully verified in the judgment to come, called *the revelation of the righteous judgment of God*, Ro 2:5. And God's recompence to them is here called *tribulation*; so Ro 2:9. And though in other scriptures the punishment of the wicked is set forth by other names, yet here it is called by this name; not only for elegancy of speech, by a paranomasia, but to parallel their suffering to their sin; they brought tribulation upon others, and God will bring it upon them. And under this word is comprehended all the torments of hell, which our Saviour expresseth by *weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth*, Mt 8:12, which is the extremity of tribulation. And it is said here, God will recompense, &c., which should teach us not to revenge ourselves; as Ps 94:1 Ro 12:19. And this the apostle sets before these Thessalonians by way of comfort; not that we ought to rejoice in men's destruction merely for itself, but in the honour that will thereby arise to God's justice, and in the favour, honour, and salvation God will vouchsafe to his people herein.

## 2 Thessalonians 1:7

Ver. 7. Having spoken of the recompence of the troublers, here of the *troubled*: and in this we may observe a parallel, as in the former. The recompence to these is expressed by *rest*; in the Greek, dismissal, or cessation from labour or trouble; as Heb 4:9: *There remaineth a rest to the people of God*, where the word is, keeping a sabbath, importing a rest from labour, as this text doth speak of a rest from trouble. And though the word *rest* is properly negative, yet under it the apostle comprehends all the felicity of the future state; elsewhere called a crown, a kingdom, an inheritance, glory, salvation, eternal life, yea, it contains in it the perfect satisfaction of the soul in the fruition of God, &c. And this is said to be given them by way of recompence, as tribulation is to their troublers;

though there is no parity between their trembles and the rest, that is, their recompence, yet it is a proper recompence; and therefore the grace and mercy of God will be much manifested therein, though it is said to come from God's righteousness in the text. The righteousness of God dispenseth both these recompences; but yet the righteousness in both is not alike; ακριβοδικαιον, strict justice, dispenseth the one, and the punishment of the wicked riseth from the nature of their sin, and the merit of it; but it is only επιεικεια, equity, that dispenseth the other, and that not so much with respect to the nature of the saints' duties or sufferings, as the promises and ordinance of God, and the merit of Christ for them. And this rest the apostle sets forth before them, under a twofold circumstance:

1. *Rest with us. Us,* the apostles and ministers of Christ, we and you shall rest together; as we have partaken of troubles together, so we shall of rest. And you shall enjoy the same felicity with the apostles themselves, in the same state of rest. And though now place doth separate us, yet we and you shall rest together, which will the more sweeten this rest to you and us.
2. *When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven;* the other circumstance. This is the time of their entering into this rest. Christ's coming is sometimes called his επιφανεια, *appearing*, 2Ti 4:8, or shining forth; sometimes, φανερωσις, his manifestation, 2Co 4:2 1Jo 3:2; sometimes, αποκαλυψις, his revelation, as in the text. Now the heavens contain him, but he will come in person, and his glory shine forth: though before that their souls shall be at rest in heaven, and their bodies in the grave, yet not till then shall their persons be at rest. And as Christ himself is already entered into his rest, Heb 4:10, so he will come again to take his people into the same rest with him.

## 2 Thessalonians 1:8

Ver. 8. But his coming will be upon another account to many others, which is said here to be to take vengeance, for which purpose he is said to be revealed *with his mighty angels*, or angels of might; and elsewhere, with all his holy angels. They are said to *excel in strength*, Ps 103:20, or to be mighty in strength, and have the name of *might*, Eph 1:21. And here called *mighty*, because as the work Christ comes upon is great and

difficult, so he will have instruments sufficient for it, and none shall be able to hinder. And though he hath power himself sufficient, yet the angels must attend him to solemnize this great day, and to be serviceable to him in the work thereof, which, as it will respect the saints in their resurrection from the dead, and their gathering from the four winds, and separating them from the ungodly, as tares from the wheat and sheep from the goats, so the taking vengeance also in this day of the Lord's wrath, which the apostle, especially, is in these verses speaking of, is the work they shall be employed in. As also *in flaming fire*, or the fire of flame, a Hebraism. Fire is the most dreadful of all the elements, especially flaming, to denote the great wrath of that day, and its breaking forth, as fire when it flameth. God's wrath is often expressed in Scripture by *fire*, De 32:22 Ps 97:3, &c.; Jer 21:12 Heb 10:27; and as that which attendeth the great day of Christ, Da 7:10 1Co 3:13 2Pe 3:7,12. And whether this flaming fire is material, or only metaphorical; if material, whether the present elementary fire, which shall descend, and be joined with that which shall break forth out of the bowels of the earth, as in Noah's flood the waters were from above and from beneath; or whether it shall be some new created fire, and the action of it natural, or supernatural, I shall leave it to the schoolmen. Yet it is generally conceived it is a material fire; else how can *the elements* be said to *melt with fervent heat*, and the world and the works thereof burnt up, as the apostle Peter speaks, 2Pe 3:10; and parallels it with the deluge in Noah's time, which was with material water. But yet it is to be a manifestation of the fire of God's wrath, and an instrument of it also in the destruction of ungodly men, 2Pe 3:7; for it is said in the text, Christ is revealed in it to take vengeance. Vengeance is an act of justice; it is a retribution of evil for evil, the evil of suffering for the evil done: and God claims it as belonging to himself, Ps 94:1 Ro 12:19 Heb 10:27; and it is mentioned in the parable, Lu 18:7,8, as one great work of Christ, at his coming, to avenge the elect.

*On them that know not God*; these are the persons upon whom he will execute vengeance: by whom some think are meant the heathen, who had not the gospel. Those that had not the gospel, yet had means to know God, by the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence, which if they did not improve, but remained ignorant of God, will fall under this vengeance. And by knowledge here is not meant so much a speculative as a practical knowledge of God; and so such as do not fear, love, and honour God, may be said not to know him. As the Gentiles, who are said to know

God, Ro 1:21, but yet not glorifying him as God, and living in idolatry, are said not to know him, Ga 4:8 1Th 4:5. And as God tells the king of Judah, that to do justice and judgment is to know him, Jer 22:16. And Eli's sons, though priests, yet are said not to know the Lord, 1Sa 2:12.

*And that obey not the gospel;* which may be taken in conjunction with the former words, and then such as obey not the gospel are the same with *them that know not God*. As God is not known aright but by the gospel, so they only know God aright by the gospel who obey it. Some are ignorant and know not God, though they live under the gospel. Or, such as have knowledge, yet are not obedient. Knowledge and obedience ought to go together. And this obedience is called the obeying of the gospel. The gospel hath not only promises to be believed, but precepts to be obeyed. Yea, faith itself may fall under its precepts, and then those that believe not the gospel do not obey it: as the same word in the Greek signifies to believe and obey. And as the gospel hath some peculiar precepts and institutions, so all the commands of the moral law are comprehended in it; and the equitable part of the judicial law, yea, and the ceremonial law also, where that which is moral is figured by it; and so far as the gospel commands, men ought to obey; and disobedience appears to be a great evil, when it will expose men to this great vengeance. So Ro 2:8,9: *To them that do not obey the truth, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, &c.* Not to obey the law of nature, exposed the heathen to God's wrath, Ro 1:18; and to disobey the law of Moses, the Jew, Ro 2:2 Heb 2:3 10:28 Heb 12:25; much more not to obey the gospel. Christ is said here especially to take vengeance of such at his coming. Gospel sins are most heinous and most provoking, and will be most severely punished.

## 2 Thessalonians 1:9

Ver. 9. This is the vengeance before spoken of; it is here called *destruction*, not an annihilation, and cessation of being, but of all well-being: and elsewhere called *death*, Ro 6:23, and *the second death*, Re 20:6, which imports also not all ceasing of life, but all comfort of life. And it is not the body alone, nor the soul alone, but their persons, *who*, &c.; and as fire is a great destroyer, so Christ's coming in flaming fire brings their destruction. And this destruction is *everlasting*: the fire that destroys them is never quenched, Mr 9:43,44. As the fire of the altar, which was a

fire of mercy, was not to go out, so the fire of Tophet burns for ever, Isa 30:33, which is the fire of justice; and God living for ever, and his justice never satisfied, their destruction is for ever. They sinned in their eternity, and will be punished in God's eternity. There was a remedy provided in the gospel for men, but rejecting the gospel, and not obeying it, there remains no hope; their destruction is everlasting. And this destruction is called punishment, *δικην τισουσιν poenam luent*; not the chastisement of a Father, as the temporal affliction of God's people. It proceeds from vindictive justice; it is taking vengeance. And this punishment is twofold, punishment of loss and sense, and from both together proceed perfect destruction.

*From the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;* the preposition *from* in the first expression noting separation, in the second noting efficiency. Others conceive efficiency to be meant in both, their destruction proceeding from the face of Christ frowning on them, frowning them into hell, (which smiling upon others, will bring their salvation), as well as from his glorious power manifested against them to destroy them, Ro 9:22. And yet others interpret the preposition in both places to note separation, both from the face of Christ, which the saints shall behold and rejoice in for ever, and from his glorious power; which will work in some for their complete salvation in the day of his appearing, as it had done before in their first conversion, and sanctification. The destruction of the wicked will be from or by the power of Christ; but by this *glory of power* may be meant only that power which will bring glory both to the bodies and souls of the saints, and this the wicked shall have no experience of in that day.

## 2 Thessalonians 1:10

Ver. 10. This speaks the different manner of Christ's coming towards the saints and believers; not in flaming fire to destroy them, as in the former verse; but to be *glorified* and *admired* in them. He saith not to be glorified by them, by their adoring and praising of him, but in them. He hath a personal glory, wherein he will appear glorious, and another mystical, in his saints. The Head will be glorified in the members, as they are glorified in and from the Head: as the sun hath a lustre and glory in the moon and stars besides what it hath in its own body, as Col 3:4: *When Christ, who is*

*our life, shall appear, we also shall appear with him in glory.* The glory God gave his Son, he hath given it to his saints, Joh 17:22, and will put it upon them, and be glorified in it in the day of his appearing; as God is said to have *glorified himself in Israel*, Isa 44:23.

*And to be admired;* and this glory will be so great, that he shall be admired in it, as the word signifies. It will set the saints themselves, and all the angels of heaven, yea, the whole world, a wondering. Small things do not cause admiration, but what is great and we cannot comprehend, that we admire. And Christ will not only be admired by them, but in them; the wonderful love, grace, mercy, wisdom, and faithfulness of Christ towards them will be admired. To raise up such a number of poor, sinful, despicable worms out of the dust into such a sublime state of glory and dignity, will be admirable.

*Because our testimony among you was believed;* and that these Thessalonians might have the comfort of this particularly, he having spoken of *saints*, and *those that believe* in general, the apostle applies this therefore to themselves in way of parenthesis: q.d. Christ will be admired in all that believe; and ye are among them that believe; ergo, &c. And the doctrine of the gospel he had preached, he called it his *testimony*, as Joh 3:33 1Co 3:6; which implies it was not an invention of his own, he did not speak of himself, as the word implies: and this testimony found different entertainment, some believed it not, others believed it and received it; upon which account the Thessalonians are commended and comforted here by the apostle. The Syriac read the words in the future tense, without a parenthesis; Christ will come to be thus glorified and admired in his saints, because our testimony among you concerning it shall be believed or confirmed *in that day*; he means the day of Christ's last coming, which he called *the day of the Lord*, 1Th 5:2; and because it is so great a day, is therefore by way of emphasis called *that day*.

## 2 Thessalonians 1:11

Ver. 11. The apostle here again mentions his praying for these Thessalonians, as he had often mentioned it in the former Epistle. And the reason might be, because he was absent from them; they might the more need his prayer, and by telling them of it, he thereby assures them that he



forgot them not. And the prayer he here makes for them hath reference to the discourse he had been upon, as appears by this word  $\text{Εἰς ο}$ :

*Wherefore, or for, or in order to which, we pray, &c.*

*This calling;* which is figuratively to be understood of the blessed state they were called to, for the calling itself they had received already. And so it is the same in effect mentioned before, 2Th 1:5, called there *the kingdom of God*; or to have Christ *glorified and admired in them*, 2Th 1:10. And elsewhere termed *the prize of the high calling of God*, Php 3:14. And that God would *count them worthy of it*; as he had used the same expression before; only there it was mentioned with respect to their sufferings, here in a way of prayer. He encouraged them under their sufferings, that they might thereupon be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, and now prays that God would count them worthy; their worthiness arising more from the gracious account of God than their own sufferings. A Christian's calling hath duty annexed to it, whereupon the apostle exhorts the Ephesians to walk worthy of it in discharge of those duties, Eph 4:1,2. And it hath a state of blessedness belonging to it, which is meant here; and none shall partake of it, but those whom God shall count worthy of it. But God's account is not according to the strictness of the law, but the gracious indulgence of the covenant of grace; but yet his prayer implies such a walking according to this covenant, as whereby they might be counted worthy of the blessed state they were called unto.

*And fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness:* the gracious purposes of God towards his people are called often his good pleasure, as Mt 11:26 Lu 12:32 Eph 1:5,9; and the same is meant Isa 53:10: *The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand*; the Hebrew word *Chephets* being of the same signification with the Greek word here used. Christ shall accomplish the gracious purposes of God towards his people. And called his *good pleasure*, partly because they have no reason out of the sovereign will of God, and they are such also as he hath great complacency and delight in; and though they are executed in time, yet they were in his heart from everlasting, and therefore called *eternal*, Eph 3:11. And I find purpose and good pleasure put both together, Eph 1:9. It is here called *the good pleasure of his goodness*, which is not a tautology, as it may seem to be, but to make his expression of God's grace the more emphatical; or rather, to show that this good pleasure of God towards his people ariseth out of

his goodness. God hath purposes of wrath towards some, but such cannot be called the good pleasure of his goodness. Goodness is that excellency in God, whereby he is ready to communicate good to his creature; but by goodness here is meant God's special goodness, which is peculiar to his people whom he hath chosen. To *fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness*, is to accomplish all those good purposes that were in his heart; some whereof were already fulfilled in their calling, adoption, justification, and sanctification begun, but the whole was not yet fulfilled, which he therefore here prays for; so that as their election, and their first conversion, were not from any worthiness or foresight of faith in them, but the good pleasure of his will, so the progress and perfection of their salvation was also to be from the same good pleasure.

*And the work of faith with power:* by *the work of faith* is either meant faith itself, which is the work of God, or else the fruits of faith; and so work is here taken for works or operations of faith. And the apostle addeth this in his prayer, to show that we are not saved only by God's good pleasure without faith, such a faith that worketh. And to perfect their salvation is a fulfilling the work of faith, for perseverance and progress towards perfection is from the work of faith. Or it may particularly refer to their patience and constancy under their sufferings, which he had before spoken of, and which is a peculiar work of faith. But because faith is not sufficient of itself, and the work of faith may fail, he therefore addeth, in power, or *with power*; that is, the power of God, which is his Spirit, so called, Lu 1:35. Our faith and the power of God are here joined together, as 1Pe 1:5. The same power that first worketh faith, afterwards co-worketh by it and with it.

## 2 Thessalonians 1:12

Ver. 12. *That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him;*  $\sigma\omega\varsigma$ . All expositors agree that these words contain in them a final cause, as the Greek word imports; and so understand them as the ultimate end of the apostle's prayer for them; he had prayed for things that did concern their salvation, but he looked further, which was, that thereby the name of the Lord Jesus may be glorified in them. The glory of Christ and the saints' salvation are wrapt up together; and though they are to look immediately to the latter, yet ultimately to the former. But whether

the apostle means the glorifying Christ in this life, or the life to come, is a question. I rather think the words refer to the life to come, when the name of Christ shall be for ever glorified in the salvation of his people, when all the good pleasure of God's goodness shall be fulfilled upon them, they having been kept in the faith by the power of God unto the end, through Jesus Christ; and then also they shall be glorified not only by him, as we may read the text, but in him, in being received into a participation of the same glory with Jesus Christ, and by their union with him are glorified in him, Joh 17:22 Col 3:4 1Jo 3:2. And when this is done, then have they received the prize of their calling, then is the whole good pleasure of God's goodness fulfilled, then is the work of faith accomplished; which things the apostle saith he prayed for in their behalf.

*According to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ:* what the apostle before called the good pleasure of God's goodness, he here calls his *grace*, and he adds the grace of Christ, because the grace or favour of both are so eminently manifested in these things, whereby not only the name of God, but of Christ also, shall be glorified, as he said before; and that it may be glorified in them according to his grace, that is, greatly glorified; and they glorified in him according to the grace of God and Jesus Christ, that is, greatly glorified, as we may further understand the words; the grace of God being exceeding great towards them in Jesus Christ. And hereby the apostle would exclude all thoughts about their own merit, 2Th 1:11.

## 2 Thessalonians 2:1

### Chapter Summary

2Th 2:1 Paul warneth the Thessalonians against the groundless surmise that the day of Christ was near at hand,

2Th 2:3-12 showing that it would be preceded by a great apostacy, and that the man of sin would be first revealed, and by his wicked impostures draw many into perdition.

2Th 2:13-14 He repeateth his good hopes concerning them,

2Th 2:15-17 exhorting them to stand fast in his doctrine, and praying God to comfort and stablish them

in all goodness.

Ver. 1. The apostle now comes to refute the opinion that some at least of these Thessalonians had received, as if the day of Christ was near at hand. He having said, 1Th 4:17: *We which are alive and remain shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, &c.*, then some might think his coming would be in the apostle's time, or some other way they might fall into this conceit; and some do conceive this was the chief reason of the apostle's writing this Epistle. And because this mistake might be of dangerous consequence, therefore he is very vehement and particular in refuting it: for hereupon they might be brought to question the truth of the whole gospel when this should not come to pass: they might be unprepared for the sufferings that were to come upon the church; their patience might fail in expecting this day, and their minds be doubting about the coming of Christ at all. This opinion also would much narrow their thoughts about Christ's kingdom, and the enlarging of the gospel among other Gentiles; and the profane might abuse it to sensuality, as 1Co 15:32: *Let us eat and drink, &c.* That he might the better persuade, he calls them *brethren*, and beseeches them, &c. And next, conjures them, using the form of an oath, *by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.* We conjure men either by what they love, or by what they fear; as they would enjoy the one, or avoid the other. The coming of Christ was what they desired and rejoiced in, as that which would bring rest to them, and tribulation to their adversaries; and by this he doth therefore beseech or adjure them: and therefore we must understand this of Christ's last coming, as the word *παρουσια*, in the text, is still applied to this coming, 1Th 2:19 3:13, &c.; and not of his coming to destroy the Jewish church and state, for that coming was at hand.

*And by our gathering together unto him;* at his last coming, when the whole body of Christ shall be gathered to him, to meet him in the air, 1Th 4:17. And then the sense is: As ye hope ever to see such a blessed meeting, and to be of that number, so take heed of this opinion. Yet some read the text otherwise, because in the Greek it is not *δια*, but *υπερ της παρουσιας*, and so the same with *περι*, not *we beseech you by*, but concerning *the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him*, as denoting only the subject matter treated of. I prefer the former; and so the apostle conjures them not to be soon shaken in

mind, but to stand fast in the truth about the doctrine of Christ's coming, which they had been taught, and very lately taught, and therefore it was the greater evil to be *soon shaken*; as the apostle upbraids the Galatians, Ga 1:6, and God the Israelites, Ps 106:13.

## 2 Thessalonians 2:2

Ver. 2. *That ye be not soon shaken in mind*; σαλευθηναι it is an allusion to the waves of the sea that are tossed with the winds, as false doctrines tend to unsettle the mind, as Eph 4:14 Heb 13:9; and to be established in the truth is often commanded, 1Co 16:13 Php 4:1 Col 1:23, &c. And by *mind* here is either meant the faculty itself; and then the apostle beseecheth them to keep company with their understanding, not to be removed from their mind: as false doctrine is said to bewitch men, Ga 3:1, and to make men foolish, 2Th 2:3; as madness is called *amentia*, or *dementia*, as that which doth as it were unmind men, and corrupt the mind, and pervert the judgment, 2Ti 3:8,9, as Jannes and Jambres deceived the people by their enchantments, as the apostle there mentions. Or else, the sentence and judgment of the mind; and then he beseecheth them to hold fast the right judgment they had entertained about Christ's coming, and not to hesitate and waver about it; so the word is taken, 1Co 2:16.

*Or be troubled*; θροεισθαι, alluding to soldiers affrighted with a sudden alarm. We find the word, Mt 24:6 Mr 13:7, used in this allusion. And the opinion of Christ's coming to be at hand might occasion this trouble in them, either lest they might be surprised by it, and unprepared for it, or by judging themselves mistaken in their former apprehensions about it; and those false teachers that broach this opinion, did also perhaps so represent this coming in such terror as to cause this trouble; as false teachers in general are such as are said to cause trouble, Ga 1:7 5:12; though the coming of Christ is in itself rather the saints' hope and joy, than ground of trouble, as 1Th 1:10 4:18, &c. And it may be some did pretend for this opinion the Spirit, or some letter from the apostle, either the former Epistle to them, or some letter that was forged, or some word he had spoken, or preached. And those words *as from us* may refer to all these: the Spirit, *as from us*; or word, *as from us*; or letter, *as from us*.

*Neither by spirit*; some extraordinary revelation of the Spirit, which the

false teachers pretended to, especially in the primitive times, when they were more ordinary; as in the church of Corinth, 1Co 14:6, and the churches of Galatia, Ga 3:2,5: some would pretend the Spirit that called Jesus accursed, 1Co 12:3, and therefore the apostle bids: *Try the spirits*, 1Jo 4:1. Simon Magus pretended to it, and had his Helene, Montanus his Paraclete, Mahomet his Dove: and the man of sin pretends to this Spirit, though it is in truth *the spirit of antichrist*, 1Jo 4:3, and the spirit of Satan, in the next chapter of this Epistle, as was foretold that in the last times there would arise *seducing spirits*, 1Ti 4:1; as there was in the times of the Old Testament false prophets that pretended to the Spirit, as 1Ki 22:24 Mic 2:11. And the very heathen would pretend to divine oracles, inspirations, and revelations, especially their kings and lawgivers, as Numa Pompilius, Lycurgus, &c.; and still there are enthusiasts who make these pretences.

*Nor by word*; δεα λογου, whereby some understand calculation by astrological rules, that the day of Christ was at hand; others render the word reasoning; and so from the declining of the vigour of the earth, and the nearer approach of the sun to it, as Ptolemy observed in his time, or some other natural causes, they reasoned the coming of Christ and the dissolution of the world to be nigh at hand: but rather we understand by it some word from the apostle's own mouth, which was pretended he had spoken or preached some where, though not written. As the Church of Rome pretends to traditions, besides the written word, upon which they ground many of their superstitions and idolatries, not warranted by Scripture. As the Jews had a second *Mishneh*, and their *Cabbala*, collected in part from the sayings of Moses, or some other of their prophets, which they did not write.

*Nor by letter*; some letter that was sent to them from some other hand, or else by some forged letter as from the apostle himself, or his former Epistle misunderstood.

*As that the day of Christ is at hand.*

*Objection.* But is it not said that the day of the Lord, or the coming of the Lord, is at hand, 1Co 10:11 Php 4:5 Jas 5:7,8 1Pe 4:2?

*Answer.* The word used in those places differs from this in the text; for it

signifies either that which is actually present, or very near it, as Ro 8:38 Ga 1:4; as that which is to be done presently is spoken of as done, Joh 17:4 2Ti 4:7. Or those places mean his coming is at hand, as to God's account of time, though not as to man's. And in that sense Christ saith: *Behold, I come quickly*, Re 22:7. But the error the apostle warns them of is, as if the coming of Christ would be in the age in which they lived. The apostles all said that the coming of the Lord was at hand, but their right meaning was perverted to a false sense, as seducers usually do.

### 2 Thessalonians 2:3

Ver. 3. *Let no man deceive you:* here the apostle urgeth again his charge against this error, though in other words, and begins his arguments to refute it. He had adjured them not to be shaken, and here he cautions them against being deceived, for the one makes way for the other; so also not to be troubled, 2Th 2:2, for troubled minds are apt to be made a prey to seducers. And the caution in the text proves that their shaking and trouble did arise from some deceivers that were amongst them, rather than any misunderstanding of their own of what he wrote in the former Epistle about Christ's coming. To be shaken in mind is bad, hut to be deceived is worse, for it is a going out of the path, as the word signifies; and thercfin'e his caution against it is universal, both as to persons and ways: Let no man deceive you, though he pretend to revelations, or be of the greatest reputation in the church.

*By any means;* either of era craft, flattery, pretending love, or plausible arguments, or misrepresenting our words, or forging of letters, or misintering our Epistle to you or any other part of Scripture, or feigned miracles, &c. Then he enters the arguments to confute it, which are.

1. The general apostacy.
2. The revelation of the man of sin.

Neither of these are yet, nor will be in this age; and yet *that dog shall not come* till these both first come.

*For that doth shall not come, except there come a falling away first;* there

is a supplement in our translation, for in the Greek it is only, *for, except there come a falling away first, &c.*, or an apostacy, a recession, a departing, or a standing off, as the world imports; so that apostacy may be either good, when it is from evil to good, or evil, when it is from good to evil: it is always used in this latter sense in Scripture. Again, it is either civil or spiritual: civil, as when people fall off from the civil government they were under, and so some would interpret the text of the defection from the Roman empire, the east part from the west, and the ten kingdoms that arose out of it; which was the opinion of Hierom, Epist. ad Algasiam. But the apostle writing to the church speaks not of civil government, and the affairs of state, and speaks of such an apostacy which would give rise to the man of sin, and the revelation of him. And this man of sin riseth up in the church, not in the civil state; and the consequence of this apostacy is giving men up to strong delusions to believe a lie, and then follows their damnation; and the cause of it is said to be, not receiving the truth in the love of it; so that it is not a civil, but a spiritual apostacy, as the word in Scripture is always (I suppose) so taken. And it is not of a particular person, or of a particular church, but a general apostacy of the church, though not of every individual; that church that is afterwards called *the temple of God*, where the man of sin sitteth, and is exalted above all that is called God; which cannot be in any particular church; and would not the apostle have specified that particular church? Neither is it some lesser apostacy which may befall the best church; but such as would be eminent, called *η αποστασια*, that apostacy, greater than that of some believing Jews to Judaism, or of some Christians to Nicolaitanism, which some think is meant. Much less can it be Caius Caesar, as Grotius interprets, or any one person, for the apostle saith not apostate, but apostacy; else a man of sin could not rise out of it, and exalt himself above all that is called God, and worshipped. It is an apostacy from sound doctrine, instituted worship, church government, and true holiness of life, as may be further considered afterwards. Neither is the apostacy all at once, but gradual; for out of it ariseth a man of sin, who grows up to this manhood by degrees; and sin and wickedness are not completed at first, as well as holiness. Much less is this apostacy a falling off from the Church of Rome, as some papists affirm, and make the Reformation to be the apostacy, which was a return from it. Doth the man of sin rise out of the Reformation? Did any of the first Reformers oppose and exalt themselves above all that is called God, or is worshipped? Or, as God sat in the temple of God, &c.? Was any of their coming with all power, and signs, and lying wonders? Or did any of



them forbid to marry, and to abstain from meats, &c.? Which is the character our apostle gives of this apostacy, 1Ti 4:1-3. Neither is the Mahometan religion this apostacy, for Mahomet sitteth not in the temple of God. Neither is it in the falling of the converted Jews from the Jewish church to the gospel church; the apostle would never call that an apostacy. And that man of sin be revealed: the next argument is from the revelation of the man of sin; this is also to precede Christ's last coming: it is a Hebraism. A warlike man is styled a man of war; a bloody man, a man of bloods; a deceitful man, a man of deceit, &c.: so a man eminent in sin is here called a man of sin; not only personally so, but who doth promote sin, propagate it, countenance it, command it. See Platina, Sigebert, Blonetas, Beuno Usprengensis, Matt. Paris. In sins of omission, forbidding what God requireth; in sins of commission, requiring or allowing what God hath forbidden. In sins of the first table; corrupting God's worship by superstition and idolatry, taking God's name in vain by heartless devotion, dissembling piety, dispensing with perjury and false oaths, taking away the second commandment and the morality of the fourth commandment, and making men's faith and obedience to rest upon a humane authority, &c. In sins of the second table; to dispense with duties belonging to superiors and inferiors; with murder, adultery, fornication, incest, robbery, lying, equivocation, &c. And besides all these, promoting a false religion, and destroying the true, by fines, imprisonments, banishments, tortures, poisons, massacre, fire, and faggot. And this man of sin is not a single person, but a company, order, and succession of men; because all are acted by the same spirit, therefore called a man; as *the man of the earth*, Ps 10:18, is all men of an earthly spirit, and *a man of the field*, Ge 25:27, is men whose minds and employments are in the field. Or, it is a sinful state. As the civil state of the four monarchies in Daniel is represented by four single beasts, and the antichristian state by a beast rising out of the sea, Re 13:1; so by *man of sin* is meant a sinful state, which though it consisteth of many people and nations, yet, being under the influence and government of one man, may be also styled the man of sin upon that account; *impietatis Coryphaeus. Moulin*. And because the sin of the whole community is chiefly centred in him, and springs out from him; a man in whom is the fountain of all sins. *Hierein ad Algasiam*. And the sin of this state is called *a mystery of iniquity*, 2Th 2:7, and so differing from the sin in all other political states; and therefore may well be judged to be the same with the whore sitting on many waters, that hath *mystery* written in her forehead, Re 17:1,5. And as no expositor takes the whore to be meant

of a single woman, and the true apostolic church is represented by a woman in travail, Re 12:1,2, why then should we take the man of sin to be a single man, as the papists do? viz. a Jew of the tribe of Dan, that shall erect his kingdom and temple in Jerusalem, seduce the Jews, continue three years and a half, make great havoc of the church, to be opposed by Enoch and Elias, and is to come a little before the end of the world. Ridiculous! Neither call this man of sin be Simon Magus and his followers, for he was revealed in the apostle's time, seeing the mystery of iniquity belonging to this man of sin began to work in the apostle's days, as 2Th 2:7, and he is the same whom St. John calls *antichrist*, 1Jo 2:18; and the *spirit of antichrist* began to be in the world in his time, 1Joh 4:3; and the nations are to be made drunk with the cup of his fornication, and to serve and obey him, &c., Re 13:8 17:4; all which requires more time than is allotted by them: but they set him a great way off, that none may suspect him to be among themselves; but he that will compare the Church of Rome in the apostle Paul's times with what it is now, and the doctrine of the council of Trent with that laid down in his Epistle to the Romans, may say: How is the faithful city become a harlot! And this man of sin is to *be revealed* also, which shows that he is not a single person, not yet born: revealing relates not so much to a person, as a thing; in particular to *the mystery of iniquity*, mentioned 2Th 2:7: his revealing is either *quoad existentiam*, or *apparentiam*. The former is meant here, and the latter 2Th 2:8. He grows up into an existence, as the apostacy grows, as vermin grows out of putrefaction. As the church's purity, faith, love, holiness declined, and as pride, ambition, covetousness, luxury prevailed, so he grew up: and which was the direct point and time of his full revelation in this first sense is conjectured by many, but determined by none; it is most generally referred to the title of Boniface the Third, to whom Phocas granted the style of oecumenical bishop, and to the Church of Rome to be the mother church. But as the apostacy brings forth this man of sin, so as he riseth he helps it forward; so that he both causeth it, and is caused by it. As corruption in doctrine, worship, discipline, and manners brought him forth, so he was active in corrupting them more and more.

*The son of perdition*; another Hebraism, where sometimes that which any way proceeds from another, as its cause, is called its son, as sparks the sons of the coal, Job 5:7, and branches sons of the tree, Ge 49:22, and the learner the son of the teacher, Pr 3:1; and sometimes that which a man is addicted to, as a wicked man is *the son of wickedness*, Ps 89:22. Again,

that which gives forth what it hath in itself, as the branches of the olive trees giving oil are called the sons of oil, Zec 4:14; and in the text, the man of sin is *the son of perdition*, as Judas is called, Joh 17:12: and he is so either actively, as he brings others to destruction, and so may be called *Apollyon*, Re 9:11; or rather passively, as devoted to perdition; as Re 19:20, *the beast and false prophet* are both cast into the lake of fire and brimstone; and *the beast that was, and is not*, is said to go into perdition, Re 17:11. The destroyer of others both in soul and body will be destroyed himself: first, morally, by the word and Spirit, as 2Th 2:8; and then judicially, by God's revenging justice in this world, and that to come. The apostle, at the very first mentioning him, declares his destiny; at his first rising and revealing, mentions his fall and ruin.

## 2 Thessalonians 2:4

Ver. 4. A further description of this man of sin, by his opposition and exaltation.

*Who opposeth*; or, ο αντικειμενος, the opposer; or rather, opposing, expressed in the participle of the present tense, denoting a continued act, or that which he bends himself strongly to. But against what? The same that he exalteth himself above, as some conceive; but the grammar will not well admit that sense, and we should not so restrain it; and therefore we will take the word indefinitely, as expressed in the text. But we may well conceive, it is Christ himself whom he opposeth; as his name given him by the apostle John doth evidence, when he is called *antichrist*, or *the antichrist*, one that is against Christ; not that he openly and professedly opposeth him, but as Judas kissed his Master, and betrayed him: see those that have written of antichrist, as Philip Nicholas, Whitaker, Danaeuns, Chamier, Moulin, Junius, &c. It is iniquity in a mystery. He serveth Christ, but it is to serve himself upon him. He acknowledgeth him in all his offices, and yet doth virtually deny and oppose him in them all: called antichrist, as opposite to the unction of Christ: Christ signifies anointed, and so he opposeth him in the offices to which he is anointed, while he owns his natures. He professeth himself a "servant of the servants of God", and yet persecutes, curseth, proscribes, and killeth them, opposing Christ in his members. He maketh *war with the saints*, Re 13:7. He hath two horus like a lamb, and speaks as a dragon, 2Th 2:11; speaks lies in

hypocrisy, 1Ti 4:2. And then he is described by his exaltation; υπεραιρομενος, exalted, which is well supplied, he *exalteth himself*: it is not from God. He *exalteth himself*, or lifteth himself, *above all that is called God*, though not really and essentially God. The apostle well knew that in the Old Testament magistrates were called *gods*, Ps 82:1,6; and 1Co 8:5: *There be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth*. Magistrates and rulers are of several degrees; some inferior, some superior; some supreme, as kings and emperors; but he exalteth himself above them all, and that not only in spirituals, by excommunications, but in civils, by deposing kings, disposing kingdoms, yea, making emperors to wait at his gate, hold his stirrup, prostrate themselves to kiss his toe, and then to tread upon their neck, as Alexander the Third did to Frederic Barbarossa; and this not condemned as the extravagancy of some particular persons, but allowed and justified by the doctrine and doctors of the Romish Church. And Bellarmine, de Rom. Pont. lib. 5. c. 8, gives it as the reason why the pope would not come to the council of Nice, lest if the emperor should come thither he should attempt to sit above him. So that by these two words in the text, the apostle describes him both in his enmity and pride, opposition and exaltation. Observe, first: He assumeth to himself a higher power than those that are only called gods; theirs is human, his is Divine; theirs on the bodies or estates of men, his over the conscience; theirs only to the living, his to men's souls after death. Next, he makes himself like God, and is *as God*, as the king of old Babylon said, *I will be like the Most High*, Isa 14:14. As God's residence of old was in the temple of Jerusalem, so *he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God*: not that temple that was built by Solomon, and afterwards rebuilt, and to be built again, as the popish doctors speak: for it is now destroyed, and if it be built again by this man of sin, as they say, at his coming, would the apostle call that *the temple of God*? 2Co 6:16 Re 3:12, &c. But it is a spiritual temple, as the church is called, 1Co 3:16,17. So Augustine, Jerome, Hilary, Chrysostom, understand it. And he is said here to sit, to have here his *cathedra*. The apostle speaks of him as a bishop, whose episcopal see is called a seat, or *cathedra*; and here he sitteth *as God*: the popish writers give the pope that and suchlike titles, *Dominus Deus noster Papa, Idem est Dominium Dei et Papae, Tu es alter Deus in Terra*, "Thou art another God on earth." *Concil. Later. sess. 4*. And as God he maketh laws to bind the conscience, and dispenseth with laws natural and moral; pardons sin as he pleaseth, past, present, and to come; can deliver souls out of purgatory, and translate them to heaven: so that this man of sin is not to

be looked for among the Turks, pagans, or infidels. He *sitteth in the temple, the church, of God*; not that it can be the true church where he thus sitteth and acteth, but rather the synagogue of Satan; but that which he calleth so, and which beareth that name, and which before the falling away was really so, Ro 1:8. As Jerusalem is called *the holy city* after it had lost its holiness, Mt 4:5; and *the faithful city, when become an harlot*, Isa 1:21; and Mount Tabor a *holy mount*, 2Pe 1:18; because once so: or called so according to men's opinion; as idols, that are nothing, are yet called *gods*, 2Ch 28:23 1Co 8:5. Some read the words, εἰς τὸν ναὸν, *in templum Dei*, as we say, *in amicum*, i.e. *velut amicus*, he sitteth for the temple of God, as if he himself was the temple and church of God. So Aug. de Civ. Dei, lib. 20. c. 19. And so some of our protestant writers, applying it to the pope, who, as the head of the church, hath the whole church virtually in himself, and doth exercise all church power.

*Showing himself that he is God*; not saying it with his mouth, as CECumenius saith, but making such a show before men; though Bellarmine interprets it of an open boasting and vaunting himself to be God, which, saith he, the pope doth not; but by pretended miracles, signs, and wonders, by pardons, indulgences, canonizing saints, dominion over princes and kingdoms, he shows himself as a God before men, and claimns a power to be judged of no man, and to be judge of all men. *A seculari potestate non solvi posse nec ligari pontificem, quem constat a Constantino Deum appellatum, cum nee Deum ab hominibus judicari manifestum sit. Decret. distinct. 96. c. 7.* Yea, lastly, he exalteth himself above God himself, when he maketh the Scriptures to derive their authority more from the pope's canonizing, than God himself; and without it no man is bound to believe them. *Decret. lib. 2. tit. 23.* Again: If the pope should err by commanding vice and forbidding virtue, the church was bound to believe vice to be good and virtue to be evil. *Bellarm. lib. 4. de Summo Pont. c. 5.* And it is frequent among their divines and canonists to say, that the pope can dispense against the apostles and the Old Testament, and the Scriptures are inferior to his decrees, and without the authority of the church are a nose of wax, paper, and parchment, &c.; so that upon the whole, as John's disciples asked concerning Christ: Art thou he that should come, or must we look for another? So, may we not say to the pope concerning antichrist: Art thou he, &c.? I will speak boldly, either there is no antichrist, or the bishop of Rome is he. *Chamier. 1.16. c. 8.*

## 2 Thessalonians 2:5

Ver. 5. The apostle tacitly upbraids them for their forgetfulness. To forget the things that have been taught us, is a great evil: Solomon often cautions against it, Pr 3:1 4:5; and it is often reproved, Heb 12:5 Jas 1:24; and the contrary required, Mal 4:4 Joh 16:4 Jude 1:17 Re 3:3. David hid the word in his heart, Ps 119:11, and the virgin Mary kept the angel's sayings, Lu 2:19. The apostles did take care to tell the churches of the apostacy that would come, and of false prophets and teachers that would arise, as Paul the elders of Ephesus, Ac 20:29,30, and Peter, 2Pe 2:1, and St. John of the coming of antichrist, 1Jo 2:18; and more fully, though obscurely, in the book of the Revelation; and the apostle here in this verse minds these Thessalonians that he told them of the coming of the man of sin before the coming of Christ, so that they should not have been shaken in their minds about Christ's coming in that present age. And they told the churches of these things, that they might not be surprised by them, or offended at them, when they came.

## 2 Thessalonians 2:6

Ver. 6. *And now ye know what withholdeth:* the apostle it seems had told them, as of his coming, so of what at present withheld the revealing of him. And what this was is difficult to know now, though it seems these Thessalonians knew it: there are many conjectures about it. This I shall say in general:

1. It was something that the apostle thought not safe openly to declare in writing; else he would not have written of it so obscurely.
2. It was both a thing, and a person; a thing, *το κατεχον*, in this verse, *that which withholdeth*; and a person, as in the next verse, *ο κατεχων*, *he who letteth*.
3. It was also such a thing and such a person as were to be removed out of the way, not totally, but as they were hinderances of this revelation.

Expositors, both popish and protestant, pitch upon the Roman emperor and

empire as most probably meant here by the apostle; and therefore he wrote not plainly, lest by writing of the taking away that empire, which the Romans thought to be eternal, he might stir up their hatred against the Christians. Some understand it of the removing only the seat of the emperor from Rome to Constantinople, whereby the bishop of Rome had opportunity to grow up into greater power. The popish writers understand it of the total destruction of the empire, which because they see not yet done they conclude the man of sin is not yet revealed. Our protestant writers understand it only of such a weakening of the empire and imperial dominion, as gave the bishop and clergy of Rome advantage to rise up into power both spiritual and secular; as some learned writers have given an account thereof. When the empire was broken into ten kingdoms, the imperial power of the emperors was much weakened; and being afterwards united in the pope as an ecclesiastical monarch, he grew up, and the imperial power declined, the grandeur of them both could not stand together. And this is the beast with the ten horns, and ten crowns upon the horns, which is spoken of, Re 13:1; whereupon this beast is worshipped, and the voice is: *Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?* 2Th 2:4. Some of the ancient fathers had this sense of the text: see Tertul. de Resurrect. 1. 4. c. 24. Chrysost. in locum. Aug. de Civ. Dei, 1. 19. c. 20. Jerome, when he heard of the taking of Rome by Alaricus, expected the coming of antichrist not far off. Whereupon the ancient church did pray that the Roman empire might continue long, that his coming might be delayed: *Tertul. Apol. c. 32,39*. But it is now evident how it is fallen from what once it was. The eastern part is under the dominion of the Turk; the western divided into ten distinct kingdoms under distinct governments; and in Germany, where it is most remaining, the empire is little more than titular; and Italy and Rome wholly in the pope's possession: and hence this man of sin hath been long since revealed.

*That he might be revealed in his time:* as God appoints seasons for all his works, so for the revealing of him, as also for his ruin.

## 2 Thessalonians 2:7

Ver. 7. *For the mystery of iniquity doth already work;* the way was prepared by degrees for the man of sin, before he came actually to be revealed, or constituted in his complete existence; and this was by the

working of the mystery of iniquity. A mystery is something in general which is abstruse, intricate, and not easily discerned. And there are mysteries in doctrine, and in practice; mysteries of godliness, and mysteries of iniquity; mysteries of the kingdom of God, and of the devil's kingdom. So there are *the deep things of God*, 1Co 2:10, and *the depths of Satan*, Re 2:24. The mystery ushering in the man of sin is a mystery of iniquity. It is not open sin and wickedness, but dissembled piety, specious errors, wickedness under a form of godliness cunningly managed, that is here meant: see the book called *The Mystery of Jesuitism*, or the *Provincial Letters*. And it is a mystery that worketh; it doth exert and put forth itself, but secretly, as a mole which worketh under ground. And its working is not against the being, providence, and attributes of God, or natural religion; but to undermine Christianity in the peculiar doctrines, worship, and practice of it. In doctrines are brought in *privily damnable heresies*, 2Pe 2:1. In worship, inventions and commandments of men, under pretences of greater reverence, devotion, and humility, Col 2:22,23. In practice, dispensations to moral impieties under colour of service to the catholic church. And this mystery, saith our apostle, already worketh; in the false doctrines of the false teachers of his time, in the traditions and inventions of men obtruding themselves into the worship of God in his time, in the affectation of pre-eminence in the church in his time, and making merchandise of the gospel in his time, and gain godliness; and in mingling philosophical notions with the simplicity of the gospel, and gratifying the flesh under a form of godliness, and pretence of gospel liberty. And it was not among the heathen, or the Jews, but among the professors of Christianity, that this mystery was then working, as I suppose the apostle meaneth. And when the man of sin was fully revealed all these corruptions did centre in him, as sinks in the common sewer; the lesser antichrists in the great antichrist.

*Only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way:* the idolatries and persecutions of the heathen emperors must be taken out of the way, to make way for those that arise under a Christian, or rather antichristian, state, the dragon giving his seat, spirit, and power to the beast. And the power that was in the Roman emperor, whether heathen or Christian, must be taken out of the way to make room for the exaltation of this man of sin. For notwithstanding all corruptions; in doctrine, worship, or practice which might be introduced before, yet he is not fully revealed till he hath his jurisdiction and secular power also in his hand. And then



this mystery of iniquity is arrived to its height; which St. John saw written in the forehead of the great whore, Re 17:5: *Mystery, Babylon the great, &c.*, and which, some have said, was written anciently in the pope's mitre.

## 2 Thessalonians 2:8

Ver. 8. *And then shall that Wicked be revealed:* this revealing I think differs from that mentioned before, 2Th 2:3; he is first revealed, as I said: *quoad existentiam*, when he comes forth into being, and then *quoad apparentiam*, when he comes to be discovered. And this I suppose is meant here, because his destruction is mentioned as following upon it; for the discovering of him is the first step to his ruin, and here is called by another name. At his first rising he is a man of sin; but after he hath violated the laws of God and the laws of Christ by setting up his own, he is well called  $\alpha\nu\omicron\mu\omicron\varsigma$ , that lawless one; and now he that pretended so highly for Christ is discovered to be antichrist. The mystery of iniquity that before lay hid comes to be revealed, God enlightening the eyes of many learned ministers and princes, yea, and of multitudes of people herein; the Scriptures, before shut up in an unknown tongue, being now translated to the understanding of the common people; those that were *made drunk with the wine of her fornication*, Re 17:2, now put away their wine from them, as Eli said to Hannah; and the kings and kingdoms that gave their power to the beast, now come to *hate the whore*, &c., the time being come for the fulfilling the words of God herein, Re 17:17. And this revelation is signified and foretold when the angel said to John, *I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her*, Re 17:7. There is need of a Divine revelation to know the mystery of iniquity, as well as the mystery of godliness. And the woman is the same with the man of sin mentioned before, once the spouse of Christ, but now by her idolatry become a whore, and divorced from him; said to be also *that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth*, Re 17:18. By the understanding these things this wicked one comes to be revealed.

*Whom the Lord shall consume;* which is not done all at once; his consumption goes before his destruction. As Jezebel, the prophetess who seduced the servants of God to commit fornication, is said to be cast into a bed of languishing, Re 2:20,22; as he rose up by degrees, so shall he be consumed gradually. His power declines by degrees, both civil and

ecclesiastical, and the authority he had got both in and over the consciences of men. The seven vials are the seven last plagues, which do gradually consume him. And this is said to be done by the Lord himself, which is the Lord Jesus. He that made war with the Lamb is overcome by the Lamb, Re 17:14; though many instruments may be employed herein; for he is said to have those with him who are called *chosen and faithful*; and it belongs to him, as all power of heaven and earth is given to him, to save his people, and to destroy his adversaries; as it is said of him, Ps 97:3: *A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about*. As he is a refreshing, directing light to his people, so a consuming fire to his adversaries. The stone cut out of the mountain without hands, Da 2:34, smites the image in the time of the fourth monarchy, when Christ came into the world, and in the latter end of it, under the antichristian state, it is broken in pieces.

*With the spirit of his mouth*; as was prophesied of him, Isa 11:4: *With the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked*, even this wicked one here in the text, Re 18:8 19:15. And this, as some interpret, he shall do with ease, as by a word speaking; or by a word of command, saying: Let it be done, and it shall be done. Or, as we may read it, with the spirit of his lips, because of the power or spirit that goes along with his word. But this breath of Christ's mouth Cajetane and others understand of the word of the gospel, which is the breath of Christ's mouth in the mouths of his ministers, called *the everlasting gospel*, Re 14:6, which an angel flying through the midst of heaven is said to have, to preach to them that dwell upon the earth; and then followed by another angel, saying: *Babylon is fallen, is fallen*, 2Th 2:8. The mystery of iniquity will be unveiled by the clear preaching of the word; and the primitive pure institutions of Christ, and doctrines of the gospel: will be vindicated from the antichristian corruptions and innovations. And the spirit of Christ going forth with the gospel, will make it effectual hereunto. These are the rod of his strength, whereby he rules in the midst of his enemies, Ps 110:2, and whereby he shall consume this man of sin. Nations and people will fall off from him as they come to understand the truth by the word preached.

*And shall destroy*; after is consuming follows his destruction, καταργησει, the word *destroy* here signifies to abolish, enervate, to make of no force; and so used often in the New Testament: sometimes applied to the law, Ro 3:31, sometimes to the body of sin, Ro 6:6, sometimes to

persons to whom Christ will not be effectual, Ga 5:4; here to the man of sin: so that whatever remains there may be of him in the world, they shall be without any efficacy or power: his jurisdiction shall be abolished, his keys shall not be able to open or shut, the edge of both his swords shall be quite blunted, his triple crown shall fall off his head, his purgatory fire shall be put out, his images shall lose their veneration; the spell of the cross shall be detected, the intercession of saints shall be found to be a fiction, infallibility shall be found to be a deceit, supremacy of the church shall fall to the ground; the rivers of his large revenues shall be dried up, &c., and *the beast that was, and is not, and yet is*, Re 17:8, shall now utterly cease to be.

*With the brightness of his coming*: the breath of his mouth wasted him, and the brightness of his coming destroys him. Some interpret this of Christ's personal coming to judgment, which will be with great brightness, as Mt 24:27: *As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall the coming of the Son of man be*; coming in the glory of heaven, and every eye shall see him; and of his coming he spake 1Th 4:1-18, and in this chapter also, as that which was not so near at hand as some imagined. And without question his coming will destroy him, if not destroyed before, as well as the rest of the wicked, 2Th 1:9; but whether judgment may not first proceed against the antichristian state, and those that have sinned under the gospel, is a question. It is sometimes mentioned particularly with respect to them: as in the parable of the tares and wheat, Mt 13:1-30, of the ten virgins, and the talents, Mt 25:1-46. And the beast and false prophet are cast into the lake of fire, Re 19:20, before the general judgment, mentioned Re 20:12. So that at Christ's personal coming his judgment will, as some conceive, begin here, and then proceed to the rest of the world; whereupon many assign some great length of time to Christ's stay upon earth, and judging the world. Others take *the brightness of his coming* in a spiritual sense, for a clearer manifestation of Christ in the world. As the kingdom of antichrist, or of this man of sin, is founded in darkness, so the brightness of this coming will dispel and destroy it. With respect to his eternal generation, Christ is said to be *the brightness of his Father's glory*, Heb 1:2; but this is a brightness with respect to men. And though he hath come in his Spirit to enlighten his church from the beginning of the world, and more eminently after his ascension, yet this will exceed all the former, and is peculiarly styled *the brightness of his coming*. And so they expect this destruction of this man of sin before

Christ's coming to judgment; for if it be the same with the fall of Babylon, mentioned in the Revelation, many things are to be done here upon earth after that, before Christ's last coming, and they mention the calling of the Jews, the destruction of those enemies called Gog and Magog, the coming down of the new Jerusalem from heaven, which is some glorious state of the ctmrch here upon earth. However, the apostle here mentions nothing of a destruction by the material sword; what princes may do of different religions upon a civil account, I do not know, but as this man of sin rose out of the apostacy of the church, so he will not be consumed and destroyed but by a return from it, which is done by the breath of Christ's mouth, and the brightness of his coming. But yet, by some instruments or other, God will avenge the blood of his servants upon this man of sin in the time and way appointed of him.

## 2 Thessalonians 2:9

Ver. 9. The apostle still continues his discourse about this man of sin. He had declared whence he arose, and to what height of power, and the manner and place of his exercising it, and what opened him the way to it, and also his destruction, with the means of it. But he thought it needful to explain particularly the mauner of his rising into all this power, and preserving himself in it, and the persons over whom he doth exercise it.

*Whose coming is after the working of Satan; Κατ' ἐνεργειαν* Christ's coming is in power, and so is his: Christ comes with the Spirit of God, and his is with a spirit also, but it is of Satan: and the Spirit of God worketh with Christ in his coming, and the spirit of Satan with the man of sin in his coming; which implies either the principle of this working in his coming, it is the devil; or the similitude of it, it is like the working of Satan. If in the first sense, it shows by what spirit the antichristian church was first formed, and by which it is still informed and acted; as in natural bodies the matter is formed and informed by the spirit within it. The true church hath the Holy Spirit, that forms it into a spiritual temple, Eph 2:21,22; the false church hath the spirit of the devil, forming it into the synagogue of Satan, Re 2:9. The dragon is said to give the beast his *power, seat, and great authority*, Re 13:2; and this dragon is the devil in the heathen empire, who being cast out of his seat and power when the emperor became Christian, found the antichristian church, and here exercised that power and authority

which he did formerly in the imperial seat of the heathen emperors; whence we may see whence all the furious zeal and bloody cruelties appearing in the popish church do spring, notwithstanding all their outward shows of devotion. If we take the words in the latter sense, then his coming is like the working of Satan; either with great power and energy, as the word imports: the Greek word is often used in a good sense; for God's working in the heart, Php 2:13, for the working of the word, 1Th 2:13, for the working of the heart in prayer, Jas 5:17: or by the same methods; by pretences of piety and devotion, as Satan transforms himself into an angel of light; or by keeping men in blindness and ignorance, so doth Satan by setting before men secular grandeur, and the pomp of the world, as thus Satan dealt with our Saviour, Mt 4:1-11; or by suggesting lies instead of truth, so he dealt with our first parents, and is called a liar from the beginning.

*With all power; εν παση δυναμει.* Besides that energy of Satan that works inwardly in this man of sin, which was mentioned before, he hath outward strength or power wherein he comes; which may be here meant. He hath the secular power to assist him, the kings of the earth giving their power to the beast; and we read of ten horns upon his head, which are the emblems of strength and power, Re 13:1; whereupon it is said: *Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?* Re 13:4.

*And signs, and lying wonders:* some, by the figure called hendyadis, read it, by the power of signs and lying wonders: but not properly. Observe how Satan is God's ape; God confirmed the gospel with *signs and wonders*, Ro 15:19; *God bearing them witness, with signs and wonders*, &c. Heb 2:4; and Satan brings this man of sin into the world in the same manner: God did it to confirm the truth, but Satan to countenance a falsehood. But though he comes with signs and wonders, yet not properly with *miracles*, as the Greek word is rendered in Heb 2:4; because though the devil can work the one, he cannot the other: he can by his great natural knowledge and experience improve natural causes to their utmost, but he cannot effect things above all possibility of nature, which is the same power as creating. The schoolmen give their distinction between wonders and miracles, which is not needful here to insert: all miracles are wonders, but all wonders are not miracles; and yet are esteemed miracles when their cause is not known. The Romish legends are full of stories of miracles wrought to confirm their false doctrines of purgatory, of relics, invocation of saints,

&c.; which might be wonders really wrought by the devil; such as were wrought by Jannes and Jambres in Egypt, and by Simon Magus, and Apollonius Tyaneus, &c.; who used magic arts, and the people, not knowing them in their causes, might judge them miracles. And being wrought for such ends, they are termed signs, for a sign is any thing that is used to make signification, whether it be a natural or artificial, an ordinary or extraordinary sign; used either for a good end, as those shown by Christ and the apostles, or for a bad end, as those used by this man of sin. People are apt to be affected with signs.

*The Jews*, saith the apostle, *require a sign*, 1Co 1:22, as they often desired Christ to show them a sign, and therefore this man of sin comes with signs. Some signs are only for representation, as the sign of the cross, and the images of Christ, and of his death and resurrection, &c.; and he comes in these: others are for confirmation, which are either real miracles, or such as seem so; and he comes in these latter also, which are here called *τερασι ψευδοις*, *lying wonders*, or wonders of a lie, Hebrew. Though the Greek word is oft used for a real miracle, yet not so, here; for miracles are the effects of a Divine power only, Ro 15:19 Heb 2:4, and not diabolical. And called *lying wonders*, either because they are used to confirm a lie, or because they are not real, but feigned wonders; impostures, to cheat the people, and make them wonder; whereof we have account in Gregory's Dialogues, and in Paulus Diaconus, and others; and yet such miracles as these the papists boast of as marks of their church to be true, though they are here by the apostle made the marks of the man of sin. And Christ foretells of false prophets that should *show great signs and wonders, to deceive, if possible, the very elect*, Mt 24:24. See De 13:1 Re 13:13,14.

## 2 Thessalonians 2:10

Ver. 10. *And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness;* or, deceit of unrighteousness, unrighteous deceit, or deceitful unrighteousness. And it is universal, *all*. It is unrighteousness managed with great subtlety to deceive; and so the same with the mystery of iniquity, mentioned before, or the mystery of unrighteousness, as we may read it. All sin is unrighteousness, whether against God or man, as all virtue is comprehended in righteousness. The apostle here means unrighteousness so cloaked and covered, that men discern it not, but are deceived by it: as the Pharisees,

who devoured widows' houses, and for pretence made long prayers; and so also they tithed mint and cummin as exactly religious, built the sepulchres of the prophets, made broad their phylacteries, would not eat with unwashen hands, &c. The like we find in the Church of Rome, as I mentioned before, where men are ambitious, covetous, cruel, superstitious, &c., and all under a pretence of righteousness, and for honour to Christ and the church: make use of Peter's keys to open rich men's coffers; and for a sum of money, to absolve men in this world, or to redeem them out of purgatory in the other world; which is a mere cheat, &c. Thus comes this man of sin, and by such ways he hath advanced himself.

*In them that perish:* this shows who they are that are deceived by him. Reprobates are often so described, 2Co 2:15 4:3; and it is the same as elsewhere signifies damnation. The word signifies men that are *lost*, so used Mt 18:11, or *destroyed*, 2Co 4:9. They are such as have not their names written in the book of life, Re 13:8; and who shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth for ever, Re 14:10,11.

*Because they received not the love of the truth:* and the apostle gives the reason why they are thus deceived. He saith not they had not received the truth, but the love of it, and so hold it not fast, but are carried away with the general apostacy. Truth is either natural, which the heathen had, and detained in unrighteousness, Ro 1:18; or supernatural, from Divine revelation. This is meant, for he speaks not of heathens, but Christians; not the world, but the church.

*That they might be saved:* and the truth here meant is saving truth, as the gospel is called *the word of truth*, Eph 1:13 Col 1:5; for had they received it in love they might have been saved, but for want of that they perish; so that it is unsound, notional professors that are carried away by the man of sin, and deceived by him. Truth, if it be not received into the heart as well as the head, will not secure against apostacy or popery, nor prevent perishing. And the amiableness that is in gospel truth calls for love, as the certainty of its revelation calls for faith; and had they so received the truth they might have been saved.

## 2 Thessalonians 2:11

Ver. 11. *And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion:* we had account in the former verse of such as are deceived by the man of sin, of their sin, and here of their punishment. They were first deluded, which was their sin; and God sends them strong delusion, and that is their punishment. They did not receive the truth in the love of it, which was their sin; and therefore are given up to believe a lie, which is their punishment. Had they received the truth aright, they might have been saved; but not receiving it, they are damned. And they were said to be such as perish, and their perishing is here called damnation. So that though God is not the author of sin or falsehood: *Deus non est auctor cujus est ultor*, Fulgent.; yet he may in justice give men up to them, which the apostle here calls God's sending, &c.; which imports either:

1. Tradition, delivering men to Satan to tempt and deceive.
2. Desertion, withholding or withdrawing that grace that might preserve them.
3. A judicial permission, God purposing not to hinder men to fall into that sin or delusion which he seeth their own hearts incline them to.

God concurs to evil, not *positive*, but *privative*; not *efficienter*, but *deficienter*; Schoolmen. God in Scripture is often said to do that which he permits to be done; as in the case of Joseph's selling unto Egypt, Ge 45:7, David's numbering the people, 2Sa 24:1, compared with 1Ch 21:1; and the ten kings giving their power to the beast, by God's putting it into their hearts, Re 17:17: and it is not a bare permission, for what evil God permits, he decreed to permit it; and he decreed the circumstances attending it, and the end to which he would order and dispose it, and the degree to which it should break forth. They were deceived into error, and God gave them up to it. And it did work with great efficacy; which either relates to the man of sin, that did lead them strongly into it, or to them that were led by him. When error doth vitiate the life, and one error begets another, and makes men violent against the truth, then it is the efficacy of error. And thus God doth judicially punish sin with sin, and delusion with delusion; and then they are always most operative, and most incurable. But men fall not presently under these judicial acts; men first refitse to see,



before God sends blindness, and first harden their own hearts, before God hardens them. These in the text first refused to receive the truth, before they were given up to believe a lie: see Ro 1:24. So that both God and this man of sin, and themselves also, are concerned in these evils; but they sinfully and unrighteously, but God judicially and in righteousness.

*That they should believe a lie:* and the lie they were given up to believe, is a doctrinal lie: false speaking is a lie in words, hypocrisy is a lie in fact, and error is a lie in doctrine, Ho 11:12 Ac 5:3. Some by *lie* here suppose is meant the lying wonders before mentioned; and this sense need not be excluded, but I rather interpret it of false doctrine, as that which stands opposite to the truth before mentioned, and again mentioned in this verse. Sometimes idols are called lies, Isa 44:20; sometimes, the things of the world, Ps 4:2; sometimes, the great men of the world, Ps 62:9; sometimes, false divinations, Eze 22:28 Zec 10:2; sometimes, false prophesyings and predictions, Jer 14:14 23:25,26; and sometimes, false doctrines, as 1Ti 4:1,2, where we read of false prophets, who shall arise in the last time, and speak *lies in hypocrisy*, &c. And false apostles are said to be *liars* upon that account, Re 2:2. And such are many popish doctrines, which the apostle here probably refers to. What is transubstantiation but a lie? Purgatory, infallibility of the church, mediation of saints, their *opus operatum*, &c.? Men must be strongly deluded to believe such doctrines, and it is mentioned as a great judgment of God upon them to believe such lies, as it is a great mercy to believe the truth, especially if we consider what follows upon it.

## 2 Thessalonians 2:12

Ver. 12. *That they all might be damned,* or condemned. The Greek is, judged, but often translated as in the text; the simple verb being taken for the compound: so Joh 3:17 1Co 11:29 Jude 1:4. It is true a man may be judged and not condemned, but the judgment of the wicked is condemnation; and damnation is here mentioned either as the event, or the effect of their believing lies, or as the purpose of God in sending them strong delusions. They are first justly punished with spiritual judgment, and then eternal, and God is just in both; whence we see that there are some errors in judgment which are damnable. As we read of *damnable heresies*, 2Pe 2:1, or heresies of destruction; such are many in the Romish

Church; and the apostle speaks of such, Col 2:19, *not holding the Head, &c.*; not meant of a total rejection of Christ, but of voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels, mingled with the true worship of the gospel; and such cannot be saved.

*Who believed not the truth:* where we have a further description of these persons who are to be damned, which is added by the apostle, either to clear God's justice, as in sending them strong delusions to believe a lie, so also in their condemnation; or to assign the cause why they believed a lie, because they *believed not the truth*. Those will easily be brought to believe a lie who believe not the truth; and the belief here mentioned is that of assent, yet such an assent as is operative and practical, which they had not; for it was said before, they received not the truth in the love of it.

*But had pleasure in unrighteousness;* did not only practise, but had great complacency and contentment of mind in it, as the Greek word imports, and so had rather believe a false doctrine which will countenance their practice, than the truth which doth condemn it: see Pr 10:23 Ro 1:32. By *unrighteousness* some expositors understand false doctrine, or error, because it is set in opposition here to truth, as sin is set in opposition to it, Joh 8:46; and that the apostle hath peculiar reference to the corrupt doctrines of Simon Magus and the Nicolaitanes, that gave liberty to the lusts of the flesh. But why not rather to the doctrines of the man of sin, which he had been before speaking of? I rather take the word in the largest sense, so all sin is unrighteousness; and the apostle St. John saith, *all unrighteousness is sin*, 1Jo 5:17, where unrighteousness is expressed by  $\alpha\nu\omicron\mu\iota\alpha$ , a word which imports transgression of the law, as in this text by  $\alpha\delta\iota\kappa\iota\alpha$ , a word which signifies injustice. So that we see here an erroneous mind and a vicious life going together. And when sin is come to this height, that men take pleasure in it, it makes them ripe for damnation. And how well these things agree to the antichristian church, let men consider and judge.

## 2 Thessalonians 2:13

Ver. 13. The apostle here exempts these Thessalonians out of the number of those reprobates that he had before spoken of, and speaks of them as such as should be preserved from apostacy in faith or practice, and obtain

salvation. And this he mentions for comfort to them, and with thanksgivings to God. He had often before given thanks for them, 1Th 1:2 2:13 3:9; and in 2Th 1:3; and both here and there mentions it as a debt he was bound unto, or a duty he owed, we ought to give thanks, as in the Greek. And here he styles them, not only *brethren*, as often before, but *beloved of the Lord*, such as have been and are beloved; and therefore not in the number of them that should be damned, mentioned in the former verse.

*Because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation:* which words are either to give the reason of the apostle's thanksgivings, or rather all arguments to evidence they were beloved of the Lord. And he instanceth in their election as a proof of it. There is an election to office, as David to be king, 2Sa 6:21, and Judas to be an apostle, Joh 6:70; and election to a visible church, and means of salvation, and thus the seed of Abraham were chosen, De 26:18 Ps 135:4 Ps 147:19; and election to salvation, as in the text; which is either that which follows faith, as some understand that place, Mt 22:14, or rather that which goes before it, said here to be *from the beginning*: not from the beginning of the gospel, as some say; nor from the beginning of our preaching to you, or of your effectual calling, as others say; no, nor yet is it meant from the beginning of the world, which was the beginning of time; or immediately upon Adam's fall: but by *beginning* is here meant eternity itself, as election is said to be from *before the foundation of the world*, Eph 1:4, which is from eternity. Though *beginning* seems to relate to time, yet the Scriptures often express eternity by such words as relate to time: as when God is called *the Ancient of days*, Da 7:9, it signifies his eternity; and Jude speaks of some that were of old ordained to condemnation, Jude 1:4, *παλαι προγεγραμμενοι*, God's eternal decrees being compared to a book wherein names are written. When was their ordaining but from eternity? And it is election to salvation, complete salvation, which is here meant, in the full fruition of it; not in the title to it by faith, or the first-fruits of it in sanctification, because they are here mentioned as the means that tend to it.

*Through sanctification of the Spirit:* election is to the means as well as the end, as Eph 1:4. Holiness is not the cause of God's election, but God hath decreed it to be the way to salvation; without holiness none shall ever see the Lord, Heb 12:14.

*And belief of the truth:* and therefore those were spoken of as persons to be damned who believed not the truth, in the former verse. And so it is evident, election is not upon the foresight of faith, it is through it we have salvation, but not election: but of this before, 1Th 4:1-18. And the apostle joins sanctification and faith together, for they are not and cannot be put asunder. Now by all this the apostle proves they were beloved of the Lord. He saw the fruits of election in their sanctification and belief of the truth, thence concludes they were elected, and therefore loved.

## 2 Thessalonians 2:14

Ver. 14. *Whereunto he called you by our gospel:* before, the apostle mentioned their election, now their calling; which are often in Scripture put together, Ro 8:30 2Pe 1:10; and are both applied to Christ himself, Isa 42:1,6. They are those two sovereign acts of God, prerequisite to a state of salvation; the one eternal, the other in time; the one immanent in God, the other transient upon the creature; and it is the first transient act that flows from election. And because there is an outward and inward civil mentioned in Scripture, we must here understand the apostle of both: for Εἰς οἷ: *Whereunto*, or to which thing, mentioned in the beginning of this verse, refers to all that he said in the former verse, which is, *salvation, sanctification, belief of the truth*, which they could not attain with a mere outward call, though they had that also; for the apostle mentions here the gospel, which he calls *our gospel*, because preached by them, and intrusted to them, though the original of it is from God, and the matter of it from Jesus Christ. And he puts them in mind of the great mercy they had received in their preaching the gospel to them, for thereby they were called into a state of salvation; as also of the way wherein they are to obtain this salvation, which is *through sanctification of the Spirit, and the belief of the truth*, that they might be careful to persevere both in faith and holiness; and not to expect it from the law, or the speculations of philosophy, which some false teachers might suggest, for as *faith cometh by hearing the gospel*, Ro 10:17, so it is that only which is *the power of God unto salvation*, Ro 1:16. And by this he confirms to them also their election, because they had been thus effectually called by the gospel: for no man can conclude his salvation from election, if he hath not been also thus called, which is by feeling the power of the gospel in the heart, and yielding obedience to it in his life. What the apostle before called

salvation, he here styles *the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*. Though in 1Th 5:9, he had there also called it obtaining salvation, and by the same word here used in the text: yea, the word περιποιησις, here rendered obtaining, sometimes signifies salvation itself, Heb 10:39, and, which is equivalent, *the purchased possession*, Eph 1:14; and it may signify in the text, the obtaining the glory of Christ in a way of purchase, as also by diligent endeavours after it, by way of acquisition, as the word seems to signify. And by *the glory of Christ* is not meant the glory we give to him, as some would strain the words to that sense; but rather, the glory we shall receive from him, which is the same which the Father hath given to him, and which he hath given to his people. Joh 17:22, whereby they are co-heirs with him, Ro 8:17. And so the apostle sets forth the greatness of this salvation, to which these believers were called, it is to the obtaining the same glory with Christ, in kind at least; and shows their different state from those that perish, and will be damned, mentioned in the former verses. Or if we read the words, ye are called to be a peculiar people, as the Greek word is so rendered, 1Pe 2:9, λαος εις περιποιησιν, *a peculiar people*, and understand by *the glory of Christ*, that glory of his grace he hath manifested herein, it shows also how God hath distinguished them from those before mentioned.

## 2 Thessalonians 2:15

Ver. 15. The former verses contained consolation, this is an exhortation: the apostle had assured them of their being elected and called, yet exhorts them to their duty. Assurance of salvation doth not encourage negligence; the apostle takes his argument from thence to quicken them:

*Therefore, &c.* And that which he exhorts them to is:

1. To *stand fast*; a military word, speaking as a captain to his soldiers; so 1Co 16:13 Eph 6:14; having before foretold a great apostacy that would come. Or because he had told them of the great glory they had been called to the obtaining of by the gospel, he exhorts them to *stand fast*, which implies a firm persuasion of mind and constant purpose of will, and stands opposite to hesitation and despondency.
2. To *hold the traditions which they had been taught*. The word *tradition*

signifies any thing delivered to another; especially meant of doctrines. The Pharisees' doctrine is called *tradition*, Mt 15:3; and so the true doctrines of the gospel, being such as the apostles delivered to the people; as the doctrine of the Lord's supper is said to be *delivered*, 1Co 11:23; and so Ro 6:13.

*Whether by word, or our epistle*; by word of mouth in public preaching, or private instruction. The apostle had both preached and written to these Thessalonians, before he wrote this Second Epistle. And that the papists should hence infer that there are matters of necessary consequence in religion, not contained in the Scriptures, is without ground. These they call traditions, some whereof are concerning faith, others concerning manners, others ritual, with respect to the worship of God, or the external polity of the church. But who can assure us what these are? What a door is here opened to introduce what men please into the church, under pretence of tradition! Who were the persons the apostle intrusted to keep these traditions? Why should he not declare the whole system of gospel truths he had received from Christ in writing, as well as part? Why should he conceal some things, when he wrote others? And doth not the apostle assure Timothy that *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof for correction, for instruction; that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works?* 2Ti 3:16,17. What need then traditions? And how can we know that they are by Divine inspiration, as we are assured all Scripture is? Our Saviour reproved the Pharisees about their traditions, when from hence they would observe and impose ceremonies of washing hands, cups, and platters, Mt 15:2-6, yea, and by them make the commandments of God of none effect; which the apostle cautions the Colossians about, Col 2:8; and whereof Paul declares his zeal before his conversion, Ga 1:14; and we find men's zeal still more about them than moral duties, and express institutions of God's worship. All the apostle's doctrine, *whether by word or epistle*, he calls by the name of *traditions* in the text here, and he commends the Corinthians, 1Co 11:2, that they kept the traditions delivered to them; but were not they all committed to writing in some place or other of his Epistles? And which were, and which were not, who can be certain? And why should *traditions* be confined only to those things which the apostle did not write? He exhorts the Thessalonians to hold the traditions which they had been taught, *whether by word or epistle*. And if they hold them with strength, as the word is, by this means they would stand fast.

## 2 Thessalonians 2:16

Ver. 16. The apostle here addeth prayer to his exhortation: the word and prayer are to go together, whether it be written or preached; as the twelve told the disciples, Ac 6:4: We will give ourselves to the word and prayer. He had planted them a church, but he knew *God gave the increase*, 1Co 3:6. The persons he prays to are here, first, *our Lord Jesus Christ*; which was a good argument in Athanasius's time, for the dignity of Christ, against the Arians; and so it is still, and now against the Socinians: for God alone is the object of worship, and the bestower of those gifts which he here prays for. Only the apostle, when he mentions Christ, delights to mention him in his relation to his people; so he doth for the most part in all his Epistles, and so in this text. He useth a pronoun possessive, *our*, for it is relation and interest which commendeth and sweeteneth any good to us. And the other person is *God the Father*, who is *the Father of lights*, from whom *cometh every good and perfect gift*, Jas 1:17; and whom in his prayer he mentions together with Christ, because no access can be to God but through Christ, and no good gift descends to us but through him. And so God the Father is mentioned in his relation to his people also, *God, even our Father*; and when Christ is ours, in him God is ours also. And the apostle thus looking, and thus speaking of Christ and of God, strengthens his own and their faith, for the obtaining of the gifts he prays for.

*Which hath loved us*: another argument is from God's love: our doubts in prayer arise more from unbelief in God's will, than his power, which will vanish when we look upon him in his love to us; for the nature of love is *velle bonum*, to will good to whom we love. Another is, from gifts already received, which are, first, *everlasting consolation*; whereby it appears, that God's love is communicative, and that it is not common, but his special love he spake of. Outward comforts are common gifts, but these the apostle means not here, because they are not everlasting; they continue not beyond death; they begin in time and end with time: but this consolation begins in time, and abides to eternity; and this man cannot give, the world cannot give, nor we give it ourselves, God giveth it only; and he gives it to whom he loveth, as every man seeks to comfort those whom he loves: and though some whom God loves may not feel his

consolation, yet they have a right, and God hath it in reserve for them: *Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart*, Ps 97:11. And though sometimes it may be interrupted where it is felt, yet not so as to be destroyed in its foundation, and to hinder its return, either in the temporal or eternal world, where it will be everlasting; so that as God is styled the God of all grace, 1Pe 5:10; so, *the God of all comfort*, 2Co 1:3. And by *us* in the text he means these Thessalonians as well as himself, for he had spoken before of their *joy in the Holy Ghost*, 1Th 1:6. And the other gift is, *good hope*. Hope, as a natural affection, is the expectation of the soul; and the object of it is *bonum futurum, arduum, possibile*; good, future good, difficult, and possible. But, as a grace, it is the expectation of the good things God hath promised, and not yet exhibited. And it is called *good hope*, good by way of eminency; with respect to the objects of it, which are eminently good; the certainty of it, it will not make ashamed, Ro 5:5; compared to *an anchor sure and stedfast*, Heb 6:19: the regularness of it; things promised only, and as they are promised; else it is presumption, and not hope: the fruits of it; peace, purity, industry, and consolation also, and therefore joined with it here in the text: as the apostle speaks elsewhere of *rejoicing in hope*, Ro 5:2 Ro 12:12 Heb 3:6. Or, as some, it is called *good hope*, with respect to the degree they had attained of it in their hearts; though they had not yet the good things promised, yet they had good hope of enjoying them. And by this epithet he distinguisheth this hope from the carnal vain hope of the men of the world, and the false hope of hypocrites, Job 8:13; and themselves also from the state they were in when Gentiles, without hope, Eph 2:12. And this also is God's gift, as he is called *the God of hope*, Ro 15:13, not only as the object, but the author of it. And both these gifts are here said to be *through grace*; for else we could have had no ground either of hope or comfort. Sin had shut up our way to both, it is only grace that hath opened it to us. What we enjoy at present, and what we hope to enjoy, is all through grace. And from these gifts already received the apostle strengthens his faith about the other things he here prays for.

## 2 Thessalonians 2:17

Ver. 17. Next, we have the things prayed for:

*Comfort your hearts*; though he said before, *who hath given us everlasting*



*consolation*. The apostle means, either actual possession of what God had given title to, or a continued supply and increase of comfort already received. And he prays for this either in respect of the afflictions they suffered, that they might not faint; or to enable them the better to stand fast in the faith, and not fall away, as others. And so it agrees with the next petition for them.

*And stablish you in every good word and work: the word of truth is this good word, Pr 4:2, as the gospel is called, 2Co 6:7. And the doctrines of it are all good, 1Ti 4:6; they are good for instruction, for correction, for reproof, for doctrine, 2Ti 3:16. All truth is an intellectual good, whether natural or moral; but evangelical truth is by way of eminence good. It is a good word which is a *word of salvation*, Ac 13:26; and to be established in it, is firmly to believe it, and to hold it fast against seducing opinion, or persecutions; and by *every good word* he means all Divine truth, especially the greater truths; not to hold some truths and let others go. And to *word* the apostle adds *work*, that there may be a harmony between faith and practice. As the doctrines of the gospel are true, so the works they require are good. And good works are manifold, respecting God, our neighbour, and ourselves. A Christian should not only practise them all, but be established in them, which implies constancy, perseverance, and resolution. True religion is not word only, but work; it is not only speculative, but practical. A sound mind ought to be joined with a holy life. And to make a work good, the principle, rule, manner, and end must all be good.*

## 2 Thessalonians 3:1

### Chapter Summary

2Th 3:1,2 The apostle desireth the Thessalonians to pray for him,  
2Th 3:3,4 testifying his confidence in them,  
2Th 3:5 and praying God to direct them.  
2Th 3:6-15 He censureth the idle and disorderly, and requireth others to abstain from their company,  
2Th 3:16-18 concluding with prayer and salutation.

Ver. 1. The apostle now draws towards the close of his Epistle, as appears by the word *finally*, which he also useth in the close of other Epistles, as 2Co 13:11 Eph 6:10 Php 4:8: το λοιπον. It imports the adding of something that remains. And that which he first addeth, is the desire of their prayers; as he had desired them in the former Epistle, 1Th 5:25; and so of other churches, 2Co 1:11 Eph 6:19 Heb 13:18, &c. He had prayed for them in the foregoing chapter, and now he begs their prayers. It is a mutual duty that ministers and people owe to one another. Though the apostle gave himself to the word, and prayer also, Ac 6:4, yet the prayers of many may be more prevalent than of one, though an apostle: and they being concerned for the advancing of Christ's interest in the world, as they were Christians, were therefore engaged to pray for him. And the apostle was sensible of the greatness of the work which was in his hand, and his own insufficiency, without God, therefore he desires prayer; and it is of them whom he here calls *brethren*: he knew the prayers of the wicked and unbelievers would avail nothing; and though he was a great apostle, yet the greatest in the church may stand in need of, and be helped by, the prayers of the meanest brethren. And their prayers he desires are, first, with respect to his ministry, *that the word of the Lord may have free course*, or may run; that the course of it may not be stopped, it being as a river of the water of life. The apostle was to teach all nations, and so desires the word may pass from one nation to another, yea, and run down from one generation to another, that it may spread and diffuse itself, and disciples might be multiplied. This is called the increasing of it, Ac 6:7; the growing and multiplying of it, Ac 12:24; the growing and prevailing of it, Ac 19:20: which Christ sets forth by the parable of the mustard-seed, which grew and spread; and of the leaven, that diffused its virtue in the meal, Mt 13:31-33: the apostle referring here to the external course of the word, rather than its inward efficacy in the soul, as also Christ seems chiefly to do in those parables. There are many things that hinder the course of the gospel; sometimes wicked rulers make laws against it, sometimes great persecutions have been raised, sometimes false teachers oppose it, sometimes professors prove apostates and scandalize the world against it, sometimes reproaches are thrown in the way of it. And to the free course of it is required, on the contrary, a provision of suitable help herein, both of magistracy and ministry, and the bestowing of the Spirit, and the blessing of endeavours used herein. All these are to be prayed for, as the former to be prayed against.

*And be glorified:* he means, that it might have honour, reputation, and high esteem in the world, and not lie under reproach; as the Jews accounted it heresy, and the Gentiles foolishness: as it is said of those Gentiles, Ac 13:48, they *glorified the word of the Lord*, by their honourable respect to it, and joy in it. As also that it might produce glorious effects in the world, in subduing people to God, and making men new creatures, and bringing them out of the devil's into Christ's kingdom, &c.; that it may evidence itself to be from heaven, and the power of God to men's salvation, and not an invention of man; to which we may add, that it may be honoured in the unblamable and exemplary walking of the professors of it.

*Even as it is with you:* the glorious success of it with them he had largely shown before in both these Epistles; and he would have them pray for the like with others. Those that have felt the power of the gospel themselves to their conversion and salvation, should pray that others may partake of it with them. Herein they show their charity to men, and love to God, which the apostle here puts them upon, as that which would be acceptable to God; and the rather, because their own experience might teach them what God was able to do for others. Or else the apostle in these words sets forth these Thessalonians as a pattern of the mighty success of the word: it had its free course and was glorified among them; they received it as the word of God, and not of men. As if the apostle should say: They that would know the glorious success of the word of the Lord, let them go to Thessalonica.

## 2 Thessalonians 3:2

Ver. 2. Their prayers are here desired by the apostle with respect to their persons, which relates to the prayer desired before with respect to the word; for the apostle and his fellow labourers met with such men that did oppose them, and by that means were hindered in their work of the ministry, and the free course of the word obstructed. What were these men? Were they the persecuting Gentiles? They met with such: or the envious, malicious Jews? They met with such also; and here at Thessalonica in particular, and which followed Paul to Berea, Ac 17:1-34. Or were they false brethren crept into the church? As he complains of his perils by them, 2Co 11:26; which some think most probable, by what he adds, *for all men have not faith*, even of those that make profession. Why

may not we take in all these? But whoever they were, he styles them, first, *unreasonable men*, men out of place, as the word imports; taken either literally, for vagrants, wanderers, not keepers at home; or such as follow the apostle from place to place, to hinder his ministry. Or logically, for men that argued absurdly, and kept to no sound topics in reasoning; either false teachers among the Jews, or the heathen philosophers, such as he met with at Athens, whom he disputed with Ac 17:1-34. Or morally, for men that had corrupt principles and practices, that kept not to the duty of their place and station, (*desordonnez*, French translation), and wandered out of the path of righteousness. We render it *unreasonable men*; men transported with fury and passion against all reason, as we read of the Jews, Ac 17:5. Or such as acted contrary to reason, as the apostle speaks of such Jews in the former Epistle, who were *contrary to all men, foridding them to preach to the Gentiles, that they might be saved*, 1Th 2:15,16. Or men of sensual lives, living more like brutes than reasonable creatures. Secondly, *wicked men*; so that whoever they were, whether Jews or Gentiles, teachers or the common people, learned or unlearned, they were wicked; and whatever was meant by the former word, yet this is plain; and the word imports either men that are laborious in wickedness, or that by their wickedness create labour and trouble to others. And such the apostle met with at Thessalonica, Jews who took to them *certain lewd fellows of the baser sort*, and drew Jason and others before the rulers, assaulting his house, Ac 17:5,6: and indeed wherever they came, they met with such kind of men. Through the lusts of men's hearts, and the enmity and malice of the devil, faithful ministers will meet with opposition, and such as will hinder what they can the free course of the word. And therefore the apostle desires prayer to be *delivered from* them,  $\upsilon\alpha\ \rho\upsilon\sigma\theta\omega\mu\epsilon\nu$ , the word signifies a rescue by strength from some impending or incumbent evil, oft used, Lu 1:74 Col 1:13 1Th 1:10. And he desires deliverance rather for the gospel's sake than his own. And though it is honourable to suffer for the gospel, yet it is desirable to be kept out of the hands of such men as these. The apostle subjoins the reason why men are thus, *for all men have not faith*. He needed not say this of infidels, which all men know to be without it, and therefore it is thought the apostle here means professors. There may be true faith wanting where faith is professed. Faith is sometimes taken for fidelity, a moral virtue, and some think is meant here, because it follows in the next verse by way of antithesis: *But the Lord is faithful*. But rather, I take it for a theological grace; for that true evangelical faith which purifies the heart, and worketh by love, and brings forth the acts of obedience to all

God's commandments. Had they this faith they would not be unreasonable and wicked. But can we suppose such to be in the church? As well as those, 2Ti 3:5, whom the apostle describes to have a *form of godliness* under all that wickedness he there mentions. But let men have civility, sobriety, external devotion, and profession, yet if they oppose the gospel, in the power, purity, and progress of it, they may be styled unreasonable and wicked men; and from such men we may pray, as the apostle desired here: Good Lord, deliver us. And it is the duty of people with respect to their faithful ministers, and the work of the gospel in their hands, to pray that they may be delivered from such men.

### 2 Thessalonians 3:3

Ver. 3. These words are added by way of consolation:

1. With respect to their establishment, which the apostle had before prayed for, 2Th 2:17, and here he assures them of it. What God hath promised, yet we may and ought to pray for; and ministers should exhort people to seek that grace which they may be sure beforehand God will give. And this establishment respects either their mind, in the belief of the gospel against false doctrine; or their hearts, against inordinate fears of men; or their practice, against departing from the way of holiness. The apostle well knew the tenure of the new covenant, which contains promises of perseverance and establishment, as well as of pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace, Jer 32:40; and he grounds his confidence of their establishment upon God's faithfulness, as upon the same account he comforts the Corinthians, 1Co 10:13, and these Thessalonians, 1Th 5:24, and it may be the apostle hath here reference to what he had said before; Though we shall meet with wicked and unreasonable men, yet fear not, God will establish you, for he is faithful. As God's promises are according to his purposes, so his performances will be according to his promises, which is his faithfulness.
2. As God would *establish* them, so *keep* them *from evil*. There is moral and penal evil, of sin and suffering; the Greek word imports the former; never used but for sinful evil, or sometimes for the devil, with respect to the sin that dwells in him, and occasioned by him, Eph 6:16 1Jo 5:18. And it is true, that God will keep his people from the devil, as some

read the word. But I suppose the apostle means here by *evil*, evil work; as he speaks, 2Ti 4:18: *The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work*. But whether the evil work of others, or their own? The latter I incline to, for he could not well assure them of the former. But how could he assure them of the latter? Did he think God would keep them from all sin? The apostle doth not mean so, nor say so; God keeps his people from much evil and sin which others fall into, though not from all. And he keeps them from falling under the power of it. Though they may be tempted by Satan, the world, or their own hearts, yet not so as finally to be overcome. However, the more God doth establish his people, the more will they be kept from evil. And the apostle doth also comfort them in this from the consideration of God's faithfulness. But these promises of God's keeping us do not exclude our endeavours of keeping ourselves: *He that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not*, 1Jo 5:18. Hence those exhortations: *Keep thy heart with all diligence*, Pr 4:23, and *Keep yourselves in the love of God*, Jude 1:21, &c. And our keeping is ascribed to our own faith with the power of God, 1Pe 1:5.

## 2 Thessalonians 3:4

Ver. 4. The apostle had before declared his confidence that God would establish them and keep them from evil, and now here declares his confidence in them concerning their obedience; for he knew well that this is the way of God's keeping men; and hereby he shows that he built his confidence concerning what he had before declared about their election, calling, establishment, and preservation upon some good ground. And he describes their obedience by doing what the apostle and his fellow labourers in the gospel among them commanded them, whether they were commandments about the duties of the law of the first or second tables, or the doctrine, order, worship, or discipline of the gospel; so that their commandments were no other but the commandments of the Lord himself, Mt 28:20 1Co 14:37. Ministers are not arbitrary commanders in the church; not *lords over God's heritage*, 1Pe 5:3, or have *dominion over the people's faith*, 2Co 1:24; nor may they, as the Pharisees, teach *for doctrines the commandments of men*, Mt 15:9. And he speaks before of these Thessalonians, that they received the word preached by them, *not as the word of men, but of God*, 1Th 2:13. Both our faith and practice in

religion are to be built upon Divine authority; either upon what God hath expressly declared, or what by clear consequence may be derived from it. So that what they command the people is from the Lord, and not themselves. Their work is to search out the mind and will of Christ, as revealed in the Scripture, seeing they have not that immediate infallible inspiration that the apostles had, who were called to lay the foundation which others were to build upon. And as to those things that are but appendices, and not of the substance of religion, and for which no particular rule is or can be laid down, Christian prudence is to regulate them according to general rules, wherein the advice, appointment, and authority of the minister is to be regarded in every church. Yet nothing ought to be enjoined in these things that is uncomely, that is not for edification, that is not of good report, that hath an appearance of evil, that gives just occasion of offence, that transgresseth the general rule of mercy, that is a direction of superstition, whereby many of the commandments of the Romish Church are justly condemned. And obedience to these commandments of the apostle he describes by the universality of it, *the things that we command you*; that is, all things; the indefinite being equivalent to the universal. And by the constancy of it, *that ye both do and will do*, &c.; ye will persevere to do what commandments ye have already received, or any new commandments we shall further give you; some whereof are probably such as are mentioned in the following part of this chapter. And their present obedience gave the apostle confidence about that which was future; at least he declares to them this confidence, as an insinuating argument to persuade them thereunto.

## 2 Thessalonians 3:5

Ver. 5. Here the apostle prays for them again, as he had done a little before, 2Th 2:17; and as this shows how much they were in his heart, so the frequent mingling of prayers with his exhortations shows they could not be effectual without God. And he prays for two things:

1. To have their hearts directed *into the love of God*; which is either meant passively, for God's love to them, to have their hearts, that is, their whole soul, engaged in the study, contemplation, and admiration of this love; or rather actively, for their love to God, to have their hearts set straight into the love of God, as the Greek word imports; drawn out

towards him as a straight line to its centre, or as an arrow directed to the mark. Till man's love is set upon God, the motions of the heart are crooked and irregular; as the ways of sin are called *crooked ways*, Ps 125:5; and John Baptist's ministry was to make crooked things straight, Isa 40:4. The turning man's heart and ways towards God makes them straight. David prays, Ps 119:36: *Incline my heart unto thy testimonies*; הִט-מִנִּי or, bend my heart; as we bend a crooked stick to make it straight. Or as he prays God to unite his heart to his fear, Ps 86:11; so here Paul, to direct theirs to his love, by which some understand all religion. We learn hence, that to direct man's heart to the love of God is the work of God, and beyond our power. And the hearts of the best saints stand in need of a more perfect and constant direction unto the love of God. Patient sufferings for Christ's sake; as the apostle calls his sufferings for Christ's sake, *the sufferings of Christ*, often, 2Co 1:5 Php 3:10, &c.; and patience for his sake, is called *the patience of Christ*, Re 1:9. In this sense, the apostle prays they may have hearts ready to suffer, and patiently to suffer for Christ's sake, Heb 10:36 Jas 5:10; and suited to a suffering state, which the heart is naturally averse and disinclined unto. And the word is often used in this sense for patience under the cross. And so the apostle hath his eye in his prayer upon the suffering state these believers were in for Christ's sake. If the sense be rendered as in our translation, he prays for their hearts to be fixed upon the coming of Christ, to look towards it, and patiently to wait for it; the Greek word being often taken for the patience of expectation as well as of suffering, Ro 8:25 Heb 10:36; and so it is the same as waiting for the Son of God from heaven, mentioned 1Th 1:10, and looking for the Saviour, Php 3:20; that hereby they might not faint under his sufferings, nor be surprised by his coming. And because the hearts of the best are apt either to be remiss or secure upon the delay of Christ's coming, he therefore prays their hearts might be directed to a patient waiting for it, as the apostle Peter upon the same account exhorts believers to the girding up the loins of their mind, 1Pe 1:13.

## 2 Thessalonians 3:6

Ver. 6. Here the apostle proceeds to a discourse of another kind, which is about their carriage to disorderly members in the church. And having before declared his confidence, 2Th 3:4, that they did and would do the



things he commanded them, he now tells them what he commands; and because either it is a matter of great importance, or that which they would be backward in, he therefore speaks with great vehemence. When he spake in the former Epistle, 1Th 5:14, of warning the unruly, he then spake with greater mildness:

*We exhort you, brethren, &c.*; but now to withdraw from them is a harsher duty; or they having first warned them, if they reform not, next they are to proceed to withdraw from them. And this he now commands as that which he supposeth they might be backward to. παραγγελλομεν the word properly signifies a command conveyed from another, so the apostle commands here *in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*. Though he had authority to command as an apostle, yet it was derived to him from Christ, and therefore he usually conjoins Christ with his exhortations and commands.

*That ye withdraw yourselves from every brother;* or avoid, as the word signifies, and is so rendered, 2Co 8:20. The word is used also, Ga 2:12, of Peter's withdrawing himself from eating with the Gentiles; and rendered drawing back, Heb 10:38, alluding, as some think, there to a soldier that draws back from the battle; but here in the text to a mariner that steers his ship from the rocks; and so it implies the danger of not withdrawing, which may be the reason of the apostle's so solemn command about it. And it is not from a heathen man, but a *brother*, one that is of the church; and it is *every brother*, let him be rich or poor, high or low, &c.; as he writes to the Corinthians, 1Co 5:11: *If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, &c.*

*That walketh disorderly:* alluding, as some think, to soldiers who keep not their rank, not walking according to rule, or, as he expresseth it, *not after the tradition which he received of us*. What is to be meant by *tradition*, is explained in the former chapter. And he cannot be understood to speak here of rites and ceremonies relating to church worship or order, as some imagine; the apostle doth in the following verses explain himself otherwise. But what is this withdrawing? Is it excommunication, the greater or the less? In a general sense it may be so called, for it is an abstaining from communion; but it is not so properly, for that is called putting away a person, a purging out the old leaven, 1Co 5:7, this is only a withdrawing from him; much less is it a delivering up to Satan, which the

apostle required, 1Co 5:5, and himself inflicted upon Hymeneus and Alexander, 1Ti 1:20. The nature of the crime here mentioned will not bear that. It was not incest or blasphemy, as in the former instances, but only disorderly walking, which he specifies afterwards. And with respect to such the apostle required in the former Epistle warning only: *Warn the unruly*. And though this is something more, yet it implies not a casting a man out of the church, which is Christ's visible kingdom, into Satan's kingdom, for he is still to be admonished *as a brother*, as 2Th 3:15. And excommunication is the exerting an act of church power, as 1Co 5:4, whereof no mention is made here; or of an absolute rejection, which is elsewhere required, Tit 3:10. It seems then to be only a withdrawing from familiar converse and society, as 1Co 5:11: *If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, covetous, &c.; with such an one no not to eat*; alluding to the custom of the Jews, who would not eat with the Gentiles; and by eating is expressed communion in Scripture, and profane writers also. And such communion is forbidden to such a brother, which the apostle allowed them to have with such sinners that were of the world, and not of the church, as 2Th 3:10, which cannot be meant of sacred communion. And familiarity with such a brother would harden him in his sins, and reflect dishonour upon religion, and endanger their infection, more than with a pagan, or infidel: which therefore the apostle forbids them to a brother, as he did the Corinthians mentioned before, as also the Romans, Ro 16:17. And which may be a step towards excommunication from spiritual communion, which is the greater punishment, especially if the brother be not hereby made ashamed, and reform his course, and doth not only now and then do a disorderly action, but *walketh disorderly*, and that after warning also. Others think it is meant of excommunication, and judge not the reason against it to be cogent.

## 2 Thessalonians 3:7

Ver. 7. Whereby the apostle intimates the aggravation of their crime who did walk disorderly, and so justifies the withdrawing from them. For they would be reproved not only by his doctrine, but example: what he required of others he practised himself, and that in some cases for this end alone, that he might be an example; examples teaching more than precepts, especially in ministers. And they did not only know how the apostle and his fellow ministers walked among them, but their end therein, whereby

they knew they ought to follow them, and how to follow them; being guided as well as excited by their example. And this is expressed more generally. First, negatively: *We behaved not ourselves disorderly among you*, which he speaks not in a way of self-commendation, but for their imitation; and he useth here the same word to express his own practice which he did in theirs, being properly a military word, as was said before. He went before them as it captain before the army, and taught them order by his own example; for in the negative the positive is included.

## 2 Thessalonians 3:8

Ver. 8. *Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought:* the apostle here gives a particular positive instance of what before he speaks negatively, and in general; and brings his discourse home to the present case, and declares his orderly working in this, that he wrought for his own bread, and did not eat for nought, or live upon that which was freely given.  $\delta\omega\rho\epsilon\alpha\nu$  the word is sometimes taken for that which is without effect, as Ga 2:21, answering to the Hebrew word *Chinnam*, oft used, Ps 7:4 25:3 69:4 119:61. Or, that which is without cause; and that either with respect to injury received, as Joh 15:25, or benefit bestowed, as Ro 3:24, when it is freely given without merit. The apostle means that he preached the gospel to them freely, as he tells the Corinthians, 2Co 11:7. Though if he had received maintenance for his labour in the gospel among them, it was that which he well deserved, and he had not eaten their bread for nought; but he wrought with his own hands to maintain himself, as he did at Corinth, Ac 18:3.

*But wrought with labour and travail;* and he wrought laboriously, with wearisome and toilsome labour, as the words import; and that *night and day;* as he had told them in the former Epistle, 1Th 2:9; only he speaks of it here upon a different account; there, to clear his ministry from suspicion of covetousness, and to evidence his sincere affection to them; here, to set before them an example of industry against such who lived idly, and did eat others' bread. Had he not wrought with his hands, he had not walked disorderly; but lest any should think so, he would do it to take away all occasion of evil. For though the labour of the ministry in the exercise of the mind and study may be reckoned as the greatest, yet most people cannot judge of it, and think it such; and though he had *power to forbear*

*working*, as he tells the Corinthians, 1Co 9:6, yet he would do it rather than any good should be hindered, or any evil furthered thereby.

## 2 Thessalonians 3:9

Ver. 9. The contents of this verse are already spoken to in the former, only the apostle asserts the right of maintenance due to the ministry by the name of *power*. It may be claimed by authority from Christ, though it should not be commanded by any laws from men. As the priests under the law had their maintenance settled upon them by the law of God; *so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel*, 1Co 9:14 Ga 6:6. And though this power may be claimed, yet in some cases it is to be denied, as the apostle did, 1Co 9:12: *We have not used this power; lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ*. And so he did here, to make himself an example, τυπον, which signifies any mark that is cut or engraven to stamp things into its own likeness; oft used in the New Testament, and variously applied.

*But to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us*: it is desirable to follow good examples, but more to become a good example: and as the old verse is true, *Regis ad exemplum*, &c., so the old proverb, "Like priests, like people"; and to follow them is to imitate them, as 1Co 11:1: *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ*. He is the first pattern, and others are to be regulated by it; and so far, and no further, to be imitated. As ministers ought to be patterns, Tit 2:7 1Pe 5:3; so the people ought to be followers, and their sin will be the greater if they follow not their doctrine, when it is exemplified in their practice.

## 2 Thessalonians 3:10

Ver. 10. The words contain a reason, as the illative *for* imports; but what it refers to is uncertain; most probably a further reason of the apostle's working with his hands, because when with them he left this command, *that if any would not work, neither should he eat*; he would therefore practise himself what he commanded them, and not be thought to be as the Pharisees, binding heavy burdens upon others, and he not touch them himself. And this is another of the commandments which the apostle gave

them, which he declared his confidence that they would do, 2Th 3:4. And this command seems grounded upon the law given to Adam: *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread*, Ge 3:19. For when he recommends a practice not directly grounded upon some word of God, or of Christ, or from infallible inspiration, he calls it a *permission*, as 1Co 7:6; but when otherwise, he saith: *I command, yet not I, but the Lord*, 1Co 7:10; and calls it *the commandment of the Lord*, 1Co 14:37. And this in the text is not his alone, but the Lord's, and is elsewhere mentioned, as Eph 4:28: *Let him that stole steal no more, but work with his hands*, &c.: see 1Co 7:20. God requires it of us as men, that we may be profitable in the commonwealth, supply our own wants and of those that depend upon us, and have wherewith also to supply the wants of the poor, Eph 4:28, to be kept from the temptations of idleness. Christianity doth not extinguish the profitable laws of nature or nations. Yet this general command admits limitations; if men have ability and opportunity to work, or if the ends of working are not otherwise supplied. For he that lives out of the reason of the law seems not bound by the law; or if the work be mental, and not manual, the law is fulfilled; and the equity of the law reacheth all men so far, as that none ought to be idle and useless in the world. And the apostle's argument for it in the text is cogent from nature itself; agreeably to that of Solomon, Pr 16:26: *He that laboureth laboureth for himself, for his mouth craveth it of him*. Whereupon some judge these believing Thessalonians to be generally a people that lived by some handicraft trade, or some other manual labour. And the eating here intended is meant of relief from the stock and charge of the church: such should not be relieved who *would not work*, as it is in the text; who could, but would not, the fault being in the will.

## 2 Thessalonians 3:11

Ver. 11. *For we hear*: the apostle gives the reason of this discourse he fell into about disorder, and commends, yea, commands, a remedy against it. He had heard of this disorderly walking, else his discourse might have been esteemed vain and needless. Reports are to obtain credit according to the quality of the person that makes them, his end therein, and probability of truth. He took notice of reports brought to him about the divisions that were at Corinth, 1Co 11:18.

*That there are some among you:* and the persons that he here chargeth the report upon, are not all, but some only, and he nameth none; for as to the body of the church, he had confidence they did, and would do, the things he commanded, 2Th 3:4. And he requires them to withdraw from the disorderly.

*Which walk among you disorderly, working not at all:* and the disorder he chargeth upon these *some* is:

1. Μηδεν εργαζομενους, that they worked not at all, at least not the work of their own place, as it follows.
2. *But are busybodies;* busy, and yet idle, and not working; περιεργαζομενους *curieusement*, French Bible; as the *curious arts* of sorcerers are called περιεργα, Ac 19:19. The word signifies working about, and denotes either vain curiosity, meddling in matters that they ought not, or going round their proper work, but not falling or fixing upon it. The same the apostle speaks of younger widows, 1Ti 5:13, who learnt *to be idle*, and yet were *busybodies*; and such are called αλλοτρισεπισκοποι, 1Pe 4:15. And the one follows from the other; for they that are idle and neglect their own business will be apt to intermeddle in another's: and they that are not keepers at home, will be gadders abroad, and so not eat their own, but others' bread, which the apostle here reproves, as dishonourable to the Christian profession; and, as a further remedy, doth with much earnestness address his speech particularly to them.

## 2 Thessalonians 3:12

Ver. 12. *Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ:* he had before given command to the church to withdraw from them, 2Th 3:6; and now he lays the commandment upon themselves, and that in the name of Christ.

*That with quietness they work:* working is set opposite to their idleness, and quietness to their busy meddling where they ought not, whereby they might occasion strife. The apostle here, and in many other places, requires Christians to live peaceably, as 2Co 13:11 Col 3:15 1Th 5:13 Heb 12:14.

*And eat their own bread;* not to live as drones, upon another's labours; yet he forbids not dealing their bread to the hungry, nor requires this of the poor that are necessitated to live upon alms. And by eating *their own bread* the apostle means, maintaining themselves and families, for bread is taken in Scripture for all things that maintain the natural life: and the apostle here insinuates a blessing upon honest labour, that thereby men shall have bread of their own; and doth assert property against that community which some have pleaded for, the civil right that men have to what they honestly get and possess; but hereby condemns oppressors, pirates, robbers, cheaters, usurpers, yea, and tyrannical princes, who maintain themselves upon the spoil of others, and take their bread out of others' mouths; and why not also such as are not quiet and contented with their own portion, but either envy others, or murmur against providence?

## 2 Thessalonians 3:13

Ver. 13. *But ye, brethren:* the apostle now directs his speech to those of the church that were not guilty of the disorders before mentioned, to whom he speaks in mild and familiar language, as if the others deserved not to be so called.

*Be not weary in well doing:* and that which he speaks to them is, not to be weary of well doing. The Greek word is often used about sufferings, as 2Co 4:1 Eph 3:13; and then usually translated fainting, and which seems to be its most proper use, to shrink or faint as cowards in war; Μη εκκακησητε, *Ne segnescite, definite, defatigamini;* it signifies a receding or fainting, or tiring in our duty, because of the evil that attends it. Sometimes it is used of prayer, Lu 18:1; and sometimes generally of all duties of religion, which are generally called *well doing*, Ga 6:9, and signifies either a slothfulness in them, or weariness of them: as those whom the prophets complain of, Am 8:5 Mal 1:13. The apostle useth the same word in this sense, Ga 6:9: *Let us not be weary in well doing;* and in the text, those that did walk orderly, he exhorts them to hold on their course, either more peculiarly to the works of charity, which are called well doing, Php 4:14; though those that worked not did not deserve them, or enjoy them, yet this should not discourage them from practising them towards others: or the word may extend more generally to all good works;

we should persevere in them without fainting or weariness, notwithstanding the evils that may threaten us therein.

## 2 Thessalonians 3:14

Ver. 14. Here we have further commandments given concerning the disorderly; in case of obstinacy, to proceed further against them. The apostle had given commandments about their walking in his first preaching to them, after that he repeats them in his First Epistle, and again in this Second.

*And now if any man obey not our word by this epistle, saith he, note that man;* and he would have none excepted, either through fear or favour, and nothing done by partiality, 1Ti 5:21. What is meant by noting is disputed among expositors; more seems to be meant than marking them, Ro 16:17. Some take it for what we call excommunication; so Aug. lib. 3, Cont. Epist. Parmen. cap. 4. Theophyl. in locum; either the casting him out of the church, which is the greater, or suspension from the Lord's supper, which is the lesser. As there were degrees of church censure among the Jews, so also we read practised in the gospel church, as is evident in the councils. Others think it is no more than a withdrawing from him, as was mentioned before, 2Th 3:6; but then the apostle saith the same thing over again, which seemeth needless. And he speaks here of some greater contumacy than before, when his word in this Second Epistle is not obeyed. We may suppose the apostle may mean not only a withdrawing from familiarity with him, but exposing his name to some public notice in the church, that both his crime and his name should be publicly noticed; as the apostle speaks of Hymeneus and Alexander, and Philetus, by name in his Epistles that were made public. σημειουσθε, note him by a sign, as the word signifies, which cannot well be done by a mere withdrawing. And seeing he speaks here of one that is not only disorderly, but obstinate, some further and more signal act of discipline is to be inflicted on him. And what word the apostle refers to in this Epistle as not obeyed is not expressed, neither need we limit it, but it may be meant of all his commandments herein, to which obedience was required. And the word, as written, is the word of God, and is to be obeyed as well as that which is preached. I know there is another reading of the text: *If any man obey not our word, note that man by an epistle;* and so it is in our margins. But this



is not probable. By an epistle? To whom? To the apostle himself? And for what? To know how to proceed towards such a one? What need that, when he here gives direction about it to them; which follows.

*And have no company with him;* or be not mingled with him, which refers either to his crime, as the Greek word is so applied, Eph 5:11, or to his person also, as the word is used, 1Co 5:9. And yet some think the apostle here forbids only civil communion, not sacred, because the word in the text is generally so used, and so rendered by expositors; but sacred communion is expressed in the New Testament by another word, 1Jo 1:3. And if meant of sacred, it is then casting him out of the church, which is a delivering him up to Satan: see Estius in loc. And that seems not to agree with what follows:

*Admonish him as a brother;* and so not to be accounted as a heathen or a publican, Mt 18:17. And we know admonition goes before casting out. But to be thrust out of the company of the people of God in all civil, friendly society, is a great punishment and affliction. And some think, that the noting of him was to be done by the governors of the church, and the renouncing his company, by all the people: let the reader judge.

*That he may be ashamed:* the end of both is here expressed. This is not added before as a reason of withdrawing, and therefore some think the apostle required that only to avoid the infection of sin by familiar society; but this further proceeding here mentioned is to make the man ashamed that is obstinate in disobedience; but we need not so limit it. And this making him ashamed is not to be out of hatred to his person, but for his good, as all church censures ought to be so intended, to bring him to that shame that may be the first step to true repentance. There is a shamefulness in sin; and when sinners repent, they see it, and are ashamed, Isa 1:29 Eze 16:61 Ro 6:21; and God complains of sinners when not ashamed, Jer 3:3. Shame is a natural affection in men, and is not in the nature of beasts, neither was it in man before the fall; and though in itself it is no virtue, being the proper effect of sin, yet it is of use to restrain much open wickedness, and to keep decorum in men's outward actions: and God makes use of it also in leading men to true repentance. To shame men out of envy or hatred is sinful, and against the law of charity; but to do it to bring them to repentance, is better than by flattery or familiar society to harden them in sin.

## 2 Thessalonians 3:15

Ver. 15. They having thus proceeded against the disorderly and disobedient, the apostle directs them about their after-carriage, which either respects their inward opinion of the mind, or outward action.

*Yet count him not as an enemy;* they should not count him an enemy, putting a great difference between an offending brother and a professed enemy. They ought not to hate him as an enemy, nor look upon him as upon such who out of enmity to the gospel persecute Christianity, nor to have an unreconcilable mind towards him.

*But admonish him as a brother;* and as to outward action, should admonish him as a brother. It is either private or public, ministerial or fraternal, gentle or severe, joined with commination. The Greeks express it in the degrees of it by three words, *νουθεσια, επιτιμια, επιπληξις*. The word in the text signifies a putting in mind: they were to put the offender in mind of his sin, and in mind of his duty. Though they were to have no company with him in a way of familiarity, yet to be in his company so as to admonish him; and the admonition here meant is either public, in the church, or private; or first private, then public, as our Saviour gives the rule, Mt 18:15-17. So that his repentance is to be endeavoured not only by abstaining his company, but by admonition. And it is to be performed to him *as a brother*, which either respects the state of the person admonished: he is not an enemy, or pagan, or one out of the visible church, but a brother, whereby some conceive that the apostle had not before spoken of his excommunication. Or it respects the way of admonition: it is to be performed with love, tenderness, and compassion, as to a brother, not to upbraid him, but to gain him; as Mt 18:15: *If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother*. And for that end great prudence is to be used. The temper of the offenders, the quality of the sin, their outward condition in the world, their age, yea, the circumstances of time and place, are to be considered.

## 2 Thessalonians 3:16

Ver. 16. *Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace:* the apostle is now taking his leave, and closing up his Epistle; and this he doth with prayer; and what he prays for is peace: and though the word peace hath various acceptations, and is of comprehensive signification, yet here it is to understood of brotherly peace and unity. Whether it was occasioned by any dissensions that were actually among them, or his fears of such to arise upon the practice of their duties to the disorderly among them, that he thus prays, is uncertain. And it is that which he much presseth and prays for in his several Epistles to the churches, as being that wherein the honour of the gospel, and their own comfort and edification, were so much concerned. And the person he prays to he styles *the Lord of peace*, whereby I suppose he means Jesus Christ, who is sometimes called *the Prince of Peace*, Isa 9:6; as God is called *the God of peace*, 1Th 5:23. It is he that hath made peace between God and us, between the Jew and Gentile, and it is one of the fruits of his Spirit in the hearts of Christians, Ga 5:22. True Christian peace is the gift of Christ, and therefore the apostle prays the Lord to give it, and saith, *the Lord himself*, as intimating none but he can give it, and that it is a singular blessing to enjoy it, as we must so interpret the phrase when at any other time we find it, as 1Th 5:23.

*Always by all means:* he shows both the desirableness and difficulty of peace. It is worth the using all endeavours for it, and without such we shall hardly attain it, as Ro 12:18: *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men;* quite contrary to the temper and practice of some men, who will live peaceably with no man: and elsewhere we read of following peace; Heb 12:14, and seeking peace and pursuing it, 1Pe 3:11, and *endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*, Eph 4:3. And the apostle prays for it in the text with much earnestness, and that they might enjoy it without interruption, *always*; that there might be no schism rise up among them at any time. And if we read the next words, in every thing, he prays that their peace might be universal with respect to opinions, words, and actions. And as a final farewell he addeth:

*The Lord be with you all;* which shows his affection to them all, though he had reprov'd sharply the disorders that some were guilty of. And a greater thing he could not desire for them, it comprehends all blessings in it, and the very blessedness of heaven itself; as a usual farewell word, Adieu, is a recommending a person to God.

## 2 Thessalonians 3:17

Ver. 17. This the apostle addeth after he had finished his Epistle, and taken his farewell, as a proof that the Epistle was genuine, and came from himself; because it may be there were some then who did counterfeit his Epistles, as there have been many since who have counterfeited creeds, liturgies, gospels, writings of the fathers, &c., and he knew it might be of dangerous consequence to the churches, to have his writings counterfeited. Heretics in several ages, and the Church of Rome particularly, have herein been deeply guilty. And though it is probable the body of this Epistle was written by some amanuensis, as is evident of the Epistle to the Romans, that it was written by one Tertius, Ro 16:22; and when he tells the Galatians, Ga 6:11, he wrote their Epistle with his own hand, so Phm 1:19, it implies sometimes he did not so; yet this salutation he wrote with his own hand, which he practised not only in this, but in all his other Epistles, as he here affirmed. And he wrote it in such characters whereby his own hand might be known; else it was an easy matter for any impostor to write the same words. And the words of it are here set down, but elsewhere explained, and therefore nothing is further needful here.

## 1 Timothy 1:1

### THE ARGUMENT

Timothy is thought to have been a native of Lystra in Lycaonia, Ac 16:1. His mother, Eunice, was a Jewess, Ac 16:1; a believer, 2Ti 1:5. His father a Greek, Ac 16:1, but (possibly) proselyted to the Jewish religion. They gave Timothy his name, signifying thereby their pious desire that their son should fear and honour God, and be put in mind of his duty by his name. They bred him up in the knowledge of the Scriptures from a child. When it was he first became a disciple to Paul doth not appear; but it appears from 2Ti 3:11, that he was with Paul at Antioch and Iconium, which was before he came to Lystra, Ac 16:1, where Paul circumcised him. After this Paul made him his companion, and sent him upon several messages. He was a sickly person, 1Ti 5:23, but eminent in gifts and graces, 2Ti 1:5 3:15 1Co 4:17. After this he was ordained a minister by Paul and the presbytery, 2Ti 1:6. He became very dear to Paul for his faithfulness, Php 2:19-21; so as he calls him his *beloved son, and faithful*, 1Co 4:17, his *son in the faith*, 1Ti 1:2, his *dearly beloved son*, his *fellow worker, fellow labourer*, &c. Paul left him a time at Thessalonica and Berea, Ac 17:13,14; then sent for him to Athens, Ac 17:15. He came to him at Corinth, Ac 18:5. Thence he sent him into Macedonia, Ac 19:22. From thence he came to Corinth, and goes with Paul into Asia. Ac 20:4; where Paul entreats him to stay some time at Ephesus, as an evangelist, to settle the churches there, 2Ti 4:5. From thence he sends for him to Rome, 2Ti 4:9, and sends Tychicus in his room to Ephesus, 2Ti 4:12. Paul having left Timothy, a young man, in this great trust, being himself to be absent, writes this Epistle to him, to encourage him against all dangers, and to direct him in the management of his office. The scope of the Epistle is to direct Timothy in the first place, and then all ministers of the gospel, how to behave themselves in the ministerial work, as to preaching, praying, government, opposing gainsayers, &c.; so as it is the most perfect direction we have in all Scripture for the discharge of the ministerial office. The time when Paul wrote this Epistle is uncertainly judged, but guessed to be the one and twentieth year after Christ's death, and about the nineteenth after Paul's conversion; it is certain it was when he was in Macedonia, and before he returned to Ephesus, Ac 19:1.

## Chapter Summary

1Ti 1:1,2 The salutation.

1Ti 1:3,4 Timothy is put in mind of the charge before given him by Paul.

1Ti 1:5-7 The end of the commandment is charity, from which some had turned aside to teach the law, which they understood not.

1Ti 1:8-11 The scope of the law was to condemn wickedness, which is the design of the gospel also.

1Ti 1:12-17 Paul blesseth God for calling him to the ministry notwithstanding his great demerit, whereby all penitent sinners that believe are assured of mercy through Christ.

1Ti 1:18-20 He urgeth Timothy to a due discharge of his trust, warning him of some who had deserted the truth, of whom Hymeneus and Alexander had been delivered by him unto Satan.

Ver. 1. *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ;* one immediately sent by Jesus Christ, by his voice from heaven, Ac 9:15, though not by his voice upon earth, as those, Mt 10:1-42.

*By the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ: through the will of God,* 1Co 1:1, not his permissive, but preceptive will; and this is the same with his being *called to be an apostle*, Ro 1:1 1Co 1:1. By our *Lord Jesus Christ*, the Father not being excluded, but the Son only being named, to whom the mediatory kingdom was committed.

*Which is our hope: our hope*, there is no more in the Greek, that is, the object of our hope: as when it is said, Ge 31:53, that *Jacob sware by the fear of his father Isaac*, that is, by the Deity whom his father feared. This glorious eulogy belongs to our Saviour, in whom there is a concurrence of all that is requisite to free us from destructive evils, and to make us everlastingly happy: for he is *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*. Hence the Gentiles without Christ are said to be without hope, Eph 2:12. And from hence it is evident that Jesus Christ is the eternal God, for if he were only a man, though in excellence above all others, he could not be our hope, for *cursed is he that trusteth in man*, Jer 17:5.

## 1 Timothy 1:2

Ver. 2. He dignifies Timothy with the title of his *son in the faith*; that is, being converted by him to Christianity, and begat to the Divine life: and by styling Timothy his *own son*, he signifies his piety and virtue, that rendered him a worthy son of such a father, whom he imitated and honoured, and with whom he corresponded in a grateful, obedient affection. Having thus designated the person to whom he writes, he expresses his ardent desires of his complete felicity; which is included in *grace, mercy, and peace*. By *grace* he means the free favour and good will of God, with all the spiritual gifts that proceed from it, either requisite for salvation, or the great work of the evangelical ministry. By *mercy*, his compassionate tender love, pardoning, relieving, supporting, and assisting us in our Christian course. By *peace* he signifies, principally, the peace of God, that divine calm of conscience, that tranquillity and rest of soul, which proceeds from the assurance that God is reconciled to us in Christ, and our freedom by the sanctifying Spirit from the tyranny of carnal lusts: this peace can never be to the wicked. And besides this principal peace, we may understand peace with man, that is, a quiet state, exempt from hatred and persecutions, that Timothy might more comfortably and successfully perform the work of his ministry. He prays for these blessings *from God*, who is the original Fountain of all good: and from *Jesus Christ* as the channel, by which all the gifts of God are conveyed to us; for without his mediation the Deity is as a sealed fountain, no grace would flow to us. He styles God *our Father*, because he has adopted us in his Son, and in that quality he communicates his *grace, mercy, and peace* to us: he styles Christ *our Lord*, who hath supreme power over us, as well by the right of creation as of redemption.

## 1 Timothy 1:3

Ver. 3. *Ephesus* was a great city in Asia the Less, whither Paul came, Ac 19:1; where Demetrius raised a tumult against him, which the town clerk appeased, as we read there. From thence he *went into Macedonia*, Ac 20:1-3. Upon this his motion into Macedonia (as divines judge) he left Timothy at Ephesus. The end of leaving him at Ephesus was, that he might *charge some that they preached no other doctrine*, that is, none contrary to

what he had preached, none contrary to the doctrine of the gospel, Ga 1:8,9. What power was here committed to Timothy is by some questioned; supposing (which is very probable) there were a greater number of disciples than could meet in one assembly, his power was more than pastoral, for he had a power over the teachers. Whether this power was extraordinary, or ordinary, and what God intended ever to continue in the church, is the question. Those who make it to be such, make it to be episcopal; those that make it extraordinary, say it was the work of an evangelist, 2Ti 4:5. That there was such an officer in the primitive church appears from Ac 21:8 Eph 4:11. That this was Timothy's work appears from 2Ti 4:5. Nor is it a new thing, but very common in the settlement of all new governments, to authorize some special commissioners, and to give them an extraordinary power for a time, till the government can be settled and things brought into a fixed order. If we consider the words without prejudice:

*I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus,* they seem to signify that Timothy was not the established bishop of Ephesus; for to what end should the apostle desire a bishop to reside in his own diocese, which he could not forsake without neglecting his duty, and the offence of God? This were a tacit reflection, as if he were careless of his duty. And the word *abide*, *προσμεναι*, does not necessarily import his constant residence there; for it is used to signify continuance for some time only; as it is said of the apostle, that he remained many days at Corinth, Ac 18:18, when his stay there was only for some months. The intention of the apostle seems to be that Timothy should continue for a while at Ephesus, and not accompany him in his voyage to Macedonia, as he was wont to do upon other occasions. And it is evident by the sacred history, that about six months after Timothy was with the apostle in Greece, that he went with him to Macedonia, and Troas, and Miletus, Ac 20:1,4, where the apostle sent for the elders or bishops of Ephesus, to leave his last solemn charge with them. In short, if Timothy had been appointed the bishop of Ephesus, the apostle would probably have given this title of honour to him in the inscription of his Epistle. Upon the impartial considering of the whole matter, though the passion of prelacy is so ingenious as to discover so many mysteries and mitres in a few plain words, (viz. that Timothy was bishop of that city, metropolitan of the province, and primate of all Asia), yet it is most likely that Timothy was left only for some time with a kind of apostolical power in the church of Ephesus; of which power this was



one branch, authoritatively to command seducers not to teach another doctrine than what was taught by the apostles, who were Divinely illuminated: a Divine rule, and most worthy of perpetual observation by all in the office of the ministry. And this showeth the mighty proneness of men, as to deviate in their conversations, from the right ways, so in their judgments from the truths of God, otherwise Paul had no need to have left Timothy for that end in this church so newly planted.

### 1 Timothy 1:4

Ver. 4. *Neither give heed to fables:* by *fables* he probably meaneth the *Jewish fables, and commandments of men*, mentioned Tit 1:14; or more generally, all vain and idol speculations.

*And endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying;* whatsoever tendeth not to build men up in godliness, which is the end of preaching. The Jews had many unwritten fables, about what God did before he made the world, &c., and many unwritten *endless genealogies*, which were as so many labyrinths, intricate, without an issue out of them: and it is probable that some of them (converted to the Christian faith) still busied their heads about them, according to their education and the practice of the Jewish doctors, and made the subject of their sermons and discourses to the assemblies of Christians; which is the thing the apostle here declareth a corruption of the ordinances of preaching, and inveigheth against, 1Ti 6:4 2Ti 2:23 Tit 1:14 3:9; and willeth preachers to avoid, and people to give no heed to them, as nothing tending to the building Christians up in holiness, which he here calleth *οικοδομιαν θεου*, the building up of God, either so objectively, or efficiently, or by his command, because it is in God, viz. in the knowledge of God, and an increase in the love of God, and other spiritual habits; or from God, being wrought by him, and serving for his honour and glory, or according to his will.

*Which is in faith:* he tells us this edifying can be no otherwise than *in faith*, preaching the doctrine of the gospel, and embracing that which is the doctrine of faith, a doctrine of Divine revelation, to which men must give their assent, because of the authority of God revealing it. So as no discourses which are not founded in a Divine revelation, and to be proved

from thence, can possibly tend to any building of God, which cannot stand in the wisdom of men, but must stand in the power of God. From this text we may observe the vanity and proneness of some persons, even from the infancy of the church, to make up what they call sermons of discourses about fables, idle questions, and speculations, and genealogies of which there is no end; the teachers being able to bring the minds of hearers to no rest about them, nor they tending to any good and saving use, but merely to show men's wit and parts; and we may also learn, that this is no religious preaching or hearing, it being impossible men should be under any religious obligations to hear any but prophets, that is, such as reveal the Divine will. For other discourses, men in their seasons may hear them, or let them alone, and credit or not credit them as they see reason.

### 1 Timothy 1:5

Ver. 5. *Now the end of the commandment is charity:* the word translated *commandment* here is παραγγελια, which rather signifies a particular charge given by superiors as to some thing, than a general law, Ac 5:28 16:24; and so in this chapter, 1Ti 1:18; which inclineth me to think, that though the proposition be true of the whole law of God, (for *love is the fulfilling of the law*), and more eminently of the Divine doctrine in the gospel, for the end and perfection it aims at and produces is a pure, ardent love of God, and of men for his sake, and of the gospel, yet it is rather here to be restrained to the commandment relating to preaching, or discoursing the revealed will of God relating to men's salvation, *the end* of which is doubtless *charity*, which ought to be *finis operantis*, the end of the workman, what he ought to intend and aim at; and *is finis operis*, the effect of the work, viz. the begetting in the souls of people love to God and their neighbour, neither of which can rationally be obtained by preachers telling people idle stories, and filling their heads with idle questions and speculations.

*Out of a pure heart:* which love to God and men must proceed from a clean, and holy, and sincere heart.

*And of a good conscience;* and a good and holy life, when conscience doth not sourly reflect upon men for presumptuous miscarriages.

*And of faith unfeigned;* which must all be rooted in and attended with a *faith unfeigned;* rooted in it, as faith signifies a steady assent to Divine revelation; attended with it, as it signifies the soul's repose and rest upon Christ for the fulfilling of the promises annexed to him that believes and liveth up to such propositions. These are the noble ends of the whole law of God, and particularly of the charge or command God hath given ministers as to preaching, which can by no means be attained by teachers' discoursing fables and endless genealogies to people, nor by people's attendance to such discourses, for they can only fill people's heads with notions and unprofitable questions, which serve to gender strife and contention amongst people, instead of love either to God or men, and so to defile instead of purifying the heart, and have no influence at all upon a holy life, all which can grow out of no root but an unfeigned faith.

*From which;* from which things (for the article is plural,  $\omega\nu$ ); from which commandment, and from the end of which commandment, from which pure heart, good conscience, and faith unfeigned.

*Some having swerved:*  $\alpha\sigma\tau\omicron\chi\eta\sigma\alpha\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ , the word signifies to wander from a scope or mark. Some men either propounding to themselves ends in their discourses to people different from the command concerning preaching, and the true end of that, or at least wandering from that true end, they have turned aside. To do an action well, two things are necessary:

1. The propounding to ourselves a right end;
2. A moving to it by due means and in right order: whoso faileth in either of these, can no more do an action well, than he can shoot an arrow well, that either eyeth no mark, or levelleth his arrow quite beside it.

The preachers reflected on by the apostle, either never considered the true end of preaching, or never regarded it in their action; this made them turn aside from theology to mataeology, from preaching to *vain jangling;* so we translate it, but the word signifieth foolish talking; so we translate the adjective: Tit 1:10, and so the word properly signifieth, any kind of foolish, impertinent discourse, either serving to no good end, or at least not that which the discourse pretendeth to. And indeed all discourses of fables, and unprofitable, idle questions, tending not to edifying, is no better than foolish talking.

### 1 Timothy 1:7

Ver. 7. *Desiring to be teachers of the law;* Νομοδιδασκαλοι. This term lets us know, that the apostle reflecteth upon some who were or had been Jews, who either pressed the observance of the law in order to justification, or spent their time in pressing the traditions of the elders, and constitutions of the scribes, as *sepimenta legis*, hedges (as they called them) to the Divine law, though not of the letter of it; upon which there arose a great many questions as insignificant as their traditions themselves, which these vain preachers spent their time in speaking to.

*Understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm;* neither understanding the Divine law, nor the questions themselves started and spoke unto, yet ambitious to be accounted *teachers of the law*. This vain desire of reputation, as persons of excellent skill in the land, was the cause of their erroneous, idle sermons: and their ignorance is aggravated and inexcusable, in that they with presumptuous boldness assert the things of which they are ignorant.

### 1 Timothy 1:8

Ver. 8. *But we know that the law is good:* not that I speak against the law of God, I know that it is *holy, and spiritual, and just, and good,* Ro 7:12,14. It is good, though not for justification, yet for conviction, to convince men of sin, and as a schoolmaster to lead men unto Christ, and to direct us in our walking with God; the equity and sanctity of its precepts are evident to the sincere and purified mind.

*If a man use it lawfully:* and as the law has an intrinsic goodness in its nature, so it is good to men when it is used for the end to which God gave it.

### 1 Timothy 1:9

Ver. 9. By *the law* is to be understood the moral law, (though possibly not excluding the law of Moses, consisting in many ordinances), as it is armed with stings and terrors, to restrain rebellious sinners; by the *righteous man*, one in whom a principle of Divine grace is planted, and, from the knowledge and love of God, chooses the things that are pleasing to him, and is ardent and active to do his will. Now it is true, the holiness commanded in the law, that, consists in the love of God and our neighbour, obliges every reasonable creature indispensably and eternally; but as the law was delivered in so terrible a manner, as it has annexed so many severe threatenings to the transgressors of it, it is evident that it is directed to the wicked, who will only be compelled by fear from an outrageous breaking of it. And this may be emphatically signified in the word here used, κειται, for it signifies to be laid, as well as to be made. The law *non obicitur* is not laid against a righteous man. Thus we translate it, Mt 3:10: *The axe is laid unto the root of the trees:* there is some difference in the construction; here it is immediately joined with the dative case, there with an accusative case, with the preposition προς between the verb and the case; but that must be the sense. It is very probable, that these false teachers had been terrifying the Christians with the law, in opposition to whom the apostle saith, the law was not made for a righteous man, as to its condemning office; it was never intended against a righteous man, but against men that committed and lived in gross sin and wickedness. These sinners are first mentioned in general terms, then the apostle proceedeth to a more particular enumeration of them; whether in them (as some think) the apostle hath respect to the several precepts of the decalogue, I cannot determine. By *the lawless* he meaneth persons living without any respect to the laws of God or men. By the *disobedient* he meaneth such as will live in subjection to no government. The word by us translated *ungodly*, signifieth such as live without any religion, having no regard to the worship of God, ασεβει. The word translated *sinners* signifies infamous, scandalous sinners.

*Unholy and profane* are also general terms, signifying persons that have no piety, but lewdly talk of things sacred, and live as lewdly.

*Murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers:* the words signify such as strike or beat their parents, though they do not give them mortal wounds, and well expresseth violaters of the fifth commandment.

*Manslayers*, ανδροφονους, signifies such as kill men, whether maliciously or passionately, violaters of the sixth commandment.

### 1 Timothy 1:10

Ver. 10. The two next terms express violaters of the seventh commandment, whether by fornication, adultery, incest, sodomy, or any beastly lusts.

*Men-stealers*; the word signifieth such as carry men into captivity, or make slaves of them in the first place; it signifies also any stealing of men. It is probable the first of these is the man-stealing principally intended, being the most common sin by pirates at sea, and soldiers at land; yet not excluding any other stealing of men from their relations, which he instanceth in, as one of the highest violations of the eighth commandment. By *liars* he meaneth such as knowingly speak what is false, especially to the prejudice of others. By *perjured persons* he means such as swear falsely. And cause it would be too long to reckon up all kinds of sinners, he comprehends them all in a general phrase, *and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine*, that is, the holy and pure truth of God, that is not corrupted, but judges aright of good and evil: for these he saith the law is made, that is, to deter from such crimes, or to condemn for them; but not to terrify such who either never were guilty of such flagitious crimes, or if they have been guilty, yet are now *washed, and sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God*, as the apostle speaks, 1Co 6:11. The law (as the apostle here saith) was never made to terrify, or to condemn and affright, these, for, Ro 8:1: *There is no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

### 1 Timothy 1:11

Ver. 11. Here the apostle specifies the sound doctrine of which he spake; that it is contained in the gospel, the perfect rule of righteousness, which he styles *the glorious gospel of the blessed God*, it being a doctrine revealed from heaven, wherein the concurrence and command of the Divine attributes, wisdom, power, mercy, and justice, do most clearly

shine to the glory of God, 2Co 4:6 Eph 1:6,12: and he gives the title of *blessed* to God, thereby to signify his transcendent goodness, in that, being infinitely happy in the possession of his own excellencies, without any possible advantage and profit from any creature, yet he was pleased to give his Son to be our ransom, and with him grace and glory to us. The apostle adds, *which was committed to my trust*, to distinguish it from the false doctrine which seducers published under the name of the gospel.

### 1 Timothy 1:12

Ver. 12. Here St. Paul expresses his most humble and solemn thanks to Christ for his rich favour in calling him to the high office of all apostle, for by *the ministry* that is to be understood; and it is so called by way of excellence, it being the most glorious and Divine ministry that ever was established in the church: and he ascribes to our Saviour the praise of all that he performed in the faithful discharge of it. He saith: *Christ enabled me*, that is, endowed him with fidelity, zeal, courage, and all other qualifications requisite for that honourable and difficult ministry, 2Co 3:5,6. The end of that sacred ministry was, to enlighten and reform the world from superstition, and that vicious and vain conversation that was so pleasing to carnal men, to abolish those corrupt customs that had taken such deep root, and to plant the truth that comes from above, and to publish a holy law so opposite to corrupt nature. This work was opposed by the craft and cruelty, the artifice and violence, of the powers of darkness, in conjunction with the perverted world; and the glory of the apostle's resisting such enemies is entirely due to Christ. He adds, as a motive of his thankfulness, that Jesus Christ *counted him faithful*, which is an evident proof that he intends that he made him faithful. His faithfulness was not the cause or motive, but the fruit and effect, of the grace of God in calling him to the ministry. This he expressly declares, 1Co 7:25, *hath obtained mercy to be faithful*. If our Saviour had only discovered his fidelity, without bestowing that grace upon him, there had not been a reason of such affectionate thanksgiving; for that always supposes some favour and benefit received.

### 1 Timothy 1:13

Ver. 13. The kindness of God in putting me into so noble a service was the greater and more thankworthy, because *before* that time I *was a blasphemer*, one who spake of Christ reproachfully, for that blasphemy signifieth. Paul was a zealous man in the Jewish religion, his blasphemy therefore only respected the Second Person in the Trinity, which the Jews owned not. Paul *compelled* others to *blaspheme*, Ac 26:11.

*And a persecutor:* of his persecution, see Ac 8:3: he entered houses, haled men and women to prison; he breathed *threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord*, Ac 9:1; he persecuted Christianity even to death, Ac 22:4,5. Thus he was *injurious*, for in other things he was, as to *the law, blameless*, Php 3:6, bred up a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of the Jewish religion, Ac 26:5; but he *verily thought* with himself that he *ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth*, Ac 26:9; so as he went according to his conscience, (such a one as he had), and, Ac 26:10, he had also *authority from the chief priests*. But neither the dictates of his own erroneous conscience, nor yet the command of his superiors, could (according to Paul's divinity) excuse him from being a *persecutor*, and *injurious*, and standing in need of the free pardoning mercy of God, which he saith he *obtained* of God's free grace, because *he did it ignorantly*. We cannot reasonably think that ignorance of the Divine law (once published) should excuse any transgressor of it, we see men will not allow it as to their laws, after promulgation; so that although Paul persecuted Christians *ignorantly*, yet he stood in need of *mercy*. Ignorance excuseth not *a toto*, but *a tanto*, not in whole, but in part, and makes the sinner's sin not to be so exceeding sinful, especially where it is not vincible. Paul's ignorance here mentioned was vincible; he lived in Judea, where the gospel had been preached some years before he persecuted the professors; he might have heard the sermons preached, and seen the miracles wrought, by Christ and the apostles; but he was bred a Pharisee, and under the prejudices of that sect which were implacable enemies to Christ, this kept him in ignorance. Christ allows something for the prejudices of men's education. He did what he did also while he was in a state of *unbelief*. He believed one true and living God, (all the Jews did so), and worshipped him according to the Jewish manner, yet styles himself an unbeliever. Every man is an unbeliever (in a gospel sense) that receiveth not Jesus Christ as the Son of God and his Saviour, though he believes there is one God, &c. Paul addeth this circumstance of his ignorant blaspheming and persecuting the truth, partly to justify the Divine



mercy that pardoned and preserved him; for the gospel peremptorily excludes from pardon all that sin against the Holy Ghost, such who, being enlightened by the knowledge of the saving truth, yet for carnal reasons deliberately and maliciously oppose it; now the showing mercy to Paul was no contradiction to this most wise law of God: and partly he mentions his ignorance to prevent the abuse of the Divine mercy by men; as if from his example they might securely imitate his persecuting the saints, or live in a course of sin, though convinced of their wickedness, and hope for mercy at the last.

### 1 Timothy 1:14

Ver. 14. *And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant;* the free love of God towards me, in justifying such a guilty creature, and sanctifying such an unholy creature, and afterwards calling me to the office of an apostle, fitting me for it, and trusting me with that great work and employment, abounded beyond all measure and possibility of expression.

*With faith and love which is in Christ Jesus:* Christ working faith in me, enabling me to receive him as the Son of God, and my Lord and Saviour; and to love him, whom I formerly thought I ought to do much against, and his disciples, whom I formerly hailed to death, of whom I made havoc, persecuting them to death. He mentions *faith and love*, the two principal graces, in opposition to the reigning sins in his unconverted state: faith in the doctrine of the gospel, in opposition to his former ignorance and infidelity; and love to Christ and believers, in opposition to his former rage and cruelty against them. And these graces were from Christ, the fruits of his merit, and Holy Spirit.

### 1 Timothy 1:15

Ver. 15. *This is a faithful saying;* the following saying, which is the great proposition of the gospel, is a saying that is in itself true, and wherein God hath declared his truth.

*And worthy of all acceptance;* and worthy to be with all thankfulness received, believed, and accepted.

*That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;* that Jesus Christ, being sent of the Father, in the fulness of time, was incarnate, lived, and died in the world; not only to set sinners an example of a better life, nor only to make God placable towards men, that if they would they might be saved; but to purchase a certain salvation for sinners, satisfying Divine justice, and meriting all grace necessary to bring them to salvation, to carry the lost sheep home upon his shoulders; yea, though they had been great wanderers, αμαρτωλους.

*Of whom I am chief;* and I was as great a one as any other, yea, the chief. Paul, though converted, had his former sin of persecution before his eyes. Persecutors are some of the chief sinners. Some will have the relative *of whom* to refer to the saving mentioned: of which sinners brought to salvation I am the great president, having been so great a sinner as I have been and yet received to mercy.

### 1 Timothy 1:16

Ver. 16. Ἄλλα, the word we translate *howbeit*, is as well to be translated but, and ordinarily is so.

*For this cause,* that is, for this end, God showed me mercy.

*That in me first;* that in me, the first, (so it is in the Greek, for it is an adjective), that is, as he said before, the chiefest or greatest sinner:

*Christ might show forth all long-suffering,* bearing with me while I was in my rage against his gospel and saints, and then changing my heart to embrace him and to love him. Or, *that in me first,* may respect the design of our Saviour in sending Paul to convert the Gentiles: for such a conspicuous example of his clemency and grace towards so great a sinner, whom he not only pardoned but preferred to the dignity of an apostle, would be a strong persuasive to them to receive the gospel with faith and obedience. For it follows, *for a pattern,* of God's patience and free grace to other sinners, from whence they might learn, that if they also shall receive and believe in him, their past sins need not be to them any reason to despair in his mercy.

*To life everlasting*: there being a certain connection between true believing in Christ and eternal life.

### 1 Timothy 1:17

Ver. 17. The apostle falleth out of this discourse with a doxology, or sentence giving glory to God, whom he calls *the King*, that is, the Moderator and Governor of all things.

*Eternal*; without beginning of days or end of life.

*Immortal*; not subject, as creatures, to any passion, or determination of being.

*Invisible*; not obvious to our senses, whom no mortal eye ever saw.

*Only wise*, primitively and originally, and eminently, from whom all wisdom is derived.

*Be honour and glory for ever and ever*; be given all praises, homage, and acknowledgments, by which he can be made glorious for ever.

### 1 Timothy 1:18

Ver. 18. *This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy*: the term *son*, here applied to Timothy, whom he elsewhere calls his brother, is not a term of natural relation, but of spiritual relation, and of affectionate friendship and endearment. By *the charge* mentioned he probably means that before mentioned, 1Ti 1:3,4, to charge the false teachers to *teach no other doctrine, nor give heed to fables, &c.*

*According to the prophecies which went before on thee*: these *prophecies* were either the judgments of good men before concerning him, or (which possibly is more probable) some Divine revelations Paul, or some believers, had received concerning this young man.

*That thou by them mightest war a good warfare;* that thou, having heard of them, or remembering them, (though thou meetest with opposition as a minister and as a Christian, yet) mightest not be discouraged, but preach and hold the faith, against all opposers. So the apostle expoundeth himself.

### 1 Timothy 1:19

Ver. 19. By *faith* here is meant, the doctrine of faith, and the holding of it signifies a steadiness of the mind's assent unto it, without wavering or fluctuation, much less deserting or denying it. By *a good conscience* is here to be understood what the Scripture elsewhere calls *a conscience void of of offence toward God, and toward men*, Ac 24:16, opposed to the *evil conscience*, mentioned Heb 10:22; so as a good conscience here signifies a pure conscience, which necessarily implieth a holy life; for our actions are presently copied out into our consciences, and make either blots or good copies there.

*Which some having put away;* which some taking no care in, viz. to live holily, so keeping a good conscience; *concerning faith have made shipwreck;* have made shipwreck concerning faith, suffered loss as to it, falling from the truths of the gospel. Error seldom goes along with a holy life. The truths of the gospel have such an influence upon men's conversation, that ordinarily men's holiness is proportioned to their soundness in the faith, and usually the love of some lust is what betrayeth men into erroneous judgments and opinions.

### 1 Timothy 1:20

Ver. 20. Of which men who have made shipwreck of a good conscience and concerning faith,

*Hymenaeus and Alexander* are two persons. Of Hymenaeus we read, 2Ti 2:17,18; he affirmed the resurrection was past, and overthrew the faith of many. Of Alexander we read, 2Ti 4:14; he was a great enemy to Paul, the same person, as some judge, mentioned Ac 19:33, then a friend to Paul, but afterwards one who did him much harm.

*Whom I have delivered unto Satan:* we meet with the same phrase, 1Co 5:5: see the notes there. Some think by it is signified a peculiar power granted the apostles, God in those primitive times confirming regular excommunications, by letting Satan loose upon persons excommunicated to torture them; but we find nothing of this in Scripture. I rather think the sense is no more than, whom I excommunicated and cast out of the church, making them of the world again, (as the world is opposed to the church, and kingdom of Christ), which, for the greater terror, the apostle expresseth by this notion of being delivered to Satan, who is called *the god of this world*, &c.

*That they may learn not to blaspheme:* not that I might ruin and undo them, but that I might amend them by this exercise of discipline, teaching them to take heed of spreading damnable and pernicious errors to the reproach of God. Or, perhaps, with their perverse opinions (which is very ordinary) they mingled reproachful speeches concerning God.

## 1 Timothy 2:1

### Chapter Summary

1Ti 2:1-3 Paul exhorteth to pray and give thanks for all men, for kings and magistrates especially.

1Ti 2:4-6 God willeth the salvation of all men.

1Ti 2:7 Paul's commission to teach the Gentiles.

1Ti 2:8-10 He directeth how women should be attired,

1Ti 2:11-14 permiteth them not to teach,

1Ti 2:15 promiseth that they shall be saved by child-bearing on certain conditions.

Ver. 1. Timothy (as was said before) was left at Ephesus to manage the affairs of the church there in the absence of Paul, who in this Epistle directs him as to this management. First he exhorts him to see that prayers should be made for all men.

*Supplications*, δεησεις, for supply of wants.

*Prayers*, προσευχας, signifieth much the same; some will have it to

signify petitions for the conservation or increase of what good things we have.

*Intercessions*, εντευξεις, prayers for others, whether for the averting of evils from them, or the collation of good things upon them.

*And giving of thanks*; and blessings of God for good things bestowed upon ourselves or others. These Paul wills should be made υπερ παντων, which may be of all men, or *for all men*, but the next verse plainly shows that it is here rightly rendered *for all men*, for there were at this time no *kings* in the church. Paul here establisheth prayers as a piece of the public ministry in the church of God, and a primary piece; therefore he saith, he exhorts *that first of all*; not in respect of time so much, as, principally, intimating it a great piece of the public ministry, which he would by no means have neglected. And he would have these prayers put up for all orders and sorts of men, such only excepted of whom St. John speaks, 1Jo 5:16, who had sinned that sin, for which he would not say Christians should pray.

### 1 Timothy 2:2

Ver. 2. *For kings, and for all that are in authority*: the kings of the earth at that time were all heathens, and enemies to the Christian religion, so (generally) were those who were in a subordinate authority to them, yet the apostle commands that prayers should be made in the Christian congregations for them. What the matter of their petitions was to be is not expressed, but doubtless not to be limited by the next words, for that were not to have prayed for them but for themselves. Prayers for magistrates ought to be directed by their circumstances. If magistrates were idolaters and persecutors, they were to pray for their conversion, and the change of their hearts. However, they were to pray for their life and health so far forth as might be for God's glory, and for God's guidance of them in the administration of their government, and their success in their lawful counsels and undertakings, &c. The latter words, *that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty*, contain the reason why prayers should be made for governors, and the good effect of them. For it is for this end that the supreme Lord hath ordained the office and dignity of kings and governors, that, being armed with authority and power, they

may preserve public order and peace, by punishing evil-doers, and protecting and encouraging those that do well. Thus, under the Old Testament, the Jews were commanded to pray for the peace of the nation or city whither they should be carried captives, for in their peace they should have peace, Jer 29:7.

### 1 Timothy 2:3

Ver. 3. To pray for all, as well our enemies as our friends, especially for princes, and such as are in places of magistracy and authority, is *good*, being according to the will and commandment of God, and *acceptable* to God, as all acts of obedience to his will are. The word *Saviour* may either be understood with reference to the Divine Being, God being our Preserver, who maketh his sun to shine and his rain to fall upon the just and unjust, Mt 5:45, which our Saviour brings as an argument to enforce his precept of love to our enemies; or with a special reference to Christ, to whom the title of *Saviour*, with reference to eternal salvation, more strictly belongs, who also by his death, when we were enemies reconciled us to God: so that such a charitable office must be acceptable to God, because in doing it we both show ourselves the children of our heavenly Father, and also the followers of Christ.

### 1 Timothy 2:4

Ver. 4. The apostle produces a clear, convincing reason, that the duty of charity in praying for all men is pleasing to God, from his love extended to all, in his willing their salvation, and their knowledge and belief of the gospel, which is the only way of salvation. From hence our Saviour's commission and command to the apostles was universal: *Go and teach all nations*, Mt 28:19; *Preach the gospel to every creature*, that is, to every man, Mr 16:15; he excludes no people, no person. And accordingly the apostles discharged their office to their utmost capacity, Col 1:24. But a question arises, how it can be said that God would *have all men saved*, when that the most of men perish? For the resolving this difficulty, we must observe, that in the style of Scripture the will of God sometimes signifies his eternal counsel and decree; that things should be done either by his immediate efficiency, or by the intervention of means: or, secondly,

his commands and invitations to men to do such things as are pleasing to him. The will of God in the first sense always infallibly obtains its effect, Ps 115:3; thus he declares: *My counsel shall stand, I will do all my pleasure*, Isa 46:10; for otherwise there must be a change of God's will and counsel, or a defect of power, both which assertions are impious blasphemy. But those things which he commands and are pleasing to him, are often not performed without any reflection upon him, either as mutable or impotent. Thus he declares, that he wills things that are pleasing to him; as, I will not the death of a sinner, but that he should turn and live, Eze 33:11; and sometimes that he will not those things that are displeasing to him, as contrary to holiness, though he did not decree the hindering of them: thus he complains in Isa 55:12: *Ye did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not*. This distinction of the Divine will being clearly set down in Scripture, answers the objection; for when it is said in the text, that *God will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth*; and in the same sense by St. Peter, that *God will have none perish, but come to repentance*, 2Pe 3:9; we must understand it, not with respect to his decretive will, but his complacential will, that is, the repentance and life of a sinner is very pleasing to his holiness and mercy. And this love of God to men has been declared in opening the way of salvation to them by the Mediator, and by all the instructions, invitations, commands, and promises of the gospel, assuring them that whoever comes to Christ upon the terms of the gospel shall in no wise be cast off; that no repenting believer shall be excluded from saving mercy.

### 1 Timothy 2:5

Ver. 5. The apostle proves the universal love of God to men by two reasons, the unity of God, and the unity of the Mediator: though there are divers societies and vast numbers of men, yet there is but one God, the Creator and Preserver of all. If there were many gods in nature, it were conceivable that the God of Christians were not the God of other men, and consequently that his good will were confined to his own portion, leaving the rest to their several deities; but since there is but one true God of the world, who has revealed himself in the gospel, it necessarily follows that he is the God of all men in the relation of Creator and Preserver. And from hence he concludes: *God will have all men to be saved*. He argues in the same manner that salvation by faith in Christ belongs to the Gentiles as



well as the Jews, Ro 3:29,30. The apostle adds, for the clearest assurance of his good will of God to save men, that there is *one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*. When the sin of man had provoked Divine justice, and the guilt could not be expiated without satisfaction, God appointed his Son incarnate to mediate between his offended Majesty and his rebellious subjects. And it is observable, the parallel between the unity of God and the unity of the Mediator; as there is one God of all nations, so there is one Mediator of all. The strength of the apostle's argument from the unity of the Mediator is this: If there were many mediators, according to the numbers of nations in the world, there might be a suspicion whether they were so worthy and so prevalent as to obtain the grace of God, every one for those in whose behalf they did mediate. But since there is but one, and that he is *able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him*, it is evident that all men have the same Mediator, and that every one may be assured that God is willing he should be saved, and, for that blessed end, should by faith and repentance accept the covenant of grace. The apostle for the stronger confirmation specifies the Mediator, *the man Christ Jesus*, to encourage the hopes of all men, from the communion they have with him in nature, that they may partake of his salvation, and that this great Mediator, having come from heaven and assumed the infirmity of our nature, Heb 4:15, will be inclined compassionately to assist them, and raise them to his heavenly kingdom.

### 1 Timothy 2:6

Ver. 6. Ἀντιλυτρον, the word here translated *ransom*, is very emphatical; it signifies the exchanging of condition with another, the laying down of one's life to save another's. This our Saviour has done for us. The Scripture discovers to us, that *by nature we are the children of wrath*, and guilty of many rebellious sins, and devoted to eternal death: being in this deplorable state, the Son of God, moved by his Divine love, undertook our restoring to the favour of God; and voluntarily endured the punishment due to our sins, and gave his most precious blood and life the price of our redemption, Mt 20:28. If it be objected: How is it consistent with Christ giving *himself a ransom for all*, that so many perish in their sins? The answer is clear: We must distinguish between the sufficiency of his ransom and the efficacy of it; he paid a ransom worthy to obtain the salvation of all men, and has done whatever was requisite to reconcile

God, and make men capable of salvation; but only those who by a lively faith depend upon him, and obey him, are actual partakers of salvation: that is, no person but may be saved in believing; and if men perish, it is not from a defect of righteousness in the Mediator, but from the love of their lusts, and their obstinate rejecting their own mercies. And it is unjust that the glory of his Divine compassion and love should be obscured or lessened for their ungrateful neglect of it.

### 1 Timothy 2:7

Ver. 7. *Whereunto I am ordained a preacher;* for the publishing and making known of which testimony of the Divine goodness and truth I am set, or *appointed*, 2Ti 1:11, ετεθην, *a preacher*, or a public officer to proclaim and make it known.

*And an apostle;* and am immediately called by Christ, and sent out upon that employment.

*I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;* I call Christ to witness that I speak nothing but what I know to be true. It is a phrase which hath, if not the form, yet the force of an oath; and was necessary in this case, for it was not easy to persuade the Jews that God had sent any to reveal the way of salvation to the Gentiles.

*A teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity;* and my special province was to teach the Gentiles, Ac 9:15 26:17 Ga 2:7-9; and to instruct them in the doctrine of faith and truth: or, I was set faithfully and truly to instruct the Gentiles.

### 1 Timothy 2:8

Ver. 8. *I will therefore that men pray every where;* this is one precept that I give thee in charge as to the management of the affairs of the church, that wherever men meet together to worship God, whether in houses built for that purpose, or in more common houses, or any other place, (for the time is now come when there is no special command for one place more than another, no special promise made to men's prayers in one place more than

another, as there was to and concerning the temple of old, Joh 4:21), they should pray, either ministering to others in the duty of prayer, or joining with him who doth so minister.

*Lifting up holy hands;* but let them take heed how they pray, for *God heareth not sinners*, Joh 9:31; let them therefore lift up holy hands, not regarding iniquity in their hearts.

*Without wrath;* and let them take heed of carrying malice, or inveterate anger, in their hearts when they go to God in prayer, for they must pray, Father: *forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us*; and, Mt 6:15: *If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses. And doubting;* and let them also take heed of doubting in prayer of the goodness, truth, or power of God to fulfil his wishes; but, Jas 1:6,7, *let them ask in faith, nothing wavering. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.*

### 1 Timothy 2:9

Ver. 9. The apostle's next precept to be urged by Timothy, is concerning the habits of women, especially when they come to worship God in the public assemblies; for to such assemblies the precepts in this chapter, both before and after this, chiefly relate. Concerning these he commands, that they should *adorn themselves in modest apparel*, observe a decency, with respect to the modesty of their sex, the purity of religion, the quality of their condition, and their age. Religion has no other interest in our habits, but to regulate them according to a modest comeliness; for they are indifferent in their nature, and neither add nor detract from the acceptance of our religious services.

*Shamefacedness and sobriety,* or modesty; a moderation of mind showed both in the habit of the body, and the manners and behaviour, both with these inward habits, and in an outward habit that may speak souls possessed of these inward habits.

*Not with brodered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;* not with hair platted or curled, not adorned with ornaments of gold, or pearls, or costly array. The apostle condemneth not these ornaments where they are suited

to the quality of women, and ask not too much time to put on, and in order; but where they are too excessive with respect to the purse of those that wear them, or take up more time to be spent in putting them on than is fit to be so spent, especially on a sabbath day, or where they are put on out of pride, or to make a vain show, or are of that nature and fashion as they speak an unchaste or an immodest heart, or may cause scandal to others. The apostle Peter, 1Pe 3:3, hath much the same precept, where he is not speaking of women's habits, with such special reference to public assemblies, but to their ordinary conversation; but it ought to be more specially avoided when people come to worship God. They should not so habit themselves when they go to pray, as if they were going to a dancing school, as Chrysostom in his time complained of some that did.

#### 1 Timothy 2:10

Ver. 10. They ought to look at the ornament of good works; for those are the ornaments which best become women professing godliness, whose hearts should despise the ornament of the figure of excrementitious hair, or a little yellow earth, or a stone, or the work of a pitiful silkworm.

#### 1 Timothy 2:11

Ver. 11. That is, in the public assemblies for worship, it is the woman's part silently to learn, showing thereby a subjection to the man, who is the head of the woman.

#### 1 Timothy 2:12

Ver. 12. *But I suffer not a woman to teach;* not to teach in the public congregation, except she be a prophetess, endued with extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, as Mary, and Anna, and Huldah, and Deborah, and some women in the primitive church, concerning whom we read, 1Co 11:5, that they prophesied.

*Nor to usurp authority over the man:* ordinary teaching of the woman was a usurpation of authority over the man, who is the head, which the apostle

also forbade in 1Co 11:3, and here repeateth. It is probable that the speaking of some women in the church who had extraordinary revelations, imboldened others also to aim at the like, which the apostle here directs his speech against. Nevertheless women may, and it is their duty to instruct their children and families at home, especially in the absence of their husbands.

### 1 Timothy 2:13

Ver. 13. The man had the priority of the woman in his creation, he was not made for her, but she was made for a help-mate mate for him; therefore she, being made for him, ought to usurp no authority over him.

### 1 Timothy 2:14

Ver. 14. Besides, Adam was not first deceived, nor indeed at all deceived immediately by the serpent, but only enticed, and deceived by the woman, who was the tempter's agent; so as that she was both first in the transgression in order of time, and also principal in it, contributing to the seduction or transgression of the man; which ought to be a consideration to keep the woman humble, in a low opinion of herself, and that lower order wherein God hath fixed her.

### 1 Timothy 2:15

Ver. 15. Though the woman was so unhappy as to be deceived by the serpent, and to be the first in taking the forbidden fruit, and an instrument to entice her husband to do the like, which may give all of that sex a cause of humiliation, and show them the reasonableness of God's order in putting them in subjection to man, and prohibiting them to break God's order in usurping authority over the man; yet through the gracious interposition of the Mediator, (afterward born of a woman), she hath no reason to despair, either of a temporal salvation, from the peril and danger of child-birth, or, much less, of an eternal salvation, for *she shall be saved*; she stands upon equal ground with the man as to eternal salvation, who cannot be saved without faith and holiness, and a discharge of the duties

incumbent upon him, and patient enduring the crosses and trials God exerciseth him with; and the woman also shall be saved, by faithful performance of her duty, and patiently enduring her crosses and trials, in the pains and peril of *child-bearing*; notwithstanding they are the sensible marks of God's displeasure for sin, yet the sufferings of Christ has taken away the said bitterness.

*If they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety*; if she also liveth in the exercise of faith in Christ, and love to God, and her husband, and all saints, and in all exercises of holiness with sobriety. Some refer the pronoun *they* to the children, because the apostle had been before speaking of the woman in the singular number; but there is nothing more ordinary than that change of the number, especially where collective words are used, that signify a whole species or sex; and it is unreasonable to think the apostle should suspend the salvation of the mother upon the faith and holiness of the child, and to interpret it of the mother's endeavours towards it, seemeth hardly a sufficient interpretation of the term *continue*.

## 1 Timothy 3:1

### Chapter Summary

1Ti 3:1            The office of a bishop is to be esteemed a good work.

1Ti 3:2-7        The qualifications requisite in a bishop, and in deacons.

1Ti 3:8-13      Why Paul wrote these instructions to Timothy.

1Ti 3:16        The important truths of the Christian revelation.

Ver. 1. *This is a true saying*; πιστος, a faithful saying, that which none can dispute, of which none ought to doubt.

*If a man desire the office of a bishop*; if a man desire any office to which belongs an oversight of the church of God. The Greek word επισκοπη signifies in the general an oversight of others; here the following discourse restrains it to an oversight of persons and affairs in the church. The apostle

by this phrase determines this employment lawful, and under due circumstances to be desired, and saith of it, that he who desireth it *desireth καλον εργον, a good work*, a noble employment; it is a *work*, the office of the ministry in the church is and ought to be a work. The titles of gospel ministers are not mere titles of honour, and of all works or employments, the ministry is the most noble employment. We (saith the apostle) are *stewards of the mysteries of God, ministers of Christ*, 1Co 4:1; *ambassadors for Christ, in Christ's stead*, 2Co 5:20; God's angels or messengers to churches, Re 2:1. It being so good, so great, and noble an employment, it is no wonder that God hath restrained women, the weaker and more ignoble sex, from invading it, for all men are not fit for it, but only such as are hereafter described.

### 1 Timothy 3:2

Ver. 2. In the following description there is the complete character of an evangelical bishop, with respect to the virtues wherewith he must be adorned, and the vices from which he must be exempt, and as to the conduct of his person, and the government of his family, and his carriage to the church, and to those that are without.

*A bishop*, whoever hath the office of oversight in the church of God, *must be blameless*, such a person as none can truly blame for any notorious or conspicuous errors in his life.

*The husband of one wife*; none who at the same time hath more wives than one, as many of the Jews had; nor was polygamy only common amongst the Jews, but amongst the other Eastern nations; but this was contrary to the institution of marriage. Some interpret this of successive marriage, as if it were a scandalous thing for a minister to marry a second time; but for this they have no pretence from holy writ, or reason, or the practice and custom of nations. Many persons lose their first wives so soon after marriage, that, were not second marriages lawful, all the ends of marriage must be frustrate as to them. The apostle commanding ministers to be the husbands but of *one wife*, doth not oblige them to marry, if God hath given them the gift of continency, but it establisheth the lawfulness of their marrying, against the doctrine of devils in this particular, which the Church of Rome teacheth.

*Vigilant*: the word here translated *vigilant* signifieth also *sober*, but for that ἀωφρονα is after used. He must be one that watcheth his flock, and is attentive to his work; one that will neither be long absent from his flock, nor yet sluggish while he is with them.

*Sober*; one that is prudent, modest, temperate, that can govern his affections and passions.

*Of good behaviour*; a man of a comely, decent behaviour, κοσμιος, no proud, supercilious man, that despiseth others, nor a morose man, who cannot accommodate himself to others.

*Given to hospitality*; one that loveth strangers, that is, who is ready to express his love to strangers (especially such as for the truth have left their country) by all courteous offices.

*Apt to teach*; one that is able to instruct others, and who hath a facility or aptness to it, neither an ignorant nor yet a lazy man.

### 1 Timothy 3:3

Ver. 3. *Not given to wine*; the word signifieth a common tippler, whether he drinks to the loss of his reason or no; a wine-bibber, that makes bibbing at a tavern his trade: no sitter at wine.

*No striker*; no quarreller, that cannot keep his fists off him that provoketh him.

*Not greedy of filthy lucre*; one that abhors all filthy and dishonest gain, any kind of way.

*But patient*; επιεικη, a fair, equal man, who will not exact the rigour of what he might; a patient, gentle, courteous man, so far from contention, that he will rather part with what is his right.

*Not a brawler*; αμαχον, one that will not fight, whether it be with his hand or tongue.



*Not covetous;* one that doth not love silver, that is, not with an immoderate, sinful love, so as to get it any way.

#### 1 Timothy 3:4

Ver. 4. *One that ruleth well his own house;* if he be one to whom God hath given a family, one who hath given an experiment of his conversation and ability to take care of a church, by the care that he hath taken of his family, and his ruling in that lesser society.

*Having his children in subjection with all gravity;* one that hath not let his children behave themselves rudely, and indecently, and rebelliously, but kept them in order by a grave demeanour towards them.

#### 1 Timothy 3:5

Ver. 5. For if a man hath a family, and hath showed that he neither hath wit nor honesty enough to govern that little society, which hath his constant presence with it, with what reason can any one presume, that he should be fit to be trusted with the care of the church of God? Which is a larger society, with all the members of which he is not so constantly present, and over whom he hath not such a coercive power, and as to whom a far greater care must be taken.

#### 1 Timothy 3:6

Ver. 6. *Not a novice;* not a young plant, that is, one that is newly made a member of the church of Christ; such persons are apt to swell in the opinion of their newly acquired knowledge, state, or dignity; and being so lifted up, they will be in danger of such a punishment as the devil for his pride met with, or to be guilty of some ill or indecent behaviour, which may give the devil occasion to accuse them. Others here interpret *διαβολου* more appellatively, and understand by it a man that is an accuser, making the sense this, —and fall into the judgment, censure, or condemnation of men, accusing them for such behaviour.

### 1 Timothy 3:7

Ver. 7. *Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without:* the apostle would have ministers men of good reputation amongst such as were without the pale of the church, for that is the meaning of that term, *which are without;* see 1Co 5:12 1Th 4:12: others might be admitted as members of the church, but not as rulers in it, because the glory of God was much concerned in the reputation of such persons, they were as lights set upon a hill.

*Lest he fall into reproach;* lest men reproach such persons for their former infamous life, and so prejudice others against the doctrine they bring.

*And the snare of the devil;* and the snare, either of some accuser, or of the devil, who hath this name from his accusing of the brethren; or lest he fall into some temptation to revenge, hatred, undue anger, or to be cowardly in the discharge of his duty, lest he should by faithfulness provoke others to reproach him for his former course of life.

### 1 Timothy 3:8

Ver. 8. *Likewise must the deacons be grave:* the term *deacon* signifies the same with one that ministereth, and is applicable to any that have any service in the church. But it is also a term peculiar to the office of those who *serve tables*, that is, took care of the poor, for which purpose these officers were first instituted, Ac 6:3; and thus the term is taken, Ro 12:7,8 Php 1:1; and so it here must be interpreted, being distinctly mentioned from the other officers, whose qualifications were before expressed, nor is it required of these officers that they should be *διδασκαλικοι*, apt to teach. Indeed both Stephen and Philip did preach, but the latter was an evangelist, and it was a time of persecution, when even the more private brethren went every where preaching the gospel. Of these officers he requires, that they should be persons not of light, airy tempers, but serious and composed, men of a modest, seemly carriage.

*Not double-tongued;* not excessive talkers, or men that regarded not what

they said, but talked any thing, according to the place or company they were in or with.

*Not given to much wine;* not too much attending taverns, and places where wine was sold or drank.

*Not greedy of filthy lucre;* not greedy of gain, any sordid, base way.

### 1 Timothy 3:9

Ver. 9. Not ignorant or inconstant persons, but such as were acquainted with the mysteries of the gospel, and believed them, and held to them; and men of a holy life.

### 1 Timothy 3:10

Ver. 10. The higher officers ought to *be proved*, ( as well as these of a lower order), as by examination or conference, so (which possibly is here more intended) by an observation of their lives and conversation, for some time before they were admitted into this employment. Then, *being found blameless*, they were to be admitted into this employment.

### 1 Timothy 3:11

Ver. 11. *Even so must their wives be grave: must their* is not in the Greek, but supplied by our interpreters, and, as some think, ill, judging that he speaks here not of deacons' wives, but of deaconesses, of such women as had the deacon's office conferred on them, such a one was Phebe, Ro 16:1; but it may be understood of either, both ought to be not light, airy, tattling persons, but composed, serious, grave people.

*Not slanderers;* not devils, (so it is in the Greek), that is, persons given to railing and accusing others.

*Sober:* see the sense of that word, 1Ti 3:2.

*Faithful in all things;* who have approved themselves every way honest, and such persons as may be trusted.

### 1 Timothy 3:12

Ver. 12. See the sense of these words, 1Ti 3:2,4, being the qualifications also of a bishop.

### 1 Timothy 3:13

Ver. 13. *Purchase to themselves a good degree;* a good degree of honour, so that none hath reason to decline or to despise that office. This seems rather to be the sense, than what pleaseth some better, viz. that they purchase to themselves a higher degree in the ministry of the church; for though it be very probably true, and but rational, that the primitive church did out of their deacons choose their higher officers for the church, yet neither was this done universally as to all persons chosen into those high employments, nor as to all those that used the office of a deacon well, there doubtless being many who had done so, who yet were not διδακτικοι, fitted with an ability sufficient to be preachers, without which fitness the primitive church would not choose any to such employment.

*And great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus;* by the well performance also of the office of a deacon, many obtained a great liberty, or freedom of speech, παρρησιαν, as to the doctrine of the faith of Christ. For by the exercise of the deacon's office, they had much converse both with the pastors and members of the church; which converse did not only improve their knowledge in the doctrine of faith, but took off that excessive bashfulness which possesseth many till they come to be fully acquainted with the thing of which, and the persons before which, they are to speak, which we see by daily experience. Or, the apostle intends that courage that arises from a good conscience. Those that are careless and unfaithful in the discharge of their duty, guilt makes them timorous; but the good and faithful servant of God enjoys that liberty and courage which faith in the Lord Jesus gives, and without fear discharges all the parts of his office.

### 1 Timothy 3:14

Ver. 14. I being now in Macedonia, or at Athens, or some parts thereabouts, have wrote to thee whom I left at Ephesus these precepts about the officers of churches, not being sure I shall, but hoping myself soon to come to Ephesus unto thee; which yet he did not, as we read, for he met Timothy at Troas, Ac 20:5.

### 1 Timothy 3:15

Ver. 15. I do not know how God will dispose of me, though I hope shortly to see thee, and therefore I have written to direct thee how in the mean time thou shouldst carry thyself in the affairs of the church, which I have committed to thee, which is a matter of great moment; for the people which constitute the church of him who is not like the gods of the heathens, a dead man consecrated and made a god, nor a being without life, like their images, but one who hath life in himself and from himself, is *the house of God*, a people in and amongst whom he dwelleth, and amongst whom he is worshipped; and of whom he hath a great care, and for which he hath a great love, Christ having died for it, *that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word*, Eph 5:26; and which (as a man doth by his house) he is daily enlarging, beautifying, and adorning with the graces of his Holy Spirit, *that* (as there, Eph 5:27) *he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.* Which church is *the pillar and ground of the truth*, *στυλος και εδραιωμα*. We want a good English word whereby to translate the latter of the two words in the Greek, which possibly hath advantaged the great contests about the sense of this text. It comes from *εδρα*, which signifieth a star, and a thing to support, and a seat, the place (say some) in which the idol was set in the pagan temples. Thence this word *εδραιωμα* is translated, the underpropper, the establisher, any firm basis upon which a thing standeth or leaneth; so that it is much of the same significancy with the former word, which we rightly translate a pillar, the two things signifying in use the same thing, that which underproppeth and holdeth up another thing, as the pillars do the building, and the basis of the image or statue doth the statue. Pillars also were of ancient use to fasten upon them

any public edicts, which princes or courts would have published, and exposed to the view of all; hence the church is called, *the pillar* and basis, or seal, *of truth*, because by it the truths of God are published, supported, and defended, and in it they are only to be found as in their proper seat and place; for to it the oracles and mysteries of God are committed, and in it they are exposed to the notice and knowledge of all, as public edicts are upon pillars. But neither that saving truth, nor the faith which we give to it, is established upon the authority of the church, (as the Romanists vainly pretend), but upon the authority of God the author of it. The church discovers and recommends the truth, but the testimony it gives is not the foundation of its credibility. The universal church (of which the church of Ephesus, over which Timothy had a charge, was a genuine part) is, in the sense before expressed, the pillar and supporter, or seat, of truth.

### 1 Timothy 3:16

Ver. 16. *And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: the various use of the particle καὶ in the Greek, which we translate and, maketh it doubtful what is the force of it here, whether it relates to the truth mentioned in the latter part of the former verse, or shows another reason why Timothy should have a care how he behaved himself in the house of God. If to the former, it is exegetical, and opens what he meant by truth, viz., the mystery of godliness, by which he means the gospel, which is the doctrine of godliness, being that which teacheth how aright to worship God, and walk before him; this he first calls, then proves to be, a mystery, a great mystery. The word is derived from the heathens, who had mysteries of their superstition and idolatrous religion. A mystery signifies a thing sacred and secret. The heathens also had their greater and lesser gods, and their greater and lesser mysteries. Paul calls the gospel, the doctrine of godliness, a great mystery, and says it is confessedly so, or such without controversy; then he proveth it by telling us what it is, and giving us the sum of it. It teacheth us that he who was truly God: God over all, blessed for ever, ( as the apostle saith), was manifested in the flesh; Joh 1:14: The Word was made flesh. How an infinite nature could be personally united to a finite nature, so as to make one person, is a mystery, and a great mystery. And this God thus manifested in the flesh was justified in the Spirit; either by his Divine nature, (which is here as some think called the Spirit), by virtue of which he in the flesh wrought many*

miraculous operations, and when he was buried he rose again from the dead, by which he was justified, that is, undoubtedly proved to be the Son of God. Or, by the Holy Spirit of God, (the Third Person in the holy Trinity), by whom he was conceived in the womb of the virgin, Lu 1:35.

*Seen of angels*, who declared his conception, Lu 1:32,33; sang and glorified God when he was born, Lu 2:10,11; ministered to him when he was tempted, Mt 4:11; who comforted him in his passion, declared his resurrection, Mt 28:1-20, and attended his ascension, Ac 1:10.

*Preached unto the Gentiles*: Christ's being preached to the Gentiles was also a mystery, so great, that Peter would not believe it to be the will of God, till he was confirmed in it by a vision, Ac 10:1-48. This some think is spoken with some reference to the Gentile superstition, who also, (as was said before), had their greater and lesser mysteries, and to the former would admit no strangers.

*Believed on in the world*: that Christ should, upon the ministry of a few fishermen, and the report the world had received of what Christ did in Judea, be received and embraced by the world as their Saviour, was as great a mystery as any other, especially considering that the doctrine of Christ was as incomprehensible by human reason, as ungrateful to the propensions and inclinations of human nature.

*Received up into glory*: the resurrection of Christ is not mentioned, because necessarily supposed to his ascension, which he mentioneth as the last thing whereby Christ was declared to be *God manifested in the flesh*.

## 1 Timothy 4:1

### Chapter Summary

1Ti 4:1-5 Paul foretelleth and describeth a great apostacy to happen in the latter times.

1Ti 4:6-11 He directeth Timothy what doctrines to teach,

1Ti 4:12-16 and by what rules to regulate his conduct, so as to save both himself and his hearers.

Ver. 1. It was usual with the prophets, when they declared the oracles of God, to assert in the beginning of their revelations, that *the Lord hath spoken*, Isa 1:2 Jer 1:2 Joe 1:1. The apostle in the same manner, in the beginning of his prediction of things future, declares *the Spirit speaketh expressly*, that is, either clearly revealed it to me, as Ac 10:19, and Ac 13:2, thus *expressly* is opposed to obscurely; for sometimes the revelations given to the prophets were under shadows and figures in divers manners, but the Spirit discovered in a most intelligible manner what seducers should come in the church, &c.

*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly;* either hath inwardly revealed it to my Spirit, as Ac 10:19 13:2, or, (which is more probable), because the verb is in the present tense, *λεγει*, it saith it in the written word, which must be in the Old Testament, for the New was not at this time written: but then the question is, where the Holy Ghost hath expressly in the Old Testament spoken of the apostacy of the latter times. Our famous Mede answers, in Da 11:1-45, where from Da 11:30 is a plain prophecy of the Roman empire, and Da 11:35-39, of antichrist, where it is said: *Some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, &c.;* and he speaks of a king, that shall do according to his will, and shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods. —Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god, but magnify himself above all. Where that learned man thinks is an excellent description of the Roman empire, their various victories, successes, declinations, and mutations, and amongst other things, Da 11:36, that they should cast off their old pagan idolatry, and after that make a defection from the Christian faith, and not regard marriage, (called there *the desire of women*), nor indeed truly regard any god. This the apostle saith should be in the *latter times*. The last times (saith the afore-mentioned famous author) are the times of Christ's kingdom, which began in the time of the Roman empire; during which time this Epistle was written, where the apostle speaking of time yet to come, the *latter times* by him mentioned must needs be the latter part of the last times, which he saith began in the ruin of the Roman empire, upon which followed the revealing of antichrist, that wicked one, mentioned 2Th 2:7. Concerning these times, the Spirit said expressly, *that some should in them depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits;* by which some understand the devils themselves; others, false teachers, or



false doctrines, which are afterwards mentioned, called *doctrines of devils*, by which some understand doctrines suggested by devils, or published by the cunning and art of devils. But others think that by *doctrines of devils* here are not to be understood doctrines so published, but doctrines concerning devils; and that the meaning is, that in the last times the pagan doctrine concerning demons should be restored. The pagan demons were an inferior sort of gods, a kind of middle beings between their highest gods and men, whose office was to be advocates and mediators between men and the highest gods, because they judged it was not lawful for men to come to the highest gods immediately; these they worshipped by images, even as the papists at this day make use of and worship angels and saints. See more fully what Mr. Mede saith upon this argument in his own book, and in Mr. Pool's Latin Synopsis upon this text; and what he saith seems very probably the sense of this text, especially considering the two doctrines mentioned 1Ti 4:3.

#### 1 Timothy 4:2

Ver. 2. The words, as translated by us, are very difficult; for the word which we translate *speaking lies*, being the genitive case, will neither agree with *spirits* nor *doctrines*, in the former verse, they being both the dative: but neither is our translation agreeable to the Greek, which is thus: In or through the hypocrisy of such as speak lies, and of such as have a conscience seared with a hot iron; which doubtless is the sense; so the words explain the manner how they were seduced to apostacy, viz. through the hypocrisy or dissimulation of men that speak lies, and had consciences benumbed, and mortified, as it were cauterized and seared with a hot iron. By their hypocrisy he characterizes seducers, uncertain, false men, that regarded not what they said, but made a show and appearance of piety, when indeed they had no sense of piety in them. By men whose *consciences were seared with a hot iron*, he means persons so far from any sense of piety, that they were hardened to any degree of iniquity: and indeed by both terms he excellently expresseth such persons as generally they are who seduce others to false doctrine, they could not do it without some show or pretence of piety, they would not do it if they had any true sense of it; and by both terms he too well expresseth those that in our days seduce men to the doctrines concerning demons, and abstaining from marriage and meats, which are those doctrines he alone instanceth in.

## 1 Timothy 4:3

Ver. 3. Forbidding to marry: the Greek is, hindering to marry, but that might be by forbidding it by a law under a severe penalty. There are great disputes whom the apostle speaketh of, to find out which it is considerable:

1. That the apostle speaketh of a time that was then to come;
2. Of some who had it in their power to hinder it:

which will make the prophecy hardly applicable to any but the Romish synagogue, to be sure, not so applicable; for though there were some persons before them that condemned marriages, yet as they were but a small, inconsiderable party, so they were persons that had no power to hinder marriage by any penal laws, nor any that did it in such hypocrisy under a pretence of piety, when he who runs may read that they do it to maintain the grandeur of their ecclesiastical hierarchy. How applicable therefore soever this might be to the Ebionites, and those that followed Saturninus and Marcion, and the Encratitae, (which the papists contend for), it certainly more nearly concerns the papists themselves, who more universally forbade them to their clergy, and were the first that had a power to hinder them, and fell into much later times than any of the others.

*And commanding to abstain from meats;* to abstain from some meats; and this also they should teach in hypocrisy, i.e. under a pretence of piety. This every whit as well agrees to the Romish synagogue as the other, whose prohibitions of flesh are sufficiently known. Mr. Mede is very confident that the Holy Ghost doth here describe the popish monks, and those that gave rules to those orders.

*Which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving;* which meats, as well as other, God hath created for the use of man, giving him a liberty to kill and eat, only we ought to receive them with *thanksgiving*; which confirmeth our religious custom both of begging a blessing upon our meat before we eat, and returning thanks to God when we have eaten, for which also we have our Saviour's example, Mt 14:19 15:36.

*Of them which believe and know the truth:* not that such as believe not and are ignorant of the truth may not eat, but they have not so good and comfortable a right to the creatures as believers, Tit 1:15; and they know and understand their liberty to eat of those things, which others deprive themselves of by their superstitious opinions and constitutions.

#### 1 Timothy 4:4

Ver. 4. *For every creature of God is good;* not only good in itself, as all was which God made, Ge 1:1-31, but lawful to be used, pure, Tit 1:15, there is no uncleanness in it.

*And nothing to be refused;* and therefore nothing upon that account is to be refused, as unclean and defiling.

*If it be received with thanksgiving;* only it must be made use of in such a manner as in and by the use of it we may glorify, and express our thankfulness to, God.

#### 1 Timothy 4:5

Ver. 5. *For it is sanctified:* sanctified in this place signifies made pure, or lawful to be used.

*By the word of God;* by the gospel, which declares it so, Ac 10:15; or by God's ordination, which hath so determined it.

*And prayer;* and prayer to God for a blessing upon it.

#### 1 Timothy 4:6

Ver. 6. *If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things;* if by thy preaching publicly, and by thy more private instructions of Christians at Ephesus, thou teachest them these things.

*Thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ;* thou shalt faithfully

discharge the office of him who is a servant of Jesus Christ, not of men merely. The ministers of the gospel are in the first place ministers or servants to Christ. Secondly, ministers (that is, servants) of the church; as a nobleman's servant employed to distribute wages or meat to inferior servants, is a minister to those to whom he so distributeth food or wages, but in the first place a servant to his lord.

*Nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine;* such a minister of the gospel ought to be one bred up in the true faith, and persevering in it.

*Whereunto thou hast attained;* whereto thou art not a stranger, only I would have thee go on and persevere in it.

#### 1 Timothy 4:7

Ver. 7. *But refuse profane and old wives' fables;* all impertinent discourses, which tend nothing to promote either faith or holiness, which he disdainfully calls *old wives' fables*, tales of a tub, as we say, discourses having no bottom in the word of God, are not fit for pulpits.

*And exercise thyself rather unto godliness;* let thy constant study be things that may promote godliness, impart those things unto people, and live up to them in thy conversation.

#### 1 Timothy 4:8

Ver. 8. *For bodily exercise profiteth little;* bodily discipline, lying in abstaining from certain meats, keeping set fasts, watchings, lying upon the ground, going barefoot, wearing sackcloth or haircloth, abstaining from wine or marriage, is of little advantage, the mind and soul of man is not bettered by them: the apostle doth not altogether despise these things, some of which may be useful (moderately used) to make us more fit for prayer, especially upon solemn occasions; but these are not things wherein religion is to be put, and alone they are of no avail.

*But godliness is profitable unto all things;* but godliness, which lieth in

the true worship and service of God, out of a true principle of the fear of God and faith in him; or (more generally) holiness of life in obedience to God's commandments, is of universal advantage; *having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come*; not from any meritoriousness in it, but from the free grace of God, which hath annexed to it not only the promises of health, peace, and prosperity, and all good things while we live here upon the earth, but also the promises of salvation and eternal happiness when this life shall be determined.

### 1 Timothy 4:9

Ver. 9. This saying about the advantage of godliness is true, and worthy to be received of all men. See the notes on 1Ti 1:15, where the same words are applied to the great proposition of the gospel: *That Christ came into the world to save sinners*. That Christ came into the world to save sinners, and that such sinners as from ungodly will become godly, and persevere in the practice of godliness, shall be happy in this life, and saved in the life to come, are two faithful and remarkable sayings, worthy the acceptation of all reasonable creatures.

### 1 Timothy 4:10

Ver. 10. If we did not believe this as a *faithful saying*, that *godliness is profitable for all things, and trust in God*, who liveth for ever, to see to the fulfilling of it, to what purpose should *we labour and suffer reproach* as we do; labouring in the work of God, suffering reproach in the cause of God, and for living godly lives, worshipping God according to his will, and denying ourselves in sensual satisfactions and sensible enjoyments, that we might fulfil the law of Christ?

*Objection.* But, will some say: how then is godliness profitable for all things, how doth the faithfulness of the promises for this life annexed to godliness appear, if those that profess it must labour and suffer reproach?

*Solution.* Labour for God is a reward to itself, our honour, not our burden, his service is perfect freedom: the promises of this life, annexed to godliness, are not promises of sensual rest and ease, but of inward peace,

satisfaction, and support of other things, only with a reserve to the Divine wisdom and judgment, so far forth as our heavenly Father shall see it fit for his glory and our good; yet they are not vain, for God, *who is the Saviour*, that is, the Preserver, *of all men*, the Preserver of man and beast, as the psalmist speaketh, is in a more especial manner the Saviour *of those that believe*, Ps 33:18,19. This seemeth rather to be the sense of the text, than to understand it of eternal salvation, for so God is not the actual Saviour of all; besides that the text seemeth to speak of a work proper to the Father, rather than to the Son.

### 1 Timothy 4:11

Ver. 11. All the things before mentioned, in this or the former parts of this Epistle, he willeth Timothy to make the matter of his sermons and other discourses.

### 1 Timothy 4:12

Ver. 12. *Let no man despise thy youth;* so carry thyself in thy office, as not to give occasion to any to despise thee because thou art but a young man.

*But be thou an example of the believers:* which thou wilt do if thou so livest as to be a just pattern unto Christians, imitable by them *in word*, in thy common and ordinary discourse, (for he speaks not of his being a pattern only to other ministers, but *to believers* in the generality), not talking frothily or profanely, or idly and impertinently, but seriously and gravely, but *things that are good, to the use of edifying, that it may administer grace to the hearers.*

*In conversation;* and in all thy converse with men behaving thyself justly, and comelily, and gravely.

*In charity;* performing also to all, all offices of charity and brotherly love.

*In spirit;* in zeal, and warmth of spirit, truly inflamed with the love of Christ, and for his glory.

*In faith;* in a steady confession and profession of the doctrine of the gospel; and *in purity;* in all cleanness and holiness of life and conversation. This is the way for the ministers of the gospel not to be despised: let them use what other methods they will, they will find what God said of Hophni and Phinehas will be made good, 1Sa 2:30: *Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed;* nor will any titles, or habits, or severities secure them from that curse, which will cleave to them.

### 1 Timothy 4:13

Ver. 13. *Till I come,* and after that time too, but then I will further instruct thee.

*Give attendance to reading;* be diligent in reading the Holy Scriptures, both for thine own instruction and for the edification of others.

*To exhortation;* to exhort others to their duty there described, or to comfort others from arguments fetched thence.

*To doctrine;* to instruct others in the principles of religion.

### 1 Timothy 4:14

Ver. 14. *Neglect not the gift that is in thee;* neglect neither the ability which God hath given thee for the discharge of the office of the ministry, nor the office to which God hath called thee; neither the improvement of them, nor the use, exercise, and discharge of them or it.

*Which was given thee by prophecy;* remember that they were given thee by the revelation of the Divine will, or by the extraordinary influence of the Spirit of God; and *the laying on of the hands of the presbytery* was a declaration of it; God also (as usually when he calls any to any special work) calling thee to the work of the ministry then also, fitting and enabling thee for the discharge of it.

### 1 Timothy 4:15

Ver. 15. *Meditate upon these things;* Μελετα, let these things be the business of thy thoughts, and take care of them.

*Give thyself wholly to them;* be in them, (so it is in the Greek), let them be thy whole work, not thy work by the by, but thy chief and principal business.

*That thy profiting may appear to all;* that so, as all men's gifts improve by study and exercise, thine also may so improve, that all men may take notice of the improvement of them.

### 1 Timothy 4:16

Ver. 16. *Take heed unto thyself;* take heed how thou livest, and orderest thy life, that it may be exemplary.

*And unto the doctrine;* and take heed also both that thou teachest, and what thou teachest.

*Continue in them;* and do both these things not for a time, but constantly.

*For in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee;* thus thou shalt do what in thee lieth to save thine own soul, and also to save the souls of others to whom thou preachest, or among whom thou conversest.

### 1 Timothy 5:1

#### Chapter Summary

1Ti 5:1,2 Directions to Timothy how to admonish persons of different conditions.

1Ti 5:3-16 Concerning widows.

1Ti 5:17,18 Elders, if they do well, are to be doubly honoured,



1Ti 5:19-21 and are not to be censured without full proof, and then openly and impartially,

1Ti 5:22 caution not to ordain any one precipitately.

1Ti 5:23 Advice respecting Timothy's health.

1Ti 5:24,25 Some men's characters are more easily discerned than those of others.

Ver. 1. *Rebuke not an elder*; it appeareth by the next verse, that the apostle by *elder* here understandeth not a church officer, but an ancient man. The word translated *rebuke* is translated too softly; it should be: Rebuke not too roughly, as appears by the opposite phrase, and indeed the word properly signifies to beat or lash. Rebuke him not but with a decent respect to his age.

*But entreat him as a father*; so that thy reproofs may look more like counsels and exhortations than rebukes.

*And the younger men as brethren*; prudence also must be used as to the younger men, ministers in rebuking them should remember that they are *brethren*, and treat them accordingly, not too imperiously.

### 1 Timothy 5:2

Ver. 2. *The elder women as mothers*; the same prudence also is to be used to matrons and aged women.

*The younger as sisters*; yea, and to younger women too, considering our relation and equality in Christ.

*With all purity*; only as to them, (considering their sex), a further gravity and prudence is to be used, that we give no occasion to lust, or unclean motions.

### 1 Timothy 5:3

Ver. 3. *Honour widows*; give a respect to such as have lost their husbands,

with a regard to that honourable estate of marriage in which they have been formerly, and do not only pay them a due respect, but afford them a maintenance, Ac 6:1.

*That are widows indeed:* who are widows indeed he openeth further, 1Ti 5:5; such as are not only pious, but desolate, as the Greek word for a widow implies, according to its derivation.

### 1 Timothy 5:4

Ver. 4. *But if any widow have children or nephews:* by the *widows indeed*, mentioned by the apostle, 1Ti 5:3, he here showeth that he meant women that not only wanted husbands, but children, or grandchildren or any near kindred that were Christians, and in a capacity to relieve them; but if any widows had any such near relations, the apostle willeth that they should be taught *to shew piety at home*; τὸν ἰδίον οἶκον εὐσεβεῖν, word for word, to worship their own house, or to be religious or godly toward their own house; that is, to show a respect or pagan homage to their own house. For worship is nothing but a respect, honour, or homage paid to another in consideration of his or her excellency and superiority; only the use of this word, which is the Greek word generally used to express religion and godliness by, lets us know that religion and godliness is vainly pretended to any that have of this world's goods, and relieve not those from whom they are descended, (for the word ἐκγονα signifies persons descended from another, whether in the first generation or not), if they be in want, and stand in need of their assistance.

*And to requite their parents:* nor is this an act of charity, but justice, a just requital of our parents for their care of us, and pains with us in our education.

*For that is good and acceptable before God;* and this is good, just, decent, and commanded by God, and acceptable in the sight of God, for the precept:

*Honour thy father and mother, is the first commandment with promise, Eph 6:2. By the way, that precept is excellently expounded by this text, both as to the act commanded, which this text teacheth is to be extended to*

maintenance as well as compliments; and as to the object, viz. all those as to whom we are εκγονα, descended from, whether immediate parents, yea or no.

### 1 Timothy 5:5

Ver. 5. *Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate:* the apostle here opens the term of *widow indeed*, 1Ti 5:3; one that is μεμονωμενη one that is made alone, destitute of such as ought to help her, a husband, or children; and being so, *trusteth in God;* is a believer, reposing her trust and confidence in God; *and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day;* spendeth her time religiously in prayer and acts of devotion. Not that other persons that are poor and desolate should not be regarded and taken care for, but the church is not so concerned in them, at least as a church; the magistrate ought to take care of them, and all good Christians, being men as well as Christians, ought to consider them; but in the first place, and principally, they are to take care of such widows, such desolate persons.

### 1 Timothy 5:6

Ver. 6. Η δε σψαταλωσα, she that is wanton, Jas 5:5, she that spends her money in needless costs, as to meat, drink, or apparel, is spiritually dead, dead in sin, while she liveth a temporary voluptuous life, in vanity, and luxury, and impurity of flesh and spirit.

### 1 Timothy 5:7

Ver. 7. In the discharge of thy ministry declare these things, that all Christians, women especially, may be blameless.

### 1 Timothy 5:8

Ver. 8. *But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house:* here is a manifest distinction between *his own*, ιδιων, and *his*

*own household*, οικειων, they are distinguished by terms in the Greek, and as to the care which men and women ought to extend to them. By *his own* he means his relations, all of a man's family or stock; by *his own household*, he seemeth to mean those who cohabit with him. The apostle saith that he who is careless of providing for the former, (so far as he is able), but especially for the latter, *hath denied the Christian faith*, that is, in the practice of it, though in words he professeth it; he liveth not up to the rule of the gospel, which directeth other things.

*And is worse than an infidel;* and is worse than a heathen, that believeth not; because many good-natured heathens do this by the light of nature, and those who do it not, yet are more excusable, being strangers to the obligation of the revealed law of God in the case.

### 1 Timothy 5:9

Ver. 9. *Let not a widow be taken, into the number under threescore years old;* what number he meaneth is very doubtful, whether he means the number of deaconesses, or the number of such as should receive alms from the church. Those who translate καταλεγεσθω here *chosen* seem to favour the former. They say, that in the primitive church there being a want of hospials and public places for the reception of people deceased in their estates, &c., they chose some old widows to take care of the poorer sort of women when they were sick, and these also were themselves maintained by the church, and served the church in that charitable employment. Whether this number, or the more general number of widows relieved by the church, be meant, the caution of their age was very prudent:

1. Because younger widows could work for their living, and needed not to burden the church.
2. Because under those years they probably might marry again, and so become useless to the church.
3. Because after those years there could be no great fear of scandal from their wantonness and incontinency.

*Having been the wife of one man:* this condition seems harder to be understood; for though in former times, amongst the Jews and pagans, men were allowed more wives than one at the same time, yet no laws ever allowed the woman liberty of more husbands.

2. To understand it of women that had not been twice married, their first husbands being dead, seems hard, no law of God forbidding the second marriages of men and women successively.
3. Some therefore rather understand it of such widows as were become wives to second husbands, the first not being dead, but parted from them legally, either through their own fault, or through their voluntary desertion.

This the apostle seems to forbid, to avoid reproach and scandal to the church.

### 1 Timothy 5:10

Ver. 10. *Well reported of for good works;* if she be a person of repute for actions concerning others which are consonant to the will and commandment of God.

*If she have brought up children well,* in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

*If she have lodged strangers;* if when persons that are Christians have come from other places, either driven from them, or upon their occasion, and could not amongst pagans find a convenient inn, her house have been open to them.

*If she have washed the saints' feet;* if she have been ready to do the meanest offices for the servants of God, of which this washing of feet was one in great use in those hot countries, where they had not the benefit of shoes, either to cool, or refresh, or cleanse them.

*If she have relieved the afflicted;* if to her ability she have relieved such as have been in any kind of distress.

*If she have diligently followed every good work; if though it may be she have not had ability, or opportunity, to do all the good works she would, yet she have diligently followed them, doing what she could; —let such a one be put into the catalogue of those whom the church will relieve, and honour, and employ.*

### 1 Timothy 5:11

Ver. 11. *But the younger widows refuse:* by *the younger widows* the apostle seems (by the last words of this verse) not to mean those that were under threescore, but the younger sort of widows, not past child-bearing; he would not have those (that is, being under no extraordinary circumstances of sickness, or lameness, or the want of their senses) be maintained at the charge of the church, because they were able to labour; nor yet to be taken into any employment relating to the church.

*For when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ;* καταστρηνιασωσι του χριστου. How the Vulgar Latin comes to translate this, *wax wanton in Christ*, I neither understand whether with respect to grammar or sense. Erasmus translates the verb, *when they have committed whoredom;* but Re 18:9 confuteth this sense, where we translate it, *lived deliciously*, ( being without the preposition κατα), which certainly better expresseth the sense, as also doth our translation, *wax wanton;* it properly signifies either the lustiness, or the headstrong temper, of beasts, that wax fat.

*Against Christ,* is against the rule of the gospel, and their profession of Christ; or they disdain the office of serving the saints, as too mean, and laborious, and sin against Christ, in whose name, and for whose glory, and to whose members, the service was to be performed. And then *they will marry,* and so put themselves into an incapacity to serve the church in the place of widows.

### 1 Timothy 5:12

Ver. 12. This sentence is not without its difficulties: here are two

questions:

1. What is meant by κριμα, which we both here and elsewhere translate *damnation*.
2. How they *cast off their first faith*.

Many think the Greek word by us translated *damnation*, ought to have had a softer sense, it being certainly capable of it. Some think it signifies here no more than guilt, or a blot; others, a public infamy; others, the judgment of good men against them. But it may be we cannot so well determine this without understanding what is meant by *their first faith*, which they are here said to *have cast off*: by which some understand their profession of Christianity; others, their promise or engagement to the church, not to marry. The latter sense supposeth that all those widows that were taken into the ministry of the church before mentioned, promised that they would keep themselves unmarried, which is a most groundless supposition. I do rather think that by *their first faith*, he means their first or former profession of Christianity; which was a crime that did expose them not only to the judgment and censure of sober Christians, but to eternal damnation. I shall offer my own sense of this text thus: it is certain these Christians were lilies among thorns, a small handful amongst a far greater number of pagans; and it is not improbable, that some younger widows, out of a desire to marry, might marry to pagans, and be by them tempted to apostacy from the Christian profession; upon which the apostle orders, that none under sixty years of age should be henceforth taken into the ministry of the church, lest doing such a thing when they were under that character, it should be a greater scandal. This seems the more probable from 1Ti 5:15, where the apostle adds, *for some are already turned aside after Satan*.

### 1 Timothy 5:13

Ver. 13. The apostle here gives some other reasons, why he would not have widows too young taken into the ministry of the church.

*And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; they being young, and having no business at home, nor any husbands to*

conduct and govern them, are subject to be gadding up and down; *and not only idle, but tattlers also*; and to be tattling idly and impertinently, and that not only of their own, but others' concerns; *and busybodies*, interesting themselves in the matters of other persons and families; *speaking things which they ought not*, and in the multitude of words, folly being never wanting, they are prone to speak things which they ought not: from whence we may deserve, that nothing more becometh Christians than a gravity and composedness of behaviour and speech, a government of their tongues, and considering aforehand well what they speak.

### 1 Timothy 5:14

Ver. 14. *I will therefore that the younger women marry: I will*, here, must not be interpreted into an absolute precept, (for the apostle would never have made that necessary by his precept which God had left indifferent), but in a limited sense, viz. if they have not the gift of continency, if they cannot restrain themselves from such scandalous courses, let them marry; *bear children*, and not only bring forth children, but take care of their education; *guide the house*, and take care of the government of families within doors (which is the woman's proper province); *give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully*; and give no occasion to Jews or pagans (the adversaries of Christian religion) to speak of the church, or any particular members of it, reproachfully, as living beneath the rules of morality and decency.

### 1 Timothy 5:15

Ver. 15. We have scandals enough already, we had need take as good heed as we can that we have no more; some young women already are apostatized (and, possibly, for the sake or by the occasion of such marriages) to Judaism or paganism; or, it may be, to a loose and lewd course of life, not suiting the profession of Christianity.

*If any man or woman that believeth have widows*; if any men or women that are Christians have any widows that are nearly related to them, if themselves be able, *let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged*; and not turn off that natural duty which they owe to their



parents, or near relations, to relieve them, to the church, which hath others enough to look after, and upon which there lies only a moral and Christian obligation.

*That it may relieve them that are widows indeed;* that so the alms of the church may go to relieve those only who are perfectly desolate, having neither husbands nor any other near relations to provide for them.

### 1 Timothy 5:17

Ver. 17. Who these *elders* are here intended hath been a great question: it is plain they are not such only as are preachers. They are such as are, *worthy of double honour*. The learned Mr. Pool, in his Latin Synopsis, giveth us an account of the most opinions about it:

1. Some judging them some of the elder sort of the members of the church, joining with the ministers in the government of the church, but not meddling with preaching, or administering sacraments.
2. Some judging by elders here are meant such as had been ministers, but being aged were superannuated.
3. Others understanding by it the civil magistrates; which seemeth of all other opinions least probable, because at this time there were no such members of the Christian church.
4. Others think that deacons are here by that term understood, who being church officers have the name of elders given to them.
5. Others understand by elders the ordinary pastors of churches, that resided with their flocks, in opposition to apostles and evangelists: this seemeth less probable, because, there were no such in the primitive church but did labour in the word and doctrine.
6. Others think that some such are meant, as were not so fit for preaching, but yet administered the sacraments, prayed with the church, and privately admonished exorbitant members; but we shall want a good

proof, either from Scripture or other authority, of any such officers in the primitive church.

I shall not determine which of these opinions is rightest, but leave the reader this own judgment. Whoever are here meant by elders are declared *worthy of double honour*; by which is understood either abundant honour, or else (as some say) respect and reverence, and also maintenance.

*Especially they who labour in the word and doctrine*; but especially such as take pains in preaching the gospel.

### 1 Timothy 5:18

Ver. 18. This verse maketh it evident that maintenance is part of the *double honour* that is due to such as labour in the word and doctrine in the first place: and not to them alone, but to any such as are employed in the rule and government of the church. The apostle had made use of De 25:4 to the same purpose, 1Co 9:9: neither of these texts conclude the duty of elders to take maintenance, but the duty of those who are members of churches to give it them, which they may refuse, as Paul himself did, if either the people's or minister's circumstances call for or will allow such a thing.

### 1 Timothy 5:19

Ver. 19. *Against an elder*; whether an elder in years or in office, though the latter being the persons formerly spoken of, seen here principally intended.

*Recieve not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses*; that is, not to proceed to any judicial inquiry upon it, De 17:6. This was a law concerning all elders or younger persons, especially in capital causes, but the apostle willeth this to be more specially observed as to officers in the church, whose faithful discharge of their trusts usually more exposeth them to people's querulous tongues.

## 1 Timothy 5:20

Ver. 20. *Them that sin;* that is, that sin publicly and scandalously, so as others have taken notice of it.

*Rebuke before all;* rebuke not privately, by a ministerial correction, but by a public ecclesiastical correction before the whole church.

*That others also may fear;* that the salve may answer the sore, and the plaster be as broad as the wound; and that others may be afraid to do the like. This end of the punishment agreeth with that mentioned De 13:11.

## 1 Timothy 5:21

Ver. 21. *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things:* by *these things* may be understood the whole of what went before, or what followeth. I judge it most proper to refer it to all the precepts foregoing in this Epistle, which evidenceth them to be things which he had received from the Lord, not what he directed without any express notice of the will of God as to them. This is evident by his grave and severe charge to Timothy to observe them, for he chargeth him to observe them as in the presence of God and Christ, and calleth the good angels to be witnesses, both of his faithfulness, in giving him this charge, and of Timothy's faithfulness or unfaithfulness, according as he should observe or neglect the things given him in charge: he calls the angels *elect*, unquestionably in opposition to the evil and reprobate angels.

*Without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality:* he requires the doing of them without respect to any persons, rich or poor, friends or foes; *partiality* no way becoming a judge in any cause, who ought to hold the balance even, not inclining it any way, but judging things and not persons. Some of the things before mentioned may seem of too minute a consideration for the apostle to lay such a stress upon, or God to give him particular direction in; but the things are not so much to be considered as the end of the precepts, which was the upholding the true honour and reputation of the church, which is a very great thing; and supposing the things given in charge to have any tendency of that nature, they must not be judged small.

## 1 Timothy 5:22

Ver. 22. By *Lay hands suddenly on no man*, is certainly, to be understood: Do thou suddenly set no man apart to any ecclesiastical employment. Laying on of hands was but an external ceremony used in blessing, Ge 48:14,15, and in the conferring of power upon persons. Nu 27:18 De 34:9. In the New Testament, we find this rite used: in prayer upon healing the sick, Mr 16:18 Ac 28:8; in blessing, Mr 10:16; in conferring the gifts of the Holy Ghost, Ac 19:6; in ordination, or setting persons apart to some ecclesiastical employment, 1Ti 4:14 Ac 6:6; and being so used, it is sometimes put for the whole action. This the apostle forbids Timothy to do *suddenly*, that is, without a first proof of the person's fitness for his work, 1Ti 3:10, both with respect to his knowledge, and to his holiness of conversation.

*Neither be partaker of other men's sins*: this participation of other men's sin ought to be taken heed of in the whole course of our conversation, but it seemeth here to be especially forbidden with reference to what was before spoken of, viz. the setting men apart for or putting them into any ecclesiastical employment; he who puts into the ministry any erroneous or ignorant persons, or any persons of a lewd conversation, makes himself guilty of all the harm they do, if he hath not first taken a due and reasonable proof of them, but hath laid hands upon them suddenly. Amongst other ways by which we interest ourselves in others' guilt, one is, by not hindering it, having power so to do. He, or they, whom it lies upon to admit, or not admit, men into the ministry, have a power to refuse them in case upon proof of them they do not find them apt to teach, or fit for the ministration they are to undertake, or such for holiness of life as God requireth: God by his word declaring what such persons ought to be, and commanding him or them first to prove such persons, and to lay hands on none suddenly, hath invested him or them with such a power, of which man cannot deprive them.

*Keep thyself pure*: the purity here mentioned, is comprehensive of that chastity which some would have the word here signify, but it is most reasonable to understand it here with relation to what went before, viz. partaking of other men's sins; If thou canst not keep the church pure, but

ignorant or erroneous persons, or sots, will get into the church, yet let them not get in through thy hands, *keep thyself pure*.

### 1 Timothy 5:23

Ver. 23. *Drink no longer water;* not wholly, as many did in those countries, and Timothy probably did, not because he was not able to buy wine, but religiously, as a piece of discipline to keep under the flesh.

*But use a little wine;* but mix some wine with the water.

*For thy stomach's sake;* to help thy digestion.

*And thine often infirmities;* in regard of thy weakness and frequent infirmities.

### 1 Timothy 5:24

Ver. 24. The sense of this verse depends upon the term κρισιν, which we translate *judgment*, it being doubtful whether it is to be understood of the judgment of God, or the judgment of men in ecclesiastical judicatories. If we understand the words of the judgment of God, the sense is this: Some men's sins are punished in this life, before their persons come before God's judgment-seat; others are more private and concealed, the punishment of which follows after. But this interpretation must suppose Paul here to run into another argument, differing from what he had before spoken upon, which though it be not unusual with the apostle, yet there being no need we should say he doth so in this place, I rather incline to think, that by judgment is in this place meant the judgement of the church, as to persons fit to be trusted with any part of the ministry of it: Some men (saith the apostle) are open, lewd, scandalous persons, whose erroneousness, or sottish life, hath been manifest before they offer themselves to the church's judgment, to be put into the office of elders or deacons; concerning these thy way is plain, admit them not. Others discover not the erroneousness of their principles, nor the impetuosity of their lusts, before they have obtained what they aim at, and are got into office; for these, they must fall under thy judgment, when they do discover

what they are, and turn them out again.

### 1 Timothy 5:25

Ver. 25. In like manner some men's holy life and conversation hath been so evident, that there needs little judgment concerning them; and for others, under a due government they cannot be long concealed, but by thy due management of and vigilance in thy office they will soon be discovered, by their publishing their erroneous principles, and the breaking out of their lusts into enormous acts, so as they will soon fall under thy censure. Or else thus: The good works of some whose life hath not been so exemplary, but yet such as in charity thou mayst judge them to have the root of the matter in them, (if thou be not mistaken), cannot be long hid, so as thou shalt soon see what they are, and accordingly know how to behave thyself to them. Thus I should choose rather to interpret this text than concerning the judgment of God, who sometimes rewards good works presently, and always rewards them certainly, either in this life or that which is come.

### 1 Timothy 6:1

#### Chapter Summary

1Ti 6:1,2 The duty of servants.

1Ti 6:3-5 Those who teach not according to the apostle's doctrine are to be avoided, as corrupters of Christianity.

1Ti 6:6-8 The gain of godliness with content.

1Ti 6:9,10 The evil of covetousness.

1Ti 6:11-16 What Timothy is to flee, and what to follow and perform.

1Ti 6:17-19 A charge to the rich not to be proud and confident in their riches, but to be beneficent and liberal.

1Ti 6:20,21 Timothy is enjoined to adhere to the true faith, and to shun profane and vain controversies.

Ver. 1. *Let as many servants as are under the yoke;* under the yoke of

servitude, not being manumised, or made free.

*Count their own masters worthy of all honour;* abundant honour: let Christian servants give their masters, instead of less, double the honour which pagan servants do. That the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed; for the credit of the gospel, and for the honour of God; that none may say that religion teacheth servants any disobedience, or breaketh the bands of civil relations: but on the contrary, that it obligeth professors to a more faithful and full discharge of such duties, servants to be the best of servants, &c.

### 1 Timothy 6:2

Ver. 2. Some Christians were servants to Jews or pagans, who both came under the gospel notion of believers; as to these the apostle had given directions in 1Ti 6:1. Others served masters and mistresses that were Christians. The apostle, not ignorant of Satan's devices, foresaw that the former would be under a temptation to neglect and despise their masters or mistresses, because they were idolaters, or of a false religion, enemies to the gospel; and the latter under a temptation not to be so diligent and serviceable as they should be, because their governors in a spiritual sense were their equals, their brethren and sisters. The apostle here declares, that the rules of the gospel neither allow the one nor the other: as to the former he had spoken; nor, saith he, let those that have masters or mistresses that are Christians *despise them*, by which he means, not be equally obedient or serviceable to them, because there is a spiritual equality or relation between them.

*But rather do them service*, looking upon this as a further obligation upon them.

*Because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit;* because they are believers, such as love our common Lord, and are beloved of him, and such as all good Christians ought to love, being partakers of the gift of God, Christ Jesus, and the great benefit of redemption through his blood.

*These things teach and exhort;* and he willeth Timothy to teach the Christians at Ephesus, that this was the will of God, and accordingly to call

upon them for an obedience to it.

### 1 Timothy 6:3

Ver. 3. *If any man teach otherwise;* if there be any person who either more publicly or more privately shall take upon him to instruct people otherwise.

*And consent not to wholesome words:* what he means by wholesome words his next words show; they are called wholesome because they tend to prevent the sickness of sin, or to cure the soul of its spiritual distempers.

*Even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;* words either spoken by Christ, or from Christ, or tending to his honour and glory, or to the promoting of piety and godliness, or which are according to the rule of godliness.

### 1 Timothy 6:4

Ver. 4. *He is proud;* τετυφωται, he is swelled or blown up, i.e. with pride swelling in opinion and conceit of himself, he is a fanatic.

*Knowing nothing solidly and truly, but doing about questions and strifes of words;* is brain sick about questions of no use, but to make a contention about words.

*Whereof cometh envy;* when he once comes to perceive that others are wiser than he.

*Strife;* for an ignorant person, if proud, can never yield that another knows more than he doth.

*Railings* are commonly the revenges of ignorant sciolists, that would be thought something and are nothing; when they perceive they are outdone by others, then they rail.

*Evil surmisings,* υπονοιαι when they can in truth say no evil of others,



they will uncharitably surmise and suspect evil of them.

### 1 Timothy 6:5

Ver. 5. *Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth;* παραδιατριβαι, mutual tearings, and gallings of or interferences with one another. The word is applied to horses knocking one foot against another. The word without the preposition παρα signifies school conflicts by disputations; the preposition added makes it to signify, in an evil sense, disputations of sophisters, not candid for the finding out of truth, but perverse and litigious merely for masteries; which he saith proceeds from men corrupted as to their understanding and judgment.

*Supposing that gain is godliness;* all whose religion is gain of riches or reputation.

*From such withdraw thyself;* with such men have nothing to do, avoid them in thy private converse, and cast them out of the church if their faults be public scandals, and they be contumacious.

### 1 Timothy 6:6

Ver. 6. *Godliness,* the exercise of a true faith in Christ, conjoined with a holy life, is a good revenue of itself, having in it αυταρκειας, a self-sufficiency. He doth not here suppose that godliness can be separated from a contented frame of spirit with that lot which God hath chosen for us, for that cannot be; but as being always attended with a contentation of mind, in which alone lieth true riches, for such men never want enough.

*A good man,* Solomon saith, *is satisfied from himself,* Pr 14:14; for which reason alone godliness is πορισμος μεγας, a great annual revenue.

### 1 Timothy 6:7

Ver. 7. This agreeth with Job 1:21, and with experience, and is a potent argument against immoderate desires of having much of this world's

goods, or using extravagant actions to obtain them; for when we have got all we can, we have got but a *viaticum*, something to serve us in our journey, which we must leave when we die, and whether to a wise man or a fool none knoweth, Ec 2:19.

### 1 Timothy 6:8

Ver. 8. If therefore God gives us any thing more than is necessary for us, let us take it thankfully, and use it for God's glory; but if we have no more than is just necessary for us, let us not repine, or murmur, but be content, without murmuring against God, or using any undue means, out of an inordinate desire to get more.

### 1 Timothy 6:9

Ver. 9. *But;* or, for.

*They that will be rich;* they who, out of a covetous and immoderate desire of being rich in this world's goods, will use any arts, and do any unlawful thing, without any just regard to the law of God.

*Fall into temptation and a snare;* fall into many temptations and snares, are exposed to impetuous inclinations and motions to that which is evil, and may and will be snares to their souls.

*And into many foolish and hurtful lusts;* kindling in them many foolish and pernicious desires, contrary to the law of God.

*Which drown men in destruction and perdition;* have a direct tendency to the eternal ruin of their souls, not to be prevented but by the force and powerful grace of God.

### 1 Timothy 6:10

Ver. 10. *For the love of money is the root of all evil;* money itself is not evil, but the immoderate love of it, whether discerned in an over eager

desire after it, or an excessive delight in it, is the cause of much evil, both of sin and punishment.

*Which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith;* which money while some too greedily thirsted after, (for though the article be feminine and cannot grammatically agree with ἀργυριον, which is neuter, yet that doth agree with it as to the sense, being understood in φιλοργυρια, with which the subjunctive article grammatically agreeth), *they have erred*, or been seduced, *from the faith*, that is, the doctrine of the gospel, or profession of Christianity.

*And pierced themselves through with many sorrows;* and exposed themselves to a great many sorrows, which have piercced their very souls, such as cares, troubles for the loss of their estates, &c.

### 1 Timothy 6:11

Ver. 11. *O man of God;* that is, O thou minister of God, whose service is not the service of the world. It is a compellation borrowed from the Old Testament, where we find it often applied to such whose work was to reveal the Divine will, 2Ki 1:9 4:40,42. By giving Timothy this compellation, he mindeth him how much he was concerned to contemn the world.

*Flee these things;* flee this eager pursuit of riches.

*And follow after righteousness;* and follow after justice, or the business of a righteous life, in thy conversation with men.

*Godliness;* piety toward God.

*Faith;* the exercise and life of faith.

*Love;* love to God and thy neighbour.

*Patience;* a quiet bearing of injuries.

*Meekness;* a gentleness of spirit, opposed to all rash anger.

## 1 Timothy 6:12

Ver. 12. The *fight of faith* is our encountering that opposition which we meet with from the world, the flesh, or the devil, for a strenuous defending the doctrine of faith, or making it good by a life suitable to the rule of faith. This is called a *good fight*, either in opposition to the bad fights of the men of the world in maintenance of their lusts, or the ludicrous fights usual in their public games, or of the intrinsic nobleness and exercise of it, or the good event or issue of it; and Timothy is bid to *fight* it, by a metaphor either drawn from soldiers, or such as exercise themselves in their games.

*Lay hold on eternal life;* by *eternal life* is meant a right and title to it, which he calls to him to *lay hold on*, as is thought, by a metaphor from those that were exercised in their games, and did what they could first to lay hold of the prize proposed to conquerors.

*Whereunto thou art also called;* to which eternal life, or rather to which good fight, thou art called, both by the internal call of God's Spirit, and by thy more external call to the ministry.

*And hast professed a good profession before many witnesses;* and to which thou hast obliged thyself by covenant or promise, made either in thy baptism, or when thou wert set apart to thy ministry, or of which thou hast given a pledge, by thy profession and practice, in the sight of the Christians in Ephesus.

## 1 Timothy 6:13

Ver. 13. The apostle's care of the church showeth itself in these severe charges laid upon Timothy; though one whom he knew to be a faithful minister, he chargeth him, calling God to witness that he had fulfilled his part in laying this charge upon him. The name he here giveth unto God may possibly have a particular reference to the state of the gospel at that time, the doctrine and profession of which had many enemies, and so it is made use of here to comfort and encourage Timothy. God is called he *who*

*quickeneth the dead, Ro 4:17; here, he who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; he proposeth the example of Christ to Timothy, as being the Head of those that witness a good confession.*

#### 1 Timothy 6:14

Ver. 14. The charge is, that he faithfully perform all the duties belonging to him as a Christian and a minister, commissioned from God, in the whole course of his life, that he may not be liable to a just accusation for the neglect of any part of his office. This is enforced by the consideration of the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ, that is, in the day of judgment, as the following words make evident. Yet the apostle seems to speak of it, as if Timothy should continue in his ministry till that appearance. But it is manifest by his cautioning the Thessalonians against that false conceit, 2Th 2:2,3, that the apostle knew the contrary; for he assures them that that day should not come till many great things enumerated by him should be accomplished. The meaning therefore of the words *until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ*, is the same with our Saviour's command to the angel of the church of Smyrna: *Be thou faithful unto death*, Re 2:10: for the whole flux of time from the death of any person till the day of judgment makes no alteration in his life; and consequently, whoever is faithful unto the death is so till the appearing of Christ. And there is no motive more powerful to a zealous and faithful discharge of our duty, no excitation more rousing from the security and carelessness of the flesh, than the serious believing consideration of the glorious reward to be dispersed by our Saviour to his faithful servants in that day, and the dreadful condemnation that shall pass upon those who have been careless and negligent in the sacred ministry.

#### 1 Timothy 6:15

Ver. 15. *Which in his times he shall show;* or Which Christ coming the second time, God in his time, his proper seasons, (so it is in the Greek), will show. Or: Which appearing of our Lord Jesus God in his time will show; for some Greek copies read the article in the feminine termination, to distinguish the order of the Trinity's working; as the first coming of

Christ is made to be from the Father's sending, so is also the second coming.

*Who is the blessed and only Potentate:* God is said to be the *only Potentate*, because he only hath power in and from himself, by him kings reign; and he is called the *blessed Potentate*, because he is the fountain of all felicity and happiness.

*The King of kings, and Lord of lords;* that is, the most mighty King and Lord, to whom all other princes are subjects, all other lords are vassals, Re 17:14 19:16. These terms seem here to be applied to the Father, though they agree also to the Son and the Spirit. They are applied to Christ, Re 17:14 19:16.

#### 1 Timothy 6:16

Ver. 16. *Who only hath immortality;* of himself; our souls and angels are immortal from the gift of God: or *immortality* signifies here the same with eternity, or immutability.

*Dwelling in the light;* continually encompassed with a glory that is unspeakable, 1Jo 1:5.

*Which no man can approach unto;* to which no man can in this life come nigh.

*Whom no wan hath seen;* nor did Moses, or Stephen, or any other, ever see his glory so as to comprehend it, or in the full perfection of it.

*Nor can see;* nor can the sons of men see him with their bodily eyes, or so as to comprehend him in his perfection, though some have with their bodily eyes seen his back parts and appearances, and with their souls have, through his grace, been enabled spiritually to behold him.

*To whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen:* to which immortal, glorious, invisible God belongs, and let there for ever be given, honour and power.

### 1 Timothy 6:17

Ver. 17. *Charge them that are rich in this world:* those that are rich in grace, and the good things of another life, need not this charge; but there are divers at Ephesus who have great estates in goods, or houses, or lands, and but poor in gracious habits, charge them.

*That they be not highminded;* that their riches do not lift them up into a high conceit or opinion of themselves, which worldly riches often do.

*Nor trust in uncertain riches;* and that they repose no confidence in them, making them their *strong city*, Pr 10:15, as if they could secure them from evil, or make them happy.

*But in the living God;* but let them repose their trust in God, who hath life in himself, giveth life unto all other things, and liveth for ever.

*Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;* and is he who gives us all we have, though it be bought with our penny.

### 1 Timothy 6:18

Ver. 18. *That they do good;* that is, to others, as they have opportunity.

*That they be rich in good works;* be plentiful in alms-deeds, or more generally in all good works of piety or charity.

*Ready to distribute;* that they be not backward to distribute that of which God hath made them stewards, to those that want.

*Willing to communicate;* but give freely and without grudging, according to their Master's order, as becometh those who are but stewards as to the riches which they have.

### 1 Timothy 6:19

Ver. 19. Riches in themselves are but for the present, but there is a use may be made of them *for the time to come*, if we employ them for the better enabling us to do what God hath commanded us to do, Mt 6:20 Lu 12:33: those acts of obedience to the command of God for the use of our estates, though they can merit nothing, (for what proportion can there be between a few shillings and eternal life?) yet will be a good bottom for us to hope for the time to come.

*That they may lay hold on eternal life;* that God will give us an eternal happiness, not as a reward of debt, but of free grace.

### 1 Timothy 6:20

Ver. 20. *O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust;* either the doctrine of the gospel, which ministers ought to keep pure, and without mixture, or the ministerial office; be true and faithful in the discharge of it, preaching Christ and the doctrine of Christ.

*Avoiding profane and vain babblings;* avoid all impertinent discoursings under the notion of preaching, which in thy discharge of that work are the best of them but profane babblings.

*And oppositions of science falsely so called;* avoid also all idle speculations, and disputations, no way serving to the end of preaching, and falsely called science.

### 1 Timothy 6:21

Ver. 21. *Which some professing have erred concerning the faith;* which kind of science, some pretending and boasting of, studying to show themselves learned and subtle men, they have been led into errors in Christianity, apostatizing from the doctrine of faith.

*Grace be with thee;* viz. the *grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord,* mentioned 2Ti 1:2.



*(The first to Timothy was written from Laodicea, which is the chiefest city of Phrygia Pacatiana.)*

## 2 Timothy 1:1

### THE ARGUMENT

This Second Epistle to Timothy was most certainly written from Rome, when Paul was a prisoner there, 2Ti 1:8, and, as most judge, a very little while before his death, for he tells us, 2Ti 4:7,8, that he was ready to be offered, he had *finished his course, the time of his departure was at hand*. He is said to have died Anno Christi 68, and in the five and thirtieth after his conversion; so this Epistle was written about sixteen years after the writing of the former. The scope of it is much the same as of the former: to exhort and encourage him to faithfulness in his ministry, to keep stedfast in the faith, to be diligent in his work; to avoid all strifes of words, perverse disputings, &c. He also in it admonisheth him, that the latter times were like to be yet more dangerous, and therefore adviseth him to prepare for hardship and persecutions, propounding his own example to him, both as to doctrine and as to suffering.

### Chapter Summary

2Ti 1:1,2 Paul affectionately saluteth Timothy,  
2Ti 1:3-5 assuring him of his constant prayers for him, and remembrance of that sincere faith which had been derived to Timothy from his mother and grandmother.

2Ti 1:6,7 He exhorteth him to stir up the gift of God which was in him,

2Ti 1:8-12 and not to be ashamed of the testimony of the gospel, but to be ready to suffer for it, according to his example,

2Ti 1:13,14 and to hold fast the form of sound words which he had learned.

2Ti 1:15 He putteth him in mind of the general defection of the converts in Asia,

2Ti 1:16-18 and commendeth Onesiphorus for his repeated kindness toward him.

Ver. 1. *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God:* See Poole on "1Ti 1:1".

*According to the promise of life:* it is much the same with Ro 1:1,2, according to *the gospel, which he had promised afore by his prophets*. These words either signify the end of his apostleship, to declare the gospel in which is *the promise of life*, or the matter of his preaching.

*Which is in Christ Jesus;* which eternal life was promised of old, but is not to be had but in Christ Jesus, and in him is the promise fulfilled.

## 2 Timothy 1:2

Ver. 2. See Poole on "1Ti 1:2"; there he calls him his *own son*, testifying his relation, here his *beloved son*, to testify his affection to him. The salutation is the same with that in 1Ti 1:2.

## 2 Timothy 1:3

Ver. 3. Paul here by his *forefathers* either intends his immediate parents, or Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; for he served the same God whom they served.

But how did Paul from his forefathers serve God *with pure conscience*, who was a native Jew, and zealous in that religion, in opposition to the faith of the gospel, which alone purifieth the heart? Ac 15:9.

*Solution.* A pure conscience seemeth here to signify the same with Php 3:6, *touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless*. Paul was strict to the rules of that religion which he professed, though that religion was not that which universally purifieth the heart. Or else his meaning is, that he at this time served that God who was the God of his forefathers, with a pure conscience.

*That without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day:* he either thanketh God on the behalf of Timothy for his gifts and graces, or else he blesseth God, that had put it into his heart daily to remember Timothy in his prayers, Phm 1:4; by which expression he both lets us know the mutual duty of Christians to pray one for another, and also that when we find any inclinations to do our duty, we ought to acknowledge them to God, being not of ourselves sufficient to one good

thought.

#### 2 Timothy 1:4

Ver. 4. There was a great brotherly love amongst primitive Christians, so as the apostle often expresseth his desire to see such Christians as were at a distance from him, Ro 1:11 1Th 2:17; but he expresseth a particular reason of his desire to see Timothy, remembering the *tears* he shed at his parting from him and the rest, Ac 20:37,38; besides the desire he had by his presence to satisfy him, and give him occasion of *joy*, with which he also should be *filled*; unless he speaketh of the joy he promised himself when he saw Timothy, upon his seeing the improvement he had made both of his graces and gifts in the ministerial office.

#### 2 Timothy 1:5

Ver. 5. The apostle expresseth another cause of his affection to Timothy, viz. his sincere owning and adhering to the profession of the gospel; as his *grandmother Lois* and his *mother Eunice* had done before him (he saith nothing of his father, for he was a Jew proselyted, or a heathen, Ac 16:1); and though he could not infallibly determine, yet he was verily persuaded of his sincerity also.

#### 2 Timothy 1:6

Ver. 6. *Wherefore I put thee in remembrance:* Paul's affection to Timothy was so far from abating his faithfulness to him, that it quickened him to admonish him to be faithful in his ministry.

*That thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee;* and to that end, he adviseth him to put new life unto that holy fire (the word signifies the recovering of fire choked with ashes or decaying) which God had kindled in him, by daily prayer, and meditating on the things of God and use of his gifts, improving those spiritual abilities which God had given him.

*By the putting on of my hands;* upon the prayers of Paul and the

presbytery, when he was by them set apart to the work of an evangelist, for the end for which God had given them to him.

## 2 Timothy 1:7

Ver. 7. *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear: fear* in this place signifieth fearfulness, or cowardice, or poorhess of spirit, in opposition to that holy fortitude which becomes ministers; this, he saith, is none of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and proceedeth not from God.

*But of power:* by *power* he means Christian courage and fortitude, not declining duty because of danger threatening us in the performance, but enabling us to encounter the greatest dangers and difficulties.

*And of love;* love to God, and to the souls of his people; love so strong as to constrain us to be willing to lay down our lives for Christ, and for his church and people.

*And of a sound mind;* σωφρονισμου we translate it *a sound mind*; others, sobriety; others, a calm and quiet mind. A sound mind, in the ordinary notion of it, for a judgment sound in the faith, is requisite to it minister of the gospel. Sobriety is the gift of the Spirit: sobriety is a very general term, and signifies the moderation and government of our passions; that which seems to be here meant is such a government, and composure of spirit, that nothing shall deter us from the discharge of our duty; and the term sound mind, opposed to a meak and sickly mind, staggering at every danger, may well enough express the apostle's sense.

## 2 Timothy 1:8

Ver. 8. *Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord;* either the testimony of Christ himself; *who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;* or that testimony which thou art obliged to give, for the ministers of Christ are to be witnesses unto him, Ac 1:8.

*Nor of me his prisoner:* by this it appears that Paul was a prisoner at Rome when he wrote this; he would not have Timothy ashamed to own him, and

the doctrine he had taught, because of that circumstance.

*But be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel;* that is, be thou content, if God calls thee to it, to take a share with me in those afflictions which I suffer for preaching and professing the gospel, or those afflictions which are inseparable from the gospel.

*According to the power of God;* through the power of God, for it is given to us on the behalf of Christ, as to believe, so to suffer for Christ's sake, Php 1:29.

## 2 Timothy 1:9

Ver. 9. *Who hath saved us;* that is, brought us into a state of salvation, and given us a right to it.

*And called us with an holy calling;* and, in order to our obtaining it, hath effectually called, renewed, and sanctified us.

*Not according to our works;* not for any merits of ours.

*But according to his own purpose and grace;* but from his own free love purposing and decreeing eternal salvation to us, with the means adequate to it.

*Which was given us in Christ Jesus;* to be obtained through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ.

*Before the world began;* which purpose of his was before the foundation of the world was laid, and therefore could not be according to our works, but must be of his own grace, Eph 1:4 Tit 3:5.

## 2 Timothy 1:10

Ver. 10. But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour *Jesus Christ;* which purpose of God in Christ Jesus was in a great measure hidden under the Old Testament, but by the coming of Christ is made

evident.

*Who hath abolished death; by his death he hath taken away the sting and power of death, delivering us from that which is the second death.*

*And hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel; and through the doctrine of the gospel he hath made the promises of eternal life plain and clear; which though existent under the law, yet were very obscurely revealed, so as they lay out of the sight of most men and women, but are now brought to light, so as he who runneth may read them.*

### 2 Timothy 1:11

Ver. 11. *Whereunto I am appointed a preacher; for the publication of which gracious counsel and purpose of God thus made manifest by Christ's coming, and of that life and immortality thus by the gospel brought to light, God hath appointed me as his crier; and an apostle; and sent me immediately as his messenger to make publication of it; and a teacher of the Gentiles; and hath made the instructing of the heathen my peculiar province, 1Ti 2:7.*

### 2 Timothy 1:12

Ver. 12. *For the which cause I also suffer these things; for the preaching and publishing of which gospel, or for the teaching of the Gentiles, I suffer these things, being accused by the Jews as a seditious person stirring up the people, and by them delivered to the Romans, and by them imprisoned.*

*Nevertheless I am not ashamed; yet I am not ashamed of my chains.*

*For I know whom I have believed, I have committed myself to God, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day; and I am out of doubt concerning God's ability to keep until the day of judgment my soul, or my whole concerns both for this life and another, which I have by faith committed to him. Some, by that which I have committed unto him, in this text, understand the church or body of believers; others understand the fruit and reward of his labours and*

suffering. Mr. Calvin would have life eternal here meant; our eternal salvation is in Christ's keeping. I rather incline to the first notion; so it agreeth with 1Pe 4:19. God commits his gospel to our trust who are ministers, 1Ti 6:20; we, according to the phrase of Scripture, are said to commit our souls to him, Lu 23:46 Ac 7:59. I am, saith Paul, unconcerned as to my sufferings, I have intrusted God with all my concerns in order to this life and that which is to come, and I know he is able to secure them.

## 2 Timothy 1:13

Ver. 13. By *sound words* which he had heard from Paul, can be meant nothing but the doctrine of the gospel, which, as it is itself pure, and consistent with itself, not rotten, one piece of which will not hold with the other, so it tends to make souls sound as to their spiritual health: this doctrine Timothy had been instructed in by Paul; whether he had given him a written form of them or no is not much material, for this (if he did) was not that which he would have him *hold fast*, but to keep the idea or pattern of that doctrine in his mind, written in his heart, making his discourses conform to it. The sum of which form of sound words he declareth to be faith and love, for all that the gospel teacheth is either believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, or keeping his commandments, which is the demonstration of love, Joh 14:15: or else the sense may be this: Keep thyself sound in the principles of religion, which thou hast learned of me.

*Which is in Christ Jesus*; but do not think this enough without exercising a faith in Christ as thy Redeemer, and living in obedience to his commandments. Many an orthodox man may go to hell, notwithstanding his orthodoxy.

## 2 Timothy 1:14

Ver. 14. *That good thing which was committed unto thee keep*: this is expounded by 1Ti 6:20; he means the doctrine of the gospel, or his office in the publication of it; Be faithful in the ministerial work.

*By the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us*; to which purpose beg the assistance and operation of the Holy Spirit, which dwelleth both in all



believers, and more particularly assisteth the ministers of the gospel. We can neither keep our minds sound in the faith, as to the doctrine of it, nor our souls steady in the exercises of faith or love, without the assistance of the Holy Spirit; which yet the Lord giveth to them that ask him, and it abides in them who do not vex, quench, grieve, or resist it.

## 2 Timothy 1:15

Ver. 15. *This thou knowest:* probably as to some he had a personal knowledge of their apostacy, as to others he knew it by information, which Paul confirmeth.

*That all they which are in Asia be turned away from me:* it seemeth unreasonable to interpret *all* here of every individual, but many, as all oft signifieth in holy writ. Some interpret it of all the Jewish proselytes; others, of those of Asia who accompanied Paul to Rome, and there, seeing his sufferings, apostatized; others, of many who still abode in Asia, where Timothy now was: these all, or many of them, deserted Paul, either wholly casting off the Christian profession, or withdrawing themselves from communion with Paul, when they saw him a prisoner.

*Of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes;* of these two we have no more said in holy writ, and therefore can assert nothing of them with any certainty.

## 2 Timothy 1:16

Ver. 16. *The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus;* whether Onesiphorus was at this time alive, or not, is very doubtful, for he only prays for his family in this text, and saluteth them only, 2Ti 4:19.

*For he oft refreshed me;* either when he was in Asia, or (which is more probable by reason of what followeth) at Rome, whither he might attend him, or follow him.

*And was not ashamed of my chain;* and showed kindness to him when he was a prisoner; for which Paul prayeth mercy for his whole family.

## 2 Timothy 1:17

Ver. 17. *But when he was in Rome, whither he might go upon his private occasions, and, being there, he sought me out very diligently and found me; he made it his business to find out Paul, and rested not until he found him, either at his inn, or in the prison where he was put.*

## 2 Timothy 1:18

Ver. 18. This would incline us to think that Onesiphorus was yet alive. The term *mercy* he here prays that he may *find of the Lord*, is comprehensive of all good, both corporal and spiritual, which he prays God the Father to grant to this good man, to find from the Lord Jesus Christ in that day when he shall come to judge the quick and the dead; for he had not only ministered to the apostle while he was a prisoner at Rome, but many ways at Ephesus, (where probably this Onesiphorus lived), which Timothy, being there, well knew.

## 2 Timothy 2:1

### Chapter Summary

2Ti 2:1-14 Timothy is exhorted to constancy and perseverance in the discharge of his duty, as a good soldier of Christ, looking for a certain reward of his fatigues and sufferings.

2Ti 2:15,16 to divide the word of truth rightly, and to shun profane and vain babblings.

2Ti 2:17,18 The dangerous error of Hymenaeus and Philetus.

2Ti 2:19 The foundation of God standeth sure.

2Ti 2:20,21 Of vessels honourable and dishonourable.

2Ti 2:22-26 Timothy is taught what to flee, and what to follow, and how the servant of Christ must behave toward all men.

Ver. 1. The sense is either: Show thyself a stout and valiant man, not being affrighted at the dangers that threaten thee in the publishing and defence of the gospel which brings the glad tidings of the grace of Jesus Christ: or: Be thou strong through the gracious influence of Christ Jesus, without which thou canst do nothing.

### 2 Timothy 2:2

Ver. 2. *And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses;* the doctrine of the gospel which thou hast heard from me, confirmed by the testimony of many of the prophets of old, or, which thou heardest from me committed to thy trust, there being many witnesses present, when thou wert ordained. or set apart to thy office.

*The same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also;* commit unto others that shall be set apart for the ministry; but let them be such as have an ability to communicate their knowledge to others, and such as thou shalt judge will be faithful to their trust.

### 2 Timothy 2:3

Ver. 3. *Endure hardness;* in the Greek it is, suffer evils, that is evils of affliction, expect them, and encounter and patiently endure them.

*As a good soldier of Jesus Christ;* remembering that the life of a minister is not a life of ease and pleasure, but the life of a soldier, whose life is a life of hardship, exposed to numberless hazards and dangers.

### 2 Timothy 2:4

Ver. 4. Having told Timothy that his life was to be the life of a soldier, in which he would be exposed to many difficulties, and dangers, and hazards, he here mindeth him of the law and custom of soldiers, who being once entered in the muster-roll, use to sequester themselves from other employments in trading, husbandry, or the like, that thereby they might be at the command of their general, or captain, to be called out upon what

service he pleaseth. So he who is a minister of the gospel ought not voluntarily and of choice engage himself in secular employments, but give up himself wholly to the ministerial work, that so he might please the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath chosen him to be his soldier.

### 2 Timothy 2:5

Ver. 5. And look as it is in the public games in use amongst you, where divers strive by wrestling, fighting, racing, where there is a crown proposed as the prize for those who are the conquerors in the game; they have not that crown set upon their heads, unless they keep to the laws of that game wherein they are exercised. So it is in the spiritual warfare, or contest; there is a far greater reward, even a crown of glory, proposed for such as overcome; but none shall have it, unless those who keep to the laws which God hath made for those who exercise themselves in that spiritual combat.

### 2 Timothy 2:6

Ver. 6. As the apostle had before compared the minister of the gospel to a soldier, and from thence concluded his duty not to entangle himself unnecessarily in secular employments; and to those that exercised themselves in their public games, and from thence concluded the obligation upon him to keep to the Divine rule in the management of his office, and of himself under the opposition he should meet with; so here he compares him to a husbandman, (as Christ himself had done, Mt 13:1, &c.), either to mind him of his duty, first to look to save his own soul, then the souls of others, or of his advantage, it being the privilege of a husbandman, being the proprietor of the fruits, (if he will), first to eat thereof, thereby intimating the privilege of those who turn many to righteousness, Da 12:3.

### 2 Timothy 2:7

Ver. 7. *Consider what I say;* weigh these things with thyself in thy own thoughts.

*And the Lord give thee understanding in all things; but thou wilt not effectually understand them without a Divine influence, opening thy mind to a comprehension of them, and thy heart to a reception of all these things, and all other things which it is reasonable for thee to know and understand.*

## 2 Timothy 2:8

Ver. 8. The apostle passeth from his former discourse, wherein he had armed Timothy against the afflictions of the gospel, to a discourse about the doctrine of the gospel; and here mentioneth two principal heads of that doctrine, the incarnation of Christ, and his resurrection, which he instanceth in, as more particularly to be remembered and pressed upon Christians, in regard they were those two points of the gospel which were either at that time denied, as that of the incarnation was by the Jews, or he knew would first be opposed; and the latter that which *declared Christ to be the Son of God with power*, Ro 1:4, and upon a faith in which Christians' salvation and consolation much depended, Ro 4:25 8:34; he therefore calls to him especially to *remember that Jesus Christ was of the seed of David*, truly man, and the true Messiah, who was to be the seed of David, (as the Jews themselves confessed): the manhood of Christ, soon after the apostle's times, was denied by the Marcionites and Manichees, &c. And that he *was raised from the dead* deserved Timothy's remembrance, both because upon that depended the great evidence of Christ's Divine nature, and the salvation and consolation of believers.

*According to my gospel;* this, he saith, was suitable to the doctrine of the gospel which he had preached to them: he calls it his gospel, because committed to his trust to publish; so Ro 2:16, and Ro 16:25, which he expoundeth, Ga 1:11, *the gospel preached of me*: he speaks in the plural number, 1Th 1:5 2Th 2:14; declaring that the gospel was no more his than others' also who were ministers of it.

## 2 Timothy 2:9

Ver. 9. *Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil-doer, even unto bonds;* that is,

for which I suffer affliction, as if I were an evil-doer, to that degree that I am put in chains.

*But the word of God is not bound;* but yet I preach the gospel, or the gospel is preached; though they have restrained me, they are not able to restrain that.

### 2 Timothy 2:10

Ver. 10. *Therefore I endure all things;* that is, all things which I do endure, reproach, imprisonment, &c., for he had not yet resisted to blood.

*For the elect's sakes;* as for Christ's sake, to imitate his example, and testify my love to him; so for the sake of those whom God hath chosen to eternal life, that they, seeing my patience and constancy, may be confirmed in the faith of the gospel, and by that means may obtain eternal life, *salvation, with eternal glory, which is to be had in Christ.*

### 2 Timothy 2:11

Ver. 11. *It is a faithful saying:* see the notes on 1Ti 1:15, and 1Ti 4:9, where we had the same phrase.

*For if we be dead with him:* we are said to be dead with Christ two ways:

1. By our dying to sin, as he died for sin, Ro 6:5.
2. By our suffering in testimony of the truth, 2Co 4:10, which is that being dead with him which is here mentioned.

*We shall also live with him:* there is also a twofold living with him, by a rising again to a *newness of life*, Ro 6:5, and hereafter in glory, which latter is here intended.

### 2 Timothy 2:12

Ver. 12. *If we suffer, we shall also reign with him;* that is, if we suffer for his name's sake, for a constant owning and adherence to his doctrine of faith, or discharge of any trust he hath reposed in us, we shall reign with him in glory.

*If we deny him, he also will deny us;* but if we, upon prospect of danger, deny his truth, or desert the profession of him, he in the day of judgment will not own us before his Father and the holy angels, Mt 10:33 Mr 8:38 Ro 8:17.

### 2 Timothy 2:13

Ver. 13. *If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful;* whether we believe or believe not, or whether we be faithful to our trust or be not, yet God will show himself faithful, either to his promises made to them that believe, or to his threatenings denounced against those that believe not.

*He cannot deny himself;* for it is impossible that he who is truth itself should be otherwise, that were for him to deny himself.

### 2 Timothy 2:14

Ver. 14. *Of these things put them in remembrance;* that is, put other teachers in remembrance of all these things which I have given thee in charge.

*Charging them before the Lord;* charging them as in the sight of God, who most certainly observeth and taketh notice of them, and will call them to an account.

*That they strive not about words to no profit;* that they spend not their time in their pulpits in contests about words which tend to no solid advantage of their hearers.

*But to the subverting of the hearers;* but may tend to the subversion of them, and the destroying their steadiness in the faith, drawing them into parties and factions, the fruit of which is nothing but envy, and

contentions, and different opinions in matters of faith; as to which it hath been always observed, that the affectation of new phrases hath been introductive of a novelty in opinion.

## 2 Timothy 2:15

Ver. 15. *Study to show thyself approved unto God;* let it be thy study, not to please men, to get their hum and applause for speaking quaintly, learnedly, or smoothly, but to approve thyself to God, who is thy Master in this work, and whom thou oughtest to serve.

*A workman that needeth not to be ashamed;* a workman that doth his work so well, and faithfully, that he need not be ashamed, whoever looketh and judgeth upon it.

*Rightly dividing the word of truth;* ορθοτομουντα, rightly cutting out; we translate it *rightly dividing*: it is not material whether the metaphor be drawn from the priests right cutting out their sacrifices, so as all had their shares in them; or from carpenters cutting out their timber, cutting off the sappy part, and by a right line dividing the other parts; or from cooks, or carvers, or parents rightly dividing a dish of meat among several guests or children; or from those that use to cut out ways; or from husbandmen cutting out furrows, &c. The sense is, rightly handling the word of God, and giving to all their portion. For their notion who would make the sense of it, cutting out a right way for others by thy example, because the word ορθοτομειν sometimes signifies to cut a right way, it no way agreeth to the text, for whatever the verb signifies alone, he is meanly skilled in the Greek that knows not it cannot have that sense, being joined (as here) with τον λογον της αληθειας, the word of truth.

## 2 Timothy 2:16

Ver. 16. *But shun profane and vain babblings;* by these dishonourable terms the apostle defameth all impertinent discourses in discharge of the ministerial office, such as he had called *fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, 1Ti 1:4; profane and old wives' fables, 1Ti 4:7*: here he calls them κενοφωνιας, empty, vain, and unprofitable discourses,



which though possibly not profane in themselves, yet were profane as used in the discharge of the ministerial office, where nothing ought to be discoursed but the solid, useful truths of the gospel.

*For they will increase unto more ungodliness;* these, he saith, will issue at last in errors and ungodliness of life.

## 2 Timothy 2:17

Ver. 17. *And their word will eat as doth a canker;* in the Greek it is: And their word will have pasture (or place to feed upon) as a gangrene: we have ill translated the word *a canker*, for it signifieth a gangrene; both our English word gangrene and the Latin word are derived from the Greek. There is a great difference between a canker and a gangrene, in the causes of those two diseases, and the nature of them, and the time in which they destroy the body of a man; only they both agree in their infecting the parts contiguous, the canker eating them, the gangrene mortifying them; and for this, the words of erroneous persons are here compared to this disease, because either of them will have something to feed upon; so νομην signifieth, Joh 10:9. Most errors in matters of faith are contagious and infectious; the reason is, because ordinarily an error is broached by some, and entertained by others, in satisfaction to some lust, as favouring some evil desire and inclination of our minds, and so naturally pleaseth those who have the same evil propensions.

*Of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus:* of *Hymenaeus* we read before, 1Ti 1:20, there he is joined with Alexander; but not of *Philetus*, nor do we find him further mentioned in holy writ.

## 2 Timothy 2:18

Ver. 18. *Who concerning the truth have erred;* these two he saith had already erred as to the doctrine of faith, giving heed to profane and vain babblings.

*Saying that the resurrection is past already;* their particular error was in the business of the resurrection, which they said was past. That there shall

be no resurrection is a very pleasing doctrine to men that have lived sensual lives; those whose lives have been nothing but eating and drinking, do very unwillingly think of dying, but seeing they cannot avoid that, they would gladly there should be no resurrection: so that it was no wonder if such an error as this did spread and mortify like a gangrene. Upon what pretence these men denied the resurrection, we are neither told in holy writ, nor with any certainty by any other authors. Some say, that they held that it was past in the resurrection of Christ, and those mentioned Mt 27:52. Others think they confounded the resurrection with regeneration, and glorification, which they allowed only as to the souls of believers. Others say they maintained no other resurrection than what men have in the procreation of children. Others, that they denied any resurrection but that in baptism. The resurrection of the body was denied by the Sadducees, by these in Paul's time, and afterwards by those that followed, Marcion, Basilides, Valentinus and Apelles, and others. Some in our times also have trodden in their steps, and are still treading (unless they think God will be more kind to those infinite numbers of heathens in the country of the Great Mogul than to Christians; for as to them, they tell us they cannot believe any such thing). Two sorts of men have been guilty of this:

1. The philosophers of the world, that think they must be able with their reason to span all articles of faith.
2. Men of sensual and sottish lives, who having lived like beasts, are willing to believe they shall also die like brutes.

*And overthrow the faith of some;* those who are tainted with this error do both themselves deny the faith, divers principal articles of which depend upon it, such as the resurrection of Christ, 1Co 15:1-58, and eternal life, &c., and also subvert the faith of others; for whoso can persuade another that there shall be no resurrection, makes him an infidel. Such heretics therefore were never endured to keep any station in the Christian church, it being always judged reasonable, that those who were turned infidels should be turned out of the flock of Christ to their proper herd.

## 2 Timothy 2:19

Ver. 19. *Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure;*

notwithstanding that these two men (possibly of some note in the church of Ephesus) have fallen from the faith, and have been ill instruments to subvert the faith of others, yet God hath a number in the world, who are built upon the rock Christ Jesus, Mt 7:25; these are founded surely,

*having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his;* sealed, and confirmed in their state by the eternal decree and counsel of God, who hath foreknown his elect, both as to their number and perseverance; but God hath from eternity known who are his, and therefore such as truly are so must be kept through faith by his power to salvation, and it is not possible that these should be totally and finally deceived.

*And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity;* and every one that nameth the name of the Lord must depart from the tents of wicked men, who have made shipwreck both of faith and a good conscience. Therefore let not the apostacy of these men be a temptation to thee to think that the church of God may or shall fail; that cannot be, there can be no more lost than the sons of perdition, such as God never knew as his, though they put on a mark of Christianity and godliness, and deceived many. Those who have God's seal upon them, and are of his foundation, shall stand and keep themselves from those damnable errors. Only, to let us know that neither the certainty of God's decree or promise doth excuse our endeavours and using means for obtaining the thing decreed or promised, the apostle puts the verb in the imperative mood: Let him depart, &c.

## 2 Timothy 2:20

Ver. 20. Look as it is in a great house, there are several vessels, made of several materials, and for several ends and uses; some are made of gold, some of silver, some of wood, some of earth; some made and bought for more noble and honourable uses, others for more vile, base, and dishonourable uses: so it is in the church of God, which is large, and like a great house. In it are many members; some have obtained like precious faith with us, who are as gold tried in the fire, or like silver purified seven times, by the word of God, and his Spirit sitting as a refiner upon their hearts. But all they are not gold or silver who glitter in an outward profession; some of them have earthy, wooden souls, savouring only

sensual things, having nothing of precious faith in them, and are not yet purged from their filthiness, wanting all truth of grace, or sincerity of love. Some, whose work is to honour God, being created to good works, and whose reward will be to be honoured and glorified by him: others, who, by their apostacy from their faith and profession, and by their wicked lives, will dishonour him, and will be eternally rejected by him, as reprobate silver, and sons of perdition.

## 2 Timothy 2:21

Ver. 21. *If a man therefore purge himself from these;* from these wicked men that subvert the faith of others, or from their wicked opinions and courses.

*He shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use;* God will honour him; and he will by it be set apart, and made fit for Christ's use in his church.

*And prepared unto every good work;* and made fit for every good work; which men are not, while they are either tainted with pernicious, damnable errors relating to the doctrine of faith, or the companions of those fools.

## 2 Timothy 2:22

Ver. 22. *Flee also youthful lusts:* by *youthful* lusts he means such sinful desires, propensities, and inclinations of mind as are most incident to youth, whether they be lusts of the flesh, or spiritual lusts, such as are the vices of the mind ambition, ostentation, pride, vain-glory, contempt of others, &c.

*But follow righteousness;* follow justice, or innocency, which wrongeth none, but rendereth to every one his due; or, the righteousness of a holy life.

*Faith,* which teacheth a soul to receive Divine revelations steadily, without perverse disputings.

*Charity, which is kind, envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, 1Co 13:4-6.*

*Peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart; a union, not with men of corrupt minds and practices, but with all such as serve and worship God purely and sincerely.*

## 2 Timothy 2:23

Ver. 23. It is a precept or caution of the same nature with those, 1Ti 1:4 4:7; and 2Ti 2:16. The repetition of this precept of the apostle four times in these two short Epistles, lets us know how important a thing he judged it, that ministers of the gospel should not spend their time in their discourses to their congregations, in things that tend nothing to the building up of their hearers in faith or holiness, being either old wives' fables, like the stories in the popish legends, or the apocryphal stories of Bel and the Dragon, Tobit and his dog, and the swallows dunging in his eye, &c.; or sifting out genealogies, or vain and impertinent discourses, or idle, fruitless questions, which tend not to edifying, but to satisfy curiosity, and increase strife and ungodliness; which kind of preaching the apostle also had defamed, 1Ti 6:4, as the issue of pride, and ignorance, and dotage, and here he calls such questions *unlearned* in the same sense, because impertinent to the end of preaching. The vanity of human nature, and their non-subjection to the will of God, appeareth much in this, that notwithstanding the unreasonableness of such preaching, and the direct opposition of it to the so often repeated precepts of the apostle, and to Titus, Tit 3:9, and Paul's proposing of his own example to the contrary, 1Co 2:1-4; yet for many years in the times of popery the people were fed with little besides these husks; and too many yet, either out of pride, to show their parts and reading, or ignorance of the mysteries of godliness, and the true end of preaching, or dotage about unprofitable speculations and niceties, can find little better food than these husks for poor people's souls.

## 2 Timothy 2:24

Ver. 24. He that is *the servant of the Lord* in the work of the ministry, *must*

*not μαχεσθαι, fight or strive; he must neither be a striker nor a brawler, neither fight with his hands nor his tongue.*

*But be gentle unto all men; but show himself to all courteous, of a soft temper, meek and gentle.*

*Apt to teach, patient: see the notes on 1Ti 3:2,3.*

## 2 Timothy 2:25

Ver. 25. *In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; without passion better informing such as have sucked in an error, not reviling them, but gently instructing them, and labouring to convince them of their mistake; for all those who for a time may oppose the truth, are not such as never repent, nor do it out of malice or hatred, they may do it out of ignorance and weakness.*

*If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and God may give them a power, and a heart to repent, and to acknowledge that truth, which they at present oppose; and although this must be God's work, yet he doth it by ministers as his means and instruments, who are to use probable means in order to it; such are not railing and reviling, but meek instructions, and a kind and gentle behaviour to them. A foul-mouthed minister is seldom an instrument to cleanse another's heart. Ver. 25. *And that they may recover themselves;* the Greek word *ανανηψωσιν* properly signifieth to awake out of a drunken sleep. A state of sin is a kind of drunkenness, in which men have lost the use of their reason.*

*Out of the snare of the devil; by the snare of the devil he means his temptations, which like snares are set covertly to catch souls.*

*Who are taken captive by him; εζωγρημενοι signifies persons taken captive in war; in such a miserable captivity are sinners.*

*At his will; εις το εκεινου θελημα, which we translate at his will, may be as well translated to his will; and so the will of God may be meant, and the whole referred to the first sentence thus, may recover themselves out of*

the snare of the devil to the will of God, that is, to embrace and do the will of God; and this is the sense some make of it: but it seems more proper to refer it to the participle, *taken captive*, for that is next it; and so it signifieth the miserable state of sinners, who are captives at the devil's command and will, that if he saith to them, Go, they go; if he saith, Come, they come; if he saith, Do this, they do it.

## 2 Timothy 3:1

### Chapter Summary

2Ti 3:1-5 The apostle foretelleth the evil characters that should appear in the last days.

2Ti 3:6-9 He describeth the enemies of the truth,

2Ti 3:10-13 propoundeth unto Timothy his own example,

2Ti 3:14-17 and exhorteth him to abide in the doctrine he had learned, commending unto him the manifold use of the Holy Scriptures.

Ver. 1. We met with this term, *last days*, 1Ti 4:1, and there said that the Scripture by that term understands all the time

from Christ's ascension to the end of the world. We meet with the

term, Ge 49:1 Isa 2:2 Mic 4:1 Ac 2:17 Heb 1:2 Jas 5:3 2Pe 3:3.

Of these days some are later than others, but it appears by Ac 2:17

Heb 1:2, that that whole period of time is so called.

*Perilous times shall come;* in the Greek it is, difficult times,

that is, times when it will be difficult for Christians to keep their

lives or estates, or any happy station in the world, with a good

conscience, by reason of the plenty of ill men that should live in

those times, and make them so difficult.

## 2 Timothy 3:2

Ver. 2. *For men shall be lovers of their own selves;* that is, the generality of men shall be persons that will neither love God nor men, in comparison with themselves; charity, which seeketh not her own, shall wax cold, men shall be wholly for themselves.

*Covetous;* lovers of silver immoderately, so as they will get it any way, and when they have it will be as sordidly tenacious of it.

*Boasters;* vaunting of themselves, vain-glorious, boasting of what they have not.

*Proud;* lifted up in an opinion of themselves.

*Blasphemers;* speaking evil of God and men.

*Disobedient to parents;* stubborn and rebellious against those that bare them.

*Unthankful,* both to God and men, for kindnesses received from either.

*Unholy;* profane and impure.

## 2 Timothy 3:3

Ver. 3. *Without natural affection;* having no kindness for such as nature obligeth them to love and honour.

*Truce-breakers;* men that will be held by no bonds or leagues. Or rather, implacable; so we translate the same Greek word, Ro 1:31; men so full of malice that they will admit no terms or covenants of peace.

*False accusers;* Greek, devils, venting their malice by informing against and accusing others, without any regard to truth.

*Incontinent;* intemperate, drunkards, gluttons, unclean persons, &c.

*Fierce;* men without any gentleness, cruel.

*Despisers of those that are good;* men that have no kindness for any good men, haters of them.



## 2 Timothy 3:4

Ver. 4. Traitors; προδοται signifies the betraying of any trust, or a falsehood to any person to whom we are obliged. It is in Scripture applied to Judas, Lu 6:16, and to the Jews that crucified Christ, Ac 7:52. The verb whence it derives is by authors applied to persons, places, and causes: it signifies that in the latter times there should be a general falsehood amongst men; see Mt 10:21; falsehood towards their superiors, their relation, profession, &c.

*Heady;* rash, inconsiderate.

*High-minded;* blown up as bladders with an opinion of their own deserts.

*Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;* voluptuous men, not using what God hath given them with a moderate satisfaction and delight in them, but contrary to God's commandments, and thereby showing that they have more love for the gratification of their sensitive appetite than the pleasing of God.

## 2 Timothy 3:5

Ver. 5. Having a form of godliness: a form here is the same with a mask, or vizard, or appearance, an accidental form, opposed to substance and reality. It signifieth that in the latter times there should be many such as owned themselves Christians, and pretended to a right way of worshipping God, to be the church, the only church of God.

*But denying the power thereof;* but in practice, though not in words, denying all substantial godliness, which lieth not in assuming the empty name of Christians, and making a profession, but lies in truth, righteousness, love and peace, self-denial, mortifying our members; it being a thing attended with life and power, a man being no more a Christian than he acts and lives like a Christian.

*From such turn away;* from such kind of professors as were before described, the apostle willeth Timothy to *turn away*, both as to having any church fellowship or communion, or any intimacy of converse with them.

## 2 Timothy 3:6

Ver. 6. *For of this sort are they which creep into houses;* who do not only privily enter in at the doors of houses, but pierce into the secrets of them, making it their business to pry into all families, *and lead captive silly women,* and take their advantages upon women, (the weaker sex), and not the wisest of them, but *γυναικαρια*, the diminutive word, is used to vilify; the little despicable women, of no judgment in sound religion, whom they by their tongues and pleasing errors make their captives.

*Laden with sins;* nor do they deal with the most pious and honest women, but such as are laden with the guilt of much sin; *led away with divers lusts;* and who, being possessed of divers sinful inclinations, not only lusts of the flesh, but any other, such as pride, &c., are easily led away; lust always smoothing the way for such errors as will be principles to justify it against the reflections of conscience. Their vices, rather than sex, made them easily seduced.

## 2 Timothy 3:7

Ver. 7. Women that pretend to be *ever learning* the truth, but cannot obtain of their lusts a leave to acknowledge the truth in their practice. The word is *επιγνωσιν*, which rather signifies a practical acknowledgment than a notional knowledge.

## 2 Timothy 3:8

Ver. 8. Concerning this resistance of Moses by *Jannes and Jambres*, the Holy Scripture saith nothing but in this text. It is said by interpreters, that they were two brethren, the chief of Pharaoh's magicians, who opposed Moses in the miracles he wrought, Ex 7:11, whose names might be known in Paul's time by tradition, or the public writings of the Jews.

*So do these also resist the truth;* so will corrupt teachers under the gospel resist the truth of the gospel published by Christ's ministers.

*Men of corrupt minds;* men whose hearts are corrupted with sordid lusts.

*Reprobate concerning the faith; αδοκιμοι* of no sound judgment as to the doctrine of faith, or not approved of God, or good men, as to their sentiments about our faith.

## 2 Timothy 3:9

Ver. 9. *But they shall proceed no further;* God will preserve those in his church that are sincere; though they may captivate a few poor, ignorant women, they shall have no great success.

*For their folly shall be made manifest unto all men;* for God will in his providence so order it, that their folly or madness shall appear to all, and their party shall decline. The Divine Providence, that governs all things by the invincible light of truth, discovers and confounds the most specious and subtle seducers in his own time. And this prediction of the apostle was exactly fulfilled with respect to those primitive seducers. As theirs also was; as God by his providence laid open Jannes and Jambres.

## 2 Timothy 3:10

Ver. 10. *But thou hast fully known my doctrine:* our translation here seemeth a little strange, for the Greek is: Thou hast diligently followed me in doctrine, εὐ δε παρηκολουθηδας μου τη διδασκαλια that is: Thou wert in my company, thou wert a follower of me, and so must know what doctrine I preached; what *manner of life I lived;* what my *purpose,* whole scope and design, was; what *faith* I taught and professed; what *long-suffering* I used, both towards my malicious adversaries and my weaker brethren; what *charity* or love I showed towards all men, whether friends or foes; what *patience* I showed in bearing injuries.

## 2 Timothy 3:11

Ver. 11. What *persecutions* for the preaching of the gospel I was under; what *afflictions* I met with at *Antioch* in Pisidia, Ac 13:14,45,50; at *Iconium*, whither he went from Pisidia; of the afflictions he met with there also, read Ac 14:1-28.

*At Lystra; what persecutions I endured:* the apostle went from Iconium to Lystra,

Ac 14:6, there also he was persecuted, Ac 14:19. Now it seemeth that in all these motions Timothy was in Paul's company and a follower of him, so as he was a witness to all; which assureth us that though we first read of Timothy. Ac 16:3, when he was circumcised, yet Paul knew him before.

*But out of them all the Lord delivered me;* yet God delivered Paul from all these, and that Timothy, being all that time in company with Paul, knew; from whence the apostle would have him take courage, exercise patience under suffering for such preaching and such living, being assured that God would deliver him also, preaching the same truth, and living the same holy life, though he met with the same troubles, persecutions, and afflictions.

## 2 Timothy 3:12

Ver. 12. Such is the disposal of Divine Providence, such the malice of the men in the world, that though not every individual person, yet it is the usual lot of them who will keep a pure faith and a good conscience, to suffer persecution in some kind or other, either in their persons, or reputation, or estates. Men may live profanely, or may be morally honest men, and be safe enough; but if they will profess faith in Christ, or love to him in keeping his commandments, they will be exposed to troubles: the world will not endure men to live in peace, that will not live as they live, and believe as they believe.

## 2 Timothy 3:13

Ver. 13. Neither do thou expect that the times should mend, for men that are given up to their lusts and γοητες, such as go about to deceive others, will grow worse and worse, as the world groweth older, both in their endeavours to deceive, and in their malice and hatred to those that oppose them.

*Deceiving, and being deceived;* deceiving others, and being left by the just judgment of God to deceive and ruin their own souls.

## 2 Timothy 3:14

Ver. 14. *But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned;* in the doctrines relating to faith, and the precepts relating to thy life as a minister, or as a Christian.

*And hast been assured of;* and hast assented to steadily, hitherto believing them.

*Knowing of whom thou hast learned them;* remembering that thou hast learned them of me the apostle of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is the same as from Christ himself.

## 2 Timothy 3:15

Ver. 15. *And that from a child;* from thy infancy, by the instruction of thy mother Eunice, and thy grandmother Lois, 2Ti 1:5.

*Thou hast known the Holy Scriptures;* thou hast had a notion of the writings of Moses and the prophets, the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament, for at this time no others were written.

*Which are able to make thee wise unto salvation;* which Holy Scriptures (without the help of the writings of Plato or Pythagoras, or any other pagan philosophers) have in them a sufficiency of doctrine to make thee, or any other, wise enough to get to heaven.

*Through faith which is in Christ Jesus;* but not without a faith in Christ Jesus, receiving him as thy and their Saviour, besides a faith assenting and agreeing to those holy writings as the revelation of the Divine will.

## 2 Timothy 3:16

Ver. 16. *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God:* Scripture signifies no more than writing; some therefore translate this text thus: All Scripture which is inspired of God; not all writings, but all the books of the Old Testament, is θεοπνευστος. This is expounded by Peter, 2Pe 1:21: *For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. And is profitable for doctrine;* and it is profitable to instruct us in all propositions of truth which we need believe in order to salvation.

*For reproof;* ελεγχον, to convince us either of any truth, that we may believe it without any hesitation, or of any sin, that we may be humbled for it, without any extenuation.

*For correction; for reproof, or correction, or reformation, to reprove us in what we are to be reprov'd, to correct us in any error, to show us the way to bring us to rights and to reform us.*

*For instruction in righteousness; to instruct us in the true righteousness, in which we must appear before God; for in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, Ro 1:17.*

## 2 Timothy 3:17

Ver. 17. *That the man of God may be perfect; that both ministers and all godly men may be as perfect as they can be in the state of mortality, fitted for the duties of their several callings and places.*

*Thoroughly furnished unto all good works; and be prepared to every work which is good, acceptable and well-pleasing unto God, whether it be a work of piety, or justice and charity. The Scripture, as to all, is so full a direction, that Christians need not go down to the Philistines to whet their tools, nor be beholden to unwritten traditions, or to the writings of pagan philosophers, for directions what to do, how to worship God, or manage any part of their conversation, either as to their general calling, or as to their particular relations.*

## 2 Timothy 4:1

### Chapter Summary

2Ti 4:1-5 Paul giveth Timothy a solemn charge to do his duty with all care and diligence,  
2Ti 4:6-8 certifieth him of his approaching end, and of the glorious prospect he had in view.  
2Ti 4:9-13 He desireth him to hasten his coming, and to bring Mark with him, and certain other things,  
2Ti 4:14,15 warneth him to beware of Alexander,  
2Ti 4:16-18 informeth him what had befallen him at his first apology,  
2Ti 4:19-22 and concludeth with salutations, and a benediction.

Ver. 1. *I charge thee therefore before God,* who seeth and observeth what thou doest, and will one day call thee to account for thy discharge of thy ministry.

*And the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead;* and before the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, whom thou hast more reason to regard, not only because he is thy Master, and thou his servant, in a special sense, but because he is to be thy Judge also, for he shall be the Judge, as of those that are dead before his coming, so of those also who shall be alive at his coming, 1Co 15:52 1Th 4:15,17.

*At his appearing and his kingdom;* when he shall appear the second time, and set up his kingdom of glory, delivering up his mediatory kingdom to this Father. I charge thee, as in the presence of God and this Christ, or as thou hast a regard to God and to this Christ, and fearest the angry face of this Judge, or believest his second coming, or expectest a share in his kingdom of glory: a most severe obtestation, charge, or adjuration. What is that duty which is ushered in in so solemn a manner? It followeth. (See Poole on "2Ti 4:2").

## 2 Timothy 4:2

Ver. 2. *Preach;* proclaim like a herald, cry like a common crier in the hearing of a multitude. Thus God to Isaiah, Isa 58:1: *Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet. The word; the word of truth, Isa 2:15, or the gospel, called *the word* by way of emphasis: see Mt 4:23 24:14 Mr 1:14 13:10 16:15. The word of God, not old wives' fables, endless genealogies, perverse disputings, unedifying questions, &c. This precept reflects upon unpreaching ministers, and impertinent, vain preachers.*

*Be instant;* be earnest and diligent. This reflects upon a cold and perfunctory preaching. God bid Isaiah *cry aloud, lift up his voice like a trumpet*. Sinners are like deaf adders.

*In season, out of season;* that is, at all times, not on the Lord's days only, but any other time when thou hast opportunity; not in times when thou mayst do it with safety, but when the wisdom of the flesh tells thee it is *out*

*of season.* This reflects upon such as preach rarely, and consult their flesh, whether they should perform it at all, or no.

*Reprove;* ἐλεγζον, convince such as gainsay the truth.

*Rebuke* all sinners, all that live an ill life. This reflects upon those effeminate preachers, against whom Ezekiel denounced the *woe*, Eze 13:18, *that sew pillows to all armholes;* that prophesy smooth things instead of the right things of the word.

*Exhort;* persuade or comfort, (the word signifies both), as thou seest occasion.

*With all longsuffering;* but do what thou doest prudently, with meekness. God needeth not thy passion, though he makes use of thy art in instruction.

*And doctrine;* do it so as to join instruction with thy reproof. This reflects upon flattering, fawning, unfaithful preachers, and such as vent their own passion, rather than pursue their due end for instruction and reformation of souls.

## 2 Timothy 4:3

Ver. 3. *For the time will come;* this time always was, (as appears by the writings of the prophets), but it will come more and more; as the world grows older, it will grow more mad.

*When they,* very many that shall live in the world, yea, in the bosom of the church, *will not endure sound doctrine,* will not endure that preaching which hath any soundness in it, or is of any tendency, life, power, or efficacy, to recover their souls from the diseases of sin and lusts.

*But after their own lusts,* but in favour of their own lusts, and to secure their satisfaction in them, *shall they heap to themselves teachers,* will be finding out teachers, not according to God's, but to their own hearts; and there will be plenty of them to be found, they shall *heap* them up, choosing them without any judgment, regarding nothing but whether they will not be smart upon their lusts.



*Having itching ears;* for their ears itch, and they must have those that will scratch them. The disease of lust in their souls brings forth an itch in their ears, that they will have a mind to hear only such as will by scratching please them.

## 2 Timothy 4:4

Ver. 4. *And they shall turn away their ears from the truth;* either in contempt, or scorn of it, as being delivered in too plain notions or style; or through impatience, not enduring their lusts should be touched, and the evil of their ways showed them.

*And shall be turned unto fables;* delighting to hear fables, any idle stories, or impertinent discourses, provided they touch not their lusts. *Missa non mordet,* The mass will not bite, was an old saying of the popish faction.

## 2 Timothy 4:5

Ver. 5. *But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions:* watching implieth:

1. A negation of sleep.
2. An industrious keeping ourselves awake for some end.

Keep thyself from all sin, and from all idleness and laziness, and do this industriously, that thou mayst honour God in thy work.

*Do the work of an evangelist;* for thy work is a great work, the work of one who is to publish the gospel; or of one who is left by me the apostle of Christ to settle the church which I have laid the foundation of, Ac 21:8 Eph 4:11.

*Make full proof of thy ministry;* make a full proof unto others of thy faithfulness in thy ministerial office and employment.

## 2 Timothy 4:6

Ver. 6. *For I am now ready to be offered;* σπενδομαι, the word properly signifieth to be offered as a drink-offering, which was offered by being poured out. Some say that σπενδομαι is only used to signify such offerings whereby some covenant was confirmed; so as it not only signifieth that Paul was sensible that he should die a violent death, but that his death should be an establishment and confirmation of the doctrine of the gospel which he had preached, that he should be *offered upon the sacrifice and service of their faith*, as he speaketh, Php 2:17, where the same word is used. A learned author thinks it is there used in a little different sense, there as an accession to the sacrifice, here as a preparation to it, they being wont to prepare their sacrifice by pouring wine upon it; which possibly guided our translators to translate it here, *I am ready to be offered. And the time of my departure is at hand;* αναλυσεως we translate it *departure*, it properly signifieth resolution, because in death we are resolved into dust, from whence we are. If any ask how Paul knew that the time of his death was so near; *Answer:* He might know it by revelation from God, or from his observation of Nero's temper, malice, or behaviour toward him.

## 2 Timothy 4:7

Ver. 7. *I have fought a good fight;* my life hath been a military life, but I have not fought the evil fights of ambitious or quarrelsome men: my fighting hath been the good and noble fight of faith, a fight with the world, the flesh, and the devil, a contending for the faith delivered to the saints, a maintaining the lustings of the Spirit against the flesh, a warring with spiritual wickednesses in high places.

*I have finished my course;* God appointed me a race to run, as a Christian, as an apostle and minister of Christ; I have now finished it.

*I have kept the faith;* I have kept the doctrine of faith, upholding and maintaining it in and by my ministry; and I have lived in the exercise of the grace of faith.

## 2 Timothy 4:8

Ver. 8. *Henceforth there is laid up for me;* as to what remains for me, (so the word *λοιπον* signifies, not *henceforth*, as we translate it), there is prepared, and in safe keeping for me, Col 1:5; or, there is appointed for me: see Heb 9:27.

*A crown;* another kind of crown than what the conquerors used to have in the Grecian games; a high and great reward, a glory with which my whole man shall be encompassed, as a man's head is with a crown.

*Of righteousness;* the purchase of Christ's righteousness, and an ample reward of mine also, the giving out of which also will be the effect of God's truth and justice, 1Jo 1:9.

*Which the Lord, the righteous judge;* and Jesus Christ, who in this shall show himself a righteous judge, *shall give it me* of his free mercy, for all I have done hath not merited it, *at that day*, at the day of judgment; my soul shall have it at my dissolution, my whole man in the resurrection.

*And not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing;* nor is this crown my particular reward, but if any persons so lead their lives in this world, as that they can desire and be pleased with the thoughts and hopes of the second coming of Christ to judgment, Christ will give them also the same reward.

## 2 Timothy 4:9

Ver. 9. To Rome, where Paul was at this time a prisoner. It appears from Php 2:19, that Timothy did go to Paul at Rome, according to this desire of his, and was with him while a prisoner there.

## 2 Timothy 4:10

Ver. 10. He showeth the reason why he desired Timothy to come to him, because most of those who were with him were gone.

*For Demas hath forsaken me; some think this Demas is Demetrius, mentioned 3Jo 1:12, the name being only shortened. He was at Rome with Paul some time, Col 4:14. Some make a question, whether Demas*

## Titus 1:1

### THE ARGUMENT

As a general of an army, who hath a large country to conquer, cannot himself stay long in a conquered city, but leaving it with a garrison, under commanders, himself still goes forward in his conquests, and by his letters directs those whom he hath left governors in his conquered places how to behave themselves; so the apostle of the Gentiles, having a large field to run over, before he could finish his course, Ac 26:17,18, could not himself stay long in places where he had brought people into a subjection to the gospel, but after a time, leaving them as a garrison to keep Christ's possession in the place, left them under the conduct of some eminent disciple and minister, to whom he afterwards wrote letters directly, of such minister, to settle the church in such a place, what and how to preach, and behave himself; thus he left Timothy at Ephesus, Titus at Crete. Crete is a great island belonging to Grecia, which on the north hath the Aegean Sea, the African Sea on the south. It was anciently called Cures; the inhabitants of it were called Cretes, Ac 2:11. We read of the island, Ac 28:1, as Paul sailed by it to Rome. It had formerly in it one hundred cities, being in length two hundred and seventy miles, in breadth fifty, in compass eight hundred and nine miles; Cortina, Cydon, Gnossus, Minois, (the country of the famous geographer Strabo), were some of the cities famous in it. It is now called Candia. It was lately taken from the Venetians, and is now in the possession of the Turks. It was a very rich place, famous for wines, and the place where brass was first found out. When the first plantation of the gospel was made there, the Scripture doth not say: it was made by Paul, as appears by his leaving Titus there. Titus was a Greek, Ga 2:3; converted by Paul, as appears by Tit 1:4; afterwards made a minister, for he was Paul's *partner and fellow helper*, 2Co 8:23, and called his *brother*, 2Co 2:13, used as his messenger, 2Co 8:6. He was left by Paul in Candia, or Crete, to settle the church there, and to *ordain elders in every city*, Tit 1:5. He writes this Epistle to him from Nicopolis, Tit 3:12. There were four cities of that name. The scope of it appears, to any that read it, to be, to direct him, what persons he should ordain as ministers, how to deal with false teachers, and how to behave himself, both as to preaching and living, towards all sorts of persons.

## Chapter Summary

Tit 1:1-4 The salutation.

Tit 1:5 For what end Titus was left in Crete.

Tit 1:6-9 How they should be qualified who are ordained to the ministry.

Tit 1:10,11 The mouths of evil teachers must be stopped.

Tit 1:12-16 The bad character of the Cretians.

Ver. 1. *Paul, a servant of God;* that is, in the work of the ministry.

*And an apostle of Jesus Christ;* who glory in this as my greatest honour and dignity, that I was one immediately sent by Jesus Christ to preach the gospel.

*According to the faith of God's elect;* *κατα πιστιν* according to what the elect, or chosen of God from the beginning of the world, have believed; so as it is no new doctrine which I bring: or else *κατα* here should be translated for, denoting the final cause, as some judge it signifieth, 2Ti 1:1, and in Tit 1:9 of this chapter; then the sense is, that he was sent to be an instrument to beget faith in such as God had chosen unto life. Ac 26:18, for those only *ordained to eternal life* believe, Ac 13:48, and Paul was sent to be a helper of their faith. Some think the apostle by this phrase only distinguisheth himself from the ministers of the law.

*And the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;* to which faith men are brought by the knowledge of the truth, and it worketh by the owning, profession, and acknowledgment of the truth; not all propositions of truth, but that which is productive of a godly life, lying in the true worship of God, and a universal obedience to the Divine will.

### Titus 1:2

Ver. 2. *In hope of eternal life;* which faith also, producing the acknowledgment, profession, and obedience to the truth, according to godliness, produceth in the soul a *hope*, or certain expectation, of eternal salvation or happiness.

*Which God, that cannot lie, promised;* nor doth this hope grow up as a rush without mire, or a flag without water, but is bottomed in God's declaration of his will to that purpose; and it is impossible that the God of truth should lie, or speak what he never intended to effect. ¶ *Ἐπηγγειλατο* might as well here have been translated *purposed*, and must be so interpreted, if we interpret the next words, before the beginning of time, unless we say it was promised to the Head of the elect, Christ, on their behalf.

*Before the world began;* before the beginning of time, or rather, many ages since, as Ro 16:25. Thus eternal life was promised, though more obscurely, Ge 15:1 17:7 22:18.

#### Titus 1:3

Ver. 3. *But hath in due times;* in proper time, (saith the Greek), in such time as God had eternally purposed, and as seemed good to the Divine wisdom.

*Manifested his word through preaching;* he hath by setting up the ordinance of preaching, or publishing the gospel, by men sent by him, manifested this promise of eternal life, which lay much obscured under the veil of temporal promises under the Old Testament.

*Which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;* which office of preaching, or which word, was committed to me, by the will of God, or immediate command of God: as to which, see Ac 26:17,18.

#### Titus 1:4

Ver. 4. *Mine own son after the common faith;* from hence we learn that Titus was converted to Christianity by Paul. Timothy was so called, 1Ti 1:2. The salutation is the same with that to Timothy, 1Ti 1:2 2Ti 1:2, and in most of the Epistles, with small variation: See Poole on "1Ti 1:2", See Poole on "2Ti 1:2", and in the beginning of most of the Epistles.

### Titus 1:5

Ver. 5. In Crete; in Candia, as it is now called: see the Argument to this Epistle.

*Set in order the things that are wanting;* set to rights things which I left undone, being hastened away to other places.

*And ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:* in this island we are told there were a hundred cities, in how many of them the gospel had taken place we are not told. Paul left Titus in this place for this end, to regulate the churches, and constitute officers for the holy ministry, to execute the office of an evangelist; doing what the apostle should have done there could he have stayed.

### Titus 1:6

Ver. 6. If any be blameless: the apostle now directs what kind of persons should be made elders or officers in the church. It is an elliptic speech, where must be something understood to perfect the sense. Do not make every one an elder, but if any be *ανεγκλητος*, see the notes on 1Ti 3:10, such a one, as though possibly he may be clamoured on by ill men, yet cannot be justly charged with or accused of any notorious crime.

*The husband of one wife;* one that doth not take the sinful liberty, taken by the Jews and heathens, (but contrary to the rule of Christ), to have at the same time more than one wife: see the notes on 1Ti 3:2.

*Having faithful children;* having also a religious family, children that are believers, or at least honest in a moral sense (so then ministers in those days might marry).

*Not accused of riot;* the Greek is, under an accusation of *ασωτιας*, we translate it by a general word, *riot*, and undoubtedly our English words, *sots* and *sottishness*, comes from this word. The word signifieth any kind of luxury, drunkenness, whoredom, prodigality.



*Unruly;* sons of Belial, ungoverned, disorderly persons, like soldiers that will not keep their ranks, or rather, like cattle untamed, that will not endure any yoke.

*Objection.* But why must none be put into the ministry that have such children? The fathers may be good men, though the children be bad.

*Solution.*

1. Because the honour and repute of the church is more to be regarded than the interest of any private person.
2. Because it is an ill sign that the parents of such children have not ruled their own houses well, keeping their children in all subjection and gravity under authority, and are therefore very unfit to rule the greater society of a church.

### Titus 1:7

Ver. 7. *For a bishop must be blameless;* one that hath an oversight of the church of God, ought to be one whom none can truly tax with any scandalous sin.

*As the steward of God;* as a chief servant in God's house, intrusted to dispense his mysteries, 1Co 4:1, one that should set an example to the under-servants in the house of God.

*Not self-willed;* not αυθαδη, one that pleaseth himself, proud, stubborn, pertinacious, confident, &c., having a high opinion of his own person, parts, judgment, or humour; for all this the word signifies.

*Not soon angry;* οργιλον, not too quick and subject to passion; how then shall he in meekness instruct those that are without?

*Not given to wine:* see the notes on 1Ti 3:3, where the same word is used.

*No striker, not given to filthy lucre:* See Poole on "1Ti 3:3", where both

these qualifications are mentioned, and opened.

### Titus 1:8

Ver. 8. *But a lover of hospitality;* a lover of strangers: See Poole on "1Ti 3:2".

*A lover of good men;* one that hath a kindness for good men, or who loves all good things.

*Sober:* See Poole on "1Ti 3:2".

*Just;* just in his dealings between man and man, giving to all their due.

*Holy;* one that reverenceth and worshippeth God, and is heavenly and spiritual in his conversation.

*Temperate;* one that restraineth all his evil inclinations and propensions, that hath brought his sensitive appetite under the dominion and government of his reason.

### Titus 1:9

Ver. 9. *Holding fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught;* no airy, uncertain man, that is of that opinion which his company is of, or his age favours, but holding steady the word of faith, as he hath learned it from me, and the rest of the apostles.

*That he may be able by sound doctrine, both to exhort,* his work is to persuade others to the faith, *and to convince the gainsayers;* by sound arguments to convince those that speak contrary to it; and if he himself be ignorant of, or uncertain, as to that, how can he ever discharge this employment?

### Titus 1:10

Ver. 10. *For there are many unruly and vain talkers:* we have had both of these words before; the first signifieth stubborn, unruly men; the second, idle, foolish, vain talkers: the apostle saith, that in that age there were many of these.

*And deceivers;* and such who were deceivers of other men's souls, or had their own souls deceived.

*Specially they of the circumcision;* especially (he saith) the Jews, who mixed the law with the gospel; pressed the necessary observance of their ceremonies, and taught that all the Jews should be saved: of these there were many in Crete, they at this time being scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.

#### Titus 1:11

Ver. 11. *Whose mouths must be stopped;* the word is active; such ministers ought to be placed in cities as shall be able and fit to stop such persons' mouths, by sound doctrine and arguments fit to convince them: or, thou oughtest to stop their mouths by silencing them; though I do not see how this was practicable in a pagan country, otherwise than by persuading Christians not to hear them.

*Who subvert whole houses;* who, as to the foundation of faith and its building, overturn whole families of Christians.

*Teaching things which they ought not;* infusing false doctrine into them.

*For filthy lucre's sake;* and all for filthy gain: and all gain is so, that is got by deceiving and ruining of people's souls, as to their faith and salvation.

#### Titus 1:12

Ver. 12. *One of themselves, even a prophet of their own;* Epimenides, a Greek poet, thus spake of the people of this country, whom he calls a prophet, because he was a poet, and wrote something about such divine oracles as they had.

*Said, The Cretians are always liars:* the Cretians were famous for lying and falsehood, so as it became a proverb. He called them *evil beasts*, either for their cruelty or treachery.

*Slow bellies;* a lazy, idle people, that had much more inclination to eat and drink than they had to work in any honest labour. From all this the apostle would infer, that Titus had the more need be watchful in his place, and faithful in the discharge of his office, being amongst such a people.

### Titus 1:13

Ver. 13. *This witness is true;* this testimony of Epimenides is true, what I have found by experience, and those of them that in profession have embraced the Christian faith may have some tincture of their nation's vices.

*Wherefore rebuke them sharply;* if thou meetest with any such, reprove or convince them *αποτομως*, cuttingly, that is, sharply, severely: the metaphor possibly is fetched from surgeons, who cut out dead flesh to the quick.

*That they may be sound in the faith;* that they may be sound in the doctrine of the gospel, or in their minds, not infected with any vice.

### Titus 1:14

Ver. 14. *Not giving heed to Jewish fables:* by his calling them *Jewish fables*, ( not *old wives' fables*, as in the Epistle to Timothy), he lets us know that he reflects upon those Jews that seemed to be proselyted, but yet had a tincture of their Jewish education, and spent their discourse about such fabulous traditions as the Jews had.

*And commandments of men;* and the traditions and constitutions of the scribes and Pharisees.

*That turn from the truth;* abhorring the gospel, and the doctrine of truth in

it.

### Titus 1:15

Ver. 15. *Unto the pure all things are pure:* by *the pure* here (as appeareth by the terms opposed to it) are meant all those whose hearts are purified by faith, working by love in a holy life. To these he saith *all things*, that is, all the creatures of God, all meats and drinks, *are pure*. *What God hath cleansed* none ought to *call common* or impure, Ac 10:14; so as, notwithstanding any law of God to the contrary, any believers under the gospel may eat of any meats.

*But unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure;* but if men be unbelievers, and so defiled, having not their hearts purified by faith, Ac 15:9, nothing is pure to them.

*But even their mind and conscience is defiled;* their mind, their notion and understanding, is defiled; and their conscience, which is the practical judgment they make up about things, is defiled: if they forbear to eat, they are defiled through superstition; if they do eat, they sin by acting against the dictate of their conscience, which is the proximate rule of men's actions.

### Titus 1:16

Ver. 16. *They profess that they know God;* he is speaking of the Jews, who (all of them) professed to know and to believe one living and true God.

*But in works they deny him;* but they lived like atheists, as if there were no God in the world, Ro 2:17-24.

*Being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate;* they are persons justly to be abominated of all good men, ἀπειθεῖς, unbelieving in the gospel, disobedient to the rule of the law, and awkward to, and averse from, any good work.

## Titus 2:1

### Chapter Summary

Tit 2:1-8 Directions given to Titus both for his doctrine and life.

Tit 2:9,10 The duty of servants.

Tit 2:11-15 The gospel teacheth all men to renounce wickedness, and to lead sober, righteous, and godly lives.

Ver. 1. That is, preach those things which agree with that doctrine which is sound, and which tendeth to make others sound in the faith, and in a holy life. Be not thou led by the example of those triflers in preaching, but let the subjects of thy discourse be what may tend to edifying; nor is there any more effectual way to stop the mouths of those fblers. Dagon will fall down before the ark of God.

## Titus 2:2

Ver. 2. *That the aged men be sober:* by the word *πρεσβυτας* seems here to be signified elders in age; he would have Timothy preach that these should be *νηφαλιτοι*, *sober*, both as to body and mind: we met with the word before, 1Ti 3:2,11.

*Grave;* of a modest, composed behaviour, not light and airy.

*Temperate;* that is, able to govern their passions and inclinations.

*Sound in faith;* we have met with the phrase before, Tit 1:13; see the notes; neither rotten through error, nor sick through fluctuation or scepticism.

*In charity,* that is, love.

*In patience;* a patient bearing of evils.

### Titus 2:3

Ver. 3. *The aged women likewise;* that is, do thou also teach the women that in age exceed others.

*That they be in behaviour as becometh holiness;* εν καταστηματι ιεροπρεπεις to be in their habit becoming holiness. The word is of a very large signification, it signifies state, gesture, and habit; we have well translated it by as general a word, *behaviour*; it signifies clothes, converse, one's whole carriage.

*Not false accusers;* not devils. That name is given to the devil, because he is *the accuser of the brethren*, and he was a liar from the beginning; it is applied to any persons that charge others falsely.

*Not given to much wine:* Greek, not serving much wine; for those that frequent the tap too much, are ordinarily enslaved to it.

*Teachers of good things;* privately instructing others in what is good, both by their discourse and example.

### Titus 2:4

Ver. 4. *That they may teach the young women to be sober:* young women, especially conversing amongst heathens, are prone to be light and airy, and over frolicsome, following the heat of their youthful temper, and forming their converse after the manner of others; which is a behaviour, though it may suit their youth, yet if they be Christians it will not suit their profession, which calls to them for more gravity: speak to them that are aged to mind them to be sober.

*To love their husbands, to love their children:* it being natural for young women to love their husbands and children, these precepts seem not so much to concern the things, as the manner of it, to love them as they ought to love them.

### Titus 2:5

Ver. 5. *To be discreet;* σωφρονας the word signifies temperate, and imports an ability to govern all our affections and passions. Discretion is but one piece of the fruit.

*Chaste;* the word signifieth pure as well as chaste, and chastity only as it is a species of purity.

*Keepers at home;* house-wives, not spending their time in gadding abroad, but in looking to the affairs of their own families.

*Obedient to their own husbands:* the same is required of wives, Eph 5:22, and is due from them to their husbands, as being their head.

*That the word of God be not blasphemed:* as for the discharge of their duty towards God, so for the credit and reputation of the gospel, that for their carriage contrary to the rules of nature and morality, as well as of religion, the gospel may not be evil spoken of, as if from that they had learned their ill and indecent behaviour.

### Titus 2:6

Ver. 6. The word signifieth to be temperate, sober, wise, discreet, to govern their passions; an exhortation more specially necessary for young men, whose natural heat inclineth them to passion and rashness.

### Titus 2:7

Ver. 7. *In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works:* he is an ill teacher of others who teacheth them not by his own example, as well as by his doctrine; for that physician proves ordinarily little valued in his prescriptions to his patients, whom they know to be in the same danger, and sick of the same disease, and yet refuseth himself to use what he prescribeth others: the patients will surely say to him: *Physician, heal thyself*. The apostle therefore requires of Titus that he should be himself a pattern of holiness; and those ministers who are not so, vainly persuade



others to be such. People (let ministers say what they will) will believe little danger to be in those courses in which their leader himself walks.

*In doctrine showing uncorruptness; preaching not rotten, but sound doctrine; and doing it with authority, and gravity, and sincerity; the word is αφθαρσιαν, incorruptibility. It is not read in many copies, nor translated by many interpreters; and is much of the same sense with αδιαφθοριαν, which is the first word, by our translation interpreted uncorruptness.*

### Titus 2:8

Ver. 8. *Sound speech, that cannot be condemned:* Paul (as yet) seemeth to be directing Titus as a minister, and the rest of the ministers in Crete, how to behave themselves in the ministry, for the last word being plural, *you*, signifieth either the ministry, or else is put for thee; he would have Titus not only preach sound doctrine, not corrupt, and do it gravely, but also preach profitable doctrine, tending to make the souls of others sound and healthy; unless perhaps by λογον be here meant his style and phrase, which he would have such as none could justly condemn. What was said of Caesar's wife, that she ought not only to be chaste, but so to behave herself as not to be suspected otherwise, is applicable to ministers; their doctrine, and phrase used in their ministry, ought not only to be sound and grave, but such as none should judge or censure for other.

*That he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed;* that the adversaries of the truth may be ashamed of their aspersing them or it.

*Having no evil thing to say of you;* and may have no evil thing to charge them with.

### Titus 2:9

Ver. 9. *Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters;* the apostle directeth as to servants of all sorts, whether bond or free, otherwise than that by covenant they have obliged themselves to men, he willeth they should be obedient to the commands of those who were their legal masters,

neither thinking themselves free from them by their Christianity, if their masters were pagans, nor that they had a greater liberty to be saucy with them, or less obedient to them, because they were Christians, and upon that account brethren, 1Ti 6:2.

*And to please them well in all things;* that is, in civil things, wherein alone they were servants.

*Not answering again;* not saucily replying when they were reprov'd, nor contradicting the commands of their masters.

### Titus 2:10

Ver. 10. *Not purloining;* νοσφιζομενους the word signifieth taking something away from others to our own use, and it signifies properly the taking not the whole, but a part of a thing; it is used to signify the sin of Ananias and Sapphira, who kept back part of what they sold their estate for, Ac 5:2,3.

*But showing all good fidelity;* honesty, and truth, and diligence.

*That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things;* that they may not be a scandal or reproach to the gospel to which they make a profession, but may be an ornament to it in all things, as remembering that it is the doctrine of God our great Preserver, and of Jesus Christ our blessed Saviour.

### Titus 2:11

Ver. 11. The gospel of our Lord Jesus, which containeth the glad tidings of salvation, is not now hidden, and obscurely delivered, as in the times of the Old Testament; but is risen up as the sun, or some bright star, directing all men their duties in their several stations, that is, all sorts of men amongst whom it cometh.

## Titus 2:12

Ver. 12. *Teaching us that, denying ungodliness;* all atheism or false religion, living without regard to any Divine Being, or according to our own erroneous and superstitious conceits and opinions of him.

*And worldly lusts;* and such inclinations, and unlawful desires, and lustings after secular things, as are commonly found in men of the world.

*We should live soberly;* we should live, with respect to ourselves, in a just government of our affections and passions.

*Righteously;* and with respect to others, giving to every one their due.

*And godly;* and with respect to God, piously discharging the duties and paying the homage we owe unto him.

*In this present world;* so long as we live in this world, where we have temptations to the contrary.

## Titus 2:13

Ver. 13. *Looking for that blessed hope;* the object or end of our hope, the salvation of our souls, Ga 5:5 Col 1:5.

*And the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;* and in order thereunto, looking for the coming of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, to the last judgment. The same person is here meant by *the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*

1. It is he whom God hath appointed to be the judge of the quick and dead.
2. Περὶφανεία, by us translated *appearing*, is attributed only to the Second Person in the Blessed Trinity, 2Th 2:8 1Ti 6:14 2Ti 4:1,8. From this text the Divine nature of Christ is irrefragably concluded; he is not only called *God*, but *μεγας θεος*, *the great God*, which cannot be understood of a made God.

### Titus 2:14

Ver. 14. *Who gave himself for us;* which great God and Saviour Jesus Christ was not only sent and given by the Father, Joh 3:16, but freely gave up himself to be incarnate, and to die for us, υπερημων, in our stead to die.

*That he might redeem us from all iniquity;* that by that price he might purchase salvation for us, delivering us both from the guilt and power of sin, who were slaves and captives to our lusts.

*And that he might purify unto himself λαον περιουσιον*, we translate it *a peculiar people*; some translate it, an egregious, famous, principal people; others say it signifieth something got by our own labour and industry, and laid up for our own use; others say it signifieth something we have set our hearts and affections upon, in a special, peculiar manner.

*Zealous of good works;* studious to do, and warmly pursuing, all such works as are acceptable to God, and profitable to ourselves and others.

### Titus 2:15

Ver. 15. *These things speak, and exhort;* whatsoever I have in this Epistle said unto thee, I have therefore spoke, that thou mightest speak to the same sense to others, and persuade them to the practice of them.

*And rebuke with all authority;* when thou hast occasion to reprove any for their errors, do not do it imperiously, but with meekness; nor yet slightly and cursorily, but showing all gravity and authority.

*Let no man despise thee;* and do not so demean thyself, as to give any persons occasion to despise thee.

### Titus 3:1

## Chapter Summary

Tit 3:1,2 Christians are admonished to be subject to civil powers, and of a peaceable and quiet demeanour.

Tit 3:3-8 They are saved from their sins by God's mercy through Christ, but must maintain good works.

Tit 3:9 Genealogies and contentions about the law are to be avoided,

Tit 3:10,11 and obstinate heretics to be rejected.

Tit 3:12,13 Paul appointeth Titus when and where to come to him,

Tit 3:14 recommendeth acts of mercy to Christians,

Tit 3:15 and concludeth with salutations and a benediction.

Ver. 1. *Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers:* all the supreme secular powers at this time were pagans, and no friends to the Christians in their dominions, which might be a temptation to the Christians to rebel against them, or at least not to yield them so free, universal, and cheerful an obedience as they ought; therefore the apostle presseth this duty upon them, and that not here only, but Ro 13:1: see 1Pe 2:13.

*To obey magistrates:* by the former term he might understand the supreme magistrates, by the latter, those inferior ranks; as the apostle Peter expresseth himself more particularly, 1Pe 2:13,14.

*To be ready to every good work;* to be free, and prepared to every work which is acceptable to God and honourable in itself.

### Titus 3:2

Ver. 2. *To speak evil of no man;* Greek, to blaspheme no man. Blasphemy is a speaking evil, whether it be applied to God or man, though use hath so obtained, that we only in common discourse speak of blaspheming God.

*To be no brawlers;* to be no fighters, ( $\alpha\mu\alpha\chi\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ ) neither with hands nor tongues.

*But gentle;* to be modest, fair, equitable men.

*Showing all meekness unto all men;* forbearing wrath and passion in their converse with all.

Titus 3:3

Ver. 3. *For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish;* without any knowledge, wisdom, or spiritual understanding.

*Disobedient:* the word signifieth as well unbelieving as disobedient, neither persuaded to assent to the truth, nor yet to live up to the rule of the gospel.

*Deceived* by the deceitfulness of sin.

*Serving divers lusts and pleasures;* being slaves to our sensitive appetite.

*Living in malice and envy;* suffering wrath to rest in our bosoms, till it boiled up to a desire of revenge, and showed itself in actions of that nature, and pining at the good and prosperity of others.

*Hateful;* deserving to be abominated by good men.

*And hating one another;* and hating good men, or such as were our neighbours: and having been so ourselves formerly, we ought to pity such as still are so.

Titus 3:4

Ver. 4. *Kindness;* χρηστοτης the word signifies one's easiness to do good to another; that native goodness that is in God, rendering him inclinable to love, and prone to do good unto the sons of men. This was in God from eternity, but *appeared* in his sending Christ, and then his Spirit, and in the application of Christ's redemption to particular souls.

### Titus 3:5

Ver. 5. *Not by works of righteousness which we have done; not according to our works, 2Ti 1:9, whether ceremonial or moral.*

*But according to his mercy; but from his own bowels freely yearning upon persons in misery.*

*He saved us; he hath put us into a state of, and given us a right to, eternal salvation.*

*By the washing of regeneration; washing us by regeneration, as in a laver, the pledge and sign of which is in baptism.*

*And renewing of the Holy Ghost; the Holy Spirit changing and renewing our natures.*

### Titus 3:6

Ver. 6. *Which Holy Spirit, as well for the renewing of us, as for the collation of more common or extraordinary gifts, God poured out upon us abundantly, through the merits and mediation of *Jesus Christ our Saviour*.*

### Titus 3:7

Ver. 7. *That being justified by his grace; that, through the free love of God, having the guilt of our sins removed, and the righteousness of Christ reckoned to us for righteousness, *we should be made heirs*; should, through adoption, be made *children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, Ro 8:17*.*

*According to the hope of eternal life: some think that the words should be read thus: That we, according to hope, should be made heirs of eternal life; because otherwise, the text hath no object to relate to heirs. But what should we be heirs of, but the kingdom mentioned Mt 25:34? Though it be true, we are no more than heirs according to hope, nor is any man otherwise an heir of an inheritance, as heir stands distinguished from an*

owner or proprietor.

Titus 3:8

Ver. 8. *This is a faithful saying:* we had this phrase before, 1Ti 1:15 3:1 4:9 2Ti 2:11. It may be applied to what went before, or what follows.

*And these things I will that thou affirm constantly;* this is the doctrine I would have thee preach, maintain, and stand to.

*That they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works;* that those who assent to these things as true, and have cast their souls upon God and Jesus Christ for the fulfilling of them, may (considering good works are the condition annexed to the promise of this eternal life and salvation) be careful to practise all that God hath commanded them in all their relations.

*These things are good and profitable unto men;* all these things are true in themselves, and profitable for men to know and understand.

Titus 3:9

Ver. 9. *But avoid foolish questions;* in the discharge of thy ministry meddle not with idle questions, 2Ti 2:23, tending to no godly edifying.

*And genealogies;* and sifting out genealogies, 1Ti 1:4.

*And contentions;* and strifes about words, or things unprofitable;

*perverse disputings,* and *oppositions of science falsely so called,* 1Ti 6:4,5,20.

*And strivings about the law;* particularly questions about the law, the traditions and constitutions of the elders about it.

*For they are unprofitable and vain;* these things are to no purpose or advantage.



### Titus 3:10

Ver. 10. *A man that is an heretic:* two things make up a heretic according to the common acceptation of the term now:

1. An error in some matters of faith.
2. Stubbornness and contumacy in the holding and maintaining of it.

Whether it so signified so early I cannot tell; it seems to refer to the former verse, supposing some that, notwithstanding all the endeavours of Titus, would be striving and contending for niceties about questions, genealogies, &c.

*After the first and second admonition reject:* for such, saith the apostle, admonish them once and again; if they will not have done, refuse them, reject them. Whether excommunication can be certainly built upon this text, may be doubted; *παραιτεομαι* signifies no more than to avoid, reject, or refuse.

### Titus 3:11

Ver. 11. *Is subverted;* *εξεστραπται*, is turned out of the true and right way and road; *and sinneth*, and is a transgressor, *being condemned of himself*, condemned of his own conscience; for he who spends his time about questions and genealogies, and strifes of words, and little questions about the law, instead of preaching Christ, is told by his own conscience that he doth not do his duty.

### Titus 3:12

Ver. 12. Of *Artemas* we read in no other place, but of *Tychicus* often; they were both ministers, one of which Paul intended to send to take care of the church in Crete, in the absence of Titus, whom he would have come to him to Nicopolis, where he designed to take up his winter quarters; but being

very loth that the flock at Crete should for a little time be without a shepherd, he limits the time of Titus's setting out towards him, till one of them should come into Crete.

### Titus 3:13

Ver. 13. Of this *Zenas* we read no more in holy writ, but of *Apollos* we read both in the Acts, and 1Co 3:4,5,22: it seemeth they were about to go to Paul to Nicopolis.

*That nothing be wanting unto them;* the apostle would have Titus take care that they might want no necessaries that might accommodate them in their journey.

### Titus 3:14

Ver. 14. *And let ours also;* either those of our order, ministers of the gospel, or those that are Christians.

*Learn to maintain good works;* in the Greek it is, to excel, or to be in the front, or to show forth, or maintain, and each sense hath its patrons of note.

*For necessary uses;* for the necessary uses of the church, or of others, or for their own necessary uses. I take their sense who would expound the phrase, *maintain good works*, by learning some honest trade, to be foreign to the true sense of the phrase.

### Titus 3:15

Ver. 15. *Greet them that love us in the faith;* that love us as we are Christians, in and for the gospel.

*Grace be with you all. Amen:* the free love of God be thy portion, and the portion of all the Christians in Crete.

*It was written to Titus, ordained the first Bishop of the church of the*

*Cretians, from Nicopolis of Macedonia.*

## Philemon 1:1

### THE ARGUMENT

This Epistle is different from the other Epistles, because it is written upon a particular subject, of more special concernment: that it was written by Paul it is not doubted, it hath what he calleth his *token in every Epistle*, 2Th 3:17. Who this Philemon was is not so easily determined. Some have judged him a Phrygian, and of Colosse: see Col 4:9. He appeareth to have been a minister by Paul's calling him his *fellow labourer*, Phm 1:1, his *brother*, Phm 1:7, his *partner*, Phm 1:17. It is conjectured that he was one hi the conversion of whom God made use of Paul as an instrument, from ver. 19, where Paul tells him, that he would not say that he owed unto him his own self. He seems to have been a man of some estate, for he kept a servant, and *refreshed the bowels of the saints*, Phm 1:7. He had a company of Christians in his house, Phm 1:2. The time when Paul wrote this Epistle is not certain; it was when he was *aged* and a *prisoner*, Phm 1:9, from whence it is evident that it was written from Rome. Some think it was written before the Second Epistle to Timothy, because he speaks of hopes that he had of being restored to his liberty, Phm 1:22. and in his Epistle to Timothy, 2Ti 4:7, he seems to have no such hopes. He also here, Phm 1:24, sends him the salutation of Demas, who he saith, 2Ti 4:10, had forsaken him. Others think it was written after that, when Demas was again returned to him; but it is not so clear that he ever returned. It is very probable that it was written much about the same time with the Epistle to the Colossians, for mention is made of *Onesimus as a faithful brother*, Col 4:9; there is also mention made of *Marcus, Aristarchus, Epaphras, Lucas, and Demas*, and *Archippus*, who are all named in this Epistle, and no more are here named, but *Apphia*. The scope of the Epistle is evident, to reconcile Onesimus to Philemon. Onesimus had been a servant to Philemon, and it should seem had wronged him by purloining some of his goods. He came to Rome, and was there converted by Paul, being a prisoner, Phm 1:10. The apostle would not detain him, being another man's servant, but sends him back with this recommendatory letter to his master. This recommendation was the occasion and is the matter of this Epistle; in the penning of which the apostle showeth himself as much an orator, as he had in his Epistle to the Romans, and some other of his Epistles, showed his skill at an argument; for the Epistle is penned with great art, and many topics are used to persuade Philemon again to receive

him into his service; some such, as would incline one to think, that Paul knew this Philemon was something covetous, and would be a little difficult to grant his request.

### Chapter Summary

Phm 1:1-3 The salutation.

Phm 1:4-7 Paul declareth his joy in hearing of the love and faith of Philemon,

Phm 1:8-21 earnestly entreating him to receive into his favour his once fugitive servant Onesimus, now become a faithful Christian.

Phm 1:22 He desireth him to provide a lodging for himself, who was in expectation of a speedy release,

Phm 1:23-25 and concludeth with salutations and a benediction.

Ver. 1. *Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ;* that is, for the sake of Christ, for the gospel, and for preaching of Jesus Christ.

*And Timothy our brother;* from whence it is evident that Timothy was come to Paul at Rome, according to his desire, 2Ti 4:9,21, before this Epistle was written, which manifesteth that Second Epistle not to have been the last he wrote. The apostle useth to join some others with himself in his salutation; Sosthenes, 1Co 1:1 Timothy; 2Co 1:1 Php 1:1 Col 1:1 1Th 1:1, where Silvanus also is added; from whence it appeareth that Timothy was Paul's ordinary companion, and the apostle showeth his humility in joining the name of so young a man with his own.

*Fellow labourer;* whence we gather that Philemon was not a Christian only, but a minister, probably one of the ministers in Colosse in Phrygia, for it appeareth that Onesimus his servant was a Colossian, Col 4:9.

#### Philemon 1:2

Ver. 2. *Apphia* was the Roman name of a woman; the naming of her before Archippus, a minister, makes it probable she was Philemon's wife. It appears this *Archippus* was a minister, from Col 4:17. He calleth him his

fellow soldier, because he was engaged in some of those many dangers Paul encountered, but we are not told in Scripture which.

*And to the church in thy house;* all those Christians that live in thy family: we have the like expression, Ro 16:5 1Co 16:19 Col 4:15. The apostle doth not always by the term *church* signify a body under ecclesiastical discipline, but sometimes calleth a company of Christians ordinarily conversing together by that name. Those who think the body of the church were wont constantly to meet in Philemon's house, seem not to consider how the dangers of those times made such a thing hardly practicable.

### Philemon 1:3

Ver. 3. The common salutation: See Poole on "Ro 1:7", See Poole on "1Co 1:3" and See Poole on "2Co 1:2".

### Philemon 1:4

Ver. 4. See Poole on "2Ti 1:3".

### Philemon 1:5

Ver. 5. *Hearing of thy love;* thy love to God and to the saints, Phm 1:7. The apostle putteth love here before faith, contrary to the true order of those spiritual habits, for love must be the fruit of faith,

*which worketh by love,* and to his own order in other places, 1Ti 2:7 2Ti 1:13 possibly to show us that he spake of that love which is conjoined with faith, and of that faith which showeth its truth by love.

*And faith;* faith in Christ.

*Which thou hast towards the Lord Jesus;* that faith which thou hast in Christ, reposing thy confidence in him for salvation, and that love which worketh in thee towards Christ.

*And toward all saints; and is seen in thy readiness to do good to all Christians, such especially as are saints indeed; because thy goodness extendeth not to God, thou showest it to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, like David, Ps 16:2,3.*

### Philemon 1:6

Ver. 6. *That the communication of thy faith:* the word sometime signifieth communion, in all which there is a mutual communication between those with whom the communion is. That thou mayst declare that thou hast the same common faith with us, thou communicatest the fruits of it.

*May become effectual;* and showest that it is not a dead, inoperative faith, but the true *faith of God's elect*, Tit 1:1, working by love, Ga 5:6, and showing itself by good works, Jas 2:18.

*By the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus;* that every *good thing*, every good habit of grace which Jesus Christ hath wrought in thy soul, might be acknowledged by others, (the servants of Christ), to whom thou declarest thy love and goodness.

### Philemon 1:7

Ver. 7. *For we have great joy and consolation in thy love;* thy love doth not extend only to the poor distressed saints helped and relieved by thee, but it hath its effect upon others together with myself; it is a wonderful joy and comfort to us to hear that God hath so opened and enlarged thy heart: the fruits of grace in one, are a true cause of joy and thanksgiving to all Christians, because God by them is glorified.

*Because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother;* the saints, or the bowels of the saints, *αναπεπαισται*, are brought to a rest, as travellers after their journey, or labourers after their day's labour, when they come to sit still.

### Philemon 1:8

Ver. 8. *Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ;* in the Greek it is: Wherefore, having much *παρρησιαν*, boldness, liberty or freedom of speech, or much power and authority, or right, as Heb 10:19, for Christ's sake, being Christ's apostle, or speaking for the sake of Christ.

*To enjoin thee;* to command thee, authoritatively.

*That which is convenient;* το ανηκον, things that are expedient, or convenient, fit for thee to do. My office authorizeth me in such cases.

### Philemon 1:9

Ver. 9. *Yet for love's sake;* writing to thee in a cause of love, where so good and charitable a man may have an opportunity to express his charity. Or rather, out of my love and kindness to thee, persuading me that I need not use my apostolical authority to such a brother and friend, *I beseech thee.*

*Being such an one as Paul the aged;* being such a one as Paul now much in years, and not like to trouble thee long with any request. Or, Paul the elder by office, one who is thy brother in the ministry.

*And now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ;* and now a prisoner for Christ's sake, and so cannot personally speak to thee; and I know such is thy piety, that my being a sufferer for the sake of Christ will not render my petition to thee lest acceptable, or to be regarded less.

### Philemon 1:10

Ver. 10. *I beseech thee for my son Onesimus;* Onesimus, lately thy servant, (the same mentioned Col 4:9), but my son.

*Whom I have begotten in my bonds;* not naturally, but spiritually, to whom I have been a spiritual father, and begotten him to Christ in my old age, and while I have been here suffering as a prisoner.



### Philemon 1:11

Ver. 11. *Which in time past was to thee unprofitable;* ἀχρηστον he useth a soft word, for it appears, Phm 1:18, he had *wronged* him, taking away some of his goods, and running away with them, without Philemon's knowledge, which made him doubly criminal.

*But now profitable to thee and to me;* but now ευχρηστον, *profitable*, one that may be profitable to thee, having learned Christ, and to me, who have used him in my service, and whose conversion will add to my crown.

### Philemon 1:12

Ver. 12. *Whom I have sent again;* he comes not of his own head, but upon my persuasion, and upon my errand.

*Thou therefore receive him;* I therefore beseech thee to receive him kindly, and entertain him in thy house.

*That is, mine own bowels;* whom I love as I love my own soul; thou canst not therefore be unkind to him, but it will reflect upon me.

### Philemon 1:13

Ver. 13. I have such an opinion of his sincerity, that I would willingly have kept him with me, that he might, while I am a prisoner for the gospel of Christ, have done those offices for me, which thou wouldst have done hadst thou been here.

### Philemon 1:14

Ver. 14. *But without thy mind would I do nothing;* but he was thy servant, and I would not do it without thy knowledge and consent, that it might not be thought that thou hadst done me a kindness necessarily, but that thou

mightest do it freely.

*That thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly:* which seems to argue that St. Paul expected that he, being reconciled to Onesimus, should send him back to Paul; unless he means the benefit done to Onesimus, in not revenging the wrong he had done him, should not be of necessity, because he was out of his reach, but freely, having him first in his power.

### Philemon 1:15

Ver. 15. Onesimus in departing designed no such thing, but possibly God, in the wisdom of his providence, suffered him to depart from thee, and to fall into theft, that he might upon that occasion come to a quicker sense and conviction of sin, and see a need of a Saviour; that, being turned from sin unto God, and having embraced Christ our common Saviour, thou mightest receive, love, and embrace him *αἰώνιον, for ever, this ever, in this life, that is, so long as you both should live.*

### Philemon 1:16

Ver. 16. *Not now as a servant;* not now merely as a servant.

*But above a servant;* but as one that deserveth much more kindness than a servant.

*A brother beloved;* being a Christian (deservedly to be loved).

*Specially to me;* especially of me, who have a spiritual relation to him, as the instrument of his conversion, and as he hath been useful in ministering to me in prison.

*But how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?* But how much more to thee, to whom he stands not only in the relation of a brother, being converted to the Christian faith, but *in the flesh,* as thy kinsman, or thy servant, or one of thy family, or thy countryman, one of the same town and place!

Philemon 1:17

Ver. 17. *If thou count me therefore a partner;* κοινωνον, one with whom thou hast communion, a partner in the same grace of the gospel, and in the same trials and afflictions of the gospel.

*Receive him as myself;* do not only forgive him, but kindly entertain him, who is my friend, as thou wouldst do myself.

Philemon 1:18

Ver. 18. If he hath any way been unfaithful. If he hath taken any thing from thee, or be in thy debt, charge that upon me, let me be accountable to thee for it.

Philemon 1:19

Ver. 19. Thou hast it here under my hand, I take upon me to satisfy thee Onesimus's debt; yet I could tell thee, that thou owest me more than it can be, even thy own self, God having made use of me as an instrument to convert and turn thee unto God. Such persons are great debtors to their spiritual fathers, Ro 15:27.

Philemon 1:20

Ver. 20. *Yea, brother:* the particle *vai* is used in swearing, affirming, persuading, entreating, the latter seemeth here most proper; as much as, of all love, brother.

*Let me have joy of thee in the Lord;* it will rejoice my heart to see thee charitable and obedient to my monitions, let me have a spiritual joy from thy satisfying of me in what I desire.

*Refresh my bowels in the Lord;* either Onesimus, whom he had called his

*bowels, Phm 1:12; or, my inward man.*

#### Philemon 1:21

Ver. 21. I have not written this without a confidence that thou in this thing wilt do what I desire of thee, but I write it out of my affection to poor Onesimus, and desire to help him, not doubting of thy readiness to do the thing.

#### Philemon 1:22

Ver. 22. This would incline one to think that this Epistle was written before the Second Epistle to Timothy, for there, 2Ti 4:6-8, he seems to have other apprehensions; yet it is plain Timothy was with Paul when he wrote this, which he was not when that Second Epistle was written, as appears from 2Ti 4:9,21. Here, upon a confidence that through the help of the church's prayers he should again come to them, he writeth to Philemon to prepare him a lodging.

#### Philemon 1:23

Ver. 23. We read of this *Epaphras*, Col 1:7, where he is called Paul's *fellow servant*, and a *faithful minister of Christ*: he was with Paul at Rome, Col 4:12, but there is no mention of him as a prisoner; but now he was a *fellow prisoner* with Paul, either in the same place, or upon the same account.

#### Philemon 1:24

Ver. 24. All ministers of the gospel: they are also named, Col 4:10,12,14: they were all at this time at Rome with Paul: see Ac 12:12,25 15:37,39 19:29 20:4 27:2 2Ti 4:10.

Philemon 1:25

Ver. 25. See Poole on "Ga 6:18". See Poole on "Ro 16:24". See Poole on "1Co 16:23". See Poole on "Php 4:23". See Poole on "2Th 3:18".

*With your spirit* is the same as with you. By *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, he means the Spirit of Christ in all its gracious emanations: we have his meaning fully, 2Co 13:14: *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.* Amen is a particle of praying and affirming, by which he declareth his earnest desire it might be so, and also his faith that it should be so. Nor doth he pray for Philemon alone, (though the Epistle chiefly concerned him), but for all those who at Colosse had with him obtained like precious faith.

*Written from Rome to Philemon, by Onesimus a servant.*

Hebrews 1:1

## THE ARGUMENT

Some few Greek copies not having the name of the apostle Paul prefixed to this Epistle, though most of them have, hath made many doubt concerning the writer of it, as others, especially heretics, of its authority. The conjectures of those who ascribe it to Barnabas, Luke, or Clemens, &c. seem groundless; since the character the Holy Ghost gives of its penman, and his state, in Heb 10:34, and Heb 13:19,23, is not agreeable to any of them. This is most certain, that the apostle Paul did write such an Epistle; that it was well known to the dispersed churches of Christ then; that it was abused by men of corrupt minds, as it is at this day, since the Spirit gives us undeniable testimony of it in 2Pe 3:15,16. That this Epistle should be it, (when it is so like the rest of his writings; when it is strongly confirming the truth the apostle Peter had written to them, Heb 6:2 10:26,27; when it is so expressive of his condition in bonds, Heb 10:34 13:19 Col 4:18, of his known companion Timothy, Heb 13:23 Col 1:1, of his love to, and concern for, those to whom he writes, Ro 9:1-3 10:1, and of his known doctrine, that Judaism had its completion in Christianity; that the veil was rent asunder, that they might discern the temple or church to be laid open to Gentiles as well as Jews, as at Antioch, Galatia, &c., he taught them; besides, that it hath the signal by which he declareth all his Epistles are to be known, Heb 13:25, compare 2Th 3:17,18, and the general consent of the church through the successive ages of it, entitling of him to it), I say, that this Epistle should be it, seems not difficult to determine. It is conjectured that the reason why he prefixed not his name to it, as to the rest of his Epistles, was, lest the great prejudice the Jews had causelessly taken up against him, as an enemy to the Mosaical law, would prevent their reading or weighing of it as they ought. It is directed by him to the dispersed tribes of believing Israel, under the name of *Hebrews*, being the common one of all the posterity of Heber by Abraham, both which patriarchs were great separatists from the idolatrous world in their respective ages, and in whose families the church of God was continued; a name grateful to them, because the Lord honoured it by adding it to his title, Ex 3:18, and ascribed it to their progenitor, Ge 14:13, of a natural descent from whom they were most fond, Joh 8:33 2Co 11:22. And the apostle Peter confirmeth these to be the persons, 1Pe 1:1,2; compare 2Pe 1:1 3:15. Written this was in the Greek language, as his other Epistles, it

being then the most diffusive dialect in the world, and especially the common one of these Hebrews, Ac 6:1, as Josephus himself testifieth; though the Greek idioms themselves, and the translation of other words in the Epistle, show it abundantly. For the time of his writing it to them, most likely it was after his appearing before the emperor Nero at Rome, 2Ti 4:16,17, during his liberty, Ac 28:30, upon Timothy's dismissal to them, Heb 13:23, and before the first of the ten bloody persecutions, Heb 12:4, about the same year wherein he despatched other of his Epistles to the churches.

The design of the apostle in this Epistle, is fully to discover to the believing Hebrews, that they had not lost by renouncing Judaism and turning Christians, since the whole economy of Moses was designed but to lead them to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to be perfected in him, he being the truth and substance of all those shadows. To confirm them in the faith of this, and to encourage them more cheerfully to undergo those cruel persecutions, in loss of goods, liberty, relations, estates, country, and life itself, which their enemies would pursue them with for it; he shows them, that it was never God's purpose to have the earthly Mosaical church frame to continue in the world, it being weak and insufficient for priesthood, sacrifice, ordinances, ceremonies, to purge their conscience, and to bring them unto God; but to be a type of, and a guide to, a better, which he did resolve to pitch by his own Son, even that heavenly one, in which both Jew and Gentile should acquiesce, and which should continue immovable to the end of the world. In handling which:

First: He instructs them in the transcendent excellency of his person and offices; in respect of his Deity, Heb 1:1-14; of his humanity exceeding angels, Heb 2:1-18; as a Prophet exceeding Moses, Heb 3:1-4:13; as a Priest exceeding Aaron, Heb 4:14-5:9; as a King and Priest exceeding Melchisedec, Heb 5:10, to Heb 7:28.

Secondly: He instructs them in the doctrine of the heavenly church frame pitched by him, with its appurtenances, which exceeded the earthly Mosaical one; in respect of covenant most excellent, Heb 8:1-13; of gospel sacrifice, ordinances, and administrations, for efficacy exceeding all the Levitical ones, Heb 9:1-10:18; where he proceedeth to improve and apply his former doctrine, that they might answer their high privileges by the performance of proportionable duties, becoming this great gospel Minister

and his heavenly church frame, from Heb 10:19-13:20; concluding the whole with solemn prayer to God, for his enabling of them to the performance of these duties, Heb 13:20,21: adding his desire of their candid acceptance of this Epistle from him; comforting them with Timothy's despatch to them, and his own hopes of seeing them; giving them the church's usual salutations, and his own valediction, whereby he discriminateth and closeth all his Epistles.

## Chapter Summary

Heb 1:1-3 The essential dignity of the Son, by whom God hath revealed himself in these last days.

Heb 1:4-14 His pre-eminence above the angels in office.

Ver. 1. God: the apostle designing the conviction of these Hebrews by this discourse, enters on it solemnly, that if a God can awe them, the consideration of Him should gain credit to his doctrine. The God he speaks of is to be apprehended here personally, as well as essentially; God the Father, the one admirable sovereign, immutable Being, the Author of first and second revelation: order is kept here in the subsistence of the relations, as in their works.

*Who at sundry times;* πολυμερως, by many parts, turns and changes of time, seasons and opportunities, and by many parcels of revelation. God's will was discovered by piecemeal, and not all at once. He vouchsafed one promise to Adam, and so gradually opened further to Enoch, Noah, Abraham, David, pointing out a Christ to come, to come of Abraham's seed in David's family: he discovered *here a little, and there a little*, Isa 28:13.

*And in divers manners;* πολυτροπως, suitable to the manifold wisdom of God, in divers forms and manners, was his revelation to them; sometimes by sensible representations to them waking, as by angels, fire in the bush, the pillar of fire and cloud: terribly, as at Mount Sinai, Heb 12:18-21. Sometimes by dreams and visions, Nu 12:6; by Urim and Thummim, by voice from the ark, by types and signs from heaven, by riddles, and dark speeches, and Levitical ceremonies; sometimes by immediate illapses on the soul, powerfully influencing it with a Divine light.



*Spake;* revealed and declared infallibly his mind and will concerning the way of man's salvation, which his wisdom contrived and his will decreed.

*In time past;* all that time past between Adam and Christ, about 4000 years before.

*Unto the fathers;* the holy ancestors of these Hebrews, from Adam, down along the Old Testament church of God: the believers of old, such as are registered, Heb 11:1-40, and all like them to the times of Christ, from Ge 3:15, to that time.

*By the prophets;* all those holy men to whom and by whom God revealed his will to his church throughout the successive ages of the Old Testament day; such as were but God's servants, Heb 2:4, and had his will and mind by measure; who as they preached God's will were God's mouth, as they wrote it were God's scribes; as Abel, Enoch, &c. before the flood; Noah before and after; Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David. &c.; to these did God infallibly declare it, and they did infallibly deliver it to the church by word and writing; God was by gracious inhabitation in them, in their hearts, tongues, and hands, 2Pe 1:21

Hebrews 1:2

Ver. 2. *Hath in these last days;* the gospel day, *last*, as after the days of the old world, and after the law given to Israel by Moses: the days of the fourth kingdom of the Roman empire, in the height of which Christ came into the world, and at the end of it shall accomplish his kingdom, Da 2:40,44. The *last*, because the perfection of those types which went before, when Christ settled in the church that religion which must remain unalterable, to the end of the world, Heb 12:25-28: the best days for clearest light and greatest mercies.

*Spoken;* revealed his will to us once and entirely, Joh 1:17,18 Jude 1:3,4; discovering the excellent things of God more clearly than they were before, Eph 3:3-11 1Pe 1:10-12.

*To us:* the believing Hebrews were so favoured beyond their fathers, to

have the best revelation of God in Christ made to them, Mt 13:16,17 Lu 10:23,24.

*By his Son;* our Lord Jesus Christ, who cometh out of the Father as a Son, Joh 1:14 16:28. He is his bosom Son, nearest his heart, Joh 1:18; the complete Word of him, creating the new world as well as the old, Joh 1:1; his wisdom, who teacheth without any mistake, declaring all of God, being truth itself, and exhibiting of it, what he hath seen as well as heard, Joh 3:11.

*Whom;* this Son, who naturally issueth from his Father by a Divine and unutterable generation, Pr 8:22-31 30:4. On him all the Father's love doth terminate, Col 1:13. He is to be the Founder and Builder of God's family, propagating being to a holy seed for him, Heb 3:3-6.

*He hath appointed;* the Father hath chosen and ordained him as God-man to heirship by an inviolable ordinance of his decree, as 1Pe 1:20; compare Eph 1:10; giving him thereby right and title to all things; appointing to him his nature, Heb 2:16, compare Heb 10:5; his offices in this nature, his kingly, Ps 2:6,7, his priestly, Heb 3:1,2, his prophetic, Ac 3:22; being heir by nature, as God the Son, and heir by an irresistible ordinance, as God-man Mediator: so as he had a super-added right from the Father, which right he was able to make over to us, but his natural right he could not, Ro 8:17. And he was by solemn investiture put in possession of it at his ascension, when he sat down on the Father's right hand, Heb 12:2 Mt 28:18 Eph 1:20-22 Php 2:9-11.

*Heir;* Lord Proprietor, who hath sovereign and universal power over all, being the *firstborn*, and receiving the right of it in the whole inheritance, Ps 89:27 Ro 8:29 Col 1:15,18. The lot and portion is fallen to him by God's law, the heir being *Lord of all*, Ga 4:1; being heir of his brethren, Ps 2:8, and the builder and purchaser of his inheritance, Re 5:9-14; compare 1Pe 1:3,4,18,19; possessing the inheritance during his Father's life, and making all his brethren heirs of it with him.

*Of all things;* of all things within the compass of God, all that God is, all that God hath, all that God can or will do. All dominions of God, heaven, earth, and hell, are his. He is Lord of angels, Eph 1:21 Col 1:18, and hath made them fellow servants with us, to himself, and ministering guards to

us, Heb 1:14 Re 5:11 19:10: of devils, to overrule them, who cannot go or come but as he permits them, Mt 8:31 Col 2:15: of saints, Joh 17:13 Ro 8:29: of wicked men, his enemies, 2Th 1:8,9: of all creatures, Col 1:15-17: of all God's works, spiritual, temporal, past, present, or to come; pardon, peace, righteousness, life, glory; all blessings of all sorts, for time and for eternity. This Son-prophet hath right to, actual possession of, and free and full disposal of them. All, both in law and gospel, his, Moses himself, and all his work, to order, change, and do his pleasure with.

*By whom;* his Son God-man, a joint cause, a primary and principal agent with the Father, and not a mere instrument, second in working as in relation; by this Word and Wisdom of God, who was the rule and idea of all things, all things were modelled, received their shapes, forms, and distinct beings, Joh 1:1-3 5:19,20 Col 1:16. In the works of the Trinity, what one relation is said to do the other do, but in their order, answerable to the three principles in every action, wisdom, will, and power.

*He made;* created and framed, giving being where there was none, causing to subsist; suggesting herein his ability for redemption work. He who made the world can remove it, Heb 11:3.

*The worlds;* τούς αἰῶνας, scarce to be met with in any part of Scripture but this Epistle; strictly it signifieth ages, and things measured by time; answer it doth to the Hebrew עולם which imports both an age and the world: so ages are here well translated *worlds*, all creatures and things measured by them. The Scriptures acquaint us with an upper world, and the inhabitants thereof, angels and glorified saints; the heavenly world, Heb 1:10, where *the morning stars sang together*, Job 38:7; compare Ge 1:1. There is a lower earthly world, with its inhabitants, men, who live on the things in it, Ps 24:1. And there is a regenerate world, the new heavens and new earth made by Christ, and a new sabbath for them, Heb 12:26-28; compare 2Pe 3:13. There is Adam's world that now is, this present world, Eph 1:21; and the world to come, which as it is made by, so for, the Second Adam, the Lord from heaven, in which he eminently is to reign, Ps 8:5-8; of which see Heb 2:5.

Hebrews 1:3

Ver. 3. *Who being the brightness;* the same gospel minister, God's Son, was, as to his person, *απαυγασμα*, a brightness shining out: which word sets forth the natural eternal generation of God the Son, discovering both the rise and flux of his being, and the beautiful and glorious excellency of it. It is the same in the sight of it with the Father's, the brightness of glory, light of light, glory of glory to perfection, streaming from his Father incessantly; as beams issue from the sun, or the mental word is the invisible brightness of that spiritual light the intellect.

*Of his glory;* essential glory. Light is a faint, visible resemblance of God's essence, his manifestation of himself in glory hath been by light; to Moses, Ex 33:18-23 34:5, 29-31; to Isaiah, Isa 6:1-4; to Ezekiel, Eze 1:4-28, and Eze 10:1-22; to Daniel, Da 10:5,6,8,16-19; to John, Re 1:1-20, 4:1-11, and Re 5:1-14. And so Christ represented that of his person at his transfiguration, Mt 17:1-7. If created light be glorious in the sun, in angels; how much more God's essential glory! Purity, beauty, light, how pleasant! But what are these to God? However the being of God be conceived, as wisdom, holiness, goodness, justice, power, the excellency of these above all created beings is this glory. No being is glory but God's; this fundamental excellency shines no where as in this Son, Joh 1:14. By this are Father and Son declared distinct relations, subsisting together and co-eternal.

*And the express image;* as the beams are with the sun the same in time, yet are weaker, therefore the Holy Ghost adds, he is his very *image*; *χαρακτηρ* is an engraven image of the Father, every way like him; the word signifieth a sculpture, print, engraving, or seal; intimating its distinction from what impressed it, and its likeness or parity to it: so is the Son's a distinct relation, yet naturally and integrally having all that might liken him to his Father, Col 1:15.

*Of his person;* *της υποστασεως αυτου*, of his subsistence. He is not the character of the Godhead, or of the Divine essence, but of the Father, the personal subsistence in the Deity. He is one and the same God with the Father, but his character as God is a Father, so that who seeth him seeth his Father, Joh 14:9; he is the visible representation of him, Col 2:9.

*And upholding;* the whole work of Providence is set out by *upholding*; *φερων* imports sustaining, feeding, preserving, governing, throwing down,

raising up, comforting, and punishing, &c. All would have fallen in pieces on man's sin, had not he interposed, and stopped the world when it was reeling back into nothing, Col 1:17; and to this instant he preserveth and ruleth all, Isa 9:6 Joh 5:22.

*All things;* τα παντα, a full, universal, comprehensive *all*, persons and things, angels, men, creatures good and bad, small and great, with all events, Ac 17:24-31.

*By the word of his power;* not by an articulate voice, but his beck, will, or powerful command, whereby he doth whatsoever he pleaseth; his absolute, powerful, irresistible word; he acts as easily as others speak; there is no distinguishing between this word and power, they went together in the creation, Ge 1:3,6,7, and do so in his providence, Ps 33:9 148:8.

*When he had by himself;* when this God-man, as the great gospel High Priest, so styled, Heb 2:17, had by himself alone, being altar and sacrifice, as well as Priest, the sole efficient of this work without any assistance. He, by his eternal Spirit, offered up a sacrifice propitiatory to God, his human nature hypostatically united to his Divine, and expiring his soul, he immediately entered with the blood of the covenant the holy of holiest in heaven, and presenting it before the eternal Judge, made full satisfaction and expiation for sins, Heb 7:17 9:11,12,14,24,26 10:10,12,14.

*Purged;* by his satisfaction and merit, removing both the guilt and stain of sin; so as God, the injured Lawgiver, could be just as well as merciful in pardoning it; and justifying those who believe and plead it from the condemnation they were liable to for it, Ro 3:24-26 1Jo 1:7,9; and mortifying and killing sin in them by his purchased Spirit, Ro 10:10,12,14,18; compare 1Co 6:11 Eph 5:25-27.

*Our sins;* the sins of men, and not of angels; and the consequents of them, removing guilt, stain, and punishment, which they would fasten on us by his self-sacrifice, Heb 2:16.

*Sat down;* after his atoning for sinners, at the forty days' end he ascended in his human nature, immortal in body and soul, and entered the second time the holy of holiest in heaven; and then εκαθισεν, made himself to sit as High Priest in the most honourable and immovable state and condition.

He did not stand, as the typical high priest before God's ark, but *sat*; and in this co-operated with his Father, and obeyed him, Ps 110:1; angels, and men, and creatures, all subjected to him, Eph 1:20-22. He doth sit quietly, Ac 3:21, and surely; there is no shaking him from his ever-interceding for his, Heb 7:25.

*On the right hand*; a similitude expressing the height of glory that this God-man is advanced to; alluding to the state of the greatest king on his throne in his majesty, Eze 1:4, 26-28 Da 7:9-14 1Ti 1:17. He is exalted by the royal Father as his eldest Son, invested with Godlike power, majesty, and glory, as Heb 8:1 Heb 10:12 12:2; there enjoying all that happiness, blessedness, all those dignities and pleasures, Ps 16:11; fulness of honour and glory, Heb 2:7; of government, rule, and dominion, Mt 28:18; of all royal and glorious abilities and endowments for the managing all things; he enjoyeth all these as the Father himself doth, who ordereth all by him, so as no creature is capable of it, Heb 1:13. All the power of doing all things in all worlds is lodged in his hands.

*Of the Majesty on high*; in the highest heaven is this possessed by him, and there is he to display his glory in ordering all, Heb 7:26 Heb 8:1 Eph 4:10: as in the happiest, so in the highest place is he to rule for ever; our advantage is by it, Eph 2:6, as to best of places and states.

Hebrews 1:4

Ver. 4. Being made so much better than the angels: this God-man, the great gospel Minister, is more excellent than angels, and so must surpass all the prophets. He became thus by being surety constituted and declared, as ordained by God's decree from eternity, in eminency above them by actual investiture on his ascension, Eph 1:20,21. A more excellent person he is beyond any comparison for his Divine nature, and in his human transcending the angelical, on the account of the hypostatical union: see Heb 1:6.

*Angels*; these were spirits likest God, and called *Elohim*, or gods, Heb 1:7 Ps 104:4; being most pure, glorious, powerful, and heavenly creatures, Mr 8:38 13:32 2Th 1:7; of various ranks, orders, and degrees, Eph 1:21 Col 1:16; used by Christ as his ministers in the delivering of his law on

Mount Sinai to Israel, Heb 2:2 Ac 7:53 Ga 3:19. The measure of his transcendency over these, for person, office, and name, is infinitely beyond expression.

*As he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name;* this was his peculiar, hereditary lot, due to him by natural right, as the heir and first-born of God, justly acquired by him, and actually possessed of him, not as a mere title, but a name descriptive of his person, distinguishing him from, and setting him above, all others: God the Son incarnate, Isa 7:14 9:6; Lord over all creatures in heaven and in earth, and under it, Php 2:9-11; not a simple messenger, but a *Son*, Mt 17:5 Joh 1:18; the Redeemer, Justifier, and Saviour of his people, Lu 1:31,32. He is a person of name famous for power, glory, and dignity above all others, Eph 1:21 Php 2:9-11.

*A more excellent name than they;* διαφορωτερον, differencing from, and setting above, all the names of angels for eminency, the archangel himself being a servant and attendant on him, 1Th 4:16. His is more differencing and transcending in his kind than the name of angels is in their kind; he is above whatever they can pretend to, and so a more excellent Prophet than they. He hath in all things, as well as name, over them the pre-eminency.

Hebrews 1:5

Ver. 5. The apostle here proves that Christ hath a more excellent name, and pre-eminency over angels, by Scripture texts owned by these Hebrews. He had the name of Son of God, and so had not angels; for God the Father, who hath absolute power to give and state all excellency, never said to any angel, so as to constitute him his only Son by an ordinance or word of power.

*Sons* he may style them, as Job 2:1 Ps 89:6; as he doth members of his church, Ge 6:2, and princes and magistrates, Ps 82:1,6; but always in the plural number, as he doth the angels, Job 38:7, noting out their power, place, and ministry. But *Son* is singular to Christ, and incommunicable to any other.

*Thou art my Son:* this is quoted out of Ps 2:7.

*Thou* God-man, thou thyself, thou, and thou alone, (that this was spoken of Christ truly, and of David only as a type of him, the Spirit asserts, Ac 13:33), art my own Son, my ever-being Son, my Son by nature, Ro 8:32. Singularity sets out his eminency above all, and his propriety by nature in him.

*This day have I begotten thee:* at the day of his incarnation, Isa 9:6 Lu 1:31,32,35, but eminently at the day of his resurrection, was he declared and published to be his only begotten Son with power, Ro 1:4; and at his ascension inaugurated the supreme, universal King and Priest in heaven and earth, Heb 5:5, possessed of a better name, place, and power than angels, Eph 1:20,21. What men enjoy in this kind attributed to them, is with a vast disproportion to this; born, or begotten, they are said to be, in respect of God's operation on them, infusing Divine qualities into their souls, but this *Son* by a generation proper to a substantial person.

*And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son:* in another Scripture, as 2Sa 7:14 1Ch 17:13 22:10, it is declared, I his natural Father, and he my natural Son; so as they are not related to any other as they are to each other. This in the type was spoken of Solomon, but fulfilled in Christ, who was universal King and Priest over his church for ever; so David understood it, Ps 110:1; compare Ps 89:19,26-29. He was the first-born Son, born a King; the Son of the universal and supreme King, the Heir and Lord of all.

Hebrews 1:6

Ver. 6. This is a further proof of the great gospel Minister being more excellent than angels, by God's command to them to worship him.

*And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world:* παλι some refer to God the Father's speech, as: *Again he saith:* others think it too gross a transposition, and unusual in the Scripture, and so read it as it stands in the Greek text: He again, or a second time, bringeth, &c. This hath started a query about what time it is that the Father saith this, and that he brought in the First-born into the world? Some say it was at his incarnation; others, at his coming to judgment. Considering the former



proofs brought out of Ps 2:7, and 2Sa 7:14, it seems most fairly to be at his resurrection and ascension, when the decree was proclaimed of his being the great King; and he was actually exalted far above all gods, whether angels or men: compare Ps 2:7, with Ps 97:1,9, and Ac 13:33, to which agrees Col 1:15,18. Then was the demonstration of what a royal Head he was to be, and how acknowledged by all, Php 2:9-11.

*He saith, And let all the angels of God worship him;* he powerfully and effectually publisheth his command unto his angels, as recorded by his prophet in his word. Ps 97:7, where the sense of the Hebrew text is full: Bow down to him all ye Elohim, or *gods*; which the Septuagint renders *angels*, and is so quoted by Paul here; and the Spirit warrants it: so is it rendered, De 32:43. That translation was commonly used by the dispersed Graecising Hebrews. This title is attributed to angels, Ps 8:5. By their worship they do obey the Father, and own their subjection to his Son at his resurrection, Mt 28:2 Lu 24:4 Joh 20:12; and at his ascension, Ac 1:9,10 Re 5:11,12: so that the worshipped is more excellent than the worshippers.

Hebrews 1:7

Ver. 7. He adds another demonstration of the gospel Minister's exceeding angels, because he hath the name of *God*, and angels are called only God's *ministers*: for the Creator of angles, who best understandeth their nature and office, by his Spirit testifieth what they are, Ps 104:4.

*Who maketh his angels spirits;* he created them such as they are, spiritual, intellectual, and immortal substances, the highest in this sort and kind of creatures. πνεύματα do not here signify winds, as if the Spirit compared angels to them for their swiftness and power, but spiritual, intellectual beings, as the Son of man is; and in this it is the attribute, and not the subject, that which is predicated or spoken of angels.

*And his ministers a flame of fire;* they are but ministers and servants, who reveal or perform his will to those to whom God sends them; honourable officers of the great King, fulfilling his pleasure, Heb 1:14, executing all his commands, and going and coming at his beck, Ps 103:20,21. Though they are seraphims, bright, glorious, and excellent creatures, they are but the grand officers of state in heaven, encompassing God's throne, waiting

for his commands, which they obey and fulfil as swiftly as the winds or flashes of lightning could despatch them. Though they are styled by the Spirit *cherubims*, Ge 3:24; compare Eze 1:5 10:1-15; and *seraphims*, Isa 6:6; for their light, glory, and excellency; yet still are they creatures, and below the Son, because his servants.

Hebrews 1:8

Ver. 8. In the Father's apostrophe to the Son, he giveth him the name of *God*, and thereby is he proved to have a better one than angels, made by, and servants to, him; and as the great gospel Minister hath a kingdom, in which they are his ministers and servants: this proof is quoted out of Ps 45:6,7. It was not to Solomon or David, but to the Son God-man, spoken by the Father. The whole Psalm is written of him, and incompatible to any other is the matter of it. It represents him and his mystical marriage to the church; compare Eph 5:23-33 Re 19:7,8 22:17.

*Thy throne, O God:* some heretics, to elude this proof of Christ's Deity, would make *God* the genitive case in the proposition, as: Thy throne of God, expressly contrary to the grammar, both in Hebrew and Greek: others gloss it, that ο θεος is the nominative case, as, God is thy throne for ever, &c. i.e. He doth and will establish it: but this is cavilling, since it is the Father's speech to and of his Son, describing his nature in opposition to the angels before. They were created *spirits*, but he was *God*; they were *ministers* and servants in his kingdom, where he was King; therefore his name and person is better than theirs.

*God*, in the singular, was a name never given to any creature, but is expressive of his Divine nature, and his relation in the Deity, being God the Son.

*Is for ever and ever:* his office as God-man, and great gospel Minister, is a royal one. He is a great King, angels are subjects of his kingdom as well as men, which royalty is set out by the ensigns of it; as here, by a throne, which is an emblem of royal authority, dominion, and power, whence he displayeth himself in his kingdom. It is a heavenly one, of a perfect constitution and administration, and of eternal continuance. His it was by natural inheritance, as God the Son; and as man united to the Godhead, he

inheriteth the privileges of that person. This natural dominion over all things remaineth for ever, Col 1:16.

*A sceptre of righteousness is a sceptre of thy kingdom:* another ensign of his royal dominion and kingdom is his *sceptre*, which is his Spirit put out in his government of the world, and in his special work of grace, guiding and conforming, through his word and ordinances, the hearts of his chosen to the will of his Father. This sceptre is subjectively right in itself, and efficiently, making all under its power to be rectified according to the right and pure mind and will of God: compare Ps 110:1-3.

Hebrews 1:9

Ver. 9. *Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity:* the administration of this King in his kingdom is suitable to his throne and sceptre, it is all goodness; for he so loved righteousness, and hated iniquity, being righteous and holy in himself, in life and death, expiating sin, and sanctifying believers. So that he acts as to both of these properly from himself, perfectly and for ever.

*Therefore God:* it may be a reason why he so loved righteousness, being anointed, or of his unction, because he loved the one, and hated the other; therefore God the Son is the person to whom the Father speaketh this.

*Even thy God;* God the Father, his God in respect of the human nature, Lu 1:35; formed by him, Ga 4:4, as Mediator between God and sinners, Joh 20:17; the Head of the church, in covenant with God, his great gospel Minister.

*Hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness;* so his Father *anointed* him *with the Holy Ghost and with power*, Joh 3:34 Ac 10:38; and thereby as endowed, so exalted him above all kings and prophets who were literally anointed, and above all angels, having Divine power and authority supereminent to all communicated to him; enjoying the best and highest joy in all his transactions with the Father for us, and which may perfect joy in us, Joh 15:11 17:13.

*Above thy fellows,* the coheirs of his kingdom, beyond whatever God

communicated to saints or angels. He had not the Spirit by measure, Joh 3:34. What others enjoy, it is from his fulness, Joh 1:16 Lu 4:18-21.

Hebrews 1:10

Ver. 10. *And, Thou, Lord:* this connective particle joins this to the former proof, that Christ had a more excellent name than angels, even that of God. That he was God, he proved out of Ps 45:6,7. He seconds it in this and the two following verses, which he quotes out of Ps 102:25-27. The strength of which lieth thus: He who was Jehovah, and the great Creator of the world, is God; such is Christ, the great gospel Prophet. This is evident in the prayer recorded in the Psalm made to him, compared with the Spirit's testimony, Heb 1:8; the very works appropriated to Jehovah there, are the acknowledged works of God the Son, as redemption, Ps 102:20,21, vocation of the Gentiles, Ps 102:15,18,22.

*In the beginning;* in the beginning of time, when that came to be the measure and limit of things, as Ge 1:1. Before there were any such creatures as angels, he was Jehovah, Joh 1:1; and then manifested himself to be Jehovah. The enemies of Christ's Deity say that the name Jehovah is not in the verse of the Psalm quoted by the Spirit; yet *thou*, the relative used in all those verses, refers to *God*, the antecedent, prayed to in Ps 102:24, and to Jehovah, the name given him in Ps 102:1,12,15,16,18,19,21,22, of that Psalm; all importing one and the same person. And it is well known that Κύριος, Lord, doth eminently decipher the Redeemer in the New Testament; he is not an instrument of Jehovah to create by, but the fountain of all being, Jehovah himself.

*Hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:* by founding the earth, and the heavens being the work of his hands, is meant the whole work of creation throughout the space of six days: he was the true, full, sole, and self-causality of the earth's being, and all creatures in it, and of the heavens, and all beings which are in them; he was the great Architect and Founder of them all; they were his peculiar workmanship, possession, and dominion, 1Co 8:6: compare Joh 1:3 Col 1:16. If the heavens were the works of his hands, and all in them, then he was the Creator of angels, and therefore must be, for person, name, and office, more excellent than they.

## Hebrews 1:11

Ver. 11. *They shall perish;* the heavens themselves instanced in, as containing the most excellent part of the creation, (such as the Gentile philosophy esteemed incorruptible), are mutable, as by the various changes, not only in the airy part of it, but in the ethereal, doth appear: the glorious lights in it have their spots and rusts, as the sun itself, both increasing and diminishing upon them, and so as to their present, natural frame, are changeable, perishable, and dissolvable, Isa 51:6 Mt 24:35.

*But thou remainest;* but the Son Jehovah is unchangeable, hath a stedfast being, such as never loseth its state, no term is set for the ending of him. His immutability proves his Deity.

*Remainest* is an expression of present time, denoting constant abiding. He was before, in, and after all ages immutable, La 5:19.

*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever,* Heb 13:8.

*And they all shall wax old as doth a garment:* the antiquation of a garment is a metaphor borrowed, to show the corruptibility of the heavens. A garment wears and decayeth with use in tract of time, it changeth its fashion, is another thing as to its matter and form: so will the heavens, as to their form and face, decay, they are gradually coming to an end as to what they are now, 2Pe 3:7,10.

*That which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away,* Heb 8:13; so these heavens do.

## Hebrews 1:12

Ver. 12. *And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up:* περιβολαιον is an upper garment, cloak, or coat, which a man puts on or casts off at his pleasure; when it is of no more use it is folded up and laid by: so the great gospel Minister, God the Son incarnate, shall roll up the natural heavens when useless, and lay them by.

*And they shall be changed;* by him they shall be altered, and made more glorious by new modelling them, changing of them into a better state, Isa 34:4 65:17 66:22: compare 2Pe 3:10-13.

*But thou art the same:* the identity of this Person is opposed to the changeableness of excellent creatures, and showeth him to be what he is here entitled, Jehovah, Heb 13:8. His assumption of the humanity to his person made no alteration in him, being still the same most excellent person as ever, Mal 3:1,6 1Co 12:5.

*And thy years shall not fail;* as the being of God the Son is not measured nor terminated by years or time, so, in respect of his humanity, the years which were the measure of it shall never fail; for being raised from the dead, he shall die no more, but *abideth for ever*, Joh 12:34, and ruleth, as foretold, Lu 1:33 1Pe 4:11. How transcendently excellent is He, who is immutable and eternal, for state and name above angels!

Hebrews 1:13

Ver. 13. *But to which of the angels said he at any time?* This introduceth the last demonstration of the gospel Minister's pre-eminency for state, office, and name, above angels. The form is thus; He that is God's fellow, and right-hand man, is more excellent, and hath a better name, than those who are only ministers to his saints. This is to be the state of Christ he proves here; for to none of the angels did Jehovah ever say this, he never gave them that honour by his word. It is an interrogatory challenge to the Hebrews to produce that text in Scripture, which doth assert, that at any time, in any place, God gave such an honorary word to angels: this was impossible for them to do. Though God the Father never said this to any angel, yet did he say this, and records it in the Scripture, to the Lord Christ. And it was a word to him *constitutivum rei*, fixing the very thing. This is recorded in Ps 110:1, where God's powerful word settled Christ in the honour, glory, and dignity of universal lordship over angels and men, so as to reign over them, 1Co 15:25; which administration he is now in the flesh solemnly managing at the right hand of his Father, Heb 1:3, ever since his ascension, and so is to continue.

*Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool;* during all the time of this world, until by his power he reduce, subdue, and subjugate all to him, even every thing and person that should be adverse to his sovereign person and kingdom, all devils and men, subjugating of them to the basest condition, to be trod under his feet, as mire in the street, utterly destroying them, when he glorifieth his saints, 2Th 1:7-10. The term of this word *until* doth not denote the end of his reign, as if after this he should not reign, but is declarative of his reign all the time before: though his enemies were many and strong, yet it is said, 1Co 15:24,28, that then he shall deliver up the kingdom to his Father. As to his natural kingdom, which is his as God the Son, that is, equally enjoyed with the Father, and that for ever, there is no end of it; but as to his mediatory kingdom, given him by choice, and in a special manner appropriated to him as God-man for his season, this, when his work is done, and all his enemies subdued, he will resign unto the Father, that God may be all in all.

Hebrews 1:14

Ver. 14. *Are they not all ministering spirits?* The apostle here proves, that angels are but ministers to the great gospel Minister, and to the members of his body the church, and so must be meaner than him for state, nature, and name. This negative interrogation is a vehement assertion. The nature, dignity, and office of angels were well known to these Hebrews out of the Old Testament, and which he repeats: they were for nature *spirits*, intellectual, active, incorporeal, and incorruptible creatures; yet though so excellent, were still creatures; whereas Christ was an uncreated Spirit, and they were but servants to him their Lord; and though there be degrees and orders among them from the archangel to the lowest angel, they are every one of them single, and all of them together, servants to Christ, and so they own themselves to be, Re 19:10 22:9.

*Sent forth to minister for them;* and so they move all at his order, and go and come at his command. Their employment directed by him; he sends them forth to deliver his errands, Ac 5:19, and Ac 12:7,11, to reveal his will to them, Re 1:1 Ps 103:21, &c. All the parts of ministry to which he appointeth them, they cheerfully, swiftly, and effectually perform.

*Who shall be heirs of salvation;* such as God hath chosen and called to be

children to himself and joint-heirs with his only Son, as have a right to, are fitting for, and shall be at last possessed of, eternal glory; these angels are to serve and help them on for to attain it, they themselves being elect, in and by Christ unto this end, 1Ti 5:21 2Ti 2:10. All which demonstrate him to be a more excellent person, and to have a more excellent name, than they.

Hebrews 2:1

### Chapter Summary

Heb 2:1-4 The obligation we are under to give more earnest heed to the gospel doctrine.

Heb 2:5-18 The dominion of the world to come was not granted to angels, but to the Son of man, whom it behoved to undergo a previous course of humiliation and suffering.

Ver. 1. In this and the three following verses the apostle applieth the doctrine of the great gospel Prophet's being more excellent for nature and person than any of the angels in respect of his Deity; and from thence inferreth the duty, that since God speaking by the prophets is to be heard by those to whom he sends them; how much more when speaking to them by his Son-prophet, who so infinitely excelleth not only all prophets, but angels too!

*We ought to give the more earnest heed;* we believers, who know the things spoken to be good for us, whether apostles, ministers, or Christian members, by the indispensable necessity laid on us by God's precept, are obliged more abundantly, exceeding abundantly, than formerly they had; more than they gave to Moses and the legal ministry, excessively beyond that, 2Co 11:23 Eph 3:20; to give heed with an attentive and intent mind, so as to have hearts fastened to what was diligently considered of before, received, believed; heeding them so as to retain and practise them; so to believe, profess, be, keep, and do what he speaks from the Father to them, having souls knit and cleaving to them, Jas 1:22,25.

*To the things which we have heard;* all that mind and will of God which



his Son revealeth to us fully, the whole gospel doctrine which by himself, and by his Spirit in the apostles, he had preached and written to them, Ro 10:14-16.

*Lest at any time we should let them slip;* an act opposite to the former giving heed, which is by them to be denied, viz. their being like leaking vessels, or having chinks open in their souls, letting by them slide out the most precious gospel of Christ, as water out of a cracked, leaky, broken vessel, or split on the ground. All forgetfulness of memory, all apostacy in heart or profession, is that which the Spirit forbiddeth in this metaphor, παραρρησμεν. Their danger as to their persons is made a motive to this duty, Heb 2:3, and is not therefore so immediately concerned in this, though it may be implied, for none will let the gospel of Christ slide from them who will not, as to their persons, slide from him at last.

Hebrews 2:2

Ver. 2. This and the following verse is a rational motive used by the Spirit to enforce the foregoing duty, and shows the danger of their persons by the neglect of it.

*For if the word spoken by angels;* for if the law of God delivered by the ministry of angels to these Hebrews' forefathers at Mount Sinai, De 33:2, as ministers, and servants of Christ there, Ac 7:38,53, compare Ga 3:19, and all other revelations of God's will to Moses and the prophets by angels, consisting of precepts, prohibitions, promises, and comminations, the whole body of God's laws contained in the Old Testament. The term by which law is expressed, λογος, signifies in most of the Eastern languages a command as well as a word; and λεγειν, to command, as well as to speak. The force or obligation of this law or word was from God the Redeemer, whose word it was, though published and promulgated to the church by angels.

*Was stedfast;* made firm by the solemn sanction of God, with a penalty, if any durst use it arbitrarily, or despise it; there was no violating it by commission or omission without being punished for it; God establishing it by fulfilling promises and executing judgments, Heb 10:28. Not a contumacious transgressor of it could escape his punishment; which made

the law firm and valid; see De 17:10, &c.; and this not only as the law of a Creator, but of a Redeemer, stablishing of it by entering into a covenant with them by it, and they confirming it, Jos 24:22,24.

*And every transgression and disobedience;* every contumacious going beside the law, or casting it aside by commission of evil, or rejecting prohibitions, or disobedience to positive laws by omission of what they required. And by a metonymy is understood transgressors by either of these ways.

*Received a just recompence of reward;* a just retribution, a righteous proportionable rendering of punishment to them for their sin; evil for evil, and death for sin, executed either immediately by God, or mediately by his instruments of government, according to the exact grains of justice, Ro 2:5-13. This punishment was either inflicted on, or received certainly by, the offender in his own person if capital, or in his representative sacrifice for lesser crimes, Heb 10:28 Ro 1:32 1Co 10:5-11.

Hebrews 2:3

Ver. 3. How shall we escape? This consequent answereth the antecedent in Heb 2:2, but in one part of it, that which concerns the punishment of the transgressors of the law, thus: If the word by angels, much more the word by the Son; and if sins against that were punished, much more sins against this: the Spirit including the sanction of the gospel's power in the judgment which it pronounceth upon its despisers, which it could not do if it were not established. The interrogative *how*, introducing the consequent, is vehemently negative; by no means, or there is no possibility of our escaping in the case proposed: compare the close of Isa 20:6. There is no avoiding the righteous punishment which the just God doth threaten gospel sinners with, such as is recorded in Mt 10:15 11:22,24 2Th 1:7-9 Heb 10:28,29; none can escape it, neither I nor you, if such transgressors; external offices, or church privileges, will not excuse any one from the just punishment and retribution of God.

*If we neglect so great salvation;* if being careless, so as to despise and make light of the gospel, or to reject it, Heb 8:9 Mt 22:5. Opposed this is to the sins of commission and omission about the law; any denial of

receiving it, or of a progress into the necessary duties it requires, so to neglect them as to end in apostacy. For the gospel law of Christ revealing and promising salvation to believers, opposed here to the law given by angels, will make safe all spiritual good both for time and eternity to the sincere believers and obeyers of it. The gospel is called *salvation* metonymically, because the subject matter of it is salvation, Eph 1:13, and it hath a causal power and virtue to save, Ac 13:26 Ro 1:16; opposed to the law, which was the ministration of death and condemnation, 2Co 3:7,9, being revealed by angels under carnal types and temporal promises, and, by reason of the veil on their hearts, became killing to them. The word by the Son is salvation, because a full and clear discovery to it. This salvation is transcendent, being not a terrene or temporary, but a heavenly, eternal salvation, delivering those who truly obey it from the worst of enemies, the sorest and most lasting punishment, and instating them in eternal happiness and blessedness in heaven. This was *great* for clearness of light, 2Co 4:4, and diffusive efficacy and success.

*Which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord;* an aggravation of the neglect of this salvation from *the Lord* publishing it. It had its rise and beginning from the Fountain of all truth, and was first by voice and preaching made known to the Hebrews, and such Gentiles as came to hear the promulgation of it, Mt 4:17, at Christ's solemn entering on his ministry, above three years before his death and resurrection. And it may refer higher; for as it was most clearly, plainly, sweetly, and eminently preached by himself, beyond what was taught by the prophets in the Old Testament, or John; yet he first preached it himself *in the beginning* to our apostate parents in Paradise, Ge 3:15, and he preached it in all the prophets publishing of it since: yet this priority may be in respect of the ministry which he ordained to follow him, and not of that which went before. It was so preached *by the Lord* himself, the Mediator, Lord of life and death, Head of angels and all principalities and powers, the great Prophet, swaying all things by the word of his power. The law was preached by angels, the gospel by God the Son himself, Heb 1:2; and so is preferred before the law, in respect of its ministration by the Head, not of its authority.

*And was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;* settled it was, made firm and authentional, by himself. The Trinity bear witness to it in heaven, confirm it on earth by miracles, signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds, by

Christ, Joh 5:36, by his apostles, 2Co 12:12, and by the gifts of the Holy Ghost in great variety distributed to his apostles and publishers of this gospel, which made their ministration of it effectual, Ac 2:1-3; compare 1Co 12:9-11; even to the apostles and Hebrews, and to all who believe, it is so confirmed. Nor is Paul less the writer of this Epistle for that he joins himself with them, since he did hear both the Lord and the apostles, and was confirming those of them with whom he had fellowship, and was confirmed by them, Ac 9:17,19 Ga 2:9. Christ's disciples and apostles heard this gospel from him, and did witness it by preaching, writing, and sealing it with their blood, Php 1:12 2Pe 1:16,17; which confirmation by their sufferings was instrumental, mediate, and subservient to the miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost enjoyed of them and wrought by them.

Hebrews 2:4

Ver. 4. *God also bearing them witness:* here is a further aggravation of the neglect of the gospel of salvation, from God's testifying to it by the works and gifts of his Holy Spirit: such sin grievously, and will receive a proportionable punishment; for God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, cotestify with all those instruments confirming the gospel of salvation, with a testimony peculiarly fitted to it; yet in this joint witnessing God is the highest, and αυτος πιστος, only to be believed for himself.

*Both with signs and wonders;* by works above nature's reach, signifying God's being in and approving the gospel law, which they attend, Mr 16:17. More numerous and glorious were these than they which confirmed the law, Ac 2:22,43 4:30; such strange works as raised admiration in all that saw them, and are prodigious to those that hear of them, or read them, Ro 15:19.

*And with divers miracles;* miraculous works, such as are compassed only by a Divine, supernatural power; and variety of these, as healing all diseases, raising the dead, ejecting devils, Mr 16:17,18; works of as great mercy, as wisdom or power.

*And gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will;* as gifts of tongues, prophecies, &c., Ro 12:6-8; compare 1Co 12:7-10; such as nature could not furnish any with, but the Redeemer did by his Spirit, communicating

them to various persons of divers kinds and indifferent degrees. From, by, and for himself he giveth out these wonderful works; his will the only rule for time, persons, manner, and measure of their distribution, allotting all their portion, Ro 12:3 1Co 7:17 12:4,7,11,18 Eph 4:7.

Hebrews 2:5

Ver. 5. *For unto the angels:* the Spirit having applied the doctrine of the great gospel Minister, exceeding the prophets of old, and having a more excellent name and office than angels, in respect of his Deity, pursues to show these Hebrews, that he is so likewise in respect of his humanity, the other nature in his person. This he proves negatively in this verse. The rational particle introducing, shows it to be a demonstration of his excelling angels, having a world to come subjected to him, which they have not; for so none of these incorporeal, intellectual, spiritual substances, so often diminished before, have; because those Hebrews were more addicted to esteem of them, and the law ministered by them, than of God the Son incarnate and his gospel.

*Hath he not put in subjection;* this God the Father, Son, and Spirit, the Creator who formed all things, and had right of disposing all things under their proper Lord, hath not put under their ordering or government; he never decreed, foretold, or promised that it should be under their authority.

*The world to come,* must be interpreted by that scripture, where it is asserted and proved that it was subjected to the great gospel Minister, and that is in Ps 8:5-8. It is a world that must consist of heaven and earth; compare Heb 2:3,6,7. It was a world not come when Paul wrote this Epistle to the Hebrews, see Heb 2:8. It is a world distinct from this present world, Eph 1:21, in which God-man must eminently reign; a world between this world and a heavenly one which is to come, in respect of us, Lu 18:30 1Ti 4:8. A world to come, which the angels have nothing to do with, as they have with this, which is greatly under their administration; such as consists of a *new heaven and a new earth, in which dwelleth righteousness*, 2Pe 3:13; for Peter asserts, that Paul, according to the revelation given him of it, had written to these Hebrews, and eminently in this text. And unto this do the prophets give witness, Isa 65:17,18 66:22; and of his day of rest and sabbath in it, as Heb 4:7,9,10; so Isa 66:23. And

for their restitution in this world to come do the creatures groan, Ro 8:19-23, that they may be therein under the happy administration of the Second Adam, the Lord from heaven. And of this the 8th Psalm (Ps 8:1-9) doth assure us; for it is not, as some have imagined, a representation of the state of the first Adam, but of God-man, the Second Adam, and his world; for Christ applieth it to himself, and testifieth it was written of him, and it is not compatible in itself to any other, Mt 21:16. This world to come is a heavenly world, begun by Christ to be created when he commenced to preach the gospel covenant, which angels were not to meddle with, as they did the law, but was only to be ministered by men, Ps 8:2; through whose ministry of the word by the Spirit, is ingrafted into the sinful nature of the elect a new creature, whereby they are delivered *from this present evil world*, Ga 1:4, and fitted for being inhabitants of this new one, 2Co 4:6 5:17; compare Eph 4:22-24; which hath been preparing by Christ's casting down heathenism and Judaism by the gospel, Lu 10:18 Heb 12:26, and bringing them into a new world of ordinances and church privileges, fitted for them, and called by the Spirit, the kingdom of heaven, it surpassing the Sinai church state as much as heaven doth earth. And he is now proceeding to cast down papism, or Roman Christian paganism, and Mahometism, Re 19:19-21, and to subdue the generality of men, both Jews and Gentiles, to himself, Zec 14:9 Ro 11:25,26; when this Christian heavenly frame shall be advanced to a higher degree by the descent of the new Jerusalem from God out of heaven, Re 21:1,2 22:1-5; in the which the kingdom of Christ shall be most peaceable, glorious, and prosperous. And to the rendering of it eminently so, Scripture seems to intimate, that the bodies of the martyrs of Jesus shall be raised, and their souls united to them, and so be made conformable to Christ's glorified person, Php 3:21; compare Re 20:4-6. These will their Lord send down into this new world, and to have the same state in it, and to perform the same offices to the saints, as the angels had and did in the world past, Mr 12:25; there to be kings, and reign as the angelical thrones and principalities did before, Re 5:10 20:4. As priests, help on the saints' duties, and instruct them in the matters of the kingdom of God, and so answer in conformity to their Head, as he was forty days after his resurrection; during whose reign in this new world the devil shall be chained up, so as they shall not be infested, nor the nations deceived, as formerly they were by him, Re 20:1-3, so as there shall be no need of good angels to oppose or restrain him. At the close of which thousand years the devil will be loosed for a little while, as Heb 2:3,7,8, and infest the world, when the great Lord and King of it shall in the greatest solemnity descend

into the air with all his hosts of angels; and by the trumpet of God sounded by the arch-angel, the dead in Christ shall first be raised, and the living changed in the twinkling of an eye; and being openly owned and acknowledged by the Supreme Judge, shall be assessors with him; when the judgment shall proceed by the angels bringing devils and all impenitent mankind to the bar of Christ, where the vast accounts of them shall be cast up and audited, and on the charge against them they shall be found speechless and convict, so as the great Judge shall solemnly sentence them, and it be assented to and applauded by all the saints, Re 20:2,11,12,15, compare 1Co 6:2,3, and be as gloriously executed by the ministering angels, Mt 13:41-43. And so this great King and Lord, having thus shut up the scene of this world, shall return in triumph into the heaven of heavens, and there in the height of his glory deliver up his kingdom to the Father, that God may be all in all, 1Co 15:22-28.

*Whereof we speak;* we describe it further in the following testimony, and in this Epistle, as to some part of it.

Hebrews 2:6

Ver. 6. *But one in a certain place testified:* the Spirit proves affirmatively out of one of the prophets, that with these Hebrews it might have the more weight and authority, by an elliptical speech, that this world to come was subject to the great gospel Minister: But to Jesus he put in subjection the world to come, as one testified. This *one* was the king and prophet David, a Lord and Son to whom was this Jesus; the title of the 8th Psalm (Ps 8:1-9) ascribes it to him: he is not particularly named, because these Hebrews well knew it, yet he διεμαρτυρατο, thoroughly *testified*, or most expressly, giving a full confirmation of what is asserted, that Jesus is the Lord of the world to come: and this *certain place* was a well known place, and very ready with those, even Ps 8:1-9.

*Saying;* making it known by word and writing there beyond any contradiction.

*What is man?* the subject of David's admiration is not the first Adam, nor any mere man, but the gospel Prophet, God-man, a most eminent One, the Messiah of these Hebrews, *the man Christ Jesus*, 1Ti 2:5; and to him only

are the privileges vouchsafed agreeable, and by him only enjoyed. For Adam had now lost his dominion when this Psalm was penned, and was never so honoured as to have all things under his feet, even principalities and powers, which Christ had, Heb 2:8 Eph 1:20-22; and Christ interprets it of himself, Mt 21:16. The expostulation is resolvable: Man is nothing in himself, that such royalty should be assigned to him.

*That thou art mindful of him;* that God should respect him, should remember and design such a worm as man for so great preferment, as union to the Deity and universal dominion.

*Or the Son of man:* this is the peculiar title of the *Second Adam*. Adam was a man, but not the son of man, but of God by creation, Lu 3:38; but the Spirit testifieth this of Christ, Da 7:13; *Lord of the sabbath*, Lu 6:5; God-man, Joh 3:13 5:27.

*That thou visitest him;* επισκεπτη, to be peculiarly inspected; and with a special care concerned for him, so industriously and with so great a providence to afford him suitable succour. The form of it is an expostulation with admiration: it is an amazement at the discovery of so stupendous love to man. How emptied he himself for sinners! This work of Christ is the greatest wonder and astonishment to angels.

Hebrews 2:7

Ver. 7. *Thou madest him:* ἡλιττωσας, so diminished, as it supposed the subject to be in a higher condition before: this no man ever was, but the man Christ Jesus: see Php 2:7,8.

*A little lower than the angels:* βραχυ τι, may refer to his condition, and to the duration of it. He was lower a little in his nature, being a man and servant; in his condition, suffering and dying; yet this was but for a little while, being about thirty-three years in the form of a servant, and three days in the grave, Eph 4:9: so he was lesser than the angels, in the Psalm styled אֱלֹהִים God's sons, Ps 97:7, to whom he is here compared; though it be a truth he is lesser than God in the human nature.

*Thou crownedst him with glory and honour;* an allusion to the crowning



of kings at their inauguration; so God visibly took him up to heaven, set him down on his right hand on his throne, and conferred on him the highest royal dignity, honour, and glory, though the Hebrews disesteemed him, Eph 1:20,21 4:9,10 Php 2:9.

*And didst set him over the works of thy hands;* his institution to his mediatory sovereignty and dominion, as the supreme Lord of all that God made in heaven and in earth, to order, rule, command, and dispose of them as he will, Ps 8:6; compare Php 2:10,11.

Hebrews 2:8

Ver. 8. *Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet;* the impartial, righteous Jehovah the Father, is the relation in the Trinity, spoken of in the relative *Thou*, throughout these verses. He is God's King; for his personal worth and excellencies, preferred before principalities and powers, and every name; before all persons, things, and places, the world to come as well as this: all angels, as well as men; all creatures wherever, in heaven, earth, sea, or hell; are under his sovereign dominion, they all lie at his feet, to dispose of as he pleaseth; they are all set in subjection to him by the ordination of his Father: see Ps 8:6-8 1Co 15:24-29 Eph 1:20-22 Php 2:9,10 Col 2:10. According to the Eastern custom, as subjects lie prostrate at the feet of their sovereign, so do all creatures to him who is Lord of lords, and King of kings, as Ex 11:8, see the margin; Isa 49:23. They bow down and worship him as their own Lord; but as being under his feet signifies the utmost subjection of them to him, and his triumph over them, it especially refers to his enemies, sin, devils, sinners, and death; as Joshua, a type of him, did, Jos 10:23,24; showing thereby what God would do with all the rest. Allusive to this is Isa 51:23, especially to all the enemies of his Son, as Ps 110:1 1Co 15:25,27. As to his church, it is his body, and though distant from him as creatures, and so worshipping and honouring of him as elect angels, yet being his queen too, she loves and honoureth him as a wife, Ps 45:9,11 Eph 1:22,23 Eph 5:23,24: she hath her subjection as well as her dignity; she is not a peer to him before marriage: but as Eastern emperors marry slaves born or captivated, because they acknowledge no king greater than they, or equal to them; so Christ takes sinners and makes them his body, his church, his queen, who though for condition are under his feet, yet he so dearly loves them, that he takes them

thence, and sets them at his right hand.

*For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him:* if nothing is left unsubjected, then angels and the world to come are subjected to him; and it is evident they are so, by their ministering to him at his conception, birth, danger from Herod, temptations by the devil, at his entrance on his ministry, at his passion, at his resurrection, ascension, and since his session on his throne, obeying his commands, and performing his errands, Ps 8:8.

*But now we see not yet all things put under him;* it is evident to our sense and experience, that though he hath obtained this sovereign dominion over all on his ascension, yet he hath not exerted his power in utterly subjecting and triumphing over his enemies at present, nor in reducing all his own people to subjection to him; yet this shall be gradually done in every age, and completely when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, to punish his enemies with everlasting destruction, 1Co 15:24,26 2Th 1:7-10 Re 20:11-15.

Hebrews 2:9

Ver. 9. *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels:* this second application of the psalmist's words demonstrates Jesus, the gospel Prophet, to be the man or Adam intended by the Spirit there; and his humiliation and exaltation to be the matter asserted of him: see Heb 2:7.

*For the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour:* the reason or end of his diminution, in respect of angels, for a little while, and of the necessity of his being man, was, that he might be crucified and die, Php 2:7-11, and thereby merit for himself a crown of honour and glory. This was given him for his giving himself to be a sacrifice for sin, and by his own blood to expiate it.

*That he by the grace of God;* the principle determining, which was God's good pleasure; he alone, out of his free love and favour to sinners, ordered this, as Joh 3:16 1Jo 4:9. Therefore the Hebrews had no reason of being offended with him as they were, 1Co 1:23.

*Should taste death;* a metaphor to express to die as a sacrifice, making satisfaction to Divine justice, and expiating sins, Isa 53:10. All his sufferings in body and soul, which were many and bitter, are here intended, and their completion by death, Mt 26:39,42, intimating by his taste of this deadly cup, his sipping of it, but not having swallowed it: and it is a metaphor allusive to the Grecian customs, who put men to death by giving them a cup of poison, as the Athenians executed Socrates.

*For every man;* to render sin remissible to all persons, and them salvable, God punishing man's sin in him, and laying on him the iniquities of us all, Isa 53:4-6 1Jo 2:2; and so God became propitious and pleasurable to all; and if all are not saved by it, it is because they do not repent and believe in him, 2Co 5:19-21: compare Joh 10:15. This was evident to and well known by these Hebrews, as if they saw it, the work, concomitants, and effects of it demonstrating it. And this now in the gospel is evident to faith: it was so certainly visible and evidently true, as not to be denied but by infidels.

Hebrews 2:10

Ver. 10. *For it became him:* a further reason of Christ's humiliation and sufferings is added, to show the necessity of his being lower than the angels for a while; in which the Spirit prevents what these Hebrews were apt to question, why God would have Christ thus to die, &c., by adding: Therefore it became him so to do; it was agreeable to him, and had a meetness in it to his excellent perfection; by it displaying together his Divine wisdom, justice, mercy, and power. Amongst all his methods, he pitched upon this as the best, and did by it what was befitting and becoming a God to do. He likewise revealed this so becoming decree of his by the prophets to the church, and it was meet to and becoming his truth to fulfil it, Isa 53:1-12 Lu 24:25-27.

*For whom are all things, and by whom, are all things;* for the manifestation of God the Father's glory, whose grace gave Christ to die for us, are all things which have a being; and by him are all things, as the Efficient and Creator of them, by his powerful word they are: this being likewise attributed to the gospel Prophet, God-man, Joh 1:3 Col 1:16.

*By whom;* it shows he is no more an instrument in this work than the Father, and equally efficient with him, Ro 3:26.

*In bringing many sons unto glory:* ἀγαγοντα cannot agree with αὐτω, him, for that is the dative case, but with what follows, Ἄρχηγον, the Leader of their salvation bringing many sons to glory: so that though the Father indeed glorify, yet it is most properly spoken of the Leader, to lead or bring his company thither; and so it is written, Eph 2:18 3:12. He showed and led them the way wherein they were to reach it, 1Pe 3:18, who though for state were sinners, yet made fit by regeneration and adoption, and have their title from their Leader, Joh 1:12,13. He merited by his sufferings both the relation and inheritance for them, Ro 8:14-18 1Pe 1:2-5; and so as to bring them to that glorious state and condition, for persons and enjoyments, in the heavenly Canaan prepared for them, Mt 25:34 1Pe 5:10 1Jo 3:1,2.

*To make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings:* so their Ἄρχηγος, a prime Leader of many, a person eminent for priority and dignity, directing and ordering all under his power, who is the prime of the creation of God, Col 1:18, having the pre-eminency of all angels and men: he was perfected; τελειωσαι signifieth the consecrating or accomplishing of a person for office by sacrifice; so Christ useth it, Lu 13:32, I shall be perfected, i.e. sacrificed and completed in my office by death: so Joh 19:30. By his sufferings of all sorts accomplished in death, and by the blood of that sacrifice, was this great gospel Prophet made a perfect Mediator, and fitted for his officiating and ministering in heaven for ever, herein fulfilling his types, Heb 9:11,12,14,15,22-24: compare Ex 29:1-46. He, in respect of saving his, is the author, purchaser, and perfecter of it to them: he by his sufferings and death merited salvation for them, by his word and Spirit fits them for it, by his intercession increaseth and applieth it; he vanquishes all opposers of it, and puts them finally into the actual possession of it in glory in heaven.

Hebrews 2:11

Ver. 11. *For both he that sanctifieth:* for shows the reason of the Son's incarnation, viz. the necessity of union in nature between the sanctifying Mediator and the sanctified sinner. The great gospel Minister was to bring

many sons to glory by suffering, which he was not capable of, but by being united to one and the same nature with them to whom the penalty was due, and so he must be Head of them. This God-man is separating and consecrating of penitent believing sinners from the common mass to God, meriting by his death for them remission of their sins, and sanctifying their persons by his Spirit from their pollutions by them, 1Co 6:11 Tit 3:4-7 Heb 9:14 10:10,14.

*And they who are sanctified;* penitent believing sinners, justified by his blood, and sanctified by his Spirit, Eph 5:25-27.

*Are all of one:* this is an attribute of the unity of the principle of both these; such an one as is proper to man with himself, whom he sanctifieth, and not competent to angels; it must therefore be the principle of humanity. He took a human soul and body united to his person, and so became of one nature with us, (compare Heb 2:14), of one human mass, alluding to the first-fruits offered at the Passover, or the loaves at Pentecost, whereby all the rest were sanctified: so Christ assumed the same human nature, that he might be the Head and leading Representative of a body of mankind, differenced from them by his being holy, and they sinful, and personally united to the Word.

*For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren;* the unity of him and them in the human nature, is the cause why he calls them *brethren*, therefore they must be one: considering him in the holiness of his Deity, and them in the filthiness of sin, he might have been ashamed of such a brotherhood; but by his effectual word he adopted them into a state of childship and heirship to God with himself; and in the flesh to give them that glory, that they might be one with God, as he and the Father are one, Joh 17:22.

Hebrews 2:12

Ver. 12. *Saying;* this brings in the proof, that the great gospel Minister, Christ, God-man, did call his sanctified ones *brethren*; and was by the same nature so related to them. The proof is in Ps 22:22, where the apostle asserts, Christ spoke what was said by the prophet there; and that this Psalm concerneth him, is evident by the application of other passages in it

to him, both by himself and the Spirit; and who reads it, may see him crucified afresh there.

*I will declare thy name unto my brethren; I,* as the gospel Prophet, who have seen thee, and am of thee. Joh 1:18, and who only understand *thy name*, will teach, and make it to be known and admired, as that whereby thou art described, distinguished, and set above all other beings and relations to them; a name suitable to their state and relation unto thee and me. Thee in all thy glorious attributes, related to them as to Moses, Ex 34:5-7, especially thy name of Father, whereby thou standest related to me and them as brethren, fulfilled, Joh 20:17:

*My Father, and your Father; my God, and your God;* when he sent this message by Mary Magdalene to his apostles and disciples, to whom he was related as a brother in his humanity, sonship and heirship, family and household and amongst whom he is the First-begotten and elder Brother. Brethren are one, and as one; and so is he and his sanctified ones, Heb 2:14 Lu 1:31,35 Joh 17:22,23 Ro 8:14; so Ro 8:17,29 Ga 4:5-7 Eph 3:14,15.

*In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee;* in the respective parts and congregations of his mystical body, implicitly his brethren. Christ and they are from one Father divine, he by nature, they by grace; and from one human parent, Lu 3:23,38, and both of one flesh: he solemnly sung and praised his Father with them at his supper, in that representative church, Mt 26:30 Mr 14:26.

Hebrews 2:13

Ver. 13. *And again, I will put my trust in him:* this is a further proof that Christ's sanctified ones are his brethren, his exercising himself in a necessary work proper to that brotherhood only. They are all *of the household of faith*, Ga 6:10; their business is to believe in God. All who do so, are brethren; Christ doth so, and so is a Brother to them; he and they rely on one and the same God and Father to both: he did believe, confide, and rest on God, that he would help his humanity to go through all his works and sufferings to the perfecting of that of redemption. Some say he spake this in the person of David in Ps 18:2, because Ps 18:49 is applied to

Christ by the Spirit in Ro 15:9. But others think that Psalm is not so properly understood of Christ, and that these words are not found in the Septuagint, which the apostle frequently useth, as being most familiar with these Hebrews; but that these words of his trusting in God, and of his *children*, are to be found near together in Isa 8:17,18, which chapter is a clear prophecy of this God-man the Redeemer, and punctually fulfilled by him on earth. This seems most rationally to be the place the apostle refers as to both these texts.

*And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me:* this is the third proof, which, though it be literally Isaiah's words, who complained how himself and the children of God in his days were scorned by the world for cleaving to him, yet herein was he a type of Christ, and in him was it eminently fulfilled. This the word *Behold* intimates, it being a matter of great weight and importance, to be attended, to be considered and unstood, by the church.

*I and the children which God hath given me;* I and my brethren, children of the same heavenly Father, Joh 11:52 20:17 1Jo 3:1; which my Father of free grace chose and delivered on my purchase, and whom he had fitted and wrought by his Spirit, to be brought home by him unto glory, though they were the wonder and contempt of this world, Joh 17:2,6,8,9,11,19,22,24.

Hebrews 2:14

Ver. 14. *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood:* the Spirit having proved the children and brethren sanctified by Christ to be men, proceeds to prove, that the Sanctifier of them was of the same nature with themselves; and so confirms what he asserted, Heb 2:11, that they were *of one*: forasmuch as those were chosen, born of God, and given to him, adopted into his sonship and heirship, and by this, as well as by their humanity, derived jointly with his own from Adam, his brethren,  $\kappa\epsilon\kappa\omicron\upsilon\omega\nu\eta\kappa\epsilon$ , these having it in common. The word imports the reality, integrity, unity, and community they all have of the human nature; they are all truly, only, and fully men, and every individual person hath this humanity. These *flesh and blood* metonymically set out the whole human nature, though the body only be literally expressed by it, a body subject to

many infirmities.

*He also himself likewise took part of the same;* God the Son himself *παραπλησιως*, had the next and nearest correspondent condition with theirs, even the same as to the kind of it, as like as blood is to blood, properly and truly, only freed from our sinful infirmities, as Heb 2:17 4:15; this word diminisheth him not, but showeth his identity: *μετεσχε*, *took part*, he became a partner with the children, and took their nature. It is not the same word as before, *κεκοινωνεκε*, as the Marcionites and Manichees corrupt it, as if he had this nature only in common with them, making him only man. But being God, besides his Divine nature, &c., to it he took the human, even their true and full nature, consisting of a body and a soul, and so united them, that in him they became one person; so that hence results a double union of Christ with man. By his incarnation he is of one nature with all the human race, and so is the Head of them: and by his dying for them all the human race are made salvable, which angels are not; and those who repent and believe on him, are actually sanctified and united to him, as his elect and chosen body, and shall be saved by him.

*That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death:* by his dying on the cross as testator of God's covenant, and not by his power as a God, (which was most glorious to himself, but most ignominious to the devil, according to the promise, Ge 3:15), did he abolish, or bring to nought, and render powerless without any recovery, not by taking away the immortal life and being, but the *κρατος*, the strength and power to kill. For the *εξουσια*, the authority, right, and command, the keys of death, are in Christ's hand only, and he useth the strength of this execution in it, as to his enemies; when sinners become penitent believers, then his death satisfying God's justice for their sin, hath executed the power as to death, which the devil had by law against them: 1Co 15:56,57: *The sting of death is sin*, that gives him power; *and the strength of sin is the law*, that, unless satisfied for, takes part with sin; but Christ by dying takes away the law's enmity, removes sin, as to guilt, stain, and power, and so brings to nought this power.

*That is, the devil;* the prince himself, set here collectively for all the rest of his evil spirits, Mt 25:41, who by his lies drew man into sin, and by sin stings him to death; having therefore such power to seduce to sin, he powerfully renders men obnoxious to death: and then, as executioner,



having them by the law delivered into his hands, putteth forth his strength to torment and destroy them. Christ by his death doth with price and power redeem them out of his hand, and destroys all his works, takes possession of them, and brings them through death to eternal life. Ver. 14. *For we are made partakers of Christ:* for shows this to be a rational motive, urging home the former counsel, unto which the following condition doth agree; for we believing Christians and Brethren are made μετοχοι, partners with the primitive Proprietor supposed in it, even Christ, who hath of his own the fulness of God, life, grace, glory, and all good; in all which fulness of his we share, by virtue of our union with him, Joh 1:16 Eph 1:22,23 Col 1:19 Col 2:9,10; and he by his Spirit will free us from the deceitfulness of sin, and hardening by it.

*If we hold the beginning of our confidence;* if by a spiritual tenaciousness, and firm fixing in our hearts, we hold αρχην, either the principal or fundamental truth, as the word signifieth in sciences; or, the entrance or beginning of our course, as used in things, so as the first step in Christianity is styled a beginning of grace.

*Stedfast unto the end:* υποστασεως, in personal relations, is, a real subsistence, as of the Son in the Trinity, Heb 1:3; in things, the basis and foundation upholding others; and this in Christianity is Christ principally, who bears up his church, Eph 2:20-22. And faith, the instrument whereby we receive Christ, is so called, Heb 11:1, that which renders present and subsisting what is hoped for to the soul; so that here it imports the retaining firm that principle of truth, upon which Christians are bottomed and supported to life, that is, Christ himself, and the true doctrine of him; as also, that we must firmly stand in the first beginnings of faith, and increase in them, so as they may be firmly fixed in our hearts, and our hearts on them, so as never to be removed as long as we live. Our retaining firmly of this, makes us partners in Christ; both instrumentally helping in it, and evidentially; it being the infallible consequence of true grace, holding us to this communion with Christ. How ought these conditions to quicken the activity of believers!

Hebrews 2:15

Ver. 15. The effect of the former destruction of the devil is laid down in

this verse, viz. the children's freedom from the fear of death, to which, being slaves to the devil, they were once in bondage.

*And deliver them;* he, by breaking and disannulling the devil's power, doth really, fully, and justly exempt them from the concomitant evil.

*Who through fear of death;* a painful and wasting horror, working the saddest apprehensions and tumultuous workings of soul, from its apprehended danger of death spiritual, temporal, and eternal, when the wrath of God doth not only dissolve the natural frame, but makes an everlasting separation from himself, shutting them up with the worst company, in the worst place and state that is possible for the human mind to imagine, and that for ever, Job 18:11,14 24:17 Ps 55:4,5 Ps 73:19 88:14-18.

*Were all their lifetime subject to bondage:* when they come to the exercise of the reasonable life of man, and under convictions of sin, then these terrors arise, and never leave affrighting or tormenting them, but make them pass as many deaths as moments, as is evident in Cain and Judas; for they are enslaved, and in such a state of drudgery and vassalage to the devil, the most cruel tyrant, by their own guilt, and so are justly, invincibly, and miserably held in it. Christ by his death rescueth them from this woeful, intolerable vassalage to the devil and hell, and brings them into the glorious liberty of the children of God, Ro 8:21 Col 1:12,13.

Hebrews 2:16

Ver. 16. *For verily he took not on him the nature of angels:* the Spirit having asserted the deliverance of the children from their slavery to the devil, shows here the means by which it was effected, even by the gospel Prophet, being a man, and not an angel; he took their nature to himself, that by death he might deliver them: ου δηπου may signify no where, or in no wise; επιλαμβανεται is read by some, to take hold of, and so make this work denied of God the Son, that he did not take hold of the falling angels, to save or recover them: but the Spirit speaks not one word of lapsed angels in either this or the foregoing chapter, and so it cannot refer to them; and for good angels, they never departed or fell, that he should stretch out his hand to save them. And it cannot be understood otherwise

than affirmatively here, which must needs have another sense, because the same act is denied and affirmed. The word therefore signifieth to assume, or to take to one, to assume or take into union. He united not to his person the angelical nature, the individual substance of an angel, so as to redeem those sinning lapsed spirits.

*But he took on him the seed of Abraham;* but he assumed into union with his person the seed of Abraham; which seed is not to be understood here collectively, for either his carnal or believing seed; but it is the one singular, eminent Seed of Abraham, in and by whom, himself, his seed, and all nations were to be blessed, Ge 22:18, compare Ga 3:16, the man Christ Jesus. This man, God the Son took of the virgin Mary, the offspring of Abraham, and united him to his person, and of God and this Seed united into one person, became our Lord Jesus Christ, so as he might bring the blessing of salvation to the chosen of God in all nations. The assumption of this eminent Seed into the unity of his own person, is here asserted by the Spirit, and denied concerning any angel, there being no promise ever made to them for it, Zec 13:7 Lu 1:31,35 Ga 4:4 1Ti 2:5. If the verb signify no such assumption in human authors, as some cavil, it is because the matter to which it is here applied was never treated on among them; and it is common with the Spirit to make words which are ordinary with men, transcendent, when he applieth them to the great mysteries of God, as Trinity, Son, adoption, &c.

Hebrews 2:17

Ver. 17. *It behoved him:* the last reason why God the Son assumed and united the human nature in the seed of Abraham to his person, and was by it made like his brethren, and for a little while lower than the angels, was, that he might be capable to receive and execute the office of priesthood, by which reconciliation of sinners to God was to be effected: for he could neither be a sacrifice nor priest without it. Ἰσχυριστε signifies not only its being necessary, but becoming, meet, convenient, and right, both on the account of his mediatorship, suretiship, priesthood, and of his very work, considering the two parties whose cause he was to manage. It was fit this Person should be God, that he might be just to God, and satisfy him; Adam had betrayed God's interest before, he would not therefore rely on a mere man: and man, that he might feelingly understand the state of that nature,

and be a complete Saviour of it, Zec 13:7. By this Person God had no unfitness nor disparagement in treating with sinners, which in a mere creature he would. For what creature could have mediated with him? Who durst undertake it, but this Son of his in their nature, whose heart he engaged to it? Jer 30:21. And fittest for man, he being near in nature to us, and coming out of the midst of us, and by it communicating the benefit of his mediation to us. The intention of Christ's merits arise from his sufficiency, but the extension of them from his proper personal fitness, and so reneweth men of the same nature with him, and not angels.

*To be made like unto his brethren;* a man having a true body and soul like them in every thing, which was necessary to make him a complete Redeemer; agreeable to them in all things necessary to their nature, qualities, conditions, and affections; like them in sorrows, griefs, pains, death.

*Merciful;* knowing and sensible of the misery of sinners on the account of sin, pain, and loss, and so inwardly touched with them, as compassionately and effectually to relieve them. How transcendent are his bowels of mercy, pity, and compassion to them! Alas, man and angels cannot reach it! Isa 53:3,4 63:9. If he should be otherwise the least moved, and desert their cause, or accuse or plead against them, what a world of them must perish for ever! He tells the Jews so much, Heb 8:12; compare Joh 5:45. A Moses may miscarry in his mediatorship, and did so, Ex 32:19; but he can never, he is always merciful.

*And faithful;* he is faithful also to penitent believers, as well as to God. They may safely trust themselves and their cause with him, and depend on him, he will never deceive them. He will satisfy God fully, and give him his due, and discharge that trust reposed on him. And to souls relying on him, he will go through his work, performing all, till they reach that for which they trusted him, Isa 11:5 1Co 10:13 1Th 5:23,24.

*High Priest;* an officer that was to order sacrifice, and all matters wherein God was concerned, according to his written law and rule. This priest must be a man; and a partnership in our conditions, both of temptations and miseries, must qualify him for it. Of this office he treats largely in Heb 7:1-10:39. Amongst the officers of this kind he is the prime, chief, and head of all that ever God had, and hath in his person performed and

fulfilled what all of them in theirs did but weakly shadow forth. He was actually in the flesh installed in it, of which hereafter.

*In things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people:* the compass of his business lieth in all Divine matters, all those wherein sinners are concerned with God, Heb 5:1; satisfaction, intercession, and blessing, are his great concerns. His principal work is to bring God and sinners together; *ιλασκεσθαι* properly signifieth to make one propitious or gracious to another by sacrifice. This High Priest, by the sacrifice of himself, satisfied God's justice, removed his wrath, procured his pardon as to all sins of omission or commission, however aggravated, for penitent, believing sinners; and so makes God and them friends, and fits them for communion with him here, and for the enjoyment of him for ever, 2Co 5:19,21.

Hebrews 2:18

Ver. 18. *For in that he himself hath suffered:* the reason foregoing the Spirit illustrates in this verse; he is such a merciful and faithful High Priest, by being a sufferer himself, which he could not have been feelingly, but by his being incarnate. So many, great, and afflictive sufferings never any endured but himself; he felt what sin deserved, and would fasten on sinners without his interposing; though he were sinless, what terrors from God within, what pains in his body without, did he suffer and undergo! Such as are unparalleled, Heb 12:3.

*Being tempted;* not from any corruption or sin within him, Heb 4:15 Joh 14:30; but from an inveterate enemy, the devil, without him, and all the instruments he used of his associated spirits and men. How early on the entrance on his office did the devil begin with him, and thought to have foiled him as he did the first Adam! And how did his children tempt him, with the which the gospel is filled in so many pages! By these he felt what temptations were, how difficult to avoid sin under them, how fearful it was to be exercised by them, Heb 5:7, how much such as miscarry under them are to be pitied; what sore evils sin brings on the committers of it; what succour, strength, stablishing, settlement his brethren need under it, Lu 22:43,44; and how easily without his assistance his tempted ones may be foiled by it.

*He is able to succour them that are tempted:* now sensibly made fit by his own sorrows, temptations, and sufferings, he is powerfully inclined to help his; subjected he was to all of them, to make him feelingly, tenderly pitying of us. He had the mercies of God before, and as if that were not enough, the tempted nature of a man, to soften his heart to pity his brethren in their sufferings and temptations. These sufferings of his had a purchasing power and ability in them for us, he thereby buying help and succour for us as to all ours, that should be correspondent unto his; so as by his bloody death under temptation he bought off ours, either not to overtake us, or if under them, he is habitually and meritoriously thereby to succour his; most compassionately and readily giving forth all reasonable, suitable, and sufficient support under and remedy against all these temptations, which for sin, or from it, his brethren are afflicted with, and come to him for help. This is the most powerful preservative against despair, and the firmest ground of hope and comfort, that ever believing, penitent sinners could desire or have. From all which these Hebrews might have been convinced what little reason they had to be offended with his humiliation or death, who was their Messiah; and though for state and time a little lower than the angels, yet in the human nature was thereby exalted to be the Lord and Head above them all.

Hebrews 3:1

### Chapter Summary

Heb 3:1-6 Christ is showed to be more worthy than Moses.

Heb 3:7-19 We must be careful therefore not to follow the example of the obstinate and unbelieving Israelites in the wilderness.

Ver. 1. Several uses the Holy Ghost makes, from the beginning of this chapter to the end of chapter four (Heb 3:1-4:16), of the gospel doctrine of God the Son incarnate, set by the Father in office, to deal for sinners towards God as their great Prophet. The counsel he giveth is comprehended in (Heb 3:1-6); and as directing these Hebrews to their duty, so further explaining and confirming his office to them, by

comparing of him with Moses, and setting him as above angels, so above him; and to be so valued, esteemed, and preferred by these Hebrews: seeing this great gospel Prophet was for a little while made lower than the angels in his humanity, and it was infinitely beneficial to us upon the account of what he suffered in it in our stead, and purchased by it for our good; therefore should those who are partakers of it, being related in the flesh to him as Hebrews, descending with them from Abraham, consider, but much more as Christians, believing and adopted in him to be God's children, and sanctified by his Spirit, 1Pe 1:1-5 2Pe 1:1.

*Partakers of the heavenly calling;* and made thus a Christian fraternity by the heavenly calling of them out of the world by the gospel; when by his Spirit he enlightened their minds, and renewed their wills, and made them obedient to it, so as for the temper of their souls they are made holy, and for their condition happy; the work of God's power and mercy eminently appearing in it: God therein preventing man, so as he influenceth him to hear him from heaven, walk worthy of heaven, and at last to rest in heaven for ever.

*Consider;* κατανοησατε imports not a bare single act of the mind, to think on, or understand, but a repeated one, to think again and again, expressed by that periphrasis of laying it to heart, pressing on their spirits the due effort of faith and obedience arising out of this observation, Isa 52:15.

*The Apostle;* God's Messenger, his own Son sent from heaven to be incarnate, with authority to execute in his human nature his prophetic, as all his offices, and with authority to send forth his apostles to do their part, Joh 20:21; which is no more than is intimated in that title, *the Messenger of the covenant*, Isa 42:19 Mal 3:1; that was, to propose it to and confirm it with them. This was he by whom Moses desired God's message might be sent to them, Ex 4:13; and whom he foretold should bring it, De 18:15 Ac 3:22,23.

*And High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus:* the Son is the great gospel High Priest, to deal in all matters with God for them, Heb 2:17. The offices divided among other persons in the Old Testament church were all united in his person, he doth transcend them all, being a High Priest peculiar to the called and sanctified ones of God, of which all preceding

were faint resemblances and types; he, the most excellent Minister of the Christian faith and religion professed by them, being anointed unto all these offices in the flesh by the Father with the Holy Ghost, Heb 1:2; and being Jesus a Saviour, our Emmanuel, God on our side, saving his people from their sins, and re-uniting them to God, Mt 1:21,23 Joh 17:21-23.

Hebrews 3:2

Ver. 2. The Spirit enforceth the duty counselled on them from the fidelity of that grand gospel Minister in his offices; exemplified in a parallel with Moses, whom he did exceed.

*Who was faithful to him that appointed him;* he did most exactly perform all he was intrusted with, according to the intention and end of his commission. He did most faithfully reveal God, Joh 1:18, and his whole saving will, to whom God sent him, Joh 3:31-34 5:34 Joh 8:28,38; as his great Prophet, Ac 3:22. He as faithfully discharged the office of his priesthood in sacrificing himself to atone God for sinners, and as faithfully intercedes for all with him unto this day, and will do so for ever, with all truth and fidelity discharging his trust, Heb 7:24-28 9:11,12,14,24,26. He was faithful in fulfilling all his types, and in changing and finishing all the ceremonial constitutions, and filling them up with gospel ones, according to God's will revealed to him about it. He was true to his Father, who appointed and constituted him to these offices, and solemnly invested him in them; ποιησαντι here not signifying the making of a creature, but the making of an officer, the person existing before; he puts him into this special charge and office by anointing him for it, Ac 2:36.

*As also Moses was faithful in all his house:* Moses was the Jewish mediator, and brought them the law moral, judicial, and ceremonial from God; as he was highly esteemed by them, so God testifieth of his fidelity. Christ was not only like to him in fidelity, but, as to both the truth and degree of it, exceeding him. Moses kept to his pattern shown him in the mount, and Christ fulfilled entirely his Father's will, Joh 5:30 6:38, and is preferred to him. Moses was so in the whole church of Israel, set out by this metaphor of a *house*; but Christ ill all God's house and family both in heaven and in earth; not the least thing that concerned the family, but Christ fulfilled; not the meanest person in it, but he careth for and saveth.



### Hebrews 3:3

Ver. 3. *For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses:* the Spirit proves to the Hebrews, that the gospel Prophet was not only like to, but more excellent than, their greatest prophet, and who had familiarity with God beyond others, as God testifieth, Nu 12:6-8. This he proves by an undeniable supposition, that God is better than man; such is Christ; which he demonstrates by a work of God, his making the church and all things. If he made the church, then he is better than the whole church, and worthy of more honour than Moses, who is but a member of it. For this, *man* is not in the original, this gospel Prophet, who was God as well as man, the apostle and High Priest of Christians, was esteemed and accounted by God the Father, the best judge of worth, and who appointed him to his offices: he treated him more honourably than Moses, as he deserved it, having real excellency and worth in himself. He was God's Son, Moses his servant. He lay in God's bosom, saw his face, was his *fellow*, Zec 13:7 Joh 1:14,18; Moses only heard his voice, and saw his *back parts*, Ex 33:19,20,23 34:5-7. Moses's face only shined, but Christ's person was entirely glorious, Ex 34:29,30 2Co 3:7: compare Mt 17:2-6 2Pe 1:17.

*Inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house;* he is the cause, principal, efficient, and architect of this building, not a stone is laid in it without him. By this metaphor of *house* to which it relateth, is meant God's spiritual building and temple, 1Co 3:10,16,17; styled God's household or family, Eph 2:19-22: in sum, God's church, built by and on Christ, of which Moses was but one living stone or member, 1Pe 2:4-8. Therefore this builder ought to be esteemed and honoured above the church, or Moses, a member of it.

### Hebrews 3:4

Ver. 4. The excellency of this builder is evinced by his nature and preference beyond his building, as any man is beyond his.

*For every house is builded by some man;* for every earthly artificial building, a material house built for habitation, though it may

metaphorically and analogically be understood of a commonwealth, or political one, which is contrived, framed, and raised by some man; yet an effect cannot produce itself, nor a house raise itself; both must have a cause, both the house wherein Moses was faithful, and Christ's house.

*But he that built all things is God;* but he who built his church in all ages, whether the Israelitish or Christian, and all things about it of which we speak, and all things else, Mt 16:18 Joh 1:1,3 Col 1:20; he *is God* essentially; and Christ, doing God's work and building all things, is not by name only, but by nature, God. The whole world is his workmanship, but the church is the most rare, curious, and excellent piece of it. Christ is not part of the house, as Moses is, but the builder of it; he is the Creator and builder both of the church and him, and so infinitely above him.

Hebrews 3:5

Ver. 5. The gospel Minister doth not only excel Moses as much as a builder doth his work, but as a son doth a servant, proved in this and Heb 3:6.

*And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant;* your great legal prophet, in whom many of you Hebrews trust, Joh 5:45, did truly and fully reveal and do what God charged him, in ministering his will to his church, Ex 40:16-33; he did not diminish from, nor add the least to, God's charge, θεραπων, Nu 12:7. As a minister, Moses was as faithful as any God had; not a slave or a drudge, but a free, willing, ingenuous servant, most entirely and obsequiously addicting himself in that honourable place and office of great trust, to which God called him; a stewardly servant, a prophet and a prince, inspecting and ordering all according to God's will; in all Christ's house and family, his church, he is but a servant.

*For a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after:* his faithfulness was evident in his bearing true witness to the church, of all God made known to him, that they might not be uncertain of the truth; even all that truth, which was more fully and clearly to be spoken by the prophets after him, and by Christ and his apostles; but which the Spirit shall speak to them further concerning Christ and his church in this Epistle, Joh 5:46. In which is insinuated, that Christ was the truth himself

witnessed to by Moses, who was a witness of an inferior degree, though in his work faithful, and conformed unto Christ.

### Hebrews 3:6

Ver. 6. *But Christ as a son over his own house;* the anointed gospel Prophet by God the Father, Heb 1:9, who was eminently faithful and true to his trust, who is Heir and Lord of all, and therefore by the law of nature and nations is above the best servant, Ga 4:1. Who is the Head and Lord over his own church, which he purchased by his own blood, Ac 20:28, and built for himself. Moses was in it but a servant, fulfilling his Master's will and pleasure, and ordering all in it agreeable to it.

*Whose house are we;* the Hebrews' personal privilege, as well as the Prophet's excellency, persuading and obliging them to know by consideration what is represented to them, and to influence their hearts to a perseverance under his teaching and government in their Christian course, because they are parts of his house, and members of his church; a particular house, and body, and church to him, and members of the catholic one. A temple, wherein God doth inhabit and dwell by his Spirit, 1Co 3:16,17: compare Eph 2:21 3:17 1Ti 3:15. A house he will glorify and perfect with his own presence, and which he will fill with transcendently more glory than he did the literal temple, Ex 40:34,35 2Ch 7:1,2 Isa 6:1,5: compare Hag 2:6. But how completely shall it be filled with his glory in heaven! Php 3:21. How should such a glorious state influence them to a sincere perseverance in his religion!

*If we hold fast the confidence;* a tenacious holding, as with both hands, with our utmost strength, against all insinuations and temptations of all adversaries whatsoever, which would either entice or force them from it. παρρησιαν της ελπιδος, is an ingenuous, bold, and confident profession of our hope before all the world, without doubting, wavering, or fearful shaking about what is the true object of it, let the persecutions or sufferings for it be what they will.

*And the rejoicing of the hope:* hope here is a firm expectation of salvation in eternal glory by Jesus Christ. It necessarily includes in it faith, for we cannot hope for that we do not believe; and faith representing to the soul

from the gospel, Christ purchasing, and the Father in him covenanting and promising to give it to us, if we truly believe in and sincerely obey him, so as we may on the surest and best grounds look out for it, and expect it, Heb 3:14 6:11 Ac 26:6,7: compare Col 1:5,23 Tit 2:13 1Pe 1:3. This *hope* keeps up the soul in a joyous and glorious condition under all threatening evil; it makes Christians glory in tribulation, Ro 5:2,3 12:12; rejoicing in want of sensible good, 2Co 6:10; compare 1Pe 5:10.

*Firm unto the end*; both this confidence and glorying of hope must be retained firm to the end. Persevere they must in the exercise of them with stability and constancy, till they reach the salvation of their souls, Col 1:23 1Pe 1:5-10; which Christians are not to trust to their own power to compass, but on the continued assistance of God in the use of those means that he hath appointed thereunto, who will never be wanting to such who do so rely on him, and constantly seek it from him, 1Co 1:8,9.

Hebrews 3:7

Ver. 7. The Spirit enforceth his counsel for those Hebrews' improvement of his doctrine about the gospel Prophet, by alleging a sad example of their fathers refusing to hear and obey him, from Heb 3:7-11. The allegation might be best placed in parenthesis, and the introductive illative particle:

*Wherefore*, may refer to Heb 3:12: *Take heed, brethren*.

*As the Holy Ghost saith*; as the Spirit, the Holy One, that third relation in the Trinity, whose essence is holiness, is the author of what the psalmist doth write, and is here quoted by him, Ps 95:7-11. So that the example registered is true and infallible, and should suitably affect them, reading it.

*To-day if ye will hear his voice*; every present time, wherein the great Builder and Lord of God's church speaketh to them; God would not have a hearer of his Prophet to procrastinate a day, but to be exercising all those internal acts, which this word of sense *hear* doth comprehend, such as reacheth the heart as well as the ear; if you will attend, intend, believe, love, and obey; a hearing better than all external sacrifices, 1Sa 15:22. The angel of the covenant speaking his mind and will to them by Moses and the prophets, which was for the matter of it faith in God's covenant, made

with them in and through Christ, Ps 95:7: compare Ex 23:20-23.

Hebrews 3:8

Ver. 8. *Harden not your hearts*: to help in the former duty the Spirit subjoins this negative counsel. That is styled hard, which will not yield to any impression: make not your heart a stone, so as not to understand, believe, or obey God's voice to it, De 15:17 1Sa 6:6; for God requires them to be fleshy tables, to write his will on, 2Co 3:3. The hardening of this part is the hardening of the whole person, and when hardened by themselves, is provoking God's judicial hardening of them to their destruction.

*As in the provocation*; εν τω παραπικρασμω, in the bitter contention, comprehending in it both work, season, and place; called Meribah, Nu 20:13,14; names of places and persons by words of the same signification, though not of the same sound.

*In the day of temptation in the wilderness*; in the day of Massah, when Israel in the wilderness did murmur, and strive against, and vexed God, (after he had divided the sea for them), for their want of water, Ex 17:2,7 De 6:16 33:8; that bitter contest of unbelief after the sight of so many miracles, when they cried out: *Is the Lord among us?* Ps 95:8. It may also refer to the whole forty years' time of their murmuring and tempting him in the wilderness.

Hebrews 3:9

Ver. 9. *When your fathers tempted me*; in the time and place forementioned, the fathers from whom you derive your being and corruption, yet glory in them and their traditions, whose state is aggravated from your line of successive rebellion, Ac 7:51-53. They have embittered my Spirit by their unbelief; for upon the want of water, they questioned his power, wisdom, truth, and providence, to the denial of all, and sometimes multiplied it, Nu 16:1-50, &c.

*Proved me*; a discontented quarrel with, and scrutiny of, Christ the

Redeemer, that if he would not serve their lust, they would deny him, and apostatize from him, and return to Egypt; notwithstanding their having sufficient proof of him, yet they would contend with him, 1Co 10:9.

*And saw my works forty years;* all the Redeemer's miracles, which he wrought for them in Egypt and the wilderness, they saw them plainly and presently on their tempting him; miracles of mercy and of punishments, by fire, by the earth opening, by fiery serpents, by the sword, by consuming six hundred thousand of them: all which were evidences sufficient to convince any of the wickedness of mistrusting him, De 29:2-4. This hardening of their hearts yet continued *forty years*, till all but two of them, Joshua and Caleb, were consumed; God by their sin was so grieved with them after such experience of his power for so long a time: see Ex 32:10 Nu 14:22.

Hebrews 3:10

Ver. 10. *Wherefore I was grieved with that generation;* because they thus tempted and proved him by hardening their hearts in unbelief forty years, God the Redeemer, Isa 63:16 1Co 10:9, *was grieved;* which is attributed to him improperly, who is not subject to passions; but as men grown impatient with grievous and oppressive burdens, so he expresseth his dislike, disdain of them, and, resolution to bear no longer, as Am 2:13. They split on him, as a ship on a sharp point of a rock, so as God hath loss, offence, and trouble by it; and all of them did so carry it to him, the whole age of them but Caleb and Joshua, Ps 95:10.

*And said, They do always err in their heart;* they follow deceit and lying in their doctrine and worship with all their heart, so that it is diffused through their persons, and that seat of truth is made a depth of error, to the stupifying of their hearts even to very madness; and this was their state all their time.

*And they have not known my ways;* notwithstanding God's works were among them, and his word, yet they would not know his mind, so as to approve, love, and walk in God's ways; his law, doctrine, revealed truth, and commands were all cast behind their back, Eze 23:35.

## Hebrews 3:11

Ver. 11. *So I swear in my wrath:* such were their provocations and temptations of their Redeemer, that he determined their punishment; the certainty of which he fixed by an irreversible oath, which is the highest confirmation of vengeance when it cometh from wrath; as of his promise, when it issueth from grace, Nu 14:27-36 Ps 95:11: compare Heb 6:17,18. And the spring of it here is *wrath*, enraged by their murmurings and unbelief.

*They shall not enter into my rest:* the punishment is expressed in an expostulatory form, which is vehemently asserting the negative of the question; They shall never enter into my rest. If they enter in, then I am neither true nor God. The rest literal was the land of Canaan, De 12:9; in the truth of that type, heaven. It is the Redeemer who speaks this, whose rest is by way of efficiency, purchase, and donation; he gives entrance into it, and shuts out of it, Mt 7:21-23. This is a shutting them out of all peace, into eternal sorrow, anguish, distress, and trouble, and every other evil contrary unto this rest.

## Hebrews 3:12

Ver. 12. Here the Spirit applieth the former dreadful example of sin and judgment to the Hebrews, to forewarn them how they sinned as these did, lest they partake of the like vengeance; and so enters his caution against unbelief.

*Take heed, brethren:* Βλεπετε signifies not an act of sight, but of the mind, circumspection, watchfulness, and heed, taking exactest caution of the evil forbidden, Heb 12:15,25 1Co 8:9.

*Brethren* they were to Paul in the flesh, and more so as true believers in Christ; he cautions them particularly, one by one, lest any root of bitterness should be amongst them, Heb 12:15.

*Lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief:* the heart is the first, and proper, and chief subject, wherein all sin riseth, and from thence

issueth into words and works, Mt 15:18,19; compare Jas 1:14,15. This comprehendeth the mind, will, and affections, the whole inward man: and this heart in every man is naturally and habitually evil, continually forging and framing of it, Ge 6:5; compare Jer 17:9. Almighty grace only can change this heart; yet it works by counsel, and makes the soul willing to use the means appointed to effect it.

*Unbelief*, though but in itself, is but a denial to assent to or rely on the will of God revealed to it, yet is the spring and fountain of all other sin, the teeming womb from whence all issueth, as uncleanness, idolatry, unrighteousness, superstition, &c. It was the hardening sin of their forefathers, they would not believe, and then did murmur and rebel. It is the root of apostacy; men breaking their covenant with God in Christ, do then desert him. Against this perfidious, impious, perverted temper doth he caution them to watch, that neither for measure, nor season they ever do admit or allow it; that there be not at all in the least degree, or at any time, such a base, malignant quality in their hearts, Ro 11:20,21.

*In departing from the living God*; turning away, standing off, and separating the heart; it implies in it a real, total, final defection; actual and formal apostacy from him whom they had owned and received; and is actual rebellion against their lawful Sovereign, by turning either Jews or heathens, and renouncing the Christian religion and its Author; who is the living God, not only formally, as opposed to dead idols, but efficiently the Author and Fountain of all sorts of life, but especially of spiritual and eternal life, Joh 5:19-21,25,26: which living God is our Lord Jesus Christ, Heb 3:7, whose voice they were to hear, who was tempted by their unbelief in the wilderness, 1Co 10:9, who gave the law to them at Sinai, Heb 12:26. So that to apostatize from him and his religion, is to apostatize from God, and to renounce eternal life, and to subject themselves to eternal punishments, which he ever liveth to inflict on them. Unless they took heed to avoid this unbelief, it was impossible for them to persevere in Christianity, when threatened with persecutions, and the loss of peace, liberty, safety, estates, honours, relations, and life itself for it.

Hebrews 3:13

Ver. 13. *But exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day*: the means



to avoid the former evil is, to *exhort*; which, as a private duty, is an earnest, frequent calling on, stirring up, or persuading, encouraging to perseverance in the Christian religion, and to put away all heart evil, especially unbelief, which traineth to apostacy; to which are subservient God's precepts, promises, threatenings suitably applied by them. And this is not only privately, but especially publicly, by the regular ministration of the word and ordinances to the whole society of Christians, as they are personally obliged to it, being members one of another, 1Co 12:25,27. And this they are to do instantly, for no man is sure what may be on the morrow, he being but a days-man, living, and supplied, as working by the day: Sufficient to the day is the duty as well as the evil in it, Mt 6:11,34. Whilst then the day of grace and repentance lasts, in which God calls and entreats, and will hear and help, the opportune time of exhorting, the very instant wherein God expecteth it, Heb 3:7 Ps 95:7. And every one, as thus to look to another, must begin with himself, lest any miscarry; charity, especially as to this, should begin in every Christian at home.

*Lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin;* lest themselves or others refuse the gospel tendered, or reject and apostatize from it after professing it, so as to become not only obstinate, but rebellious, by unbelief, and an habitual hardened heart; so as the sinful, natural habit of our soul, Jas 1:12,15, so horribly vile in itself, that were it not masked nature would abhor it, might be drawn forth by the false colours, as the devil blinds sin with, to delude the understanding, and to catch and insnare the malignant will, that it swallows it more and more, to the hardening of the heart; that Divine promises, threatenings, nor admonitions, can make any impression; it being unmoved under the application of all these, disregards the Christian faith, and hath its issue in a total apostacy, Jer 17:9 Eph 4:22 1Ti 1:19.

### Hebrews 3:15

Ver. 15. This is another circumstance of the example of the Jews applied to them: That since now Christ is speaking to you, as he did to your forefathers then; the same voice concerning you both, so as, not tomorrow, or when you will, but *To-day*, if you will believe what God speaketh to you by him, and hath recorded in his word concerning his

being the Messiah, and render not yourselves deaf to God's voice, or obdurate through unbelief, as your forefathers did, when their unbelief and hardness of heart embittered God's Spirit against them, because acting in it against their solemn vows and engagements to him, so as to apostatize from him.

### Hebrews 3:16

Ver. 16. *For some, when they had heard, did provoke:* this is a rational enforcement of the former duty pressed; it being as possible for them to provoke Christ as others, they should look to it, and not harden their hearts; for the greater *some*, the most of the congregation of Israel, embittered God's Spirit by their unbelief and hardness of heart; though Christ spake to them from heaven, as never was before done, and daily by Moses they were hearing counsels by which they might live, yet provoked they him, and would not believe.

*Howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses:* this rightly interprets the psalmist, and sets a better example of their fathers for them to follow. Let Caleb and Joshua, believers, and obedient to God, be your patterns to imitate. He aggravates the disobedience of the one, and the obedience of the other. They all had equally a clear exemption and deliverance from the place of bondage, and that by Moses, by whom God wrought such miracles as might command faith from any; yet these *some*, by murmuring and striving with the Redeemer, provoked him: how great is their sin! How suitable and pleasing the obedience of the others to him!

### Hebrews 3:17

Ver. 17. By these questions the Spirit makes a more lively representation of these unbelieving provokers of God, that his reason may have the more force with them. Do ye observe with whom God was grieved? The form puts them on more exact notice for their caution: God suffers not by passion, but these redeemed out of Egypt carried it contrary to him, and crossed his will, that which usually grieveth us. Concerning the word, see Heb 3:10. It is used by the Septuagint, De 7:26, to express that detestation and abhorrence which Israel was to show against idols, that they should be

a grief to their soul not to be endured: idols are called grievances. He was displeased and grieved with their covenant breaking with him forty years together. These sinners, by their unbelief, murmuring, idolatry, rebellion against his officers and ordinances, and their other lusts, so embittered his Spirit, that he by various judgments destroyed them, and turned them into the grave and hell together, 1Co 10:5-11. Moses and others of God's own cannot be numbered among these sinners, for their sins were pardoned and persons accepted; and though they came short of the literal, had a much more abundant entrance administered to them into the heavenly Canaan.

### Hebrews 3:18

Ver. 18. To prevent these Hebrews falling, the Spirit repeats the direful oath of God to apostates in the wilderness; the form of which was opened, Heb 3:11: compare Nu 14:30. The matter sworn was, that they should be so far from possessing, that they should not so much as enter into the land of promise, Canaan, which was God's property, as the whole earth is; he promised it to them, could only dispossess their enemies, did give it in possession to their seed, and made it a type of heaven, and of his rest there; he swore this in his severe vindictive justice, so as his sentence was irreversible; which oath stands good against all total and final apostates from him, who have thereby forfeited any title to God's eternal rest.

*Them that believed not;* those who were unbelieving under all God's miracles of mercies and judgments, which they saw, and so became obstinately disobedient to God's commands, and broke his covenant, Heb 8:9 Jer 31:32, and apostatized from him, and so perished in their gainsaying.

### Hebrews 3:19

Ver. 19. The execution of the matter sworn was felt by these Hebrews, which should make them and all that read it to dread both their sin and punishment, which the gospel would as justly inflict on them, if unbelievers. It is to be seen in God's written record of it, and the experienced downfall of such, that God's oath had shut the door as to their entrance there, and his judgments consumed them in the wilderness,

because of their denial of resting on God's word, and the impious practices that issued from it, in their rejecting promises, rebelling against precepts, and murmuring against providence. God is no respecter of persons; if we sin so against his Son and gospel, how much sorer punishment will overtake us! Heb 10:27,29.

Hebrews 4:1

### Chapter Summary

Heb 4:1-11 The rest of Christians to be attained by faith.

Heb 4:12,13 The power of God's word.

Heb 4:14-16 Having Jesus the Son of God for our High Priest, we must hold fast our profession, and come boldly unto the throne of grace.

Ver. 1. *Let us therefore fear:* the Spirit draws this counsel from the former sad event of unbelief in the progenitors of these Hebrews, who were shut out of an earthly Canaan by it, which was promised to them: hereon he adviseth them to avoid that sin which will have now as fearful a punishment, viz. the shutting them out of the heavenly Canaan, tendered and promised to believers in thee gospel. Fear is that affection of the soul, by which it avoideth and shunneth what is hurtful to it, and here carrieth it in a gracious and child-like care and jealousy of slighting the Father's promise, and coming short of heaven; it is a fear issuing from faith, Php 2:12.

*Lest, a promise being left us;* lest the promise of God to men, who swear some should not enter, but promised others should, as Nu 14:23,24,30,31; a promise of the most excellent, glorious, and heavenly rest made to believers, Isa 11:10. This was graciously *left* or made to them by God; but καταλειπομενης here is an act of sin, lest we by sin should leave or reject God's promise of the better, as the Hebrews did of the literal, rest, by their unbelief and disobedience to God's law; and so is the proper object of fear, and therefore ought to have been read, lest the promise being left behind.

*Of entering into his rest;* of a free entrance into heaven, and enjoying a

glorious rest with God there.

*Any of you should seem to come short of it:* he would have it the fear of all, that not one soul might be endangered by it; so as not in any measure to slight such a promise, nor as much as to seem so, flying from the very appearance of evil, 1Th 5:22; υστερηκεναι, a metaphor taken from racers, where any are outrun and left behind; noting the miserable state of such Christians who profess to run to heaven, but never do so as to obtain it, 1Co 9:24-26. Alas, he that falleth short of heaven, reacheth home to hell!

Hebrews 4:2

Ver. 2. *For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them:* the reason enforcing the former counsel is, their having mutually the same means, the one as the other, and if they fear not, may be guilty of the same sin; for the Hebrews and the whole church were evangelized by the outward publishing to them, and their professed reception of, the glad tidings of salvation by God the Son incarnate, who was to lead them in the way to God's eternal rest; which if they had been truly evangelized and transformed by, they could never have been shut out of God's rest; the same gospel being preached to both their forefathers and them, though more gloriously revealed to the latter, 2Co 3:10,11. For the gospel was preached to Abraham and to his offspring, that in his eminent Seed, the Lord Jesus Christ all nations should be blessed, Ge 22:18; compare Joh 8:56. He was the Angel of the covenant that was Lord of God's hosts, and was to lead them into the literal and heavenly Canaan, Ex 23:20 Jos 5:13-15 Isa 11:10. So that none entered into either of God's rests but by him alone, who so testifieth by himself, Joh 5:39,46, and by his Spirit, Ac 15:11.

*But the word preached did not profit them:* the gospel was so preached to them, that they did or might hear it, Ro 10:14,15; compare Ps 92:4 Isa 52:7; yet did it not prove effectual to many of those Hebrews, to bring them either into the literal or heavenly Canaan, but they came short of God's rest in both; they not performing what he required, he by an irreversible sentence excluded them: see Heb 3:17,19.

*Not being mixed with faith in them that heard it;* συγκεκραμενος a

metaphor taking from mixing things in the stomach, as meat and drink, without the concoction of which there can be no nourishing the body; setting forth the sin of these Hebrews, who never received nor mixed this gospel which they heard with a sincere faith in their souls, so as, being digested thereby, it might be united with it. Thus that which was the mighty power and wisdom of God to salvation to those who believed, was a word of condemnation and eternal death to unbelievers, 1Co 1:18 1Pe 2:2,3.

Hebrews 4:3

Ver. 3. *For we which have believed do enter into rest:* a further reason setting home this counsel, was the certain benefit of our care in believing; for that the community of real Christians, partakers and exercisers of the same precious faith, as Paul himself, 2Pe 1:1, have the same privilege as believing Caleb and Joshua had, Nu 14:24,30, to enter into God's rest; initially having peace with God now, and his love shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, witnessing their reconciliation, justification, renovation, adoption, so as they rejoice in hope of the glory of God, Ro 5:1,2,5; and are by believing and obedience making out to the attainment of the final and complete rest of God in heaven, of which they are afraid to fall short.

*As he said, As I have sworn in my wrath:* God himself confirms this by his oath, Heb 3:11,18 Ps 95:11. At the same time that he excludeth all unbelievers from entering in, he inclusively and by consequence sweareth that all believers do and shall enter in.

*If they shall enter into my rest:* that rest which David there speaks of was not God's rest on the seventh day from the creation after the finishing of God's works, nor the temporal rest in the land of Canaan which the Jews had, and were past, as these Hebrews might suggest; but another rest to come, either in the world to come, Heb 2:5, or in the heavenly rest in glory, which he takes occasion further to explain to them.

*Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world:* καὶ τοι some render as a particle of exception, *although*, as if it intended, although God's rest is some where meant of his rest after the finishing of

the works of creation, yet here God speaks of the rest of Canaan, a type of the heavenly one: others, that God swore they should not enter into his rest, although God's works were done, and the rest were ready, because of their unbelief. Others render it, and indeed he said and spake of the same heavenly rest, long before he spake of the rest of Canaan, even upon the finishing of his works from the foundation of the world: which seems most agreeable to the Spirit's design here.

#### Hebrews 4:4

Ver. 4. *For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise;* the Spirit proves, that the rest mentioned by David, Ps 95:11, is not meant the seventh day's rest, because spoken three thousand years after that rest was past; but this rest of which he speaks was to come, though spoken of and known then: for Moses had spoken of it in a well known place to them, Ge 2:1-3, and this when he wrote of the seventh day, which was eminently noting the sabbath, and a type of God's most excellent rest which he swore unto believers.

*And God did rest the seventh day from all his works:* God doth not here rest as if he were weary, Isa 40:28, but ceased from the creation of all kind of things he purposed to make, but not from their propagation and his providence about them, Ac 17:25. And this he did on the seventh day, which he instituted a sabbath for his people, Ge 2:3; which resting day may type out the eternal rest of angels and men, when their work of obedience is finished: and yet was not God's rest spoken of in the Psalm, nor promised in the gospel to believers, for this was yet to come; whereas the seventh day's rest was entered into from the foundation of the world.

#### Hebrews 4:5

Ver. 5. *And in this place again:* καὶ here is not so much copulative, connecting an instance of David to the same purpose of that of Moses about the seventh day's rest from the creation; but disjunctive, joining an instance of another rest of God different from the seventh day's rest. Moses spake of this, but David here of a further rest; for in Ps 95:11, David spake not of the seventh day, but of God's last and eternal rest.

*If they shall enter into my rest;* εἰ here is affirmative, as appears by comparing [Heb 4:3](#) and [Heb 4:6](#), that these shall have a real and full possession in the future after David's time of this rest, and therefore different from Moses's rest so long past before. The word *rest* in the Hebrew is not the same in the text of Moses and David; [Ge 2:2,3](#), it is שבת in [Ps 95:11](#), מנוחה this of David noting the full, eternal, comfortable rest of souls in glory, sworn by God to believers in the gospel.

#### Hebrews 4:6

Ver. 6. The Spirit having demonstrated, that God's rest sworn to believers in the gospel, and mentioned by David, could not be the seventh day's rest; proceeds to prove likewise, that it could not be the rest of Israel in the land of Canaan, since that was entered into four hundred years before he wrote by the Spirit of this better rest, since those unbelieving Israel that entered into Canaan never entered into this rest.

*Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein;* forasmuch then as a rest to come is spoken of, and that some believers must have a real and full possession of the glorious rest offered to them in the gospel, as David foretold: see [Heb 4:9-11](#).

*And they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief;* the unbelieving Israel, who had the glad tidings of this rest preached unto them by Moses and by David, &c., yet entered not into it, though they entered into and lived in Canaan, because of their disobedience and unbelief. Then it follows Canaan's rest and this cannot be all one, and the latter only is intended by David here.

#### Hebrews 4:7

Ver. 7. *Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David:* this is a further proof, that David did not mean or intend the rest of the Jews in Canaan, in the [Ps 95:1-11](#), from the determined time of it; as if the Spirit had said: Besides what I have proved, take another argument; Again I argue. God by the prophet setteth out, and severeth from all other time, a certain stated



day, from which the rest spoken of is cleared, and of it testifieth by him, Ps 95:7,8.

*To-day, after so long a time;* after four hundred years past of Israel's rest in Canaan, which was a long time, doth David say of to-day, a time present, then and further to be extended, even the gospel day, in David's time, and after it; not in Joshua's, for that was past long before.

*As it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts;* ye ought to-day to hear, receive, and believe the gospel of God's rest, and not by unbelief to turn your hearts from the voice of God in the gospel.

Hebrews 4:8

Ver. 8. This is the improvement of the former instance, Heb 4:7. If Joshua, by bringing Israel into Canaan, had given rest to all believers, then God would not by David have spoken of another day and state of rest to come. Joshua was a type of Jesus bringing believers into the true rest of the heavenly Canaan, as he did Israel into a literal one, Ac 7:45.

*For if Jesus had given them rest;* if that of Canaan was the full and perfect rest of believers, which was given them by him.

*Then would he not afterward have spoken of another day;* then God himself would not have spoken by David of a better and heavenly rest promised believers in the gospel; of which spiritual and eternal one, both God's seventh-day sabbath, and the rest of Canaan, were but fainter shadows and types. The expostulation is vehemently denying it.

Hebrews 4:9

Ver. 9. Here the Spirit concludes from his former proofs, that there is a more excellent rest revealed to faith in the gospel, which is remaining, future, and to come, and will surely and most certainly do so; though it be behind, yet it will be enjoyed. A sabbatism, which is a state and season of a most glorious rest, (see Heb 4:10), shall be enjoyed by sincere believers, the true Israel of God, of whom he is the Proprietor, and who are for their

eternal state so excellently holy, and of so Divine a nature, that he is not ashamed to be called their God. They have an entrance here into the initials of this sabbatism in internal peace, and the glorious liberty of the children of God; and by it are secured of their full possession of it in the eternal inheritance of the saints in light, Col 1:12,13 1Pe 1:3-5 Re 14:13.

Hebrews 4:10

Ver. 10. This proveth the foregoing consequence of a rest remaining, from the nature of a true rest, which is a resting from all labours, which the Israelites did not in Canaan, therefore it is yet to come. For every true believer who hath full possession of God's rest, where God is satisfying of them in bliss, they rest in his loves, of which the sabbath and Canaan were but types.

*He also hath ceased from his own works;* such true Christians have ceased and rested from all their sinful works and labours, as works of callings, miseries, anxieties, and sufferings of any kind, resting from them perfectly and perpetually, having finished all his work of evangelical obedience through them.

*As God did from his;* they have rested not in a parity of rest, or work in kind, but as God from his own in likeness of order, his work going before rest, and of rest fitted for believers by him conformable to his own. Some refer these words and the relative *he* to our Lord Jesus Christ, as Head of his body, the church of true believers; and that the parallel runs between God the Father and him in the works of the old and new creation, which works were good and complete in their different kinds, in their cessation from them, and their rest in their respective sabbaths, both days being founded thereon; and that believers shall be conformable to their Head, treading in his steps in doing and suffering, and then in rest.

Hebrews 4:11

Ver. 11. *Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest:* this is the use of the former doctrine, that since many through unbelief fall short of God's rest, therefore let us labour:  $\sigma\pi\omicron\upsilon\delta\alpha\sigma\omega\mu\epsilon\nu$  imports study of mind, earnestness

of affection, diligence of endeavour, with all the powers of soul and body to intend this work: so is it used, 2Pe 1:10. This is the most necessary, excellent, and important one to us in this world, our single great business in it; and therefore, as students, our minds must be bent on it, and our wills fixed and resolved about it, and the operations of all the executive powers of our persons put forth to the utmost degree, so as all the duties necessary thereunto, as attendance on all ordinances, and the constant exercise of faith and obedience, must be fitting us for, and bringing us into, the full possession of the eternally blessed and glorious rest of God, 2Pe 1:5-11.

*Lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief;* that not any particular person may fall into sin and the consequences of it. The particle *εν* may be read, into, and then it implies, lest any of you prove rebels and apostates. Or it is read, by, or after, and then it is a fall to destruction and hell, with all the miseries that those feel who are shut out of God's rest, as their unbelieving forefathers were. God spared neither apostate men nor angels, and will not spare others if they sin as those did. Our judgments may be rather sorer, being warned by their example, 1Co 10:11; compare Heb 10:26,27,29. They were contumacious and disobeyed the gospel of God's rest, therefore he destroyed them in the wilderness, and thrust them down to hell for ever: avoid you their sin, as you would labour to avoid their punishment.

Hebrews 4:12

Ver. 12. *For the word of God:* the efficacy of the word of God is a further enforcement of their studious labour to enter into God's rest, for that calleth us thereunto; even the law and doctrine of the gospel brought by the incarnate Word from heaven, preached by him to the world, dictated and inspired into the holy penmen both of the Old and New Testament by the Holy Ghost, and written by them at his call and order, 2Pe 1:19-21; representing all those precepts and prohibitions, promises and threatenings, by which God will judge to whom this gospel hath been preached in that man whom he hath appointed: compare Heb 2:1,2, and Heb 4:1,2 of this. And this word was written by David, Ps 95:1-11, even a word of exhortation, promise, and threatening, as opened before, and shows the perfection of this gospel law in its administration by Christ.

*Is quick;* this word, like the incarnate Word, is ζων, not only a living word, but a quickening word, making dead sinners living Christians; souls dead in sins and trespasses, alive to God. This word, the breath of God, conveyeth spirit and life to them, 2Ti 3:16 1Pe 1:23: so David experienced it, preserving the life it breathed into him, Ps 119:50; and the members of the church, 1Co 4:15; compare 2Co 3:6,17,18; and as a rule it guideth and directeth them through Christ unto eternal life, Joh 6:68.

*And powerful;* ενεργης it is an active word, powerful in its effects, the very ministration of the Spirit, 2Co 3:8, most efficacious and energetical for convincing, converting, comforting; and for condemning, killing: it acts like the power of God; so Ro 1:16,18.

*And sharper than any two-edged sword;* τομωτερος signifieth a cutting sharpness, as becometh several uses, as searching, letting out corruption, or for killing; all which agree to this Divine word; sharper than any sword with two mouths. The Hebrews style the edge the mouth, that which bites, tearth, or woundeth; as Re 1:16, and Re 2:12. The word for spiritual execution upon souls is more sharp, and above every other sword; there is none so piercing for cutting the heart, or killing sin in it. So is it used, Eph 6:17; compare Ac 2:37 7:54. It is Christ's weapon of offence and defence for his people, and it cuts without resistance; with it he is defending his truth, and smiting his enemies, Isa 11:4; compare Re 19:13,15,21.

*Piercing even to the dividing asunder;* δυκνουμενς, piercing, or going through what is smitten with it; which way soever it is turned it forceth its way through all opposition, to a dividing into parts, and separating the most nearly united and closely joined things, laying open the very entrails, the most inward in a man; where the metaphors taken from the closest parts of the person are applied to the soul.

*Of soul:* ψυχη may denote not so much the natural life and the faculties of that, but that which is styled the rational soul as unregenerate: see 1Co 2:14. Such an animal, carnal soul as is purely human, 1Co 3:3, which wants both a principle, light, and faculty to discern the things of God, as no natural eye can see a spirit, Ro 8:5-8.

*And spirit;* πνευματος, the soul of man regenerate and spiritualized, called *spirit*, 1Th 5:23. The soul enlightened, renewed, and governed by

the Holy Ghost; not altered as to its substance, but as to its qualities; whose understanding, will, and affections are spiritualized, manifested in its actions, agreeable to the spiritual will of God, 1Co 2:10,12,14,15. These are both of them under the piercing power of the word, and the Spirit can reach them by it as he pleaseth.

*And of the joints and marrow:* αρμων are not the members, but the nerves, membranes, muscles, whereby the members or limbs are joined one to another, so as not without incision to be discovered; and *the marrow* within the bones, there must be a breaking or perforating them to reach it. By which metaphors are set out the hardest, compactest, and most intimate parts of a sinner, the most secret hidden ones, which no natural reason can reach; yet the word of God pierceth them, to discover either the evil or good of them, and to inflict wrath, or communicate comfort, according to their conditions.

*And is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart:* the word of God is a most nice, exact, and critical judge, discerning the gravity and rectitude of them; it discovers and distinguisheth them as they are, or not, agreeable to itself, the fundamental truth; and is capable, as a judge, to charge or discharge, as its author will, by it, Ro 2:12,15,16; compare 1Co 14:24,25. It discovers the most inward, close, secret, and constant motions, both speculative and practical, of the soul of man inseparably united to the heart; and one with another, whether they are opinions, conceptions, resolutions, or decrees, so subtile and so secret, as who can know them, but he who made the heart? Ge 6:5 Jer 17:9.

Hebrews 4:13

Ver. 13. *Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight:* και is not only copulative, but rational, showing the ground of the former efficacy of the gospel word, because its Author seeth and knoweth all persons and things, and filleth it with this power and force. For every creature which God the Son created, angel, or man, or any other, from the greatest to the least, from the leviathan to a mite, and all parts of every creature, especially of every creature to whom the gospel is preached, Mr 16:15; not any one is αφανης, without light, invisible, unapparent, obscure, or possible to be covered, or hid, or concealed from his view or

face: where the relative αὐτοῦ agreeth with θεοῦ, God in Christ, and not with λογος, or the word, Heb 4:12, as the following relative evinceth. To this God-man no spirit nor thought can be hid; it shall not be so from the efficacious power of his word; much less shall infidelity or hypocrisy be hid from it, or his most piercing eye.

*But all things are naked and opened;* but all things in general and particular, not any one excepted, are bare, naked, unclothed, the covering is removed, all secrets are open and manifest to view, God the Son seeth within and without, all are unveiled to him, and laid open as by dissection, τετραχλισμενα a metaphor taken from the sacrificed beasts, which being skinned, were cut open from the neck, and so divided by the chine to the rump, or by the throat downward embowelled by the priests, so as every part within may be clearly seen whether clean or unclean. The truth of which is, the every thing in the world, even the most secret and inward thoughts of the heart of a sinner, which is a great deep, is opened and laid forth to every scruple unto God in Christ; every secret unbelief, apostatizing principle, or hypocrisy, he discerneth clearly and fully, Jer 17:9,10: he that made the eye, must see best.

*Unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do;* his eyes who pierceth beyond the vulture's, into things and places that no eye can discern, the souls of men, Job 28:7,10 Ps 94:9 Pr 20:12. All this is asserted concerning the person of whom Paul writes, Christ, God-man, the great gospel Minister, whose word is so powerfully piercing: of him and his word is all this speech and discourse; he it is who is the all-knowing and impartial Judge, and makes his gospel word of counsel, promise, and threatenings to cut so deeply, and search the secrets of the hearts of all.

#### Hebrews 4:14

Ver. 14. The excellency of the great gospel Minister beyond all others in respect of his priestly office, especially beyond Aaron and the Levitical priesthood, is shown by the Holy Ghost: (Heb 4:14-5:11). It is introduced as the Spirit's counsel to these Hebrews, from the premises, for their using of this High Priest, in order to their reaching home to the rest of God, to whom and whose profession they ought to adhere, since he is so fit and so willing to give them an entrance into it: compare Heb 2:17,18 3:1,6.

*Seeing then that we have a great High Priest;* being therefore by the Spirit through faith not only interested by a common relation in him, but by a real union to, and communion with him, as here described, a High Priest (Heb 2:11, and Heb 3:1) so great as none was, or can equal him: all the high priests on earth but imperfect types of him; above Aaron and all others; the grand presider over all God's worship, who had work peculiar to himself above all; the supreme and universal Priest in heaven and earth, whose title the Roman antichrist usurpeth, to him only due, *Pontifex optimus maximus*; yet officiating always for us.

*That is passed into the heavens;* he hath fulfilled his type, entering into the holy of holiest in heaven, taking possession of God's rest, and purchasing an entrance for us into it, and this after the removal of the curse, satisfaction of the Divine justice for our sins, victory over all enemies that would oppose his or our entrance by him, as sin, wrath, death, and the devil, and keeping possession of this rest for us, Heb 9:23,24,28.

*Jesus the Son of God;* Jesus the Saviour of his people from all their sins, their Emmanuel, Mt 1:20,21,23, who being God the Son by eternal generation, was incarnate by taking to himself and uniting a true body and a reasonable soul, being conceived miraculously by the virgin Mary from the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost: in which nature, inseparably united to his person, he fulfilled all righteousness, and died a sacrifice for our sins, and rose in our nature, and ascended and entered into the holy of holiest in heaven, and made atonement, and laid open the way to believers to enter God's rest there.

*Let us hold fast our profession;* the entire religion of which Jesus is the author, as opposite to that of the Jews in its principles and practical part of it, Heb 3:1, is powerfully, strongly, and perseveringly to be held by his without relaxation; in which if we follow him, cleave to him, and by him labour to enter, we shall not come short of God's rest, Heb 7:24,25: where the Head is, there shall the body be also, Joh 14:2,3 17:24.

Hebrews 4:15

Ver. 15. *For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the*

*feeling of our infirmities:* this duty of perseverance in the Christian religion, is enforced by the consideration of the sympathy of this High Priest, with the states of all who will enter into God's rest by him. He is worthy that we should hold it fast, being without impotency. It is impossible he should be pitiless to penitent sinners, though he be glorious, there being nothing in himself, or out of himself, indisposing him to it. *εμπαθησαι* imports such a sympathy or fellow feeling, as makes him like affected as if he were in the same case with them. He cannot but be compassionate, since inwardly affected and moved with the sufferings of his, Ac 9:5; compare Isa 58:9. As God, he is infinitely merciful; as man, inwardly feeling them, even all the miseries they were liable to, but sinful ones. He wants no bowels, but he hath, as a fellow feeling, so a fellow grieving, and fellow caring for the redress of them, even all such as are fit for his pity; and works on affections, a sense of guilt, fears, doubts, tremblings, weak-workings to God, the concomitant infirmities of sinful souls; all the weaknesses of grace in us, all troubles, distresses, anguishes in the flesh, the fruits of sin. He knows these sensibly as man, which as God singly he could not. These sinful weaknesses of soul inclining to sin, and disabling from resisting temptations, by which the subtle, powerful enemy of our soul prevaieth over us to the accumulating of sin and guilt daily and so need this sympathy of his to us-ward: see Heb 5:2 1Co 2:3 2Co 11:23-31 12:5,9,10.

*But was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin;* but *πεπειρασμενον*, was pierced and tried by all sorts of sufferings, being outwardly tempted by the devil to sin; inwardly he could not, being perfectly holy, Joh 14:30; but was outwardly with violence assaulted by him, Mt 4:1-11: and tried by men beyond any man, and tempted to the same sins whereby Adam fell, and others miscarry every day. He felt the curse of sin, the wrath of God, agonies in his soul, violent pains in his body, sorrows to the death from the cradle to the cross: and in every matter of grief and suffering in soul, in body, from the world, from Satan, from God, in all kinds of temptations spiritual and temporal; experiencing the evils of this life, hunger, thirst, weariness, grief, Isa 53:3-10, even such as we are liable to, all of them really and truly like ours, and more powerfully than ours; they were for similitude like, but for degree exceeding them; ours, for exquisiteness of sense, but a shadow of his. Yet under all these temptations he was sinless, as the Holy One of God; never did temptation prevail over him, he overcame all. Nothing was out of place or order by his



sufferings in him: all his affections and passions under these, regular, showing his innocency under variety of sufferings, and eminency of compassions. Sin hardens bowels, but he is compassionate without any mixture with or hinderance by corruption; and his intercession is the more effectual with God for us. What Christian under his conduct would not follow his great example, so to resist and conquer by him?

Hebrews 4:16

Ver. 16. *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace:* since our High Priest hath a sense of our infirmities, hath experienced our trials, and no sin is in him to shut up his bowels of compassion, therefore haste we to him, as those who desire to reach favours from our Sovereign, as our poor, guilty, needy souls want them. It is a soul-motion by faith and love, breathed forth in strong cries to his God and Father and ours, constantly approaching God in every duty by him: compare Heb 10:19-22; and that with open face, boldness, and assurance, without any shame or dismay, coming in the name and with the person of our great High Priest, who takes our duties and persons, and presents them, perfumed with the incense of his merits, to him. Away now with all unbelief, doubtings, or fears in our approach to him; admission to him, and hearing by him, is now certain unto the believer, Ro 5:1,2 Eph 2:18 3:12 1Jo 3:21,22 5:14,15. For his throne, now the Father is propitiated by him, is from a throne of strict justice made a throne of grace, of which the propitiatory seat over the ark of the covenant in the holy of holiest, both in the tabernacle and temple, was a type. All the terror and dread of it is now done away by Christ. Thunderings, and lightnings, and voices, and the sound of a trumpet are now ceased; the still voice of pardon, peace, purging and saving sinners, proceeds from it; grace in reference to believers, sits in all its glory, and majesty, and power only, Re 5:1,6,13; compare Heb 8:1 12:2 Eph 1:20. Christ now takes us by the hand, brings us thither, and pleads by his own blood for us, so as we may approach to it with greatest confidence.

*That we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need;* that we may actually partake of the fruits of Christ's purchase and intercession from the Father of mercy; pity suitable to our misery, pardon for our guilty souls, and relief for us under all our afflictions, Isa 63:7-9, and all grace necessary for us at all times for a seasonable help, but especially in times

of greatest need. It is most opportune, when most helpful: when infirmities, afflictions, temptations, and the snares of sin, beset us with grievous persecutions, then may we by prayer, through our High Priest, have recourse to this throne of grace for our suitable and sufficient supply, without which there is no holding fast our profession, or possibility of entrance into God's rest.

Hebrews 5:1

### Chapter Summary

Heb 5:1-4 Concerning the office of high priests taken from among men,

Heb 5:5-10 wherewith Christ's priesthood is compared, and its privileges set forth.

Heb 5:11-14 A further account of which is deferred, and for what reason.

Ver. 1. *For every high priest taken from among men:* *for* is a rational particle, enforcing the truth of what was asserted concerning the gospel High Priest before, that he was the most sensible and tender-hearted of all other, beyond what all his types were, even Aaron himself: how did it therefore behove those Hebrews to cleave to him and his religion, as to desert the Levitical priesthood which he had perfected in himself; he being more excellent for rise, qualities, office, call, than his preceding types, and the permanent truth of them all! For every one of that order in God's institution, and according to his law, ought to be selected out of the numbers of men for whom he was to minister, and therefore to be a man. He was not to be an angel, nor to minister for them; and being separated from men, is to be put into another and higher rank and order, Ex 28:1, than he was in before: no person was to usurp it, but to be designed to it according to the Divine law settled in that behalf. This was accomplished in Christ's person, and he hath not since selected out of men any such order of priests properly so called in the Christian church. His officers being so far from being high priests, that they are not so much as in the enumeration of their titles styled ἱερείς, priests; and as far is it from truth, that there are now as priests, so altars, sacrifices, temples in the Christian church properly so called; since it is expressly against the New Testament,

and if so spoken of by the fathers, it must be understood figuratively and metaphorically, or else it is untrue.

*Is ordained for men in things pertaining to God;* καθισταται, the designed person, is constituted and set over others for their good, to seek either temporal or spiritual good, as the office is: compare [Heb 8:3](#). By this ordination is power conveyed to this officer, and an obligation laid on him by a charge to exert it about things wherein men are concerned with God: he is a religious officer. Τα is imperfect, as [Heb 2:7](#), for εν τοις, in things, or κατα τα, about things. A sinner can undertake to manage nothing towards God immediately, or by himself, but with a mediating priest, who must know God's mind and perform it; and it was infinite mercy for God to institute such a help to sinners. The common sense of mankind about it since the fall doth evince it; no nation being without a religion, a temple, a place of worship, or a priest.

*That he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins;* who may bring home to God, the supreme Lord and King of all, gifts, which were those free-will offerings, as of things inanimate, the first-fruits of corn, wine, and oil, &c., or of sacrifices, such whereby they were to atone and propitiate God for their sins, they being guilty, and he just; those were necessary to satisfy his justice, remove his wrath, and procure his blessing. What those sacrifices were which would please him, God only could reveal, as who should offer them both for himself and others: and this he did reveal to Adam, Noah, and Abraham, and to Moses fully in his law given him about them on the mount, and of which he hath written in his last four books.

Hebrews 5:2

Ver. 2. *Who can have compassion on the ignorant:* the melting quality of the typical high priest is eminently to be fulfilled in the gospel one; each is to have an aptness, disposition, and a sufficiency of it, by the institution of God, for his ministrations, for manner as well as for matter, [Heb 2:18 4:15](#). Μετριοπαθειν, strictly, is to bear, suffer, or be affected in measure, or suffer moderately, with the failings of others, in such a degree as is necessary to incline, as far as he is able, to succour, help, and comfort those who are in misery. It notes sympathy, [Heb 2:18 Ro 12:15](#); and a suffering with them, yet so regulated by the Divine rule, as not to extend it

unto unfit subjects, nor in an undue measure, lest it unfits him for ministering for them. But the great High Priest excelleth in this, and is not bound to our measures, but sinlessly overabounds in it, to such as sin for want of knowledge of their duty, unwittingly, and without any forecast, for which the law provided a sacrifice, Le 4:2 Nu 15:24-29.

*And on them that are out of the way; πλανωμενοις* a metaphor borrowed from travellers gone out of their way; by which are understood such sinners as are misled by infirmity or violence of temptation, and so offend God by their opinions or practices; for the expiation of such were those sacrifices appointed, Le 5:6,7; but then they were such as were sensible of their sins, confessed them, and begged for pardon, of whom the High Priest was to be compassionate; but not of presumptuous and capital sinners, who were unfit subjects of God's mercy or man's: there being no sacrifices provided for such, but they were to die without mercy, Nu 15:30,31; compare Ex 22:14. God's altar itself is no protection to them, 1Ki 2:28,31. Such sins of infirmity which the Levitical high priest was liable to himself, was he to be compassionate of.

*For that he himself also is compassed with infirmity;* for that he was beset with infirmity, sin, ignorance, error, and disobedience; infirm in respect of duty and sacrifice, which was by reason of its weakness to be repeated yearly, Heb 10:1,11; and of the same infirm nature, liable to the griefs and miseries of his brethren both in soul and body. All these did surround and lie about him; he was sin and weakness all over, and therefore should be the more feeling of his brethren's states, and more careful and ready to sacrifice and intercede for himself and them. But our great High Priest hath all the sense of these, but no sin, Heb 4:15.

Hebrews 5:3

Ver. 3. This connection demonstrates the infirmity of the legal high priest: for this their infirmity, sins of ignorance and error.

*And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people;* he was obliged to his work by the express law of God, Le 1:1-17. It is a rule for what the priests ought to do, and so is the whole book, to which they are to be punctually obedient, even to sacrifice for particular sinners in the church, as they were

guilty and brought their sacrifice, Le 4:1-35, and for the whole church of Israel on the atonement day, Le 16:15-34.

*So also for himself, to offer for sins;* he had also his proper sacrifice for his own sins commonly, Le 4:3, extraordinarily on the day of atonement annually, Le 16:6-14. It is not necessary to a priest to be a sinner, but it is to be merciful. Adam offered prayers and praises to his Creator for himself and Eve in innocency; but since the fall our Lord Jesus Christ is the only tigh Priest without sin, and yet most merciful, as well as most sensible of the sins and miseries of penitent believing sinners. He offers up the sacrifice to God truly propitiatory, as his types did the typical ones, and procured the pardon which God promised to give upon his so sacrificing to him.

Hebrews 5:4

Ver. 4. This connecteth the last thing describing the typical Levitical priesthood, their call to it.

*And no man taketh this honour unto himself;* not any person whatsoever hath or can lawfully take to himself the honourable office of a high priest, so as to be the author or end of it. Many have usurped this office, and others have distributed it contrary to God's law, whose priesthood, offerings, and ministry are no true ones, especially where men are self-officiating, corruptly managing of it, as Eli's sons and Jeroboam's priests, or self-benefiting by it, 1Sa 2:13, &c.; Mic 3:11. This was so honourable an office as it was united to the principedom in Melchisedec and Jethro.

*But he that is called of God, as was Aaron;* he that is according to God's law, (the Author of this priesthood, its work and success), qualified in himself, separated from others, and actually honoured by God with it, he ought to take this office and execute his work in it to God's glory, depending on him for his blessing. Aaron is the particular instance of the Divine call to this office. God separated his tribe, family, and person for his service in the room of the first-born: God qualified him for it, entailed the high priesthood to his seed and offspring with the subordinate priesthood. He solemnly consecrated him by Moses, confirmed him in his work by fire from heaven at his first sacrifice, and vindicates his own call

of him to it by the blossoming rod, and destroying the rivals with him for it, Ex 28:29,30 Nu 16:35 17:5.

Hebrews 5:5

Ver. 5. The Spirit now draws the parallel, and shows, that whatsoever is requisite in God's high priest, is transcendently fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ, the infirmities of his types, which were accidental to the office, excepted.

*So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an High Priest:* he begins the parallel in his call to it: God-man, the, great gospel High Priest, anointed to this office in the flesh with the Holy Ghost, was not tainted with ambition, neither did usurp this honour and dignity, Joh 8:54, though there never was person qualified for it, or deserved it, like him. He never did intrude himself upon the office, or take the sacerdotal power to him, whatever others have done, and usurped it.

*But he that said unto him;* but God the Father bespeaketh him, and calleth him to this high office, as he did Aaron: he chose him, separated, sent, and anointed him for it. No less person than the eternal Jehovah could constitute and invest him in what was so high for dignity, so glorious for power; he did by speaking commission him for it, and did publish and testify the constitution, glorifying him in it, as is testified, Ps 2:7.

*Thou art my Son: Thou,* is not David, but Christ, as is interpreted, Heb 1:5 Ac 13:33. Art my only begotten Son, my natural Son, Joh 1:14,18; the first-born of God, Ps 89:27; compare Ro 8:29 Col 1:18. As his Son, the Father could appoint him to what calling he pleased. By his primogeniture he had right to the priesthood and kingship; and to these doth the Father call him, as who would not be denied by him.

*To-day have I begotten thee;* from eternity he had a right and title to this office, but his solemn investiture in it was on the resurrection day, then was he begotten to it; not only dedicated, as Hannah did Samuel to the priesthood, but solemnly, after his consecration by his own blood to it, Heb 9:10-12,23,24, compare Ro 1:4, was he by the Father proclaimed to be the Son-mediator, King, Priest, and Prophet, and made to enter the holy

of holiest in heaven, and to sit down there on his Father's right hand, invested with glory and power for the execution of his offices, and this of his priesthood in special, which tie is daily fulfilling with him by his intercession: see Heb 7:25,28 9:24; compare Ps 2:8.

#### Hebrews 5:6

Ver. 6. *As he saith also in another place, Thou art a Priest for ever:* the Spirit proves his call and investiture into this office, its confirmation to him for ever, by another testimony of the Father about it, penned by David, Ps 110:4, and ratified to be so by the Lord himself, Mt 22:41-45; that he as man was David's Son: as God-man, David's Lord, and the grand officer to atone God by his sacrifice for sinners, and to intercede for them. By this word of God to him was he invested with the most glorious priesthood, and settled in that which he must execute for ever, Heb 7:24, having no successor in it.

*After the order of Melchisedec;* which order was a singular and most excellent one, such as Aaron's did but imperfectly shadow to us. It was a royal priesthood God installed him in, such as was Melchisedec's, largely described, Heb 7:1-28. This was by God the Father revealed to David, and prophesied by him to the church, but actually fulfilled as to proclamation and inauguration at his ascension into the holy of holiest in heaven, where he actually in the flesh doth officiate and minister in it.

#### Hebrews 5:7

Ver. 7. Here Christ is paralleled in his nature, work, and compassions, to his types, and is set above them.

*Who in the days of his flesh:* he was taken out of men, as his type was, Heb 5:1. He was made flesh, and dwelt among us in the human nature, Joh 1:14. He had his days numbered, and his time set for his being and ministry beneath, doing and suffering the will of God here in a state of humiliation, frailty, and mortality; which infirmities attending his flesh, are now put off for ever, Heb 2:14.

*When he had offered up prayers and supplications:* he performed his service and offering to God, as his types, for the men for whom he was ordained, such as he delighted in; his prayers represented his inward desires to God for what he needed, and was necessary in our behalf to be obtained, a sacrifice fit to be offered by him, Heb 13:15; compare 1Pe 2:5. Ἰκετηριας, a word but this once used in the New Testament; its root signifieth an olive branch, which petitioners carried in their hands; an emblem of the vehement desire of such supplicants of a peaceful answer or return to their prayers. These of Christ were the most fervent supplications, flowing from a deeply afflicted soul in a prostrate body, when he was preparing for the offering up his soul a sacrifice for sin, when he was in the garden, Lu 22:40,46, in his agony, and when actually offering it on the cross, Mt 27:46. These were the prayers of God-man, the gospel High Priest.

*With strong crying and tears,* put up by him unto God the Father, who is essentially good and powerful, willing and able to hear and answer his supplications, the fountain of all mercy, blessing, and help, who could deliver him from, and save him in, the greatest dangers, so as none of those which encompassed him should hurt him, no, not death; for he was delivered from the evils which were far more dreadful to him than death itself, and which were to exercise him both before and at the hour of death. Those deadly temptations which he underwent in his agony and on the cross, and from which he chargeth the disciples to pray, that both he and they might be kept, Mt 26:37,38. Those deadly stings in his soul, Mt 26:41 Mr 14:38 Lu 22:40,46; such conflicts as his Father supported him under, carried him through, and gave him the victory over all that curse and power that might do him or his mystical body hurt. It was this death of deaths that did terrify him. As for the other, he cheerfully underwent it, resigned his spirit to his Father, trusted his body in his treasury, and was so far from being swallowed up by it, that he was gloriously risen from it.

*Unto him, that was able to save him from death;* evident in his agony, in the mighty groans that his soul poured out then when *he prayed more earnestly*, Lu 22:44; that which made him sweat through his flesh congealed clots of blood, squeezed by his agony out of his body, which made him weep and cry loudly; his voice as well as his soul was stretched out in prayer: the like was exercised by him in his conflict on the cross, Mt 27:46. How bitter was his passion to him! How fervent, importunate, and



loud his prayers! How did it break through the cloud wherewith God covered his face then! Ps 22:1-31, represents in prophecy what was now fulfilled, Mr 15:34,37 Lu 23:46; It was in making satisfaction to the justice of God for us that these were exercised, to show his inward compassions to us, and to secure sustentation for us in our sufferings by temptations, Heb 2:17,18 4:15,16.

*And was heard in that he feared*; the efficacy of these mighty prayers and supplications is evident by their reaching God's ear, and procuring his help for him. He was helped, delivered, saved; so the Septuagint use this word in the Old Testament, putting hearing for helping and saving, as in Ps 55:16-18 2Ch 18:31: απο της ευλαβειας, this is the right acceptation strictly read; for as a thing is truly apprehended, it stirreth up fear. This word hath in Scripture use two senses:

1. From the thing feared, by a metonymy, fear being put for that which works it, which was not here death simply, for that he suffered, but what he was more afraid of than death, viz. from the fear of being by his temptations hurried into diffidence of his Father, impatience in his agony, or despair at the eclipse in his death, which the devil designed. As to this his Father did hear, answer, and help him; in his agony sent his angel to strengthen him, Lu 22:43; and which he derected for him at the end of his passion, when he breathed out his soul triumphantly into his Father's hands, Mt 27:46,50 Mr 15:37,39 Joh 19:28-30. Or,
2. From the fear, that godly fear and care in him not to displease God in any thing he did or suffered; this was a proper cause of his acceptance, and his prayer being heard, and his deliverance, which is becoming the Mediator. This is a truth, and may be admitted; but it seemeth especially to refer to the former by his prevalency, against which by prayer he defeated the devil, was made feelingly sensible of his temptations, showed himself compassed with infirmities, though not with sinful ones, and as our High Priest was rendered pitiful and compassionate to us under our temptations, so as to intercede for us above, as he did pray for himself on earth, and to procure for us succour under and deliverance from them.

## Hebrews 5:8

Ver. 8. He fulfilled his type in the end; for though he were God the Son incarnate, in a nearer and more excellent relation to the Father than any angel, or any high priest among men his types, being all servants to his Father and him; God's Son by eternal generation as to his Deity, by conception from the Holy Ghost by the virgin as to his humanity, who for his worth might have been exempted from such burdens; yet did God teach him (not as if he wanted it at any time) by what he imposed and commanded him, and he learnt by what he did agree and covenant to perform, active obedience to God's will, fulfilling all righteousness, being for his person, and doing for his work to a tittle what God required from him; but especially passive obedience, by his experience knowing what it meant, freely subjecting himself to his state of humiliation, Php 2:6-8, enduring all the indignities and sufferings for sinners from his birth to his death, even the most vile and cursed. This the Father enjoined and commanded him, and he did obey it: read Isa 53:1-12. He who offered prayers for himself, as a high priest offered himself a sacrifice for us, as ours. By this did he finish his Father's will entirely, experimentally, feelingly, knowing how difficult patience under the cross is, and how to pity us under all our sufferings.

## Hebrews 5:9

Ver. 9. *And being made perfect:* as to the powerful execution of his office, this God-man exceeds his types; for having consummated all the work to which he was designed, by his doing, suffering, dying, rising, and ascending into heaven in the human nature, he perfected the work of redemption, and consecrated himself to his office.

*He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him:* by this was he constituted, made, and declared by his Father to be, not an instrument, as all his types were, but the cause efficient, meritorious, and exemplar of salvation; by his sacrifice satisfying God's justice, meriting and effecting reconciliation and justification for sinners; and on his ascension sends forth the Holy Ghost, to qualify them for the reception of his benefits, by working in them what he requires; and on their application to him, he, as their High Priest, pleads the merit of his blood, and

intercedes for their justification and salvation, which is the freeing them from all evil, criminal and penal, sin, and whatever it subjecteth them to in this world, or that which is to come; and insisting them into all the heavenly privileges promised in the covenant of grace, righteousness, holiness, heirship to, and life and glory with, God, and to be safe in the possession of them all, not for time only, but for eternity. This efficient cause produceth this only to the duty qualified subject: mankind is rendered salvable by the obedience and sacrifice of this High Priest; but it is only to penitent believing sinners that he doth communicate this, and for whom he effects it; those who will entirely submit themselves to Christ as a Lord and King, and be loyal to him and obey him, as well as to a Priest or a Saviour, continuing his faithful subjects to the end, Joh 3:16,18,36; compare Mt 10:22.

#### Hebrews 5:10

Ver. 10. His constitution by God the Father in his office, maketh it so effectual; he was solemnly proclaimed and declared to be what God had constituted him. God nameth or calleth things as they are, and as he hath made them; and this was done openly, and with the most illustrious solemnity, at his ascension into heaven, when God set him down on his right hand in the presence of all the surrounding angels, who did all submit to him as their Head and King, and acknowledge him as the great royal High Priest of God, as was foretold, Ps 110:1,2; which words of the psalmist the Spirit further explaineth in Heb 7:1-28, where he proves this gospel High Priest to be of a more excellent order than Aaron's, even like that of Melchisedec, which it exceedeth, and which must last for ever.

#### Hebrews 5:11

Ver. 11. The Spirit here digresseth from discoursing further of the priesthood of Christ, that he may fit these Hebrews to apprehend and improve it when he shall return to it, Heb 5:7. He beginneth with a reproof, which takes up the remainder of the chapter, and enters on it artificially from the doctrine delivered of Christ's priesthood, insinuating the difficulty of its reception by them.

*Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered: ου, of whom, some would make to refer to Melchisedec, but by what followeth in this and Heb 5:7, it can be spoken of none but of Christ the truth of that type, who was made a High Priest after that order. And of him the apostle was filled by the Spirit with the matter, as Elihu speaks, Job 32:18. Much he had to say of this mystery, which was most excellent and weighty, and which a few words could not express; for it was δυσερμηνευτος, not unutterable in itself, or difficult for him to open and interpret, but for them to understand.*

*Seeing ye are dull of hearing; because the ears of their mind were not created nor proportioned to it: they were babes and children in understanding; the difficulty was in themselves, not in the word or mystery; their intellective faculty was slow to discern, perceive, and judge of this doctrine, and their hearts were averse to it, being so conceited concerning the Levitical priesthood: such were the apostles at the first, Joh 16:12.*

Hebrews 5:12

*Ver. 12. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers: the conviction of this fault in their understanding and will, is by the Spirit demonstrated; for their dulness proceeded from their neglect of God's means of knowledge, and so was inexcusable; they had time and means enough of improving in the knowledge of this gospel doctrine of Christ's priesthood, and to have gained in them the abilities of teachers of their families, fellow Christians, and neighbours, both from the law of Moses, and the other Scriptures, and by the teaching of Christ and his apostles.*

*Ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles; yet such was their negligence and idleness, that their knowledge was diminished and lost, and they fallen off to the old Mosaical economy of priesthood, ceremonies and services, so as they had need again to be taught and instructed by others which are the στοιχεια of God's oracles in the Scriptures, such things as are the first in order, and first to be taught and learnt, the very fundamental principles of Christianity, without the knowledge of which none can be saved, and on which all others do depend. They are so styled by a metaphor, signifying such a state of this in*

the Scripture, as the elements have in natural bodies which they compound; or, like elements of speech, which must be first attained before there can be either an understanding, speaking, or writing of a language; they are the foundation upon which a system of the Christian religion is raised; see Heb 6:1: which principles lie dispersed in the New Testament, and are summed up in those ancient creeds which are agreeable to our Saviour's words.

*Of the oracles of God:* λογίων του θεου, such oracles or revelations of God's mind about the way of our salvation, which he hath made to us by his Son our High Priest, and which he brought from heaven with him, and taught himself, as Heb 1:1,2; and hath by the inspiration of his Spirit of persons chosen on purpose by him, penned them eminently in the Scriptures of the New Testament, not excluding those of the Old Testament, which are unveiled, opened, and made glorious in them, Ro 3:2.

*And are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat:* these Hebrews had so greatly forgotten these first principles, that they were become mere babes and infants in knowledge, they needed the first and weakest spiritual food, metaphorically styled *milk*; the most plain and easy truths of the gospel, such as they may understand, and give light to others; not the beggarly elements of Judaism, as they are styled, Ga 4:3,9, and Col 2:8,20, which would keep them ignorant babes in the word of righteousness, and unfit them for the understanding and digesting the stronger food of the higher and more excellent doctrines of the gospel concerning Christ's priesthood. Such a babe was Nicodemus, though a master in Israel, Joh 3:10,12.

Hebrews 5:13

Ver. 13. The Spirit proves these Hebrews such infants by describing the state of them, and of their contrary, and tacitly applying it to them under a metaphor or allegory started by him before.

*For every one that useth milk;* for, saith he, every one of you who take in nothing but the elements and weakest kind of doctrines, and can bear no other, have not digested the first principles of the oracles of God.

*Is unskilful in the word of righteousness;* are ἀπειρος, not truly knowing, not proving nor experiencing, never exercised or practised in, *the word of righteousness*, the gospel doctrine, which is in itself an eternal certain truth, the revelation of the righteousness of God to faith, Ro 1:16,17, and the instrumental conveyer of it to faith; a perfect rule of righteousness, making Christians conform exactly to the mind and will of God, and so reaching the state of strong and perfect ones, Col 1:25-29.

*For he is a babe;* he is but a new-born Christian, a child in Christ's school, one that cannot be experienced in the perfections of God's word, because he is weak in knowledge, ignorant and unconstant like an infant, 1Co 14:20; compare Eph 4:14.

Hebrews 5:14

Ver. 14. *But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age;* but those great, deep, and high mysteries of the gospel concerning Christ's natures, their hypostatical union, his offices, his actual fulfilling all his types in the Old Testament both personal and mystical, with the prophecies of his gospel church state, and his mediatory kingdom, &c., these are the strong meat and food of grown Christians, who have reached some maturity in the knowledge of these gospel mysteries, and are of a full age in understanding, 1Co 2:6 1Co 14:20 Php 3:15; reaching on to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ in knowledge and grace, Eph 4:13.

*Even those who by reason of use;* even those who δια την εξιν, by a gracious habit of wisdom and knowledge infused and perfected by long study, practice, and exercise of themselves in the word of righteousness, by which they are able to apprehend and improve the highest doctrines of the mystery of Christ.

*Have their senses:* τα αισθητηρια are, strictly, organs or instruments of sense, as the eye, the tongue, and the hand, by a metonymy, express seeing, tasting, and feeling; and so is by analogy applied to the inward senses and faculties of the soul, whereby they discern and relish gospel doctrines.

*Exercised:* γεγυμνασμενα strictly notes such an exercise as wrestlers use for a victory with all their might and strength, being trained up to it by long exercise. The spiritual organs or faculties of Christians are well instructed, practised, made apt and ready, as the external ones are, for their proper work.

*To discern both good and evil:* προς διακρισιν, for the discerning and differencing things, so as the mind discerns what doctrine is true and what is false by the word of righteousness, and the will chooseth what is good and refuseth what is evil, the affections love good and hate evil. As the senses external can by exercise discern what food is gustful, pleasing, and wholesome for the person, and what is nauseous and unwholesome; so the grown Christian is improved by the exercise of his spiritual senses, that can by his enlightened mind discern higher gospel doctrines, and by his renewed will relish the sublimer mysteries of Christ as they are revealed to him. Such the Christian Hebrews ought to have been, so able proficients in the school of Christ.

Hebrews 6:1

### Chapter Summary

Heb 6:1-3 The higher doctrines of Christianity are proposed to be treated of.

Heb 6:4-9 The guilt and danger of apostacy.

Heb 6:10 Charitable deeds will not be forgotten of God.

Heb 6:11,12 An exhortation diligently to imitate the faith and patience of those who inherit the promises.

Heb 6:13-20 The promise of God to Abraham a sure ground of hope.

Ver. 1. The Spirit having reproved these Hebrews for their fault, doth now counsel and direct them to amend it.

*Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ;* seeing ye have lost so much time already, and made so little progress in learning Christ, let us not therefore stay any longer in the principles of it, but proceed to

some higher degree: pursuant to which he layeth down the principles of Christian doctrine in which these Hebrews had been initiated, and the doctrine of perfection which they were to pursue.

*Leaving* is an omitting or letting go, as to any sticking or standing in, so as to make no further progress, but to gain higher degrees of knowledge in the doctrine of the gospel, which enters novices into Christ, having attained the beginning, the matter or work of entrance into the Christian religion, now not to stick at this first and imperfect inchoation in this doctrine.

*Let us go on unto perfection;* a regular motion must succeed, according to the great Mover, incessantly, for our attaining the perfection of the doctrine of Christ. This *perfection* notes height of knowledge, faith, utmost repentance and spiritual change, greatest strength of understanding, and the fullest operation, according to the doctrine of Christ, in doing and forbearing, the fullest perseverance of the mind in the knowledge of it, and of the will in cleaving to it.

*Not laying again the foundation:* that which would hinder this was reiterating foundation work, which the apostle laid with them by initiating of them into the first principles of Christianity, the knowledge and faith of which they professed to receive, 1Co 3:11 Eph 2:20, and were therefore obliged to proceed in the building both of persons and truths on it: and lest they had forgot, or other's were ignorant, what those fundamental principles and doctrines of the gospel were, he layeth down six heads of them in this and Heb 6:2, which was the common method of teaching either the children of Christians or infidels, that they might be Christians, at least professedly, or upon their lapse to restore them.

*Of repentance from dead works:* the first Christian principle or doctrine to be learnt, was that of *repentance*, which is the fundamental change of a sinner's mind, and, in that, of himself; it carrieth in it knowledge, conviction of sin by God's law, bitter sorrow for it, and full conversion of the soul to God from it, as it is described, 2Co 7:9-11; as from all sinful works flowing from it while lapsed from God; dead in sins, which would have eaten out and destroyed their souls for ever, Ro 6:23 Eph 2:1,2. It supposeth the knowledge of other truths preceding it, as their creation in God's image, their apostacy from it, the misery consequent. &c. These



Hebrews were to proceed and advance daily in the exercise of this grace.

*And of faith towards God:* the second Christian principle or doctrine is of *faith on God*, comprehending the habit and acts of that Divine grace, of evidence, subsistence, assent, and affiancing, Heb 11:1, all the effects of it; and this exercised on God in his essence, relations, especially in his gracious contrivance and execution of the work of redemption for sinners; as giving reconciliation, righteousness, holiness, adoption, and eternal salvation, through Christ, fulfilling all righteousness by his death, as a sacrifice satisfying his justice, and meriting, as purchasing, all these blessings for believers, and effectually from heaven is dispensing them to them.

Hebrews 6:2

Ver. 2. *Of the doctrine of baptisms:* the third fundamental doctrine in which these Hebrews were initiated was, the *doctrine of baptisms*; containing in it the doctrine which baptism teacheth, as that of the covenant of grace, of which it is a sign and seal, and of their entering into it who partake of it, which, as to its duties and privileges, is sealed and confirmed: and the doctrine in which baptisms are taught, as that of Christ by water and by the Spirit, Mt 3:6 Joh 3:5; and containing in it the doctrine of the seals of God's testament, distinct from the other doctrines of faith; by the use of which, such who had solemnly professed their repentance, and faith and obedience to the gospel, were sealed and confirmed.

*Baptisms*, in the plural, raiseth the doubt, whether it immediately concern the initial seal of the covenant, which some say is so styled as a Hebraism, the plural number being put for the singular; or, from the numerous partakers of it at set times, which were called days of baptisms, or from divers administrators, and the baptisms of believers and their seed, and that so they were many. Others would make these to be Jewish baptisms, frequently used by these Hebrews, as elements to teach faith and repentance, and leading them to the further knowledge of Christ. And the more they suspect this, because these baptisms are used but four times in the New Testament, and always signifying Jewish ones, as Heb 9:10, and Mr 7:4,8.

*And of laying on of hands:* the fourth fundamental doctrine, or principle, was, *the imposition of hands*, which by Christ and his apostles were used either for healing diseases, Mr 6:5 Lu 4:40 Ac 28:8, or communication of blessing, Mt 19:13,15, or for the communication of the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, to such who were separated for Christ's service in his church, Ac 6:6 8:17 8:3 19:5,6; and so take in all the saving fruits of the Holy Ghost, by which they are renewed, increased, strengthened, and built up into everlasting life. Others would make this a primitive rite of confirming the baptized grown up, on the confession of their faith, and renewing their covenant with God, which was made for and with them in their infancy, and so was a preparatory admission of them to communicate with the church in the Lord's supper. If other places of Scripture did concur with it, it would be more clear and satisfactory. Some look on them, as *baptisms* before, to be Jewish rites, which should here lead them to Christ; but, on their neglect of him, became beggarly elements, and such as they are called from here unto higher attainments in Christ.

*And of resurrection of the dead:* the fifth fundamental principle and doctrine of Christianity, in which they were initiated, is, the doctrine of *resurrection from the dead*. This, as to the propriety and fulness of it, is at the last day; yet the entrance into this is begun in a new life effected by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, Joh 5:25-29 Ro 6:3-13. From this entrance are they called to make out to the full resurrection of the just, as the apostle did himself, Php 3:10-12. This article of the gospel doctrine all Christians were to be founded in, and especially these Hebrews, because it was denied by the Sadducees among them, Mt 22:23 Ac 23:6-8, derided by the Athenian philosophers, Ac 17:18,31,32, and perverted by heretics, 2Ti 2:17,18; and is therefore particularly asserted, as described by this apostle, 1Co 15:1-58.

*And of eternal judgment;* the sixth fundamental doctrine and principle of Christianity, into which they were to be initiated, was that of the general *judgment*, finally determining the believers of it to their rewards, the deniers of it to their eternal punishment, because the one hath observed, the other violated, the covenant of grace. These Hebrews had begun to reach this truth, by being reconciled to their Judge, and therefore are to proceed to perfect their work to the Lord's glorious appearance, Heb 9:27,28 Ac 17:31 2Pe 3:7,10,15 Jude 1:6,14,15 Re 20:11-15.

### Hebrews 6:3

Ver. 3. This connects the prime cause promoting this progress, and by whom alone it can be effected, as well as his resolution of finishing his discourse of the ministry of Christ's priesthood.

*And this will we do;* we will really, certainly, and constantly, leave our entrance into these Christian, fundamental principles, and proceed unto perfection in them; all of us real Christians will do this. Others make it a purpose of the apostle to handle these doctrines at another season, and that he will now proceed to instruct them in the higher mysteries of Christ and the gospel, and so finish his designed discourse about them.

*If God permit;* whether it refers to their proceeding from the knowledge of the Christian principles to the perfection of knowledge, or of growth in Christian graces, or of the apostle's proceeding to open to them the higher mysteries of the gospel, it is not a kind of passive letting things to be done, or giving leave only; God is not subject to so weak a condition: but it is all act, noting God's assistance as well as permission; for all persons and things are in his power, who worketh to will and to do, Php 2:13. But as to a progress in Christianity and reaching the perfect man, &c., Eph 4:13, if he, the Lord of all knowledge and grace, hath delight in us, and will work this grace in us, then we shall do this, even go on unto perfection, Heb 12:2 Ho 14:5 Mal 4:6 1Co 3:6.

### Hebrews 6:4

Ver. 4. The foregoing counsel the Spirit enforceth on these Hebrews, from the danger of apostacy, to which the neglect of it doth dispose them, and the terrifying consequents of it, from Heb 6:4-8. We must go on to perfection, unless we will draw back to perdition: so that he bespeaks them: You have been sluggish and dull, and going backward already; lest you grow worse, stir up yourselves; if you neglect it you are in danger of utter falling away: *for it is impossible*, not in respect of God's absolute and almighty power, but in respect of any created power in others or themselves, justly, and by right, it is impossible, because contrary to God's declared will and resolution in his church, by which his power is limited,

so as he will never do it, nor suffer it to be done; in this he will not, cannot deny himself, Heb 6:11 11:6; compare Mt 7:18 19:24,26 2Ti 2:13.

*For those who were once enlightened:* φωτισθεντας, several interpreters render, the baptized, who were illuminated with the beams of Divine light; others, the penitent, such who had been initiated into repentance, as Heb 6:1, and think the term *once* may be limited to baptisms, whereas it refers to all the other particulars. These are such who are instructed in the principles of the Christian religion, and brought out of the darkness and ignorance of Judaism and heathenism, so that they were other persons for the knowledge of gospel truths than before: they see with a new light spiritual things, and have the mind raised up to such objects as they knew not before; but they have no new eyes or understandings given them, and so are but as devils like angels of light, whereas the light of a real Christian is the light of life, Joh 8:12: see 2Ti 1:10 2Pe 1:19. Such some Hebrews professed themselves to be, Ro 2:17-19; and as Balaam was, Nu 24:2,3.

*And have tasted of the heavenly gift;* an act of sense in the body, put metaphorically for an act of the mind. Tasting in the soul, is an apprehension and reception by it, and but merely such, and no more; a taste, and not a digestion, of Christ and his benefits as revealed to them in the gospel, Joh 4:39,40, followed with the superficial relishes of their joy and peace on their temporary believing in them, as it was with the stony ground, Mt 13:20. A sinner enlightened so as to see Christ and the glorious promises made to believers in him, it being agreeable to his natural principles, and being not much humbled, runs away with them with joy, having good desires and affections, but a stony heart still: such was Herod, Mr 6:20.

*And were made partakers of the Holy Ghost;* not by an inhabitation of his person in them, but by his operations in them, whereby he is trying how far a natural man may be raised, and not have his nature changed: as is evident in Socrates, who died for owning the unity of the Deity; and as the scribe near the kingdom of heaven, Mr 12:34. He is proving by his gifts to them how much supernatural good, and workings towards salvation, they are capable of, without the putting forth of the exceeding greatness of his power to make them new creatures, as Ge 6:3; compare 1Co 1:21 1Pe 3:18-20. These did partake of from the Holy Ghost, the light of nature, of the law, of the gospel, with some spiritual power accompanying all these;

which as they are trials of lapsed nature, so are lessening many punishments by keeping men off from many sins, as 2Pe 2:20. These professors had escaped the gross and outward pollutions and defilements that many were drenched with in their lives, but have lusts abiding unmortified, from whence these would arise in them still; but here is no pure heart or divine nature wrought in them, and the lusting principle is unmortified still; this God accepts according to its kind: compare Mr 10:21,22.

#### Hebrews 6:5

Ver. 5. *And have tasted the good word of God;* so as to relish comfort and sweetness in the doctrine and promises of the gospel through self-flattery; for these hearing of pardon of sin, and crediting it, are filled with joy by it; as a condemned malefactor, hearing of a general pardon, believeth himself to be one of the pardoned, and rejoiceth in it: see Mt 13:20,21 Lu 8:13. So did many of the Jews rejoice in John's doctrine, Joh 5:35.

*And the powers of the world to come;* thus some of them were affected with the powerful doctrines of the gospel, concerning the final judgment, as their natural conscience was wrought on by the Spirit in the word, that they feel it as it were begun in them, the sparks of the wrath of God having set their consciences in a light flame for their sins, as in a Felix, Ac 24:25. As on the other hand, being acquainted by the Spirit in the word, of Christ's being a Redeemer, to save them from the wrath to come, and to instate them into happiness, beyond what is attainable on earth; self-love doth externally close with the revelation and apply it to itself, as Balaam did, Nu 23:10. All these five instances are the workings of the Holy Spirit on corrupt nature for its improvement, and in their falling from these supernatural operations, they do sin *in tanto* against the Holy Ghost.

#### Hebrews 6:6

Ver. 6. *If they shall fall away;* a falling away, or apostatizing, in proportion like Adam, such a *παραπτωμα* as his was, Ro 5:15-17, whereby they are totally unchristianed, as he was turned into a sinner; perfidiously revolting from all those supernatural workings of the Holy

Ghost, whereby their natural spirit was elevated, but not changed, unto their old swinish and canine temper of spirit and course of life that they led before they professed themselves Christians, as 2Pe 2:18-22. They freely forsake their professed Christian state, and make shipwreck of all; Jude 1:4,10,16,18,19. Whether *παλιν*, *again*, ought to be referred to falling away, so as to denominate the apostate no Christian, as he was at first, before his profession, or to renewing following, it makes no difficulty, for it is a real truth in both parts; only interpreters generally refer it to the latter, as do ours, and so we shall consider it.

*To renew them again unto repentance;* they cannot renew and bring themselves to the same state they enjoyed, and from which they fell; nor can the Christian ministry do it by their exhortations or counsels, thunders or comforts; the offended, wronged Spirit withdraws, and will not assist or elevate theirs to act above nature again, Ge 6:3 Isa 63:10; but leaves them justly to themselves, so as he will neither by himself, nor by others, suffer it to be done having limited his power by his will in it. They shall neither have a new principle infused into them, nor their minds or hearts changed by him to repentance, because they have undervalued his lower operations and motions on their souls, revealing Christ to them through the gospel, and have by their sinful negligence not improved them to seek from him the better and higher ones which he mentions, Heb 6:9,10, and were to be effected by the exceeding greatness of his power.

*Seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh:* that which renders this renovation of them impossible, is their ill treatment, by their apostacy, of their Redeemer, who was to bring them as children to glory, which they by the gospel knew, and by profession owned him ascended and sat down on the right hand of God, and who had, by the operation of his Spirit, elevated their natural principles so to discern him, and to confess him: by this their apostacy they look on him as an impostor and deceiver, as 2Pe 2:1 Jude 1:4, and deny him to be a Saviour to them, rejecting his sacrifice, and would, as much as in them lieth, dethrone him, and, if he were within their reach, would crucify him again, and tread him under their feet, as Heb 10:29, and actually do it to him in his members; as the apostate Julian did in former ages, and the papists do at this day.

*And put him to an open shame;* *παραδειγματιζοντας*, making him a public shameful example, as the Jews did by the most cruel and

ignominious death, with all their reproachful carriages to him then, which he despised, Heb 12:2, and in which his are to imitate him, Heb 13:13: so do these apostates verbally and practically blaspheme and disgrace him; in their esteem vilifying him, and by their apostacy put him to an open and public ignominy, and make him a spectacle of the vilest reproach, as if they could find no good in him, and therefore renounced him; and this to the condemning and destroying of themselves, since they cannot repent, Christ having not purchased it for, nor God promised it to, any such: so as by the law of his kingdom their sin is irremissible, the blood of Christ, that could only remove it, being profaned and trampled on by it, and so their final destruction unavoidable.

Hebrews 6:7

*Ver. 7. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it: for* is narrative here, and not rational, introducing a parabolical illustration of the states and ends of truly regenerate Christians, and unregenerate apostates; as if he said: You have heard the good of true perfect Christians, and the evil of apostates, you need not to be offended at it, or wonder, for it is with them even as with the earth, which is the *good ground* in Christ's parable, Mt 13:8 Lu 8:8, and which he interpreteth to be *a good and an honest heart*, Lu 8:15, renewed in a sinner by the Holy Ghost, naturally of the same mould with all others, Eze 11:19 36:26,27. As the earth drinks up the showers moistening and fructifying it; Ps 45:9,10; so this good and honest heart receiveth the spiritual dews and rain descending from heaven on it in the word and ordinances, as De 32:2.

*And bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed;* it bringeth forth all sorts of fruits for those who dress it, according to God's institution, Ge 1:11,12 2:5,6. So these good souls bring forth fruit which God relisheth and delighteth in as suitable to his husbandry, Mt 13:23; compare 2Pe 1:5-8 2Co 9:10 Ga 5:22,23; and such as the great manurer of souls expects from them, 1Co 3:6,7,9.

*Receiveth blessing from God;* this good ground is made fruitful by God's blessing; and the more fruitful it is the more blessing it receiveth, Ge 27:27. This fruitfulness is not the meritorious cause of this blessing, for that issueth from grace; but it qualifieth these good hearts for it, i.e. the

continuance to such souls of the means of grace, and their increase in spiritual comforts, till they reach the perfection of blessing from God in eternal life, Heb 6:9.

Hebrews 6:8

Ver. 8. *But that which beareth thorns and briers:* δε but, introduceth the state and end of a sinful apostate, that ill earth, showered upon as well as the good; the unregenerate soul, that had gospel dews and spiritual rain by the word and ordinances dropped down on it from heaven; yet bringeth forth, or out of it, not herbs or fruits fit for its owner or dresser, but briers, thorns, and thistles: so apostates, under all enlightenings and tasting of these supernatural dews of the Spirit, bring forth from a stony, unregenerate soul, nothing but corruptions and evils, their rooted lusts thrust out and sprung together with their common gifts, Lu 8:7,13,14; the words and deeds of whom are pernicious, dishonouring God and hurting men, as unbelief, hypocrisy, apostacy, described, 2Pe 2:1-3,12,14,18-22 Jude 1:4,8,10,12,16,19.

*Is rejected;* αδοκιμος it is refuse land neglected by the owner, he takes no care of it; such are these apostates, of a reprobate mind, approving evil, rejecting good, and are so rejected of God, who withdraws his spiritual dews and ordinances, and the concurrence of his Spirit with them, as unworthy of them, and useless as to any good fruit to be produced there.

*And is nigh unto cursing;* such are looked upon as the mountains of Gilboa, accursed, 2Sa 1:21; and to be dealt with by the owner as the fruitless fig tree by Christ, Mt 21:19 Mr 11:21. So these apostates are under the curse, 2Pe 2:14 delivered up judicially by Christ to blindness of mind, and hardness of heart, and even to Satan himself, as the unbelieving Jews were, Joh 12:40, and those apostates, 1Ti 1:19,20.

*Whose end is to be burned;* the end of briers and thorns is the fire, they are to be burnt up by it; and this will be the final issue with apostates, to be destroyed by a Christ whom they have rejected, with eternal fire Heb 10:27 12:29 Mt 3:12 25:41 2Th 1:7-9.



## Hebrews 6:9

Ver. 9. For preventing of the application of this discourse unto themselves, the apostle subjoins his judgment concerning these Hebrews in this verse, and his reason for it in the next.

*But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you;* although we have spoken of the attainments, states, and ends of apostates, we reflect not on you by it; *but,* or notwithstanding, *we are persuaded;* which word imports not a simple conjecture, for he had the gift of discerning of spirits, and the Holy Ghost, who indites it, did very well know them, so as he was confident of their good state and condition in Christianity, and the Spirit testified so of them by the Epistles of the other apostles directed to them; they were well assured of this, and certain, not only because they were such whom he dearly loved, as if it were only a good or charitable opinion in him, but because of their relation to him as true Christians, and members of the one body of Christ; and so they were very dear to him, whatever they might fear, because of what he wrote before of apostates, for they had better things in them than enlightenings, &c. which he said were in apostates before, Heb 6:4,5, even the saving work of the Spirit on their souls, not by giving them light only, or raising their affections, but by giving them a new eye of understanding, as well as new light, and with it a renewed heart; Christ having by the exceeding greatness of his power made them new creatures, as well as professing Christians; their minds, wills, and affections being all changed, and made truly spiritual by the Spirit of Christ; and which they manifest by the exercise of real graces, and that their light, state, and end is better, more excellent, and of another kind, than that of apostates, evinced Heb 6:10.

*And things that accompany salvation;* such things as have salvation in them, even the spiritual mind, which hath eternal life in the root of it, Ro 8:6,10,11,16,17. That Divine nature, which the apostle saith was in the same persons, 1Pe 1:1-5 2Pe 1:1-4; which shows the state of their spirits to be a state of grace, which had salvation in it, secured by promises to it, so as they are inseparable, and their union not to be dissolved.

## Hebrews 6:10

Ver. 10. For introduceth the reason of the apostle's former persuasion concerning them, which was the real graces of faith and love to God wrought in their hearts, and shown in their work, which was better than all enlightenings.

*God is not unrighteous;* the affirmative is implied, God is just, and faithful, and true, in performing what he promiseth, as well as *not unrighteous:* the certain truth is asserted in this emphatical negative; compare 2Th 1:6,7, with 1Jo 1:9: should he not perform he would be unjust.

*To forget your work:* God always remembers all things, because his knowledge is perfect; and he will take notice of grace in these Hebrews manifested by their works, so as to recompense and reward them for it, by perfecting his gracious work in them; which having promised, the apostle is confident of the good estate of them through grace, Php 1:6. He will never forget the work of your faith in his name, your courageous profession of the gospel, Ga 5:6 Col 1:4 1Th 1:3: a grace of God in them which made their souls delight in him, such as was purely Divine, beginning and ending in God, carried out in the labour and exercise of it to his glory, showing it in all the supplies they give his in his name, to Christians as they are his, Mr 9:41.

*And labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister:* their labour of love was evidenced by what they had done, and were doing, for Christ, in their using all effectual means for supplying, comforting, preserving, and delivering his members, giving their goods to them, and their lives for them, 1Jo 3:10-18. So the apostle asserts these did, Heb 10:32-34. So did Aquila and Priscilla love Paul, Ro 16:3,4. And this they did show to such as were God's children, and bore his name, the present suffering Christians, who endured rifling, plundering, banishing, imprisonment, and death for their faith in Christ's name: those brethren who, being loved in and for God, do evidence to these Hebrews that they are passed from death to life, 1Jo 3:14.

Hebrews 6:11

Ver. 11. *And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence:* having thus commended them, to show he did not flatter them in it, he discovereth what was wanting in them, and introduceth it with the particle But, we desire you; επιθυμουμεν properly signifieth the inward affection and strong desire of heart that the apostle had of their further profit. The Spirit lusted in him for this, Ga 5:17, which was not only convenient for them, but necessary for their perfection. And this desire of his was not for all promiscuously, but that each single person who was a lover of God and his saints, should use all means diligently, as they had in degree done before, to have this perfected to the end of their life, 2Pe 1:5-10. It is an earnest agitation and hastening of spirit within, and a demonstrative discovery of the same without to the utmost, Ro 2:7.

*To the full assurance of hope unto the end;* their souls with full sails constantly making out after this most certain and full assurance of faith, to the excluding of every doubtful thought of the truth of God and his promises, and of hope, shutting out all wavering, unsettledness, or impatience in waiting for the accomplishment of the good, which is secured by the merit and intercession of Christ, the purpose, promise, and oath of God to them, Heb 10:22,23; compare Ro 4:21 Col 1:24.

*Hope* here is not synonymous with faith, yet its certain concomitant; and is a vehement desire and longing after, with a patient expectation of, what is possible and sure to be enjoyed, because God hath promised and sworn it; though it be at never so great a distance, yet to be communicated by him to his in his best time, Heb 11:1; compare Ro 4:13 Tit 1:2 1Pe 1:3,13,21. This Christian diligence must continue to the end of their own days, and the perfection of their grace in glory, until they come unto the entire possession of what they believed, hoped for, and were fully assured of, Ro 6:22 1Pe 1:9,13.

Hebrews 6:12

Ver. 12. *That ye be not slothful:* if you will be diligent, away with sloth: you are inclined to it, Heb 5:11, and though you be quick in affection, yet slow in understanding the mysteries of God; and though you have laboured, yet not with that intense labour to which he here presseth them, even to an utter abolition of all the degrees of sloth.

*But followers of them;* μιμηται, strictly, imitators, in diligence and painstaking, of the believers who have performed this duty before you.

*Who through faith and patience inherit the promises:* in their graces imitate them, as in faith, by which they rested on, as credited, God's promises revealed to them of things invisible, excellent, and distant, and which by no creature power but only God's could be attained, Heb 11:1,9,10,16 13:7. In *patience*, because the things promised are future, and at a great distance from them, waiting for them, suffering many evils from many, passing through fire and water, Isa 43:2, and staying God's leisure to obtain them, Heb 10:36 12:1 Ro 15:4,5 Jas 1:3. Those they were to imitate, were heirs of blessed promises, Heb 6:14, of spiritual blessings in Christ, the blessed Seed, in whom themselves and all nations were to be blessed, Ge 22:18. It may be queried: How did Abraham inherit the promises, when he did not receive them, as is testified, Heb 11:13? This is certain as to the promises of spiritual saving, and universal concernment to them, as of justification, sanctification, adoption, and salvation by Jesus Christ; these they received, as is evident, Heb 11:10,14,16 Ro 4:8-25: such promises as were of special consideration and reserved to a set time, as the possession of Canaan, and Christ's incarnation, Joh 8:56. These they did not receive, though they saw them sure to their seed by faith, but for salvation, and glory, and heaven, carried in the covenant of grace, they did personally enjoy; of the others they were heirs as given by God to them.

Hebrews 6:13

Ver. 13. *For when God made promise to Abraham:* *for* is a confirmation by instance, that faith and patience had made some to inherit the promises, as Abraham, and what was influencing of him in the exercising them, viz. God's promise and oath. God Almighty, who was as able to perform as to make a promise, Ge 17:1, having made a promise to Abraham the father of believers, that he would communicate some temporal and spiritual good, which by it he gave him a right to, and bound himself to perform, which summarily was Christ the Redeemer to be of his seed, and Isaac his immediate seed to be a type of him; this promise at the offering up of his son Isaac God confirms to him by oath.

*Because he could swear by no greater:* an oath is to be made by the greatest, who is able to make good all, and to judge after his will; by nothing under or beneath God must there be any swearing.

*He sware by himself,* as the best and greatest, Jehovah himself confirming that which was evident and certain by that which was most so: a strange condescension of God the Son, the Angel of the covenant, to a creature, to lift up his hand to eternity, and to lay it on the altar of his infinite and unchangeable being, to pawn and pledge his Deity, that he might give the highest assurance; and is willing that it shall be forfeited and lost, if Abraham fall short of what he hath promised to him: see the oath, Ge 22:15-18; an oath confirming the covenant of grace to all believers as firmly as to Abraham.

Hebrews 6:14

Ver. 14. Here is laid down the form and matter of God's oath: the form, in Ge 22:16, is implied in the participle ׀ in this text well rendered *surely*, Heb 3:11. The other defective expressions are forms of swearing, as if, except, unless; but here it is positive, *surely*, or verily, which Christ frequently useth; it is a vehement assertion of what he saith. The whole matter of God's oath is not repeated, but the substance and comprehensive part of it, which made for the apostle's purpose here. By *blessing*, in the Hebrew manner of expressing, is carried the abundance and certainty of all that temporal and spiritual good, which he would convey unto him in and through the blessed and promised Seed, our Lord Jesus Christ, with the multiplicity, abundance, and certainty of the seed natural, and believing, to whom he should be related as a Father through Christ, as is evident, Ge 22:16-18; and all this so uttered, as if God could not express how much he loved him.

Hebrews 6:15

Ver. 15. *And so, after he had patiently endured:* Abraham's carriage was suitable to this sworn promise, his soul did patiently wait for it full thirty years, enduring and suffering many temptations about it; yet he overcame all, and continued firm in the covenant to the end; his faith extended his

soul in a patient expectation of its accomplishment, without doubting or murmuring, knowing God would fulfil it in the best time: he was a long-breathed believer, Joh 8:56 Ro 4:20,21 Jas 1:2,3.

*He obtained the promise;* he did not fall short of any piece of the promise, but fully possessed it at last, both in Isaac, the type of the blessed Seed, and the Messiah himself, as to all the spiritual and eternal good promised in him and by him in the heavenly Canaan, Mt 22:32.

Hebrews 6:16

Ver. 16. *For men verily swear by the greater:* for here is only narrative, introducing the amplification of the argument drawn from God's promise and oath, for the quickening those and all believers to make out after the full assurance of hope, the promise and oath of God concerning them as well as Abraham. That since men's oaths procure credit, and put an end to doubts, strife, and contradiction amongst them; much more should God's oath put an end to doubts and gainsayings of creatures, and make them to give faith to him: men are not inventors and authors of this ordinance of swearing, but subject to God's precept requiring this from them, and in this special part of God's worship instituted by him, they ought to swear justly and according to his will; and swear they must by God only, who knows the intentions and secrets of the heart, and who is absolutely greater than all; the omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, and sovereign Lord of all persons, who knows false swearers, and inflicts on them not only temporal but eternal punishments. The swearing by any other, God rebukes, De 6:13 Jer 4:2.

*And an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife:* and in this special part of God's worship, God is called in as a co-witness of the truth of what is sworn, and as a judge and avenger of it, if it be otherwise: and so the oath becomes a confirmation of faith and confidence of men one in another, and of love accompanying the same; so that if strife, doubt, suspicion, or jealousy arise among them about either words or deeds, which are not known to those who doubt, and cannot be cleared by sense or reason, or any other way but by a testimony of some person who knows them, which being insufficient of itself, he calls in God by an oath as co-witness, with whom it is supposed he would not break his interest, nor

invocate him against himself, by declaring what is false: on this all strife and contradiction is to be decided among men, and to cease, and so the controversy to be determined.

Hebrews 6:17

Ver. 17. The apostle having stated the nature of an oath in the antecedent, subjoins and applies it in a consequent, in which he shows that God sware to this end, that his own counsel might appear to be immutable, and the consolation of believers greater.

*Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show;* Εὐ ω, in which matter or case, viz. God's act of promise and oath to Abraham, it was not limited to his person, but to all his believing seed, Ro 4:23,24. Out of his own mere grace and free-will, his goodness and affection to them, without any consideration in them moving him; but his free, unexpected, as undeserved mercy, did first reveal, then promise, then swear. What more could he do? How liberal and abundant is his love in these overflowing discoveries of it! So to reveal and make known his gracious thoughts, making them manifest, perspicuous, and glorious, when none was privy to them, nor could reveal them, but himself.

*Unto the heirs of promise;* the seed of Abraham's faith, all true believers, whom God had made children and heirs by promise, as Isaac, Ga 3:22,26,29 4:26-28; *joint-heirs with Christ,* Ro 8:17. These alone did God intend to secure, and make certain of their salvation.

*The immutability of his counsel:* God's unchangeableness in his will and decree, as in himself, excludes all hesitation, alteration, or transposition of what it was from eternity; God did never, will never, change one iota or tittle of his eternal will and decree of saving, perfecting, and gathering into one penitent believers, by the promised Seed Jesus Christ; which he did reveal to the world, and without which manifestation a believer could have no comfort, and without its immutability, not any lasting and permanent comfort.

*Confirmed it by an oath:* εμεσιτευσεν is proper for a mediator, one who cometh in between two parties as a surety; and so is justly applicable to

God the Son, who interposeth between God the Father promising, and believers to whom the promise is made as heirs, as a Surety engaging to see his Father's promise made good to his seed; and therefore confirms it to them with an oath, that they might know the promise was immutable, and should be punctually fulfilled; by which means he removes all doubts, fears, and jealousies about it from them. If they will believe men who swear, how much more ought they to do so, and rest satisfied, with the oath of the Mediator!

Hebrews 6:18

Ver. 18. *That by two immutable things:* another end of the Mediator's oath is here added, God's oath and a promise spoken to before, which are firm and stedfast to eternity; heaven and earth may pass away, but they cannot.

*In which it was impossible for God to lie,* i. e. to cease to be himself, for essential truth to become a lie is impossible, it is utterly inconsistent with his nature. He is incapable to deceive, or speak against his mind, Nu 23:19 1Sa 15:29 Ps 89:35 Tit 1:2; and it is as impossible for him to violate his promise or oath.

*We might have a strong consolation;* such as will vanquish all doubts, fears, jealousies, sorrows, distractions, putting the heart into a quiet, peaceful, settled frame, and stablishing it in it, whatsoever temptations, trials, or persecutions it may meet with from without or within to perplex it.

*Who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:* but it is the heart of a persevering believer, not of common professors, which is so strongly settled and comforted by them; such who flee to take hold of them; having cleared their right to them, and possessing their souls of them by faith, so to hold fast, as who would no more leave, than Joab would the horns of the altar, being a far greater security than it, or any city of refuge whatsoever; retreating to, and keeping in, this strong hold, nothing can interrupt their comfort. or hurt them, Job 13:15,16 Pr 18:10.

*The hope set before them* is that eternal, good, and blessed state which is reserved in heaven for believers, the object of their hope set out to their



view and prosecution as a prize in the promise, 1Pe 1:3,4; by a metonymy of the effect for the cause, hope and good hoped for are joined together for our pursuit.

Hebrews 6:19

Ver. 19. *Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast: which,* taketh in both the good hoped for, and the grace and act itself of holm exercised about it; which grace is by a metaphor set out to be to the soul what an anchor is to ships in a tempest, when tossed with gusts, and storms, and billows of thoughts rolling one upon another to the oversetting of it; this hope stayeth, strengthens, settleth it, even the hope and certainty of eternal rest and happiness secured to them by the promise and oath of God. This hope is safe and firm efficiently, and makes the soul, in the midst of all the threatening temptations from a tempestuous world, safe, because fastened on God's promise; and firm, because strengthened by God's oath, which will hold out all tempests.

*And which entereth into that within the veil:* this *hope*, like an *anchor*, is firmly placed, hath wrought itself into the best holdfast, even the innermost part of the veil.

*The veil* was that in the tabernacle and temple which separated the holy place from the holy of holiest. This typical veil was rent at the death of Christ, and the holy of holiest in heaven, the truth of that type, was then laid open unto all believers, whether Jews or Gentiles: compare Heb 9:24 10:19-21. Here it is that the anchor of the Christian's hope is fastened; this sure harbour, where no tempest can reach or loosen it, but into which their souls, after all their tossings in the tempestuous ocean of this world, by the hurricanes of temptations, which made them quiver again, shall be over, will enter with a full gale, and enjoy that rest and blessedness for ever, which they had by God's promise and oath, on which they relied, secured to them: see Col 1:5 1Pe 1:3-9.

Hebrews 6:20

Ver. 20. *Whither the forerunner is for us entered:* this heaven is actually

possessed for us already by a harbinger, who came at his Father's word to fit and prepare us for it, and then again returned in our nature, and as our Head and Representative he hath entered, made the way open, and paved the coast for us thither, and made it plain and safe; and having taken real and full possession, is making ready our mansions; and when he hath completed his work in us, will come and take and carry us thither, and put us into the full possession of it in our persons, Heb 9:24 Joh 14:2-4.

*Even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:* he describeth the forerunner to be God the Son incarnate, the Saviour of believers, he that will keep them safe for it, and set them safe in it. Their Jesus, who as to his office is the great gospel High Priest, had fulfilled his type, and put an end to it by his entering within the veil into the holy of holiest in heaven, being constituted by his Father a royal High Priest, superior to all other orders and persons, *a High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec*, mentioned before, Heb 5:10, where the Spirit begun a digression, and having here ended it, repeats the description of it again, as the thing to be immediately handled and pursued, as he doth in the next chapter.

Hebrews 7:1

### Chapter Summary

Heb 7:1-10 Christ, a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, is proved to be of a more excellent order than that of Aaron, from the character of Melchisedec, and his confessed superiority to Abraham and Levi, Heb 7:11-19 from the imperfection of the Levitical priesthood, which induced the necessity of a change to one more perfect, Heb 7:20-22 from the confirmation of Christ's priesthood by an oath, Heb 7:23-25 from the unchangeableness, Heb 7:26-28 and spotless innocence, of the person.

Ver. 1. The Spirit now proceedeth to prove, that the gospel High Priest is of a far more excellent order than that of Aaron's, by his being of the order of Melchisedec, of witore they had read, and whom they had in great

esteem, and after whose order they were assured, by the prophet David, another Priest was to rise up in the church, rendering Aaron's priesthood useless, and continuing the only means of reconciling sinners, and bringing them to eternal life, to whom they must cleave. He initiates it with a description of the state of Melchisedec's order, from Heb 7:1-10; and then proceeds to apply it to Christ, from Heb 7:11-28. Having asserted, Heb 6:20, that Jesus was made from eternity *a High Priest after the order of Melchisedec*, and declared to be so by his entrance within the veil in heaven at his ascension, he reasoneth it out by showing what this Melchisedec was. The person pointed at by this name, is mentioned only once by Moses, and that in Ge 14:18-20. It is certain he was a man who lived by bread and wine, as well as Abraham, and received tithes from him becoming a man. His place of residence was Salem, afterwards called Jerusalem, in the land of Canaan, Jos 10:1. The Jews conceived him to be Shem, the second son of Noah, which this scripture denieth, for his genealogy is well known in it. That he descended from Ham, third son of Noah, because an inhabitant in Canaan, and that his name, Melchisedec, was the common name of the princes of that country, whose metropolis was first called Tsedec, then Salem, then Jerusalem, because the king of it in Joshua's time was named Adoni-zedec, which is synonymous with this, is all conjectural. This is certain, he was *king of Salem*, endowed with royal power, such as the other kings in Canaan had. The capital seat in his kingdom was Salem, the name likely of both his city and territory; not that Salem of the Sichemites, Ge 33:18, afterwards called Shechem, demolished and sown with salt by Abimelech, Jud 9:34,45; in John the Baptist's time raised again, and called Salem, Joh 3:23. But Salem mentioned Ps 76:2, more known by its famous appellation, Jerusalem. This shows him to be a man, as doth his next title.

*Priest of the most high God*: his authority in matters of religion, as a prime minister about holy things between God and men, and therefore a man, as Heb 5:1, set up by the most high God for himself, and consecrated in his order of priesthood by him, which should most illustriously set out that of his own Son. He managed all as a priest between his own people and the great God, ruling of them in all matters civil, and teaching and ordering them in all sacred things.

*Who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings*: he went from Jerusalem with necessary refreshings to meet Abraham, the friend of God,

the father of believers, a prince and a priest himself, and of whose posterity was to come the Messiah, now returning from his victory over Chedorlaomer and his confederate kings, with the rescue of his nephew, and all his, to his tents at Mamre. As he was passing near Salem, Melchisedec meets him, and entertains him, Ge 14:13-20.

*And blessed him:* it was an act of his sacerdotal office, such as God enjoined on such officers afterwards in Nu 6:23-27, and not a common wish and desire only. The matter of blessing is laid down, Ge 14:19. It was in God's name, by his commission, effectually denounced on Abraham by virtue of his office and God's institution; the height of God and all the good in heaven and in earth within God's possession is conveyed to him, Ge 15:1, of seeing, denoting it to be such a serious and intent act, as calls for the utmost exercise of the discerning faculty; a carelessness in it, or an oversight, might make the proposal to be to no purpose. The greatness of this high priest is what he sets in their view, and that indefinitely: How great is this officer! Intimating him to be somewhat excessive to other great ones: and how much greater then must be Christ, if his type be so great! Beyond not only Abraham, Levi, and his posterity, but this great Melchisedec, as to his sacerdotal power and dignity.

*Unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils:* this greatness is evinced by Abraham's (the patriarch, chief of all the fathers of Israel, whom the Hebrews esteemed above all others, Joh 8:53, and God owns as his friend, and sets all believers under his fatherhood) giving, as a due to Melchisedec, being the greater person in office, the tenth of all the spoils, that which was due to God, and paid to him as God's high priest: ακροθιτων notes either the first or choicest of the heaps of grains, especially the first-fruits dedicated to God; but here signifieth that part of the spoils which, according to the custom of war in most nations, after the victory, were offered to God as his part, whether they did consist of persons or things: the tenth part of these were given by him to, Melchisedec, as the greatest priest of God in the world, and superior to himself.

Hebrews 7:2

Ver. 2. *To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all;* by which tithing

to him. Abraham owns him to be God's priest. As he had received blessing from God by him, so he returns to God, through him, his acknowledgments; he divided, shared, and gave out his part to him, even *the tenth part of all the spoils*, Heb 7:4. This is the first scripture, Ge 14:20, that gives us any account of paying the tenths of goods to God in his priests; which custom afterwards obtained among most nations, to give the tenths of the spoils after victory to God. And this Abraham did, as due to the office by Divine institution, having received a blessing from it.

*First being by interpretation King of righteousness*: the mystery of his name, title, and descent, the Holy Ghost now opens to them. His name is a compound of מֶלֶךְ or מֵלֶכֶּי which signifieth a *king* or governor, or my king, and צַדִּיק *righteousness*. A supreme governor, not only formally righteous in his own disposition, but efficiently by just and excellent laws making his subjects righteous; a king working righteousness in a Canaan, and in such a time of universal degeneracy from it. This God ordered for some special use, viz. to type out his own Son, God-man, the great gospel minister, to be the *King of righteousness*, who purchased it for, imputeth it to, and infuseth it into, sinners; who is so fully *the Lord our righteousness*, that we are *made the righteousness of God in him*, Isa 32:1 Jer 23:6 33:16 Zec 9:9 2Co 5:21.

*And after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace*: the mystery of his title of office, *King of Salem*. The due order of this is observable; he is first *King of righteousness*, and after that he is *King of Salem*, that is, of peace; the fruit of whose righteous government was peace. He kept this among his people, and round about him, while others were wasting and destroying their kingdoms by lusts and wars. This is eminently true of Christ *The Prince of Peace*, Isa 9:6,7, who gave some signal of his government, and begun his priesthood, in the same Salem, or Jerusalem, where Melchisedec reigned, Mt 21:5,9,10. He is eminently the royal purchaser, maker, and distributor of peace, reconciling all things to God, angels and men in heaven and in earth, and all persons, Jews and Gentiles, and the creation itself to recovered man, Col 1:20,21; compare Eph 2:13-17. The Prince and price of our peace, setting peace within souls, giving it to them without, peace spiritual, temporal, and eternal: his kingdom aboundeth in it, Ps 72:1,3,7 Isa 54:10,13 Joh 14:27 Jas 3:18.

## Hebrews 7:3

Ver. 3. In this verse is a mystical description of the eternity of Christ's person and priesthood, set out by the Spirit in the silence and omission of things that concerned Melchisedec and his glory; so that what here is represented to be typically and in shadow, that was Christ really and substantially; for he gives no account of his father, mother, genealogy, birth, or death; the Spirit either not revealing it to him, or ordering him to leave it out, that he might appear the more lively and perfect type of Christ, being represented in all things different from all the men that ever were, or shall be: such a priest therefore as he was, was Christ to be; not deriving his priesthood from any by birth, nor leaving it to any after him. As Melchisedec was *without father*, that was a priest before him, or is recorded, from whom he should derive, as the Levitical priesthood had; so Christ, as to his humanity, was without any human father, conceived only by the power of the Holy Ghost.

*Without mother:* as to any Scripture records of it, or to any title of the priesthood by her, as those of Aaron's family had: so Christ, as to his Deity, was without a mother, being the eternal Son of the Father only, and without any title in his humanity to the priesthood from the virgin, she being of David's family, and not of Aaron's.

*Without descent:* there is no line of him described in the Scripture, mentioning from whence he descended, or by what genealogy he came to the priesthood, as the Aaronites did clear their right, Neh 7:64. As to Christ, *who shall declare his generation*, or produce the lineal roll by which he claimeth the priesthood? Isa 53:8; compare Heb 7:12,15.

*Having neither beginning of days, nor end life:* there is no record of his birth or death, though he had a father or mother, as there is of Adam's beginning and end, who had neither: so Christ, as to his priesthood, had no predecessor, nor shall have any successor, Heb 7:16,24,28. As a sacrifice and the Lamb of God, he had his time of entrance into the world, and of his leaving it; yet, as God's Priest, he had neither beginning nor end of days. Pure eternity is its rise, and its end shall not be till God be all in all.

*But made like unto the Son of God;* ἀφωμοιωμενος he was in these things the shadow, picture, and resemblance of what Christ should be in

his royal priesthood; in these singular prerogatives a visible type of God-man; he was the sign likening, and Christ was the truth and substance of it.

*Abideth a priest continually:* these words are the key to all the description before. God made many other persons eminent types of his Son, but Melchisedec was the only type of the eternity of his royal priesthood; for which the Holy Ghost singled him out, dropped him down, as it were, from above, and then took him up again, without any further account of him in the Scripture, that he might convey this mystery to us. That which hath no beginning nor end of it recorded, is as abiding for ever; which this type had not, and so fully sets out the truth designed to be conveyed by it.

Hebrews 7:4

Ver. 4. *Now consider how great this man was:* the Spirit compares with, and prefers, Melchisedec before Abraham, as he was God's high priest; he introduces it with pressing these Hebrews to exercise an act of judgment under the metaphor of seeing, denoting it to be such a serious and intent act, as calls for the utmost exercise of the discerning faculty; a carelessness in it, or an oversight, might make the proposal to be to no purpose. The greatness of this high priest is what he sets in their view, and that indefinitely: How great is this officer! Intimating him to be somewhat excessive to other great ones: and how much greater then must be Christ, if his type be so great! Beyond not only Abraham, Levi, and his posterity, but this great Melchisedec, as to his sacerdotal power and dignity.

*Unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils:* this greatness is evinced by Abraham's (the patriarch, chief of all the fathers of Israel, whom the Hebrews esteemed above all others, Joh 8:53, and God owns as his friend, and sets all believers under his fatherhood) giving, as a due to Melchisedec, being the greater person in office, the tenth of all the spoils, that which was due to God, and paid to him as God's high priest: *ακροθιτων* notes either the first or choicest of the heaps of grains, especially the first-fruits dedicated to God; but here signifieth that part of the spoils which, according to the custom of war in most nations, after the victory, were offered to God as his part, whether they did consist of persons or things: the tenth part of these were given by him to Melchisedec, as the greatest priest of God in the world, and superior to

himself.

### Hebrews 7:5

Ver. 5. This is a proof by instance out of the Levitical law, that he who receiveth is greater than he who giveth.

*And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood: the seed of Levi the son of Jacob, son of Isaac, son of Abraham, Nu 1:48-50 3:1-5, and not all of them neither, but the sons of Levi descending from Aaron, were separated and consecrated in the priesthood by God's precept, and vindicated from those who would usurp it, Nu 16:1-17:13, and confirmed in it by miracle.*

*Have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law: God himself gave them a law from heaven to tithe by, and a charge to observe this law, as to all parts of tithes, such as were due to all Levites, Nu 18:24, to the high priest only as God's substitute, Nu 18:8-19, 25-29; to the Levites, widows, and poor together, De 14:22-29. These the same law obliged all the Israelites to pay to these Levites as a homage due from them to God, and so delivered to his substitutes superior unto them, as his priests and ministers, and due to them by his own constitution, being the first-fruits of his own blessing.*

*That is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham: yet these Israelites who were to pay those tithes to these as superior to them in office, were their own brethren by nature, of the same rank, coming out of the same loins of Abraham, but subjected to these priests, who, by God's ordinance, were set above them in their office; and their receiving tithes was an inseparable property of that superiority.*

### Hebrews 7:6

Ver. 6. The proof is here applied, showing Melchisedec to be greater, not than the Levitical priest only, but than Abraham himself.

*But he whose descent is not counted from them; he drew not his genealogy*



from any priests before him, but is greater than those priests, who by genealogy and succession were made such, and set above their brethern by God himself: he being independent, having no progenitor, priest, or successor, is greater than whom he decimateth.

*Received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises;* he decimated Abraham, the father of the Levitical priests, and by the Most High's order blessed him, by assuring him of his peace with God, grace continually from him, and multiplying temporal and spiritual blessings to him, according as God promised, Ge 15:1, &c. And this he did to him, though Abraham was a patriarch, and privileged with promises above any other; yet though God were made over to him in all his fulness, the blessing given him of fatherhood to a numerous nation, even the visible church of God among Israel, as to all believing Gentiles, who had Canaan literally promised to his posterity, and even this Salem, among the rest, of which Melchisedec was king, and the heavenly Canaan to himself; and above all, the promised Messiah to descend from him, in whom himself and all nations were to be blessed; he, so great in promises, is tithed and blessed by a greater Melchisedec.

#### Hebrews 7:7

Ver. 7. This principle is commonly acknowledged, it is a most apparent truth, you Hebrews cannot deny it; it is your common judgment, that a priest blessing, as God's officer, is greater than those blessed by him. He that is in a lower state in God's church, is blessed by one set above him in office by God himself, better and greater than he for his place and dignity in office. He must have the pre-eminency for his blessing, which he authoritatively, powerfully, and effectually conveyeth from God to those he blesseth, representing therein God communicating by him the good he wanteth in his benediction.

#### Hebrews 7:8

Ver. 8. His greatness as to his priesthood above the Levitical, is proved from its immortality. Immortal is greater and better than mortal; such is his order of priesthood. This argument he brings in to heighten the former, and

so connects it to it.

*And here men that die receive tithes:* the particle *ὧδε*, *here*, if referred to time, notes during Moses's economy, while the Levitical law lasted; if it refer to place, it notes Jerusalem in the land of Canaan, where the temple was: in that habitation of the Israelitish church the Levitical priests were not only as to their nature and persons withering and decaying, ceasing to be on earth, though they had the honour to decimate their brethren, but as to their order and office, mortal, they were no better than the tithed and blessed by them, in prospect of death. Aaron himself, the first of the order, died, and so did all his successors, as well as Israel.

*But there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth:* but how much better is Melchisedec and his order! *ἐκεῖ*, *there*, may refer either to the place where his business was transacted with Abraham, near Salem; or to the place of Scripture record concerning him, either Ge 14:18-20, where there is no account of his death, or in Ps 110:4. By the prophet David is the testimony borne, that his order is for ever; that Melchisedec, as to his order and office of priesthood, now liveth and subsisteth in the Son of God incarnate, and continueth for ever. It is suggested by a great light in the church, as if Melchisedec was translated as Enoch was, and so continued a priest to the very moment of his translation; and that neither his person nor priesthood died, but liveth for ever: but in this the Scripture is silent. An other refers it immediately to Christ, reading it thus: Here, i.e. in this world, they receive tenths, or are priests; but there, i.e. *within* the innermost of *the veil*, *whither the forerunner is for us entered, Jesus*; supplying this out of Heb 6:19,20. *Here*, is to be understood, not who receiveth tithes, but who is, *of whom it is witnessed that he liveth*. He saith this sense is to be found in so many words in Heb 7:23-25, where those who receive tenths, and die, are no other men than those many priests who were not suffered to continue by reason of death, Heb 7:23. Nor can *he, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth*, be any other than Jesus, who, Heb 7:24, is the *man* that *continueth for ever*; and, Heb 7:25, is ever-living.

Hebrews 7:9

Ver. 9. *And as I may so say:* the Spirit now sets this priesthood above the Levitical by instance, which instance being not so proper or direct, his

form of introducing it is considerable, as  $\omega\varsigma$   $\epsilon\pi\omicron\varsigma$   $\epsilon\iota\pi\epsilon\iota\nu$ , as to say the word, which is a Greek elegance of speech, when that is uttered which is remarkable, and yet hard to be understood; and it is not only conclusive to what was spoken before, I will speak a word more, and then end the discourse, but interpretative of what he was about to say concerning Levi, born a hundred and sixty-two years after this transaction; *As I may so say*, or, in some sense it may be said.

*Levi also;* Levi, not so much taken personally as collectively, for the tribe that sprung of him, who were priests or ministers to Israel, which Levi personally was not. He was the third son of Jacob, and his seed God separated for, and consecrated to, his service, settling the priesthood in Aaron's family, which was a branch of that tribe, and making all the rest servants to them.

*Who received tithes, paid tithes in Abraham;* these did receive these tenths by God's law from their brethren, and these paid tenths by or in Abraham, and so showed them to be inferior in office to Melchisedec, who received this homage from them as due to God, and to him as his high priest. This was not properly, but figuratively; true parents and children being accounted here as one person before they exist, as well as after; Levi, not actually existing then, but virtually in his parent. Christ was in his loins virtually too, as to his humanity, but not to descend of him by natural propagation, but by miracle; and in him as an antitype to this Melchisedec, and one to be set above him, in whom Melchisedec himself was to be blessed, and therefore could not pay tenths to him in Abraham.

Hebrews 7:10

Ver. 10. *For,* introduceth the proof, that Levi tithed in Abraham, being virtually in him, as his productive cause; so near is the unity and identity of descending children; and as truly were the posterity of Adam in him when he ate, sinned, and fell, Ro 5:12. To remove all question of the truth of it, the time is annexed to it, when Melchisedec met Abraham, and blessed him, then did Levi pay tenths in him; so as Melchisedec was greater than the Levitical priest: Christ, typified by him, being greater than himself, must be greater than them also.

Hebrews 7:11

Ver. 11. *If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood:* now the Spirit infers from the doctrine of Melchisedec's priesthood, the dignity and perpetuity of Christ's, typified by it: so that it is not Aaron's priesthood, but Christ's, which the Hebrews were to use for their salvation after Aaron's was expired. For perfection was not to be had by Aaron's priesthood or law, but by a better, of another order, even Christ and his law. The form of these words are interrogative, implying a vehement denial of what is queried in them. A perfecting of persons to life eternal by expiation, justification, renovation, &c.; see Heb 9:9 10:1; freeing sinners from the guilt, stain, filth, and consequents of their sins by an expiatory, satisfactory sacrifice to God, and fitting of them for an eternal enjoying him; a self-efficiency to these things without Christ, is, as to the Aaronical priesthood, vehemently denied; as to this, that is defective.

*For under it the people received the law;* for with the priesthood, about the time of its institution by God, the Israelitish church, God's covenanted people, *received the law;* by which, as well as by its priesthood, there is no expiation, remission, nor eternal life to be obtained, Ga 3:17-19; compare Mal 2:4-8. This law and priesthood being types of far better to succeed them, they were but leading to them, which in the fulness of time were to be revealed, and which should perfect what they could not, Ga 3:23,24 4:3-5.

*What further need was there, &c.?* It was needful, since the Levitical priesthood and law could not perfect sinners, that another should take place which could perfect them. David therefore, who lived above four hundred years after their institution, and feeling their imperfection, did by the Spirit foresee and tell of a royal priesthood and law to take place after this, that should perfect sinners, which could not be done by any called after Aaron's imperfect order. This was the Lord Christ the Messiah, who must be after the order of Melchisedec, Ps 110:4, and who by his priesthood and law should abundantly effect it; which was far more excellent for both, than any of the Levitical family can pretend to.

## Hebrews 7:12

Ver. 12. *For the priesthood being changed: for* refers to the expiration of the Aaronical order, to which these Hebrews now were not bound, for that a better priesthood and law were to fill up their room in the church. The Levitical priesthood was changed and abolished to make way for this; God designing that to continue for a time, and then to expire, when the truth perfecting it should take place.

*There is made of necessity a change also of the law;* the mutation of the priesthood indispensably requireth the change of the law, i.e. the legal dispensation of the covenant of grace, and the bringing in with another priesthood a better hope, Ga 3:17-27; compare Heb 7:18,19 of this chapter; even the covenant of grace in the gospel dispensation of it. This was made necessary by the decree of God, who determined, that both priesthood and law should expire together, and accordingly hath fulfilled it. For when Christ, the gospel High Priest, had in his person and work perfected all of it in heaven, he roots out that order of priesthood, abolisheth the law, scatters the people which would cleave to it; demolisheth the temple and city to which he confined the administration, so as all designs and endeavours of Jews, or of apostate Christhins, to repair, or to restore it, have been ineffectual to this day.

## Hebrews 7:13

Ver. 13. *For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe:* that this priesthood was so altered, he proves by Christ's being of another tribe than Levi. This is a periphrasis, describing the priest after Melchisedec's order. Of whom was this said in Ps 110:4, but of Christ, God-man, the royal High Priest of God? Mt 21:42. He, as to his human nature, descended of the tribe of Judah, and not of Levi; and so the Aaronical priesthood was ended by him, Heb 2:14 Ge 49:10.

*Of which no man gave attendance at the altar;* of which tribe none was at priest, whose work was to attend the altar, and offer sacrifice; if any of another tribe pretended to, or would usurp it, God either smote them, as Uzziah, 2Ch 26:18, or destroyed them, as those rebels, Nu 16:1-3, 28-35; neither was the priesthood hereby made tribual, or continued in any such

tribe as in Levi, but confined to our Lord only, not because he descended of Judah, but extraordinarily selected of God out of it to discharge it.

Hebrews 7:14

Ver. 14. *For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda;* the proof of this change of the tribe, and of what tribe he was, was undeniably evident to these Hebrews from their own genealogies, and the Roman census and enrolment of him; the providence of God ordering this, that it might be universally known that he was David's seed, as well as Abraham's, and as called by his name, Eze 34:23,24 37:24,25. Our Lord was God-man, Lord-mediator, Ps 110:1,4 Mt 22:42,46. He was, as to his humanity, born of the tribe of Judah, as his genealogy by his mother doth evince, Lu 3:33, and the concomitant evidence of the Roman rolls, in which his name was registered and kept in their archives above an age after his ascension.

*Of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood:* no man of which tribe was so designed by God, or so revealed to have the royal priesthood, but himself; none of them having any right to it, as they could prove out of Moses's writing; and the rule of priesthood is to be found there, and no where else: so that a negative argument taken from Scripture in matters of religion is valid, though never so much puffed at in this age.

Hebrews 7:15

Ver. 15. *And it is yet far more evident:* the change and abolition of the Levitical priesthood, and law, that the perfecting of Christ might succeed, is not only clearly represented to the understanding of all, that they assent to it, but *it is far more evident* from the eternity of this priesthood's constitution, as is proved, Heb 7:16.

*For that;* εἰ it, is a particle vehemently asserting, as in form of swearing, and not doubting, and therefore rendered *for that*.

*After the similitude of Melchisedec;* like and parallel in order to him, and in all the properties foretold, which make him a most excellent priest; a priesthood far above that of Aaron, upon the account of the law and

covenant to which it is related, which was not only the law of nature, serving God as Creator, but the law of grace, as he was Redeemer in Christ, who with the patriarchs worshipped God by, as believed in, a Christ to come.

*There ariseth another priest;* not only of another tribe than Aaron, but of a different order from his; is constituted, manifested, and beginneth the exercise of his office with the abolition of Aaron's.

Hebrews 7:16

Ver. 16. *Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment;* the gospel High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, was not constituted nor consecrated after that order and rule of God which did bind the Aaronical priesthood, and regulate it as to their consecrations and ministrations, obliging them by annexed temporal promises and comminations, which could not reach an immortal soul. The Mosaical rites and ceremonies were bodily, fleshly, only external. He was not made a priest by legal purifying with water, nor anointed with oil, nor sprinkled with blood, nor clothed with priestly garments, as Aaron and his order was, Ex 39:1-43 40:13-15,31,32; nor initiated with sacrifices of bulls, goats, &c. He was not to minister in a tabernacle or temple, as they did, which was carnal, and reached only the flesh, could not expiate sins, nor procure spiritual and eternal blessings, Heb 9:1-12, 19-26.

*But after the power of an endless life;* but was constituted and consecrated by God according to his powerful law. He was anointed with the Holy Ghost and power, Ac 10:38, which mighty influence enabled him to execute his office effectually for saving sinners; and by it he receiveth life peculiar to his priesthood, opposed to the dead letter of the commandment, by which, and under which, souls perished by multitudes. But this High Priest hath by this law life in himself, and the best of life to give out to those who wait on his ministry, Joh 5:21, 24-26, and such life as is indissoluble, opposite to carnal and bodily, which corrupts and perisheth; but the powerful life of this priest is not to be destroyed, neither in himself, nor his people. He by his death and life makes eternal expiation, and procureth eternal blessings for them: see Heb 7:25, and Heb 9:11,12,28.

Hebrews 7:17

Ver. 17. *For he testifieth:* this is proved by infallible testimony in Ps 110:4, God the Father himself solemnly declared him to be so before the angels in heaven, and revealed it to men on earth by the prophet David.

*Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:* that as Melchisedec had no end of days recorded, so this is repeated again to prove, that the Priest after his similitude, i.e. after his order, (the words being here synonymous), must continue for ever. Christ was not a temporary Priest by a carnal law, but was made a Priest for ever, with everlasting power endowed to save all his people: see Heb 7:24,25,28, and Mt 1:21.

Hebrews 7:18

Ver. 18. *For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before:* the Spirit having proved the disannulling of the Aaronical priesthood for its imperfection, proceeds to prove the abolishing of the law or covenant annexed to it, like it for weakness and unprofitableness; αθετησις is a displacing, deposing, or laying it aside as to its binding force, so as there is no obligation from it on any as to obedience or penalty; and this is so disannulled of the Law-maker, God himself, by setting up the gospel by his Son-priest, which is most certainly true.

*For the weakness and unprofitableness thereof;* for the Mosaical covenant and law wanted strength to bring about what the Jews sought by it, and wanted good fruit to them who made their boast of it; both which weakness and unprofitableness arose from the Hebrews' abuse of it, expecting expiation and sanctification by it, without minding the promise which preceded it four hundred and thirty years, to which it should have led them, and by its neglect proved so fatal to them. For they would be justified and saved by an external obedience to this law, without any regard to Christ and his sacrifice, by whom alone it could be attained, Ga 3:17-27. It was strong and profitable to the end for which God made it, to lead to Christ; but weak and unprofitable to justify or sanctify them without him, which was the end they used it for, or rather abused it.



## Hebrews 7:19

Ver. 19. *For the law made nothing perfect:* the proof of this weakness and unprofitableness of the law is its imperfection; it had no supernatural moral power to justify or sanctify any person, or to bring him to perfection; neither did it perfect any person of itself so as to reconcile him to God, or bring him to salvation, whatever was expected by it, Heb 9:9 10:1,2.

*But the bringing in of a better hope did:* δε *but,* shows the opposition of *hope* to the *law*; though *the law* could not perfect any, yet the *better hope*, the gospel, promulgated to and received by them, could perfect them. Πεισάγωγη, superinduction, i.e. it was brought in, and put in force, after the legal covenant expired; and brought in to abolish that, so as by it it was repealed and abrogated. The gospel law is styled *a better hope*, because it is conveying better promises, Heb 8:6, which gives firm and certain hope of sinners' perfection by it, viz. their enjoyment of justification, sanctification, and eternal life. This hope wrought by the Holy Ghost in their hearts, enableth them to obey the gospel, and seals the promises to them.

*By the which we draw nigh unto God;* and by this they have free access to God, as Heb 4:14,16; compare Heb 10:19-22 Ro 5:1,2; not only to worship him, but to receive the blessings of the covenant from him, without fear of displeasing him, or being consumed by him, as under the law, but in the greatest confidence of pleasing him in Jesus Christ, of having communion with him, and of being blessed in the enjoyment of him for ever: see Heb 12:18-22, and compare Heb 7:22-25 with them.

## Hebrews 7:20

Ver. 20. This is a further proof of the excellency of Christ's priesthood above Aaron's, taken from his constitution in it by oath. He who is made a priest by oath, is a better and a greater priest than any made so without it; but so is Christ. Καθ' ὄσον is a comparative, answered Heb 7:22, insinuating by how much the cause constituting or confirming an office of

priesthood is more excellent, by so much the effect and office must excel, receiving greater power for some more excellent end. This ὀρκωμοσία is as much as a double oath, ἀπο τοῦ ὀμνῆειν ὀρκον. By the swearing of an oath by God the Father was the gospel High Priest constituted an eternal one after Melchisedec's order; and it addeth so much the more strength and glory to the sanction. This is testified by David, Ps 110:4. The Levitical priests were made by a Divine designation, and with external rites were consecrated; but Christ was constituted a Priest by oath, as our translators well supply it out of the following verse.

Hebrews 7:21

Ver. 21. *For those priests were made without an oath;* those priests of Aaron's order were selected, instituted, consecrated, without any oath mentioned by Moses, who did all exactly as the Lord commanded him, Ex 40:16. God gave only command for it, and made their priesthood but a temporary and passing honour and office, which he might alter when he would.

*But this with an oath by him that said unto him: The Lord sware and will not repent:* but he, or Jesus, was made a Priest after Melchisedec's order, by an oath of God his Father, speaking to him, as is recorded by David, Ps 110:4. The Lord Jehovah the Father, sware unto his Son the Lord Messiah, lifting his hand, and saying: *I live for ever*, De 32:40, when he ascended and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, solemnly by this oath ratifying and confirming him in this office; and that he would not repent, i.e. change, or alter, or retract what he swore to him, there being no need of any other, he so effectually performing the work of it, that all that God bestows upon his by him, are gifts not to be repented of even eternal life and salvation.

*Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:* that which the oath ratified was, that Christ should be God's only and eternal Priest, who was to have no sharer with him in the priesthood, and no end of it; taking away from himself by oath any power to make Christ no priest, or take away his office at will and pleasure, as he did Aaron's; hereby honouring his Son, and highly gratifying sinners by giving them such a royal High Priest, who should effectually manage all their concerns with him for

ever.

## Hebrews 7:22

Ver. 22. This brings in the consequent on Heb 7:20.

*As much* excellency as was in God's oath constituting, *so much* there must be in the office constituted. The Aaronical priesthood, by God's constitution, was excellent; but Christ's is much more so, being by God's oath made personal and everlasting, relating to the best covenant; so as the Hebrews had the greatest reason to renounce Aaron's, and to cleave to Christ's for salvation. He being God-man, is a Surety, one that bindeth himself for another, to see something paid or performed, to give security for another; and is proper to him as a Priest, Job 17:3 Ps 119:122 Pr 6:1. In the Mossical economy the priests were typical sureties, or undertakers for the people; so Aaron, as a surety, was sent by Moses to stand between the living and the dead, when God was cutting off those sinners, Nu 16:46,48. The Spirit interprets this *Surety* to be a *Mediator*, Heb 8:6, which is the general comprehensive name of all his offices: as he gives all from God to us in and by his promises, he is *the Testator* fulfilling them, Heb 9:15,16; as he gives satisfaction to God for us, and returns our duty performed with the incense of his merits, he is our *Surety*; which merit of his resulted from his perfect obedience to the whole law and will of God, and from the full satisfaction he made to God by his death for our sins, Ro 5:19 2Co 5:21 Ga 3:13.

*A better testament*; the gospel covenant, described Heb 8:10-12, and referreth to what the Lord foretold of it, Jer 31:33,34, which is better than the Mosaical for perspicuity, freeness, fulness, spirituality, and the Spirit promised in it for its ratification by the death of Christ, and its perpetuity: see Heb 8:8,9,11.

## Hebrews 7:23

Ver. 23. *And they truly were many priests*: this further demonstrates the excellency of Christ's priesthood above the Aaronical for its singularity and self-sufficiency; whereas theirs was, for the multiplicity of it, weak,

vanishing, and mortal, like themselves. They had multitude of priests together under the high priest, to manage the service, and above seventy high priests, beside their sagans, such as were to officiate for them if at any time they were legally disabled from the institution of the Aaronical order, to the destruction of the temple, and were made according to the law successively.

*Because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death;* death cut them off one after another; they were all mortal, and could not abide, neither in their priesthood or life, Ex 28:43. Death transmitted that priesthood from one unto another, till the priesthood itself, by the succession of a better, was abolished, and did expire; so frail, passing, and imperfect were both their persons and office.

Hebrews 7:24

Ver. 24. *But this man, because he continueth ever;* this Priest, Jesus, Heb 7:22, is opposed to the Aaronical multitude; this excellent one, 1Ti 2:5, after his resurrection abideth immortal. He is eternal and permanent for person and office: see Heb 7:25 Ro 6:9. They are vanished, but he continues for ever, Re 1:17,18.

*Hath an unchangeable priesthood;* απαράβατον, a priesthood that cannot pass from him to any other, as Aaron's did to his successors: no person is to be a sharer in it, nor a successor to it: it is reciprocal with himself; his individual person terminateth it for ever; he hath no vicars nor successors of his priesthood, whatever the pope pretends to in it.

Hebrews 7:25

Ver. 25. *Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost:* this inference proves his eminency in office above Aaron's order by the efficacy of it; for he is possessor of a supernatural Divine power, which is able to save to perfection, to the full, to all ends, from sin, in its guilt, stain, and power; from its consequents, the curse, and wrath, and eternal death. What neither ourselves nor others could do for us, he is only able, and an willing as able, to set us in a safe, happy, blessed, and glorious state for

ever, Ro 5:9-11,17.

*That come unto God by him;* all such who will come to God by him as their High Priest, and no other, praying for remission of sins for his sake and merit, by faith in his blood, renouncing self, expecting the mercy of God to flow in him to them, subjecting themselves entirely to him, and depending on him to present them unto God their end, without spot or blemish, or any such thing, and to make them blessed in the enjoyment of him for ever. This is his work, Joh 6:35-40 1Pe 3:18.

*Seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them;* since he always exists and lives a High Priest for the good of those who wait on him, having life in himself, and quickening them; compare Ro 8:6; and, as their Advocate, 1Jo 2:1,2, answereth all charges against them, suing for those penitent believers, and pleading for all promised them by the Father in him. He sitting at God's right hand must ever be in his presence: and appears as the general Representative of his, and useth all his interest with the supreme Lawgiver, Judge, and Governor, for them, (see Heb 9:24), as it was foretold he should, Isa 53:12, even for them who cannot plead their own cause through guiltiness or weakness; he will manage it for all of them who believe in him, and apply themselves to God by him, atoning him for their sins by his sacrifice, performing their duties and person by the incense of his merits, and presenting them to God, answering in heaven his type on earth, Ex 30:1-10: compare Re 8:3,4 Ro 8:31-36.

Hebrews 7:26

Ver. 26. The last excellency of the gospel High Priest, preferring him to Aaron's order, is the qualification of his person, by which he is described in himself, distinguished from and set above all others, and is that which remained out of David's proof to be cleared, who this person was, who was different from Melchisedec, though after his order, to take place after Aaron's was expired, who was immortal, and constituted an everlasting Priest by God's oath.

*For such an High Priest became us, who is holy:* this was God-man, the Messiah, and gospel High Priest, who was convenient, congruous, suitable, useful, and necessary, for us guilty, filthy, miserable sinners, in respect of

ourselves hopeless and helpless, and cannot approach God without consumption; and, unless we have a person who can manage our cause with God, are lost for ever. To such is he agreeable and necessary, who only can help and save us. This the titles given him evince, showing all the perfections of a priest, of which others were dark shadows and types; as he was not only externally and relatively by office, but internally and morally holy. His essence as God was holiness; as man his nature was entirely agreeable to God's will; he was *that holy thing*, Lu 1:35; not having holiness engraven on a mitre, as Aaron, Ex 39:30,31, but in his person; holy in his conception, birth, life, and death. The devil could find nothing but holiness in him, Joh 14:30. Pure in his soul, in his body, transcendently beyond his type, Le 21:17-23; not a creature, angel or man, so holy as he, the most like to God of any, Joh 1:14.

*Harmless*; ακακος, void of all natural evil in his spirit and flesh, no lust, no disposition to evil, not injurious to any, having no guile, an Israelite indeed beyond a Nathanael, of the most simple, pure, and innocent nature; he was good, and all his work was good, Ac 10:38.

*Undefiled*; αμιαντος, without any spot, not soiled or stained without or within; the angels and heavens are not so clean in God's sight, as lifts Priest of his; he was never tainted with the appearance of sin: if his church be so pure, what must himself be! Eph 5:27.

*Separate from sinners*; free from all vicious habit, quality, act, or stain, by what was in sinners, or by his converse with them; as separate from guilt or stain, as if he had never been with them; conjoined with God in being and fulness of righteousness, making sinners righteous, but contracting nothing from them.

*And made higher than the heavens*; by the constitution of God, after his sacrifice, mentioned Heb 7:27, he ascended far above all heavens, Eph 4:10, and is settled on God's throne at his right hand, having all principalities, powers, might and dominion, and every name, subjected to him, and all things put under his feet, Eph 1:21,22. Never priest can reach where he is; this is his supereminent excellency, Heb 4:14 8:1 9:11. How able, mighty, and successful is he for managing all for his clients there! His work now is intercession.

## Hebrews 7:27

Ver. 27. In this verse the Spirit shows the ground of his intercession work in heaven, and why he doth not sacrifice as a High Priest there; therein setting his far above the Aaronical priesthood.

*Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice;* he had no necessity, being so holy as he was, to multiply sacrifices.

*First for his own sins, and then for the people's;* for himself, being sinless, and having no infirmity to atone for, as the Aaronical priesthood had, who annually on the day of atonement did offer sacrifice for themselves, being sinners, and needing pardon as well as the people, Lev 9:7. And he had no need annually on a day to offer for the people's sins, as Aaron and his successors had, and did continue to do, till his sacrifice took place and abolished them; he having once offered a sacrifice for the sins of the people, which outweighed all their multiplied sacrifices.

*For this he did once, when he offered up himself;* and this he did once when he himself died a sacrifice for sins, when he offered up the human nature by the eternal Spirit without spot, a propitiatory sacrifice to God, when his body hung on the cross, and his soul ascended and entered into the throne of God in the holy of holiest in heaven, with the blood of the testament, and atoned him for all his people. How transcendent was this sacrifice to all the Aaronical ones, whereby sinners were reconciled unto God for ever! Heb 9:11,12,14,24-26. On this offering was he exalted by God fitr above all heavens, confirmed by oath in his office, and his intercession became so powerful and effectual to save all his people from their sins, and the consequents of them.

## Hebrews 7:28

Ver. 28. This is the reason why the Aaronical priests had need to sacrifice for themselves, and the gospel High Priest had not, and is finally describing him who is so.

*For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity;* for the law

which God gave to Moses, the ceremonial law, constituteth, sets up, and puts into this Aaronical order and office of priesthood, such as are not only liable to bodily infirmities, but to moral ones, sins. Aaron and all his sons had their spiritual sinful infirmities, Heb 5:2, for which they were to offer their propitiatory sacrifices to God, as well as for those of the people; they were sinful, dying men, Heb 7:26.

*But the word of the oath, which was since the law;* but God the Father's promise to his Son, ratified with an oath, that he should be the great High Priest perfecting of souls for God, as David testifieth, Ps 110:4, to be revealed to him; and this four hundred years after the law was given which constituted the Aaronical priesthood. The word revealed God's promise to him, the *oath* made it irreversible; yet this promise was not actually performed to him till his ascension in the human nature higher than the heavens, Ps 110:1.

*Maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore;* God the Son incarnate, the man Christ God's fellow, the glorious only begotten and bosom Son of the Father, Zec 13:7 Joh 1:14,18 1Ti 2:5, is made by this ratified word the only single everlasting High Priest, who is not only completely and perfectly holy, as opposed to the infirmities of the Aaronical priests, but ever able and fit for his work, as successful in it. Who would not therefore leave that abolished priesthood, and cleave to this which must abide for ever?

Hebrews 8:1

### Chapter Summary

Heb 8:1-5 Christ, our great High Priest in the heavens, hath amore excellent ministry than the priests on earth,

Heb 8:6-13 as he is also the Mediator of a better covenant thanthat which was given to Moses.

Ver. 1. The Spirit having cleared the doctrine of the priesthood of the great gospel Minister, now proceeds to show how he executed that office; and that therein as he far excelled, so he was to be valued and used before, the



Aaronical priests. He introduceth it with a reflection on his foregoing discourse.

*Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum;* the sum then of the things spoken, is κεφαλαιον some read, the head, i.e. the scope in a discourse driven at; others, the chief of all the excellencies of the priesthood hitherto held forth; as if it were *palmarium argumentum*, the highest and choicest of all that hitherto had been spoken; and it is proportionably true, as will be seen in what followeth: but it must necessarily join the foregoing and following discourse together, and so it notes a sum, contract, or epitome; a breviate of the heads formerly discoursed on and largely, Heb 7:1-28; and so shows the dependence of the matter remaining to be handled on what went before, when many things are summed up in a few words; as Christ's priesthood, largely opened before from Ps 110:4, is, as to the substance of it, briefly handled in this verse.

*We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;* we Paul, and believing Hebrews, opposed to the infidel Jews, have not only a right to, and interest in, but actual possession of, Christ, God-man, as our High Priest, while their infidel brethren had only a sinful man: He who hath eminent power above, and though crucified by men, yet thereby became victorious over sin, death, and hell, and the lord of them the devil, led principalities and powers in triumph, when he passed through their kingdom in the air, Col 2:15, entered into the heaven of heavens, and there sat him down and settled himself, as was his right, on the right hand of God, as he sat on his throne, invested with all power and dignity, as God's royal Priest, near to him, and the great manager of all our concerns with him; while the sinful priest at Jerusalem stood trembling before the shadow of this heavenly temple on earth, Heb 1:3.

Hebrews 8:2

Ver. 2. *A minister;* this is spoken of the High Priest sat down on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, and relates to that work of his whereby he was constituted λειτουργος which, according to Suidas, is compounded of two words, παρα το ληιον *vel* ληιτον εργον, public

work; so as it might be rendered administrator, and notes any public officer from the highest to the lowest. The Spirit of God in the New Testament hath applied it to the highest and subordinate ministry; in this verse to Christ himself in his exalted state, and so notes a ruler, as he was now God's published, settled King, the Lord Administrator of all things in his kingdom, agreeably to what he foretold, Ps 2:6,7 110:1; compare Ac 13:33. And here properly it notes him in all his offices, his royal, sacerdotal, and prophetic ministry in the heavens and earth, administering and governing all things in them.

*Of the sanctuary:* the things about which his administration is concerned are τῶν ἁγίων, of holies. Some refer this to persons, as noting saints, of whom he is the Ruler and Governor, Re 15:3; others, to things, graces and endowments bestowed by him upon his: but most properly here, in the neuter gender, it notes the place, the sanctuary in heaven, the holy of holiest, where he is administering and governing all, though it may be applied to all of these. For heaven is the place, the sanctuary, wherein saints the persons for whom, and all holy endowments the matter about which, he administers, do descend. But the holy house, or *sanctuary*, is the proper import of it; and so, though expressed in the plural number, to all the holy parts of its types, the temple and tabernacle.

*And of the true tabernacle:* some, because of the connection of this to the former word, *sanctuary*, would have it import the same thing, even heaven; but the Spirit distinguisheth these from each other, Heb 9:1,2. Some would understand it of the body of Christ, but here not so properly and agreeably to what the Spirit is speaking of. But by *tabernacle*, here, is meant Christ mystical, the true temple, church, and habitation of God on earth. For as Christ was the body and truth by all the shadows and types of the tabernacle, Col 2:17, so not all one way. Some of the types were single, and terminated on his person, as priesthood, sacrifice, altar, shew-bread, incense, ark of the covenant, &c. Other types were aggregate, and compounded of many things, as tent, sanctuary, and tabernacle here; parallel to this, there must be a truth in Christ complex, that is, Christ the church, so framed and pitched a house by God, that he may dwell in it. The apostle so interprets it, 1Co 3:16,17 2Co 6:16; compare Eph 2:20,21 1Pe 2:4,5. Christ in person is its foundation; saints are the several living materials, of which the house and tabernacle is made; their dispositions, graces, and endowments, the ornaments of it; the laws, rules, orders,

ordinances, are the cement, the cords and stakes that join them together; and the glory of God fills it, as it did the tabernacle and temple, Hag 2:7,9 Re 21:23. It is styled, *the true tabernacle of God*, because of it the literal tabernacle was but an imperfect shadow and type; in this God dwells truly and personally, therefore to be entered into by the Hebrews; the old one, the type, being abolished and vanished by the appearance of this the truth. For now was that word fulfilled, Jer 3:16; the days were come that men should mention no more *the ark of the covenant of the Lord*; so no more the tabernacle of the witness; but the truth of God in Christ should be acknowledged by them. The reason of this interpretation is evident. A tabernacle is God's habitation; the Christian church is such, it answers in all parts, and bears its proportion to the complex type, and cannot fully be matched by any other things: it is congruous to Christ's session in glory; for thence he doth, as the honourable and glorious Administrator of God's church, order and manage all on it according to his will, having settled in his true tabernacle a ministry, Eph 4:8-13, covenant, as below, Heb 8:6-13, service, Heb 8:3,5, and privileges, far exceeding its type: all which this grand officer, as the only royal High Priest and Head of his church, Prophet of his people, orders by his Spirit, the only Vicar he useth in it. Of this true tabernacle, church, or house of God, the sovereign, independent, omnipotent, infinitely wise and holy, the eternal Lord, was the author; and such is his work as no other can question it, can add to or alter it, can reach it, so proportioned is it to its Framers.

*Which the Lord pitched*;  $\epsilon\pi\eta\zeta\epsilon\nu$  he framed and prepared every piece that constituteth this tabernacle himself, as the materials of the first were wrought by his pattern and order. He compacted and joined all the parts of it together, to make it his tabernacle; and especially reared, pitched, and firmly constituted this his own habitation. This he doth for ever so pitch, as hell and earth, with all their arts and force, can never remove it. Mt 16:16,18. It is his rest for ever, here he will dwell, for he hath desired it, and will make it glorious, Heb 12:26-28 Ps 132:14 Isa 11:10 Re 21:1-27.

*And not man*; this is denied because man is weak, sinful, and mortal, no such hands intermeddle with the work of God's tabernacle, for his work would be like him, weak, faulty, and perishing, which could not long survive its author.

### Hebrews 8:3

Ver. 3. *For every High Priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices:* in Christ's administration for his in heaven, as he is a King, so he is a High Priest; and as such must have service and ministration suitable to himself there, as the Aaronical high priests had on earth; every of which was constituted to stand and minister at God's altar, and were to offer sacrifices and gifts, as cleared before, Heb 5:1.

*Wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer;* seeing these earthly priests had such service, it would follow thence, if he were earthly and of their order, he should need such too. Ἄναγκατον having no verb expressly joined to it, is variously supplied: some, by *it is*; but those who would make the tabernacle his body, do not allow it, that being offered before this, and therefore add, it was, or hath been: but it is best supplied potentially, it would be necessary for this High Priest, if he were so low as those priests, to have something of the like nature or kind of gifts and sacrifices, that he might offer as they did. Now such he needed not, as being utterly inconsistent with his priesthood, as is proved after.

### Hebrews 8:4

Ver. 4. *For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest:* this gives the reason why the Levitical gifts and offerings were inconsistent with Christ's priesthood: for if he were earthly for person or office, or was existing on earth, or in an earthly sanctuary or tabernacle proper to the law, he could not by Divine ordination be an offering priest, being not of Aaron's family, nor of the tribe of Levi, nor such a priest as he was made by God's oath after Melchisedec's order, if he were for temper, office, or place of ministry earthly.

*Seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law:* this earthly office, state, and work, was by the law settled on Aaron's family, and none could legally offer sacrifices or gifts in God's earthly tabernacle or temple, but his sons alone. Christ, as he was not of that tribe, so he never was either in the court of the priests, or in the holy place in the temple, neither did minister in them as a priest at all; this was proper and peculiar only to his types.

## Hebrews 8:5

Ver. 5. *Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things;* these Aaronical priests and their service in the literal tabernacle, were only subservient, as the model in the mind, to represent the truth, as the platform of a tabernacle serves toward the making and pitching of it. Υποδειγματι is an obscure and underhand resemblance, the first draught, that which is the rough part of what is to be represented, Heb 11:23, such as the shadow is to the natural body, a dark resemblance of it: such were these of Christ's person, ministry, and those heavenly things performed by him; they were leading them to, and instructing them in, Christ and his work, though the veil on their mind and hearts hindered them from discerning it. So true is that, Joh 1:17. Moses's law was the shadow, Christ the truth of all; compare Heb 9:6,23 10:11. And it is not unlikely, that both the literal tabernacle and temple economy are but grosser and obscurer discoveries of that form and manner of the manifestation of God in glory, and the most excellently regulated service and ministry in the economy there.

*As Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle;* κερηματισται. Moses was in the mount, from God's own mouth, (the best of oracles), charged and admonished about, and infallibly guided in, his duty, Ex 25:1-40, confirmed by the Spirit in Ac 7:44: when he had his commission for the work resolved to enter on and perfect it according to God's charge, then was this oracle given out about the earthly tabernacle, priesthood, and service.

*For, See, saith he;* look you to it, observe this, take heed and beware, saith he, who is Jehovah, the Sovereign Lord of him and Israel, a Being of power to enjoy, and command, and to require any neglect, Ex 25:1-40.

*That thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount;* thou shalt make, frame, and work, by enjoining Israel what they are to make, and perfect what thou art to do, all those things of the vessels, parts, and structure of the tabernacle for officers and service, for conjoining, rearing, and pitching of it, Ex 25:1-40:38; all after the type, copy, pattern, exemplar, showed thee by me, and seen and viewed by thee,

when thou wert with me in the top of the Mount Sinai forty days and forty nights. This tabernacle was framed by its type, and was to be an ordinance resembling, figuring, and typifying a spiritual tabernacle and ministry of Christ that was to succeed and fulfil it, being different in the whole kind from this type; it being spiritual and heavenly, this a gross, material, earthly fabric. Moses was most exact in framing all as God commanded, after his own pattern; he did not add, diminish, nor alter any thing in it, Ex 40:1-38.

Hebrews 8:6

Ver. 6. *But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry: but* is here adversative, setting this High Priest over against and above the Aaronical, on the account both of his ministry and covenant, of which theirs were but types and shadows. The Lord Christ hath now really and fully obtained, and doth possess as the gospel High Priest, a public ministration, which, as to its glorious effects, transcendently excels the Levitical, Heb 9:11,12,14 10:12,14,18.

*By how much also he is the mediator;* by how much he is Mediator of a better covenant, by so much he hath a more excellent ministry, so that this is a proof of the former. Μεσσητης is a middler, one that interposeth, not only between persons at distance, but at enmity: his parleying between God and sinners could profit little, God being so highly injured by and offended with them; and therefore he mediates here as a Surety, as Heb 7:22, and so undertakes for sinners to satisfy God, wronged by them, by sacrificing himself for them, and so secure the performance of his covenant mercy to them. By which sacrifice he purchaseth and merits the Holy Spirit, to enable man to perform the conditions which God requireth from him; to repent, and believe, and obey the Redeemer, and wholly to rely upon his sacrifice for God's favour; as by his intercession he secures to them all the blessings of God's covenant for time and eternity, as proved, Heb 9:1-28.

*Of a better covenant;* the gospel covenant, which was a solemn agreement between an offended God and sinners; wherein he binds himself to give forth pardon and life to them upon certain conditions; and they bind themselves to perform, in order to the obtaining these. Which covenant

was brought about by the intercession of Christ the Mediator between them, who became a Surety for the performance of it, and solemnly ratified and confirmed it by the sacrifice of himself; as other covenants were by the blood of federal sacrifices, of which we have frequent mention in the Scripture; called *better* than the Mosaical covenant, not for the matter of it, but for the manner of exhibition, Heb 7:22, being comparatively a greater good than that which was less, Ga 3:17.

*Which was established upon better promises;* which gospel covenant was νενομοθετηται, as the Mosaical one, confirmed, ratified, and established by the blood of the sacrifice according to the law, Heb 9:18-21. This was its sanction, it was by it settled unchangeable, attended with and founded on the best promises, such as were more spiritual, clear, extensive, and universal, than those in the Mosaical covenant were.

Hebrews 8:7

Ver. 7. This proves the gospel covenant better than the Mosaical, for if it had not, there would have been no second.

*For if that first covenant had been faultless:* that first covenant, of which Moses was the mediator, as to the administration of it, (as to the matter of it, it was the same from Adam throughout all ages), was faulty; not because God made it, though it was a less perfect good than what succeeded it; it was able to save those who would rightly use it, and come unto Christ by it, Ga 3:24; but accidentally, by reason of the priests' faults, and people's sinfulness, it became wholly ineffectual to them for saving them; therefore the blame and fault of it is charged on them, Heb 8:8.

*Then should no place have been sought for the second:* the question here is vehemently assertive; if that covenant in its Mosaical administration had reached effectually its end, brought all that were under it to Christ, to be saved by him, no place nor room was there, that then being so perfect, for another to succeed it, God would have rested there; but his excellent wisdom and counsel determined to put in being the second, and to set it in the place of the first, that was faulty, and which was to be abrogated by it, Ga 3:21.

Hebrews 8:8

Ver. 8. This is the proof of the faultiness of the Mosaical covenant, from the right cause of it, those who did abuse it.

*For finding fault with them:* the Lord, by the prophet Jeremiah, being distasted and offended, accuseth, and with complaints and aggravations chargeth the houses of Israel and Judah, both priests and people, for frustrating God's covenant with them by their unbelief, mistaking God's mind in it, and using it to justify them, and not bring them unto Christ, who justifieth the ungodly. That the covenant was not faulty in itself, but only accidentally, is evident; for it was given to change hearts, though its spiritual efficacy was not so fully revealed, De 10:16 30:6; for Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, were saved by the right use of it. It did not bind them by works to obtain justification, for it was delivered with blood, which taught them it was to be had only by faith in Christ's blood. But when they would not be led to Christ by it, they were faulty, and not the covenant, and so they perished in their gainsaying. The administration of this covenant by men being so defective, he finds fault with them, and resolves on the change of the administration.

*Behold, the days come:* *Behold,* imports attention to and observation of the rare, excellent, and important thing proposed in the word to the eye and mind of those for whom it was written, and to whom it is sent: so is this here, in Jer 31:31; the days of the Messiah's coming in the flesh, when *a woman shall compass a man*, as Jer 31:22; the known times of grace, Jer 23:5,6. A time to come when the prophet wrote it, past when the apostle quotes it here; so ordered by God to teach those there the imperfection of that covenant administration, so as they might make out to Christ by it, and not rest in it, as he had revealed him to them in the prophecy; and to strengthen believers in their faith in Christ when come, and to convince and leave inexcusable such Jews as would not believe in him, and further to confirm his priesthood.

*Saith the Lord:* this is not an invention of the prophet, but a revelation of the Supreme Lord to him. It is his certain, true, and infallible speech, illuminating his mind by it, and directing him in his words and writings for to convey it to those to whom he sent him; so that the word is firm, and



worthy of all acceptance; and the more of the Hebrews, because sent by Jeremiah, a Levitical priest, to them.

*I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:* I will make perfect and complete. In the prophet it is וְכָרַתִּי I will strike or cut, because in covenant-making the sacrifices were cut asunder; and thence is it transferred figuratively, to signify covenant-making. A covenant, for form and manner of administration, second, later, better, stronger, and more excellent than the Mosaic; such as should be effectual to God's saving ends in the ministry of Christ, with the whole seed of Jacob, the visible church of God, when the prophet wrote this, divided into two kingdoms of Israel and Judah, and that of Israel removed afar off by the Assyrian, and seemingly lost, but by this covenant to be made one people again, and to be saved by Christ, David their King, Jer 23:5,6 Eze 37:21-28.

Hebrews 8:9

Ver. 9. The Spirit proceedeth to show the form of the covenant denied.

*Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers;* not the same covenant for habit or form, nor any like unto the same for the manner of its administration, as was made by the Lord with the Hebrews their progenitors, when they were strangers in Egypt, and under great bondage there.

*In the day when I took them by the hand;* the day that I laid my hand on them, and took hold of theirs, even the last day of the four hundred and thirty years foretold to Abraham, Ge 15:13,16; compare Ex 12:40,41; as a father takes hold of his child to pluck it out of danger. It is a metaphor setting out God's special act of providence, in their miraculous deliverance out of Egypt, keeping them in his hand, while he was smiting their enemies; setting them at liberty, and then striking covenant with them, and binding them by it to be his obedient people, as such redemption mercy did deserve. At which time the covenant was unlike the promise or gospel one for external habit and form only, as carried on by a ceremonial law and priesthood, over which Christ's was to have the pre-eminency for power and efficacy of administration.

*Because they continued not in my covenant;* these unbelieving Hebrews, under that administration of the covenant, continued not faithful to it, as by their own word and consent they bound themselves to it, but apostatized from God and his truth, De 5:27. The word used by the prophet **הִפְרִין** signifieth the breaking and making void the covenant. The administration of it did not hold them in close to God, but they frustrated all God's ordinances, turned idolaters, forsook the Lord, and worshipped the gods of the nations round about.

*And I regarded them not;* ημελησα, I took no care of them, I did neither esteem nor regard them, but cast them off from being my people for their lewd, treacherous covenant-breaking with me; they would not return unto me, and I rejected them from being my people, or a people as they were before. Who knows where the nine tribes and the half are? And in what a dispersed, shattered condition are the remaining Jews to this day! The apostle in this follows the Septuagint, who read the effect of their sin, their rejection, for what was their sin itself, which by the prophet is expressed **וְאִזְבִּי בְעַלְהֵי** should I be a Lord or Husband to them; which is an aggravation of their sin from God's dominion over them or marriage-relation to them; yet did they break his marriage-covenant with them according to their lewd and whorish heart: see Eze 16:1-63, 23:1-49. But in this quotation by the apostle, and translation of the Septuagint, it is a metonymy of the effect for the cause, to reject, cast off, or neglect them for their treachery to him in their marriage covenant, which was the true cause of it. The verb itself **בעל** may signify to neglect or despise; and so Kimchi reads it, Jer 3:1, and is so rendered in this place by other rabbies, and so it signifieth in other languages.

*Saith the Lord:* this is God's irrevocable word, used four times by the prophet, Jer 31:31-34, and three times repeated by the apostle here, as proper only to the Lord; none can speak so truly, certainly, infallibly, as he.

Hebrews 8:10

Ver. 10. *For this is the covenant that I will make: for,* showeth it should not be such a covenant-form as was given on Mount Sinai, it being wholly

different, and that denied before, being carnal and ceremonious, full of types and shadows, and through their sin ineffectual to them. This is the firm administration of the covenant which I will strike. To which three words answer is in this scripture, I will perfect, make, and dispose; which last is the root from whence the notion of a covenant in the Greek is derived, διαθησομαι.

*With the house of Israel:* Israel is the comprehensive name of all the twelve tribes, as Heb 8:8; compare Ex 16:31 40:38; and is so used by the Lord himself Mt 10:6, and by Peter, Ac 2:36.

*After those days;* in the prophet it is, after those days of their delivery from Babylon, Jer 31:1,8,11,16,21, but especially when those days of the first administration of the covenant are accomplished, when the fulness of time for the Messiah's revelation is come, Ga 4:4. To this God again puts his seal, he saith it.

*I will put my laws into their mind;* the great God, the Redeemer himself the infinitely wise, and good, and powerful Spirit, who only can reach the soul, will make impressions, and write clear characters of Divine truth on it, 2Co 3:3. None can alter, new mould, frame, and temper a spirit, but him, who hath a true original right of all the good he promiseth, which he will freely, graciously dispense from himself, Joh 4:10,14. All the doctrines of the gospel, which include in them the moral law, as now managed by Christ, all the will of God concerning our salvation, promises, and commands; and these in their spirit and power, which God not only ratified in, but conveyed to the world by, Jesus Christ, and especially into the mind. διανοιαν renders the Hebrew בקרובם the inward parts, in the prophet's text. The mind or understanding being the innermost part of the soul, is capable of receiving impresses of Divine truth, and its characters are by it made legible to the soul; which as promised here, is so prayed for by the apostle, Eph 1:17,18.

*And write them in their hearts:* επιγραψω is a metaphor setting out a real, actual, powerful work of the Spirit of Christ, which leaveth the express characters of all God's saving mind and will upon the heart or soul as plain as writing upon paper, or engraving upon stones; such an operation of the Spirit of Christ on the souls of them, as whereby is conveyed into them a new light, life, power, so that they are made by it partakers of a Divine

nature; and though they are not other faculties, yet they are quite other things than they were for qualities and operations, so as they are enabled to know, observe, and keep his laws, which are set up in authority and dominion in their souls, ruling and ordering all there, Eze 11:19,20 36:26,27 2Co 3:3,8,9,10,18.

*And I will be to them a God:* as in the former word was the promise of conversion, regeneration, and renovation, so joined with it is the promise of adoption. In which God engageth in Christ to be to penitent believers, Ro 9:6,8, a God, i.e. the cause and author of all good, Ge 15:1-21, 17:1,7; what he is, hath, or can do for them of good, is all theirs, and himself terminating all the knowledge, faith, and worship of them. He will exercise all his wisdom, power, and goodness to deliver them from all evil, and to make them eternally happy and blessed in himself.

*And they shall be to me a people;* and to him this true Israel shall be a true, spiritual, eternal, adopted seed and people, partakers of all that he hath promised to them or they can desire of him; so as their name is better than the name of sons or daughters, an everlasting one, not to be cut off, Isa 56:5. They, as his people, attend on, witness to, and contend for, him and his glory, are always at his beck, being purchased, made, and covenanted so for his use and service, that they are not their own, but wholly at his disposal, Jer 23:7 32:20 Eze 11:20 37:23,27 Zec 8:8 2Co 6:16.

Hebrews 8:11

Ver. 11. *And they shall not teach:* the subject implied in the plural verb, and by a partitive particle expressed, *they*, and *every man*, is in Jeremiah's text **וְכָל אִישׁ** a man, even every truly covenanted one who hath the knowledge of the Lord.

*And they shall teach no more,* in Jer 31:34. A double negative supplieth it in this verse, οὐ μὴ denying that weak and fruitless kind of teaching which was under the Mosaical covenant administration, whereby souls were not savingly edified in the knowledge of God, there was imperfection both in their knowledge and teaching, which should not be under the gospel.

*Every man his neighbour;* such as are nearer to each other in society or commerce, a fellow citizen; or are near by relation, by nature or alliance, by consanguinity or affinity, one near at hand, ignorant of the Lord; and that needs instruction, one capable and possible to be taught.

*Saying, Know the Lord:* this intimates the manner of teaching denied, a formal, customary way of teaching, *saying*; it was proverbial with them; and so was the matter of it: *Know the Lord*; as they used to say: *The temple of the Lord*, Jer 7:4; *The burden of the Lord*, Jer 23:34; *The day of the Lord*, Am 5:18; or otherwise, not to teach them to know the Lord notionally only, without any influence on their heart, without believing, loving, fearing, or obeying him, 1Jo 2:3,4; or to teach them to know the Lord, as redeeming and delivering of them out of Egypt, or out of the land of the north, that is, bringing them back from their captivity in Babylon, as they were taught, Ex 20:2 Jer 23:7,8; but as delivering them from sin, the curse, wrath, and hell. Or, they shall not teach one another so darkly, slenderly, and imperfectly in the meaning of types, shadows, and ceremonies, that they might know the Lord in truth, and worship him according to his mind; or to take so much pains to instruct them concerning the Lord and his worship, as they took with the Gentiles when they proselyted them.

*For all shall know me, from the least to the greatest;* for under the gospel administration all the covenanted ones, the infant in the church and the aged, Isa 65:20, all ages in Christ, children, fathers, and young men, as 1Jo 2:12-14, young and old, shall have his laws put into their mind's, and written on their hearts, the true saving knowledge of him in Christ in the fulness of it, as Isa 11:9: they shall so perfectly know him, as not to depart from him; he shall be theirs and they his by an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; by the plentiful effusion of his Spirit in all the gifts and graces of it through his gospel institutions on them; they shall be so enlightened in gospel truths, that they shall know their duties, and perform them, as if they were immediately enlightened from above, rather than by the common methods of teaching by his word; that they shall not need so much cautioning, threatening, correcting as they did under the law; but shall entirely cleave to him, without a disposition to revolt.

## Hebrews 8:12

Ver. 12. *For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness:* this *for* states the cause of all the former acts promised in the gospel covenant, as regenerating, illuminating, adopting, and God's gracious removing all sins that might hinder the communication of these and all other good to his covenanted ones; God, in and by the administration of this covenant, ratified by his blood, propitiating him, will of his free mercy pardon, blot out, and take away, Heb 2:17, and thereby free them from the guilt, power, and punishment of their original and actual unrighteousness; implying his reconciliation to, and free acceptance of, their persons in Jesus Christ, on whose account it is he dealth so graciously with them in all things, Isa 55:7-9 1Jo 4:9.

*And their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more;* all the breaches of God's law by commissions or omissions, whatever they may be for number or for aggravation, he will always through Christ save his covenanted ones from them all, Mt 1:21 Ro 3:21-26. All of these shall not only be for the present blotted out, but his mercy will be so great and certain through Christ, that he will neither punish them for them, nor charge them to them; he will abundantly pardon, and for ever take them away, so as if they be sought for they shall not be found, Heb 10:3,14 Isa 43:25 Mic 7:18,19. And when he forgets their sins, he will have their persons in everlasting remembrance, Ps 112:6.

## Hebrews 8:13

Ver. 13. *In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old:* the inference from what was before said, Heb 8:8, (in the Lord's saying this by the prophet Jeremiah, that he would make a new covenant, for form and manner of administration later and better, even the last and best he will make, and in which he will have penitent, believing sinners to acquiesce), is this: That the Mosaical one, though first in respect of the gospel, hath lost its power, strength, and vigour, its binding force; and so, by God's instituting another, is abrogated, as useless, needless, and imperfect.

*Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away;* this Mosaical one, thus grown old, weak, and decrepit, and by the institution of

the new gospel covenant abrogated, may continue for a while, but in no force; and so gradually moulder and decay by little and little, till it at last vanish and totally cease. It was near to it upon finishing of the ministry of the gospel High Priest on earth, when by his death he fulfilled the truth of this typical one, and so virtually nulled it; and, as to its binding force, vanished, when the gospel was published throughout the world, Ro 10:16-18; compare 2Co 5:17; as is owned by the apostolical synod, Ac 15:1-41. It was high time for these Hebrews to cease from that vanishing Mosaical one, and effectually to close with the gospel priesthood and covenant, which must remain and continue for ever; see Da 9:24,26,27; which if they did not, must end in the total destruction of them, their temple and city, which came to pass not many years after the apostle wrote this Epistle.

Hebrews 9:1

### Chapter Summary

Heb 9:1-14 The service and sacrifices of the first tabernacle were far less perfect and efficacious to purge the conscience than the blood of Christ.

Heb 9:15-22 The necessity of Christ's death for the confirmation of the new covenant,

Heb 9:23,24 and of better sacrifices than those legal ones to purify the heavenly things.

Heb 9:25-28 Christ was offered once for all.

Ver. 1. The Holy Spirit, Heb 9:1-10:18, is illustrating his two last arguments taken from the tabernacle and covenant administrations, about which both the Aaronical priests and the gospel High Priest did minister; in both which Christ hath beyond all comparison the pre-eminence, which the Spirit proves by an argument drawn *a comparatis*, of the tabernacle and service of the Aaronical priests, and the tabernacle and work of Christ. He beginneth with a proposition of the adjuncts of the first covenant from Heb 9:1-10: The three particles introducing it,  $\mu\epsilon\nu$ ,  $\omicron\upsilon\nu$ , and  $\kappa\alpha\iota$ , agree, the one in connecting, the other demonstrating, and the last in asserting, that which followeth to depend on what went before, as: And then truly the first.

*The first covenant:* η πρωτη is an ellipsis, nothing is in the Greek text joined with it, though some Greek copies add σκηνη, the first tabernacle; but this is to make the same thing a property of itself, and it is absurd to read, the first tabernacle had a tabernacle; it is therefore better supplied from that which *first* relates to in Heb 8:7,13, viz. the Mosaical covenant administration, which had or possessed, as its proper adjuncts, even those three distinct ones following.

*Had also ordinances;* δικαιωματα, we read *ordinances*; others, ceremonies or rites. It is derived from a passive verb, and may signify, a righteous sentence or ordinance of God, or a righteous event that answers that law or decree, as Ro 8:4. In the plural it notes *jura*, the laws of God, but especially here the ceremonial laws, these just constitutions for ministry which God gave by Moses to the Aaronical priesthood.

*Of divine service;* λατρειας, which our translators make of the genitive case singular; but this is repugnant to the next words connected to it, which should strictly be of the same case; it is therefore best rendered in the accusative case plural, and by apposition to ordinances, and so is read services or worship, which because it refers to God, our translators have added to it the word *Divine*. How various this worship was in the ministry of the high priest and ordinary priests, the apostle showeth afterward, and therefore most properly to be rendered services.

*And a worldly sanctuary:* το αγιον was the sanctuary where these services were performed, called the holy, from its relation to God and his service. It consisted of two tabernacles, as is described, Heb 9:2,3. It is styled κοσμικον, being externally decent, beautiful, and glorious, as is evident by its description, Ex 26:1-37. Made it was after God's own model, a mystical structure, and a type of a better; yet though that were so pleasing to the eye of the world, its materials were, like it, frail, brittle, and passing away, as things made with hands make way for better, Heb 9:24.

Hebrews 9:2

Ver. 2. *For there was a tabernacle made:* the Spirit descends to a particular account of the three former adjuncts to the covenant, beginning with the last, the *sanctuary*; which being glorious, he advanceth the glory



of Christ from the place of his ministry above it.

*For* is demonstrative of what was asserted Heb 9:1, the first visible habitation that God had amongst men, 2Sa 7:6, as a token of his gracious presence with them. This tabernacle consisted of three parts, of the court where stood the brazen altar of burnt offerings, the brazen laver for the priests to wash the sacrifices in, and to purify themselves when they came and offered them upon the altar, Ex 27:1, &c.; Ex 30:17-21 38:1-20 40:28-33. This court the Holy Ghost here leaves out. Separated from this court by a veil was the first tent or tabernacle, called the sanctuary, or holy place, where the priest did the daily service, which is called the first, Ex 26:36 40:22-29. Inward of this, and separated by a veil, was the holy of holiest, where the ark was, and where the high priest only entered once a year, Ex 25:10,22 40:20,21. This tabernacle was according to God's pattern and command, prepared, finished, and reared up by Moses, Ex 40:1-38.

*The first*; the sanctuary, or holy place, separated by one veil from the holy of holiest, and from the court by another, had in it the following sacred utensils.

*The candlestick*; for matter and form answering God's pattern, as Ex 25:31,40 37:17,25 40:24,25. It was of pure gold, and of six branches artificially wrought, by which was typified that Spirit of light which Christ giveth to the true tabernacle, his body mystical, the church wherein God dwelleth, not unusually set out by lamps, Re 4:5. And by reason of that light is the church set out by the emblem of candlesticks, Re 1:4,12,13,20.

*The table*; for matter, of plates of pure gold covering the shittim wood, and a crowning verge of gold round it, Ex 25:23-30 37:10-16 Ex 40:22,23. Most excellent for its spiritual use, setting out Christ in all his excellencies, well stored and furnished for his; which the Jews by their unbelief and profaneness made contemptible, Mal 1:7.

*The shewbread* was twelve cakes made and set on the table, new every sabbath day in the morning, and when taken away were to be eaten by the priests only, Ex 25:30 40:23 Le 24:5-9. However, on David's necessity God dispensed with that law, and allowed him to eat of it, Mr 2:26. This was an emblem of God's provision for the twelve tribes, the type of his church; and the bestowing on them the bread of life from heaven, the all-

sufficient food for them, Joh 6:32-58; compare Col 2:16,17.

*Which is called the sanctuary;* which first tabernacle was called the holy place or sanctuary, being relatively so, as God's tent, and no otherwise, so is it styled by the Spirit, Ex 26:33.

Hebrews 9:3

Ver. 3. *And after the second veil:* this distinguisheth the second tabernacle from the first; for, passing through it to the end of it, there hung up a curious veil made of blue, purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen, with figures of cherubims, Ex 26:31,32 36:35,36 40:21. The mystery of which is interpreted after, Heb 9:8: see Heb 6:19. A veil noteth distance and obscurity; or, covering, opposite to that which is open and free.

*The tabernacle which is called the holiest of all:* behind this veil was the second tabernacle, called the holy of holiest, Ex 26:33, by God himself, which did really, though typically, hold out the place of God's special appearance for propitiation and gracious answers of peace to the desires of his people in the Lord Jesus; applied afterwards to heaven itself, the holiest of all, where the High Priest is entered for us, and sits at the right hand of his Father, making intercession for us, Heb 6:19,20 7:25 9:24 10:19.

Hebrews 9:4

Ver. 4. *Which had the golden censer;* in the holy of holiest was reserved the golden censer, on which the high priest put the incense when annually he entered there, (see Le 16:12,13), that the cloud of it might cover the mercy-seat, and so was kept for that service in it: see Joseph. Antiq. lib. 3. 7. Many would refer this to the golden altar of incense that stood before the veil in the holy place, Ex 30:6-8; and so they read it, having the golden altar of incense before it for its service, and not within it; signifying the Godhead, by which Christ maketh his intercession, sanctifying and perfuming his own, and all offerings made in his name.

*And the ark of the covenant;* it was a coffer or chest of shittim wood, plated all over with gold, Ex 25:10-22 37:1,6 40:20,21. This chest had for

its cover a mercy-seat, listed or verged with a crown of gold round it; and is called *the ark of the covenant*, because the tables of testimony were laid up in it, Ex 25:16 40:20; those two stone tables wrought by Moses, and carried up into the mount, (after he had on the idolatry of Israel broken those of God's own making, and on which God had written the ten laws, the terms of his covenant with them), on which God wrote afresh his laws, and renewed his covenant with them, Ex 34:1,2,28,29; compare Ex 31:18. This ark was a type of Christ interposing between God and us, who had broken the covenant of his laws.

*Wherein was the golden pot that had manna*; εν η, *wherein*, refers not to the ark mentioned just before, for in it was nothing but the two tables of the covenant; but the tabernacle, called the holy of holiest, in which was reserved the golden censer, pot of manna, provided by God's charge before the giving of the law, and laid up afterwards in that archive by God's order, Ex 16:32-34. This manna was the bread God fed Israel in his church with forty years in the wilderness, and is called *angels' food*, Ps 78:25; a type of Christ *the true bread*, that God gave from heaven to his church, Joh 6:31-58.

*And Aaron's rod that budded*; which was by God's order put before the testimony in the holy of holiest, and not into the ark, for it was to be in view there as a token of the true priesthood, the type of Christ's, against all after-murmurers and usurpers: see Nu 17:1-11.

*And the tables of the covenant*; and as these, the urn of manna and rod of Aaron, were in the holy of holiest; so especially the two tables of the covenant were there too, but laid up in the ark which was in that place: see 1Ki 8:9 2Ch 5:10. Others think the preposition εν is to be read, by which, or about, near which ark, as it is used of Christ's sitting εν δεξια, Heb 1:3; and so notes, as to the pot of manna and Aaron's rod, an apposition of them to or by the ark, when the tables of the covenant were undeniably put into it.

Hebrews 9:5

Ver. 5. *And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy-seat*; on the cover of the ark at each end was a cherub of beaten gold; these and the

cover of the ark were all of one piece, they had their feet on the ledge of the cover, or its crown, at each end; their faces looked towards each other, and their wings touched each other in the extreme part of them, and so on the cover formed the mercy seat see Ex 25:17-22: and Ex 37:6-9 40:20. Their form is described by Ezekiel, Eze 1:1-28 and Eze 10:1-22. They were glorious for matter and service, God in his glory manifesting himself over them, gave propitious answers unto Moses about his church, Ex 25:22 Le 16:2. These cherubims typified the ministry of angels to our Lord Jesus, especially in his great work of rendering God propitious to his church, and saving it, Heb 1:14. Standing on the two ends of the ark's cover, they showed Christ to be the basis of their own standing, when others fell: they spread out their wings, to show their readiness for serving him in all; with their faces opposite to each other, and looking down on the mercy-seat and ark, typifying what the apostle saith of them, 1Pe 1:10-12, desirous to pry into the mystery of this great Propitiator, the Surety and Mediator of God's testament, and on his propitiation and its effects, which is admirable and astonishing, not to sinners only, but to angels, Eph 3:10.

*Of which we cannot now speak particularly;* the apostle apologizeth for his but mentioning these mysterious things now, that it was not to eclipse the glory of that administration, but because the matters were well known to them already, only in this they were defective, that they reached not after Christ, the truth and substance of all these types; and therefore he proceeds from the places, to treat of the services to be performed by the Aaronical priesthood in them.

Hebrews 9:6

Ver. 6. The Spirit now proceeds to the second adjunct of the Mosaical administration, having stated the places of them, even the Aaronical priests' services in them.

*Now when these things were thus ordained;* when the tabernacles were made and reared, and the utensils rightly disposed in them, and all things set in God's own order, now *the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God;* into the holy place or sanctuary within the first veil, described, Heb 9:2. Not only the high priest, but all the common priests, consecrated by God's order to their work;

every one in his daily course, constantly performing, and completely acting, all the services enjoined on them by God to be done there, as to put on the shew-bread, and to eat what they took off, Ex 25:30 Le 24:5-9; to keep the lights in the candlestick, supplying it with oil, and clearing the lights, Ex 25:37,38 Ex 27:20,21 30:1,8 Nu 8:2,3; to burn incense on the golden altar before the ark: the priests took a censer, and filled it with fire from the altar of burnt sacrifice, and then came to the altar of incense before the veil, and there put the incense on the fire in the censer; during the evaporating of which, the people in the court were pouring out their prayers for pardon, each person by himself; see Ex 30:1-9,34-36 40:26,27 Lu 1:9,10; even all the ordinances of worship commanded by God, did the priests perform in it. All which services in the holy place do but typify the true services in the gospel church, of all made priests by the blood of Christ, 1Pe 2:5,9 Re 1:5,6 5:9,10; offering prayers and praises to God continually in the name of Christ, perfumed with the incense of his merits, Mal 1:11; compare Re 8:3; obtaining thereby the light of his grace through his Spirit, and the bread of life, till they are perfected by their great High Priest, and carried into the holy of holiest, there to be praising and enjoying God in him for ever, as he hath prayed for them, and promised to them, Joh 14:2,3 17:20,21.

#### Hebrews 9:7

Ver. 7. This verse contains the special anniversary of the high priest alone in the inward tabernacle, the holy of holiest, of which you have the law, Ex 30:14 Le 16:2, &c.

*But into the second went the high priest alone once every year;* into this place the high priest was to enter once a year only, and every year to repeat it, as Ex 30:10, upon the atonement day, being the tenth day of the month Tisri, the seventh month in their ecclesiastical year, and the first of their civil: that day was he to enter several times into that place, first for himself, Le 16:11-14, and then for the people, Le 16:15,16, &c., carrying in the blood first within the veil, and then coming out again, and carrying in the incense on the golden censer: none of the other priests were to enter into the holy place while he was ministering, but him alone, as Le 16:17.

*Not without blood:* when he first entered into the holiest of all, it was with

the blood of a young bull, of a ram, Le 16:3,14, with the blood of the he-goat, Heb 9:15,27. After he had offered the incense on his golden censer, Heb 9:4, he must sprinkle the blood upon the mercy-seat and before it, by which expiatory blood there was made an atonement, Heb 9:12-14.

*Which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people;* first, for his sinful self and family, Le 16:11, and then for the ignorances, incogitancies, errors, and all sorts of sins committed by the people, Heb 9:16 Heb 7:27; all of them being committed with some error of the understanding. Which type, in all its parts, was perfectly fulfilled in Christ, the gospel High Priest, as is shown in the following verses; whereby not only his office, but his services, are transcendently set above, and preferred to, all the Aaronical ones.

Hebrews 9:8

Ver. 8. *The Holy Ghost this signifying;* God the Spirit himself, the third relation in the Deity, the author of all the Mosaical institutions, who commanded all these ritual, ceremonial services in this tabernacle to be performed, who revealed all this to Moses, and who inspired him with it, Le 16:1,2, the most infallible interpreter of his own institutions, declared by these signals and types, and demonstrated by the frame of ordinances, then given to the church, in these expressions, Ex 30:10 Le 16:2, 12-15,17: the veil ever covering the holy of holiest, but only on the day of expiation, when it was drawn aside, and that laid open.

*That the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest;* the true and very means to God's presence in heaven itself, which is only by Christ the great High Priest, through whose blood we can come to the throne of his grace there boldly, Heb 10:19-22, and by the perfect work of his Spirit on us, can enter with him into the holy of holiest in heaven; this was not so plainly, clearly, fully, universally known as afterwards by the shedding of Christ's blood, and the revelation of it in the gospel to all the world. Christ was revealed to the Hebrews, and all these ceremonial ordinances did hold him out, and by him only the saints under that covenant administration got to heaven; yet the manifestation of it was obscure in comparison of what it is since.

*While as the first tabernacle was yet standing;* while the Mosaical covenant administration was to continue, till the coming of Christ in the flesh, and perfecting the work by his death, for the space of near one thousand five hundred years, was the true, right, and proper way for entering into heaven, darkly, and obscurely, and typically revealed unto the church; when by the death of Christ the veil of the holy of holiest was rent asunder, heaven laid open to be seen, and entered into by all penitent believing sinners through Christ, every day in their duties, and then in their persons, Mt 27:51.

Hebrews 9:9

Ver. 9. *Which was a figure for the time then present:* the tabernacle in all its parts, and the whole economy of it, was παραβολη, which signifieth the translation of a word or thing from its own natural signification to signify another, which thing so signified by it is commonly more excellent than itself, as the substance exceeds the shadow; equivalent it is to those terms of types, examples, figures of things to come: such are the tabernacle and its services, representations of things spiritual and Divine, and very imperfect shadows of them, serving only for that infant state of the church: and when its nonage was to expire by the coming of the truths themselves, then were they to expire too. The only time when the tabernacle administration was present, and no longer.

*In which were offered both gifts and sacrifices;* in which tabernacle were performed services to the great God, whose tent it was, suitable to his person, and agreeable to his will, even gifts and sacrifices, as before described, Heb 5:1 8:3.

*That could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;* they were all impotent as to the restoring of a sinner to God's favour by themselves; they could not reconcile him to God, preserve communion with him, nor bring them to happiness in him, Heb 10:3,4; no perfect justifying, sanctifying could be had by any of them, though never so often repeated. They might do all to the letter which God required, absolving the worshipper as to the external part, but not at all according to the conscience; or they could not take the guilt of sin from the conscience as to themselves, but it would cry guilty still; neither could they remove

the power of it, for it was under bondage to it still; neither could they take away the fears and terrors of it, but left it shaking under them and unquiet still, being abused by them as a veil to keep them from Christ the true Priest and sacrifice, when as types and shadows they should have led these worshippers to him.

Hebrews 9:10

Ver. 10. Having shown the typicalness, weakness of the Mosaical covenant administration; in respect of the tabernacles, services, and ordinances, he closeth his description of them in this verse, by showing their carnality and mortality. As they were external things, they could reach no further than the flesh only, as appears by particular instances, and therefore could not quiet the conscience, considered without Christ, nor justify, sanctify, or save the sinner. For meat and drink offerings, and meats clean and unclean, and drinks prohibited by God, in which the Jews placed much of their religion, separate from what they signified, commended no man unto God, 1Co 8:8.

*Which stood only in meats and drinks:* as to *meats*, see Le 11:1-47 De 14:3-21. As to *drinks*, forbidden the priests, Le 10:9, and the Nazarites, Nu 6:2,3; the jealousy water, Nu 5:24, and the paschal cup, Ps 116:13, and cup of thank-offerings; see Le 1:1-17 and Le 2:1-16.

*And divers washings*, which were many for the priests in their services, and for others in performing theirs by them; some by sprinkling with blood, Ex 29:20,21, with water, Nu 8:7 19:9-19; some by washing at the brazen laver, as the priests, Ex 29:4 30:17-21; so the sprinkling of healed lepers, Le 14:4-9, and the purification of the unclean. All these were of God's own instituting, but still reach no further than the flesh or body of the sinner: see Heb 9:13.

*And carnal ordinances:* other carnal rites and ceremonies, such as could not reach the conscience, as they used them, yet were to be used by them in obedience to God's will, and to discriminate them from others, which were various in the ceremonial law.

*Imposed on them;* ἐπικειμενα, imposed, may agree with δωρα, Heb 9:9,



*gifts imposed;* or may have the whole sentence for its substantive, as, being matters imposed or settled in meats and drinks. All these things were not the inventions of Moses, but God's own institutions, enjoined by his own authority on the Jewish church, to lead them by a regular use of them to life by Christ, but by their own corruptions were made burdens to them. The Divine precept obliged them to an observation of them, and to the serving God in, by, and through them.

*Until the time;* as they were outward, bodily, and carnal things, so they were mortal; as to their being and continuance enjoined by God, they were *μεχρι καιρου* *until* is a term settled and limited, and not indefinite, and its limit is a singular time, even that point of time wherein Christ, having finished the work of redemption, ascended and sat down on the right hand of God, and powerfully thence breathed forth the Spirit, of infallibility on his apostles, for guiding them in laying the foundation of his church, by preaching the gospel throughout the world, and perfecting of it, and no other. This the Jews and others expected from the Messiah, Joh 4:25, in his time. All the New Testament perfecting was by them, and therefore they give a charge against the least alteration of the gospel, truth, and law, which they left as a rule for ordering of Christ's church to his last coming: see Mt 28:20.

*Of reformation;* διορθωσεως, of putting things to rights by the law, rule, and ordinance of Christ, the work of this special point of time. He, the great church reformer, thoroughly righteth things to God-ward, by removing and taking away what was faulty, not in itself, but by man's abuse of it, even all the Mosaical economy and church-frame, which carried men about to God, by opening and making that to be seen with open face, which was well veiled, and so mistaken, even the mystery of Christ hid from ages, by manifesting and establishing that which was the truth itself, instead of the shadows that did but represent it; even that true churchframe intended first by God, and now fully revealed and settled by his Son as a standing rule and pattern to all for ever; which unmovable kingdom of his is described further, Heb 12:22-28.

Hebrews 9:11

Ver. 11. *But;* the Spirit, by this adversative *But*, opposeth and applieth the

truth to the type, and brings in view the antitype, the office, tabernacle, sacrifice, and ministration of Christ, which vastly exceedeth the Mosaical one.

*Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come;* the High Priest preferred is no less person than God the Son manifested in the flesh, and anointed to his office with the Holy Ghost and power, Ac 10:38. In the fulness of time, before the antiquating and removing the former order, was he exhibited and consecrated the true High Priest, of which all the other were but types, and bringing with him all those good things which were figured and promised under that economy, all pardon, reconciliation, righteousness, holiness, adoption, and glorious salvation, which were under that dispensation to come, being present and exhibited with, as effected by, this High Priest at his first coming, but to be completed and perfected at his second, which is intimated, Heb 9:26,28.

*By a greater and more perfect tabernacle;* the anti-type of the Mosaical sanctuary and tabernacle, where there was the holy place, and the holy of holiest, correspondent to, and figured out by, these, was the more glorious sanctuary of this High Priest; he passeth through the tabernacle of his church on earth, of which he is the minister, as hath been cleared, Heb 9:10, and Heb 8:2, and so enters into the heaven of heavens, the holiest of all, Heb 9:24, where God sits on his throne of grace.

*Tabernacle* here cannot signify the body of Christ, for that is the sacrifice that answereth to the legal ones offered in the court, and without the gate, Heb 13:11-13, and with the blood of which he enters the holy of holiest as the high priest did, and he doth not pass through his flesh there, but carrieth it with him. The word εσκηνώσεν, Joh 1:14, may not only refer to the Godhead's tabernacling in flesh, but that God the Son incarnate tabernacled in his church; those with whom Christ dwelt while on earth, for his human nature dwelt or had a tabernacle in this world as well as his Deity; and this is such a tabernacle where he in his whole person and his church may meet and communicate together. This tabernacle is greater than the Mosaical for quantity, as it refers to earth the place, even the whole world, where his church is dispersed, beyond all comparison larger than its type, which was a little limited and confined place; and more perfect than that, which was only made of boards, gold, silver, brass, silk, linen, skins, &c. This being a spiritual temple and tent, in which God will

inhabit and dwell for ever, 1Co 3:9,16,17 2Co 6:16 Eph 2:12, 20-22 1Pe 2:5; it is far more glorious than that tabernacle, Hag 2:7-9.

*Not made with hands*; what is hand wrought, or made by men, is at the best mouldering and decaying; but this was wrought by the Spirit of God himself, most excellent for the quality, permanency of the materials, and work, Eph 2:22. Man had neither power nor skill to form, polish, frame, or pitch this, Heb 8:2. Creation work is God's work, as to the old and new creation. Hands may frame and pitch the other, and pluck it up; but he that worketh, frameth, raiseth, createth this, is God, 2Co 5:5 Eph 2:20.

Hebrews 9:12

Ver. 12. From his office and sanctuary he proceeds to clear up his service.

*Neither by the blood of goats and calves*; it was not about weak, typical, vanishing sacrifices, the blood of goats or young bulls, that he was concerned, as the Aaronical priests were, Le 16:14,15, opened before, Heb 9:7; and this annually on the expiatory day, Le 16:29,34; which could not satisfy injured justice, nor expiate sin, nor purge nor quiet the conscience of the offender, Heb 10:1-5.

*But by his own blood*; but with his own pure, precious, and unspotted blood, 1Pe 1:19. Not a drop or few drops must go for it; then what dropped from his body in his agony, from his head pierced by thorns, from his back when whipped, from his hands and feet when nailed on the cross, might have done; but it must be his own life-blood, the blood of the Second Adam dying by it for the first, Ro 5:8-20 Php 2:6,8. And as it is the blood of Adam, that it may have value enough and worth, it must be the blood of him who is God too, *with his own blood*, Ac 20:28. This price surmounts all treasures, Joh 6:51 10:11,15.

*He entered in once into the holy place*; with this blood of the covenant he entered, immediately upon the breathing out of his soul on the cross, (the veil of the temple being rent asunder, and room made for the great High Priest to fulfil his type), into the holy of holiest in heaven, where never angel came, nor any but himself, till his now piercing through, rending the veil, and laying it open, Heb 10:19; compare Isa 57:15; and came with it to

God's throne of justice there, and made the everlasting atonement for sin, and so turned it into a throne of grace, fulfilling his type, and as the high priest did before the sacrifice was burnt or consumed, Le 16:1-34. For the expiation of sin was not deferred by Christ to his ascension, forty-five days after his death, but was immediately on his giving up the Ghost by him performed; and in this he fulfilled *all righteousness*, Mt 3:15. This is the *once* that he entered heaven for expiation, satisfying the injured justice of God by sin, fulfilled the law, and then publicly appeared at God's throne, to show all was complete, Lu 23:43,45,46 Joh 19:30. This *once* he did that which the high priest did annually typify, but could never accomplish for so many hundred years together, Heb 9:26,28 10:10,12,14. By which it is evident that *one*, and *once*, refers to the shedding of his blood as a sacrifice, and presenting of it to the Father, as completing propitiation work at that once for ever.

*Having obtained eternal redemption for us;* when he with the incense of his merit and prayer to the just and merciful Judge, even God his Father, sued for, found, obtained, and fully received eternal redemption for sinners; i.e. deliverance of their guilty persons from eternal death, full remission of all their sins, Ro 3:25,26, full reconciliation to God, 2Co 5:18,19,21, with an instating them into all spiritual good. This work is styled *eternal*, because its virtue is of perpetual continuance, which freeth the duly qualified subjects (Col 1:21,23) from the guilt and punishment of all sins for ever.

Hebrews 9:13

Ver. 13. This service of Christ in his sanctuary exceeds the Aaronical, not only for reconciling souls to God, but purifying of them, as cleared in this and Heb 9:14.

*For if the blood of bulls and of goats:* the *blood* is the same as spoken of Heb 9:12.

*Bulls*, here put for calves, are but to distinguish the sex; and it is to be noted, where our translators read oxen, as to sacrifices in the Old Testament, as particularly Nu 7:87, they mean bulls, for no oxen were by the law to be offered to God at all as sacrifices; see Le 22:17-23; because

they could not be true types of the true sacrifice, which was to perfect them. This blood was sprinkled on the mercy-seat and before it, and on the altar, Le 16:14,19, &c., expiating sins, and taking away the guilt and legal punishment.

*And the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean:* the rite of preparing it, read in Nu 19:1-10. A red heifer was by the people given to the priest; he was to bring her without the camp, and order her to be slain, and then take the blood with his finger, and sprinkle it towards the tabernacle seven times; after which she was to be wholly burnt in his sight, with cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet, the ashes of which were reserved; when they used them, they took them in a vessel, and put running water to them, and then sprinkled them with a bunch of hyssop on persons legally unclean, Heb 9:18-20, and so they purified them from their ceremonial filth and pollution; but none of these could purify an unclean soul, that was left unholy and unclean still.

*Sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh;* these sprinklings did sanctify those who were legally unclean, and did procure a legal purity and acceptance of them the service of the sanctuary, from which else they were excluded; by this they were looked on as externally holy with the congregation, their flesh and outward man being made pure by it for their external worship.

Hebrews 9:14

Ver. 14. *How much more shall the blood of Christ?* The question supposeth an unexpressible difference between Christ's purifying and the legal sacrifices. The blood with which he pierced within the veil to the throne in the highest heavens, on which sat the just God, the proper, precious, powerful blood of God the Son incarnate.

*Who through the eternal Spirit;* who in his immortal soul obeying all God's will in suffering, did, through his own eternal God-head, to which both body and soul were united, and which sanctified the body offered, as the altar the sacrifice, Mt 23:19, which is called the spirit of holiness, Ro 1:4, and gave value and virtue to the sacrifice, offered up his body a sacrifice for sin, when he died on the cross. Not sheep, bulls, goats, turtles,

pigeons, &c., not man, nor the life of angels, were his sacrifice; but himself, pure, holy, and unpolluted, an innocent, harmless person, 2Co 5:21. How much beyond his types for innocency and purity! Le 22:20,21 Nu 19:2.

*Offered himself without spot to God:* the offended, injured Creator and Judge of sinners, who constituted him to this whole work; and was by this most perfect sacrifice propitiated; his justice was satisfied, his law obeyed, and himself set fully free to pardon and forgive sinners without injustice; and to be just, as well as gracious and merciful, in doing of it, Ro 3:25,26; and they might be put in possession of his favour, presence, and person again, as their own God, 1Pe 3:18.

*Purge your conscience;* though the sacrifice be over, the virtue and excellent causality of it doth abide, purging now as ever, not only justifying and absolving of a penitent believing sinner, but purifying and sanctifying the soul, procuring the Holy Spirit to renew it, and take away inherent corruption and infuse holiness into it, Eph 4:24, and making willing in the beauties of it, Ps 110:3 1Co 6:11 Tit 3:5,6; making body, soul, and spirit one frame of holiness to God, 1Th 5:23. So as the most quick, lively, and sensible part of the immortal soul, conscious of sin, is freed from the guilt, filth, and fears of sin that did cleave to it; this thus purged, no consciousness of guilt remains, nor fear of punishment, but it is filled, from the interest it hath in this blood, and the work on it of this Spirit, full of joy and peace and righteousness by believing, Ro 5:1,2,5,11.

*From dead works;* all operations of sin, which come from spiritually dead souls, and work eternal death, Eph 2:1, of which they are as insensible as dead men; all sorts of sin which do taint, pollute, and defile the soul, much more contagious, pestilent, and polluting the soul, than any of those things forbidden to be touched by Moses's law could the flesh, Nu 19:18: they are as offensive to God, and more, than carcasses are to us, and pestilential things, though themselves keeping souls from any communion with him.

*To serve the living God:* as under the law there was no coming to the congregation of the tabernacle without legal purifying, Nu 19:13,20; so by this purifying correspondent to the type, souls are quickened, have boldness and confidence God-ward in point of duty, present themselves living sacrifices, Ro 12:1, aim at him through their whole life; that he

delights to keep up communion with them proportioned to himself, till he fit them for their complete serving and enjoying of him in the holy of holiest in heaven.

Hebrews 9:15

Ver. 15. *And for this cause he is the Mediator of the new testament:* as Christ's priesthood and service, his sacrifice and purifying, so the testamental covenant, and his administration of it, did incomparably exceed all those of Aaron's; so that for what was spoken, Heb 9:14, even the effects of his sacrifice, the justification and sanctification of sinners, is he the great gospel High Priest, the mediating person between God and sinners, confirming and making effectual by his death God's testamental covenant to them, which is for the administration of it the very best and last, in which God bequeatheth pardon, reconciliation, righteousness, holiness, adoption, and heirship to an eternal inheritance to penitent, believing sinners.

*That by means of death;* the death of Christ himself, God-man, the most excellent sacrifice, without which there could be no remission, Heb 9:22, nor the testament of God about it put in force; for which cause he was the Mediator of it, that they should value him so much the more for his death, fulfilling therein all his types, and reach that which was unattainable by these, both for their fathers and themselves.

*For the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament;* for the satisfying the justice of God for the wrong their sins had done it, paying that price without which they could not be expiated, by which they were remissible, and to the duty qualified, actually forgiven, even the sins of those who were under the Mosaical administration of the covenant. Aaron, Samuel, David, and the saints, believers in that time, had their transgressions pardoned by virtue of the death of Christ to come, shadowed by these sacrifices typifying him and his death in their own times. What the death of beasts or birds could do for them, his did, delivering them from the guilt and punishment of their transgressions, under which otherwise they must have perished for ever: this Peter publisheth, Ac 15:11. This virtue of Christ's death is not mentioned exclusive of New Testament sins being remitted by it; but if it did expiate

those old ones, reaching so much backward, even to Aaron, it will much more expiate those under the New Testament to penitent, believing, praying sinners for it, as those Old Testament transgressors were.

*They which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance:* such as on God's call repent and believe on the Lord Jesus, that Angel of the covenant then revealed to them, and enter into covenant with him, Ex 23:20-23; compare 1Co 10:3,4,9 Joh 5:45-47; such as by it have sins expiated, consciences purged, so as to have a title to and fitness by the work of the Spirit for the heavenly Canaan, Ro 4:16,24,25; may be put into the possession of that eternal inheritance made over to them by promise, and which the Spirit gave them an earnest of here, Heb 12:10,14,16; compare Eph 1:13,14 1Pe 1:3,4. All this is confirmed to these by Christ's death.

Hebrews 9:16

Ver. 16. *For where a testament is: for* gives the reason of the Mediator's death, even the putting the called into the possession of the bequeathed inheritance, demonstrated by a common, natural law in all nations of the testament's effect on the testator's death; a testament being a disposition by will nuncupative, or written, of either goods or lands, which are the person's own, to be the right and possession of others after his death, whom he nominateth in it: such in proportion is the new covenant, where God gives freely all spiritual good things with a heavenly inheritance, as legacies to all his called ones in Christ, by this last and best will and testament of his, written in his Scripture instrument, witnessed by the prophets and apostles, sealed by the two sacraments, especially the Lord's supper, Lu 22:20.

*There must also of necessity be the death of the testator;* he who maketh a testament by the law of nature, as of nations, must die before the legatees have any profit by the will; the son and heir inherits not but on the father's death; then is the testament firm and valid, the time being come for the heir's inheriting, and for the will's execution, it being now unalterable; the necessity of which is cleared, Heb 9:17.



Hebrews 9:17

Ver. 17. *For a testament is of force after men are dead:* the testator being by death disseised of his goods and lands, the right takes place of the legatees, and the time of their challenging it; such a sacred tie there is upon the surviving, that none can of right add to it, alter, or disannul it.

*Otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth;* it is of no force while the maker of it liveth, because they have need of the things bequeathed; they can alter and change it, and by the will itself it is declared none shall have any right to the things bequeathed in it till the testator be dead. The consequent of all this is, that the Testator of the new testament must put it in force by death; and his death is of greater force to confirm his testament than that of men, because his will can never be violated, it being a Divine constitution, but the human testament may. Christ, God-man, after dieth, as Testator, and puts the testament in force; and by breaking the bonds of death, doth gloriously effect that the legatees perform the conditions required in the will, to fit them for receiving their legacies; and then faithfully distributeth them to them by his grand executor the Holy Spirit, who applieth the virtue of it to the legatees under the Old Testament, as well as these under the New; he being the Testator, as well as the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world.

Hebrews 9:18

Ver. 18. Forasmuch as all testaments are put in force by the death of the testator, and all covenants are most strongly confirmed by death and blood in God's own judgment, thence it is that the Mosaical covenant was confirmed by them.

*Dedicated;* *εγκεκαινισται*, strictly taken, signifieth made new, or renewed. It is not used in the New Testament but in this place, and Heb 10:20: the Syriac translate it here confirmed, or ratified. In the Old Testament the Septuagint use it to express the Hebrew הִנְכִּי De 20:5. In which law, for a man who had built a house, and was called out to the wars, to return and dedicate it, was to take possession of it, and secure it from the claim of another. Here it is properly used to make sure, firm, and inviolable; and that by blood, typical of Christ's, which is the highest and

most solemn ratification. So were the covenants before ratified, but especially under the law, and the Mosaical covenant itself, as appears by instance, Ge 15:9,10,17,18 31:44,54; compare Ex 24:5,7,8.

Hebrews 9:19

Ver. 19. *For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law:* that the Old Testament was ratified by blood the Spirit proveth by instance, Moses as mediator having spoken every command, promise, and article of the covenant to all Israel, who came out of Egypt, according to God's charge, reading all to them out of the book, wherein by God's order he had written it; and the people declaring their assent and consent unto this covenant, as Ex 24:3,4,7, as God covenanted and bound himself to his part of it.

*He took the blood of calves, &c.:* the Mediator then took, according to the common rite in such ratifying acts, a sprinkling bush made of scarlet wool, cedar wood, and hyssop, Le 14:4,6 Nu 19:6,18; to which David alludeth, Ps 51:7; and with this bunch sprinkles the blood and water (which he had received into basons from the sacrifices, killed by the first-born, for burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and there mixed, Ex 24:5,6 Le 9:3,4 14:51) on the altar, book of the covenant, and all Israel, Ex 24:6-8, confirming and ratifying the covenant on God's part and theirs, as the words annexed, Heb 9:20, and Ex 24:8, affirm: Behold the blood by which this covenant is made firm and inviolable. All this is but a shadow and type of the ratification of the new covenant with sinners by the death of Christ; he is the Mediator that brings God's testamental covenant to them; he dieth and puts it in force; by his blood ratifieth it on God's part and theirs, by his Spirit applying it to them, and sprinkling it on them; he brings home the testamental blessings to them, Heb 10:22 11:28 12:24 Isa 52:15 Eze 36:25 1Pe 1:2.

Hebrews 9:20

Ver. 20. Moses, after his sprinkling the altar, book of the covenant, and all Israel, taught them the meaning of it; saying: This that is the blood wherewith I have sprinkled you, is a sign or a seal of the testament, the

blood by which it is ratified and confirmed. The blood typified and represented by it, was that of Christ the Testator, by which all the new testament is ratified to all penitent, believing sinners that look to it, without which it could never have been made good. The blood of Christ is the immovable foundation of this testament, Ex 24:8; compare 1Co 11:25; even the testamental covenant which Jehovah had made with them, and which he enjoined them by such a rite as this to ratify and confirm.

#### Hebrews 9:21

Ver. 21. Moses did not only sprinkle the book of the covenant with blood, but the tabernacle itself, yearly, on the atonement day, as is charged, Le 16:14,16,17. For as the altar and persons were to be atoned for, so was the tabernacle itself, Heb 9:18,20. First they were sprinkled, and then anointed, Le 8:10,11, as the gospel tabernacle was in the truth of it, 1Co 6:11. All the garments and vessels of that priesthood were thus to be purified, typifying how unclean all the persons ministering with them, and atoned for in and by them, were; and how polluting all things, and polluted by them, till they were purified by the blood of Christ.

#### Hebrews 9:22

Ver. 22. *And almost all things are by the law purged with blood;* all such things as are capable of purifying, and which were not to be so by the water of separation, or by fire, as Le 16:28 Nu 31:23, were ceremonially purged by blood.

*And without shedding of blood is no remission;* and without the death of some living creature as a sacrifice, and the blood of it not only shed, but sprinkled, there could be neither legal pardon of guilt, nor purging of ceremonial filth. By this God signified to Israel, that without the blood of Christ his Son, and the Testator of his testament, shed as a sacrifice, to purchase and procure both remission and the Spirit, there could be neither pardon of the guilt of sin, and removal of the punishment, nor purging the filth, or renewing the nature of the sinner, his blood being the inestimable price purchasing both for them.

## Hebrews 9:23

Ver. 23. *It was therefore necessary:* this conclusion the Spirit draweth from the antecedent, Heb 9:18, proved in the following verses, therefore is it here rehearsed. The illative particle *therefore*, is but to sum up the use of blood about the first tabernacle, and that Testament dispensation. It is positively *necessary* by the will of God, expressively enjoining them, to point out better, and that there might be an agreement of the type with the truth.

*That the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these:* the tabernacles in all their parts, the book of the covenant, vessels, services, &c., being types, signs, examples, shadows of things in heaven, must be ceremonially purged and separated from common use to Divine, by those external, ritual sprinklings and lustrations, especially with beasts' blood, mystically representing better blood and purifications of persons and things than these.

*But the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these;* but things more excellent and glorious than earthly ones, the gospel tabernacle in its parts, testament, and services, about which Christ ministereth, which are heavenly for their descent, agreeableness with, and tendency to it; they are spiritual and incorruptible, Heb 9:11,12 Heb 9:8:2 12:22 Ga 4:26 Re 21:1-27; are to be dedicated, set apart, put in force, and sanctified to God by the one sacrifice of Christ, of more value, worth, and virtue than all the legal sacrifices together. It is expressed plurally, to answer the opposite term, and to set out its excellency, being far above all others; the blood of it being that of God by personal union, and which is only efficacious for eternal good, and available with him; so ought it to be esteemed as it was in truth, and not quarrelled with by these Hebrews.

## Hebrews 9:24

Ver. 24. *For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands:* *for* shows this to be a rational proof of the transcendency of Christ's death and sacrifice; and this he demonstrates from the place of his ministry, far exceeding that of his type. The gospel High Priest did not, like Aaron,

enter with his blood into the holy of holiest of an earthly tabernacle, frail and movable, and appear before the mercy-seat on the ark there, Heb 9:9.

*Which are the figures of the true;* all these were but like and correspondent figures and resemblances of the true, holy, and glorious place of God's residence.

*But into heaven itself;* but he, as our High Priest, did enter with his atoning blood, after the sacrificing of himself on the cross, into the heaven of heavens, and approached the throne of justice, and propitiated it, making it a mercy-seat and true throne of grace unto penitent, believing sinners; and then perfected the work of propitiation and redemption: afterwards at his triumphant ascension, he entered in his whole person immortal, and laid open a way for our entering there.

*Now to appear in the presence of God for us;* where he now appears as our advocating Mediator, pleading his merit for the remission of our sins, and rendering of God's face smiling on and favouring his clients, which was terrifying and affrighting to guilty Adam before: see Heb 7:25 10:19 Ro 8:34 1Jo 2:1,2 Re 5:6. Here he represents our persons to God's face, fitting in the mean while us beneath for our seeing him face to face, and being blessed in the enjoyment of that prospect for ever.

Hebrews 9:25

Ver. 25. The excellency of Christ's sacrifice beyond the Aaronical is argued here from its singularity; it needs no repetition, as their multiplied sacrifices did.

*Nor;* ουδε, introducing it, is but inferring this excellency of Christ's sacrifice, by denying in it that weakness which was annexed to the legal ones; there was no need that he should die yearly, to fulfil the type of the often yearly sacrifices of the legal high priest, who entered with the blood of bulls and goats, strange blood to him, and not his own, into the holy of holiest in the tabernacle, and entered so every year once, to show the virtue of his sacrifice to be only signal, typical, and passing, to make room for a better, that single, individual one of Christ, in respect of sacrifice and oblation.

Hebrews 9:26

Ver. 26. *For then must he often have suffered;* επει the consequent is drawn *ab impossibili*; if he had often offered himself, he must have often suffered, but he could not suffer often. For where there was offering, there must be a sacrifice, and so suffering. Now that Christ should do so in his own person, was impossible and absurd, for God to have put his Son on suffering so cruel a death so often.

*Since the foundation of the world;* from the fall of Adam at the beginning of the world, ever since sin needed a sacrifice: but his once suffering as a sacrifice for it was of eternal virtue in God's purpose, answering and satisfying God's justice; one death of the Second Adam for the sin said penalty of the first, in the efficacy and virtue of his death, which was everlasting. The often and annual sacrificing of the Aaronical priests, and entering of the holy of holiest with the blood of beasts, was to show the Jews their weakness, and to instruct them in, and lead them to, this one sacrifice once to be offered, of eternal avail, as is subjoined.

*But now:* but Christ the gospel High Priest was not only God-man, manifested to be so, and exhibited as such an officer by his work, but was manifested to be such by promise, and in types and figures from Adam's fall; but now showed it clearly in his suffering work, 1Ti 3:16.

*Once in the end of the world;* the days of Christ's ministry on earth under the fourth monarchy, called *the last time*, 1Jo 2:18, *the ends of the world*, 1Co 10:11, *the fulness of the time*, Ga 4:4, God's set and best time for his appearance; and it was but once that he appeared in these days, performing this work.

*Hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;* then he sacrificed himself, offered up his blood to God within the veil, taking away by his own blood, which God required, the guilt, stain, and power of all sin, justifying believers from any condemnation by it, by what he did and suffered in their stead for their good, who fly from it for refuge to him, Isa 53:1-12 Da 9:24 Ro 7:24,25 1Jo 3:5.

## Hebrews 9:27

Ver. 27. *And as it is appointed unto men once to die:* the proof of the necessity of Christ's suffering death but once, is introduced in this verse by the conjunction *And*. It was according to God's decreed and published statute of men's but once dying; for God the Supreme Lord, Governor, and Judge of them, set, constituted, and appointed by an unalterable and irrevocable decree, as Lawgiver, and sentence, as Judge, to all of the sinful human race, the corrupt seed of apostate Adam, their grand representative, whom God threatened with this penalty upon his sinning and transgressing his law, Ge 2:17; which sentence was denounced upon him, Ge 3:19; compare Ro 5:12,14 Ro 6:23. This sentence was but *once* to be undergone by himself and all his sinful offspring, and by their Surety, and no more; so that the Second Adam needed but once to die by this statute. No man can keep himself from this, it being the general rule of God's proceeding with all persons. The Supreme Legislator may make what exceptions and provisos to his law he pleaseth. Those that were translated by him, did suffer a change proportionable to death, as Enoch, Heb 11:5 Ge 5:24, and Elijah, 2Ki 2:11,12; and those that shall be changed at Christ's coming must undergo the like, as 1Co 15:51-54 1Th 4:17. Those that were raised from death by Christ, Peter and Paul, &c., God might glorify his name by reiterating it; but whether they did die again, is not certain. This is to be the general settled law and rule of God.

*But after this the judgment:* in order, after souls by death are separated from their bodies, they come to *judgment*: and thus every particular one is handed over by death to the bar of God, the great Judge, and so is despatched by his sentence to its particular state and place with its respective people, Ro 14:12. At the great and general assize, the day of judgment, shall the general and universal one take place, Ac 17:31, when all sinners in their entire persons, bodies and souls united, shall be adjudged to their final, unalterable, and eternal state, Ro 14:10 2Co 5:10 Jude 1:6 Re 20:11-15.

## Hebrews 9:28

Ver. 28. *So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many:* οὕτως και

is an illative connection between the antecedent Heb 9:27, and this consequent; As it was appointed to men once to die, so it was appointed to Christ once to offer himself. God's statute determineth both of these; Christ the High Priest, opposed to *men*, Heb 9:27, having died once as a sacrifice for sins, and offered his blood to God to expiate them, bearing their punishment which God laid on him, Isa 53:6; and so took away sins, guilt, filth, power and condemnation from many, whom the Father gave to him, and he undertook for, in it, Mt 20:28 26:28 Joh 10:15,16.

*And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin;* and to his believing, penitent expectants, such as long for his coming, Php 3:20 Tit 2:13, stretching out their heads, as the mother of Sisera, Jud 5:28, with a holy impatience of seeing him, such as by faith and prayer are hastening it, Ro 8:23 2Co 5:1-10 1Pe 1:3-9, shall he once more visibly appear to them and the world, Ac 1:11 Re 1:7, gloriously, without need to suffer or die again for them, having at his departure after his first coming, carried all their sins into the land of forgetfulness.

*Unto salvation;* and to their persons will he bring entire and complete salvation, raising and uniting bodies and souls together, Php 3:21; and then take them as assistants to himself in the judgment-work on men and angels in the air; and having despatched that work, return with them to the holy of holiest in heaven, there to be completely blessed, in praising, serving, glorifying, and enjoying God in Christ, and the blessedness that attends that state, for ever and ever, as 1Co 6:2,3 1Th 4:17.

Hebrews 10:1

### Chapter Summary

Heb 10:1-4 The sacrifices of the law, being often repeated, could not take away sins.

Heb 10:5-9 The abolition of them, and substitution of Christ's body in their stead, foretold by the psalmist,

Heb 10:10-18 by the offering of which body once for all we obtain perfect remission.

Heb 10:19-25 An exhortation to steadfastness in the faith, and to love and good works.



Heb 10:26-31 The danger of a wilful relapse after having received the knowledge of the truth, Heb 10:32-39 and of forfeiting the reward of a good beginning for want of perseverance.

*Ver. 1. For:* this *for* is connecting this to the foregoing discourse, and is a further improvement of the argument laid down, Heb 9, proving the necessity and excellency of the one sacrifice offered by Christ for sinners unto God, from the weakness of all the legal ones. For if all the multitude of them were not able to take away sins, and Christ's one offering is mighty to abolish them, and to perfect all who use it, then not these legal ones, but his is necessary to be valued by the Hebrews, and preferred to that end; the demonstration of which takes up from Heb 10:1-18 of this chapter.

*The law;* the whole Mosaical economy given from God to Israel by him in the wilderness of Sinai; priesthood, covenant, sacrifices, and services, which that did contain.

*Having a shadow of good things to come:* see Heb 8:5. A *shadow* is lower than an *image*, and of another kind from the reality or substance; a dark, obscure representation of what was to fulfil them, viz. of Christ, with all his ministry and privileges attending his covenant, both for time and eternity; this the Mosaical law-real comprehended, but all in shadow-work.

*And not the very image of the things;* they are not the very essence and substance themselves of these things, the pattern, or real sampler, but a shadowy representation; they lead their users to Christ and his matters, which they represented, but were not the substantial good things themselves. So *image* is read, 1Co 15:49, *we have borne the image of the earthy Adam*, that is, his nature.

*Can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect:* the legal sacrifices are not only impotent in respect of their constitution, but of their very nature, being only shadows, so as they cannot render a soul complete, either in respect of justification or sanctification; they could not free any either from the guilt or punishment of sin at present, much less eternally: with all

the renovation of them either on the day of atonement yearly, or those daily offered by them, though they should continue to be offered for ever, yet could they not perfect either the priests ministering, or those for whom they ministered, who were externally humbling themselves on the expiation day; they being designed only to point the people to this better sacrifice of Christ, which was to perfect them, that work being so noble, and above, the power of shadows to perform.

Hebrews 10:2

Ver. 2. *For then would they not have ceased to be offered?* for proves the weakness of that shadowy service under the law, because it never ceased, which it would if it had perfected its users; and having reached its end, and done that work, have ceased; for these sacrifices would not of right have been repeated, neither needed they, if they could have justified and sanctified souls for ever.

*Because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins:* for then this effect would have followed, the worshippers who were to be atoned for or expiated by these sacrifices, if they had perfected them, i.e. pardoned, justified, and acquitted them from guilt of sin and punishment, there would have nothing remained to have troubled, vexed, or tormented their souls, they being no further accused or condemned by their conscience about sin, God having justified and sanctified them, Heb 9:14,26,28; compare Ro 5:1,2,11.

Hebrews 10:3

Ver. 3. If the legal sacrifices could have perfected their offerers, there would have been no remembrance of sins; but there is a remembrance of sins yearly, therefore they are weak and cannot perfect. These shadowy-sacrifices yearly reiterated, still left sins in their guilt and killing power, loading and grinding the conscience by accusation and condemnation for them, as well as setting them in the light of God's countenance. For in the expiation day Aaron was to remember and to confess over the head of the scape-goat, laying his hands on it, all the church's sins of the past year and life, notwithstanding former expiatory sacrifices offered for them, Le

16:22. For as soon as that was done, their expiating virtue vanished, and so they renewed sacrifices without any spiritual profit by them, the guilt of past and present sins remaining still: whereas Christians now renewing sin, do renew their faith and repentance, but not their sacrifice for it; the virtue of which, in a full and final absolution, applied to them by the Spirit, makes them to have, upon their final accounts, no conscience of sin for ever.

Hebrews 10:4

Ver. 4. *For* gives a reason of the precedent proof, that the legal sacrifices did keep sins in remembrance; for they were of such matter as could not have any causal power to take them away.

*It is not possible*: this is equivalent to a universal negative, the impossibility being absolute as to the things themselves in their very nature; they being corporeal, can have no influence upon a spiritual evil in the soul, Mic 6:6,7; and by God's constitution they were to lead them to better things, God being not pleased with flesh and blood, Ps 50:13 Isa 1:11.

*That the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins*; the blood of these were only carried into the holy of holiest on the atonement day, yearly, Le 16:1-34, to which this is chiefly applied; nor could the blood of all the other sacrifices by expiation pardon their offerers, nor by sanctification cleanse them, nor by removing the sense of them comfort the soul; they could neither pacify God, nor the sinner's conscience, having no virtue or power to satisfy God's justice, or merit his grace, only it had by his constitution a power to typify that blood which could do both.

Hebrews 10:5

Ver. 5. *Wherefore*,  $\Delta\iota\omicron$ , introduceth the proof of the invalidity of legal sacrifices, and the efficacy of the one sacrifice of Christ, from Divine testimony about both of them.

*He saith*; God the Son, who existed before his incarnation, bespeaketh

God the Father, when he was coming into this world, to become a part of it, by uniting a holy human nature to the Divine, as David voucheth by the Spirit of God, Ps 40:6.

*Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not:* the bloody atoning sacrifices of bulls and goats, the peace-offerings, and thank-offerings, Lev 7:16, and offerings of every sort without blood, required by the law of Moses, God did neither desire, require, nor delight in as in themselves propitiatory; for he never intended them to take away sins, or perfect the worshippers: see 1Sa 15:22 Isa 1:11-15 Jer 6:20 Am 5:21,22.

*But a body hast thou prepared me:* but, the Hebrew text reads, the ears hast thou bored for me. The apostle makes use here of the Greek paraphrase, *a body hast thou fitted me;* as giving in proper terms the sense of the former figurative expression, discovering thereby Christ's entire willingness to become God's servant for ever, Ex 21:6; and that he might be so, which he could not as God the Son, simply, the Father by his Spirit did articulate him, and formed him joint by joint a body; that is, furnished him with a human nature, so as that he might perform that piece of service which God required, offering up himself a bloody sacrifice for sin, to which he was obedient, Php 2:8. Thus were his ears bored, which could not be if he had not been clothed with a body.

Hebrews 10:6

Ver. 6. Two other sorts of sacrifices are added to the former, as whole *burnt-offerings*, which were all devoured by fire on God's altar, and no part of them came to the priests, Le 1:3,9,10,13,14,17; and peace-offerings, which were not totally consumed, but part of them was the priests' portion, Ex 29:27,28. These four sorts of sacrifices comprehend all the Aaronical offerings for expiation. God did not require or desire any of these for themselves, or for the perfecting of sinners; he did not as to such an end approve them, or take any pleasure in them.

Hebrews 10:7

Ver. 7. *Then said I, Lo, I come:* when the Father declared the sacrifices of

beasts and birds would not please him, nor be accepted for expiating sins, then I said, I appeared in person, and declared, Lo, I come with a fit and proper sacrifice; I approach myself with my human nature, fully resolved to offer that to thee as a propitiatory sacrifice, Joh 12:27; compare Ps 40:7.

*In the volume of the book it is written of me:* κεφαλῆς, the head; our translators keep to the Hebrew, ספר במוצלת ספר *the volume of the book*, Ps 40:7. Books, with the Hebrews, were rolls of parchment stitched at the top, and so rolled up. In this book was Christ every where written and spoken of, as he testifieth himself before his death, Joh 5:39, after his resurrection, Lu 24:44-46. The Septuagint render it, *the head*, as beiag in the top and beginning of the whole roll to wit, in the books of Moses; compare Lu 24:27. And in the entrance of them the Spirit testifieth of his Deity, and of his union to the humanity, being to be conceived and born of a virgin, and offering himself a sacrifice to expiate sin, and reconcile sinners, Ge 3:15; compare Joh 5:46,47.

*To do thy will, O God;* to obey his Father's command, of dying an expiatory sacrifice for sinners. It was his Father's will that he should so offer himself for satisfying his justice, making way for his mercy, and so redeeming and recovering lost souls. This will of God was in his heart, he delighted to obey it, Ps 40:8; and his own natural will that would regret it, he would deny, and would not use his Divine power to deliver himself from it, Mt 26:39,46 Joh 18:11.

Hebrews 10:8

Ver. 8. In this verse the apostle repeats the whole testimony, produced out of the Psalm, only with a specification in a parenthesis, *which are offered by the law*, viz. such sacrifices, against which the apostle argueth, which could not purge away sin, nor procure righteousness, nor make no more conscience of sins. He observes from the Psalm, that the will of God was plainly signified by his Spirit to David under the law, about the nature, state, and design of his institution of sacrifices, that they were typical of, and leading to, a better sacrifice than themselves; and that for their own sake only they were no way acceptable to God, and so rejected by him.

## Hebrews 10:9

Ver. 9. In this verse the apostle collects the psalmist's assertion of God the Father's accepting his sacrifice, the offering whereof was so exactly agreeable to his will, when he was displeased with the legal ones; and this revealed to David when he was punctually using them according to the law.

*He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second:* God therefore abolished all the legal sacrifices, which he commanded to be used as types of the better sacrifice he had provided, because of their insufficiency and weakness as to expiate sin, or pacify conscience, that he might establish that sacrifice of the body of Christ for abolishing sin, and bringing in everlasting righteousness, which was effectual, and an actual obedience agreeable to his will and command, Php 2:7,8. This being thus proved, he concludes from it ... (See Poole on "Heb 10:10").

## Hebrews 10:10

Ver. 10. *By the which will;* that spoken of Ps 40:8, that will and command of God given to Christ, God-man, that he should once offer up his body a sacrifice for sin, which he willingly and heartily obeyed, Php 2:8.

*We are sanctified:* *sanctified* is to be taken largely, for a communication to us of all the benefits of redemption, as pardon, reconciliation, absolution from punishment, renovation of God's image, and such a discharge of sin at last, as never to be guilty of it more, perfection of grace in glory.

*Through the offering;* the volutarily and heartily yielding it up, and presenting the blood of it to the Father within the veil in heaven to atone him, according to his own command and will, without which it would not have been accepted by him, Lu 23:46; compare Joh 20:15,17,18 19:28,30.

*Of the body of Jesus once for all:* it was that part of Christ's person that was to die a sacrifice, and the blood of it that was to be shed for purchasing the remission of sins, as appears in the memorial of it, Lu 22:19,20; the very body of God-man, Ac 20:28. The *once* offering of which was eternally available to take away sin from sinners, and perfect

them to glory. So that God's end being once reached in it, it is of perpetual virtue to apply its fruits to believing penitents, and needs not any repetition.

Hebrews 10:11

Ver. 11. Having proved, that not the yearly repeated legal sacrifices could perfect a sinner, but only the sacrifice of Christ, the Spirit proceeds to prove, that the daily legal sacrifices can do as little for this work as the annual; and therefore these Hebrews ought to desert all these, and depend only upon Christ's, Heb 10:11-18.

*And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices:* every priest in Aaron's family in his course daily ministering, stood at the altar, and performed the service appointed him by God, offering often the same bloody sacrifices to God, of bulls, goats, sheep, fowl, many times in one day, and for many days together, Heb 7:27.

*Which can never take away sins;* these were not available either to the priests offering, or those who brought them to be offered, for the spiritual and eternal expiation of their sins, as to their guilt, stain, power, or punishment, not any, nor all of these, none could do it at any time: see Heb 10:4.

Hebrews 10:12

Ver. 12. *But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins:* opposed to the legal priests is this Priest, God-man, an almighty Minister, having once offered, and no more, one sacrifice of his body for the sins of others, (he had none of his own, as every other priest had), that they might be pardoned and remembered no more, it being of eternal virtue and efficacy.

*For ever* must be joined to the sacrifice to complete the opposition, Heb 10:11. The legal one could *never take away sins*, but his *one sacrifice* could take them away *for ever.*

*Sat down on the right hand of God;* he ceased from sacrificing any more,

and ascended up to heaven, and there he sat himself down (having abolished sin, and finished his work as a servant for ever) in the highest place of dominion and power at God's right hand, while the Aaronites stood trembling and waiting at God's foot-stool: and thence he powerfully and efficaciously commands the blotting out of sins, applieth his merits, and dispenseth to his servants the covenant mercies which he purchased by his own blood for them, Heb 1:3 2:9 8:2.

Hebrews 10:13

Ver. 13. That which remaineth he expecteth, even the fulfilling of his Father's promise to him, Ps 110:1, patiently waiting, earnestly looking, for what is most certain, and wherein he cannot be disappointed; for in respect of himself. His enemies cannot infest him more, being entirely vanquished already; but in respect of his administration, he waits till all that oppose his royal priesthood, as the devil and his angels, sin, the curse, death, and the world, with which he conflicts as a Priest to destroy them with his own blood, as his members do by it, Re 12:11. Having given them their death's wound by his own death, he sits down, and waits in the successive ages of his church, until upon his elect it be made good, putting all under his own and church's feet, so to overcome and trample on them, as men on their footstools: see Heb 2:8 1Co 15:26.

Hebrews 10:14

Ver. 14. *For by one offering:* *for* here gives the reason of the precedent effect, and it is opposed to the reason of the legal offerings' defect; their sacrifices multiplied could not perfect sinners, but this *one* doth it fully.

*He hath perfected for ever:* Christ, God-man, the gospel High Priest, by the *one offering* of himself a sacrifice for sin to God his Father, and once performed by him, hath secured perfection of justification, sanctification, and blessedness, perpetually to be continued, whereby the persons interested in it are qualified and consecrated to be priests to God and his Father, (as the Aaronical priests were by the sacrifice of the ram of consecration, Ex 29:22,24), to serve in their proportion here, but especially after the completion of it by their resurrection, they shall perfectly serve



him before his throne in the holy of holiest for ever, 1Pe 2:9 Re 1:6 5:10 20:6.

*Them that are sanctified:* the renewed souls by the Holy Ghost, such whose consciences he hath sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, and by it freed them from the guilt of sin and its punishment, and whose natures he regenerates and sanctifieth, freeing them from their evil habits, and making them inherently holiness unto the Lord, Ps 110:3 1Co 6:11.

Hebrews 10:15

Ver. 15. The assumption cleared before, the apostle now proceedeth to prove out of the Old Testament, viz. that God's purpose was, by Christ's one sacrifice to take away all sins for ever; therefore there was no need of the repetition of the legal sacrifices.

*Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us:* the authority avouched, is the testimony of the Holy Spirit of truth, that cannot deceive nor be deceived in what it witnesseth, but confirms the truth beyond all just ground of doubting, by his amanuensis the prophet Jeremiah, Jer 31:31,33,34; where the person that the prophet styleth Jehovah, is by the apostle declared to be *the Holy Ghost*; and by it is proved to be the eternal God. He testifieth *to us*, the church of God, in the prophet's time, and to us all called to be members of it to this day.

*For after that he had said before:* this contains the preface of the Spirit's testimony, that which he spake before, the covenant, which is his evidence; and this preface is laid down, Jer 31:31. Here they are all the apostle's words.

Hebrews 10:16

Ver. 16. God promiseth his true Israel his entering with them into a new testamental covenant; after the days that the covenant administration at Sinai was expired, then the Lord saith, Jer 31:33, that he will renew minds and hearts by his Spirit, and contorm them to his will, that they shall be living, walking exemplars of his law; of both which see Heb 8:10. This

work of sanctification of souls is properly inferred here, to prove that such as enjoy it are perfected by Christ, because the promise of holiness is joined with that of perfect righteousness. Formerly it was urged from the text to another purpose, to prove God's will of changing the Aaronical administration of the covenant, because this was better. Here it is urged to prove the perfect effect of the sacrifice of Christ once offered to God, without which these promises of the covenant of justifying and sanctifying sinners had neither been made nor effected.

#### Hebrews 10:17

Ver. 17. God covenanteth to give not only sanctification, but justification to his believing Israel, so as their sins shall be remitted, and God will solemnly absolve them from the punishment they merit; see Heb 8:12; promised, Jer 31:34. In which proof, though there be no express mention of the sacrifice of Christ, yet is it implied, for it is urged by the Spirit to that purpose; and in other scriptures, speaking of the same thing here promised, it is expressed, as hath been shown, Heb 8:6, (compare Isa 53:1-12) that the death of Christ confirms this covenant, of which he is Mediator, and secures remission of sin for ever to the duly qualified subject for it.

#### Hebrews 10:18

Ver. 18. The Spirit having cleared his assumption before, now concludes; Whereas perfect forgiveness of sins is from God's grace, by the one sacrifice of his Son once offered, acquired and effected for penitent believers for ever, as the promise voucheth, Jer 31:34: For he will in no wise remember their sins, but will forgive them for ever; therefore there needs no repetition of that sacrifice again, or of any other for sin. But the Hebrews had the highest reason now to desert the legal sacrifices, and to rest upon and to cleave to his alone, any being, use, or consistency of such, after the effect of Christ's one sacrifice, being vain; for all being completed in his, it is but just theirs should cease from them.

## Hebrews 10:19

Ver. 19. At this verse the Spirit applieth and maketh use of the doctrine of the great gospel High Priest, and his one all-sufficient sacrifice, and continueth it through part of Heb 13:1-25. The transition to it is made by the particule οὖν, *therefore*, which refers to the whole of his doctrinal discourse before of the excellency of the gospel High Priest, for his person, as to both his natures, being God-man, and his sacrifice, with its effects. Seeing these things are so, *therefore, brethren*; see Heb 3:1,12; inviting them with this endearing term of relation, to receive what his brotherly love imparted to them for their salvation.

*Boldness to enter into the holiest*; freedom granted us of God for this motion, and confidence and freeness of Spirit in ourselves to move, so as not only to look into the holy of holiest, but of spiritual and real access for supplication and conversation, while we are personally upon earth; and others are denied such an entrance and approach to him on his throne of grace there, while they have their petitions received, Eph 3:12, and thence their persons blessed, Heb 4:16.

*By the blood of Jesus*: and this only vouchsafed them *by the blood of Jesus*, which atoned him, who sits on the throne, for us, and made it accessible to us. How much greater is this gospel privilege than that under the law! Aaron alone, and not the Israelites, could enter into the holy of holiest, and that but once a year, and then with the blood of beasts sacrificed for himself and them; whereas every penitent believing sinner can now by faith in Christ's blood and prayer, enter into the holiest of all in heaven, and there converse with God every day, while sin hath made him inaccessible to others.

## Hebrews 10:20

Ver. 20. *By a new and living way*; which way is figuratively setting out the means of entering into the holiest in heaven by the blood of Christ. By way is understood that by which approach to God in heaven is made, and wherein we must have our access to him, even Christ himself, Joh 14:6: προσφατον, a way newly made manifest by Christ's sacrifice newly slain and offered, rending the veil that hid heaven from them, so as they could

not so clearly discern the throne of grace then, as now; and the way is not only *new*, but ζωσαν, a quickening way, giving life and ability for motion and refreshment to those who walk in it, Joh 14:6, such as is everlasting, and is opened, not as the legal way, only to the high priest, but to all true Israelites to enter into it, and that not once a year, but continually. This is the way of life permanent and safe, Isa 35:8-10.

*Which he hath consecrated for us;* this way Christ himself hath newly made, finished and opened unto them that they might walk therein, and reach home to God; nothing could obstruct or hinder them in it, he having perfected it unto this end.

*Through the veil, that is to say, his flesh:* the inner veil, that separated the holiest of all from the holy place, was a type of the flesh of Christ, veiling his Deity; through the breaking and rending of which by death, he opens the way to the throne of grace in the holy of holiest in heaven, and so made God accessible to believers there, Heb 9:12; compare Mt 27:51.

Hebrews 10:21

Ver. 21. Christians have not only a liberty of coming, but a way wherein, and a help whereby, to reach home to God; which help is a surpassing Priest to all others, the great and eminent one for real worth and dignity, Christ himself, God-man, exalted to the right hand of the Majesty on high, after he had fulfilled his work here; where he was invested with all authority and power, and set over the church of the living God, consisting both of Hebrew and Gentile Israelites, Heb 3:6 Ac 20:28; whose sacrifices of praise and prayer offered up to God, he presenteth, perfumed with the incense of his own merits, before the throne, representing their persons, pleading their cause, and continually interceding for their good, making all they are and perform acceptable to his Father by his own blood, Heb 8:2.

Hebrews 10:22

Ver. 22. *Let us draw near;* this contains the duty grounded on, and encouraged to, by the former privileges, viz. the spiritual motion of his church, using Christ for their coming home to God, in prayer, and all parts

of worship and conversation: see Heb 4:16 7:25.

*With a true heart;* with sincerity and integrity of heart, both as it is the subject of actions, and exercising them as such in all acts of worship and service unto God, when the mind and heart is fixed to perform all strictly, according to God's will, for matter and manner, so as to reach him glory, and to obtain from him a blessing, Ps 37:31.

*In full assurance of faith;* believing in, and being fully assured and confident of, Christ's merits and God's promise, which is true, faithful, and immutable, to all who perform the duty required by it, Heb 6:11 Col 2:2 Jas 1:5-7.

*Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience;* having the soul in all its rational faculties, the inward man, the prime efficient of all actions, and here under bond to the law of God, purged and cleansed; alluding to the Aaronical rite of purifying by sprinkling of blood, as souls are to be now by the blood of Christ when they are justified, Ro 3:23-26, that God may admit them into his presence, hear them when they worship him, Heb 10:19,20; so as they may be free from an accusing or, condemning conscience, on the account of the guilt of sin gnawing them, and making them obnoxious to punishment; as also of the stain and pollution of sin, making them unfit for any communion with God, Heb 9:14.

*And our bodies washed with pure water;* the body (as the priests were under the law washed before their service) is the outward man, which is, as well as the soul, to be sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and cleansed from all filthiness of flesh: these corrupt members of the old man must be put off, and mortified by the Spirit of God, before they can be fit to approach to worship him, Eze 36:25 1Co 6:11,19,20 2Co 7:1 1Jo 3:3.

Hebrews 10:23

Ver. 23. *Let us hold fast;* this duty is inferred from the doctrine of the gospel High Priest, and the perfect work he wrought in taking away sin, and bringing in everlasting righteousness: let us therefore persevere in the faith and hope of him, really, actually, stedfastly, retaining it with all our might and power; whatsoever insinuations may be used to entice us, or

violence by persecutions to force us, from it, retaining it still in mind, will, affection, and operation.

*The profession of our faith;* an outward exhibition to the world both in word and deed, as we have it sincerely in our hearts, solemnly owning it in the ordinances of God in his church, of the hope we have in Christ our High Priest, and of all that he hath purchased for us, and promised to perform in us and to us, Heb 3:1,6 4:14 6:11 Ro 10:9,10 1Pe 1:3,21.

*Without wavering;* ακλινη, without any declining from it, either to the right or left, from the first and due state of it; not warping or wavering from the revelation of God about it, when others weakly made a defection from it, Heb 6:6,9. And good reason for this unbiassed retention of it, while others declined.

*For he is faithful that promised;* for God, who covenanted with them what he will be to and do for them, is only primitively, eminently, and reciprocally faithful and unchangeable for his person and purpose; all is sure on God's side, Nu 23:19, and his power is irresistible. He hath promised to reward those who persevere and continue to the end true to the Redeemer, and to give them grace and assistance that they may so continue, so as they need not fear the power of their enemies, nor their own weakness, for he will enable them to perform the duty, endure the afflictions for it, and then to reach the blessing, 1Co 10:13 1Th 5:23,24 2Th 3:3.

Hebrews 10:24

Ver. 24. Having urged from the gospel doctrine of our High Priest our duty to God, the Spirit proceeds to show what influence it should have on Christians for performing their duty one to another, in their inspection and observation of the whole body of Christ, consisting of Jew and Gentile, who have equally shared in Christ's sacrifice, and are interested in and related to is his person; and by the apprehensive and judicial faculty so to discern the spiritual state and condition of each other, and the whole, as every particular member of it may be capable to animadvert, exhort, reprove, counsel, or comfort, and act suitably and seasonably in the discharge of their mutual duty, Heb 3:13 Ro 14:19 15:7,14 Col 3:16 1Th

5:11,15.

*To provoke unto love;* εις παροξυσμον it is a word borrowed from physicians, who use it to set out the violent incursion of a fever, when the fit is so strong as to make the body tremble and bed shake with the horror and rigour of it. In this place it is used to set out the vehemency of affection to which the sacrifice of Christ obligeth Christians, as those who had their whole persons acted by love to each other, with all vehemency, to the highest and fullest pitch of it; as who should exceed in benevolence, beneficence, and complacency in each other, such as is conscientious, pure, and extensive to the very end, Heb 13:1 Ro 12:9,20 1Th 4:9 1Pe 1:22; and manifesting itself in good works to them, especially merciful ones, pitying, counselling, succouring, supplying, and comforting them, Jas 2:13,15,16 1Jo 3:14,16-18 and this freely, cheerfully, and constantly, Eph 2:10 4:32 1Ti 6:18.

Hebrews 10:25

Ver. 25. Helps to the performance of both the former duties, to God and fellow Christians, with their respective motives, are laid down in the following part of the chapter. The first is couched in this verse; neither slighting in thought, nor vilifying in word, nor separating, nor leaving by dissociation.

*Not forsaking:* εγκαταλειποντες imports such a desertion, as leaves destitute in deep trouble or distress, when they should be helping.

*The assembling of ourselves together:* επισυναγωγην strictly notes an addition to this synagogue of the Jews; an accession of new members to the former church assembly, even the Gentiles, becoming Abraham's seed by their conversion to, and confession of, the faith of Christ. This some of the Jews, from the self-conceit of their being the only people of God, disdained, and continued in a separation from them, and all communion with them. This the Spirit reproveth, and adviseth not to leave the assembly thus augmented, lest in doing it they forsook God and Christ, as well as ordinances of worship and duties attending such church meetings, and promoting their salvation.

*As the manner of some is;* such desertion of those assemblies in the worshipping and serving of God, was the common custom among some of these Hebrews; a usual, frequent mode of them to do it; some idolizing their own nation; others, their own selves, thinking them holier than others, Ga 2:12-14; others, that valued honours, riches, and ease more than Christ or their souls; some for fear of persecution, as foretold, Lu 8:13,14, fulfilled, Ga 6:12.

*But exhorting one another;* παρακαλουντες supposeth assembling, in opposition to the former desertion, and the duty of the assembled; and signifieth, counselling, reprovng, encouraging, and comforting one another, so as they might persevere in performing the duties for which they assembled, according to Christ's mind and will; so as to strengthen each other's hearts and hands in the faith, and in the other duties instanced in before.

*And so much the more, as ye see the day approaching;* they have so much the more reason to do it, and intend the work, as they did not conjecture, but certainly know, that the day of their own death, and particular account to be given of themselves to God; the day of God's executing his judgments on Jerusalem, as Christ foretold, Mt 24:1-28, prophesied by Daniel before, Da 9:26,27, when the temple should be burnt, the city destroyed, and the people dispersed through the world; or, the day of the general judgment, testified by the gospel to the world, Ac 17:31: all these were every day nearer to them than other, and they believed them to approach; therefore ought they to be more exercised in denying evil and doing good, not forsaking church communion, but keeping close to Christ and his assemblies, that they might better stand together in that day.

Hebrews 10:26

Ver. 26. *If we sin wilfully:* the severe exaction which God will take upon such as apostatize from him, is further enforcing the former duty, and is introduced by the particle *for*, to that end; if we by a free and spontaneous desertion of Christ, and his ordinances, without a coercion by threats and persecutions; and this after we had professedly in our judgments, wills, and affections, with faith and reverence, acknowledged a love and subjection to the true gospel doctrine of the way of bringing sinners to God



by Christ our great High Priest, Joh 8:31 14:6, which was made known to them by Christ and his apostles, and confirmed by miracles and the gifts of the Holy Ghost, so as to profess a full conviction of this truth, so as to assent and consent to it.

*After that we have received the knowledge of the truth;* after all this, to renounce the profession of it, and to forsake the assemblies where it is held forth; this is the spontaneous and wilful sinning: see Heb 6:6.

*There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins:* this is unpardonable by the just constitution of God in the gospel, because no sacrifice can atone God for them, without which they cannot be pardoned; and the sacrifice of Christ, which only could do it, they renounce and desert; and so this, nor any other they can bring, can procure pardon for them, so that their sins remain in guilt and power on them, and between them and God's wrath are they like irrecoverably to be ground to perdition.

Hebrews 10:27

Ver. 27. *But a certain fearful looking for of judgment:* *But,* is introducing the terrible evil asserted to be expected when sacrifice cannot help such sinners, especial and certain, terrible and dreadful (such as fills the soul with fears and horrors) expectation of judgment by their awakened consciences, not knowing how soon it may come; as a malefactor under sentence, in daily expectation of execution, how doth he suffer it over and over! So will this worm gnaw them: to which is synonymous, Mr 9:44. How must the execution of the sentence of the just Judge terrify them!

*And fiery indignation;* when it must be by burning, or heat of fire; wrath of fire proceeding from an injured and wronged God, Eze 36:5 38:19 Zep 1:18 3:8. As in execution of just vengeance, which like fire devours and eateth them up, not putting an end to their being by consumption, but perpetual piercing, searching, torturing, and this for eternity.

*Which shall devour the adversaries;* these underhand adversaries, υπεναντιους, who are the most bitter enemies of Christ and his church, because secret ones, and seem to be by profession otherwise, Mt 25:41 Mr 9:43,44 2Th 1:8,9.

## Hebrews 10:28

Ver. 28. The punishment threatened on such sinners is illustrated by an instance proper to the Hebrews; For if the lesser sin against Moses's law was punished by death, the greater sin against the gospel of Christ shall be more punished.

*He that despised Moses's law;* any person, whoever he were, none excepted, cantemning, rejecting, nullifying, or making to have noplace or force, (suitable to forsaking, before prohibited), the law of God, given by the mediation of Moses, so as to have no power on the conscience by apostacy from it, and to do it openly, proudly, and presumptuously, in the face of the church, Nu 15:30,31.

*Died without mercy under two or three witnesses;* was to be sentenced to death without any compassion or mercy, and indispensably executed without any pity, by stoning of the offender by two or three witnessess, which did evidence the fact, and convict him of it, according to the law, as De 13:6-11 17:2-7.

## Hebrews 10:29

Ver. 29. *Of how much sorer punishment:* the expostulation aggravates both the sin and the punishment in the consequent on the former assertion; a punishment heavier, bitterer, sorer, more grievous, and unexpressibly greater, than death.

*Suppose ye;* you yourselves being judges, to whom I appeal about it; what can you suppose, think, or determine of it?

*Shall he be thought worthy;* doth he fully deserve, and is liable to, by the judgment of man, but much more by the righteous and inexorable judgment of God?

*Who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God;* who sinneth at a higher rate than a Jew against Moses's law, being an apostate from the gospel, a

revolter from and a rebel against it, discovering it by as much as in him lieth, tearing from his throne God the Son incarnate, and treading him under his feet, wickedly undervaluing and horribly vilifying him, treating him with the greatest contempt that can be expressed by such an action, as if he were the vilest malefactor. A person so much greater and more excellent than Moses, to be so used; so as, if he were here on earth, he would tread him (who is higher than the heavens, and had done and suffered so much for him) as the dust and dirt under his feet; and this by a contemptuous forsaking his church assemblies, wherein he was set out in all his excellencies.

*And hath counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing;* accounting and so deserting the blood of Christ, (which ratified the everlasting covenant of grace, by whose virtue was made unalterable, firm, and effectual in all the promises of it of pardon, righteousness, holiness, grace, and glory, unto penitent believing sinners), as either the common blood of men, or the blood of a malefactor, to have not so much excellency in it as the blood of bulls, or goats, or rams, or birds, under the law; as not sanctifying souls, but polluted.

*Wherewith he was sanctified;* εν ω ηγιασθη, in or by which he was sanctified, is by most interpreters referred to the apostate, as aggravating his sin, to despise that blood by which he thought he was so, and boasted of it, and was so reputed by the church upon his baptism and profession of his faith, and, as a member of the church, had a visible relation to it, partaking of those ordinances wherein its fruits were conveyed, and enjoying the external privileges purchased by it. Others refer it unto Christ himself, the blood whereby he was consecrated to God as a holy sacrifice, Joh 17:19. All this was discovered by his forsaking the church assembly, wherein this was declared to be the only way and means to justification of life and salvation.

*And hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace;* injuring, wronging, despising, greatly grieving, not a creature, but God the Spirit, the quickening Spirit of dead sinners, who fits them for union to God, and in order to it, uniteth him to Christ and his God, animateth it; who graciously communicated to these apostates the knowledge natural and supernatural which they had and abused, Heb 6:5, by the desertion of the assemblies, where he manifested his gifts and graces. They reject him with them, and

treat his gifts and motions as if they were the delusions and impostures of an evil spirit; and this wilfully done out of malice to Christ, and abhorrence of his church and religion. A sin like the devil's, for them to forsake God loving, Christ redeeming, his blood justifying, his Spirit renewing, and so wilfully refuse to be saved, and expose themselves to the severest punishment God can inflict on such sinners, and they do deserve.

Hebrews 10:30

Ver. 30. *For we know him that hath said: For* brings in the proof of the soreness of God's punishment to be inflicted on apostates, from God's own testimony about it; which we, who are conversant with the Scriptures, are well acquainted with; we know what God hath spoken, and by whom he hath spoken it, Joh 9:29. Their knowledge of it was clear and certain, it being spoken to them by Moses, and written for them, De 32:35,36.

*Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense;* to me is vengeance and recompence; which are the words of the Hebrew text. To me, the sovereign Being, the supreme and universal Lawgiver and Judge, doth belong the universal right and power of vindictive justice. It is his propriety, as he will avenge all injuries against his people, he will much more avenge the sins and injuries against his Son; and will actually return to evil-doers, as a recompence for their sins, the evil of punishment. He is not only just and powerful, but actually manifesting both in his retribution on them, De 32:41,43 Ps 94:1 Ro 12:19 2Th 1:8.

*Saith the Lord;* Jehovah saith it, who is faithful and true, powerful, and constant to his threatenings, as well as his promises. This he saith to, and threatens apostate Jeshurun with, who revolted from God, and served idols, De 32:15-17.

*And again, The Lord shall judge his people:* a further testimony is urged from God's vindication of his people, when he hath punished apostates, taken from De 32:6, and Ps 135:14. The sovereign Being of righteousness, the same Jehovah as before, will rule, justify, save, deliver, and vindicate his covenant people from the contempt and vilifying of his Son and them, by punishing severely such who, by their apostacy from him and them, are guilty of it. He will certainly take vengeance on them, and thereby clear

the innocency, truth, and goodness of his, who are trampled on by them.

#### Hebrews 10:31

Ver. 31. The punishment of these apostates is further aggravated from the inflicter of it, the knowledge of which should make them tremble; the thoughts of it might affect them, as the hand-writing on the wall did Belshazzar, Da 5:6. It should strike horror into their heart, trembling into their persons, De 28:65,66, by apostacy from him as a Father, to be subjected to him as a Judge, and as obnoxious to his severest judgment. Him in whose hand is power inexpressible, 1Ch 29:12, to avenge himself on his enemies, Ps 90:11, who have renounced him as their God, and provoked him to fury by it. A God that will not repent of vengeance, and who liveth ever to inflict it; who lifts up his hand to heaven, and saith, *I live for ever*, De 32:39,40; to punish with everlasting burning, and a devouring fire, such traitors to himself. So is he described, Isa 33:14 Mt 10:28. His vengeance on these apostates is like himself, everlasting.

#### Hebrews 10:32

Ver. 32. *But call to remembrance the former days:* *But* is not so much adversative as copulative, adding another direction for their persevering in Christianity, even the revolving in their minds, and bringing again to thought, what was past, carrying in it both the act and the end of it. It is a practical remembrance which bettereth them, while recollecting their own days, and the time that was past.

*In which, after ye were illuminated;* in which they were convinced of the truth of the gospel, and received it in the love of it, and externally professed it, by being baptized into Christ, and by it made members of his church, Heb 6:4, and testified the truth of their being Christ's.

*Ye endured a great fight of afflictions;* by their sufferings for him with patience and divine fortitude, willingly, cheerfully, valiantly: Ye have borne, and overcome by bearing, preserving your integrity, so as your faith was immovable, and strengthened you to endure the many and most violent assaults of the devil and his instruments, both within and without

the church; who thought to force them from the faith, by the many evils which they inflicted. If they were patient in the enduring these at the first, how much more now, after so long a continuance in it Ro 8:18 2Co 1:6-8 2Ti 1:8 1Pe 5:9.

Hebrews 10:33

Ver. 33. *Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions;* their sufferings personal in this famous instance, *θεατριζομενοι*. They were so publicly exposed as on a stage or theatre, so as multitudes might sport themselves with them, 1Co 4:9; as many were exposed to be devoured by beasts in their public shows, 1Co 15:32. Or, to destroy them, exposed in their public courts of justice, and there taunted and reviled, as Christ foretold them, Mt 10:17,18. They were suffering reproaches and afflictions publicly both in word and deed. What nicknames imposed on them, what crimes imputed to them which they abhorred, what buffeting, scourging, tormenting, shackling, imprisoning, banishing, were they not exercised with, as their fellow Christians are to this day?

*And partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used;* their sufferings by participation, in presence and sympathy with their fellow Christians. This is another kind of it; they were consorts and sharers of all those members of Christ, who were so abused by the devil and his instruments, and they bore their burdens with them, were inwardly grieved for them, publicly owned and comforted them, supplied and supported them as they could, as Heb 10:34 2Co 11:25,26.

Hebrews 10:34

Ver. 34. *For ye had compassion of me in my bonds;* for ye sympathized in my bonds, &c., is a proof of both kinds of their sufferings forementioned. As to their suffering with others, he instanceth in himself, as a witness of it; for when he was in bonds for preaching the gospel, both at Jerusalem, Ac 21:33,37 22:24,25, at Cesarea, Ac 23:1-24:27, at Rome, Ac 28:1-31, they forewarned him of his danger, bore his burden with him, supplied, relieved him, and endeavoured, what in them lay, his release.

*And took joyfully the spoiling of your goods;* and in their own sufferings, by being rifled for the gospel; their goods, estates, and means of subsistence, were either by fines, confiscations, or violence, ravished from them; their enemies, like so many harpies, preying on them, 1Th 2:14. So as these Christian Hebrews at this time had their respective properties, and all was not levelled among them. Though they were so impoverished to make them comply with the Gentile superstition and idolatry, yet they cheerfully bore it, esteeming it their honour and privilege thus to suffer for Christ, and herein obeyed him, as Mt 5:11,12, and as the apostles did before them, in Ac 5:41.

*Knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance;* they were fully assured of this by faith in God's promise, and by God's work on their own hearts, qualifying and fitting them for it, Ro 8:15-17. That they have by promise given them as theirs, as fitted for them, a spiritual substance, an estate beyond what this world could afford them; riches, honours, and pleasures, better for their quality than all terrene ones; spiritual ones, proper for their souls, 1Pe 1:3,4. The sum of which is God in Christ, their exceeding great reward, Ge 15:1, and all he can be to or do for them. He is their portion and their inheritance, the most excellent in itself, and the most enduring, out of the reach of men or devils, who can neither take it from them, nor them from it, it is safe enough in the heavens, Mt 6:19,20 19:28,29 Ps 16:5 2Co 5:1 2Th 1:4,5.

Hebrews 10:35

Ver. 35. *Cast not away therefore your confidence:* this introduceth the last direction for helping on their perseverance in Christianity. Μη αποβαλλητε denieth all degrees of apostacy, from secret undervaluing to an utter renouncing, not to slight, despise, or reject; they had endured already so much as might steel and fortify them against what remained, and implieth the bold, resolute, and courageous retention, Eph 6:10,16, of the boldness of their confession of the Christian faith. It is an ingenuous, free, bold, and daring profession of it, which no brow beating nor violence can dash out of countenance, the fruit of a mighty, invincible faith, and hope of eternal life. This makes them persevere courageously in their religion, notwithstanding their being laden with reproaches and sufferings

for it, as Christ himself gave them a pattern, Mr 8:31,32 Ac 4:13,29,31.

*Which hath great recompence of reward:* what greater encouragement can there be to the retaining this confidence, than the great remuneration secured in the New Testament to them: God himself, in all his fulness, to be their exceeding great reward, seen and enjoyed by them; and which for quality and quantity is inexpressible, Ge 15:1 Mt 5:12 10:32.

Hebrews 10:36

Ver. 36. *For ye have need of patience: for* shows this to be an enforcement of the former direction: Cast not away your confidence, for you have need of grace, which that must maintain in order to carry back your reward. It is therefore absolutely necessary, as well as useful to you, for the bearing of your burdens, persevering in all duty, and waiting for your reward, notwithstanding your reproaches, afflictions, and fiery trials, that you preserve your confidence in maintaining this patience, Heb 6:12 Ro 2:7 Jas 1:4.

*That, after ye have done the will of God;* that having believed God's promises, obeyed his precepts, endured his trials, and persevered in all, according to the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God; and so exercised our patience, and evidenced our confidence, and finished our work; *ye might receive the promise;* you may carry back, as your full prize, after your race. It is a necessary and true reportation from God, after his will is done, 1Pe 1:9 5:4; the reward promised metonymically expressed by *the promise*, Heb 6:15 Heb 9:15; all that life and glorious inheritance in the reality and fulness of it, *called a crown of glory that fadeth not away*, 1Ti 4:8 2Ti 1:1.

Hebrews 10:37

Ver. 37. The reason of their retaining their confidence to the end, is the shortness of his coming, who will reward them for it, proved out of God's promise written to and for the church, by Habakkuk, Hab 2:3. A truth sufficiently known to these Hebrews, as brought them by their own prophet; and though spoken for the comfort of the captives in Babylon



then, yet it is extended to the suffering church in all ages, and so to these Hebrews, and to us also, *upon whom the ends of the world are come*, [1Co 10:11](#). And though the prophet speaks it of a vision of grace, in promise to be despatched, yet the Septuagint refers it to a person; and in this the apostle follows them, because the promise cannot be made good without the coming of its Author to fulfil it.

*For yet a little while;* in which promise there is the celerity or speed of it; as little, little as it may be, as is fit for Christ and them. How little is this time! A very short moment, as he speaks himself, [Re 22:7,12,20](#).

*And he that shall come will come;* he that hath promised to come and save you, and reckon with your persecutors, he will certainly come, he and his promise together, will despatch and put an end to the suffering of his, and put on their crowns. Metonymically, his coming is his saving, full refreshing, and rewarding his believing and patient sufferers.

*And will not tarry;* he will not spin out time to delay deliverance, beyond the set point; he will not come behind the last moment, the hour fixed and appointed, which is pitched in infinite wisdom and goodness, for the best comfort of Christ's suffering members, [Isa 46:13](#).

Hebrews 10:38

Ver. 38. These are, as the former, the words of the Prophet Habakkuk, [Hab 2:4](#), enforcing the former duty pressed from the gain of perseverance, and the loss by withdrawing, when Christ shall come. They are used by this apostle Paul to several purposes, as to prove, that righteousness is only obtained by faith from God, and not by man's own works, [Ro 1:17](#) [Ga 3:11](#); that whoever is righteous by faith, shall live for ever, by holding that righteousness in faith, as here.

*Now the just shall live by faith;* the justified, according to the terms of the new covenant, who hath obtained the righteousness of God in Christ by believing, and is renewed and sanctified by the Spirit, shall really, spiritually, happily, eternally live; and no end shall be to that life of his, till it be perfected by Christ in glory. And this he shall live by a real and spiritual assent to the gospel, and reliance on God's promises in it,

especially by an affiance to Christ, God-man, as the Lord their Righteousness, by which we have him ours, and so we live. This faith increased, continued in, and held fast amidst all reproaches, sufferings, and persecutions; by this only is the life, due to righteousness, made sure to sinners, drawing from Christ daily, and making real and present the fulness of it promised to and hoped for by it, Mr 13:13 Joh 6:47 Ga 2:20 Col 3:4.

*But if any man draw back:* see Hab 2:4, where עמלה translated here υποστειληται, is variously rendered, as, elated like a bubble, lifted up; making pride and unbelief to be the sins threatened there; and the proper sense of the word here used, is, for fear, or sloth, to withdraw, or leave their understanding: so that the meaning in both amounts to this: If any, out of the pride of their heart, will not depend on Christ's righteousness, as the Jews would not, or, out of fear and sluggishness, will not hold out, but withdraw themselves, in time of persecution, from their faith and confidence in Christ, professed; shrinking through fear, or losing it through sloth, or forsaking it by treachery, either gradually or totally, confiding in themselves, and so despising God; reject him, and draw away from him.

*My soul shall have no pleasure in him;* God himself will be so far from taking any pleasure or delight in such a soul, or vouchsafe it any joy or life, that his very soul abhors it, is highly displeased with its sin, and abominates its person. In his displeasure is misery, death, and eternal perdition: see De 32:15,18-21.

Hebrews 10:39

Ver. 39. The conclusion is a hopeful assertion of their condition, or a sweet intimation of what they ought to be, even like himself; and so the apostle removes all jealousy of his reflecting on them, as Heb 6:9.

*But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition;* the adversative, *but,* is an exception of them to whom he writes from the apostate state, and so joins himself with them, hoping they were such *de facto* as he was, and as they ought to be *de jure*; and so intimates their duty, and that of all Christians: We are not sons of defection, persons withdrawing and backsliding from Christ, his gospel, or duties; apostates from the truth, whose end is destruction, an utter separation from all good, life, and glory,

and full subjection of body and soul to eternal torments in hell, by the righteous sentence of God, Mt 10:28: who are sons of defection, are sons of perdition, Joh 17:12 2Th 2:3.

*But of them that believe to the saving of the soul;* sons of faith, true and sincere believers, cleaving to Christ and his body, rooted in his faith, and persevering in it to the end, Eph 3:17 Col 2:7: which faith acquiring, purchasing, or obtaining, according to the gospel covenant, the soul for salvation, and glory for the soul, Joh 3:15,16,36 5:40 2Th 2:14. Faith realizing, applying, and keeping fast the price which Christ himself paid to God for the purchasing of these for them on their souls.

Hebrews 11:1

### Chapter Summary

Heb 11:1-40 The nature of faith, and its acceptableness with God, set forth in the examples of many excellent persons of old time.

Ver. 1. *Now faith:* the Holy Spirit proceeds in this chapter to strengthen the counsel he had given these Hebrews to continue steadfast in the faith of Christ, to the end that they may receive their reward, the salvation of their souls, Heb 10:39 1Pe 1:9; and so beginneth with a description of that faith, and proves it to be effectual to this end, by instances out of all ages of the world before them, wherein the Old Testament believers had found it to be so. The description of it is laid down, Heb 11:1; the proof of it in both parts, Heb 1:2,3; and the illustration of its power by examples, Heb 11:4-40. The particle δε shows this is inferred as a discovery of that faith, which is saving or purchasing the soul; which that none of these Hebrews may be mistaken in, he describeth from its effect, and not from its form and essence. Faith is here a Divine fruit of the Spirit, given and wrought by it in his elect, and is justifying and purchasing the soul to glory, Joh 12:38 Ro 5:1 2Co 12:9 Eph 1:19,20 2:8.

*Is the substance of things hoped for:* υποστασις, in 2Co 9:4, notes confidence of boasting; Heb 1:3, personal subsistence; and Heb 3:14, confidence of faith. Here it is a real, present, confident assent of the soul of

a believer to the promise of God, (which is the basis or foundation of it), by which the spiritual good things to come, and which fall not under sense, yet with a most vehement and intense desire urged for, are made to have a mental, intellectual existence and subsistence in the soul which exerciseth it, Ro 8:18,26 Joh 3:36.

*The evidence of things not seen:* ελεγκοι is a demonstrative discovery of that which falleth not under sense, such as is scientific, and puts matters out of question to a man; and therefore is styled by logicians a demonstration: here it notes faith to be that spiritual space which by God's revelation demonstrates or makes evident all things not seen by sense, or natural reason, without it, as matters of spiritual truth, good and evil in their several kinds, both past, present, and to come, Joh 17:6,8 Eph 1:17,18.

Hebrews 11:2

Ver. 2. This is a proof of the first part of faith's description, that it is *the substance of things hoped for*; for all the fathers were testified of to have this work of faith in realizing their hopes. πρεσβυτεροι were the fathers and ancestors of these Hebrews, run up through their genealogies to Adam, the special instances of whom follow. These received a testimony or witness, truly and fully from God himself, in some signal acceptance of them, eminent appearances and providences to them, with a Scripture record of them, that through this grace of our Lord Jesus Christ they walked with, worshipped, and pleased God, and were saved by him, even as these Christians; and all this by the same grace of faith, Ac 15:17, which wrought kindly in them, and made the invisible things of God to subsist with them.

Hebrews 11:3

Ver. 3. This proves the second part of faith's description, Heb 11:1, that it is *the evidence of things not seen*; for by it only we understand the creation, which no eye saw. It is the same Divine faith as described before, but as evidencing invisible truths, it communicates a marvellous light to the understanding, and leaves real impressions of it from the word of God,

whereby it arriveth unto a most certain knowledge of what is above the power of natural reason to convey, and gives a divine assent to it, such its as is real, clear, sure, and fruitful, different from that of the Gentiles, Ro 1:19-23.

*The worlds;* τούς αιωνας the ward noteth sometimes ages, Lu 16:8; the garb and corrupt habit of men who live in them, Eph 2:2; eternity: but there, as Heb 1:2, it is a word of aggregation, signifying all kinds of creatures, with their several places, times, and periods; things celestial, terrestrial, and subterrestrial; angels, men, and all sorts of creatures, together with all the states and conditions in which they were made.

*Were framed by the word of God;* heaven, earth, and seas, with all their hosts of creatures, the visible creation and the invisible world, were put into being and existence, placed in their proper order, disposed and fitted to their end, by the mighty word of God: Trinity in Unity the Creator, his powerful fiat, without any pain, or trouble, or assisting causes, instantly effected this miraculous, glorious work; *He spake, and it was done,* Ge 1:3,6,9,11,14, &c.; Ps 33:6,9.

*So that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear;* the visible world, and all visible in it, were made all of nothing; this reason could never digest. All was produced of that formless, void, dark chaos which was invisible, Ge 1:2; which void, formless, dark mass itself, was made of no pre-existent stuff, matter or atoms, but of nothing; which differenceth the operative power of God from that of all other agents. See Ge 1:1 Ps 89:11,12 Ps 148:5,6, &c.; Isa 42:5 45:12,18.

Hebrews 11:4

Ver. 4. The Spirit beginneth here to illustrate his description of faith, by induction of instances throughout the former ages of the church to the time of these Hebrews; and he begins with believers in the old world before the flood. Faith is the same Divine grace as described before, only here to be considered as fully receiving of God's will in Christ as to sacrificing work, and remitting such affections and operations to God in it as were agreeable thereunto.

*By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain:* Abel, the younger son of Adam, an eminent believer, whose faith orders him and his worship, the first martyr for religion in the world, Lu 11:51, who sealed the truth of God with his blood; he, in the end of days, that is, the sabbath, Ge 4:3,4, brought a bloody sacrifice of the fattest and best of the flock, and offered up to the Divine Majesty, the true and living God, his Creator and Redeemer, to atone him for his sin; having a regard to, and faith in, the great sacrifice of the Seed of the woman, for him in fulness of time to be offered up, and of which his was but a type. This sacrifice was fuller of what God required in offerings, than Cain his elder brother's, not, it may be, for external price, but internal worth. Cain offered the fruits of the ground, such as God afterwards required in the ceremonial law, but he was not sensible of the guilt and filth of sin, and of its demerits, nor desirous to remove it in the due way and order appointed, as appears by his murdering of his brother after: Abel's sacrifice was better, more excellent, because more fully agreeable to God's will for purging and pardoning sin, full of self-denial and abasement for sin, and faith in Christ's sacrifice.

*By which he obtained witness that he was righteous;* by which sacrifice of faith he had testimony that he acknowledged himself a sinner, that had need of the blood of Christ to sprinkle him; yet he was righteous by the righteousness of faith, Ro 3:22,25,26, which is upon Abel, as all other believers, Php 3:9. And this testified to his soul, by God's Spirit, that he was justified and sanctified, and so eminently righteous; and it was manifested to others, Christ himself, God-man, witnessing of it, Mt 23:35.

*God testifying of his gifts;* God himself witnessed from heaven to the truth of his state, by accepting of his person and sacrifice, and giving a visible sign of it, so as Cain could observe it, and be displeased at the difference God made between him and his brother, Ge 4:4,5,7; likely it was by sending fire from heaven, and consuming Abel's sacrifice, as he did others afterwards, Le 9:24 Jud 6:19,21 1Ki 18:38 2Ch 7:1; and by it testified him to be righteous.

*And by it he being dead yet speaketh;* by his faith, though murdered out of this world, and his place here knows him no more, and with a design that he should never speak nor be spoken of more, yet he now speaketh, i.e. liveth, Mt 22:32, and testifieth to God that he is true, and the only true God to make souls happy. He, in his example, and his record in Scripture,

bespeaketh all that read his story to imitate him in his faith and worshipping of God, and his patient martyrdom for God and his gospel worship through Christ. And by his blood he crieth for justice against his murderer, as Ge 4:10; see Heb 12:24; and its joined with the rest of the martyrs of Jesus, impleads God's righteous vengeance to be executed on their bloody persecutors, Lu 11:51 Re 6:10,11. By reason of his faith he is spoken of throughout all generations, recorded among the excellent sons of God, and renowned in the church to this day. Such a force hath faith to eternize the persons of believers in acceptance with God through Christ, their wrongs, injuries, and blood on God's remembrance, and their names in heaven and the church below.

#### Hebrews 11:5

*Ver. 5. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death:* by the Divine faith before described, that which reacheth home to God by Christ, Enoch, the seventh patriarch in a descent from Adam of the church's line, Ge 5:21, all eminent prophet and *Boanerges*, denouncing judgment against the ungodly ones of his time, so as to awaken them to repentance, Jude 1:14,15, was taken by God, Ge 5:24. The apostle keeps to the Septuagint translation of the text. He was miraculously changed in his body from a mortal to an immortal state, and this without any separation of his soul from it. God, out of an extraordinary grace and favour to him, dispensed with the common sentence passed on the human seed in Adam, as he did many ages after this to Elijah. He died not: all the rest of the fathers of the church, Ge 5:5,8,27, the longest liver of them, died.

*And was not found; he was not,* Ge 5:24, neither among men, nor in their sepulchres, as others were, but had changed his habitation and society. If any went to seek him, as others did Elijah he was far out of their finding, 2Ki 2:17.

*Because God had translated him;* for God had taken him to himself in heaven, the place of his residence, and in the very act changed his body into a spiritual, powerful, glorious, and incorruptible one; as all ours, who are true believers, shall be at last, 1Co 15:51 1Th 4:15; and so made fit for the place to which he was taken, made like an angel in person, and to be with those spirits in company; now did he fully see and enjoy him whom

by faith he walked with beneath.

*For before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God;* in the time of his life, and walking with God in this sinful world, all the time of his witnessing for God in it, God witnessed by his work on his soul to himself, by his ministry and life to the world, and by the prophet Moses's record of it to all generations to come in the church once and again, Ge 5:22,24, that in his walking with God he *pleased* him. He was not only justified, graciously accepted, and beloved of him, but he did that which was pleasing to God, putting out in thought, word, and deed all the power of grace to act for God; preserving constant converse and communion with him; and had no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but reprov'd them. By this he pleased God, and God testified to all the world he did so, by a miraculous translation of him from the world to himself. God cares not for, nor will take to him, such who please him not.

Hebrews 11:6

Ver. 6. The Spirit here proveth that Enoch pleased God by faith, though it was not expressly written in his text by Moses, because of the impossibility of pleasing God without faith.

*But without faith it is impossible to please him;* but without faith upon God in Christ, whom Enoch pleased, it is absolutely impossible to do any thing acceptable to God, so as to be justified by him; for infidelity, or want of faith, makes God a liar, 1Jo 5:10, Christ a vanity, Joh 5:40, and God's will a deceit, which peremptorily saith, there is no pleasing of him but by faith in Christ, Joh 14:6. The effect cannot exist without its cause, as is proved in the next words.

*For he that cometh to God:* for whoever he be, every particular soul, that cometh off from sin to God, so as to be under his conduct and influence; makes out by spiritual motions of his mind, will, affections, and members, in thoughts, desires, resolutions, and operations, to enjoy God, so as to be accepted with, justified by, and blessed of him; and at present makes his access to him with liberty and boldness in prayer, or any other duty, through Christ.



*Must believe that he is;* he must really, fully, and supernaturally receive all that which God revealeth in his word is pleasing to him, especially concerning himself; as, that he is the primitive, perfect Being, and the Cause of all; that he is three in relations and one in essence, most excellent in all his attributes, infinitely wise, powerful, just, good, and eternal, &c., the supreme Creator and Governor of, and Lawgiver to, all.

*And that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him;* and that he will recompense all men according to their works, but will eminently and freely give himself to be the reward of his, and whatever he can be to or do for them for their good, Ge 15:1; but to those only, who with an intent heart and spirit pursue him by faith, love, and longing after him as their supremest good, Isa 45:22 Ro 2:6,12 Re 22:12.

Hebrews 11:7

Ver. 7. *By faith Noah, being warned of God;* by the same Divine faith Noah, the last example of it in the old world, and the father of the new world, being warned by an immediate revelation from God, Ge 6:13,21, largely rehearsed by Moses: so that God's word is the ground or foundation of Divine faith in all ages of the world.

*Of things not seen as yet;* of things not yet seen, but only by faith in God's revelation: which things were the perishing of the world by a deluge of waters above one hundred years after; and that himself and family, with some creatures, should be saved from that deluge, to repeople the world, and to replenish the air and earth; none of which things did fall under Noah's sense then.

*Moved with fear;* ελαβηθεις imports in it a right reception of God's revelation, which made him afraid, and careful not to offend God; and a godly carriage to him who had revealed the imminent danger of the sinful world, and his own deliverance from it: see Heb 5:7.

*Prepared an ark to the saving of his house;* hereon he obeyeth God's precept, and prepared and perfected the vessel, both for matter and form, according to God's word; so as to be ready against the time of the deluge, for the preservation of himself and family by it, Ge 6:14-16,22; compare

1Pe 3:20. By virtue of this ark, that water which drowned the world saved them. So that flood was a full type of the water of baptism: his ark, of Christ our ark; his family, of Christ's small family in comparison of the world; their salvation from water, of the eternal salvation of these from the deluge of fire, 2Pe 3:6,7,11,14. The same Divine faith in Noah and in Christians, maketh them to obey God's precept, retire to and enter God's ark, and so enjoy his salvation.

*By the which he condemned the world;* by this faith discovered in his work about the ark, he testified against the sinful world of mankind for their unbelief and disobedience, who for one hundred and twenty years together, being by Noah's preaching and building the ark called to repentance, 2Pe 2:5, and to prevent the judgment God threatened on them; and so condemned them virtually by his word and doctrine, judicially by declaring God's sentence on them: see Mt 12:41,42 Joh 12:48.

*And became heir of the righteousness which is by faith;* by this faith he received the promise of righteousness, which made him an heir of it, and of that eternal life and salvation for which it fitted him, as well as to which it entitled him; and by it he sent out all the fruits of righteousness that are to the praise and glory of God, Ro 5:1 Joh 1:12.

Hebrews 11:8

Ver. 8. Here begin instances of this Divine faith after the flood from Abraham to Moses's time, Heb 11:8-22. The first is the father of believers, so entitled by God, eminent in the exercise of this grace, of whose ancestry, and their descent from him, these Hebrews did greatly glory. He had an express discovery of the will of God unto him, that he should leave the idolatrous place where he lived, Ge 11:31 12:1-3; compare Jos 24:2 Ac 7:2,3; and with his family should travel to a land which God would show him, and which he would give him as an inheritance for him and his, which was the land of Canaan, as described, Ge 13:14-17 25:18,19,21. This command of God, strengthened by a promise, he obeyed, Ge 12:4 Ac 7:4; through faith, really, freely, and fully resigning up himself and his to God's disposal.

*And he went out not knowing whither he went;* he went forth with his

father Terah from his country, kindred, and friends, in Ur of the Chaldees, to Charran, and there they dwelt till Terah died, Ge 11:31 Ac 7:4. After which, he pursued God's orders in his motion from place to place, though he knew neither the way, nor the place in which and whither he was to move, resting himself on God's word and guidance, and relying wholly on his provision for him, and protection of him in all his ways.

#### Hebrews 11:9

Ver. 9. *By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country;* by the same Divine faith he passed from tent to tent, moving it from place to place, as God ordered; so as he rather sojourned than dwelt in any. His journal is legible in Moses's history, moving from Charran to Shechem, from thence to Beth-el, and then more southward, and thence to Egypt; see Ge 12:1-20: so that he sojourned in Canaan, and the adjoining countries, which God had covenanted to give for an inheritance to him and his seed, Ge 15:18-21; yet by faith he would stay God's time for it, but lived in it as a stranger, not having in possession one foot of ground, but what he bought for a burying place, Ge 25:9,10 Ac 7:5.

*Dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:* here he, with his son Isaac, and grandson, and their seed, coheirs with him of Canaan, built no houses, but lived in tents, which they might pitch or remove at God's pleasure, and as he called them, as who were strangers to this country, and to the inhabitants of it, with whom they were to have no spiritual society, as travelling to a better; being in this world, but neither citizens nor inhabitants of it, but as denizens of a more excellent one, Ge 26:3 Ge 28:13,14.

#### Hebrews 11:10

Ver. 10. The reason of this contented pilgrimage was the excellent end of it, the place and state to which it brought him; he did really discern by the Spirit's work in him, and promise to him, his title to it, and vehemently did desire and long for, and yet patiently waited for, a better place and state than this earthly; and was daily making his approaches to it, Ro 8:19 2Co 5:1,2,8,9.

*For he looked for a city which hath foundations:* πολις notes both a place made up and constituted of buildings and houses, such was the earthly Jerusalem; and a state, polity, or community. Here it must be understood spiritually, for such a place and state as is not to be shadowed out by any in this world; it being for nature, mansions, society, condition, such as no earthly can decipher, or set out. This city is heaven itself, often so styled in this Epistle, as Heb 11:16 12:22 13:14 Re 3:12. It is not movable, as a tent fastened by stakes and cords; nor as creature buildings, perishable. Histories tell us of the rise and fall of the best earthly cities; this city is built on the Rock of ages, as well as by him, whose immutability, almightiness, and eternity hath laid and settled its foundations, the basis and ground work, firm and incorruptible, 1Pe 1:4.

*Whose builder and maker is God;* the happy fabric, with persons and state, endures for ever, because of its Raiser and Founder. The great Architect, that cast the plot and model of it in his own mind, and the publicly declared Operator and Raiser of it, who laid the foundations, reared the mansions, and finished the whole, is no less person than the infinitely wise, almighty, and eternal God. It all became him alone, and doth as far exceed other cities as God doth men. No human art or power was fit or capable for such a work, but only God.

Hebrews 11:11

Ver. 11. *Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed;* by the same Divine faith in Abraham and Sarah was brought forth the child of promise. For though the instance be expressly in Sarah, yet it is inclusive of Abraham also, who was eminent for his faith in this thing, acquiring an eminent title by it, even of the Father of believers, as the apostle declareth, Ro 4:17-22, and therefore jointly to be considered with Sarah. She, who first through unbelief laughed at the promise, yet being reproved by Christ, the Angel of the covenant, for it, believed on the repetition of it, Ge 18:9-16, and gave testimony of it by her waiting for the promised mercy. As barren as she was, yet faith made her fruitful; when it was impossible of herself to expect it for nature or years, yet received she power and strength from God, by believing, to conceive seed, that is, laying the foundation of it, conceiving in her dead womb, and bearing a

son.

*And was delivered of a child when she was past age;* she was not only naturally barren, but of ninety years of age at this time, when the most fruitful were past such work; yet was she delivered of a son, and became the mother of Isaac by faith, as he was the son of promise, Ge 15:4 18:11; compare Ro 4:17-19.

*Because she judged him faithful who had promised;* she gave glory to God by a firm and hearty closure with his promise, accounting God faithful to his word, and able to perform it, and so rested on it, and waited for him, as Abraham did, Ro 4:18,20,21. The promise which he made was: That they in their old age should have a son, Ge 12:2; made in general, Ge 13:15,16 in particular, Ge 15:4,5; to both, Ge 17:15-17 18:10,14 21:1-3,12.

Hebrews 11:12

Ver. 12. Because of this faith of Abraham and Sarah, and the fruit of it in conceiving and bringing forth Isaac, was laid the foundation of a numerous seed by God's promise; from Abraham, a hundred, and Sarah, ninety years old, and barren, and both dead as to procreation, Ro 4:19, there were begotten a vast and unbounded seed, as the stars in the firmament, or the sand on the sea shore; and amongst them the teeming blessing, the one eminent Seed of Abraham, the Messiah, in whom all nations were to be blessed. Within four hundred years from the birth of Isaac, this seed increased to above six hundred thousand fighting men, besides women and children, and after increased to a stupendous greatness, according to the promise, Ge 13:16 15:5 Ex 12:47 1Ch 21:5,6.

Hebrews 11:13

Ver. 13. *These all died in faith;* all these, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob, &c., who were heirs of the same promises, and who had opportunity to return to the same country from which they came forth, as Heb 11:15: they did not only live according to faith, walking with, worshipping of, and waiting on God, testifying against sin, but finished their course by dying according to faith; by faith, as the instrumental efficient of it; in

faith, as the regulating cause of it; according to faith, as in the state of believing. Faith was immortal in them as their souls, making their death a covenant dissolution, Lu 2:29, a voluntary, hopeful, blessed death, as 2Co 5:8 1Th 4:13.

*Not having received the promises;* not receiving actually, and in sense, the things promised, which were a numerous offspring, the literal Canaan, the Messiah in the flesh, and a glorious resurrection; but departed triumphing, and in the faith of all, and that they would be made good to theirs; and this they discovered by the blessings they left on each other, as Isaac on Jacob, and Jacob on the patriarchs.

*But having seen them afar off;* but faith brought all these promises into their view, though so far off; so did Abraham see by it the Messiah, Joh 8:56. They all had a real, clear, and strong prospect of them, the inheritance temporal in its time to come, and the heavenly rest beyond the grave, seeing the resurrection, heaven, and glory, by faith, when they died, Ge 49:18.

*And were persuaded of them, and embraced them;* by a powerful impression of faith on their souls, of the truth, goodness, and certainty of the things promised, on their minds, with a mighty apprehension of and assent to them in their wills, to the choosing of and closing with them in their affections; cleaving to them in love, desire, and delight, as surely to be accomplished; having their souls thankfully receiving them, graciously returning to God for them, with the greatest satisfaction embracing them, as are welcome friends or relations long absent from us; hugging Christ, saluting heaven, and embracing glory in the promises by faith, when dying.

*And confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth;* in word and deed; while they lived they published it to the world, as Abraham, Ge 23:4, and Jacob, Ge 47:9; keeping themselves free from all entanglements of this earth, as became those who are strangers, having no possession of, nor intimacy with, this earth; incorporating with no other people, but as pilgrims wandered from place to place, took up and pitched their tents when and where God would have them, unpeopled as to this world, and desiring to be peopled with the Lord, Ps 39:12 105:12,13; compare 2Co 5:6,8. They were all of the same mind, loose from and above this world,

and longing to remove to their own country and be with God.

#### Hebrews 11:14

Ver. 14. The reason of faith's effect in their dying, is the bringing in view a better life, state, and place than any earthly one. For these believers, by word and life professing themselves to be strangers and pilgrims on this earth, and seeing God's promises, and embracing them, *declare* and show *plainly* to all who see them, or converse with them, *that they seek a country*, and a place of rest, which they were not possessed of. For no person is a stranger or pilgrim in his own country; but these inquired the way, and walked in it, which led them to a better than any this earth afforded them: and so the apostle brings us back to that which he had declared before, Heb 11:10, and immediately prevents the suggestion, that this country should be their former country, and clears it to be a better.

#### Hebrews 11:15

Ver. 15. Though they were strangers in Canaan, yet they might seek an earthly country, even Ur of the Chaldees, from whence they came forth, and which was their native country, and so might be dearer to them than any other; but it was not that, but a better country, they were mindful of, which they viewed by faith; whereas the other they might have seen with their eyes. If that had been all they desired, they wanted neither means nor opportunity of returning to it, but they remained fixed in obedience to the heavenly call; and when Jacob returned to it for a wife, yet he left it again when God summoned him, as appears, Ge 29:1-31:55. They did willingly leave it, and kept from it, and never looked back there, but looked for a better.

#### Hebrews 11:16

Ver. 16. *But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly:* having deserted this world, as strangers in it, they sought, desired, and hoped for with the greatest earnestness and fervency, a city in the country of heaven, Heb 11:10, in comparison with which they contemned and despised all

others; a country where there is perfection of life, and fulness of glory: it excelleth all others as far as heaven doth earth, 2Ti 4:18 1Pe 1:4. The state, society, enjoyments, and place, they longed for, were all heavenly, Php 3:20,21; nothing lower than this world would satisfy them.

*Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God:* faith having carried them thus estranged from this world to the grave, endearing to them the promises, and engaging of them for heaven only, therefore God did not disdain them, he did not think it any disrepute to him to own them his, but esteemed it an honour and reputation to him, took up his joy and delight in them: see him owning them when dead, Ex 3:6,15 Mt 22:31,32; surnaming himself by them, and adopting them as his own, as Jacob did Joseph's sons, Ge 48:5,6; so that though they are dead as to their bodies, yet they are alive as to their souls, and are owned by God in his name and title, and are assured, as to their dust, of a resurrection; for he will do it, giving them that rest that they never had in their pilgrimage.

*For he hath prepared for them a city;* that heavenly state and place which they sought for, Heb 11:10, which infinitely transcended Cannan, and the Jerusalem in it, of which they were denizens while here, Eph 2:19 Php 3:20; the pleasant, peaceful, rich, and glorious metropolis of the living God, Heb 12:22 13:14; which shall make abundant amends for all their sorrows, sufferings, and restless wanderings on earth, where they shall enjoy pleasures, riches, honours, and rest for evermore, 1Pe 1:4.

Hebrews 11:17

Ver. 17. *By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac;* by the same excellent faith Abraham alone, and by himself considered, being tried by God, in a rare way, to give proof of the truth of his faith in and love to him above all, was to take his only son, his darling, and to offer him for a whole burnt offering on Mount Moriah, to himself, Ge 22:2. Which command of God was not unjust, he having absolute sovereignty and dominion over all persons and their lives, having power to kill, and to make alive, De 32:39. This son of his he offered up as God commanded; for in his heart he had fully parted with him to God, and proceeded so far in execution, as, if God had not dispensed with it, it had been actually done, he would have killed him and burnt him to ashes on the altar, Ge



22:3,6-13.

*And he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son: this mighty faith enabled him to do this, though he was his only begotten son by promise, and in the church's line, concerning whom he had received so many promises, and in whom only they were to be fulfilled, as that a numerous seed should descend from him, who should inherit Canaan, and through whom Christ was to descend into the world, in whom himself and all nations were to be blessed. Yet faith silenceth reason and natural affection, assureth him God could fulfil his promises by him though he should offer him, as he raised him from a dead body and womb at first, and gave him to him: so he obeyeth God's word, and offereth him.*

Hebrews 11:18

Ver. 18. This did greaten Abraham's trial, that unto him it was promised by God himself: That in this only begotten son Isaac, the eminently blessed and blessing Seed, with all his mystical body, should be called; that is, put in being, propagated and made known as by name in Isaac, Ga 4:28. This God revealed to Abraham, Ge 17:19,21, and hereby was his faith put to it to reconcile contradictions, as to believe this special promise, and yet execute this special command to sacrifice Isaac, yet to believe in him his seed should be called.

Hebrews 11:19

Ver. 19. *Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead:* faith put this into Abraham's thoughts in his reasonings about this trial between the temptation and God's power, and influenced him to conclude and determine under it. That since God could raise him from the dead to perform his promises, he would sacrifice him to obey God's command. This faith grew from what God had done, in giving him Isaac from his own dead body, and Sarah's dead womb, Ro 4:17-22. God's almighty power to raise from the dead answered all the difficulties in the trial. If God command it, who can raise from the dead, this can be no murder; for he can either prevent or recover. Promises should not fail, though Isaac was sacrificed; for God would raise him up and accomplish

them. As to arguments from natural affection: Shall a child be dearer to me than a God, who quickens me, and can raise him from the dead? Since God can do this, what difficulties can he not overcome? Hence is this principle so often revealed and repeated to be a sure prop to a Christian's faith throughout the gospel.

*From whence also he received him in a figure:* his generation was a kind of resurrection from the dead, and so was his restitution to Abraham, for in Abraham's account he was dead, his hand being lifted up to kill him, when the angel stops the execution, Ge 22:11,12. From the altar he carrieth him back as a trophy and reward of the victory of his faith, in such a manner as one risen from the dead, and an eminent signal of his victory over this temptation. Abraham had a figure of the resurrection in his son, and an earnest of a far more glorious resurrection in Christ.

#### Hebrews 11:20

Ver. 20. Isaac is the next example instanced in of the same Divine faith, described, Heb 11:1; only here exercised on the special revelation of God to him concerning his seed. By this faith he did not only wish and pray blessings, but prophetically applied them to his two sons, to Jacob and Israel his seed the covenant blessings, and to Esau and the Edomites his seed the temporary blessings, God designed them, Ge 27:27,39. Both these were things to come, and to be communicated to their seeds hundreds of years after. As the things to come that concerned Jacob, which were not seen, but hoped for from God's revelation of them, were, plenty, dominion over brethren, blessings above the power of a curse, even the spiritual and covenanted ones of Abraham and Isaac with him, Ge 27:28,29. The things to come concerning Esau and his seed, were only earthly, temporal blessings, escape out of servitude in time, common good things at the highest, Ge 27:39,40. By faith Isaac foresaw all these future events, foretold them, and applied their several portions to them from the mouth of God, and they were to a tittle fulfilled, 2Sa 8:11, and 2Ki 8:20, as to the Edomites; as in the whole Old Testament unto Jacob, and to his seed literal and spiritual.

## Hebrews 11:21

Ver. 21. *By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph:* Jacob did not degenerate from his progenitors, but by the same excellent faith (being heir to the birthright and blessing, by God's appointment, and his father's confirmation, as Ge 28:1,3,4) doth, as a grandfather and a prophet, near expiring, weak in body, but strong in faith, bless Joseph, and each of his sons, Ge 48:15-20, preferring Ephraim the younger before Manasseh the elder, by laying his right hand on his head, and his left on the other's; and so adopts them to be his children, gives them the blessing of the covenant, as to their persons, and the inheritance of two tribes amongst his sons, as belonging to Joseph, as his birthright, Ge 49:22-26. These by faith he foretold, and applied particularly to each of them from God himself through prayer.

*And worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff:* another effect of his faith, is his worshipping God, having bequeathed his body to the burial in a firm expectation of the promised inheritance, as the history clears, Ge 47:29-31 48:21,22. For having sent for Joseph, he raiseth up himself on the pillow at the bed's head, and for his support used his staff, leaning on the head of it, when in faith he declares his will to his son Joseph, and binds him by an oath to bury him in Machpelah in Canaan, with Abraham and Isaac, heirs of the same promise, as an earnest and handsel of the twelve tribes' possessing it; which Joseph having solemnly sworn to him, Jacob bowed himself and worshipped, lifting up his heart to God in thankfulness for his continual providence in the gradual accomplishment of his promise to the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This he did *by faith*, adoring his sovereign Lord and Saviour by his humbly bowing before him. There was no need of faith to bow to Joseph, who was inferior to Jacob, and blessed by him.

## Hebrews 11:22

Ver. 22. *By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel:* Joseph, the first son of Jacob by Rachel, whom God preferred before his brethren, envied and sold by them, but advanced by him to be lord of Egypt, and a saviour to them, heir of the birthright, and of his father's grace, a patriarch and prophet like him; drawing near to the

end of his pilgrimage on earth, and dying, he *made mention*, and brought to the mind of the Israelites his children, brethren, and nephews, and, likely, with a charge to convey it down to their posterity, as it might be remembered by them, that this he did with willingness find choice, looking for a better place and state than any in Egypt, and that his death should not obstruct the issues of providence to them for good; for God lived, and would surely visit them in their posterity, Israel living when he sent Moses to them, and would make them go up gloriously out of Egypt, and bring them into the Land of Promise, and give it to them for their inheritance. This testimony he gives them of it *by faith*, Ge 1:24; and God fulfilled it one hundred and sixty years after his death, as he had sworn to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

*And gave commandment concerning his bones: by faith* likewise he charged them about carrying his embalmed body with them and burying it in Canaan, and obliged the Israelites to it by an oath, Ge 1:25, making it an earnest and signal to them of the promise and oath of God for their deliverance, that as he desired his bones might be buried in Canaan, being heir together with Jacob of the same promised inheritance, it might be a visible token of, and encouragement in, the appointed time, to their return. And this Israel fulfilled, Ex 13:19, carrying them away with them, and afterwards burying them in Shechem, the lot of Ephraim, Jos 24:32.

Hebrews 11:23

Ver. 23. *By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents:* the parents of Moses were as eminent in this faith as their progenitors; for by it Amram and Jochebed, both of them of the tribe of Levi, Ex 6:20, (πατρῶν) here put by a metaphor for γονεῖς, and though in the history ascribed to the mother only, yet it was by the father's direction, as Ex 2:2; compare Ac 7:20), hid Moses, born under the bloody edict of a tyrant for drowning all the Hebrew males in the Nile. He was born three years after Aaron, and sixty-five after Joseph's death. They kept him three months from the destroyers, and they adventured the penalties threatened by the edict, Ex 2:2,3; faith overcoming their fears and difficulties about it, and, in all probability, ordered their fitting the ark, and disposal of it for his preservation, with the other acts attending it.

*Because they saw he was a proper child:* the reason of faith's work was their seeing of him to be ἀστειον, fair, beautiful, proper; and this not in himself only, but, as Stephen interprets it, ἀστειον τῷ θεῷ, fair to God, Ac 7:20. Some glorious aspect was by God put upon him as a signal of some great person, and of great use in God's design to his church; some extraordinary stamp of God on his countenance, which faith could discern there, and so influence them to conceal and preserve him.

*And they were not afraid of the king's commandment;* faith made them fearless; for they were not afraid that the king's edict should frustrate God's purpose concerning the child, or keep him from its service to the church, wherein God would employ him, and of which he had given them a signal in that lustre cast on his person; and therefore they used means to preserve him, even when they exposed him, and which had a suitable success, Ex 2:3-10.

Hebrews 11:24

Ver. 24. Moses himself was as eminent a believer as his parents, and a mighty instance of Divine faith. He who was so named and saved by the enemies of the church, and adopted as a son to a notorious one of them, yet being great in age and stature, full forty, Ex 3:11 Ac 7:23, past the folly of childhood and rashness of youth, upon manly deliberation and a rational exercise of faith, notwithstanding he was by birth a poor Israelite, and saved from perishing by a princess, the daughter of a potent king; nourished through her indulgence by his own mother, adopted as her own son, educated by her in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, preferred, owned, and honoured as her son, and might have been in a fair way to have succeeded to the kingdom; yet, not out of any disingenuity, or base ingratitude to his eminent preserver, but out of a Divine faith, he layeth down all his titles and honours, and renounceth his relation, for the enjoyment of a better title with, and a greater good in, God; and this he manifested by word and deed in his after transactions, Heb 11:25.

Hebrews 11:25

Ver. 25. *Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God:* the

same faith influenced his will, the cause of his former renunciation; for being in the present fruition of all court favours, and under the offers of all worldly delights by Egypt, and of all worldly discontents by God, faith determined his choice, made him a fellow sufferer in all the oppressions, afflictions, persecutions of his natural brethren the people of God, the most privileged society in the world for hope, as the most exercised by trials for God's sake: he knew there would be eternal rest and glory into which they would issue him, besides glorious effects they would have on his soul while he was enduring them; and that they were but passing, and would quickly have an end, Ro 8:18 2Co 4:17,18.

*Then to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season:* the same faith made him to reject the enticing pleasures of sin, which could not be avoided by his continuance in Pharaoh's court, either in dissembling himself to be no Israelite, professing himself to be an Egyptian, taking part with them in their cruel carriage to his brethren, living after their vicious course in all manner of voluptuousness; and the pleasures which he was to enjoy were sinful, transitory, and momentaneous, neither satisfying nor enduring, and must be attended with a sting in the end of them, even eternal anguish and torment, whereas his afflictions would end in eternal joys and pleasures, Mr 9:43,44,47 Lu 16:25.

Hebrews 11:26

Ver. 26. *Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt:* faith influenced and determined his former choice from the most excellent ground of it, the representation of these by the Divine inspired truth to him; it made him weigh and deliberate about the matters proposed, and then to judge, and positively determine about them: That the reproachful suffering of all sorts of afflictions, poverty, distresses, tortures, most ignominiously inflicted on them by their enemies for their faith in Christ, and expectation of him according to God's promise, and who was now the Angel of the covenant that protected them, as well as their ancestor Jacob, Ge 48:15,16: these Moses chose to suffer patiently, out of faith in and love to Christ; these, with what excellent things were to follow by virtue of God's promise, he preferred as a better and richer estate, and infinitely more desirable, than all the treasures of honours and riches, which either Egypt or its king could oblige him with, the whole of them

founded in the dust, disposed by flesh, fading in enjoyment, and ending in vanity. What are these treasures, compared to those laid up in store by Christ for his in heaven?

*For he had respect unto the recompence of the reward:* these were the things Moses had in his eye, the end of Christ's reproach, and Egypt's glory; this made him turn his eye and heart away from Egypt, and intently to look on the excellent issue of his reproachful sufferings for Christ, even Christ rendering to him his unexpressibly glorious and eternal reward for it, 2Co 4:17,18. This God had promised to, Christ had purchased for, such, who were by faith bearing his reproach, and qualified for the enjoying of it, Ro 8:17,18 2Ti 2:12 1Pe 4:13,14.

Hebrews 11:27

Ver. 27. *By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king:* by the same excellent *faith*, after his demand from Pharaoh of liberty for Israel to leave Egypt, and he had brought on him and his people the ten plagues God threatened them with, then he brake the bands of captivity, and took up Israel, and left Egypt subdued, wasted by plagues, and a place to be abhorred; triumphing over it, he forsakes it as a conqueror, and carrieth away the spoils of it. The wrath and rage of Pharaoh at him and his work for Israel, did not appal him; he was not afraid of his threatening to kill him, Ex 10:28,29; yet he defied him, even when his rage made him to pursue him and Israel with his host to destroy them.

*For he endured, as seeing him who is invisible;* εκαρτερησε, he was of a bold, undaunted spirit, so as nothing was too hard for him, either to suffer or do: magnanimity expelled his fear, so as he would stand or march according to God's order, faith presenting to his view at all times the great Angel of the covenant, God the Son, the Redeemer of him and Israel, *the only Potentate, the invisible King of kings, and Lord of lords*, 1Ti 6:14-16; with him, and for him, against Pharaoh, leading, covering, and guarding him and Israel in all the way, and fulfilling his promise of delivering of his church from Egypt; this makes him to march undauntedly with God's host.

## Hebrews 11:28

Ver. 28. *Through faith he kept the Passover, and the sprinkling of blood:* this Divine *faith* influenced him in all his work about God's ordinances, receiving the law about them from God's mouth, and obeying it. By it he made the Passover, i.e. as God's instrument, he instituted it, and put it into being, Ex 12:21; he celebrated and solemnly managed in each particular, and finished it, reaching the end of it according to God's law in that behalf, 1Co 5:7. Here he saw Christ, and testified of him, the true paschal Lamb of God; by whom God's wrath passed over the children of Israel, when it rested upon the Egyptians, Ex 12:21, &c.

*By faith* he took a bunch of hyssop, and dipped it in the blood of the paschal lamb, and struck the lintel and two side posts of the doors with the blood, Ex 12:22. He used it as a signal of God's sparing Israel, and passing over their houses by his angel, Heb 12:23; and he saw in it the true blood of sprinkling, of Christ our Passover, which saveth souls from the destroyer, Joh 5:46, and brings them out of the Egypt of this world into the heavenly Canaan.

*Lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them:* the end of both these was, that the destroying angel, who slew the first-born of the Egyptians, might not touch an Israelite, Ex 12:29,30. Under all this, faith evidenced to Moses God's faithfulness in his promise, it ordered all his duty, and it realized to their hope in that time of danger, that God would save them, who were under that blood, working the assurance of it.

## Hebrews 11:29

Ver. 29. *By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land:* the same faith enabled Moses eminently, and those other believers, as Aaron, Caleb, Joshua, &c.; for all Israel believed not, 1Co 10:5, yet for the faithful's sake were they kept from drowning, after Moses had, at God's command, (when the Israelites were ready to be fallen on by the Egyptians), lifted up his rod, and stretched his hand over the Red Sea, when God immediately, by an east wind, divided it, made the waters to stand up on each side like walls of crystal, and the bottom of it to be dry; then entered Moses and Israel into the empty and dry space, and walked through it on dry ground,



and not a soul of Israel miscarried, but might see astonishing power and mercy in it, Ex 14:22.

*Which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned:* in the mean time the Egyptians, with their king, pursuing Israel for their ruin, find their own; for presumptuously adventuring to pursue them through this miraculous space, guided by sense, and not by faith, and thinking to pass as safe as Israel, when they had no word for it, God troubles them by his angels in their motion, makes them drive heavily; and having brought them into his pit in the midst of the channel, the crystal walls dissolve, and the waters, returning to their fluid nature, quickly overwhelmed and swallowed up all that host, so as not one of these unbelieving, presumptuous, persecuting wretches escaped. God's great work in this, as to Israel, had a double meaning; literal, their salvation from the Egyptians; mystical, their baptismal initiation into the covenant of God by Moses: though all of them had not faith unfeigned, yet they professed faith in God; and the doctrine Moses brought from him, was accounted sufficient to attain both, 1Co 10:2.

Hebrews 11:30

Ver. 30. This Divine faith, exercised by Joshua and Israel after their entrance into the Land of Promise, (who did, on God's word and command, compass the impregnable walls of Jericho once every day for six days together, and on the seventh day seven times, sounding with trumpets of rams' horns, and at last giving a shout), brought down these walls flat to the ground by the almighty power of God, to whom they were as nothing, Jos 6:20. Faith in all this realized God's promise to them, reached forth their love to him, and obedience in all particulars required by him, glorifying God, as the great Captain of their hosts, as he revealed himself, Jos 5:13-15; committing the work and event to him, who, by the breath of faith, doth crumble down these walls before them.

Hebrews 11:31

Ver. 31. *By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not;* by the same gospel faith Rahab, who, as the Jews read the word, Jos

2:1, זִינָה; was an hostess, and kept a house of entertainment, and so came to lodge the spies; or, as the Septuagint read it, and the Holy Ghost confirms it here, and Jas 2:25, was a public harlot, who gat her livelihood by the prostitution of her body, as well as the sale of meat and drink: so notorious a sinner as she, and a Canaanite too, was preserved from the destruction that was inflicted by the Israelites on the unbelieving and disobedient inhabitants of Jericho, being, after her exclusion out of the camp, in order to a legal purifying, admitted into God's church, and honoured by him to be a mother in Israel, from whom the Messiah should descend, Jos 6:23,25.

*When she had received the spies with peace:* the full proof of her being a believer, was her entertaining of the spies sent from Joshua to Jericho, preserving them when sought for, and dismissing them, advising them what they were to do in order to their safety, Jos 2:3,10, to the end. The ground of all this, was her faith in God's promise of giving Canaan to Israel, confirmed by the great works she heard God had done for them, and her own expectation of good only in the portion of God's people, to whom she desired to be united, which was afterwards accomplished. Neither doth Paul and James contradict each other concerning her faith and works, Jas 2:25; for she was emptied from destruction by the same faith by which she was justified; and her faith was justified to be sound and true, by her carriage to the spies, for it was a full demonstration of her faith in God.

Hebrews 11:32

Ver. 32. *And what shall I more say?* Here the Spirit puts a period to the induction by an expostulation, as if he had said: Why do I speak of so many examples of faith? the Old Testament is full of them; but here is proof enough, I will say no more.

*For the time would fail me to tell, &c.;* for time of life and writing would be sooner gone, than a full account can be given of all the notable effects of faith by all these worthies who might be named; yet he would give some general hints of persons, and of the works of faith, which he judgeth sufficient, and so nameth promiscuously, and not in order of time wherein they existed. He nameth four judges, one king, and one prophet, and extraordinary prophets in a bulk, whose histories you have; of *Gideon*, Jud

6:11, &c., *Barak*, Jud 4:5, &c., *Samson*, Jud 13:1-16:31, *Jephthah*, Jud 11:1-12:15, *David's* history and *Samuel's* in the First and Second Books of Samuel, and the First of Chronicles; the excellent exploits of whose faith are, as their names, enumerated promiscuously; some of them agreeing to particular persons, others to them all.

Hebrews 11:33

Ver. 33. These, by the same gospel faith, *subdued kingdoms*, defeating the mighty enemies of the church; and eminently amongst them, David, who conquered Edom, Moab, Ammon, and the Syrian kingdoms, and extended his conquests to the Euphrates. This he and they did in obedience to God's call, in dependence on God's promise both of conduct and victory. All was done by God's arm at the instance of faith and prayer, Ps 18:29-42 20:5,9.

*Wrought righteousness*; they were all of them eminently righteous in their persons, and in their administration of justice to others: the utmost of their abilities were laid out in it, as became righteous judges, as to all matters of God and men, Jud 6:1-40 1Sa 7:15,17 12:2,6.

*Obtained promises*; a real and actual possession of all those good things which God secured to them by promise; especially as to Gideon and Barak, victory and success over the Canaanites and Midianites, Jud 4:1-24 6:1-40; Samson, victory over the Philistines; David, victory over the church's enemies. All which they first obtained in the promise, and then in the execution. Faith secured all, giving a real enjoyment of all the good made theirs in the promise, and then in the event; and will give the fulness of all good in general promises made to the church and them in the end.

*Stopped the mouths of lions*: Daniel, an eminent prophet of God, believed in him, and for his testimony to him was cast into the den of lions to be devoured, where God stops the mouths of them on his faith and prayer, and opens them to destroy their adversaries, Da 6:22. By the power and strength of God, both Samson and David slew those lions which would have preyed both on them and others, Jud 14:6 1Sa 17:34-36. Faith obtained this success for them.

## Hebrews 11:34

Ver. 34. Quenched the violence of fire: by the same faith others of the prophets, Heb 11:32, eminently acquainted with God, and partakers of his secret, who defying idolatry, and the threatenings of a tyrant, became confessors of the true God and his worship, and were adjudged to the fiery furnace, Da 3:19,23, and by faith were secured from being consumed by those flames, which in an instant destroyed those which threw them in, Heb 11:22-28. How did this fetch down the Son of God himself to accompany them, and to suspend the consuming power of the fire, so as it did not singe either their persons or garments, or to leave any scent of it upon them! And how did Moses's and Aaron's prayers extinguish the fire at Kibroth-hattaavah, and at Taberah! Nu 11:1,3 16:22-45.

Escaped the edge of the sword: by faith these worthies, forementioned, Heb 11:32, were delivered, when others fell by the devouring sword, and all those instruments of war which were destructive to others. Their enemies fell by their swords in those many battles wherein they were engaged, fulfilling at that time God's will, and trusting on his promise. And how many of the prophets hath God delivered from the swords of those who would have killed them!

Out of weakness were made strong; by faith many of those who had really natural infirmities, both of body and mind, had their tremblings and faintings of spirit, and were, in respect of their enemies, weak, few in number, short of them, as to force, power, and policy, yet by faith in God were made bold as lions, and had wonderful success against numerous and potent enemies, Jud 4:8 6:15,16 7:5,7,10 Jud 11:29 15:11,19 1Sa 7:9,10, &c.

Waxed valiant in fight; faith made those who were called to the war by God, mighty for that service, 2Sa 22:30-38, so as no perils could daunt them, no service was too hard for them. How victorious in the most desperate attempts, as to sense, did faith make them! Ps 27:1,3.

Turned to flight the armies of the aliens; they overthrew the camps of adversaries. παρεμβολη notes a single castle or tower, Ac 21:34, or a whole camp or place where an army is pitched, Heb 13:11,13; in the plural, many such tents where soldiers lie; and is metonymically read

*armies.* Το κλινειν, actively taken, is to make to lie down, or to throw down, as applied to tents and camps; to put to flight, as applied to armies; all which were those of the idolatrous enemies of the church, strangers to their country, and more to their God, as the army and camp of Midian, Jud 7:13-23, which were overturned, routed, and destroyed by them.

Hebrews 11:35

Ver. 35. *Women received their dead raised to life again:* through this Divine faith, both the prophets Elijah and Elisha did raise and restore, the one to the window of Sarepta, 1Ki 17:22,23, the other to the Shunammite, 2Ki 4:35,36, their sons from the dead; and these women and mothers did by faith receive them from the prophets alive again, who by faith and prayer procured this mercy from the quickening Lord, for them. In the general resurrection all shall be raised by the power of God, and the effect of faith therein is only receptive; we shall enjoy life again, and receive others from the dead also.

*And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance;* others also, besides the prophets forementioned, Heb 11:32, ετυμpanισθησαν, were tympanized; what manner of torturing death this was, is not so certain, whether by excoriation, and making drum-heads of their skins, or extending them on the rack, as the skin or parchment is on the drum head, and then with clubs, or other instruments, beating them to death; of which sort of sufferers seems Eleazer to be under Antiochus Epiphanes, Apc 2Mac 6:19,30, for his not turning heathen, when urged to it by that torture; and though his deliverance from torture and death were offered to him by his tormentors on compliance with them, and renouncing his religion, yet he refused it, as others did, Apc 2Mac 7:24, resolving to endure the utmost extremity rather than turn idolater, and disobey God.

*That they might obtain a better resurrection:* that which influenced them to suffer, was their faith in God's promise of obtaining thereby a resurrection to an incomparable better life than they could have enjoyed on earth; for though they might have been spared from death now threatened them, which was a kind of resurrection, yet was it not to be compared with the resurrection to eternal life, glory, bliss, and pleasure, to be enjoyed by them with God in heaven. See what influenced them, 2Co 4:17,18.

## Hebrews 11:36

Ver. 36. *And others had trial of cruel mockings;* the same gospel faith enabled others than those mentioned before, prophets and saints, as Micaiah, 1Ki 22:24, Elisha, 2Ki 2:23 Isa 8:18 Am 7:10, readily, cheerfully, and patiently to accept and receive the experience and trials of mocking, from the insulting, cruel enemies of God and his church, both national and aliens; being exposed and made a laughing-stock by reproaches, sarcasms, and nick-names, to aggravate their afflictions; and these inflicted on them by words and external signs, trials which, to an ingenuous spirit, bears harder than external torments, and which they more deeply sense and resent; yet faith makes them to receive all humbly, and carrieth them above them, as Ps 31:20 52:1-5 120:3,4 140:3.

*And scourgings;* they felt the scourges and whips of their enemies smart on them, such as were excessively shameful and painful, being inflicted on the vilest persons, as slaves; such as was the matter of these scourges, such their smartings, whether of thongs, cords, or wires, Jer 20:2 37:15. This torment was commonly inflicted on them, not in Antiochus's time only, and those before, but commonly in Christ's and the apostles' days, 2Co 6:5 11:23.

*Yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:* they cheerfully and patiently submitted to the cruel treating of their persecutors, who put them in the stocks, places of little ease, dungeons, loading them with iron shackles and fetters, which the wickedness of man had invented to torment them with; stern and cruel usage by their gaolers, restraining society from them, and of comfortable relief, feeding them with the bread and water of affliction, 2Ch 18:26 Ac 16:24.

## Hebrews 11:37

Ver. 37. *They were stoned;* by the same faith were several of the prophets and believing worthies of old carried through cruel deaths, the just punishment of malefactors, but the wicked tortures of these innocent saints, some being stoned to death, as Zechariah the son of Jehoiada, 2Ch

24:21, and others, Mt 21:35 23:37 Lu 13:34.

*The were sawn asunder;* as Isaiah was, which is a known tradition among the Hebrews, a punishment common among the bordering nations of them, 2Sa 12:31 Am 1:3, and exercised on these innocents, to which Christ himself alludeth, Mt 24:51.

*Were tempted:* whether επειρασθησαν should not be επυρασθησαν, is much doubted, temptation being no manner of death; and the Spirit had instanced in it before, Heb 11:35. It may therefore be a slip of the transcriber, and that burning was the cruel death that should fill this place among the rest, a common punishment with them, Jer 29:22 Apc 2Mac 7:5. Or, it may note a death with several trials of racks and torments gradually inflicted, with a design to tempt them by their pains to renounce their religion.

*Were slain with the sword;* others were killed by the sword, either by beheading, or cutting in pieces, Mr 6:16,17; a kind of death foretold to be attending the martyrs of Jesus Christ, Re 20:4. All these sorts of death were most unjustly and cruelly inflicted on them by their persecutors, and as patiently received and cheerfully undergone by them.

*They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins:* as faith carried these believers through variety of deaths, so it managed others comfortably under their banishments and lingering sufferings, which were in proportion as cruel as death itself; they circuited up and down to preserve themselves from their destroyers, either voluntarily returning themselves into desolate places to keep a good conscience, or were unjustly and violently banished and forced away from their own habitations, to live as vagabonds, clothed only with goatskins and sheepskins, the common apparel of the prophets, as of Elijah, 2Ki 1:8 Zec 13:4, which they wore as they came from the beasts' backs, without dressing. Being destitute, afflicted, tormented; wandering in this forlorn state, stripped of money and necessaries of life, and not supplied by others in their poverty, 1Ki 17:4, grievously pressed within, pained without, and afflicted beyond what can be sensed by any but in the like states, and evilly entreated by all; many miseries attending them by their pursuers, hardship in travels, and all sorts of evils, which multiplied their griefs: through all this faith carried them comfortably, and kept God with them.

## Hebrews 11:38

Ver. 38. *Of whom the world was not worthy:* the Spirit intermixeth an account of what these persons were who were so treated, lest the reader or hearer of these things might be mistaken of them, judging them to be some heinous malefactors, who were thus hurried in and destroyed by the world. Would you know what manner of persons they were? Be it known to you in the judgment of God, the best judge of their persons and states, they were such as the world did not deserve they should live among them, but were unworthy of their society, and the blessings which did attend it; and were it not for their sakes, God would quickly put an end to the sinful world, and burn it up. Such were these as did more for the preservation of the world, when thus brutishly treated by it, than it would or could do for itself.

*They wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth:* yet were they wandering over the desolate parts of this earth, being forced from all society with men, to the retirements of wild beasts in deserts, and climbing up mountains and rocks from their persecutors, lodging themselves in the natural or artificial dens and caves of the earth, the only receptacles for these worthies, faith giving them the best company, God and his comforts, there: see 1Sa 22:1,4 1Ki 17:3 18:13 Apc 1Ma 1:53 2:28-30.

## Hebrews 11:39

Ver. 39. The apostle returns in this verse to the proposition laid down in the second verse, which he had been proving by all these examples, and with it shuts up the history of them.

*And these all;* all these elders, mentioned from Heb 11:2 to this verse.

*Having obtained a good report through faith:* μαρτυρηθεντες, strictly, is having been martyred, or made martyrs; specially witnessing to the death for Christ, have a testimony given them, by way of eminency, by God himself in his Scripture record, that through faith they pleased him in their



glorious achievements and sufferings, and were God's faithful witnesses to the world, glorifying him in it; though reproached and ruined by the world, yet they were too good to live in it, and were fit to live with him in heaven, as Heb 11:2,5,16,35.

*Received not the promise;* yet these worthies, as Abraham and his believing seed, did not possess the land of Canaan, though they had the promise of it in their time, Heb 11:13; others did obtain the grace and good things promised for their time, Heb 11:33, but none of these had fulfilled to them in their day the manifestation of the Messiah in the flesh; though they saw his day and coming by faith, and did rejoice in it, yet none saw him so come as Simeon did, Lu 2:26,29; though, as to the eternal benefits by Christ, they did as actually receive them, as those since his perfecting the work of redemption have received them, even eternal blessedness and glory by him, Ac 15:11.

Hebrews 11:40

Ver. 40. *God having provided some better thing for us:* the causes of their not receiving the promise, are summed up in this verse; the efficient of it is God's providence unto believers before and after the incarnation of the Messiah. God having from eternity foreknowledge of those who would believe in God the Son incarnate, Ro 8:29, predestinated them to be called to the faith in him, and provided better for New Testament believers than for the Old ones, that what they had of Christ in types and veils, these should have in truth; what they had in promise, these should have in sight and possession; what they had in hope, as to his first coming, these should have it past, and as an earnest of his second coming; what they had by measure of his Spirit and grace, these should have in fulness, Lu 10:23,24 Joh 1:14,16 7:39 2Co 3:8 Eph 3:8-11 Tit 2:13 1Pe 1:12.

*That they without us should not be made perfect;* the final cause of this gracious providence was, that the former and later believers might be completed together; they shall not reach that perfect state of grace and glory by a re-union of their bodies and souls until the general resurrection, when they shall not prevent us, nor we them; but as soon as the trumpet alarms the dead to rise, in the same moment, and twinkling of an eye, shall the living be changed, and all be caught up together *in the clouds, to meet*

*the Lord in the air; and so shall be ever with the Lord, 1Th 4:15-17. The ground of which perfection of all believers in all ages being in the last time, is from his choosing them all to be but one body of Christ, and him their Head; so as one member cannot be perfected but in the perfection of the whole, Mt 8:11 Eph 4:4. In which perfection of it, God is resolved to be all in all; not in one, or in some, but when Christ hath subdued all his enemies, and gathered all his members, then shall his body and kingdom be perfected, and God be all in all, 1Co 15:28.*

Hebrews 12:1

### Chapter Summary

Heb 12:1-4 An exhortation to patience and constancy enforced by the example of Christ.

Heb 12:5-13 The benefit of God's chastisements.

Heb 12:14-17 Exhortation to peace and holiness.

Heb 12:18-24 The dispensation of the law compared with the privileges of the gospel.

Heb 12:25-29 The danger of refusing the word from heaven.

Ver. 1. The Spirit proceeds in this chapter in his exhortation or counsel unto duties worthy of the former doctrine of Christ, and suitable to the foregoing examples, enumerated Heb 11:1-40.

*Wherefore seeing;* he introduceth it with an illative particle, *τοιγαρουν* seeing all those worthies finished their course through faith, and received not the promise since made good to us, therefore is there something to be inferred.

*We also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses;* we, I Paul, and you Hebrews, having enjoyed the better things provided by God for us, we are so much the more obliged; as also having such a multitude of witnesses of so vast worth and dignity, as all the Old Testament believers were, distilling, like a cloud, abundant influences, from their example, in doing and suffering for God, through faith, on our souls, to make us persevering in the faith to the end, as they did; and so compassing

us about, as we cannot want either direction or encouragement to it, whenever we look into their histories for it.

*Let us lay aside every weight;* like the Grecian and Roman racers, who laid aside their cumbersome garments, so as they might more easily and lightly run their race; in allusion to which, it is the concern of every Christian to *lay aside*, or put away, all his worldly cumbrances, which would clog him in his race, his corrupt self, the world, &c., Mt 16:24 Lu 21:34 1Ti 6:9-11 2Ti 2:4.

*And the sin which doth so easily beset us:* the evil weight inward is the old man, the corrupt nature, which remaineth in every Christian, styled by Paul, *the body of death*, Ro 7:24; but especially each Christian's own personal iniquity, which sticks and cleaves nearer to him than his garments, and which made David so careful about it, in Ps 18:23; that which is so compassing and clasping him about, that he is so far from running, he cannot move for it, 1Co 9:27 Col 3:5. This they are to mortify in them.

*And let us run with patience the race that is set before us;* how distant soever the goal is, which finisheth the race of a Christian's life, yet the way passing to it, though it be troublesome and long, and being set to us by God himself, must be patiently, strenuously, and constantly run, that they may obtain it, Ps 119:32,33 Lu 13:24 1Co 9:24-27 Ga 5:7 Php 3:13,14 2Ti 4:7. The cloud of witnesses have so run it before them for their direction and encouragement.

Hebrews 12:2

Ver. 2. *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith:* as if all the former witnesses were not enough, he adds a more excellent one than them all, even our Lord Jesus Christ, who is not only a pattern to them in their race and running of it, but a help, and for which end they were looking to him: the word ἀφορῶντες is only here used in all the New Testament, and signifieth a looking off from whatever would distract us from earnestly looking on the proposed object alone; and though a word of sense, yet here noteth an act of the mind. It is borrowed from racers, the similitude of whom the apostle further improves: they fixedly eye their guides or

leaders, to help them on in their course; so must a Christian in his race look off from all things else, and singly and intently look on Jesus to help him through it; αρχηγον see Heb 2:10; here it denotes Jesus to be the great institutor of, and chief leader in, the Christian race, and perfecter of them in running it. The disposition, grace, ability, and success which they have for running it, it is all from him; from the beginning of the work of faith unto the end of it, to the finishing of the course, he doth infuse, assist, strengthen, and accomplish the work of it to the last, Joh 6:29,30 Php 4:13 2Ti 4:7 1Jo 5:4,5.

*Who for the joy that was set before him;* who for that joyful and glorious state which was clearly represented and faithfully promised to him by his Father to succeed his sufferings, that he should immediately attain himself, and successively communicate to all who believe in him, Lu 24:26 Joh 17:1,5,24 1Pe 1:11. This did so cheer and strengthen him, that with unexpressible patience he cheerfully *endured the cross*, with all the concomitants of it, the sorrows in his soul, the torturing pains in his body, of buffetings, smitings, piercings of thorns, tearing his flesh with scourges, boring of his hands and feet with nails, with all the evils that either the malice or rage of devils or men could inflict on him; he was neither weary of his burden, nor shrinking from nor fainting under it. With what invincible meekness and passive fortitude did he undergo all that was foretold of him! Isa 53:1-12.

*Despising the shame;* as the same time slighting and casting out of his thoughts all the disgrace poured on him by his enemies, both in his mind and action, contemning all the blasphemies, taunts, reproaches, and shameful carriages of sinners to him, suffering without any emotion all their indignities, even in the most shameful death itself, Php 2:6-8, though he were the most innocent as well as excellent person in all the world.

*And is set down at the right hand of the throne of God;* the issue of all which was, his exaltation by God for his abasement by man; he riseth from the dead, ascendeth to heaven, sets himself down as a triumphing conqueror over sin, the prince of the powers in the air, death, and hell, *at the right hand of the throne of God;* and thence discovers himself in his state and glory, as the great Ruler of the world, King of kings, and Lord of lords, Php 2:9,10, (see Heb 8:1), and the glorious rewarder of those who serve him, and suffer for him.

### Hebrews 12:3

Ver. 3. *For consider him;* the connection is rational, that they ought to regard this example, for that there were greater sufferings behind than any yet they had endured, which would enforce it, as Heb 12:4: *αναλογισασθε* signifieth the use of it proportionable consideration, thinking on or reasoning about this example within a man's self, such as may make the considerer bear a proportion to the subject considered.

*That endured such contradiction of sinners against himself;* this Jesus spoken of before, who most patiently submitted to, and perseveringly bore up under, such opposition and contradiction by the words and works of the most wicked and vilest men against himself, who was the most innocent and best of men, always going about doing good to them, so as their sin and his patience were without parallel: none was ever so scorned, taunted, reviled, blasphemed, spit on, and ignominiously treated like him; and never any so invincibly endured it, Ro 15:3.

*Lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds;* the reason of this consideration is, lest faintness, languishing, or deficiency of soul, that is, of vigour, strength, and activity of heart in grace, should befall them; and so they should lie down and cease to run the Christian race, which the devil designed to oblige them to, as he would Christ, by the multitude and soreness of the contradictions they should suffer from sinners in it, so greatly as would not end but by broaching their life-blood, as they did Christ's, and these must expect from them.

### Hebrews 12:4

Ver. 4. Ye have suffered ranch for Christ already, but there is more that he requires from you, and is yet behind, Heb 10:32-34; the condition he fixed with you as his disciples, in Lu 14:26, to lay down your life as well as your relations and goods for him. You may yet be called to testify to him, by suffering a violent and bloody death from his and your enemies, as other martyrs had done for him: consider him who hath suffered a worse death for you, to sweeten yours to you, that you do not faint, fail, or turn

apostates from him and his truth; resisting with agonies whatsoever men or devils use to entice or force us to apostatize from Christ, since there will be neither arts nor powers wanting to it. Watch you, pray, and strive to the utmost against them, Lu 22:31,32 1Pe 5:9.

Hebrews 12:5

Ver. 5. *And ye have forgotten;* εκλελησθε, whether rendered interrogatively: have ye forgotten? Or positively: ye have forgotten; either way it carrieth a check upon their forgetfulness of what was of the greatest importance for them to remember in the time of persecutions, and implieth a direction of them to their duty, that they ought to remember the counsel or command given by God to them, how to interpret these persecutions for Christ and the gospel, and how to improve them; and so introduceth a further help to their running of the race of God with patience.

*The exhortation;* παρακλησεως notes properly consolation, and is here a consolatory exhortation to the management of a duty which would be highly such to them, and a dehortation from an evil which would greatly prejudice them; when it is said to speak, it is a metonymy of the effect for the efficient; the Lord in the exhortation speaking this to them.

*Which speaketh unto you as unto children:* these words were written by Solomon, from God unto his children in that time; and God speaks no less by him to these Hebrews, who were his children now, as to all others who are such, or should be such, children to him. And whereas it is spoken singularly:

*My son,* it is to every child of God in Christ Jesus, and so collectively includeth all of them.

*Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord:* the dehortation is written in Pr 3:11, that not one of these children should care little for, or set light by, denying all regardlessness, senselessness of, and incorrigibleness under, such smart correction as a parent gives to a child, either by himself, or by any other to whose care it is committed; but this chastening is from the Lord, the most gracious and tender Father, who can do them no evil, and will profit and benefit them by it. As they come from their persecutors for

the sake of Christ, they are injuries; but as ordered by God their Father, they are so many favours to them, preventing sin, preserving in duty, and preparing them for blessedness.

*Nor faint when thou art rebuked of him;* nor to nauseate his rebukes, or to faint under them; neither to let our faith or hope in our Father fail, nor to sink in our love to him, his way, or truth, or religion; nor to be weary, and give over our course, because of persecutions, but continuing faithful to him to the end, Heb 12:14,15 Mt 10:22 Lu 22:28,29.

#### Hebrews 12:6

Ver. 6. *For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth:* for showeth this to be a suatory reason against fainting under God's rebukes, and enforcing the foregoing duty: sheet whomsoever, son or daughter, every child, that God the Father choicely loveth, taketh into his bosom, tendereth as a parent doth a child, Eph 5:1, he nutureth, instructs, corrects by his word and rod in its respective measure, for their spiritual profit and advantage, 1Co 11:32.

*And scourgeth every son whom he receiveth:* scourgeth noteth the highest degree of chastening, even with the sharpest and most smarting punishment, wherein God proceedeth with all and every son or child, not any excepted, whom he hath adoped and received into his bosom with complacency and delight, Heb 5:8: compare Pr 3:12 Mt 17:5 Re 3:19, where, though the words do vary, yet the sense is one and the same; God correcting, as a Father, the son in whom he delighteth.

#### Hebrews 12:7

Ver. 7. *If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons:* his reason he illustrateth from the convertibility of suffering affliction and chastening from God the Father, and being his child; If ye have a child-like sense of chastening, such afflictions and sufferings from him as the Father ordereth to you, so as quietly and patiently to bear them, and by faith expecting a saving issue from them; God the Father in love chastening you, beareth, carrieth, and offereth himself to you as a father to his son,

full of grace and love, Le 26:41 Job 13:15 Ps 89:30 Mic 7:9.

*For what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?* No son or child of God can be instanced in, who was capable of chastening, but more or less have felt it; even God's only and best beloved One, Heb 5:8, for our sakes felt it, Isa 53:5. The interrogation is a vehement assertion, and so to be resolved.

Hebrews 12:8

Ver. 8. But if God chasten you not, or if he do, and ye have not grace, or do not rightly endure it, are not managing yourselves well under it, nor are profited by it, when all and every one of his children are partakers of it, then are ye a false and spurious seed, and not God's genuine offspring, *bastards* in his account; and indeed so the most forlorn, wretched persons of all others, left under the power and dominion of sin, hurrying them on to their utter destruction, Joh 8:41. These visible church members have a bastardly disposition, hearts alienated from God and his law, and inclined to the will and works of the flesh, expressing it in their conversation, running into the excess of sin, having no chastening to restrain them, and are deserted by God for it, Isa 1:4-6 Hos 4:14,17.

Hebrews 12:9

Ver. 9. *Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us:* he enforceth the duty of not despising nor fainting under the Lord's chastening, from the consideration of his being our Father, and better than any earthly one, and from his goodness in that relation, and therefore we ought to submit to it: We have had our natural parents, as we are children, and who were the subordinate cause of our being as to our bodies, Heb 7:5,10, and they were instructors and correctors of us, made use of the rod as well as the word for our nurture; they have whipped and chastised us, putting us to smart and pain, 2Sa 7:14 Pr 22:15.

*And we gave them reverence;* *ενετρεπομεθα*, imports a turning of bowels and spirits within them towards their fathers, covered with shame and blushing for their faults, and afraid to look them, when offended, in the



face; reverencing them chastening, and submitting to the penalty, so as to reform and turn from the faults for which they were corrected.

*Shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits?* The expostulation shows the vehemency of the argument more than a simple position. It is the highest reason, of all right we must and ought (being as much our privilege as duty) to deny ourselves, and be in in that subjection, the free and willing subordination of our spirits to God, as the rod calls for it, receiving the correction, reforming under it, and resigning our souls to him who is the Creator of them as to their natural and spiritual being, and the Sovereign, Guardian, Protector, and Disposer of them; men nor angels have any power over them, but this Father of them only, and his great work and concern is about them, Ge 2:7 Nu 27:16 Ec 12:7 Zec 12:1.

*And live;* by his chastening of our spirits, our immortal souls, Joh 3:6 Ro 8:5,6, he is furnishing them with more spiritual life, whereby they are enabled to live and move wholly to God, from grace to glory. He makes them live more the life of God, which God in flesh lived on earth, Ga 2:20 Eph 4:18 Php 1:21 1Pe 4:6 1Jo 3:9. This chastening promotes this honourable life as an instrument and means in God's hand, and advanceth it daily, till it is perfected in eternal life, Ac 14:22 Ro 5:3-5 8:18 2Co 4:17,18 Jas 1:12 Jude 1:22.

Hebrews 12:10

Ver. 10. *For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure:* as God hath his prerogative in paternity, so he hath the transcendency in the end of chastening his children; for our natural parents, fathers of our bodies, nurtured us by the word and rod for a little time, the days of childhood and youth, as they would and thought good, as they apprehended their power over them, arbitrarily, passionately, without reaching what is best for them by it; their own thoughts, whether good or bad, were the rule of their chastening, and such as their thoughts are, such is their end; how imperfect and defective must that be!

*But he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness;* but God, the Father of our spirits, corrects us ἐπι το σωματικόν, which strictly notes comportation, intimating, that in his chastening his children he brings in

his help, puts as it were his shoulder to it, brings in his stock of grace, and so bears together with them unto their advantage and profit in spiritual life, and this during our whole lives. That which he bears home to them, and puts in them by his chastening, is *his holiness*; of which being made partakers, they thrive mightily as to their spiritual life, and increase in the Divine nature with all the increases of God, Eph 3:13,19 Col 2:19.

Hebrews 12:11

Ver. 11. *Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous*: a further argument to persuade Christians not to despise nor faint under the Lord's chastenings, is the good issue of them, subjoined to fortify them against the suggestions of flesh and blood, as if they could not be from love, nor for good, because they are smarting and grievous; therefore the Spirit asserts the truth as to both: All these chastenings and rebukes that the Father of spirits inflicts on his children, not one excepted, are, for all the time they are so inflicted, sensed by his children to be as they are; they feel them to have no joy in them, but a great deal of grief, pain, and smart; they are not pleasing of themselves, and God would not have them to be so, but his to feel the smart of his rod, when he corrects them with it.

*Nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby*; yet have not his children any reason to despond or faint under them; for they are not always to continue, and there accrueth after them a benefit to them, that will make amends for them all the afterward following to eternity: this chastening rendereth and bringeth forth to all the corrected children, who labour to improve the smart, under God's direction and blessing, a righteous compliance with the whole will of God, and a purging out of all sin, Isa 27:9; filling the soul full of joy and peace, and securing to the chastened a confluence of all that good that will abundantly reward them for their sufferings, setting them above them, and making them blessed, Isa 32:17 Ro 5:1-5 Jas 1:2-4.

Hebrews 12:12

Ver. 12. This introduceth the use of the doctrine of God's chastening

providences, stated before.

*Wherefore* concludes the rationality and necessity of the duty subjoined, as consequent from the truth asserted before.

*Lift up;* ἀνορθώσατε notes the making, or setting aright, that which was out of its proper place and posture, as disordered members into their right frame and composure, that there be not any let in our Christian race, nor fainting by our course in it.

*The hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;* by hanging down hands, and palsied knees, are metaphorically represented the hearts, spirits, and souls of these children, such as droop, despond, and are ready to faint and die away under chastening, Isa 35:3-6. The sum of the counsel is, rightly to compose our thoughts, affections, and members, under trials from notorious enemies, and unbelieving brethren, so as to perfect our Christian course in the fear and strength of God, continuing stedfast in prayer, 1Ti 2:8, walking constantly in God's ways, and obeying all his commandments, Ps 119:48,100, patiently bearing all God's corrections, and bringing forth the peaceful fruit of them. This is the truth of the metaphor.

Hebrews 12:13

Ver. 13. Make straight, smooth ways, such as have all stones of stumbling and rocks of offence removed, so as themselves may be set right in comfort, and duty, and walking; lest being lame or halting in their minds between Judaism and Christianity, because of the violent persecution of them by their infidel brethren, they should be turned aside out of God's way, erring, and deviating from the truth of the gospel; but that they be restored to it, so as no sufferings upon that account, under God's hand, might make them suppress the truth, or expose them to apostacy, or to walk as stumbling-blocks to others, and wounding their own souls, Ac 15:1 Ga 2:11-15 6:12.

Hebrews 12:14

Ver. 14. Here begins the second head of counsel in this chapter. That seeing the gospel church Officer, the great Reconciler of sinners to, and Sanctifier of them for, God, was fully revealed to them, it did now concern them to promote peace with men, and perfect holiness towards God: this is pursued to the end of the chapter.

*Follow peace with all men:* διώκετε imports such a fierce, unwearied, unsatisfied pursuit, as persecutors make after the innocent servants of Christ, till they have their purposes on them; and so sets out the real, earnest, violent, unwearied, constant pursuit and labour after peace, i.e. concord, unanimity, and comfortable consociation in all things, good and lawful, to all sorts of persons, in thought, word, and deed, as far as it is possible for us, Ps 34:14 1Co 10:32 1Co 13:4,5,7 1Pe 3:10,11.

*And holiness:* αγιασμον is all that habit and frame of heart, which becometh souls to have towards God, enjoying all purity from spiritual uncleanness, and a conformity to the holiness peculiar to God, Eph 4:24. The result and quintessence of all the graces of the Spirit, is holiness, 1Pe 1:15,16 1Jo 3:2,3; labouring to the perfection of this within our kind, Ps 110:3 2Co 7:1.

*Without which no man shall see the Lord:* a soul destitute of holiness is in no capacity, either of faith or sight, to *see the Lord;* they can have no union to, communion with, or fruition of, God in Christ, neither in grace nor glory; implying and assuring them, that with holiness they may see and enjoy him, Mt 5:8 1Co 6:9,10 1Co 12:13 Ga 5:21 1Jo 3:2,3.

Hebrews 12:15

Ver. 15. To further their pursuit of peace and holiness, he metaphorically proposeth a caution against what might stop them in it, which he properly specifieth and exemplifieth in Esau, Heb 12:15-17.

*Looking diligently:* επισκοπουντες notes a very strict and severe inspecting themselves; its primitive, σκοπειν, signifieth such a looking to a thing, as those who, in shooting, aim at the mark; and the preposition adds intention to the action, signifying a most earnest care in Christians over themselves, in them over others, and in ministers over them all.

*Lest any man fail of the grace of God;* lest any person among them should fail of grace offered in the gospel to it, and never have it, Tit 2:11,12; or apostatize from the profession of it, by seduction or persecution, Heb 4:1 10:38 2Co 6:1: compare Ga 1:6 3:3.

*Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you;* a metaphor borrowed from plants, to which roots are proper, and which was used by Moses before, De 29:18: a root bearing a poisonous herb; intending by it such persons, whose nature, words, and works, are so bitter unto God, as gall and wormwood are to men; such as apostatized from God to idols. The apostle intending hereby the hindering the springing up and growing of errors, heresies, or immoralities, as profaneness, filthiness, &c., which are apt to infect churches, and, as they spread, to molest, trouble, and disturb them, and to keep them from pursuing holiness, Heb 3:8 Ho 12:14 Ga 1:7 Jas 3:14.

*And thereby many be defiled;* lest by but one such poisonous root, a whole church of Christians may be infected and poisoned, their sin being as apt to spread and diffuse itself, as leaven, 1Co 5:6, to taint the whole lump, Ga 5:9: and how early, even in the apostles' time, for want of obeying this caution, were the primitive churches corrupted, both in doctrine and morals, by loose, filthy heretics among them!

Hebrews 12:16

Ver. 16. This properly interprets the *root of bitterness* before, by two special fruits of it.

*Lest there be any fornicator:* uncleanness,  $\piορνος$ , is not to be taken so strictly, as only to note fornication, uncleanness committed by unmarried persons, but all sorts of pollution and filthiness, as it is used in the general decree, Ac 15:29; such defilements as had crept in among them already, to which many were propense and inclined, whence warned of and charged against it by James, Peter, and Jude, in their Epistles.

*Or profane person:*  $βεβηλος$  imports one who had a bitter frame of spirit against the first table, one of an impure mind to God-ward, opposite to

godliness, who neglects and spurns at holy things, rolling itself in its own pleasures, riches, honours, with a despising of God, his grace, and glory, 1Ti 1:9 4:7,16 2Ti 2:16.

*As Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birth-right:* Esau, the best example to these Hebrews, he being Jacob's brother, who was most notoriously profane, who irreligiously undervalued and despised the blessing of the birthright, to which was entailed by God the double portion, the priesthood and dominion over the family, the blessings of the covenant, and the being a type of Christ; he basely and impiously gave it away to his younger brother, slighting it, and freely and fully making it over to him, and all for one eating, the base gratifying of his sensual appetite but once, Ge 25:32,34. Like to whom were those, Php 3:18 2Pe 2:10-19 Jude 1:4-19. In these is his filthy, profane spirit improved.

Hebrews 12:17

Ver. 17. *For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected:* as Esau's sin was, such was his penalty; for they knew, and were well acquainted with this in Moses's history of him, that after he had despised his birthright, and sold it, being at man's estate, Ge 27:1-46, and was desirous to inherit that blessing, he was rejected by his father, as well as by God, and could not obtain it, being unalterably settled on Jacob by both.

*He found no place of repentance,* as to the giving it, with God, who gave it, and would not alter it, Ro 11:29; nor with his father, who did not repent of giving it to Jacob, but confirmed it, Ge 27:33,40 28:1,3,4.

*Though he sought it carefully with tears;* and this, although he sought the blessing from his father with cries and tears, Ge 27:34,38. How therefore should these Hebrews, knowing all this, root out such a root springing up in themselves, or others, that they might not be guilty of such sin; lest having despised God's blessing for their own ease, honours, or profits in this world, when they may desire to seek with tears the blessing of the eternal inheritance from God, he should irreversibly reject them. See Mt 7:22,23.

## Hebrews 12:18

Ver. 18. *For* showeth, Heb 12:18-24, the apostle enforcing on these Hebrews, and with them on all Christians, the pursuit of holiness and peace, by subjoining the great helps they have for it, beyond what the Old Testament church had, they being freed from the legal dispensation, which was less helpful to it, and admitted to that of the gospel, most promoting it. The first he layeth down, Heb 12:18-21; and the other, Heb 12:22-24. They are freed from the covenant dispensation at Mount Sinai.

*Ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched;* you have not been called, as to your body, to journey it to Sinai, or as to your faith to close with that covenant administration, to depend on, or have any expectation from it, as delivered by Moses at Mount Sinai in Arabia; a mountain visible, tactile, sensible, on earth, signifying the covenant dispensation from this mount to be low and earthy, occasioning earthy thoughts of God and carriage to him, sticking in an earthy altar sacrifice, and carnal and sensual religion; to the law written in stones, without minding the spirituality of it, or having it in their hearts; walking wisely in this wilderness state, yet, by the charge of God, not touchable by Israel at that time, though they came near to it in the third month after their coming out of Egypt, Ex 19:1,12,13,23.

*And that burned with fire;* to the fire, in the which the Lord descended on the mount, Ex 19:18; which burnt unto the midst of heaven, De 4:11 5:23,24, and would consume them that broke that law which he spake to them out of it, De 33:2.

*Nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest;* to the black, thick smoke that ascended as the smoke of a furnace, Ex 19:18; to *darkness*, occasioned by the thick clouds enveloping the mount, De 4:11 5:23; to *tempest*, the storm of thundering, and lightnings, and earthquake, the terrible attendants of this solemnity, Ex 19:16,18 20:18. All these shadowing forth the fiery and terrible storms of wrath and indignation, which should pursue the breakers of this covenant to the lowest hell; giving them, in this delivery of the law, a visible type of what should be the issue of their breaking it, Ex 19:22,24. These terrors of the Almighty did so fright them, that they ran from God, and set not themselves to the

serious pursuit of holiness, Isa 33:14.

Hebrews 12:19

Ver. 19. *And the sound of a trumpet;* which was most shrill and dreadful, it sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, giving a fearful alarm unto Israel to draw near to the Lord to hear his law to them, and covenant with them, and to see a type of their doom, if they transgressed it, in an obscure representation of the general judgment, Ex 19:16,19 20:18; compare 1Th 4:16 2Th 1:7-9.

*And the voice of words:* after which alarm, the Angel of the covenant uttered his voice out of the fire most majestically, distinctly, and loudly, and spake to Israel in their own language the ten words, or commandments, that they might hear and understand them, so as they sensed them to be dreadful for their sound and matter, Ex 20:1-20 De 4:10,12,13 5:1-27.

*Which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:* the people, being overwhelmed with the majesty and dreadfulness of that voice, deprecated any more such for matter or manner of manifestation to them, Ex 20:19 De 5:23-26 18:16. And therefore desired Moses to speak to them God's law, and that God might speak no more.

Hebrews 12:20

Ver. 20. The reason of the foregoing deprecation, and which adds to the terribleness of this covenant dispensation; *for* the voice surpassed their strength and capacity, that they must die if they heard it any more, so dreadful was the sound and matter of it; for the commandment and threatening was: That if any man or beast did but so much as touch the mountain, they should die for it, Ex 19:12,13,21,23,24. Therefore was Moses so strictly charged to look to it, and to provide against it, showing the dreadfulness of that covenant dispensation, that if men did not keep their beasts from coming near, they should be stoned or darted to death; how much more themselves, if they should transgress the law, which,



though it was designed to lead them unto Christ, yet was not generally so discerned or used by them! So that if the publication of it be so terrible, how much more the punishment for breaking it! Ex 20:20.

Hebrews 12:21

Ver. 21. It must needs be a dreadful, fearful, horrid, and astonishing apparition, and exhibition of the great Lawgiver here, that such a person as Moses, so sanctified by him, so favoured with familiarity with him, so constituted mediator between the people and God in this work for their good and comfort, so called and ordered by God to manage it, yet should cry to God to succour him, while he did quake and tremble at it; and was comforted and strengthened by God's voice to him again, Ex 19:19. Christians now have no call nor access to so terrible a dispensation of the covenant, but have immunity, exemption, and freedom from it, which was not so helpful to holiness as the gospel dispensation, to which now they have actual admission, having freed them from all the terrors and curses of the Mosaical one.

Hebrews 12:22

Ver. 22. The Spirit now adds the privilege of Christians in the better state to which they have access by the gospel dispensation, Heb 12:22-24; Ye have left those hinderances and disadvantages instanced in before, but are come to these helps for your furtherance in holiness; ye have an access to all those most excellent, though invisible, things, by faith, and by it attain them, and are incorporated into them, as they follow.

*But ye are come unto mount Sion:* this is not literally to be understood for the mount on which the city of David was built, for that was as visible and touchable as Mount Sinai, to which it is opposed; but that mount which is higher than the highest, as high as heaven itself, Heb 12:25 9:24 Joh 3:13; where is the most orderly government of God for holiness, Mic 4:7; whence all good gifts and gospel blessings are conveyed to the church, of which these believers were members, Isa 8:18 28:16 59:20 Re 14:1.

*And unto the city of the living God;* of which the living God is the Builder

and Maker, and wherein he dwelleth, where nothing but life is, and whence Christ's voice giveth life to dead souls, enabling them to live a life of holiness to God, as Ps 46:4,5 48:1,8 87:3 Isa 40:14 Joh 5:25. To distinguish this from any earthly city or corporation, it is said to be *the heavenly Jerusalem*, its original, nature, and end being all heavenly; a fruitful place, whence believers are made partakers of the most spiritual influences for holiness; where there is nothing carnal, terrible, deadly, barren, but all causal and productive of holiness issueth thence, Isa 42:1-25, 65:17-19 66:10 Joh 17:24 Gal 4:26 Re 3:12 21:2,10.

*And to an innumerable company of angels;* in which city are many excellent inhabitants with whom believers are incorporated, and to whom they have relation, as myriads of angels, who are ministering spirits under the gospel, as under the law, full of holiness, power, agility, and endowments, fit for their work and end; who, though for number are thousands and millions of them, Ps 68:17 103:20 104:4 Ac 7:53 Ga 3:19 Re 5:11, yet are all fulfilling their Lord's pleasure in every place, as ordered by him. Their ministration of the law was terrible in flaming fire, but of the gospel, most sweet and gracious, Lu 2:13,14. At Sinai they ministered externally and sensibly, affecting senses; but from Sion they minister spiritually, to hearts, Mt 4:11 Lu 22:43 Ps 91:11, resisting evil spirits ministering wickedly. Their ministry little effectual under the law; but under the gospel, saving, Ac 7:53 Heb 1:14 Re 19:10. Their former ministration temporary and ceasing, but this everlasting, till they bring all their trust into Abraham's bosom, Lu 16:22. They are promoting holiness by God's sending things to us by them, and by their observing the goings and doings of Christians, whether holy or not, 1Co 11:10, and giving an account of the success of their ministry towards them, as to this end, Mt 18:10. And the neglect of this means to help our pursuing holiness, will God require, Heb 2:2.

Hebrews 12:23

Ver. 23. *To the general assembly:* other inhabitants of this heavenly city and polity with whom believers are incorporated, are such, into whose communion they have admittance here below, viz. to the catholic assembly of Christ, his whole body, the fulness of him who filleth all in all; all assembly gathered out of all nations, Re 5:9 7:9, throughout the world,

extended to all times and ages, especially to that part of it which is on earth, sojourning here, fitting for heaven; the other part is triumphing in it. They are not called or incorporated only into a particular national assembly, a straitened society, as the Old Testament church was; the general assembly of saints are more helpful to holiness than a lesser, Ps 22:27,28 Ga 4:25-27.

*And church of the firstborn:* this *general assembly* is not a rout, but a *church*, such as are called out of the world with a holy calling, subjecting themselves to Christ as their Head, and are, as quickened, so ordered and ruled by him: it is not a weak or an infant church, but strong and perfect, come unto maturity, in respect of the great discoveries of the mysteries of God made by Christ to them, Heb 5:12,13 6:1 Ga 4:1,3,4. This chosen, called, and well ordered society, were only of such persons who were *the first-born* of God, and partners of Christ's sonship and primogeniture, being regenerated by him, and dignified with his birthright privileges, Ro 8:17,29. They are the might and excellency of Christ; whereas the church at Sinai, for the body of them, were but typically, literally, and externally so, Ex 4:22 Col 1:15,18, and did not universally enjoy, as those do, the strength and fulness of grace from God, Joh 1:16 Ga 3:26,29; are *joint-heirs with Christ*, Ro 8:17, and made by him *kings and priests to God and his Father*, 1Pe 2:5 Re 1:6.

*Which are written in heaven:* they were not, as the church at Sinai, of an earthly enrolment, registered here to know their families and descent, whether right Jews and priests or no, whose genealogy was preserved to that end, Ezr 2:43, &c.; but had their register in heaven, were written in the Lamb's book of life, to be of heavenly descent, born of God, partakers of the Divine nature, and who had a right and title by faith in Christ to the heavenly inheritance, and were free denizens of it, Lu 10:20, and have all heavenly privileges derived to them, Lu 20:12,19 21:27. How obliging, influencing, and promoting are these privileges of every Christian's pursuit of holiness!

*And to God the Judge of all:* they were as Christians privileged with an access, not as Israel had at Sinai, with fear, and terror, and trembling, so as to fly from the great Author, Lord, and Judge of the covenant, lest they died, as Ex 20:18; but with liberty and boldness of faith, in the strength of love and with firmness of hope, they come now in Sion, Isa 59:20 Heb

10:19, unto God in his being and sovereignty, who ruleth all, and who giveth to all according to their works, and in a most eminent manner ruleth them; who, as he is their Judge, hath not, as at Sinai, any bars to keep them from him, Ex 19:12 Eph 2:18, nor is terrifying and consuming, as then, De 5:24,25, but justifying them; full of grace and love to all approaching him in Christ, his throne is a throne of grace to them, he comforting and encouraging them to make home to him, Joh 5:22 Ac 10:22 Ro 3:6. So as they have boldness in the day of judgment, and stand unshaken before their Judge, and are strengthened by him, Ro 8:1,33,34 1Jo 4:17. He rewards them gloriously, 2Ti 2:8, perfecting holiness in them beneath, and crowning them with glory above. What a help is this to pursue holiness!

*And to the spirits of just men made perfect:* the perfect state to which the gospel covenant leadeth is promoting holiness, for they have an access to the same lot, and are come into the same way of being perfected in holiness, which the spirits of the righteous, separated from their bodies, enjoy in heaven; and have a right unto, and shall have the certain enjoyment of, the same privilege, which carrieth through all difficulties in the pursuit of it, expecting themselves by death to be put in possession with them of the same state, Ro 8:22,23 2Co 5:1,2,8; compare Php 3:12-14.

Hebrews 12:24

Ver. 24. *And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant:* the Mediator of the Sion covenant is better than the mediator at Sinai, and more able to promote the holiness required by it. Believers have not now access unto, or dependence on, a Moses, a mere man, and a servant, declaring God's will, only a sinner himself, trembling in his office, and weary of his clients, and whose ministry is vanishing, as his person dying; but unto God the Son himself incarnate, a Son-mediator, making sons, and bringing them nearer to God, satisfying the law for them, and writing it on their hearts; above all sin himself, though a sacrifice for it, who is able to save to the uttermost, for that he ever liveth to intercede for them, Heb 1:1-3 Heb 3:6 7:26 Re 1:13. He is the Mediator, not of a literal, dark, terrible, charging and condemning, temporary and vanishing, covenant; but of the most spiritual, lightsome, gracious, justifying, sanctifying, and everlasting testamental dispensation of God, more effectually influencing souls to holiness than

the old, Heb 8:10,11 2Co 3:6 5:19.

*And to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel:* the sacrifice ratifying the Sion covenant is unexpressibly better than all the typical sacrifices confirming that at Sinai, it eminently purchasing and securing holiness to those interested in it. The blood of the immaculate Lamb of God, sprinkled on penitent, believing sinners, which hath purchased pardon for them, and, as follows, the Spirit, to sanctify them throughout, and perfect holiness in them, Heb 9:12 1Pe 1:18 1Jo 1:7,9; and so they are freed from access to the sprinkling of the blood of sacrificed beasts, which was only typical and weak to purge the conscience, calling sin to remembrance yearly and daily, which was now forbidden and rejected as of no worth, and which, like Abel's, crieth for revenge and condemnation, Ge 4:10; since their blood now offered when Christ had split his, was accounted of God as the blood of innocents slain, as Isa 66:3. Others render the blood of Abel, for the blood of sprinkling of the sacrifice that Abel offered unto God, Ge 4:4, which was sprinkled upon him; and so prefer Christ's sacrifice, not only to the Mosaical sacrifices, but to all that have been from the beginning of the world, which though accepted by God, yet not like Christ, of which they were the types. The sum of all these comparisons, is to show the greater helps, motives, and encouragements that Christians have to pursue and perfect holiness than all the Old Testament church had before them.

Hebrews 12:25

Ver. 25. Here the Spirit closely applieth his former arguments for their pursuit of holiness, especially that of Christ's speaking by his blood to them; by caution, Heb 12:25-27; by counsel, Heb 12:28,29.

*See that ye refuse not him that speaketh:* he introduceth this caution with: Look ye, or take ye heed; a term expressing the things said to be great and weighty, intimating that fear, solicitude, and watchfulness about this great and important concernment of their souls, Lu 12:15; that they see to it there be no aversion in their spirits to, no undervaluing or despising of, no dislike or apostacy from, but a hearing, believing, and obeying Jesus speaking by his blood all the gospel covenant to us; convincing them of sin and guilt that needed his blood, calling them to repentance and faith in his

blood and satisfaction, declaring his intercession with God for pardon, holiness, and glory by it, and so importunes them to follow holiness, which would evidence all this to them.

*For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth:* he enforceth his caution by a rational motive of the danger of their refusal, arguing from the less to the greater; that is, their ancestors escaped not the vengeance of God when they refused to hear, believe, and obey the legal covenant, which he spake on earth from Mount Sinai, and wrote on tables of stones, and delivered to Moses on the mount, and by him communicated it to them, Heb 2:2 10:28,30,31 De 33:1,4 Ac 7:51,53 1Co 10:1-10.

*Much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven;* much more and greater sinners are all such who turn aside scornfully from Jesus, and receive not his voice and the revelation of God's gospel covenant by it, who is God's only begotten Son, and brought it down from the Father's bosom in heaven, Heb 1:2 Joh 1:14,16-18 3:13, and ratified it with his own blood on earth: and as the sin is beyond compare greater, so will the punishment be, and the certainty of its infliction both for time and eternity, Mt 11:24 2Th 1:7-9 Heb 10:26-31; there remaining no more sacrifice for such sin and sinners.

Hebrews 12:26

Ver. 26. *Whose voice then shook the earth:* the sin and punishment of gospel despisers and rejecters, is aggravated by the Person concerned in both. It is that Jesus, the great Angel of the covenant, speaking now by his blood, whose voice at the delivery of the law on Mount Sinai, and selling Israel in a church state under that covenant dispensation, Ex 20:1,19 De 4:12 5:2,4,22, did shake the mount, Ex 19:18 Ps 68:7,8 114:4,7; and not only the literal Sinai, but that low, earthly condition and state of Israel coming out of Egypt, and bearing its reproach as a common people of the earth, together with other nations, Jos 5:9. This he removed away, and brought them then into a church state with himself by covenant, which church state obtained the name or title of heaven, Mt 21:43, and is by the prophet styled the old heaven, Isa 65:17, which was to be shaken and removed also.

*But now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven: but now* the same Jesus so shaking them had promised, and had at this time in part fulfilled what he spake, Hag 2:6,7, even after the prophets little while was expired, and Christ the desire of all nations was come; that yet *once more* he would shake the Israelitish church state, pitched till the time of reformation; not the earthly one only, as he did at Mount Sinai, which yet Jesus literally did at his death and resurrection, Mt 27:51,54 28:2, and the heavens also by his star, Mt 2:2, light to the shepherds, Lu 2:9, his baptism, Mt 3:17, transfiguration, Mt 17:5; his prayer, Joh 12:28-30, his passion, Mt 27:51 Lu 23:44,45, effusion of the Holy Ghost, Ac 2:2-4: but this is also a powerful, moral shaking, so as to change and remove that heavenly church frame pitched in the Jewish tabernacle; that he might pitch a tabernacle himself more heavenly and spiritual, whereof Jesus should be the Lord High Priest and Ruler, as well as Minister, Heb 3:1,2.

Hebrews 12:27

Ver. 27. The interpretation of the former matter in this verse, is introduced by reassuming: *And this, Yet once more;* as if he said: I told you that God promised, Yet once more, &c.; what he meaneth by it I now declare to you: this shaking of God intends not a small alteration, but a total removal and abolition of the Israelitish heaven and earth, forementioned, an alteration of their church, religion, and administration, and a total abrogating of them, because they are hand work, Heb 9:24. Such as were at God's direction made by men, as tabernacle, altar, and that typical service, not reaching the spiritual design of God, and but types of far better to succeed them; and which settled, did make the others to be finished, past, and never to return again.

*That those things which cannot be shaken may remain:* these better things are the administration of Christ's kingdom unshakeable, his church state which is heavenly, settled by his own evangelical laws and ordinances, which he hath so fixed by promise, as never to be removed till the whole church of Christ be completed with him in heaven, Hag 2:7 Mt 17:5 28:18-20.

## Hebrews 12:28

Ver. 28. *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved:* in this verse the apostle follows his doctrine with counsel to several duties; such as concern the first table, and terminate on God, in this and the following verse; such as concern the second table, Heb 13:1, &c. In this verse he begins with the Christians' privilege, and then directs their duty. These Hebrews having received by faith the privileges, and submitted themselves unto the laws and government, of the unmoveable kingdom of Christ, that gospel church state of which God is the author, Christ the King, his spiritual under officers ministers, penitent believing sinners the subject; the gospel laws by which the government is administered perfectly holy, just, and good; the privileges of it all grace here, and glory above; the descent of all from heaven: all which are to endure for ever unshaken, and against them the gates of hell shall not prevail, Zec 9:9 1Co 15:24-28 Eph 4:11-16 Col 1:13 2:3.

*Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear;* let us get and hold fast that gracious temper of soul, whereby they are made true, wise, believing, loving, humble, and obedient subjects to the laws of this kingdom, and manifest it by worshipping, and serving of, and walking with, God in this world, so as our persons and duties may be all well-pleasing to him in Christ, Eph 1:6, and constantly conformable to his holy will, Heb 11:4,5; and out of a sense of their own lowliness, with a self-abasing heart, and a reverential carriage, as Ge 18:27 Lu 18:13, approaching God in all his service with a holy jealousy over itself, that it do not offend him in what it is or doth, but rightly receiving law from him for all his service, and rightly returning all conformable thereunto to him again, Joh 12:49,50.

## Hebrews 12:29

Ver. 29. The motive enforcing this duty is no less terrible than that given to Israel under the law, obliging their obedience to that covenant dispensation, De 4:23,24: *The Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.* He that was so respecting the transgression of the legal, will much more be so as to this gospel covenant. God Almighty, the most gracious, and yet the most just Being, their own God by covenant



obtestation; yet will be to them, if they break his covenant, and do not, through Christ, acceptably serve him with reverence and godly fear, as fire consuming them. His gospel law, in the contempt of it, will be as the fiery law at Sinai, adjudging such sinners unto fire unquenchable, Heb 10:27-31; compare Mt 3:12 25:41 2Th 1:7-9.

Hebrews 13:1

### Chapter Summary

Heb 13:1 Exhortations to charity,  
Heb 13:2 hospitality,  
Heb 13:3 pity for the afflicted,  
Heb 13:4 chastity,  
Heb 13:5,6 contentment,  
Heb 13:7,8 to regard the preachers of God's word,  
Heb 13:9 to avoid strange doctrines,  
Heb 13:10-14 to confess Christ,  
Heb 13:11-15 to offer up our praises to God by him,  
Heb 13:16 to do good and to communicate,  
Heb 13:17 to obey spiritual rulers,  
Heb 13:18,19 and to pray for the apostle.  
Heb 13:20-25 The apostle endeth with a prayer and salutations.

Ver. 1. The apostle in this chapter pursueth his counsel to the subjects of the unmoveable kingdom of Christ, for their performing suitable duties to such a privilege, and especially such as more immediately terminate on their neighbour, and are contained in the second table of the Redeemer's laws; as the chief and fundamental one, *brotherly love*. Let love, a fruit of the Spirit, show forth itself and its existence in you, in pre-eminence, and in duration, by disposing always the inward man, mind, will, and affections, to seek the good, to speak all the good to and of, and to do all good to their Christian brethren, to all true Christians, eminently styled by the Spirit the brotherhood, Mt 12:50 28:10 Joh 13:34,35 20:17 1Co 13:1-13 Eph 4:32 1Th 4:9 1Jo 3:14,16.

## Hebrews 13:2

Ver. 2. The next duty suitable to Christ's kingdom, is hospitality to Christian strangers.

*Be not forgetful to entertain strangers;* be neither ignorant nor unmindful: by which charge they are bound strongly and always not to have this out of mind, though it may be out of hand; and the negative confirms the positive duty, removing hinderances, and enjoining it strictly, that they have a love and desire to the duty, bearing affection to the person of a Christian brother though a stranger, unknown and brought by Providence to them, Mt 22:39 25:35; and to the work of being an host, of entertaining such Christians; ξενος signifying an host as well as a stranger or guest. It is a love to be an hospitable person that is here required, Tit 1:8; (such was Gaius to Paul and the church, Ro 16:23); importing a kind, courteous reception of Christians into their houses, being harbourless, which Christ promiseth them, Lu 18:29 1Ti 5:10; a free and cheerful provision for their necessary refreshing, Ge 18:4-6; with a careful furtherance and assistance of them in the work of God, and helping them to persevere in the same, 3Jo 1:6-8.

*For thereby some have entertained angels unawares;* the advantage that accrues to such hosts of the Christian church and its members is great; for in the exercise of this duty, Abraham and Lot, being strangers, and waiting to entertain such, received angels into their tabernacle and house, Ge 18:2,3, and had sweet discoveries of God in the Messiah made to them; were delivered by them from judgment, as Lot, Ge 19:10,15-17. And now the general guard of angels goeth along with the saints, and are entertained in them, who never come without a blessing, they attending them in their way, defending them against evil spirits, and offensive ones and places where they are, though their ministry be little observed or acknowledged as it ought, Heb 1:14. Not only angels, but Christ himself accompanieth his pilgrim members, and is entertained, fed, comforted, and lodged in and with them, Mt 10:40-42 25:34-36; and for this will he reward them in both worlds.

## Hebrews 13:3

Ver. 3. *Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them:* a further duty of the subjects of Christ's kingdom, is sympathy with their Christian brethren, to remember to pray for, visit, and minister all necessary refreshment to those in bonds, fettered, manacled, and imprisoned for Christ's sake and the gospel; being straitened for them, and partaking of their bonds, bearing them with them, and seeking their deliverance out of them by all just means, Mt 25:36 Eph 6:19,20 Col 4:18 2Ti 1:16-18.

*And them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body;* be mindful of those suffering any evil for Christ's sake and the gospel, persecuted, oppressed, or afflicted, who have not deserved any of this from man, so as to carry it suitably to them in these conditions, Heb 11:36-38; so feelingly, as if we were the persons in their conditions; carefully, knowing we are in bodies capable and liable to the same, and are ignorant how soon it may be our own case; conscientiously, as knowing we are members in the same body of Christ with them, and of them in particular, 1Co 12:25-27.

Hebrews 13:4

Ver. 4. *Marriage is honourable in all:* the next duty charged on the subjects of Christ's kingdom, is chastity; the commendation of it is a precept to it. Marriage is that state which God instituted at the beginning, after the creation of Adam and Eve, which was by his law the making of them two to become one flesh, Ge 2:24; confirmed by Christ, Mt 19:5. On this state God, the fountain of all honour, hath stamped his own name and excellence, and hath made it, by an irreversible law, a glorious and honourable state. The connection is present, real, and necessary; God saith it, therefore it is so, and must be so; and this after God's institution in all its concomitants every where, and in all times; but especially in all persons in the kingdom of Christ, true Christians of all sorts and degrees, of what state or calling soever, qualified for and called to it, whether magistrates, ministers, or church members; God by it preventing sin, preserving holy and pure communion between the married, propagating his church, and accomplishing the number of his chosen by it, Ps 111:3 Mal 2:15 1Co 7:9 1Th 4:3,4 1Pe 3:1,7.

*And the bed undefiled;* a good, moral use of the marriage bed, the natural

and lawful use of the wife by the husband, and of the husband by the wife, according to the law of God; which is so far from being unclean, filthy, and inconsistent with the purity of Christ, as papists, apostates from the faith, assert, 1Ti 4:1-4, that it is holy, pure, and chaste in itself, and a most excellent means of preserving chastity among the subjects of Christ's kingdom, 1Th 4:4 Tit 2:5 1Pe 3:2; by this they are kept in their bodies from being polluted or dishonoured by fornication or adultery. Marriage is thus honourable in all husbands and wives, of what degree or order soever, whilst they are such; and must be undefiled in all, because their bodies are the members of Christ, and temples of the Holy Ghost, 1Co 6:15,17-20.

*But whoremongers and adulterers God will judge;* but God hates unclean societies of all men and women, but especially of Christians; and as he will certainly judge, and inflict eternal punishment upon, all kind of unclean persons, so especially upon whoremongers and adulterers who profess themselves subjects of Christ's pure kingdom, 2Pe 2:6 Jude 1:4,7 Re 2:21.

Hebrews 13:5

Ver. 5. Contentation with our state and condition is a fifth duty charged on the subjects of Christ's kingdom, and this is expressed privatively and positively, yet both propositions without a verb, which is best supplied by an imperative.

*Let your conversation be without covetousness:* Ο τροπος strictly signifieth a turning, but here it sets out the motion or turning of a man up and down in the actions of this life, which in common speech is called conversation; not any motion of the heart, nor turn of the eye, nor action of any member, after money or riches, with a sinful, inordinate love to them, or pursuit of them; forbidden, Mt 6:25,31 1Ti 6:9,10 Jas 4:13 1Jo 2:15. The studious endeavour and labour night and day, turning and winding every way, to be scraping together and hoarding up worldly wealth, and lading themselves with thick clay, Ec 4:7,8 Hab 2:6,9, must not be the case or condition of any Christian, Eph 5:3,5 Col 3:5 2Pe 2:3-15.

*And be content with such things as ye have;* but having a heart acquiescence and satisfaction with that portion or pittance of earthly things which God at present doth allot us, whether more or less, and not with that

only which we may think enough to serve our turn, Php 4:11,12 1Ti 6:8.

*For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee:* the reason enforcing it is, God's giving by promise a special engagement to provide for them. This God solemnly made to Jacob, Ge 28:15, then to Israel, De 31:6,8, then to Joshua, Jos 1:5, and to all believers as well as them; for God will not let any such see the miseries of his absence, but will vouchsafe to them his presence, with all the blessings which attend it, Ps 46:1,5 Isa 41:10 43:2 63:9.

Hebrews 13:6

Ver. 6. *So that we may boldly say;* upon the account of which promise of God all the true subjects of Christ's kingdom, together with the apostle, may with an undaunted boldness of heart, above all fears and doubtings, and with a daring confidence, professing that which they believe, nor staggering, nor shrinking, nor being ashamed of their faith, but openly owning it to all the world, own that *The Lord is my helper;* the Lord in the infiniteness of his power, wisdom, and goodness, is a real, present, universal, and permanent help against all trouble, and for all supplies in all cases, and at all times, to every one of them. They may say as Moses, Ex 18:4; as David, Ps 27:9 40:17 56:4,11 118:6.

*And I will not fear what man shall do unto me:* and therefore faith expelleth fearfulness of, and introduceth fearlessness of, any created evils incident to a believer; and of which man may be an instrument inflicting, Ps 46:2,3. Implying in it an unshaken settledness of mind, judgment, and thoughts on God's help, a fixed frame of heart, without tumultuous passions or perturbations, with an unmovable resolution to keep close to God and his word both in word and deed, amidst all oppositions and persecutions of men for it.

Hebrews 13:7

Ver. 7. Imitation of their godly ministers, is another duty that Christ's law chargeth on his subjects, both here and Heb 13:17.

*Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God;* be mindful of your spiritual guides and rulers, firmly and constantly to retain their excellencies in memory, esteeming of them, and thanking God for them, which were sent to them and set over them by the Holy Ghost, who were guiding of them by Christ to God, and enjoyment of eternal life with him, which they did by preaching to them, and writing the gospel of Christ for their edification, by the inspiration of the Spirit. Some of which guides were removed by death, slain and martyred for the truth of Jesus, and ascended unto heaven, and others were alive among them; they were to remember all of them, but especially their spiritual fathers that had begotten them to God by the gospel, 1Co 4:15 2Co 2:17 1Ti 5:17 2Ti 3:14-17 1Pe 4:11 5:2,3.

*Whose faith follow;* the best way of remembering such is by imitating them, to believe the doctrine which they taught and practised, and to be as stedfast in the faith as were they, and holding of it out to others, how eminent believers they were, 1Ti 4:12 6:11 2Ti 2:22.

*Considering the end of their conversation;* such as their doctrine was, such was their life, conformable to Christ's, 1Co 11:1. It was honest, upright, and blameless, much in heaven, 2Co 10:3 Php 3:20. All their turnings and motions in the world, their very life, was hid with Christ in God; all agreeable to, as ordered by, his will. And such was the issue and egress of this life, which it is their concernment to review, they having by it an outlet from the remainders of sin and misery, which did defile and oppress them, Re 14:13, and a victory over the world and all its oppositions to them, sealing the truth with their blood which they had preached and practised among them, and were more than conquerors over all by death, having an inlet into life, and peace, and eternal glory, in the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away, reserved for them in heaven, Ro 8:37 2Ti 4:8 1Pe 1:4 3:4.

Hebrews 13:8

Ver. 8. Though this hath no term of connection, yet it may be referred either to what precedeth or followeth it; for the apostle is not here dropping aphorisms, but pressing on the subjects of Christ's kingdom known duties. It is here interposed as a weighty reason of the duty

foregoing, to remember their guides, imitate their faith, and consider the end of their conversation, for they taught, believed in, conversed with, and at last were perfected by, Jesus Christ; so that they might be saved by him as their guides were, there being no other way to blessedness, but by *Jesus Christ the same*, &c., Joh 14:6. Or a reason enforcing what followeth, that since Jesus Christ is the same, as in his person, so in his doctrine, faith, and conversation, which he enjoineth on his subjects, they should not be carried about with divers and strange doctrines. Jesus Christ personal is immutable in his care and love to his mystical body, and all the members of it, throughout all times and ages, he never leaves nor forsakes them; so Christ doctrinal, in his faith, law, and rule of conversation, Eph 4:20,21. The pure, full, and entire religion of Christ is unchangeable, being simply, indivisibly, and constantly the same throughout all measures of time, Mt 5:18 2Co 11:3,4 Ga 1:6,7 Eph 4:4,5 1Pe 1:23,25.

Hebrews 13:9

Ver. 9. Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines: the doctrine of Christ being immutable, it is but necessary to dehort his subjects from deserting it, which the apostle doth here; that they should not be wheeling or whirling about with an unstable and inconstant motion of judgment, faith, and practice, about such human doctrines which are vain rules to lead to God, such as are different in nature from Christ, one and the same rule, and those very numerous and various, strange and untrue, taught by false apostles and teachers, taken out of Gentilism and Judaism, and added to the Gospel by them, as necessary, together with Christ, to justification and salvation, Mt 15:9 2Co 11:3 Eph 4:14 2Th 2:10,12 1Ti 4:1-3 2Ti 4:3,4 2Pe 2:1,18,19 Jude 1:12.

*For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace;* for the goodness of heart establishment unto God is no less than full and complete salvation of the soul, 1Co 15:58 2Pe 3:17,18. And this is only wrought by grace, the free love of God put out in Christ, for regeneration and preservation of souls unto life eternal, carried in the simple doctrine of Christ, which is always the same, 2Th 2:16,17 1Pe 5:10.

*Not with meats;* doctrines of meats and ceremonies, which are divers, and strange from Christ's, cannot make the heart agreeable to God, but only

distract and divide it from him; for whatsoever is not in and from Christ, is strange to God, and abhorred by him, Ga 5:2 Col 2:18,19,23 2Ti 2:16 Jas 1:8.

*Which have not profited them that have been occupied therein:* those who did converse in these various and strange doctrines, professing and constantly practising them, observed times, and meats, and ceremonies, have not been profited by them; for being carnal and eartidy, they could not justify them as to their state God-ward, nor could they renew or sanctify their souls, nor yield any advantage to their spiritual life; and being perishing, could not profit to the attaining of eternal life, Ro 14:17,18; compare 1Co 6:13.

Hebrews 13:10

Ver. 10. *We have an altar:* these strange doctrines are not only unprofitable, but perilous to Christians, since they disinterest all that entertain them, as to any participation of Christ; since his subjects, adhering to his simple and immutable doctrine, have a right and just claim to, and an actual use of, Christ, as their altar, in opposition to the Mosaical; and from whom they have altar sustenance for their souls, in opposition to the Jewish meats, while they attend on him; all the quickening benefits issuing from the sacrifice of his human nature on the altar of his Godhead, as reconciliation and adoption to God, justification of our persons, renovation of our nature, growth in grace, and perseverance therein, to the perfecting of it in glory, Joh 6:55-57 1Co 9:13 10:16-18. We have altar sanctification of our persons and offerings in our access to God from him, Heb 13:15 Mt 23:19 Eph 5:20 Col 3:17; so as all is accepted with the Father. We have altar protection and salvation, keeping us who attend on him unto the revelation of God in glory, Ex 21:14 Re 6:9,11. This is altar individuation to all Christians; God had but one altar under the law, and he prohibited all others, and complained of and threatened the increase of them, Ex 20:24-26 27:1,2 2Ch 4:1 Ho 8:11 10:1. This one altar did type out that true one of Christ, by which only sinners can come to God, and find acceptance.

*Whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle;* of this altar privilege all Jews or Judaizing Christians, who adhered to the Mosaical



administration of the covenant in meats and ceremonies, have no lawful right or title to partake; they cannot have this honour while they cleave to them, because they thereby deny this altar, reject the Son of God, and are in it rejected by him.

Hebrews 13:11

Ver. 11. The illustration of the legal and gospel altar service is added as a typical proof of the foregoing reason; *for* annexing it to it; that the Jews and Judaizing Christians had no right to eat of the Christian altar, for a law of their own excludes them from it, which is written, Le 6:30 16:27: That the bodies of those living creatures, which were yearly sacrificed as a sin-offering for priests and people, both of the bull and the he-goat, with their skins, &c., were burnt wholly without the camp; so as neither the priests nor any of the people had any part of this bull or goat allowed them to eat, having no right to it by the law of God, which otherwise ordered it. This is the literal sense, yet the use of it is anagogical, leading us to higher things; as that the high priest signified Christ, God-man; the altar, his Godhead; the sanctuary, heaven itself; the sacrifice, his human nature, the true sin-offering, of which neither priest nor people serving the tabernacle ought to eat.

Hebrews 13:12

Ver. 12. Because that sacrifice for sin was *burnt without the camp, therefore Jesus, to fulfil the type, suffered without the gate;* and as they might not eat of that expiatory sacrifice, so neither of this. Jesus, therefore, to fulfil this type, suffered without the gates of Jerusalem, upon Mount Calvary, where skulls and bones of cursed creatures were scattered; as the expiatory sacrifices were burnt without the camp, when Israel was tabernacling within it; without the gates, when Israel dwelt in cities. As the high priest carried the expiatory blood into the holiest of all, on the day of atonement; so Christ with his own blood entered the holiest in heaven, and by it obtained pardon of sin, peace of conscience, and renewing by the Holy Ghost, for all people who repent, believe, and will come unto God by him. Therefore those who will still Judaize, have no right to eat of his sacrifice, no more than of the expiatory one, which was wholly burnt: so

that they were not to be justified by meats and ceremonies, but by the blood of Christ alone, the truth of all the sacrifices, Ro 3:25 5:9 Joh 1:29.

#### Hebrews 13:13

Ver. 13. *Therefore* shows this to be a necessary duty, inferred from the former privilege; That since we have such an altar and sacrifice as Jesus, sanctifying us by his own blood, which he entered with to God, when he *suffered without the gate*; we ought and must *go forth* (from tabernacle service, consisting of meats and ceremonies, from Judaism, in all its parts abolished, and all erroneous doctrines, how numerous and strange soever, and all worldly things) unto Jesus, who was cursed for us, that we might be blessed, Ga 3:13, in faith and love; not ashamed of, but glorying in his sufferings, and following and imitating of him, patiently and boldly bearing mockings, revilings, scourgings, crucifyings, and all other persecutions, which are parts of his cross, for his sake, Heb 11:9 Ro 6:5,6 1Co 1:30 Ga 2:20 Php 3:8-10; making him in all our example, 1Pe 2:21 4:12-19.

#### Hebrews 13:14

Ver. 14. This is an enforcement of the foregoing duty, as the particle *for* cleareth; That they have no reason to be discouraged from going forth from Judaism, and those erroneous doctrines, and the world, to him, though it should cost them their lives for it; *for* at the best this world is not a place fit for us, nor can our state in it be desirable, since it is imperfect, fleeting, and vanishing, and we must die out of it; we may well then go forth, and die with him, and for him. And we have reason to go forth and suffer with him, since it will instantly bring us to that heavenly city, which we profess that we only live to fit ourselves for, and then to enter in and possess it, Heb 11:10,16 12:22 Php 3:20,21.

#### Hebrews 13:15

Ver. 15. *Therefore*, introducing this duty, shows it not only to issue from the former privilege of having Christ our altar and sacrifice, *therefore* we

should use him, and sacrifice by him; and it is inferred as anticipating an objection of these Hebrews: That if the tabernacle service ceased, then they should have no sacrifice to offer unto God. Yea, saith the apostle, *let us offer*, which is not hand work, but heart work, by a spirit of faith on this altar, the sacrifice of praise, 1Pe 2:5, such as God requireth and accepts above all the sacrifices of beasts, &c., Ps 50:23; praise for the grace privilege and honour of being denizens of his city, and of being brought home to it by suffering, Col 1:11,12; and this always throughout our life, to the God that is the author and distributor of all these blessings to us. This sacrifice of praise the Spirit interprets to be *the fruit of our lips*, which the prophet styleth, *calves of our lips*, in Ho 14:2. By both these must synecdochically be understood the Spirit and heart guiding the whole man in this matter, Ro 12:1, confessing that all it is capable of rendering is due from it to God, even all of love, praise, thanksgiving honour, for its redemption through Jesus Christ, whether continually expressed either by lip or life, as Ps 50:23 1Co 6:20 Eph 5:20 Php 4:6,7 Col 3:17 1Th 5:17,18.

#### Hebrews 13:16

Ver. 16. *But to do good and to communicate forget not:* the last duty which Christ sufferings without the gate for his subjects obligeth them to, is liberality and beneficence to others. In which is explicitly denied any carelessness of mind, aversion of affection, or omission of the duty; in which is implicitly enjoined, inclination to, retention in memory of, and constant practice of beneficence and liberality, both as to spiritual and temporal good, vigorously and cheerfully edifying the souls and cherishing the bodies of all necessitous ones, but especially of their poor brethren of the household of faith, Ga 6:10 1Jo 3:17; glorifying God by obeying his law and rule about it, Mt 6:1-4 Eph 6:5-9.

*For with such sacrifices God is well pleased;* such doing of good, and communicating to the necessities of poor saints, are part of our evangelical sacrifices, which God requireth of us, instead of the numerous legal ones; and are attending on, concomitant with, and sanctified by, the one true sacrifice of Christ; and being duly terminated on him according to his law, they are highly pleasing and acceptable to God, yea, sometimes above other sacrifices and holy things given to him; and which, as he commands, he will at present greatly reward with temporal and spiritual blessings, and

with everlasting riches and glory in heaven, Pr 19:17 Mic 6:6-8 Mt 9:13 Mt 25:34-40 2Co 9:12.

Hebrews 13:17

Ver. 17. *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves:* the further duty required by Christ from the subjects of his kingdom, is their due demeanour to their present pastors, and church guides, or rulers. He chargeth them to esteem and account of them, as they are, and he hath constituted them in his church, to attend on their ministry and teaching, yielding full obedience of faith to the doctrine which they delivered from Christ, and to be subject to the power and authority Christ hath given them over them for their edification, and not for destruction; and that they imitate them in their believing and holy conversation, Ac 20:18. And this as to all of them, set over them by the Holy Ghost, whether ordinary or extraordinary, as the apostles, evangelists, elders, pastors, teachers, doing all as commissioned by Christ, and in his name exercising their power and authority, according to his express written law about it, Eph 4:11,12; knowing that who receiveth or despiseth them, dealeth so with Christ and God, who sent them, Mt 10:40 Lu 10:16.

*For they watch for your souls, as they that must give account:* good reason have they to perform this duty, because of their concern in and care for their souls. How great, by Christ's law, are the night watchings, and day cares, and tears, studies, exhortations, reproofs, comfortings, their preachings, and prayers with tears, and strong cries to God for their souls! Will you pay duty to those who watch to preserve and protect your natural life, and not unto those spiritual watchers, and God's charge given to them? Ac 20:28-31 2Ti 4:5 Re 3:2,3. And God will exact an account of them for your souls; and they must render it at a dear rate, Eze 3:17-21 33:7,9. It is at their peril, if they are faithless and neglect their duty, and your souls miscarry, Mt 18:23 25:14,30.

*That they may do it with joy, and not with grief;* that they may not only do their work cheerfully and comfortably among you, but that they may give up their account joyfully about you to God, when they have brought you home to him, 1Th 2:19,20; and which will be an eternal comfort unto you, 2Th 1:7,10. If you be disobedient to them, though they will have their

reward for their fidelity from their Lord, yet with what sighs, tears, groans, sorrow, and heaviness of heart, must they see their labours and your souls lost, and to charge you before God with it! 2Co 3:15,16 12:21.

*For that is unprofitable for you:* and what damage will both your disobedience to the word of God and them, and their account of it to God, bring on yourselves! Will it then quit the cost to find your punishment more intolerable than that of Sodom and Gomorrah, Mt 10:15 Mt 11:22,24, when he will give you your portion with hypocrites, Mt 24:51, and punish you with everlasting destruction? 2Th 1:7-9.

Hebrews 13:18

Ver. 18. *Pray for us:* the closing duty becoming the subjects of the kingdom of Christ, is prayer, upon some special accounts, Heb 13:18,19, that they would with their renewed souls, influenced and assisted by the Spirit of grace and supplication, pour forth their desires to God with faith, fervency, and importunity, for his vouchsafing to the apostle himself, and for their spiritual guides and rulers, that the things they need, and God hath promised to them, as to the successful course of their ministry, may be bestowed on them, which the Spirit specifieth elsewhere, 2Co 3:5,6 Eph 6:18-20 Col 4:3,4 2Th 3:1,2.

*For we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly:* he urgeth this on them, for that he was a fit subject to be prayed for, however any might accuse or charge him for rejecting Judaism out of singularity, prejudice, or some evil design; he assures them from the Spirit of God, that he had a rightly informed conscience by God's word, and which testified his innocency and sincerity, and which did dictate and influence him to be communicating and promoting, with all and to all, the truth of the gospel; and that his own life and conversation in the world was agreeable to the gospel rule, in all godliness and honesty, Ac 23:1 24:14; compare 1Co 4:4 2Co 1:12.

Hebrews 13:19

Ver. 19. He is the more urging and pressing them to the exercise of this

duty more fervently, instantly, and abundantly, at this time, that they might prevail with God to remove hinderances by his enemies, freeing him from his chain and restraint at Rome, and to speed his liberty for a return to them, that it might be in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel. So the church prayed for Peter, and prevailed, Ac 12:12, and he had hopes that God would hear them for him also, Phm 1:22.

#### Hebrews 13:20

Ver. 20. As the apostle desires the church's prayers for himself, so he poureth out his for them; with the which he introduceth the conclusion of this Epistle, Heb 13:20,21. Now God the Father, the God and Author of peace and reconciliation of sinners to himself, the propagator and lover of peace among all the subjects of his kingdom, the dispenser of the fulness of good, blessing, and happiness, Ro 15:3 Php 4:9 1Th 5:23, who gloriously manifested his power by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus from the dead, Eph 1:19,20 Ro 1:4, who is *the great Shepherd of his sheep*, exalted to this office, because he poured out his blood a sacrifice for sins, to purchase them, justify and sanctify them, a peculiar flock for himself, according to the covenant of grace that God made with them, and in him with and for sinners, who should repent and believe in him, Joh 10:9-30 1Co 6:11 Php 2:7,10 Tit 2:14 1Pe 1:18,19, and to perfect them with himself above, 1Pe 5:4, by the same power wherewith he was raised, perfect you, &c. Eph 1:19.

#### Hebrews 13:21

Ver. 21. *Make you perfect in every good work to do his will:* may this God dispose, incline, and fit you for, may he finish and perfect in you, grace to perform all the forementioned duties, and every other good work, which he enjoineth on you towards God, one another, and all men, 2Co 13:9 Eph 4:12 Tit 3:14 1Pe 4:2 5:10, according to his written will and law, Eph 2:10.

*Working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ:* working in you by his Spirit continually, that all these good works may satisfy his expectation, be a sweet savour in his nostrils, and so pleasing in his sight, that his soul may delight in them, Php 2:13 Col

1:9,10; that God's good-will may return unto them, and he may reward them according to their works, Heb 11:5,6; while all is rendered by Jesus Christ, sprinkled with his blood, and perfumed with his incense, Heb 10:19-22. As they are to have all done through Christ, so through his merit and intercession the apostle begs all this from the Father for them.

*To whom be glory for ever and ever;* to this God the Father, in the Son, and by the Spirit, working all this good in them and for them, be really, truly, heartily, and perpetually, throughout all ages, ascribed the honour and glory due to him for the glorious manifestation of his perfections in them, Eph 3:21 Php 4:20 2Pe 3:18 Re 4:11 5:13. The firm seal of this, from his believing heart, is his *Amen*, longing for the addition of God's *Amen*, so be it in heaven, to his on earth.

#### Hebrews 13:22

Ver. 22. The apostle now drawing to a close, desires them candidly to accept his Epistle; that, considering their relation to him as Christians and Hebrews, he doth affectionately entreat them, that they would fully receive, entertain, and hold fast, as well as bear with, or suffer, all the doctrine, reproof, exhortation, and consolation, even his whole discourse to them in this Epistle, which *the word* implies. He had so comprised, summed up, and delivered the revelation of the doctrine of Christ, testified by Moses and the prophets, in a very few words, and sent them kindly and affectionately, in the form of an epistle or letter to them, that it might not be burdensome, either for its matter or length: though how weary are most professing Christians of the shortest heavenly discourse!

#### Hebrews 13:23

Ver. 23. He acquaints them with the good news of his dismissing Timothy to them, to acquaint them how it fared with him, as he dismissed and sent Tychicus to the Colossians, Col 4:7,8, Epaphroditus to the Philippians, Php 2:25,28, as he intended to have sent Timothy with them, Heb 13:19,23,24, but he stopped him to see the issue of his appearance before Nero Caesar; which being over, he despatched him with an account of it to these Hebrews, and the rest of the churches, and signifieth his purpose,

that if he quickly returns from them again, then he would visit them together with him. That the word ἀπολελυμενος noteth, or signifieth, the dismissal of a person about business, is seen, Ac 13:3. To which interpretation the subscription of the Epistle inclines; and the Scripture is silent of any troubles or restraint of Timothy at all, Php 2:19,20.

#### Hebrews 13:24

Ver. 24. He sends his salutations, which were good wishes and prayers for the peace, prosperity, health, and happiness of their souls and bodies, and success in all their concernments; first unto their excellent guides and rulers, Heb 13:7,17, that they may prosper and succeed in their work among the saints; and then unto *the saints* themselves, conveying the gospel peace, according to Christ's command, Mt 10:12 Lu 10:5. Which *saints* were all those Hebrews dispersed in several places, and there convening, and maintaining church society; and to whose hand the Epistle first came, they were to receive the salutations themselves, and transmit them to others. With his own he transmits the salutations of all that part of the church of Christ which was in Italy to them. Which salutations, though commonly abused, yet are of great weight and worth where communicated and received by the churches in which the Holy Spirit abideth.

#### Hebrews 13:25

Ver. 25. He closeth all with his wonted gracious valediction, wherewith he shutteth up all his Epistles, as he testifieth, 2Th 3:17,18. He, like an apostle influenced by the Divine Spirit, admiring *grace* vouchsafed to himself, and heartily and fervently wishing it down upon all to whom he writeth, even all the spiritual fruits of God's grace and love in Jesus Christ, from election to salvation. And he sealet up his desire, prayer, and declaration of this, upon them *all* who were the true subjects of it, with his *Amen*. Even so let the whole earth be filled with the glory of thy grace, O Trinity of relations in Unity of essence, from henceforth and for ever. Amen.

*Written to the Hebrews from Italy by Timothy.*





## James 1:1

### THE ARGUMENT

That the authority of this Epistle hath been questioned by some anciently, appears plainly by Eusebius and Jerome, who speak suspiciously of it; and that it hath been denied by some more lately, is no less clear (to say nothing of Cajetan and Erasmus) in Luther, who (though in his after-writings he was more modest) at first spoke slightly of it; and some of his more early followers were of his mind. But as for the ancients, (admitting the two forementioned authors wrote their own sense, and not, as some think, and their words cited by Brochmand and others may well import, the opinion of other men), why should not this Epistle, being unquestionably received by most of the fathers and primitive Christians before Eusebius or Jerome were born, and many councils, be more effectual to prove its being canonical, than the doubts of a few to persuade us to the contrary? What do we find in it disagreeable to the doctrine of the gospel, unbecoming the style of an apostle, or the Holy Ghost's inditing? Hath it not the same majesty, purity, spirituality, efficacy, and power on men's consciences, that other Scriptures have? To Cajetan and Erasmus we oppose the universality, not only of protestants, but of papists themselves; and to Luther all the modern Lutherans, who now generally receive it. That which drew Luther himself to reject it (to speak a little of that as being of weight) was, partly the seeming difference between James and Paul in the point of justification, which will be spoken to in Jas 2:1-26; and partly his speaking nothing (though he wrote to Christians) of the death, or merits, or resurrection of Christ, &c. Whereas, indeed, though he is more sparing in handling evangelical doctrines, yet several he toucheth upon: what doth he mean but the gospel of Christ by *the ingrafted word*, Jas 1:21, and *law of liberty*, Jas 1:25? And who doth he understand by *the judge*, Jas 5:9, but Christ? And whose coming doth he speak of, Jas 1:7, but Christ's? And how expressly doth he mention *the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ!* Jas 2:1. But the truth is, the persons for whom this Epistle seems designed, and the scope of the writer, call for such a way of writing, as here we have. He bends himself mainly against a licentious, sensual sort of professors, who boasted of the name of faith, but wanted the thing, and (being rather libertines than saints) blemished the Christian profession with unsuitable practice. These he takes upon him to correct, and evinceth their faith and religion (being barren of good works) to be vain. It was not

therefore necessary he should so largely insist upon the doctrine of faith, when his chief design was to reform manners. Paul having many times to do with men of Pharisaical spirits, or such as were difficultly weaned from Judaism, and an opinion of self-righteousness, makes it his business to settle the doctrine of grace, and justification by faith; and why may not James, having to do with those who (probably, and as Austin thinks, misunderstanding Paul) abused the doctrine of grace, and turned it into an occasion of licentiousness, be allowed to tax that abuse, and insist the more fully on matters of practice, and press them to live up to their faith, and bring forth fruits answerable to that holy truth they had received? Remedies must be suited to diseases: there is as little need to urge a Solifidian to rely on grace of which he already presumes, as to persuade a Pharisee of the necessity of good works, upon which of himself he lays but too much stress.

But as the authority of this Epistle hath been questioned formerly, though with little reason, so the penman of it is still doubted of, perhaps with more. However, this question is less material; we need not be over solicitous to know what amanuensis the Spirit of God made use of in penning it, so long as we find the impress of God upon it. It is certain that this James was not the son of Zebedee, whom Herod had beheaded (if chronology fail not) before the writing of this Epistle, Ac 12:1. It is not certain that there were three Jameses, two of them apostles, and the third (called Oblias, and James the Just) one of the seventy disciples; the Scripture mentioning but two, one the son of Zebedee, the other of Alpheus, called *the brother of the Lord*, Ga 1:19, as being of kin to his family; and said to be a *pillar*, Ga 2:9, and joined with Peter and John. And though some have thought the James there mentioned to have been the third James, called Oblias, and one of the seventy; yet it is more probable that he was indeed no other than the son of Alpheus, and one of the twelve: nor is it likely, that one of the disciples should be numbered as one of the three *pillars*, and therein preferred above so many apostles. This James, therefore, upon the whole, I take to be the penman of this Epistle; and his not calling himself an apostle, need not be objected against his being so, when he doth no more in omitting it than Paul doth in four of his Epistles, viz. to the Philippians, both to the Thessalonians, and that to Philemon.

Why this Epistle is called *general* is much questioned, and a satisfactory

reason not easily given. Some think, because it is not inscribed to any particular church or person, as Paul's are. But then why are the two latter Epistles of John reckoned among the catholic or general ones, though directed to particular persons, and that to the Hebrews not counted among them, though it have no such particular inscription? Others think, that this and the six other were called catholic, upon their catholic or general reception and approbation among the churches, in opposition to the Epistles of Barnabas, Ignatius, Clemens, &c., which never were received as any part of the canon. These are the best reasons of this title I meet with; which is the more probable, let the reader judge.

The matter of this Epistle is, in a manner, wholly practical, but very various; though chiefly, either corrective of the vices and abuses which had crept into the conversations of professors; or monitory and hortatory, partly to awaken the drowsy among them out of their stupidity and security, and stir them up to the practice of their neglected duty, (to which he points them particularly, by minding them of approaching judgment), and partly to persuade sincere and humble believers to patience under tribulations and oppressions, by propounding unto them suitable encouragements for their support and consolation in such a condition. Many excellent and useful truths are promiscuously laid down throughout the whole, which cannot easily be reduced to any certain method, but will be severally spoken to in the respective places where they occur.

### Chapter Summary

Jas 1:1            The apostle's address to the dispersed Jews.

Jas 1:2-4        He recommendeth patience and joy in afflictions.

Jas 1:5-8        and prayer with faith.

Jas 1:9-11      He giveth advice to the poor and to the rich.

Jas 1:12        The reward of those that are proof under trial.

Jas 1:13-16     Our own lusts, and not God, tempt us to sin.

Jas 1:17,18     God is the unchangeable author of all good to his creatures.

Jas 1:19-25    We must receive the word with purity and meekness, and not only hear, but do it.

Jas 1:26      The necessity of governing the tongue.  
Jas 1:27      The essential duties of true religion.

Ver. 1. *James*, the son of Alpheus and brother of Jude, called likewise *the brother of the Lord*, Ga 1:19.

*A servant*; not only by creation, as all the creatures are, Ps 119:91, or by redemption, as all believers are, but by special commission in the office of an apostle; see Ga 1:10 Php 1:1 2Pe 1:1; compare likewise Ro 1:9.

*Of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ*: the members of this clause may be taken, either jointly, and then the conjunction *and* hath the power only of an explication, q. d. The servant of God, *even* the Lord Jesus Christ, as Tit 2:2 and the sense must be, the servant of Jesus Christ, who is God: or, separately, (which our translation seems to favour), to let his countrymen know, that in serving Christ he served the God of his fathers; and by the authority both of God and of Christ wrote this to them.

*To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad*: being one of the apostles of the circumcision, Ga 2:9, he writes to all his believing countrymen wherever dispersed, as they were upon several occasions, and at several times, into divers countries, Ac 2:9-11.

*Greeting*; a salutation usual, not only among the heathen, but the Jews, Mt 26:49 27:29; and used by the Christians, Ac 15:23. It seems to answer to the Hebrew salutation, *peace*, which was comprehensive of all happiness; and so is this here to be understood.

### James 1:2

Ver. 2. *My brethren*; both as being of the same nation and the same religion; so he calls them, that the kindness of his compellation might sweeten his exhortations.

*Count it*; esteem it so by a spiritual judgment, though the flesh judge otherwise.

*All joy*; matter of the chiefest joy, viz. spiritual. So *all* is taken, 1Ti 1:15.

*When ye fall into;* when ye are so beset and circumvented by them, that there is no escaping them, but they come upon you, though by the directeth of God's providence, yet not by your own seeking.

*Divers temptations;* so he calls afflictions, from God's end in them, which is to try and discover what is in men, and whether they will cleave to him or not. The Jews were hated by other nations, and the Christian Jews even by their own, and therefore were exposed to divers afflictions, and of divers kinds, 1Pe 1:6.

### James 1:3

Ver. 3. *Knowing this;* considering.

*That the trying of your faith;* the reason why he called afflictions temptations, as well as why believers should count it all joy to fall into them, viz. because they are trials of their faith, and such trials as tend to approbation, as the word (different from that in the former verse) imports.

*Of your faith;* both of the truth of the grace itself, and of your constancy in the profession of it.

*Worketh patience;* not of itself, but as a means in the hand of God, made effectual to that end.

*Objection.* Ro 5:3, it is said, *Tribulation worketh patience, and patience, experience,* or trial; whereas here it is said, that trial works patience.

*Answer.* The words used here and Ro 5:3 are different; here it is δοκιμιον, which signifies actively, the trying itself, and this works patience; there it is δοκιμη, which is taken passively, for the experiment following upon the trial; or, as we read it, the experience, viz. of our sincerity, as well as of God's consolation, which may well be the effect of patience wrought by and under trials. And so both are true, that tribulation, as Paul speaks, and trial, as James, work patience; and patience, not a further trial, but rather discovery, or experiment, or approbation of what we are, which appears by nothing more than by patience under sufferings.

### James 1:4

Ver. 4. *But let patience have her perfect work;* i.e. effect:

q. d. Let it have its full efficacy in you, both in making you absolutely subject to God's will, and constant to the end under all your sufferings.

*That ye may be perfect and entire;* that you may grow perfect in this grace, as well as in others, and have the image of Christ (to whom ye are to be conformed) completed in you.

*Wanting nothing;* either not failing, not fainting in trials, or not defective in any thing which is a needful part of Christianity.

### James 1:5

Ver. 5. *If any of you lack wisdom; if,* doth not imply a doubt, but supposeth something which they themselves would grant; viz. that they did lack wisdom, either in whole or in part. It is as if he had said, Since, or seeing, ye lack, &c. See the like, Mal 1:6. Though this hold true of wisdom taken more generally, yet wisdom here is to be restrained, according to the circumstances of the text, and taken for wisdom or skill to bear afflictions so as to rejoice in them.

*Let him ask of God;* by believing, fervent prayer.

*That giveth to all men;* either to all sorts of men, Jew or Gentile, bond or free, &c., or to all that so ask, as appears by the next verse.

*Liberally;* or simply, Ro 12:8, i.e. with an open, free, large heart, in opposition to the contracted, narrow spirits of covetous misers. Our translation renders it well *liberally*; and so the word is used, 2Co 8:2 9:13.

*And upbraideth not;* doth not twit them with their importunity, or frequency in asking, (as men often do), however he may upbraid them with their unthankfulness for, or abuse of, what they have received.

*And it shall be given him:* see Mt 7:7,8 Joh 16:23. The promise is here added to encourage faith in asking.

### James 1:6

Ver. 6. *But let him ask in faith;* with confidence of God's hearing, grounded on the Divine attributes and promises, Mr 11:24 1Jo 5:14.

*Nothing wavering;* either not disputing God's power or promise; or rather, not doubting, not slandering *through unbelief*, Ro 4:20), where the same Greek word is used: so Ac 10:20, *nothing doubting;* and Mr 11:23, where it is opposed to believing.

*For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed:* this notes either the emptiness and unprofitableness of faithless prayer, when men's minds are thus at uncertainties, tossed to and fro; the confidence they sometimes seem to have, like waves, falls down and fails, and their prayers come to nothing: or, the disquiet and torment distrust works in the minds of such waverers, which are never settled till faith come and fix them, Isa 57:20.

### James 1:7

Ver. 7. *For let not that man;* he that wavers, in opposition to him that asks in faith: all doubting doth not hinder the hearing of prayer, but that which excludes faith, Mr 9:23,24.

*Think;* vainly conceit, or persuade himself.

*That he shall receive any thing of the Lord;* even the least mercy, much less the wisdom mentioned.

### James 1:8

Ver. 8. *A double minded man;* either;



1. A hypocrite, who is said to have a double heart, Ps 12:2. Or rather;
2. He that is of a doubtful mind, wavering, and fluctuating with contrary motions, sometimes of one mind, sometimes of another; sometimes hoping, sometimes desponding.

*Is unstable;* either unconstant, without any fixedness or consistency of spirit, as ready to depart from God as to cleave to him; or unquiet, troubled, full of inward tumults.

*In all his ways;* by a Hebraism, *ways*, for counsels, purposes, actions, &c.

### James 1:9

Ver. 9. *Let the brother;* i.e. the believer, (for to such he writes), all believers, or saints, being brethren in Christ, 1Co 16:20 1Th 5:26 1Ti 6:2.

*Of low degree;* the Greek word signifies both lowliness of mind and lowness of condition, (as the Hebrew word doth, to which it answers), but here is to be understood of the latter, (as Lu 1:48), but especially of such a low estate as a man is brought into for Christ's sake and the gospel's.

*Rejoice in that he is exalted;* either exalted to be a brother, a member of Christ, a child of God, and heir of glory, which is the greatest preferment; or exalted to the honour of suffering for Christ: see Ac 5:41 Ro 5:3.

### James 1:10

Ver. 10. *But the rich;* viz. brother, he that is in a high, honourable, or plentiful condition in the world.

*In that he is made low;* supply from the former verse, let him rejoice in that he is made low; not as to his outward state, (for he is supposed to be rich still), but his inward disposition and frame of mind, God having given him a lowly heart in a high condition, and thereby prepared him for the cross, though as yet he be not under it.

*Because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away:* the reason why the rich brother should be humble in his greatest abundance, viz. because of the uncertainty of his enjoying what at present he possesseth; he is neither secure of his life, nor his wealth; he and his enjoyments pass away, and his pomp vanisheth as easily as the flower of the grass, which fades as soon as it flourisheth.

### James 1:11

Ver. 11. *With a burning heat;* or, the scorching east wind, which in those countries was wont to rise with the sun, Jon 4:8.

*So also shall the rich man fade away;* either *shall* is here put for *may*, the future tense for the potential mood; and then the apostle doth not so much declare what always certainly shall be, as what easily may be, and frequently is, the prosperity of rich men not being always of so short continuance. Or, *shall* may be taken properly, as we read it; and then his is a general proposition, showing the mutable nature and short continuance of rich men and their riches, whose longest life is but short, and death, when it comes, strips them of their enjoyments: and though this frailty be common to all, yet he speaks of the rich especially, because they are so apt to hear themselves high upon their wealth, and put confidence in it, 1Ti 6:17.

*In his ways;* either in his journeyings and travels for his riches, or rather in his counsels, purposes, actions, Ps 146:4.

### James 1:12

Ver. 12. *Blessed is the man that endureth;* holds out against the assaults and impressions of temptations with patience and constancy, Jas 5:11 Heb 12:5,7.

*Temptations;* afflictions, as Jas 1:2.

*For when he is tried;* approved, and found upon the trial to be sound in the faith: a metaphor taken from metals tried by fire, and found pure.

*He shall receive the crown of life;* so the heavenly glory is called, Re 2:10, either because it is not to be had but in eternal life, or because of its duration and not fading away, 1Pe 5:4.

*Which the Lord hath promised:* this shows on what ground it is to be expected, viz. on the account of the promise, and how sure we may be of it.

*To them that love him;* i.e. all true believers, whose faith, and thereby title to the crown, is evidenced by love, which is the fulfilling of the law.

*Objection.* Why not, promised to them that suffer for Christ, of whom he here speaks?

*Answer.* That is implied, for none have him more, or evidence their love to him more, than they, that suffer for him.

### James 1:13

Ver. 13. *Let no man say;* neither with his mouth, nor so much as in his heart, blasphemously cast the blame of his sins upon God, to clear himself.

*When he is tempted;* so stirred up to sin as to be drawn to it.

*I am tempted of God;* either solicited by God to sin, or enforced to it.

*For God cannot be tempted with evil;* cannot be drawn aside to any thing that is unrighteous, by any motion from within, or impression from without.

*Neither tempteth he any man;* doth no way seduce or enforce to sin, so as to be justly chargeable as the author of it.

*Objection.* God is said to be tempted, Ex 17:2,7 De 6:16 Ps 78:41; and to tempt, Ge 22:1 De 8:2 13:3.

*Answer.* Both are to be understood of temptations of exploration, or for the

discovery of something that was before hidden. Men tempt God, that they may know what he will do; God tempts men, that they (not he, for he knows it already) may know what themselves will do, which then appears, when the temptation draws it out; but neither is to be understood of the temptation here spoken of, viz. of seduction, or drawing into sin. God tempts by giving hard commands, Ge 22:1; by afflicting, as in Job's case; by letting loose Satan or other wicked instruments to tempt, 1Ki 22:22; by withholding his grace and deserting men, 1Sa 28:15; by presenting occasions which corruption within improves unto sin, and by ordering and governing the evil wills of men, as that a thief should steal out of this flock rather than that, that Nebuchadnezzar should come against Jerusalem rather than Rabbah, Eze 21:21,22. But God doth not tempt by commanding, suggesting, soliciting, or persuading to sin.

#### James 1:14

Ver. 14. He shows the great cause of sin; that Iust hath a greater hand in it than either the devil or his instruments, who cannot make us sin without ourselves: they sometimes tempt, and do not prevail; but when lust tempts, it always prevails, either in whole or in part, it being a degree of sin to be our own tempters.

*Drawn away;* either this notes a degree of sin, the heart's being drawn off from God; or the way whereby lust brings into sin, viz. the impetuosity and violence of its motions in us.

*Of his own lust;* original corruption in its whole latitude, though chiefly with respect to the appetitive faculties.

*And enticed;* either a further degree of sin, *enticed* by the pleasantness of the object, as represented by our own corruption; or another way of lust's working in us to sin, viz. by the delightfulness and pleasure of its motions: in the former it works by a kind of force, in this by flattery and deceit. It is either a metaphor taken from a fish enticed by a bait, and drawn after it, or rather from a harlot drawing a young man out of the right way, and alluring him with the bait of pleasure to commit folly with her.

## James 1:15

Ver. 15. *Then when lust hath conceived;* lust (compared to a harlot) may be said to conceive, when the heart is pleased with the motion, and yields some consent to it.

*It bringeth forth sin;* the birth of sin may be the complete consent of the will to it, or the outward act of it.

*And sin;* actual sin, the fruit and product of original.

*When it is finished;* sin is finished, when it is not only committed, but continued in, as the way and course of a man's life.

*Bringeth forth death;* not only temporal, but eternal. Or we may thus take the order and progress of sin: the first indeliberate motion of lust, is the temptation or bait, which by its pleasantness enticeth, and by its vehemency draws the heart after it (as the harlot, Pr 7:21, with the flattering of her lips forced the young man, telling him of the pleasure he should enjoy, Jas 1:14,16-18, and then he goes after her, Jas 1:22); the heart's lingering about and being entangled with the delightful motion of lust, is its committing folly with it; when the full consent is joined, lust hath conceived; when the outward act is performed, sin is brought forth; and when sin is finished in a settled course, it brings forth death; which, though every sin do in the merit of it, yet sin only finished doth in the event.

*Objection.* Doth not this imply lust, and its first motions, not to be sin?

*Answer.* No: for;

1. The least motions of it are forbidden, Mt 5:28 Ro 7:7.
2. It is contrary to the law and Spirit of God, Ro 7:23,25 Ga 5:16,17.
3. It is the fountain of impurity, and therefore is itself impure, Job 14:4 Mt 7:15,16 Jas 3:11.
4. Evil thoughts defile a man, Mt 15:19 Ac 8:22.

*Objection.* How is lust said here to bring forth sin, when, Ro 7:8, sin is said to work lust?

*Answer.* James calls the corrupt principle itself *lust*, and the actings of it, *sin*; whereas Paul calls the same principle *sin*, and the actings of it *lust*. And so both are true, lust, as a root, brings forth the acts of sin as its fruits; and sin as a root, brings forth actual lusts, as its fruits.

### James 1:16

Ver. 16. Viz. in imputing your sins to God, and saying, that when you are tempted you are tempted of him.

### James 1:17

Ver. 17. *Every good gift*; Greek, giving; and so it may be distinct from *gift* in the next clause; to show, that whereas men sometimes give good gifts in all evil way, and with an evil mind, God's giving, as well as gift, is always good; and therefore when we receive any thing of him, we should look not only to the thing itself, but to his bounty and goodness in giving it. Or, it may be rendered as our translators do, *gift*, and so the word is sometimes used by profane writer's themselves; and then, though it may be implied, that all good gifts, and of all kinds, of nature and of grace, are from God, yet the apostle's design in this place being to prove that God is not the author of sin, *good gifts* may most fairly be understood the best gifts, those of grace, (spiritual blessings, Eph 1:3), such being contrary to sin, and destructive of it, in one of which he instanceth, viz. regeneration, Jas 1:18.

*And every perfect gift*; the highest degree of good gifts, those that perfect us most; to intimate, that all the parts and steps of spiritual life, from the first beginning of grace in regeneration to the consummation of it in glory, are of God.

*Is from above*; i.e. from heaven, Joh 3:27,31; and heaven is put for God that dwells there, Lu 15:21.

*And cometh down from the Father;* the Creator, Author, or First Cause, as Heb 12:9; it is spoken after the manner of the Hebrews: see Ge 4:20,21.

*Of lights;* God is the author of all perfection, and so of corporeal light; but here we are to understand spiritual light, the light of knowledge, faith, holiness, as opposed to the darkness of ignorance, unbelief, sin; of which he cannot be the author.

*With whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning:* he here sets forth God as essentially and immutably good, and the Father of lights, by allusion to the sun, the fountain of corporeal light, and makes use of terms borrowed from astronomy. The sun, though it scattereth its beams every where, yet is not without its changes, parallaxes, and diversities of aspects, not only sometimes clear and sometimes eclipsed, but one while in the east, another in the south, then in the west; nor without its turnings in its annual course from tropic to tropic, (to which the Greek word here used seems to allude), its various accesses and recesses, by reason of which it casts different shadows: but God is always the same, like himself, constant in the emanations of his goodness, without casting any dark shadow of evil, which might infer a change in him.

### James 1:18

Ver. 18. *Of his own will;* out of his mere good pleasure, as the original cause, and not moved to it by any dignity or merit in us, Eph 1:9 2Ti 1:9.

*Begat he us;* by a spiritual generation, whereby we are new born, and are made partakers of a Divine nature, Joh 1:13 1Pe 1:3,23.

*With the word of truth;* i.e. the word of the gospel, as the instrument or means whereby we are regenerated: why it is called *the word of truth*, see Eph 1:13.

*That we should be a kind of first-fruits;* i.e. most excellent creatures, being singled out and separated from the rest, and consecrated to God, as under the law the first-fruits were, Re 14:4.

*Of his creatures;* viz. reasonable creatures; the word creature being

elsewhere restrained to men: see Mr 16:15 Col 1:15.

### James 1:19

Ver. 19. *Let every man be swift to hear;* prompt and ready to hear God speaking in *the word of truth*, before mentioned.

*Slow to speak;* either silently and submissively hear the word, or speak not rashly and precipitately of the things of faith, but be well furnished yourselves with spiritual knowledge, ere you take upon you to teach others.

*Slow to wrath;* either, be not angry at the word, or the dispensers of it, though it come close to your consciences, and discover your secret sins; the word is salt, do not quarrel if it make your sores smart, being it will keep them from festering; or, be not angrily prejudiced against those that dissent from you.

*For the wrath of man:* that anger which is merely human, and generally sinful, inordinate passion and carnal zeal.

*Worketh not the righteousness of God;* will not accomplish the ends of the word in you, viz. to work that righteousness which in the word God prescribes you. But here is withal a meiosis in the words, less being spoken than is intended; it is implied therefore, that the wrath of man hinders the operation of the word, and disposeth to that unrighteousness which is forbidden by it.

### James 1:21

Ver. 21. *Wherefore lay apart;* not only restrain it, and keep it in; but put off, and throw it away as a filthy rag, Isa 30:22: see Eph 4:22 Col 3:8 1Pe 2:1.

*All,* of every kind.



*Filthiness*; or, sordidness; a metaphor borrowed from the filth of the body, 1Pe 3:21, and thence transferred to the soul; and it here seems to imply, not only sensuality or covetousness, but all sorts of lusts, whereby men are defiled, 2Co 7:1 2Pe 2:20.

*And superfluity of naughtiness*; i.e. that naughtiness which is superfluous. That is said to be superfluous or redundant, which is more than should be in a thing; in which respect all sin is superfluous in the soul, as being that which should not be in it: and so this intimates that we are not only to lay apart more gross pollutions, but all the lusts of the flesh, and relics of old Adam, as being all superfluities which may well be spared, or excrements, (as some render the word, agreeably to the former metaphor), which should be cast away.

*And receive*; not only into your heads by knowledge, but into your hearts by faith.

*With meekness*; with humility, modesty, and gentleness, which makes men submissive to the truth of the word, and ready to learn of God even those things which are above their natural capacity, Ps 25:9 Isa 66:2 Mt 11:5,27: this is opposed to wrath, which makes men unteachable.

*The ingrafted word*; either which is ingrafted or implanted, viz. ministerially, by the preachers of the gospel, 1Co 3:6,7; principally by the Spirit of God, who writes it in the heart, Jer 31:33. And thus it may be taken particularly for the word of the gospel, in opposition to the law, which came to men's ears from without, and admonished them of their duty, but was not written in their hearts, or ingrafted thereto from them unto obedience to it. Or, that it may be ingrafted, i.e. intimately united to, or rooted in, the heart by a vital union; or made natural to it, (as some render the word), the heart being transformed by the power of it, and conformed to the precepts of it, 2Co 3:18 Ro 6:17.

*Which*, viz. when received by faith, *is able to save*, instrumentally, as being the means wherein God puts forth his power in saving them, Re 1:16.

*Your souls*; yourselves; the soul, as the noblest part, is by a synecdoche put for the whole person: see 1Pe 1:9.

### James 1:22

Ver. 22. *But be ye doers of the word;* the same as doers of *the work*, Jas 1:25, namely, which the word prescribes; q. d. Receive the word by faith into your hearts, and bring forth the fruit of it in your lives: see Lu 11:28 Joh 13:17.

*And not hearers only;* not contenting yourselves with a bare hearing the word, though it have no influence upon you.

*Deceiving your own selves;* playing the sophisters with, or putting a fallacy upon, yourselves; particularly, persuading yourselves into a good opinion of your state, merely because of your being hearers of the word, Mt 7:21.

### James 1:23

Ver. 23. *He is like unto a man:* the Greek word here used, properly signifies the sex, not the species, but is indifferently used by this apostle with the other, as Jas 1:12,20, so that by a man looking at his face in a glass, is meant any man or woman.

*Beholding his natural face;* or, the face of his nativity, by a Hebraism, for natural face, as we translate it; i.e. his own face, that which nature gave him, or he was born with.

*In a glass;* the word is here compared to a looking-glass: as the glass represents to us the features and complexions of our faces, whether beautiful or deformed; so the word shows us the true face of our souls, the beauty of God's image when restored to them, and the spots of sin which so greatly disfigure them.

### James 1:24

Ver. 24. The remembrance of what his face is vanisheth as soon as his eye

is off the glass; he remembers not the spots he saw in his face, to wipe them off. So he that sees the blemishes of his soul in the glass of the word, and doth not remember them to do them away, looks in that glass (i.e. hears the word) in vain.

### James 1:25

Ver. 25. *But whose looketh into;* viz. intently and earnestly, searching diligently into the mind of God. The word signifies a bowing down of the head to look into a thing; and is used of the disciples' looking into Christ's sepulchre, Lu 24:12 Joh 20:5; see 1Pe 1:12; and seems to be opposed to looking into a glass, which is more slight, and without such prying and inquisitiveness.

*The perfect law of liberty;* the whole doctrine of the Scripture, or especially the gospel, called *law*, Ro 3:27, both as it is a rule, and by reason of the power it hath over the heart; and a *law of liberty*, because it shows the way to the best liberty, freedom from sin, the bondage of the ceremonial law, the rigour of the moral, and from the wrath of God; and likewise the way of serving God freely and ingenuously as children; and because, being received into the heart, it is accompanied with the Spirit of adoption who works this liberty, 2Co 3:17. It is called a perfect law, not only as being entire and without any defect, but as directing us to the greatest perfection, full conformity to God, and enjoyment of him, 2Ti 3:16,17.

*And continueth therein;* perseveres in the study, belief, and obedience of this doctrine, (Ps 1:2), in all conditions, and under all temptations and afflictions. This seems to be opposed to him, who, when he hath looked in a glass, goes away, Jas 1:24. By which are set forth slight, superficial hearers, who do not continue in Christ's word, Joh 8:31.

*He being not a forgetful hearer;* Greek, hearer of forgetfulness, by a Hebraism, for a forgetful hearer; it answers to him in the former verse, that forgetteth what manner of man he was; and implies, not only not remembering the truths we have heard, but a not practising them, as appears by the next clause.

*But a doer of the work;* viz. which the word directs him to do: the singular number is put for the plural; he means, he that reduceth what he hears into practice, Ps 103:18.

*This man shall be blessed in his deed;* this is opposed to bare hearing, and the doer of the work is said to be blessed in or by his deed, as the evidence of his present begun blessedness, and the way to his future perfect happiness.

### James 1:26

Ver. 26. *If any man among you seem to be religious;* seems to others, or rather to himself; thinks himself religious, because cause of his hearing and outward worship: thus the word rendered *seems* is often taken, 1Co 3:18 8:2 14:37 Ga 6:3. Here he shows who are not doers of the work, as in the next verse, who are.

*And bridleth not his tongue;* restrains it not from the common vices of the tongue, reviling, railing, censuring, &c.

*But deceiveth his own heart;* either deceiveth his own heart in thinking himself religious, when indulging himself in things so contrary to religion, or deceiveth his own heart, being blinded with self-love, and lifted up with self-conceit, which is the cause of his censuring and speaking evil of others.

*This man's religion is vain;* empty, and to no purpose, having no reality in itself, and bringing no benefit to him.

### James 1:27

Ver. 27. *Pure religion;* true, sincere, genuine, Mt 5:8 Joh 15:3.

*And undefiled;* this seems to reflect upon the hypocritical Jews, whose religion consisted so much in external observances, and keeping themselves from ceremonial defilements, when yet they were sullied with so many moral ones, Jas 1:14 Mt 23:23 Joh 18:28; devoured widows'

houses. They thought their religion pure and undefiled; the apostle shows here which is really so *before God*; in the sight of God, and according to his judgment.

*God and the Father*; i.e. God who is the Father, *and* being only explicative, as Eph 1:3 5:20: yet this title may be given here to God with respect to what follows, and to show that such acts of charity are acceptable to him that is called the *the Judge of widows, and the Father of the fatherless*, Ps 68:5.

*To visit*; this includes all other acts of charity to them, comforting, counselling, relieving them, &c.

*The fatherless and widows*; he doth not exclude others from being the objects of our charity and compassion, but instanceth in *fatherless and widows*, as being usually most miserable, because destitute of those relations which might be most helpful to them; and possibly in those times persecution might increase the number of widows and orphans.

*In their affliction*; when they had most need; lest any should think it sufficient to visit them that were rich, or in a prosperous condition.

*And to keep himself unspotted from the world*; untainted by the evil example of men in the world, and free from the lusts of the world, moral pollutions. The apostle doth not here define religion but only instanceth in these two things, good works and holiness of conversation, as testimonies and arguments of the truth of it.

## James 2:1

### Chapter Summary

Jas 2:1-9 It is not agreeable to the Christian profession to regard the rich, and despise the poor.

Jas 2:10-12 The guilt of any one breach of the law.

Jas 2:13 The obligation to mercy.

Jas 2:14-19 Faith without works is dead.

Jas 2:20-26 We are justified, as Abraham and Rahab were, by works, and not by faith only.

Ver. 1. *Have not*; profess not yourselves, and regard not, or esteem not in others.

*The faith of our Lord Jesus Christ*; i.e. faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; not the author but the object of faith is meant, as Ga 2:20 Ga 3:22 Php 3:9.

*The Lord of glory*; *Lord* not being in the Greek, *glory* may be joined with *faith*, ( admitting only a trajection in the words, so frequent in the sacred writers), and then the words will run thus, the faith of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, i.e. the faith of his being glorified, which by a synecdoche may be put for the whole work of redemption wrought by him, which was completed by his glorification, as the last part of it; or, by a Hebraism, the faith of the glory, may be for the glorious faith. But the plainest way of reading the words is (as our translators do) by supplying the word *Lord* just before mentioned; *Lord of glory*, ( Christ being elsewhere so called, 1Co 2:8), i.e. the glorious Lord; as the Father is called *the Father of glory*, Eph 1:17, i.e. the glorious Father: and then it may be an argument to second what the apostle is speaking of; Christ being the Lord of glory, a relation to him by faith puts an honour upon believers, though poor and despicable in the world; and therefore they are not to be contemned.

*With respect of persons*; the word rendered *persons* signifies the face or countenance, and synecdochically the whole person; and, by consequence, all those parts or qualities we take notice of in the person. To respect a person is sometimes taken in a good sense, Ge 19:21 1Sa 25:35. Mostly in an evil, when either the person is opposed to the cause, we give more or less to a man upon the account of something we see in him which is altogether foreign to his cause, Le 19:15, or when we accept one with injury to or contempt of another. To have, then, the faith of Christ with respect of persons, is to esteem the professors of religion, not for their faith, or relation to Christ, but according to their worldly condition, their being great or mean, rich or poor; this the apostle taxeth in the Hebrews to whom he wrote, that whereas in the things of God all believers are equal, they respected the greater and richer sort of professors, because great or rich; so as to despise those that were poor or low. The Greek hath the word plurally, respects, which may intimate the several ways of respecting persons, in judgment or out, of judgment. This doth not exclude the civil

respect we owe to magistrates and superiors upon the account of their places or gifts; but only a respecting men in the things of religion upon such accounts as are extrinsical to religion; or, with prejudice to others as considerable in religion as themselves, though inferior to them in the world.

### James 2:2

Ver. 2. *For if there come unto your assembly;* either church assemblies for worship, Heb 10:25; and in these we find some respect of men's persons, which may here be blamed: see 1Co 11:20-22. Or their assemblies for disposing church offices, and deciding church controversies, &c.; for he speaks of such respecting men's persons as is condemned by the law, Jas 2:9, which was especially in judgment.

*A man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel;* the usual ensigns of honourable or rich persons, Ge 38:18,25 41:42 Lu 15:22 16:19.

*And there come in also a poor man;* the word signifies one very poor, even to beggarliness.

*In vile raiment;* filthy and sordid, Zec 3:3,4, the sign of extreme poverty.

### James 2:3

Ver. 3. *And ye have respect to him;* Greek, look upon, viz. with respect and veneration, or a care and concern to please him.

*Sit thou here in a good place;* an honourable place, either contrary to the usual orders of the churches, according to which, (as some say) the elder sat in chairs, the next to them on benches; and the novices on the pavement at their feet; the apostle taxing their carnal partiality in disposing these places to the people as rich, not as Christians; or it may note their disposing church offices to them that were rich, or favouring them in their causes rather than the poor.

*Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool;* the meanest places, and

belonging to the youngest disciples: both are expressions of contempt.

#### James 2:4

Ver. 4. *Are ye not then partial in yourselves?* Either, are ye not judged in yourselves, convicted by your own consciences of partiality, and accepting men's persons? Or, have ye not made a difference? viz. out of a corrupt affection rather than a right judgment; and then it falls in with our translation; *Are ye not partial?* The Greek word is used in this sense, Ac 15:9 Jude 1:22.

*And are become judges of evil thoughts;* i.e. judges that have evil thoughts, or are evil affected: q. d. You evidence the corruptness of your affections by your thus perversely judging.

#### James 2:5

Ver. 5. *Hath not God chosen the poor?* Not that God hath chosen all the poor in the world, but his choice is chiefly of them, 1Co 1:26,28. Poor he means in the things *of this world*, and in the esteem of worldly men; they are opposed to those that Paul calls *rich in this world*, 1Ti 6:17,18.

*Rich:* some insert the verb substantive to be between this and the former clause, and read: Hath not God chosen the poor of this world to be rich, &c. So Ro 8:29, *predestinate to be conformed:* the like defective speeches we find, Joh 12:46 2Co 3:6. And the verb understood here is expressed, Eph 1:4, after the same word we have in this text. And yet if we read the words as they stand in our translation, they do not prove that foresight of faith is previous to election, any more than that being heirs of the kingdom is so too.

*In faith;* either in the greatness and abundance of their faith, Mt 15:28 Ro 4:20; or rather, rich in those privileges and hopes to which by faith they have a title.

*And heirs of the kingdom;* an instance of their being rich, in that they are to inherit a kingdom.



*Which he hath promised to them that love him:* see Jas 1:12, where the same words occur, only that which is here a kingdom, is there a crown.

James 2:6

Ver. 6. *But ye have despised the poor;* God's poor, viz. by your respecting persons.

*Do not rich men?* Either those that were unbelieving Jews or heathen; or such as made a profession of Christianity, but were not cordial friends to it; or, both may be included.

*Oppress you;* insolently abuse you, and unrighteously, either usurping a power over you which belongs not to them, or abusing the power they have.

*And draw you before the judgment-seats;* especially before unbelieving judges, 1Co 6:1,6: they would colour their oppression with a pretence of law, and therefore drew the poor saints before the judgment-seat.

James 2:7

Ver. 7. *Do not they blaspheme?* If the rich here spoken of were Christians, then they may be said to blaspheme Christ's name, when by their wicked carriage they caused it to be blasphemed by others, unbelievers, among whom they were, Ro 2:24 Tit 2:5, &c.; 1Ti 6:1: but if rich unbelievers be here meant, the rich men of those times being generally great enemies to Christianity; he would from thence show how mean a consideration riches were, to incline the professors of religion to such partiality as he taxeth them for.

*That worthy name;* or, good or honourable (as good place, Jas 2:3, for honourable) name of Christ; they blaspheme what they should adore.

*By the which ye are called;* or, which is called upon you, either, which was called upon over you, when you were baptized into it; or rather it is a

Hebrew phrase, and, implies no more than (as we read it) their being called by it, as children are after their fathers, and wives after their husbands, Ge 48:16 Isa 4:1; for so God's people are called by his name, De 28:10 Eph 3:15.

### James 2:8

Ver. 8. *If ye fulfil;* or, perfect; the word signifies to accomplish perfectly, but no more is meant by it than sincerity in observing the duties of the law in an indifferent respect to one as well as another, which he seems to oppose to their partiality in the law, by respecting some and neglecting others.

*The royal law;* either the law of God the great King, or Christ the King of saints; or rather, *the royal law* is the king's law, i.e. the great law which is the same to all, rich and poor, the common rule by which all are to act, as, *the king's way*, Nu 21:22, i.e. the great plain way in which all are to travel. Here may likewise be a tacit reflection on the servile disposition of these accepters of men's persons, evil becoming them that pretended to be governed by the royal law, which was to be observed with a more free and king-like spirit.

*According to the Scripture:* see Mt 22:39 Ga 5:14.

*Ye do well;* ye are not to be blamed, but commended. The apostle seems here to answer an objection they might make in their own defence; that in the respect they gave to rich men, they did but act according to the law which commands us to love our neighbour as ourselves: to this he replies partly in this verse by way of concession, or on supposition; that if the respect they gave to rich men were indeed in obedience to the law of charity, which commands us to love our neighbour as ourselves, then they did well, and he found no fault with them; but the contrary he shows in the next verse.

### James 2:9

Ver. 9. *But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin;* the second part of

the apostle's answer, in which he sets *persons* in opposition to *neighbour*: q. d. If you, instead of loving your neighbour, which excludes no sort of men, poor no more than rich, choose and single out (as ye do) only some few (viz. rich men) to whom ye give respect, despising others, ye are so far from fulfilling the royal law, that ye sin against it.

*And are convinced of the law*; either by the particular law against respecting persons, Le 19:15, or rather, by that very law you urge; your thus partially respecting the rich to the excluding of the poor, being so contrary to the command of loving your neighbour, which excludes none.

*As transgressors*; i.e. to be transgressors, viz. of the whole law, as fellows.

### James 2:10

Ver. 10. *For whosoever shall keep*: this is not an assertion, that any man doth keep the whole law so as to offend but in one point, but a supposition that if, or admitting, such a one were.

*The whole law*; all the rest of the law, that one point only of the whole being excepted.

*And yet offend in one point*; slip, or trip, or stumble at; it seems to signify the least failing in any point of the law.

*He is guilty of all*; guilty of the breach, and obnoxious to the punishment, of all; not distributively, or separately, as if he transgressed every precept distinctly; but:

1. Conjunctively or copulatively; he is guilty of not keeping the whole law, though not of breaking each particular command; he breaks the whole law, though not the whole of the law: as he that wounds a man's arm wounds the whole man, though not the whole of the man; he that breaks one link breaks the whole chain, and he that fails in one musical note spoils the whole harmony.
2. He sins against charity, which is the sum of the law, and upon which all

the commands depend; and so though he keep most of them, as to the substance, yet he keeps none of them in a right manner, because none out of love, which should be the principle out of which he observes all of them.

3. He sins against the authority of the whole law, which is the same in every command.
4. He is liable to the same punishment, though not the same degree of it, as if he had broken all the commandments, Ga 3:1; and his keeping most, cannot exempt him from the punishment due for the breach of that one. This he speaks either in opposition to the Pharisees among the Jews, who thought themselves righteous if they kept most of the law, though in some things they came short; or rather, against hypocrites among Christians, who would pick and choose duties, obey some commands and neglect others; whereas no obedience to God is right, but that which is impartial, and respects all the commands, Ps 119:6 Mt 5:19.

#### James 2:11

Ver. 11. All proof of what he laid down in the former verse, by instancing in these two commands, there being the same reason of all the rest, the same sovereignty and righteousness of God appearing in them, and it being the will of God to try our obedience in one as well as another.

*Thou art become a transgressor of the law;* viz. by contemning the authority and holiness of God, which appears in the whole law, and every command of it.

#### James 2:12

Ver. 12. *So speak ye, and so do:* the apostle concluding his discourse about respecting persons, which consisted both in their words and actions, he directs them how to govern themselves in both.

*As they that shall be judged;* viz. for both your words and actions, and that, not only in your own consciences at present, but at God's tribunal

hereafter.

*By the law of liberty;* the gospel, of the liberty of which it is one branch, that these differences among men, of Jew and Gentile, bond and free, circumcised and uncircumcised, &c., are taken away, Ac 10:28 Ga 3:28 Col 3:11; against this law of liberty you sin if you respect persons, and then may well fear to be judged by it; as it takes away differences of persons now, so it will make none at last, but will be as impartial in its judgment as it is in its commands.

### James 2:13

Ver. 13. *For he shall have judgment without mercy;* shall be judged according to the rigour of the law, by pure justice without any mixture of mercy.

*That hath showed no mercy;* that hath been cruel and unmerciful to his neighbour here.

*And mercy rejoiceth against judgment;* either,

1. The mercy of God rejoiceth and glorieth over judgment, being as it were superior and victorious in relation to those that show mercy, to whom the promise of obtaining. mercy is made, Mt 5:7. Or rather:
2. The mercy of men, i.e. of those that deal mercifully with others; their mercy having the mercy and promise of God on its side, need not fear, but rather may rejoice, and as it were glory against judgment, as not being like to go against them.

*Objection.* Is not this to make some ground of glorying to be in men themselves, contrary to Ps 143:2 Ro 4:2?

*Answer.* Mercy in believers is an evidence of their interest in God's mercy, which prevails on their belief against his justice; and so its rejoicing against judgment, is not against it as overcome by itself, but by God's mercy. Thus both senses are included.

## James 2:14

Ver. 14. *What doth it profit;* viz. as to his eternal salvation? Wherein are the ends of religion promoted by it? The apostle had just before declared, that they who are unmerciful to men shall find God severe to themselves, and have judgment without mercy: but hypocritical professors boasted of their faith as sufficient to secure them against that judgment, though they neglected the practice of holiness and righteousness. Hence he seems to take occasion for the following discourse, to beat down their vain boasting of an empty, unfruitful faith, and possibly, lest they should abuse or misunderstand what he had said about *the law of liberty*, as if that inferred a licence of sinning, and living as they pleased.

*Though a man say;* whether boastingly with his mouth to others, or flatteringly in his heart to himself. The apostle doth not say, that a man's having faith simply is unprofitable, but either that faith he pretends to without works, or his boasting he hath faith, when the contrary is evident by his not having works.

*He hath faith;* such as he pretends to be good, and sound, and saving, but is really empty and dead, Jas 2:26, and unfruitful.

*And have not works;* i.e. good works, such as are not only acts of charity, to which the papists would restrain it, but all the fruits of righteousness and holiness proceeding from faith, and appearing both in heart and life.

*Can faith save him?* The interrogation is a vehement negation; q. d. It cannot save him, viz. such a faith as a man may have (as well as boast he hath) without works. This James calls *faith* only by way of concession for the present, though it be but equivocally called faith, and no more really so, than the carcass of a man is a man.

## James 2:15

Ver. 15. *If a brother or sister;* a Christian man or woman, who are frequently thus called: see 1Co 7:12,15.

*Be naked;* badly clothed, or destitute of such clothing as is fit for them, Job 22:6 1Co 4:11.

*And destitute of daily food:* see Mt 6:11; that which is necessary for the sustaining of life a day to an end. Under these two of nakedness and hunger, he comprehends all the calamities of human life, which may be relieved by the help of others; as food and raiment contain all the ordinary supports and comforts of life, Ge 28:20 Mt 6:25 1Ti 6:8.

### James 2:16

Ver. 16. *Depart in peace;* a usual form of salutation, wherein, under the name of peace, they wished all prosperity and happiness to them they greeted, Mr 5:34 Lu 7:50 8:48.

*Be ye warmed;* i.e. be ye clothed; the warmth here mentioned being such as is procured by clothes, Job 31:20.

*And be ye filled,* or, satisfied with food; a metaphor from the fattening of cattle with grass or hay. The same word is used, Mt 14:20 Mr 6:42 Php 4:12. These two good wishes answer the two former great wants.

*Notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body;* understand, when yet ye are able to relieve them; for he speaks to the rich, or such as were in a capacity of being helpful to others.

*What doth it profit?* Either, what do your good words and charitable wishes profit them, without charitable deeds? Or, what do they profit yourselves? Or both may be included: as your fair speeches convey no real good to them, so they bring in no reward to you from God.

### James 2:17

Ver. 17. *Even so faith;* that which they boasted of, and called faith.

*Is dead;* void of that life, in which the very essence of faith consists, and which always discovers itself in vital actings and good fruits, where it is

not hindered by some forcible impediment; in allusion to a corpse, which plainly appears to have no vital principle in it, all vital operations being ceased. It resembles a man's body, and is called so, but in reality is not so, but a dead carcass.

*Being alone;* margin, by itself, or in itself; be it what it will, it is but dead: or, as we render it, *being alone*, i.e. not in conjunction with works, which always it should be.

### James 2:18

Ver. 18. *A man;* any true believer.

*May say;* to any such boasting hypocrite.

*Thou hast faith;* thou pretendest to have faith, or admit thou hast faith; and an historical faith he might have, as Jas 2:19.

*And I have works:* I do not boast of my faith; or, to say nothing of my faith, yet works I do profess to have.

*Show me thy faith without thy works:* there are two readings of these words, but in both the sense agrees with the rest of the apostle's discourse. If we take the marginal reading, show me thy faith by thy works, the sense is, evidence the faith thou pretendest to by thy works, as the fruits of it; let thy actions vouch for thy profession. But if we take the reading in the text, *without thy works*, it is a kind of ironical expression; q. d. Make it appear by convincing arguments that thou hast true faith, when yet thou wantest works, the only argument of the truth of it. Understand here, but this thou canst not.

*And I will show thee my faith by my works;* I will easily prove my faith to be true and genuine, by those good works it brings forth in me. Demonstrate the cause to me without the effect, if thou canst; but I will easily demonstrate the cause by the effect, and prove the root of faith to be in me, by my bringing forth that fruit which is proper to it. It cannot hence be inferred, that wherever such works are, as men count and call good, there must needs be faith: the apostle's meaning only is, that wherever true



faith is, there good works will certainly be.

### James 2:19

Ver. 19. *Thou believest that there is one God;* thou givest thy assent to this truth, that there is one God. This may likewise imply other articles of the creed, to which the like assent may be given.

*Thou doest well;* either this kind of faith hath its goodness, though it be not saving; or ironically, q. d. A great matter thou dost, when thou goest almost as high as the devils.

*The devils also believe;* yield the like assent to the same truth.

*And tremble:* the word signifies extreme fear and horror, viz. such as the thoughts of their Judge strike into them. This shows the faith the apostle speaks of in this place, not to be the faith of God's elect, which begets in believers a holy confidence in God, and frees them from slavish fears; whereas the faith here spoken of, if it have any effect upon men, it is but to fill them with horror.

### James 2:20

Ver. 20. *But wilt thou know?* Either this question is in order to teaching, as Joh 13:12 Ro 13:3; and then the sense is: If thou hast a mind to know, I shall instruct thee: or, it is a teaching by way of question, as more emphatical and pressing; and then it is as if he had said, Know, O vain man.

*O vain man;* an allusion to an empty vessel, which sounds more than one that is full. The carnal professor to whom he speaks is vain, because empty of true faith and good works, though full of noise and boasting.

*Objection.* Doth not the apostle sin against Christ's command, Mt 5:22?

*Answer.*

1. He speaks not of any particular man, but to all in general, of such a sort, viz. who boasted of their faith, and yet did not evidence it by their works.
2. It is not spoken in rash anger, or by way of contempt, but by way of correction and just reproof; see the like spoken by Christ himself, Mt 23:17,19 Lu 24:25 and by Paul, Ga 3:1 1Co 15:36.

*That faith without works is dead;* a defective speech, *faith without works*, for that that which is without works, or, faith, if it be without works. He doth not say, faith is dead without works, lest it should be thought that works were the cause of the life of faith; but *faith without works is dead*, as Jas 2:17,26; implying, that works are the effects and signs of the life of faith.

#### James 2:21

Ver. 21. *Was not Abraham our father;* not only the father of us as Jews, (for to them he wrote), and according to the flesh, but as believers, and according to the promise; so all believers are called Abraham's children, Ro 4:11 Ga 3:7.

*Justified by works;* found or declared to be justified, not only before God, but in the face of the world; and his faith (by which he had been justified above thirty years before in the sight of God) now approved as a true, lively, justifying faith, by this proof he gave of it, upon God's trying him in the offering up his son, Ge 22:9,12, *Now I know that thou fearest God*, &c. Abraham did fear God, and believe him before, and was justified before in the sight of God; but by the working of his faith in so eminent an act of obedience, the sincerity of all his graces, and so of his faith, was manifested and made known, and so his faith itself justified, as his person was before, and he obtained this ample testimony from the mouth of God himself. So that Abraham's justification here was not the absolution of a sinner; but the solemn approbation of a believer; not a justifying him as ungodly, but commending him for his godliness. He was by his works justified as a righteous person, but not made righteous, or constituted in a justified state, by his works. The design of the apostle is not to show how sinners are justified in God's court, but only what kind of faith it is

whereby they are justified, viz. such a one as purifies the heart, Ac 15:9, and looks to Christ, not only as made righteousness, but sanctification to them, 1Co 1:30; and consequently not only rests on him for justification, but stirs them up to yield obedience to him.

*When he had offered Isaac his son;* viz. in his firm purpose and resolution, and was about to do it actually, had not God hindered him. It was no fault in Abraham that it was not actually done, and therefore it was counted to him as if it had been really done, Ge 22:12 Heb 11:17.

*Upon the altar;* this shows the settled purpose of Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, when he proceeded so far as to bind him, and lay him upon the altar; for that argues, that he expected and intended nothing but his death, which generally was wont to follow in sacrifices when once laid upon the altar.

### James 2:22

Ver. 22. *Seest thou how faith wrought with his works?* He doth not say, works wrought with his faith, as he should have said, if he had intended their concurrence in justification; but *faith wrought with his works*, i.e. his faith was not idle, but effectual in producing good works, it being the office and business of faith to respect Christ for sanctification, as well as righteousness, Ac 26:18.

*And by works was faith made perfect;* either:

1. Faith by producing good works is itself encouraged, heightened, improved; and so not made perfect by any communication of the perfection of works to it, but by being stirred up and exercised as to the internal strength and power of it. Or rather:
2. Faith is made perfect by works declaratively, inasmuch as works evidence and manifest the perfection and strength of faith.

Faith is the cause, and works are the effects; but the cause is not perfected by the effect, only its perfection is demonstrated by it, as good fruit doth not make a tree good, but show that it is so. See 2Co 12:9.

### James 2:23

Ver. 23. *And the Scripture was fulfilled;* this illustrious instance of Abraham's obedience did so clearly evidence the sincerity of his faith, that it did most plainly appear, that what the Scripture said of him, it spoke most truly, viz. that he did indeed believe God, *and it was counted to him for righteousness.* Things are said to be fulfilled when they are most clearly manifested. As those words, Ps 2:7: *This day have I begotten thee,* are said to be fulfilled at Christ's resurrection, Ac 13:32,33; not that he was then first begotten of the Father, but that he was then in a glorious manner declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead, Ro 1:4. So here Abraham's offering up his son being the evident discovery of his faith, it did by that appear, that the Scripture report of him was true, that he *believed God,* &c.: he did believe before, and his faith was imputed to him before, but it was never so fully made known, as by this so high an act of obedience.

*It was imputed unto him for righteousness;* viz. as apprehending Christ in the promise. Faith is said to be imputed for righteousness, Ro 4:3-6, as being the instrument or means of applying Christ's righteousness, by which elsewhere we are said to be justified, Ro 3:24,25 5:19 2Co 5:21 Php 3:9.

*And he was called the Friend of God;* either he was *the friend of God;* to be called, sometimes times implies as much as to be, Isa 48:8; or properly, he was called, 2Ch 20:7 Isa 41:8; and that not only on the account of God's frequent appearances to him, conversing with him, revealing secrets to him, Ge 18:17,18 Joh 15:15, and entering into covenant with him; but especially his renewing the covenant with him upon the sacrificing of his son, and confirming it by oath, and thereby, as it were, admitting him into a nearer degree of friendship, Ge 22:16, &c.

### James 2:24

Ver. 24. *Ye see then;* an inference either from the instance of Abraham, or from the whole preceding discourse.

*How that by works;* works of new obedience.

*A man is justified;* declared to be righteous, or approved as such, and acquitted from the guilt of hypocrisy.

*And not by faith only;* not by a mere profession of faith, or a bare assent to the truth, without the fruit of good works.

*Question.* How doth this general conclusion follow from the particular case of Abraham?

*Answer.* Abraham's faith and justification, both before God and the world, are set forth as the exemplars of ours, to which the faith and justification of all believers, both Jews and Gentiles, is to be conformed, Ro 4:11,12,23,24.

*Question.* Doth not James here contradict Paul's doctrine in the matter of justification, Ro 4:1-25?

*Answer.* The contradiction is but seeming, not real, as will appear, if four things be considered:

1. The occasion of these apostles' writing, and their scope in it. Having to do with different sorts of persons, they had likewise different designs. As Christ speaks one way when he dealt with proud Pharisees, whom he would humble; another way, when with humble hearers, whom he would encourage. and Paul carried it one way when among weak brethren, in condescension to whose infirmities he circumcised Timothy, Ac 16:2,3; and another, when he was among false brethren, and men of contention, who opposed Christian liberty, seeking to bring believers into bondage, and then would not suffer Titus to be circumcised, Ga 2:3-5. So in the present affair. Paul's business lay with false apostles and Judaizing Christians, such as did, in the matter of justification, either substitute a self-righteousness instead of God's grace, or set it up in conjunction with it; and therefore his scope is (especially in his Epistles to the Romans and Galatians) to show the true cause and manner of justification, and vindicate the freeness of grace in it, by the exclusion of man's works, of what kind soever; to which purpose he propounds the examples of Abraham and David, in their

justification, Ro 4:1-1-25. Whereas James having to do with carnal professors, and such as abused the doctrine of grace to encourage themselves in sin, and thought it sufficient that they had faith, (such as it was), though they did not live like believers, resting in an empty profession, with the neglect of holiness; his design plainly is, to show the effects and fruits of justification, viz. holiness and good works; thereby to check the vanity and folly of them who did thus divorce faith from a holy life, (which God hath joined to it), and fancied themselves safe in the profession of the one, without any respect to, or care of, the other, as appears in this chapter, Jas 2:14,17,26. And because they might bear themselves high in this false confidence by the example of Abraham, their father according to the flesh, and whom Paul had set forth, Ro 4:1-25, as justified by faith, without the concurrence of works to his justification; James makes use of the same example of Abraham, as one eminent for holiness as well as faith, and who made his faith famous by the highest act of obedience that ever a saint did, to show, that faith and holiness ought not to be separated; Abraham's faith being so highly commended, especially as productive of it. To the same purpose he makes use of the instance of Rahab, who, though a young saint, and newly come to the knowledge of God, yet showed the truth of her faith by so considerable an exercise of her love and mercy to God's people, as her receiving the spies in peace was. This therefore helps not a little to reconcile the difference between these two apostles. Paul deals with those that magnified works too much, as if they were justified by them, and slighted faith and grace; and therefore, though he frequently shows the usefulness of faith and good works unto salvation, and presseth men every where to the practice of them, yet he proves that they have no interest in the justification of a sinner before God's tribunal, which he asserts to be wholly and solely of grace, and by faith. But James, in dealing with loose Christians, who magnified faith, and slighted good works, not only as having no influence on justification, but as not necessary at all to salvation; he takes upon him to maintain good works, not as necessary to justification, but as the effects, signs, and evidences of it, and such as without which their faith was vain, and themselves in an unjustified state.

2. Paul and James take faith in different senses: Paul speaks of a true, lively faith, which purifies the heart, and *worketh by love*, Ga 5:6. Whereas James speaks of a profession, or presumption of faith, barren,

and destitute of good fruits, such a faith as is dead, Jas 2:17, such as the devils may have, Jas 2:19, which is but historical, and consists only in a belief of God's being, not a consent to his offer, or relying on his promises. What contradiction then is there here between these two apostles, if Paul assert justification to be by faith, viz. a lively, working faith; and James deny it to be by faith, viz. an idle, inactive, barren faith, and which hath only the name, but not the nature of that grace, and is rather the image of faith than faith itself?

3. But because James not only denies justification to the faith he speaks of, but ascribes it to works in this verse; therefore it is to be considered, that justification is taken one way by him, and another by Paul. Paul takes it for the absolution and acceptation of a sinner at God's bar, by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, which is the primary and proper notion of justification. But James takes it for the manifestation and declaration of that justification; and the word is taken in the like sense in other scriptures: Lu 7:29, the people *justified God*, i.e. owned and declared his righteousness by confession of their sins, and submission to John's baptism; and Lu 7:35, *Wisdom is justified*, i.e. declared to be just and right. Ro 3:4, *justified in thy sayings*, i.e. acknowledged and declared to be true in thy word. And what is Christ's being *justified in the Spirit*, 1Ti 3:16, but his being *declared to be the Son of God*? Ro 1:4. And that James takes justification in this sense, appears:

(1.) By the history of Abraham here mentioned: he was (as hath been said) justified by faith long before his offering up his son, Ge 15:1-21, but here is said to be justified, i.e. declared and proved to be so, by this testimony which he gave to the truth of his faith, and consequently to his justification by it; and the Lord therefore tells him, Ge 22:12, *Now I know that thou fearest God*, &c.; q. d. By this obedience thou hast abundantly showed the sincerity of thy graces.

(2.) Because if James doth not here speak of Abraham's being justified declaratively, how can it be true which he speaks, Jas 2:23, that *the Scripture was fulfilled* (in his sacrificing his son) *which saith, He believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness*? For if James intends justification in the proper sense, how was Abraham's being justified by works a fulfilling of the Scripture, which asserts

him to be justified by faith? Here therefore again there is no contradiction between these apostles. For it is true, that Abraham was justified, i.e. accepted of God, and absolved from guilt, by faith only; and it is as true, that he was justified, i.e. manifested and declared to be a believer, and a justified person, by his works.

4. Lastly, we may distinguish of the person that is said to be justified; either he is a sinner, in the state of nature; or a believer, in a state of grace; whence ariseth the two-fold justification here mentioned. The justification of a sinner, in the remission of his sins through the imputation of Christ's righteousness, and acquitting him from the condemnation of the law, is the justification properly so called, and which Paul speaks so much of; and this is by faith only. The justification of a believer, is his absolution from condemnation by the gospel, and the charge of infidelity, or hypocrisy, and is no other than that declarative justification James speaks of, or an asserting and clearing up the truth and reality of the former justification, which is done by good works, as the signs and fruits of the faith, by which that former is obtained: and this is but improperly called justification. The former is an absolution from the general charge of sin, this from the special charge of hypocrisy, or infidelity. A sinner's great fear (when first awakened to a sense of his sin and misery) is of a holy law, and a righteous Judge ready to condemn him for the violation of that law; and so his first business is to look to Christ by faith for righteousness, and remission of sin. But when he is justified by that righteousness, men may charge him with hypocrisy or unbelief, and so may the devil and conscience too, when faith is weak, or a temptation strong; and therefore his next work is to clear himself of this imputation, and to evidence the truth and reality of his faith and justification in God's sight, which must be done by producing his obedience and good works, as the indications of his faith; and hereby he proves that he hath indeed closed with the promise of the gospel, and so is clear of the charge of not believing it, which was false; as well as (by consequence) is justified from the charge of sin against the law, which was true. To conclude, therefore, here is no opposition between Paul and James. Paul speaks of Abraham's being justified as a sinner, and properly, and so by faith only; James speaks of his being justified as a believer, improperly, and so by works; by which not his person was justified, but rather his faith declared to be justifying: nor he constituted righteous, but



approved as righteous. In a word, what God hath joined must not be divided, and what he hath divided must not be joined. He hath separated faith and works in the business of justification, and therefore we must not join them in it, as Paul disputes; and he hath joined them in the lives of justified persons, and there we must not separate them, as James teaches. Paul assures us they have not a co-efficiency in justification itself; and James assures us they may, and ought to have, a co-existence in them that are justified. If the reader desire further satisfaction yet, let him consult Turretine de Concordia Pauli et Jacobi, where he may find much more to the same purpose as hath been here said.

### James 2:25

Ver. 25. This instance of *Rahab* is joined to that of Abraham, either to show, that none of any condition, degree, or nation, was ever numbered among true believers, without good works; or else to prove, that faith, wherever it is sincere and genuine, is likewise operative and fruitful, not only in older disciples and stronger, such as Abraham was, but even proportionably in those that are weaker, and but newly converted to the faith, which was Rahab's case.

*The harlot;* really and properly so, Jos 2:1 Heb 11:31; though possibly she might keep an inn, and that might occasion the spies' going to her house, not knowing her to be one of so scandalous a life; which yet the Holy Ghost takes special notice of, that by the infamousness of her former conversation, the grace of God in her conversion might be more conspicuous.

*Justified by works;* in the same sense as Abraham was, i.e. declared to be righteous, and her sincerity approved in the face of the congregation of Israel, when, upon her hiding the spies, God gave a commandment to save her alive, though the rest of her people were to be destroyed.

*When she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way:* her receiving them implies likewise her hiding them; both which, together with her sending them forth another way, were acts of love to the people of God, of mercy to the spies, and of great self-denial in respect of her own safety, which she hazarded by thus exposing herself to the fury of

the king of Jericho and her countrymen; but all proceeded from her faith in the God of Israel, of whose great works she had heard, and whom she had now taken to be her God, and under whose wings she was now come to trust.

### James 2:26

Ver. 26. *The spirit:* this may be understood either, according to the marginal reading, of the breath; and then the sense is, that life and breath being inseparable companions, as the the of breath argues want of life in the body, so, lively faith and works being as inseparable, want of works argues want of life in faith: or, according to the reading in the text, *spirit*, taking it for that substance which animates the body, and is the cause of vital functions in it, which is sometimes called spirit, Ps 31:5 Ec 12:7 1Co 2:11; and then the sense is, that as a body is without a soul, so faith is without works, i.e. both are dead. As a body without the soul hath the shape and lineaments of a man, but nothing that may discover life in it; so faith without works may be like true faith, have some resemblance of it, but hath nothing to discover the truth and life of it.

*So faith;* not true faith, for that cannot be dead, but an empty profession of faith, which is rather called faith by way of concession, or because of some likeness it hath to it, than really is so; as a dead body, though called a body, is really but a carcass.

### James 3:1

#### Chapter Summary

Jas 3:1 We must not rashly take upon ourselves to reprove others.

Jas 3:2-12 The importance, difficulty, and duty of governing the tongue.

Jas 3:13-18 True wisdom will show itself in meekness, peaceableness, and charity, in opposition to strife and envying.

Ver. 1. *Be not many masters;* let not every man make himself a master of other men's faith and manners, a censor, or supercilious reprover of their failings and infirmities, Mt 7:1. All reproof is not here forbidden, neither authoritative by church officers, nor charitable by private brethren; but that which is irregular, either in the ground of it, when that is false; or the manner of it, when it is masterly and imperious, or preposterous, as when we reprehend others and are no less reprehensible ourselves, Ro 2:21; or in the end of it, when we seek to advance our own reputation by observing or aggravating others' faults, &c.

*Knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation;* by how much the more severe and rigid we are in judging others, the greater will be our judgment, not only from men, who will be apt to retaliate, but from God himself, Mt 7:1-3 Lu 6:38 Re 2:2,3. See the like expression, Mt 23:8,14.

### James 3:2

Ver. 2. *For in many things we offend all:* there is no man absolutely free from sin, 1Ki 8:46 Job 14:4 Pr 20:9 Ec 7:20 1Jo 1:8,10; and therefore we must not be too critical in other men's actions, having so many failings ourselves, Ga 6:1.

*If any man offend not in word;* know how to govern his tongue aright, speak what, and when; as he ought.

*The same is a perfect man;* either sincere, in opposition to the hypocrisy of those that pretend so great zeal in correcting others, when they are alike or more guilty themselves: or rather, we may understand it comparatively, and with respect to others, of one that hath made good proficiency in religion, and is of greater attainments than others: see 1Co 2:6.

*And able also to bridle the whole body;* to govern all the other parts, (eyes, ears, hands, &c.,) as to those actions which are performed by them. No member of the body being more ready to offend than the tongue, he that can rule that, may rule all else.

### James 3:3

Ver. 3. He illustrates the former proposition, that he that can rule his tongue may rule his whole body, by two similitudes: the first, of an unruly horse, which yet, as wanton as he is, being curbed in with a bit, may be easily managed; intimating, that even so, if a man's tongue be well governed, the rest of the man will be under command.

### James 3:4

Ver. 4. The other similitude, in which a man is compared to a ship, the tongue to the rudder, the governing the whole body to the turning about the ship. As the rudder is but a small thing, in comparison of the much greater bulk of a ship, and yet, being itself turned, turns the whole ship (*though so great, and driven of so fierce winds*) which way soever the steersman pleaseth: so likewise the tongue, though little to the whole man, (which may withal be driven, and acted by storms of furious passions), yet if it be itself under government, the rest of the man will be so too.

### James 3:5

Ver. 5. The accommodation of the former similitudes.

*The tongue is a little member,* i.e. one of the lesser, in comparison of the body.

*And boasteth great things;* the Greek word signifies, according to its derivation, the lifting up of the neck (as horses, mentioned Jas 3:3, are wont to do in their pride) in a way of bravery and triumph; and hence it is used to express boasting and glorying, but here seems to imply something more, viz. not only the uttering big words, but doing great things, whether good and useful, as in the former similitudes, or evil, as in what follows; or its boasting how great things it can do: q. d. The tongue, though little, is of great force and efficacy, and it will tell you so itself; it not only boasts what its fellow members can do, but especially what itself can.

*Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!* Another similitude, in

which he sets forth the evil the tongue, as little as it is, doth, where it is not well governed, as in the former he had shown the good it may do, when kept under rule.

*A matter;* the word signifies either any combustible stuff, or, as in the margin, wood, that being the ordinary fuel then in use.

*A little fire kindleth;* even a spark, the smallest quantity or particle, which may do great mischief, when lighting in suitable matter.

### James 3:6

Ver. 6. The application of the similitude in the foregoing words.

*The tongue is a fire,* i.e. hath the force of fire, and resembles it in the mischief it doth.

*A world of iniquity;* a heap or aggregation of evils, (as the natural world is an aggregation of many several beings), as we say, an ocean, or a world, of troubles, meaning, a great multitude of them. And the words may be understood, earlier with an ellipsis of the word *matter*, expressed just before, and supplied here; and the pointing a little altered, they may be thus read, And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity (or an unrighteous world, viz. which lies in wickedness, 1Jo 5:19) is the matter, namely, which it inflames. A wicked world is fit fuel for a wicked tongue, and soon catcheth the fire which it kindles. Or rather, as they stand plainly, without any such defect: The tongue is a world of iniquity, i.e. a heap or mass of various sorts of sins; though it be but a little piece of flesh, yet it contains a whole world of wickedness in it, or is as full of evils as the world is of bodies.

*It defileth the whole body;* infecteth the whole man with sin, Ec 5:6, as being the cause of sin committed by all the members of the body; for though sin begin in the soul, yet it is executed by the body, which therefore seems here put (as Jas 3:2) for the man.

*And setteth on fire the course of nature;* or, setteth on fire the wheel of geniture, or nativity, (in allusion to a wheel set on fire by a violent, rapid

motion), meaning the course of nativity, i.e. the natural course of life, as the face of nativity or geniture, Jas 1:23, for the *natural face*: the sense is, it inflames with various lusts, wrath, malice, wantonness, pride, &c., the whole course of man's life, so that there is no state nor age free from the evils of it. Whereas other vices either do not extend to the whole man, or are abated with age, or worn away with length of time; the vices of the tongue reach the whole man, and the whole time of his life.

*And it is set on fire of hell;* i.e. by the devil, the father of lies and slanders, and other tongue sins, Job 1:10 Joh 8:44 Re 12:10; the tongue being the fire, the devil, by the bellows of temptations, inflames it yet more, and thereby kindles the fire of all mischiefs in the world.

### James 3:7

Ver. 7. *Every kind;* some of every kind.

*Of beasts;* wild beasts, such as are most fierce and untractable.

*And of birds;* though so movable and wandering, the very vagabonds of nature.

*And of serpents;* which are such enemies to mankind.

*And of things in the sea;* the inhabitants, as it were, of another world, really of another element.

*Is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind;* either made gentle, or at least, brought into subjection to man by one means or other. He useth both tenses, the present and the past perfect, to note that such things not only have been, but still are; and that not as the effects of some miraculous providence, as in the case of Daniel, Da 6:1-28, and Paul, Ac 28:1-31, but as that which is usually experienced, and in man's power still to do.

### James 3:8

Ver. 8. *But the tongue;* not only other men's tongues, but his own.

*Can no man tame;* no man of himself, and without the assistance of Divine grace, can bring his tongue into subjection, and keep it in order; nor can any man, by the assistance of any grace promised in this life, so keep it, as that it shall never at all offend.

*It is an unruly evil;* or, which cannot be restrained, and kept within bounds: wild beasts are kept in by grates and bars, but this by no restraint.

*Full of dead poison;* the wickedness of the tongue is compared to poison, in respect of the mischief it doth to others. It seems to allude to those kinds of serpents which have poison under their tongues, Ps 140:3, with which they kill those they bite. The poison of the tongue is no less deadly, it murders men's reputations by the slanders it utters, their souls by the lusts and passions it stirs up in them, and many times their bodies too by the contentions and quarrels it raiseth against men.

### James 3:9

Ver. 9. *Therewith bless we God;* pray, and speak well of God.

*Even the Father;* of Christ, and in him of all true believers.

*And therewith curse we men;* rail on, revile, speak evil of, as well as wish evil to.

*Which are made after the similitude of God;* either:

1. Saints in whom God's image is anew restored; or rather:
2. Men more generally, who, though they have lost that spiritual knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness in which that image of God, after which man was created, principally consists; yet still have some relics of his image continuing in them.

This is added to aggravate the sin; speaking evil of men made after God's image, is speaking evil of God obliquely, and by reflection.

### James 3:10

Ver. 10. He repeats here, by way of exaggeration, what he had said Jas 3:9, to show how exceedingly absurd it is that two such contrary actions should proceed from the same agent.

*These things ought not so to be;* there is a meiosis in the words; he means, things should be quite contrary. See the like expression, 1Ti 5:13 Tit 1:11.

### James 3:11

Ver. 11. Ordinarily and naturally; if any such be, it is looked upon as uncouth and prodigious.

### James 3:12

Ver. 12. *Can the tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs?* The same tree cannot ordinarily bring forth fruit of different kinds, (on the same branch, whatever it may on different, by ingrafting), much less contrary natures: see Mt 7:16-18.

*So can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh;* or, neither can a salt fountain yield fresh water; but the scope is still the same as in our reading. The apostle argues from what is impossible, or monstrous, in naturals, to what is absurd in manners: q. d. It is as absurd in religion, for the tongue of a regenerate man, which is used to bless God, to take a liberty at other times to curse man, as it would be strange in nature for the same tree, on the same branch, to bear fruits of different kinds; or the same fountain at the same place to send forth bitter water and sweet.

### James 3:13

Ver. 13. *Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you?* i.e. if there be a wise man, &c. See Ps 25:12, and 1Pe 3:10, where what David speaks by way of interrogation, Peter explains by way of assertion. The



apostle having shown the disease of the tongue, comes now to remove the cause, viz. men's opinion of their own wisdom; (they censure others, because they take themselves to be wiser than others); and to point out the remedy, godly meekness, which is the truest wisdom. By wisdom and knowledge the same thing may be meant; or if they be taken for several things, (as sometimes there may be great knowledge where there is but little wisdom), yet these masterly censures he speaks of pretended to both, and were so rigid toward others because so well conceited of themselves: the sense is: You pretend to be wise and knowing, but if you would approve yourselves as such indeed, *show out of a good conversation, &c.*

*His works;* let him show as the testimony of his wisdom, not his words in hard censures, but his works, viz. good ones, and those not done now and then, or on the by, but in the constant course and tenor of his life; or show his works to be good, by their being not casual, but constant, and his ordinary practice in his whole conversation.

*With meekness of wisdom;* i.e. meek and gentle wisdom, which can bear, and answer, and teach, and admonish, and rebuke mildly and sweetly, with long-suffering, as well as doctrine, 2Ti 4:2: and then it notes the quality of this wisdom, or such meekness as proceeds from wisdom, or is joined with it, there being some which is foolish, affected, carnal, viz. that which is opposed to zeal; whereas true meekness is only opposed to fierceness and rashness: and thus it notes the cause of meekness.

### James 3:14

Ver. 14. *Bitter envying;* Greek, zeal, which he calls bitter, partly to distinguish it from that zeal which is good, whereas this he speaks of is evil, and though it pretends to be zeal, yet is really no other than envy; and partly because it commonly proceeds from an imbittered spirit. and tends to the imbittering it more.

*Strife;* the usual effect of bitter zeal, or envy.

*In your hearts;* the fountain whence it proceeds; or strife in the heart implies a heart propense and inclined to strife.

*Glory not;* glory not of your zeal, or rather of your wisdom, as if you were so well able to reprehend others, but rather be humbled; what you make the matter of your glorying, being really just cause of shame.

*And lie not against the truth;* viz. by professing yourselves wise, or zealous, when ye are really neither.

### James 3:15

Ver. 15. *This wisdom,* which they pretended so much to, who so criticized on other men's actions, and inveighed against them, and which was accompanied with strife and envy.

*Descendeth not from above;* i.e. from God the author of wisdom, from whom, though every good and perfect gift descends, Jas 1:17, and even knowledge and skill in natural things, Isa 28:26,29; yet this wisdom, being sinful, is not from him, because it *is earthly*, of the earth, of no higher original than from the first Adam, who was of the earth, and earthly, 1Co 15:47; and likewise because it is employed, and fixeth men's minds, on earthly things.

*Sensual;* this may be understood either:

1. According to the reading in the text, the word here used being so rendered, Jude 1:19, agreeable to 1Th 5:23, where *soul*, from whence the word is derived, is opposed to *spirit*, and taken for the sensitive powers, which men have in common with brutes, in distinction from the intellectual, which go under the name of spirit, and are proper to men: mere reason, without the Divine grace, being apt to degenerate into brutishness, and easily brought to serve the ends of sensual appetite, this wisdom may well be called sensual. Or:
2. According to Jude 1:19, natural, in opposition to spiritual. The natural man (1Co 2:14, where the same word, in the Greek, is used as here) is one that lives under the conduct of his own carnal reason, not enlightened, nor regenerated by the Spirit of God; a man of soul, (as the word imports), or that hath no better, no higher principle in him than his own soul. Accordingly, this wisdom here mentioned, is such as

proceeds merely from a man's own soul, in its natural state, destitute of the light and grace of God's Spirit, and therefore may be termed natural.

*Devilish;* because it is of the devil, or such as is in him, and makes men like him, who is a proud spirit, and envious, a liar and slanderer, Joh 8:44, and who observes men's faults, not to amend them, but accuse them for them.

### James 3:16

Ver. 16. *For where envying and strife is;* the usual companions of this devilish wisdom.

*There is confusion;* or, inconsistency, viz. both with man's self and others; envy makes him unquiet in himself, and troublesome to others, by causing contentions and seditions among them, and breaking their peace, as well as his own.

*And every evil work;* all manner of wickedness is ushered in by this confusion and sedition.

### James 3:17

Ver. 17. *But the wisdom that is from above;* true wisdom, which is of God, opposed to that which *descendeth not from above*, Jas 3:15.

*Is first pure;* either excluding mixture, and then it is opposed to hypocritical; or redtar excluding filthiness, and then it is opposed to *sensual*, Jas 3:15, and implies freedom from the defilement of sin and error, it being the property of true wisdom to make men adhere both to truth and holiness.

*Then peaceable;* disposeth men to peace, both as to the making and keeping it, in opposition to strife and contention, which is the fruit of the earthly wisdom. Peaceableness, which relates to man, is set after purity, which respects God in the first place, to intimate, that purity must have the preference to peace. Our peace with men must always be with a salvo to

our respects to God and holiness.

*Gentle;* or equal, or moderate, Php 4:5 1Ti 3:3 Tit 3:2. It implies that gentleness (as we translate it) whereby we bear with others' infirmities, forgive injuries, interpret all things for the best, recede from our own right for peace sake; and is opposed to that austerity and rigidness in our practices and censures, which will bear with nothing in weak, dissenting, or offending brethren.

*Easy to be entreated;* easily persuadable. True wisdom makes men yield to good admonitions, good counsel, good reason. This is opposed to implacableness, Ro 1:31; pride, and obstinacy in evil, Pr 12:1 13:1.

*Full of mercy;* a grace whereby we pity others that are afflicted, or that offend, and is opposed to inhumanity and inexorableness.

*And good fruits;* beneficence, liberality, and all other offices of humanity, which proceed from mercy.

*Without partiality;* or, without judging, i.e. either a curious inquiring into the faults of others, to find matter for censures, which many times infers wrangling, as our margin renders it; or a discerning between person and person, upon carnal accounts, which is *partiality*, as it is here translated, and Jas 2:4.

*And without hypocrisy;* or, counterfeiting, as they do that judge others, being guilty of the same things, or as bad, themselves: or *hypocrisy* may be here added, to show that sincerity is the perfection of all the rest before named; purity, peace, and gentleness, &c., may be counterfeited; hypocrisy spoils all; and therefore the wisdom that is from above is sincere, and without hypocrisy.

### James 3:18

Ver. 18. *And the fruit of righteousness;* either the fruit we bring forth, which is righteousness itself, Lu 3:8,9 Ro 6:22 Php 1:11; or the fruit we reap, which is the reward of righteousness, viz. eternal life.

*Righteousness*; metonymically here put for the heavenly wisdom before described, whereof it is the inseparable companion, or the effect, Job 28:28.

*Is sown*; either righteousness, as the good fruit, is wrought or exercised, Ho 10:12, (as wickedness is said to be sown when it is acted, Job 4:8), or it relates to the reward, which is the fruit, of which righteousness is the seed, Ps 97:11; and then it implies, either the sureness of that reward, that it is as certain as harvest after seed-time: or the non-enjoyment of it for the present, as they that sow their seed receive not the crop till long after.

*In peace*; either in a mild, peaceable, amicable way; or *in peace* is as much as with peace, viz. spiritual peace and comfort of conscience.

*Of them that make peace*; that follow after and are studious of peace; and so the words may have a two-fold sense: either the meaning is:

1. That they that exercise righteousness must do it in a sweet and peaceable way: in particular, men may reprehend others, so they do it with moderation and gentleness, not as executioners, to torment them, but as physicians, to heal them; as, on the other side, they that are most peaceably disposed, yet must not make peace without sowing righteousness with it, which includes just reprehension, whereby righteousness is promoted. Or:
2. That they who sow righteousness in peace, i.e. join righteousness with their endeavours after peace, shall reap the reward, not only in comfort here, but in glory hereafter.

James 4:1

### Chapter Summary

Jas 4:1-6 Our evil lusts and passions tend to breed quarrels among ourselves, and to set us at enmity with God.

Jas 4:7-10 The way to overcome them, and recover God's favour.

Jas 4:11,12 Against detraction and censoriousness.

Jas 4:13-17 We must not presume on the future, but commit ourselves to God's providence.

Ver. 1. *Wars and fightings*; either it may be understood properly of insurrections, and tumults, in which, possibly, some carnal professors might be engaged; or rather, strife and contention about outward things, wranglings among themselves, and going to law, especially before unbelieving judges, 1Co 6:1.

*Your lusts*; Greek, pleasures, i.e. those lusts whereof pleasure is the end, which is therefore put for the lusts themselves: he means the over eager desire of riches, worldly greatness, carnal delights, Tit 3:3, where *lusts and pleasures* go together.

*That war*; oppose and tumultuate against reason, conscience, grace, Ro 7:23 1Pe 2:11.

*In your members*; not only the members of the body, but faculties of the soul, exercised by them; all the parts of man unrenewed, Col 3:5, which are used as weapons of unrighteousness, Ro 6:13.

### James 4:2

Ver. 2. *Ye lust*; passionately and greedily desire.

*And have not*; either soon lose, or rather cannot get, what ye so lust after.

*Ye kill*; some copies have it, ye envy, and many suppose that to be the better reading, as agreeing with the context, and with Jas 3:14; envy being the cause of strife there, and joined with emulation, or a desire of having, here. We read it according to other copies, *ye kill*, which, if he speaketh of wars in a proper sense, Jas 4:1, was, no doubt, the effect of them; and if he speak only of strife and contentions, yet they might proceed so far, that the death of some (though not intended) might be the consequent of them, and occasioned by them. Or, he may mean their murderous desires, killing men in their hearts, wishing for and gaping after their death, that they might gain by it; and this agrees with what he speaks of the frustration of their greedy desires, none being more frequently disappointed of their hopes

than they that hope to be gainers by other men's deaths.

*And disire to have;* or, emulate, i.e. ambitiously affect to have what ye see others have, grieving that they should have more than you.

*And cannot obtain;* viz; that which ye envy others' having.

*Ye fight and war:* you wrangle and quarrel with your neighbours for what they have, that ye may get it for yourselves.

*Yet ye have not;* ye are still needy, though still craving; your lusts are infinite and insatiable in themselves, and no way helpful to you.

*Because ye ask not;* viz. of God by prayer, who hath promised to give to them that ask, Mt 7:7, not to them that war and fight. Instead of humble seeking to God for what ye want, ye would extort it by force or fraud from one another.

### James 4:3

Ver. 3. *Ye ask;* he prevents an objection; q. d. Admit you do pray for the good things you want, or, though you pray for them.

*Ye ask amiss;* though you pray for good things, yet you do not pray well, or in a right manner, not according to God's will, 1Jo 5:14, and therefore ye are not to complain of not being heard.

*That ye may consume it upon your lusts;* you pray for the things of this life only, that you may have wherewith to please the flesh, and gratify your carnal appetites, and so an evil end spoils good means; and while you would have God serve your lusts you lose your prayers.

### James 4:4

Ver. 4. *Ye adulterers and adulteresses;* he means adulterers and adulteresses in a spiritual sense, i.e. worldly-minded Christians, who being, by profession, married to the Lord, yet gave up those affections to

the things of the world which were due to God only. The like expression is used, Mt 12:39 16:4.

*Know ye not;* ye ought to know, and cannot but know.

*That the friendship of the world;* inordinate affection to the world, addictedness or devotedness to the things or men of the world.

*Is enmity with God;* alienates the soul from God, and God from it, 1Jo 2:15.

*Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world;* if it be the purpose and resolution of a man's heart to get in with the world, though perhaps he cannot obtain its favour; he courts it, though it be coy to him.

*Is the enemy of God;* exerciseth hostility against God, by adhering to an interest so contrary to him.

#### James 4:5

Ver. 5. *Do ye think that the Scripture saith in vain?* Greek, emptily, or vainly, i.e. to no purpose. This question hath the force of a negation, q. d. It doth not speak in vain.

*Question.* What is it which the Scripture doth not speak in vain?

*Answer.* Either those truths he had been speaking of before, particularly in the former verse, *that the friendship of the world is enmity with God;* or, that which follows in this verse, *the spirit that dwelleth in us,* &c.

*The spirit that dwelleth in us;* either the Spirit of God, who is said to dwell in believers, 1Co 3:16,17; or the spirit of men, viz. as defiled by sin, and acted by the devil, who works in men while children of disobedience; and then it is the same as corrupt nature.

*Lusteth to envy;* either is vehemently carried out to envy, or makes us lust, and carrieth us out to it; or lusteth against envy: so the Greek preposition is often used, as Lu 20:19 Eph 6:11 Heb 12:4. Under *envy* he comprehends



all other fleshly lusts, but instanceth in this particularly, as having been speaking of it before, Jas 3:14,16; and because it hath so near a connection with other lusts, whereof it is the cause, or concomitant, and so is a principal member of the old man. This latter clause may either be read interrogatively or affirmatively; and then according as we take *spirit*, either for the Spirit of God, or the human spirit, the sense of the words may be either:

1. Doth the Spirit of God, that dwelleth in us, lust unto envy, i.e. incline and dispose us to so base an affection? The answer is understood: No, and confirmed by the next words, *he giveth more grace*, gives freely, liberally, and therefore doth not make us envy others any good they have. Nothing is more contrary to the Spirit of God, who abounds in his gifts to us, than to make us envy others theirs. Or:
2. We may understand it without any interrogation, taking the preposition to signify, against; and then the sense is: That good Spirit which is in us teacheth us better things than strife and envy, &c., for it lusteth against envy, i.e. makes us lust against it, carries out our hearts to hate and resist it. And this well agrees with what follows; The Spirit, &c., lusts against envy, but he gives more grace, viz. than to envy the good of others. Or:
3. If *spirit* here be understood of the spirit of man, corrupt nature, the sense is plain, as the words lie; man's spirit (especially by the instigation of the devil) lusts, or strongly inclines, to envy, and consequently to other wickednesses, but he (that is, God, Jas 4:4) gives more grace.

*Question.* Where is any such sentence to be found in the Scripture?

*Answer.* No where in so many words; but which soever of these ways we take the words, we find the sense in the Scripture. Joshua's envying Eldad and Medad's prophesying, for Moses's sake, seems to be an instance of this lust, Nu 11:29, (compared with Ge 6:5 8:21, where the general inclination of man's heart by nature is said to be evil), and Moses's not envying them an instance of the two former.

### James 4:6

Ver. 6. *But he;* either the Spirit of God, if *spirit* in the former verse be understood of the Spirit of God; or God, if *spirit* be there taken for the spirit of man.

*Giveth more grace;* either, though we, according to our natural inclination, be envious, yet God (or his Spirit) is bountiful and liberal; or God gives to those that are renewed, more grace than to be hurried on by their own old spirit, to envy, strife, and suchlike lusts.

*Wherefore he saith;* God saith, viz. in the Scripture: or it may be taken indefinitely, and impersonally, for, it is said. The particular place he refers to, is Pr 3:34, according to the translation of the LXX., which not only James, but other New Testament writers, frequently follow.

*God resisteth;* it is a military term: God sets himself, as in battle, against the proud, defying, beating down, exposing to contempt, and destroying them; he is so far from giving them more gifts, that he rather spoils them, as sworn enemies, of what they have.

*The proud;* those that by reason of the gifts God hath given them, lift themselves above others: Solomon, in the parallel place, calls them *scorners*; it being the usual guise of those that think over-well of themselves, to despise others, and even contemn the warnings and judgments of God himself, which may well draw him out to fight against them.

*But giveth grace unto the humble;* not only gives favour and honour in the sight of men to those that are lowly in their own eyes, but especially furnisheth them with grace for the overcoming and mortifying their carnal desires and remaining corruptions.

### James 4:7

Ver. 7. *Submit yourselves therefore to God;* viz. voluntarily and freely, and that not only in a way of obedience to all his commands, but (which is chiefly meant here) in a way of humility, and sense of your weakness, and

emptiness, and need of his grace.

*Therefore;* both because of the danger of pride, (opposed in the former verse to humility), he *resisteth the proud;* and because of the benefit that comes by humility, he *giveth grace to the humble.*

*Resist,* by faith, and the rest of the spiritual armour, Eph 6:13,14, &c. Or, *resist,* i.e. comply not with his motions and temptations.

*The devil;* the head and leader of fleshly lusts. These likewise are military terms. Having spoken before of strife and contention, he directs here with whom we may, and with whom we may not, contend. He had commended modesty toward men, they are our equals, we must not lift ourselves above them, nor envy nor strive with them; here he adviseth to submission to God as our supreme Governor, we must not contend with him; and to open war with the devil as our great enemy, our contention must be with him.

*And he will flee from you;* as to that particular assault in which you resist him; and though he return again, and tempt you again, yet you still resisting, he will still be overcome; ye are never conquered so long as you do not consent.

#### James 4:8

Ver. 8. *Draw nigh to God;* by faith, which is a coming to God, Heb 7:25; by true repentance, which is a returning to God, Ho 14:1 Mal 3:7; and by fervent prayer to him for the help of his grace, Ps 25:1.

*And he will draw nigh to you;* by the manifestation of his grace and favour to you, particularly giving you strength against the devil and your lusts.

*Cleanse your hands;* reform your actions, amend your lives. Hands, the principal instruments of bodily actions, being put for the actions themselves; cleanness of hands signifies the innocency of the outward conversation, Job 22:30 Ps 24:4 26:6 Isa 33:15,16.

*Ye sinners;* you that are openly and notoriously vicious, whose wickedness appears in your ordinary practices: so such are called, Mt

11:19 Mr 2:15 Lu 7:37 15:2 Joh 9:31.

*And purify your hearts;* your thoughts and inward affections, from whence the evils of your outward actions proceed, Isa 60:7: see 1Pe 1:22 1Jo 3:3.

*Ye double minded;* either by the former he understands the profane, and by these, hypocrites, or the same by both, viz. such as had wicked hearts, and led wicked lives; only he shows wherein true repentance consists, viz. in the reformation both of the inward and outward man.

James 4:9

Ver. 9. *Be afflicted;* humble yourselves for your sins, before mentioned, and in the sense of wrath approaching, if ye do not.

*And mourn,* with inward sorrow of heart.

*And weep;* show your inward grief by weeping, the usual expression and sign of it.

*Let your laughter;* your carnal rejoicing in what you get by sinful courses, Jas 4:1,2, lusting, warring, fighting.

*Be turned into mourning;* exchange your carnal joy for godly sorrow.

*And your joy;* to the same purpose as laughter, before: by it he means their pleasing themselves in the success of their unrighteousness, the gain of their rapine and violence.

*Into heaviness;* the same as mourning, or an outward expression of it in the dejection of the countenance, which usually proceeds from shame or sorrow, (and the Greek word signifies both), whereas joy and confidence make men lift up their heads or faces, Ezr 9:6 Job 10:15 Job 11:15 22:26 Lu 21:28.

James 4:10

Ver. 10. *Humble yourselves:* the same duty pressed again, only with respect to the more internal part of it, the debasement of the heart, lest they should rest too much in the outward exercises before mentioned. They did lift up themselves through pride and emulation, and he shows them the best way to the truest exaltation, viz. humility, Mt 23:12 Pr 15:33 18:12.

*In the sight of the Lord;* sincerely, as in the presence of the Searcher of hearts.

*And he shall lift you up;* as to your outward state and enjoyments, so far as God sees good for you; but, however, in grace here, and glory hereafter, Lu 14:11.

#### James 4:11

Ver. 11. *Speak not evil one of another;* viz. unless in the way of an ordinance, by reproof, admonition, &c., Le 5:1 1Co 1:11 11:18 2Co 11:13 2Ti 4:14,15.

He forbids all detraction, rigid censuring, and rash judging the hearts and lives of others, when men condemn whatever doth not suit with their notions or humours, and make their own moroseness the rule of other men's manners.

*Judgeth his brother;* finds fault with and condemns him for those things which the law doth not condemn in him, or forbid to him, Ro 14:3,4.

*Judgeth the law;* viz. either:

1. By his practising and approving what the law condemns, i.e. this very censoriousness and detraction: or:
2. By condemning that which the law allows; he condemns the law for allowing it, taxing it as too short and imperfect.

*But if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge;* if thou not only judgest thy brother, and therein invadest the law's office, (whose part it is to judge him), but judgest him for what the law doth not

forbid him, and therein judgest the law itself, as insufficient, and not strict enough; thou dost cast off the law's government, disown its superiority, exempt thyself from any subjection to it, and make thyself merely a judge of it.

### James 4:12

Ver. 12. *There is one lawgiver;* one absolute, supreme, universal and spiritual Lawgiver, and who can simply and directly bind men's consciences, and make laws for their souls, Pr 8:15,16 Isa 33:22 Ac 4:19. By this he intimates, that they did invade God's right, who took upon them a legislative power in prescribing to other men's consciences, and making their own will the rule of the others' duty.

*Who is able to save and to destroy,* both temporally and eternally, De 32:39 1Sa 2:6 Isa 43:13; whereas other lawgivers cannot save or destroy men's souls, nor so much as their lives, without God's concurrence.

*Who art thou;* what a sorry creature, a man, a worm, that thou shouldst lift up thyself into God's place, and make thyself a judge of one not subject to thee!

*That judgest another;* the servant of another Master, Ro 14:4. It is a fond thing for thee to take upon thee the power of a judge, when thou hast no power of saving or destroying, rewarding or punishing.

### James 4:13

Ver. 13. *Go to now;* either this is a note of transition, or of command to inferiors, or rather of admonition to such as are stupid or rash, and tends to the awakening their attention, and stirring them up to the consideration of their duty, danger, &c.

*Ye that say;* either with your mouths, or in your hearts.

*To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city;* not, let us go, but, *we will go,* in the indicative mood; noting the peremptoriness of their

purposes, and their presuming upon future times and things, which were not in their power.

*And continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:* he doth not condemn merchants travelling into other countries, nor trading there, nor designing gain by their trade, nor forecasting their business; but their promising themselves the continuance of their life, the accomplishing their designs, and the success of their labours, without respect to God's providence and direction, as if their times and their works were in their own hands, not in his.

#### James 4:14

Ver. 14. *Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow;* whether ye yourselves shall continue till then, or what else shall then be, or not be. In vain do ye boast of whole years, when ye cannot command the events of one day.

*For what is your life?* This question implies contempt, as 1Sa 25:10 Ps 144:3,4.

*It is even a vapour;* like a vapour, frail, uncertain, and of short continuance; and then how vain are those counsels and purposes that are built upon no more sure a foundation than your own lives.

#### James 4:15

Ver. 15. *For that ye ought to say:* it is the real acknowledgment of God's providence, and the dependence of all our affairs upon him, which is here required; and this is to be done, either expressly with the mouth in such like forms of speech as this is, so far as is needful for our glorifying God, and distinguishing ourselves from those that are profane, as hath been customary with the saints in Scripture, Ac 18:21 Ro 1:10, and other places, but always inwardly, and in the heart.

*If the Lord will;* i.e. with his providential or directive will, which as yet we do not know, and therefore we say: *If the Lord will:* for all our counsels

and determinations must be regulated by his preceptive or directive will, which we do know; and therefore, with respect to that will, we are not to say: We will do this, or that, if God will, i.e. commands it, but we must first see that it be commanded, and then resolve to do it if God will, that is, if in his providence he shall permit us.

*If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that;* some read the words: If the Lord will, and we shall live, we will do this, or that; and then the latter copulative *and* is redundant, and the sense is, that all our actions depend not only upon our living, but upon God's willing; God may permit us to live, and yet not permit us to do this or that. But if we take the words according to our reading: *If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that,* the meaning is, that both our life and actions depend upon the will of God, nor the one, nor the other, is in our power. And so here is a double check to the vain boasts of those that were so peremptory in their resolutions, without considering the frailty of their own lives, or the dependence of their actions upon God's will, when both the one and the other are at his disposal.

#### James 4:16

Ver. 16. *But now ye rejoice,* or, glory; ye please yourselves with them.

*In your boastings;* viz. of your carnal projects, and hopes of what you intend to do, and expect to get: q. d. You vainly boast of your designs and successes, without taking notice of God's providence, under the government of which you and your affairs all are.

*All such rejoicing is evil;* both as being contrary to the word, which assures us so often that it is vain to promise ourselves long life, or prosperity in our worldly business, without God's leave and blessing, Ps 127:1 Pr 16:9,33; and likewise as proceeding from pride and security.

#### James 4:17

Ver. 17. Either this may relate to all that the apostle had been before speaking of; q. d. I have admonished you of your duty, and now ye know



what ye are to do, and therefore if you do it not it will be your sin: or, it may refer to what he was immediately before discoursing of, and may be spoken to prevent an objection. They might say, he taught them no more than what they knew already; and that they acknowledged God's providence in all things. To this he replies, that if they knew their duty, they ought to practise it, and so actually submit themselves and their affairs to the conduct of that providence; and their not doing it, now that they knew it, would the rather be their sin.

*To him it is sin;* i.e. sin indeed, or (as we say) sin with a witness; a greater sin, and which hath more of the nature of sin in it, or is more highly aggravated, by being against knowledge, and so is punishable with severer vengeance, than if done out of ignorance, Lu 12:47. See the like expression, Joh 9:41 15:22,24.

## James 5:1

### Chapter Summary

Jas 5:1-6 Wicked rich men are warned of God's impending judgment.

Jas 5:7-11 The brethren are exhorted to patience, after the example of the prophets and of Job,

Jas 5:12 to abstain from swearing,

Jas 5:13-15 to pray in affliction and sickness, and sing psalms in prosperity,

Jas 5:16-18 to acknowledge mutually their faults, and to pray for one another,

Jas 5:19,20 and to endeavour to reclaim sinners.

Ver. 1. *Go to now:* see Jas 4:13.

*Ye rich men;* he speaks to them not simply as rich, (for riches and grace sometimes may go together), but as wicked, not only wallowing in wealth, but abusing it to pride, luxury, oppression, and cruelty.

Against these, either as looking on them as incurable, or upon

supposition of their impenitency, he denounceth God's judgments; and that whether they were unconverted Jews, vexing the believing Jews; or Gentiles, oppressing the Christian Jews; or Christians in profession and name, who yet were so vile in their practice, as to condemn and kill the just; and that they might more speciously do it, to draw them before the judgment-seats, &c.

*Weep and howl;* to denote the extremity of the calamities coming upon them, in which they should not only weep like men, but howl like wild beasts: see Jer 4:8 Mic 1:8 Joe 1:10,13.

*For your miseries that shall come upon you;* or, are coming upon you, to signify the certainty and nearness of them. The miseries he means may be both temporal and eternal.

### James 5:2

Ver. 2. *Your riches are corrupted:* either by *riches* he means the general, and by *garments*, gold and silver, the particulars in which their riches consisted; and then being corrupted, is to be taken generally, as comprehending the several ways whereby the several kinds of their riches were spoiled: or else, by *riches* he understands such things as were liable to corruption, or putrefaction, as corn, wine, oil, which were a great part of their riches.

*And your garments are moth-eaten;* costly garments, in which rich men are wont to pride themselves; and under them may be comprehended all such clothes as may be eaten by worms or moths.

### James 5:3

Ver. 3. *Your gold and silver is cankered;* the most precious and lasting metals; yet even they, with long disuse, canker, and go to decay. Under these, other metals in esteem among them may be understood.

*And the rust of them shall be a witness against you:* by a prosopopoeia, that which properly belongs to living persons is ascribed to dead things, as Hab 2:11 Lu 19:40. It is as much as if he had said: The rust shall be a certain evidence against you, and which will as effectually convict you, as any living witness could do, of your folly in putting your trust in perishing things, your greediness in hoarding them up, your unmercifulness in not supplying the wants of others, and your unreasonableness in denying the use of them to yourselves, when you had rather let them lie by and perish, than enjoy the comfort of them, or do good with them. The like expression we have, Mr 6:11.

*And shall eat your flesh;* the rust (the witness of your covetousness and cruelty) which now eats your money, shall hereafter devour yourselves, soul and body, (which he means by *flesh*), viz. by procuring and kindling the wrath of God upon you, (compared to fire), and likewise by galling your consciences with a vexatious remembrance of your sin and folly; and so what in the judgment is a witness against you, in hell will be a tormentor to you.

*As it were fire;* as if you had reserved fire in your treasure, as well as treasure in your chests.

*Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days:* either this may be understood metaphorically, ye have heaped a treasure of wrath for the last days, Ro 2:5; or literally, ye have hoarded up your wealth against the last and fatal days, in which God is bringing those judgments upon you which will consume all.

#### James 5:4

Ver. 4. *Behold;* this is either a note of demonstration, as Joh 1:29; q. d. The case is plain, and cannot be denied; or of excitation; q. d. Seriously consider it; or rather, of confirmation, to intimate, that the threatenings here denounced should certainly be made good upon them: see Jude 1:14.

*The hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields;* the wages of those by whose labour and sweat ye yourselves live and are nourished.

*Which is of you kept back by fraud;* either wholly denied them, or detained from them when due to them, contrary to the law, Le 19:13 De 24:14,15. Deferring payment is a sort of defrauding, as it bereaves the creditor of the benefit of improvement; and so they are taxed here with injustice, as well as covetousness, in that they lived upon other men's labours, and starved the poor to enrich themselves.

*Crieth;* viz. to God for vengeance, as such sins are said to do, which either are so openly and boldly committed, as to dare the justice of God, or so secretly, or securely, that they are like to escape the justice of men, Ge 4:10 18:20,21. Among others, oppression of the poor is a loud crying sin, Ex 2:23 Job 24:11,12 Hab 2:9,11,12.

*The Lord of sabaoth;* i. e. the Lord of hosts, as having all the creatures above and below, of all sorts, ranked under him as their great Commander, whose will they are ready to execute. He mentions God by this title, not only for the encouragement of the poor oppressed, whose Patron and Protector he avows himself to be, Ex 22:23,24,27 Pr 23:11; but for terror to the powerful oppressors, who think themselves out of the reach of men's judgment.

### James 5:5

Ver. 5. *Ye have lived in pleasure;* luxuriously and deliciously, giving up yourselves to your sensual appetites, Am 6:4-6 Lu 16:19,25.

*On the earth;* where you place your happiness without looking higher, and from whence you fetch your delights, Php 3:19.

*And been wanton:* the same word is used 1Ti 5:6; it seems to imply effeminate, lascivious behaviour, as the effect of their riotous living.

*Ye have nourished your hearts:* either by a Hebrew phrase, ye have nourished your hearts, for ye have nourished yourselves, Es 6:6 Job 10:13; or, ye have cheered up and encouraged your hearts in your luxury by pampering your flesh, (Lu 12:19), and feeding not to the satisfaction of nature, but the inflaming of your lusts.

*As in a day of slaughter;* either securely, and without fear of the destruction coming upon you, as sheep graze quietly, though by and by to be brought to the shambles; or rather, *in a day of slaughter,* i.e. in a day of solemn feasting, when many beasts were killed in sacrifice, on which they were wont to feast, Pr 7:14 17:1. They made every day a feasting day, and that, too, lavishing out other men's dues upon their own flesh, and sparing from their labourers that they might spend upon their lusts. This he brings to aggravate their sin.

### James 5:6

Ver. 6. *Ye have condemned and killed;* i.e. procured by your wealth and power the passing unrighteous sentences, and thereby the destruction of the just.

*The just;* indefinitely and collectively, *the just* for any just man, viz. such as were innocent and just in comparison of their persecutors.

*And he doth not resist you;* this notes not only the patience of such in bearing injuries, but their weakness, and being destitute of human help against their adversaries' power.

### James 5:7

Ver. 7. *Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord;* viz. to judgment, and that either particular, to avenge the quarrels of innocent sufferers upon their tyrannical persecutors; or rather, to the general judgment, in which a full retribution is to be made both to the just and unjust, Ro 2:5,6, &c. To which judgment the Scripture calls all to look, especially those that are under oppression and persecution, 2Th 1:6,7, &c.

*Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth;* which cost him hard labour, and by which he receives great benefit, the sustentation of his life.

*Until he receive the early and latter rain;* the rain soon after the sowing, which caused the corn to spring up; and that before the harvest, which plumped it, and made it fit for reaping, De 11:14 Jer 5:24 Ho 6:3 Joe 2:23.

### James 5:8

Ver. 8. *Be ye also patient;* viz. in expectation of your harvest, and the fruit of your labours, as the husbandman is in looking for his.

*Stablish your hearts;* let your hearts be steadfast in faith and constant in holiness, encouraging yourselves to both by the coming of the Lord.

*For the coming of the Lord draweth nigh;* as before, his coming to the general judgment, which is said to be nigh, because of the certainty of its coming, and the uncertainty of the time when it will come, and because it is continually drawing on, and the whole time of the world's duration till then is but short in comparison of the eternity following; and likewise because the particular judgment of every man is nigh at hand. See Php 4:5 Heb 10:37.

## James 5:9

Ver. 9. *Grudge not;* Greek: Groan not; the sense may be, either: Envy not one another, (or, as we translate it: *Grudge not*), it being the nature of envy to groan at other men's good; or, Groan not by way of accusation or complaint to God against others, desiring him to avenge your quarrels, as if you were too good to suffer injuries, or God were unjust or forgetful of righting you.

*One against another;* brother against brother, Christian against Christian: they were injured not only by rich worldlings and open oppressors, but by their fellow professors, and gave one another mutual cause of sighing and groaning.

*Lest ye be condemned;* lest God punish you all; there being none of you but have given others cause of grief and complaint, as well as others have given you, Mt 7:1.

*Behold, the Judge standeth before the door;* the Lord Jesus Christ, the Judge of you all, is at hand, (Php 4:5), in a readiness either to bring those evils upon you which you wish may fall upon others, or to give you your reward, if *through patient continuance in well doing* you seek for it, Ro 2:7. The like phrase we have, Mt 24:33 Mr 13:29; or it may allude to Ge 4:7.

## James 5:10

Ver. 10. *Take, my brethren, the prophets;* as being most eminent among God's people, and leaders of them; he intimates that it is an honour to suffer among the best.

*Who have spoken in the name of the Lord;* by his command and authority, and so were employed in the highest services in the church, and thereby appeared to be approved of God, and most dear to him.

*For an example of suffering affliction:* as much as God honoured and loved them, yet they were not exempted from afflictions, but were maligned, traduced, and persecuted by men, 1Ki 18:13 19:14 2Ki 6:31 Am 7:10 Heb 11:1-40; and therefore when they suffered such hard things, it is no shame for you to suffer the like, Mt 5:12.

*And of patience;* as the example of their sufferings should prevent your discouragement, so the example of their patience should provoke your imitation;

God having set them forth as examples of both, that if you suffer the same things, you may suffer with the same minds.

### James 5:11

Ver. 11. *We count them happy which endure;* we ourselves count them happy that endure, and therefore should be patient, and not count ourselves miserable if we endure too.

*Which endure;* viz. patiently and constantly, Mt 5:10,11.

*Ye have heard of the patience of Job;* for which he was as eminent as for his sufferings; and though some signs of impatience be showed, yet his patience and submission to God being prevalent, and most remarkable to him, that only is taken notice of, and his failings overlooked.

*And have seen the end of the Lord:* Job's patience is heard of, but God's end seen: seeing being a clearer way of perception than hearing, is put in this latter clause, because God's bounty and recompence was more evident than Job's patience.

*The end of the Lord;* the good issue God gave to all Job's sufferings, in restoring him to his former state, and doubling his prosperity.

*That the Lord is very pitiful;* full of bowels, Greek; the bowels being the seat of compassion, (in which we feel a stirring when strong affections are working in us), are frequently put to signify the most tender and movable affections, such as mothers have toward their children, Ge 43:30 1Ki 3:26 Isa 43:15 Col 3:12: this seems to note the affection itself, or God's readiness to show mercy, Lu 1:78.

*And of tender mercy:* this may imply acts of mercy suitable to a merciful nature, the former mercy within, and this mercy breaking out.

### James 5:12

Ver. 12. Because it is a great sin to swear upon every slight occasion, and it was very usual among the Jews, and it was the more difficult to bring them off from it who were so much accustomed to it; therefore the apostle commands them, that *above all things* they should not swear, i.e. should take special care they did not, and watch diligently against a sin so many were addicted to, and into which they might so easily fall.

*Swear not;* all swearing is not forbidden, any more than Mt 5:34; (for oaths are made use of by holy men both in the Old and New Testament, Ge 21:23,24 24:3 26:28 1Ki 17:1,2 2Co 1:23 Ga 1:20; and the use of an oath is permitted and approved of by God himself, Ps 15:4 Heb 6:16); but such oaths as are false, rash, vain, without just cause, or customary and frequent in ordinary discourse, 1Ki 19:2 Jer 5:2 Mt 5:37.

*Neither by heaven, neither by the earth;* by which the Jews thought they might lawfully swear, as likewise by other creatures, so the name of God were not interposed; not considering that where it is not expressed yet it is implied, Mt 23:20,21.

*Neither by any other oath;* viz. of the like kind.

*But let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay:* either:

1. Let your speech be yea, yea, and nay, nay; i.e. by plain affirmations and negations, without the addition of any oath for confirmation, Mt 5:37: or:
2. *Let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay,* i.e. let your words be in truth and sincerity, your speech seconded by your actions; accustom yourselves to truth and plainness in speaking, and that will take away the occasion of swearing. See the like, 2Co 1:17-19.

*Lest ye fall into condemnation;* viz. for taking the name of God in vain, Ex 20:7, which is always done in an unwarrantable oath.

### James 5:13

Ver. 13. *Is any among you afflicted?* either troubled or afflicted in mind, as appears by the opposite being *merry*, or more generally afflicted any way. Not that we need not pray at other times, but when under afflictions God calls us more especially to it, and our own necessities put us upon it.

*Let him pray;* for support, patience, sanctification of afflictions, &c.

*Is any merry? let him sing psalms;* express his mirth in a holy manner, by praising God with psalms or spiritual songs for mercies received from him, 1Co 14:15 Eph 5:19; and so keep up his spiritual mirth by a spiritual exercise, lest his cheerfulness degenerate into vanity and frothiness.



## James 5:14

Ver. 14. *Is any sick?* Or infirm, though not desperately and incurably.

*Let him call for the elders;* especially teaching elders, they being usually best furnished with gifts who labour in the word and doctrine, 1Ti 5:17. It is in the plural number, either by an enallage for the singular; q. d. Let him send for some or other of the elders; or, because there were in those times usually several elders (an ecclesiastical senate) in each church.

*And let them pray over him;* as it were setting him before God, and presenting him to him, which might be a means to stir up the greater affection and warmth in prayer; see 1Ki 17:21 2Ki 4:33,34 Joh 11:41 Ac 20:10 9:40; or laying on their hands, as Ac 28:8, which yet seems to be for the same end.

*Anointing him with oil;* an outward rite used in those times, in miraculous healing sick persons, which might then be kept up, while the gift whereof it was the symbol continued; but the gift ceasing, it is vainly used. These cures were sometimes wrought only with a word, Ac 9:34 14:10 16:18; sometimes by taking by the hand, or embracing, Ac 3:7 20:10; sometimes by laying on of hands, Mr 16:18 Ac 9:17; sometimes by anointing with oil, Mr 6:13; and so this is not an institution of a sacrament, but a command, that those elders that had the gift of healing, (as many in those days had), being called by the sick to come to them, should (the Spirit of the Lord so directing them) exercise that gift, as well as pray over them.

*In the name of the Lord;* either, calling upon the Lord, and so joining prayer with their anointing; or, *in the name,* is by the authority of the Lord, from whom they had received that gift.

## James 5:15

Ver. 15. *And the prayer of faith;* i.e. proceeding from faith; the cure is ascribed to prayer, the moral means, and standing ordinance, not to the anointing, which was but ceremonial and temporary; and to faith in prayer, to show that this remedy was effectual only when faith (requisite to the working of miracles) was active, viz. in a certain persuasion that the sick person should be healed.

*Shall save the sick;* restore to health, (if God see it fit, and the health of the body be good for the soul), Mr 10:52 Lu 7:50 18:42.

*And the Lord shall raise him up;* the elders pray, but the Lord raiseth up, being

prayed to in faith.

*Raise him up;* the same as saving before, only the word seems to respect the sick man's lying upon his bed, from which he riseth when he is healed, Mr 1:31.

*If he have committed sins;* if he have by his sins procured his sickness; or, those sins for which particularly God visits him with sickness; sin being often the cause of sickness, Mt 9:2 Joh 5:14 1Co 11:30, though not always, Joh 9:2.

*They shall be forgiven him;* God will take away the cause as well as the effect, heal the soul as well as the body, and prayer is the means of obtaining both.

### James 5:16

Ver. 16. *Confess your faults;* some copies have the illative particle, therefore, in the text, but even without that here seems to be a connexion between this and the former verse: he had said, the sick man's sins should be forgiven upon the elders' praying; and here he adds, that they must be confessed.

*One to another;* either, that ye may be reconciled to one another when offended, or rather, confess when admonished or reproved for sin, or wounded in your consciences with the sense of it: and so this is not meant of auricular confession made to a priest, but such as should be made, though especially to ministers, yet, when need is, even to godly, experienced Christians, for the easing and disburdening men's consciences, and getting the help of others' prayers.

*And pray one for another;* both in other ordinary cases, and chiefly upon occasion of your mutual confessions, and those soul-troubles that prompted you to them.

*That ye may be healed;* not only recover bodily health when sick, but spiritual, when weakened or wounded by sin. Healing is often applied to the soul as well as the body, Mt 13:15 Lu 4:18 Heb 12:13 1Pe 2:24.

*The effectual fervent prayer:* our translators use two words (and little enough) to express the significancy of the Greek word in this place: some translate it inwrought; it seems to be a prayer wrought in the soul by the Holy Spirit, and so may imply both the efficiency of God's Spirit, (the Spirit of supplications, Zec 12:10), and the vehemency of holy affections caused by him in prayer, Ro 8:26.

*Of a righteous man;* one sincerely righteous, and in a gospel sense; the following instance of Elias shows that it is not to be understood of a man absolutely righteous.

*Avaieth much;* is very powerful with God for obtaining what is desired, 1Jo 5:14; whereas God heareth not sinners, Pr 15:8,29.

### James 5:17

Ver. 17. *Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are;* both of body and mind, natural and moral; and so, though he were righteous, yet he was not perfect; though an eminent prophet, yet but a man.

*And he prayed earnestly;* with that effectual, fervent prayer before mentioned. It is a Hebrew phrase, and notes vehemency, as Lu 22:15.

*That it might not rain;* this is not expressly mentioned in the history, but this apostle might have it by revelation, or by certain tradition well known in his age. Other passages of the like nature we meet with in the New Testament which are not in the Old: see 1Ti 3:8 Heb 12:21 Jude 1:9.

*And it rained not on the earth;* or, the land, viz. of the ten tribes, and the places bordering on them, as Sarepta, 1Ki 17:9 Lu 4:25,26.

*By the space of three years and six months:* so Lu 4:25.

*Question.* How doth this agree with 1Ki 18:1, where it is said, *the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year?*

*Answer.* Most probably it was in the midst of the third year from his coming to Sarepta; and he was by the brook Cherith a year. 1Ki 17:7, where the margin reads it, according to the Hebrew, at the end of days, i.e. the days of a year, as the phrase is often used, Ge 4:3 Jud 17:10; so that his time spent in both places may well make up the *three years and six months*.

### James 5:18

Ver. 18. *And he prayed again;* after the destroying the prophets of Baal. Baal-worship especially gave occasion to his former prayer, which he puts up out of his zeal to God's glory, then laid low by the Israelites' idolatry, and a desire to have them by some exemplary punishment for their sin awakened to repentance. And the destruction of the idolaters, and reformation of the people, who now acknowledged the Lord to be God, might give occasion to this.

*And the heaven gave rain;* i.e. the air or clouds, which had not been for three years before.

### James 5:19

Ver. 19. *The truth;* the truth of God revealed in the gospel as the complete rule of faith and life: see the gospel called *the truth* by way of eminency, Jas 1:18 Ga 2:5,14 3:1 5:7 Eph 1:13 1Pe 1:22.

*And one;* any one, minister or private believer, who may be an instrument in the conversion of others; though one acts by way of authority, the other by way of charity, yet both out of duty.

*Convert him;* viz. ministerially or instrumentally, in subordination to God. The work is his, Eph 2:10, but often is ascribed to the instruments acting under him, and using means appointed by him, and by which he works, Ac 26:18.

### James 5:20

Ver. 20. *Of his way;* of his life and actions, which is contrary to the way which God hath prescribed.

*Shall save;* men are said to save in the same way as to convert, viz. instrumentally.

*A soul;* the soul of him that is thus converted, 1Ti 4:16: *soul* for person, as Jas 1:21.

*From death:* eternal death, unto which he was hastening while he continued in the error of his way, which led him toward destruction.

*And shall hide a multitude of sins;* in the same sense as before he is said to convert and save his soul, viz. in being instrumental to bring him to faith and repentance, upon which God pardons, i.e. hides his sins, (Ps 32:1), though not from the eye of his omniscience, yet from the eye of his vindictive justice, and so as not to bring them forth in judgment against him.

## 1 Peter 1:1

### THE ARGUMENT

Of the penman of this Epistle there is no doubt; and of the time of his writing it, no certainty, whether about the year of our Lord 45, or rather 65. The occasion of it may (not improbably) be thought to be the same that was of James's writing his, viz. the folly and perverseness of some in those times, and among the Jewish Christians to whom he wrote, in separating faith from holiness, and their doubting whether Peter and Paul taught the same doctrine. His scope therefore is, partly to confirm these saints in the belief of the gospel, and to testify that the doctrine of the grace of God through Jesus Christ, which they had embraced and did profess, was indeed infallibly true, 1Pe 5:12, being the same that had been preached by the prophets to the fathers of the Old Testament, 1Pe 1:10-12; fairly implying it to be the same that Paul preached, by his sending this Epistle to them that were of the circumcision, by Silvanus, a minister of the uncircumcision, and Paul's ordinary companion in the work of the gospel; as likewise he doth by that ample testimony he gives to Paul and his writings, 2Pe 3:15,16. And partly to exhort them to the practice of godliness, and a conversation suitable to the gospel: and that he doth, both as to the general duties incumbent on all believers, 1Pe 1:13-2:12; and as to the particular duties which concerned them in their several relations, subjects to magistrates, servants to masters, husbands and wives mutually to each other, ministers to people, younger people to their elders, and especially sufferers towards their oppressors and persecutors; but withal intermixing several general duties, and of concernment to all, and concluding all with prayer and salutation.

### Chapter Summary

1Pe 1:1,2 The apostle's address to the strangers elect in Christ, dispersed throughout the Lesser Asia.

1Pe 1:3-9 He blesseth God for having raised them to the hope of a blessed immortality.

1Pe 1:10-12 He showeth that their salvation in Christ had been foretold by the prophets

of old,  
1Pe 1:13-21 and exhorteth them to a vigilant and holy conversation, suitable to their calling and redemption by the blood of Christ,  
1Pe 1:22-25 and to mutual love.

Ver. 1. *To the strangers;* not only metaphorically strangers, as all believers are in the world, 1Pe 2:11; but properly, as being out of their own land, and so really strangers in the places here mentioned.

*Scattered;* so Jas 1:1.

*Throughout Pontus;* a country of the Lesser Asia, bordering upon the Euxine sea, and reaching as far as Colchis.

*Galatia;* which borders upon Pontus, and lies southward of it. To the Gentile churches inhabiting here, Paul wrote his Epistle inscribed to the Galatians.

*Cappadocia;* this likewise borders upon Pontus, and is joined with it, Ac 2:9.

*Asia;* that part of Asia the Less, which was especially called Asia. viz. the whole country of Ionia, which contained in it Troas, Phrygia, Lydia, Carla, &c. See Ac 16:6,9 19:10,31.

*And Bithynia;* another province of the Lesser Asia, bordering upon Pontus and Galatia, and opposite to Thracia.

*Question.* Who were the strangers to whom this Epistle was written?

*Answer.* Chiefly the Christian Jews scattered in these countries, as appears by 1Pe 2:12, and 1Pe 1:18, where he mentions the *traditions* of their *fathers*, of which the Jews were so fond, Mt 15:2 Ga 1:14; but secondarily, to the converted Gentiles. As Paul, the apostle of the uncircumcision, wrote principally to the converted Gentiles, at Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, &c., but doth not exclude those Jews that were among them, who, being converted to the faith, were of the same mystical body with them; so Peter,

though he firstly wrote to the converted Jews, as being an apostle of the circumcision, yet includes the Gentiles that were mingled among them, and joined in faith and worship with them.

### 1 Peter 1:2

Ver. 2. By *elect* he means, either:

1. Singled out of the world, and separated unto God in their effectual calling, as 1Co 1:1; those that are said to be called, 1Co 1:26, are said to be chosen, 1Co 1:27,28; and so the word seems to be taken, Jas 2:5: or:
2. Chosen to salvation, and the means of it, in God's eternal decree, Eph 1:4 2Th 2:13.

*According to the foreknowledge*; either:

1. The Divine preordination, or decree of election, as the word is taken, 1Pe 1:20, and then we may take *elect* in the first sense; men are chosen out of the world, or called in time, according as they were chosen from eternity, Ro 8:30: or:
2. *Foreknowledge* here is as much as approbation or love, Mt 7:25 Ro 11:2; and so signifies the free favour and good will of God, which is the fountain from whence the decree of election proceeds; and then we are to take *elect* in the latter sense, and so *elect according to the foreknowledge of God*, is, eternally designed unto life, according to, or out of, that free grace and love God did from eternity bear to them, which was the only motive he had for his choosing them: or, (which comes to the same), by *foreknowledge* we may understand election itself, as it is in God; and by election, the same, as terminated in the creature, and executed in effectual calling.

*Of God the Father*; this doth not exclude the Son or Spirit from their interest in and concurrence to the Divine decree, but only notes the order of working among the three Persons in the affair of man's salvation; election is ascribed to the Father, reconciliation to the Son, and sanctification to the Spirit.

*Through sanctification*: sanctification seems to be taken in a

large sense, for the whole change of our spiritual state, both as to real grace in regeneration, and relative in justification; so that God may then be said to sanctify us, when in our effectual calling he justifies us from our sins, and renews us unto obedience: so it is taken, Heb 10:10.

*Of the Spirit;* this is to be understood rather of the Spirit of God, the efficient of sanctification, than the spirit or soul of man, the subject of it.

*Unto obedience;* either:

1. The obedience of Christ to God; and then the sense is, elect, or ordained to be, by the sanctification of the Spirit, made partakers of the benefits of Christ's obedience: or:
2. The obedience of believers to Christ, and that either in their believing, faith being a giving obedience to the great command of the gospel, Joh 6:29, and particularly called *obedience*, Ro 1:5; and then the sense runs thus, elect unto faith, which was to be wrought in you by the sanctification of the Spirit: or else in the exercise of holiness, which is the fruit of faith; and then it signifies the same as Eph 1:4, chosen, that you might be made, by the sanctification of the Spirit, holy and unblamable, and might accordingly demean yourselves.

*And sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ;* an allusion to the sprinkling of the blood of the sacrifices under the law, Heb 9:13,14,20-22 Heb 12:24; it signifies the application of the blood of Christ for the purging of the conscience, (which was typified by those legal sprinklings), especially from the guilt of sin; which sprinkling, or application of the blood of Christ to our consciences, is performed on our part by faith, on God's part by his Spirit working that faith in us (as well as enabling us unto obedience) in our effectual calling, as likewise by God's imputing Christ's righteousness to us; and so the sense of the whole is: Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, to be by the sanctification of the Spirit brought into the participation of all the benefits of Christ's redemption; the sum of which consists in the renovation of your natures unto gospel obedience, and the justification of your persons.

*Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied;* there being several



kinds of grace, 1Pe 4:10, and several kinds of peace, outward and inward, he wisheth them all kinds of each; and there being several degrees and measures of both, he prays for an increase of these degrees in them, and so a multiplication of all good, both temporal and spiritual, to them.

### 1 Peter 1:3

Ver. 3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;* either the conjunction *and* is here but an explicative particle, and so we render it, 2Co 1:3, *God, even the Father, &c.*; or if we take it for a copulative, as Eph 1:3: God is called the God of Jesus Christ, according to Christ's human nature, and his *Father* according to his Divine.

*Which according to his abundant mercy;* this shows the fountain from whence regeneration and all other spiritual blessings flow, and excludes all merit and dignity in us, as the cause of so great benefits.

*Abundant mercy* is the same with riches of mercy, Eph 2:4.

*Hath begotten us again;* translated us out of a state of sin and misery into a state of grace and life; and so begotten again here, is the same as sanctifying in the former verse.

*Unto a lively hope;* either *a lively hope*, for hope of life; or rather, a lively hope is a true and effectual hope, such as proceeds from a lively faith, and is itself productive of peace and purity, Ro 5:2 1Jo 3:3, in opposition to the vain hope of worldly men, which neither comes from faith nor tends to holiness.

*By the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead:* this may be referred either:

1. To God's begetting us again, and then it implies the resurrection of Christ to be the cause of our regeneration, we being raised to a spiritual life by the power of Christ's resurrection, and our vivification being often ascribed to it, 1Pe 3:21 Ro 4:25 6:4,5: see Eph 2:5. Or:
2. To the lively hope to which he begets us, which depends upon,

and ariseth from, the faith of Christ's resurrection, Ro 8:11 1Co 15:17,19 1Th 4:13,14. Christ's resurrection being the cause and pledge of ours, as the certainty of ours depends upon his, so the liveliness of our hope follows upon the faith of it. Possibly the apostle may have in these words some respect to the languishing condition of the hope of him, and the other disciples, Lu 24:21, which was then ready to expire, but was again revived by their being well assured of his resurrection, Lu 24:33,34.

#### 1 Peter 1:4

Ver. 4. To an inheritance; so eternal life is called, Eph 1:18, and elsewhere, as being given not as wages to hirelings, but as an inheritance to children born of God, and adopted to him.

*Incorruptible;* immortal, everlasting, which being once possessed, cannot be taken away, nor pass over to others.

*And undefiled;* both as being pure in itself, and having nothing to offend them that enjoy it; and likewise as being incapable of any pollution or defilement, contrary to what is said of the land of Canaan, the earthly inheritance of the Israelites, Jer 2:7 Eze 36:17.

*And that fadeth not away;* always retains its vigour and gratefulness, never causes weariness or satiety in them that possess it. It seems to be a metaphor taken from flowers, probably the amaranthus, (the very word here used), which still keeps its freshness and verdure, without any decay or withering.

*Reserved;* laid up, Col 1:5 2Ti 4:8; secured for the heirs, though not yet possessed by them.

*In heaven;* and therefore safe, and out of the reach of enemies. This is opposed to the uncertain condition of earthly possessions, such as Canaan was.

*For you;* margin, for us, viz. whom God hath begotten again: or if we read it, as in the text, *for you*, the apostle may change the person in order to his exhortation.

## 1 Peter 1:5

Ver. 5. *Who are kept:* lest it should be objected, that though the inheritance be safe in heaven, yet the heirs are in danger here upon earth, by reason of the power and stratagems of enemies, and their own imprudence and weakness; he adds, that not only their inheritance is reserved for them, but they preserved unto it, kept securely and carefully, as with a garrison, (for so the word signifies), against all the assaults, incursions, and devices of the devil and the world.

*By the power of God;* which power is infinite and invincible, and therefore able to keep them, Joh 10:28,29 Ro 8:31,38,39 2Ti 1:12.

*Through faith;* which, resting on the power of God, overcomes all their enemies, the flesh, 1Jo 3:9, the devil, 1Pe 5:9 Eph 6:16, and the world, 1Jo 5:4. It implies, that not only they themselves are kept through faith, whereby they rely on the power of their Keeper, and his promises of keeping them, but that they and their faith too are kept by the power of God.

*Unto salvation;* viz. full and complete in glory, and not only begun and imperfect here.

*Ready;* as being already purchased, prepared, and laid up for them; and so he intimates, that their not as yet possessing it, is not because it is not ready for them, but because the time of their being put in possession of it is not yet come.

*To be revealed:* it was said to be *reserved in heaven*, 1Pe 1:4, kept safe, but close too, as a rich treasure, the greatness of it is not yet known, even to them that are the heirs of it, Col 3:3,4 1Jo 3:2; here he adds, that it is *to be revealed*, and made known to them, so soon as the time of its manifestation shall come.

*In the last time;* simply and absolutely the last, viz. the day of judgment, which is called *the last day*, Joh 6:39,40 11:24 12:48.

## 1 Peter 1:6

Ver. 6. *Wherein;* this refers to the whole foregoing sentence; Ye rejoice in your being kept by the power of God unto salvation.

*Ye greatly rejoice:* the Greek word signifies something more than a bare rejoicing, and therefore is added to a word that signifies to rejoice, Mt 5:12, and implies an outward expression of the inward gladness of the heart, by looks, words, gestures, &c. Some read the word in the imperative mood, by way of exhortation; but the indicative, according to our translation, seems most agreeable to the context, in which, as yet, he commends the saints, to whom he writes, for the grace of God in them; descending to his exhortation afterward, 1Pe 1:13.

*Though now for a season;* viz. while this life lasts, which is but a little time, 2Co 4:17.

*If need be;* if God see it fit, needful for your good, and conducing to his glory; intimating, that God doth not always afflict believers, but when he sees just cause, and never doth it without cause.

*Ye are in heaviness:*

*Question.* How could they be in heaviness, and yet rejoice?

*Answer.* Their grief and joy were about different objects; they might be in heaviness by reason of present afflictions, and rejoice in hope of future glory; they might grieve as men, and rejoice as saints; sense of suffering might affect them, and yet the faith of better things coming relieve them. If their heaviness did in any degree abate their joy, yet it did not wholly hinder it; and though their joy did overcome their heaviness, yet it did not wholly exclude it.

*Through manifold temptations;* he so calls afflictions, from the end and effect of them, the trial of their faith, Lu 22:28 Ac 20:19 Ga 4:14 Jas 1:2 2Pe 2:9; he calls them *manifold*, as being not only numerous, but various, and of divers kinds.

1 Peter 1:7

Ver. 7. *That the trial of your faith;* i.e. your faith when tried. He

compares the faith of the saints with gold, and argues from the less to the greater: q. d. If men do so far esteem their gold, that they will make the excellency and preciousness of it appear by trying it in the fire, which purgeth away the dross, and discovers the goodness of the metal; no wonder if God will have the faith of the saints (more precious to him than gold is to men) tried by afflictions, that the excellency of it may more fully be discovered.

*Being much more precious than of gold;* i.e. than the trial of gold; or gold tried, compared with faith tried.

*That perisheth;* is worn away, and consumed by use, as many particles of it likewise may be in the very trial of it, 1Pe 1:18; whereas faith is not consumed nor wasted, but increased by being used, and made more conspicuous by being tried.

*Might be found unto praise and honour and glory;* i.e. may be found to be, or to have turned, to praise, &c., the dignity of it being by that means evidenced. These several words show whither present trials tend, and in what they issue; they may be reproachful and ignominious now, Heb 12:2, but they end in glory. We need not be critical about the difference of these three words, *praise*, *honour*, and *glory*, which may be synonymous expressions (by way of amplification) of the same thing, yet they are mentioned distinctly with relation to believers elsewhere; *praise*, 1Co 4:5, *honour*, 1Sa 2:30 Joh 12:26, *glory*, as well as honour, Ro 2:10.

*At the appearing of Jesus Christ;* i.e. at the day of judgment, frequently so called, as 1Pe 1:13 5:4 Col 3:4 2Th 1:7. Christ's glory is at present hid and obscured, while he is instructing his elect, and training them up unto patience, and defers his judging of his enemies; but at last it will be fully manifested in the face of the world, when he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, &c., Re 1:7.

1 Peter 1:8

Ver. 8. *Whom;* which Christ.

*Having not seen;* with your bodily eyes. Most of these Jews

lived out of their own country, and so had not seen Christ in the flesh; and this was the commendation of their love, that they loved him whom they had not seen, though sight doth ordinarily contribute toward the stirring up of affection.

*Ye see him not;* neither as others have done in the days of his flesh, nor as you yourselves hereafter shall in his glory; ye *walk by faith*, and *not by sight*, 2Co 5:7.

*Ye rejoice*, in hope of seeing and enjoying him.

*With joy unspeakable;* which cannot be expressed with words. See the like phrase, Ro 8:26 2Co 9:15.

*And full of glory;* both in respect of the object about which this joy is conversant, the heavenly glory; the degree, it is the highest here in the world; the duration of it, it is most solid; as likewise in comparison of the joy of this world, which is vain and transitory, and whereof many times men are afterward ashamed.

### 1 Peter 1:9

Ver. 9. *Receiving;* either this word is to be taken improperly, and by an enallage, the future being put for the present tense; q. d. Being about to receive; or rather properly, in the present tense, and then it intimates the certainty of the thing spoken of.

*The end of your faith;* i.e. the scope to which faith tends, or the reward of faith.

*The salvation;* either:

1. Salvation more generally taken, which is begun in this life, Eph 2:8 Tit 3:5; or rather:
2. Complete final salvation in the other, as 1Pe 1:5: and then the sense is, either, ye rejoice that ye shall certainly receive the full salvation of your souls, or, ye rejoice that ye do receive that salvation, viz. in the promises of it, in those graces of the Spirit wrought in you, which begin this salvation, and are the pledges of it, and in the certain assurance of it.

*Of your souls;* i.e. by a usual synecdoche, the salvation of your persons.

### 1 Peter 1:10

Ver. 10. *Of which salvation;* either:

1. The more full and clear manifestation of salvation promised to be at the coming of Christ, when *life and immortality* should be brought to light through the gospel, 2Ti 1:10; and then this place is parallel to Lu 10:24: or:
2. The salvation of the dispersed Jews, i.e. their public conversion by the gospel, and eternal life following upon it; which (as well as the calling of the Gentiles) was reserved for the times and glory of the Messiah.

*The prophets;* viz. those under the Old Testament, out of whose writings the faith of New Testament believers is to be confirmed, Joh 5:39 Ac 17:11; and whom this apostle therefore mentions, that he might strengthen the faith of the Christian Jews, by assuring them that the doctrine he had delivered to them was no new invention, but the very truth of God revealed of old to the prophets.

*Have inquired and searched diligently;* the words imply their vehement desire of knowing, as well as great diligence in seeking.

*Who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you:* what he called *salvation* before, he calls *grace* here, to intimate their salvation to be merely of grace.

This grace revealed under the gospel, the prophets foretold, but in a more dark way; the Sun of righteousness not being yet risen, the shadows were not gone, and the light was but obscure.

### 1 Peter 1:11

Ver. 11. *Searching what?* Whether near or farther off, or what particular part of time. This may relate particularly to Daniel's

weeks, Da 9:1-27.

*What manner of time;* whether peaceable or troublesome, when the people were free or when in bondage; what were the qualities of the time, or signs by which it might be known, Jacob foretells Christ's coming, when the sceptre was departed from Judah, Ge 49:10; Isaiah, in a time of universal peace, Isa 2:4 11:6. This diligent inquiring after the time of Christ's coming showed their earnest longing for it.

*The Spirit of Christ;* so styled, as being of the Son, no less than of the Father, both by eternal procession and temporal mission, Joh 14:16,26 15:26. This shows, that not only Christ had a being under the Old Testament before his coming in the flesh, (for if Christ were not, there could be no Spirit of Christ), but likewise that Christ is God, because of his inspiring the prophets with the knowledge of future things, which none but God can do.

*When it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ;* what the prophets did foretell concerning Christ, was not their own conjecture, but what the Spirit did dictate to them.

*And the glory that should follow;* Greek, glories, in the plural number, i.e. the manifold glory which was to follow upon his many sufferings, the glory of his resurrection, ascension, sitting at the right hand of God, sending the Spirit, &c. Christ's suffering and glory are often joined together, Ps 22:6 110:1-7 Isa 53:3,10-12 Lu 24:26 Php 2:8,9 Heb 2:9,10; to show that there is the same way (and no other) for the salvation of the members, as for the glory of the Head, viz. by sufferings.

### 1 Peter 1:12

Ver. 12. *Unto whom;* unto which prophets.

*It was revealed;* viz. by the Spirit of Christ that was in them.

*That not unto themselves;* who lived before Christ's coming in the flesh.

*But unto us;* not only apostles, but believers, who live since Christ came.



*They did minister;* declare and foretell. The preaching of the word is called a ministry, Ac 6:4 2Co 4:1 5:18.

*The things;* the whole doctrine of the gospel concerning Christ's person, offices, benefits, kingdom, and the whole New Testament state.

*Which are now reported unto you;* viz. as fulfilled, and actually exhibited now, which were only foretold by the prophets.

*By them that have preached the gospel unto you;* the apostles, and other gospel ministers assistant to them: the sense is: The prophets under the Old Testatment did, by the Spirit, foresee and foretell Christ's passion, resurrection, ascension, the effusion of the Spirit, the enlargement of the church by the calling of the Gentiles, &c.; but did not live to see their own prophecies, and God's promises, fulfilled, Heb 11:13, as you now do. They did spread the table that you might feed at it; they had but a taste by faith, and at a distance, of those things you feast upon in their accomplishment; yet they did not grudge to declare these things, being instructed by the Spirit, that what they spake of should not be fulfilled in their time, but in the generations to come; that so ye, by comparing what they said should come to pass with what you have now been assured is come to pass, may be confirmed and established in the belief of the truth, being the same held forth by the prophets formerly, and gospel ministers at present.

*With the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven:* Christ promised to send the Spirit, Lu 24:49 Joh 14:26 15:26 16:7; and actually sent him, Ac 2:1-47: the apostles, not of themselves, but acted by this Spirit, have declared unto you the fulfilling of those things, which the former prophets, by the instinct and power of the same Spirit, (the Spirit of Christ, which was in them), did foretell would in their proper season come to pass.

*Which things;* the things before said to be reported by them that preached the gospel.

*The angels desire to look into:* it seems to be an allusion to the cherubims that stood above the ark, with their faces toward the mercy-seat, which was a type of Christ. The word signifies a bowing down the head, and stooping to look iuto a thing. Lu

24:12 Joh 20:5; and implies a prying, or looking narrowly into it; which argues an earnest desire to know it. The angels thus look into the mysteries of the gospel, as desirous to see the accomplishment of them, admiring the manifold grace and wisdom of God in them, Eph 3:10, and rejoicing in the salvation of sinners, which is the end and effect of God's revealing them.

### 1 Peter 1:13

Ver. 13. *Wherefore*; the following exhortation may be connected, either with 1Pe 1:4, Being so glorious an inheritance is reserved in heaven for you, *gird up*, &c.; or with 1Pe 1:12: Seeing ye know those things, which the prophets that foretold them did not fully see, and the angels themselves desire to look into; the grace of God vouchsafed to you is so excellent and admirable, *gird up*, &c.

*Gird up the loins of your mind*; i.e. let your minds be attent, prompt, ready, prepared for your spiritual work, restrained from all those thoughts, cares, affections, and lusts, which may entangle, detain, hinder them, or make them unfit for it. It is a metaphor taken from the custom of the Oriental nations, who wearing long loose garments, were wont to gird them up about their loins, that they might not hinder them in their travelling or working, 1Ki 18:46 2Ki 4:29 Lu 17:8: See Poole on "Lu 12:35", See Poole on "Lu 12:37". Perhaps it may have a special respect to the like rite used at the Passover, Ex 12:11, when the Israelites were just ready to enter upon their journey, and go out of Egypt.

*Be sober*: this may relate, either:

1. To the body; and then the sense agrees with Lu 21:34, where *the cares of this life* seem to be opposed to the girding up the loins of the mind, and *surfeiting and drunkenness*, to sobriety here. Or rather:
2. To the soul; and then girding up the loins of the mind, may refer to the understanding, and thoughts, and sobriety, to the will and affections, and may signify that moderation which belongs to them, in opposition to their inordinateness, which is a sort of drunkenness. Or, it may be rendered, be watchful, as it is translated, 2Ti 4:5, and with which it is joined, 1Th

5:6,8; and so it agrees well with the former clause; they that have the loins of their mind girt up, being of a vigilant, present mind, and ready for any work they are to undertake.

*And hope to the end*; Greek, perfectly, as in the margin, i.e. sincerely, entirely, with a firm confidence; but the following words favour our translation, which signifies perseverance in hope. See Heb 3:6.

*For the grace that is to be brought unto you*; final salvation, which is the gift of grace, Ro 6:23, and is called *the grace of life*, 1Pe 3:7.

At the revelation of Jesus Christ; called the appearing of Jesus Christ, 1Pe 1:7.

#### 1 Peter 1:14

Ver. 14. *As obedient children*; Greek, children of obedience, by a usual Hebraism, for obedient children. So *children of disobedience*, Eph 2:2 Col 3:6. And this we may understand either absolutely, children of obedience for obedient persons; or with relation to God, obedient children of God; and then the apostle persuades them to their duty by an argument taken from their adoption; being the children of God, he would have them behave themselves obediently, as becomes them in that relation.

*Not fashioning yourselves*; not accommodating, not conforming yourselves, not shaping or ordering your conversation. See the same word, Ro 12:2.

*According to the former lusts*; the lusts you formerly indulged yourselves in: see Eph 4:22.

*In your ignorance*; your ignorance of Christ and the gospel: q.d. Not fashioning yourselves according to those lusts you lived in when you were ignorant of Christ. He distinguisheth between the time of their ignorance, and of their illumination. Another age requires other manners. They formerly lived according to the dictates of their lusts, but now ought to live according to the will of Christ: see 1Pe 1:18 Ac 17:30 Eph 4:17,18.

### 1 Peter 1:15

Ver. 15. *But as he which hath called you;* God the Father, to whom, as the First Cause, our calling is frequently ascribed, Ro 9:11,24 1Co 7:15 Ga 1:6,15. It may be rendered: According to the Holy One that hath called you, i.e. according to his example; you are children, and should therefore imitate your Father, Eph 5:1.

*Called you;* viz. effectually, to the knowledge and faith of Christ.

*Is holy;* so God is often styled by Isaiah and other penmen of the Scripture, as the fountain and exemplar of holiness.

*So be ye holy in all manner of conversation;* either, through the whole course, and in the several parts, of your conversation; or, *in all manner of conversation,* as we read it, i.e. with whomsoever ye converse, believers or infidels, friends or enemies, relations or strangers; and in whatsoever condition ye are in, peace or trouble, prosperity or adversity.

### 1 Peter 1:16

Ver. 16. I am your Father, and therefore you ought to imitate and obey me: or, I that have severed you from other people, that you should be mine, Le 20:26, to which place particularly this seems to refer.

### 1 Peter 1:17

Ver. 17. *And if;* this particle is used here, and frequently elsewhere, not as a note of doubting, but by way of assertion, and supposition of a thing known.

*Ye call on the Father;* either this is to be meant of invocation, their calling on God in prayer; and then the sense is: If you be servants and worshippers of the Father; prayer being many times put for the whole worship of God, Isa 43:22 Ac 9:11: or, of their calling God, Father, as Mt 6:9; and then the sense is: If you

would be counted God's children, Jas 2:7.

*Who, without respect of persons;* and so will no more excuse you that are Jews, and descended from Abraham, than those that are born of Gentile parents, Job 34:19 Ac 10:34 Eph 6:9.

*Judgeth;* and so is not a Father only, but a Judge, and that a most righteous one.

*According to every man's work;* i.e. works, the singular number put for the plural, as Jas 1:25: see Ro 2:6 Job 34:11.

*Pass the time of your sojourning here;* the word signifies the temporary abode of a man in a place where he was not born, or doth not ordinarily reside; such being the condition of believers in the world, that they are sojourners, not citizens of it; they are travelling through it to their Father's house and heavenly country, Heb 11:9,10,13,16. They are here exhorted to a suitable carriage, expressed in the next words.

*In fear;* which is due to him as a Father and a Judge. It may imply the greatest reverence, and the deepest humility, Php 2:12 1Co 2:3 1Pe 3:2,15.

### 1 Peter 1:18

Ver. 18. *Forasmuch as ye know;* considering that ye were, &c.

*That ye were not redeemed with corruptible things:* see Tit 2:14. This implies them to have been in a servile condition, and in bondage to their own errors, till they were converted to Christ.

*As silver and gold;* the most precious things, of greatest esteem among men.

*From your vain,* because unprofitable to, and insufficient for, righteousness and salvation, *conversation,* viz. in your Judaism, wherein you were so much addicted to uncommanded rites and ceremonies, as to have little respect for God's law.

*Received by tradition;* and so not only by their example and practice, but by their doctrine and precepts, Mt 15:3, &c.; Mr

7:7, &c. See likewise Ga 1:14.

*From your fathers*; either your ancestors, as Eze 20:18, or doctors and instructors, who are sometimes called *fathers*, 1Co 4:15.

### 1 Peter 1:19

Ver. 19. *Precious*; because the blood not only of an innocent person, but of the Son of God, Ac 20:28.

*As of a lamb*; i.e. who was a Lamb.

*A lamb; the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world*, Joh 1:29; not only like a lamb, for his innocence and gentleness, Isa 53:7, but the Antitype of the lambs which under the law were offered in the daily sacrifices, and more especially of the paschal lamb; whatever was shadowed out in that, and those other sacrifices, having its accomplishment in Christ.

*Without blemish*; without fault, without defect, in which nothing was wanting that was requisite to its perfection; or, in which nothing could be blamed. The Greek word seems to be derived from the Hebrew *Mum*, so often used for a blemish; see Le 24:19,20.

*And without spot*; without any other deformity. The lamb might have no defect, but yet might have some spot; and it was to be perfect, Ex 12:5, which implied its having neither the one nor the other. Christ was such a Lamb, perfect in holiness, and free from all sin, Joh 8:29,46 Heb 7:26 1Pe 2:22.

### 1 Peter 1:20

Ver. 20. *Who verily was fore-ordained*; by God's decree appointed to the work of redemption, and to be that Lamb that should take away the sins of the world, Eph 1:9.

*Before the foundation of the world*; from eternity; there being nothing before the world began but what was eternal, Joh 17:24.

*But was manifested;* not only by his incarnation, 1Ti 3:16, but by the preaching of the gospel. See these Scriptures: Ga 4:4 Eph 1:10 Heb 1:2 9:26.

*In these last times;* last, in comparison of the times of the Old Testament; the same as *the fulness of time*, Ga 4:4.

*For you;* that you, with other believers, might partake of salvation by him. The fruit of Christ's redemption reacheth all ages, but much more abundantly the times after his coming in the flesh. The sum of the argument is, Christ was ordained from eternity, promised to the fathers, but manifested to you: your privilege therefore being greater than theirs, Mt 13:17 Heb 11:39,40, you should be the more holy.

#### 1 Peter 1:21

Ver. 21. *Who by him do believe in God;* both as revealing God to you, Mt 11:27 Joh 1:14; and making way for you to God, who, out of Christ, is a consuming fire, so that there is no coming to him but by Christ, Joh 14:6 Eph 2:18 3:12 Heb 7:25.

*Gave him glory;* viz. in his resurrection, ascension, sitting at the right hand of God, &c., Php 2:9-11 Heb 2:9,10.

*That your faith and hope might be in God;* that seeing Christ raised and glorified, ye might be fully confirmed in the belief of a thorough satisfaction made to Divine justice for sin, and perfect reconciliation wrought (for had not Christ fully paid the price of redemption, his Father would never have let him out of the prison of the grave, in which his justice had shut him up); from which faith ariseth a hope, which looks to the resurrection of Christ your Head, as the certain pledge and earnest of your resurrection to life and glory. Christ's resurrection and glory are the great grounds of faith, 1Pe 3:21 Ac 2:32,33 5:31 10:40 Ro 4:24,25 1Co 15:14,17.

#### 1 Peter 1:22

Ver. 22. *Your souls;* i.e. yourselves; the whole person is implied, the soul being the principal part.

*In obeying the truth;* in subjecting yourselves to the truth of the gospel, by faith, to which the purification of the heart is ascribed, Ac 15:9, not only as to justification, and purging away the guilt of sin, but as to sanctification, and cleansing from the defilement of it: q.d. Seeing ye have begun to purify your hearts by faith in Christ, set forth in the gospel, and made sanctification to them that believe, 1Co 1:30.

*Through the Spirit;* by the operation of the Spirit working faith in you.

*Unto unfeigned love of the brethren;* without hypocrisy, and which is not in word only, but in deed and in truth, 1Jo 3:18. Love to the brethren in Christ, and for Christ's sake. This notes one great end of our sanctification, viz. the exercise of brotherly love, whereby our love to God is likewise manifested, when we love them upon his acconut. The whole clause may likewise be understood, as an exhortation to purify themselves more and more by faith, that so they might (being purged from carnal affections) be the better able, and more disposed, to love one another.

*Love one another with a pure heart;* as the source and fountain of your love to each other, and from whence it proceeds, 1Ti 1:5 2Ti 2:22.

*Fervently;* or, vehemently, and intensely, strongly. The word seems to be a metaphor taken from a bow, which the more it is bent, with the greater force it sends forth the arrow; so love, the more fervent and strong it is, the more abundantly it puts forth itself for the benefit of others.

### 1 Peter 1:23

Ver. 23. *Being born again:* this may refer either:

1. To the general exhortation to holiness, 1Pe 1:14,15, and then the argument runs thus: Ye are in your regeneration become the children of God, and therefore ought to walk holily as become his children. Or:



2. To the more particular exhortation to brotherly love, 1Pe 1:22:  
q.d. You are by your regeneration become spiritual brethren,  
and therefore ought to live like brethren.

*Not of corruptible seed;* which is itself corrupted ere any thing can be generated out of it, or out of which nothing is begotten but what is corruptible; so that all such generations tend but to a mortal life.

*But of incorruptible;* so the word is said to be, because containing still the same, and being immutable in itself, it changes and renews the hearts of those that by faith receive it. Or: it may be understood of its being incorruptible effectively, because it leads, or tends, to an immortal life.

*The word of God;* the same which he called incorruptible seed, which is the instrument in regeneration, as is implied in the preposition, *by*, going before it.

*Which liveth;* this and the following verb may be joined, either:

1. To God, the word of God, who liveth, &c.; or rather:
2. To *the word*, so our translation reads it, which word liveth, and abideth, &c.; and this agrees best with the testimony of Isaiah in the next verse.

The word of God is said to be a living word, because it enliveneth the hearts of those that entertain it.

### 1 Peter 1:24

Ver. 24. *All flesh;* all men as born of the flesh, and in their natural state, in opposition to regenerate men, 1Pe 1:23.

*All the glory of man;* whatever is most excellent in man naturally, and which they are most apt to glory in.

The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: see Jas 1:10.

## 1 Peter 1:25

Ver. 25. *But the word of the Lord endureth for ever;* not only absolutely in itself, and in respect of its perpetual verity, Ps 119:160 Mt 24:35; but relatively, as received by and dwelling in believers, 1Jo 3:9, who always experience the effects of it in themselves in their regeneration, receiving a solid and lasting being from it, (the new nature), which is likewise preserved by it, in opposition to that flux and mutable being they had by their first birth.

*And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you;* this word, of which Isaiah speaks, and which he so much magnifies, is the very same word of the gospel, which is preached unto you by us apostles.

## 1 Peter 2:1

### Chapter Summary

1Pe 2:1-3 The apostle exhorteth the Christian converts to lay aside all uncharitableness.

1Pe 2:4-10 He showeth their privileges through Christ, the chief corner stone.

1Pe 2:11,12 He beseecheth them to abstain from fleshly lusts, and by their good conversation to promote God's glory among the Gentiles.

1Pe 2:13-17 He enforceth obedience to magistrates,

1Pe 2:18-25 and teacheth servants to obey their masters, and to suffer patiently for well-doing, after the example of Christ.

Ver. 1. Having in the former chapter mentioned the new birth, 1Pe 1:23, and exhorted to brotherly love, as agreeable to it, 1Pe 1:22, he begins this chapter with a dehoration, wherein he dissuades them from those vices which are contrary to the state of regenerate men in the general, and brotherly love in particular.

*Laying aside;* or, put off; a metaphor from an old over worn garment, fit only to be thrown away: see Eph 4:22 Col 3:8,9 Jas 1:21.

*All malice;* malignity, when men do evil to others voluntarily and industriously, or delight in other men's harms: see Ro 1:29 Eph 4:31.

*All guile;* all fraudulence and impostures, and circumventing of others in any kind.

*Hypocrisies;* all flattering, and counterfeiting friendship, and showing love in words and outward carriage, when the heart is otherwise affected. Christ calls them hypocrites that flattered him, Mt 22:16,18.

*Envy;* grieving at other men's welfare.

*All evil speakings;* all kind of detraction.

### 1 Peter 2:2

Ver. 2. Pursuant to his discourse, 1Pe 1:23, where he speaks of their new birth, he here calls them *new-born babes*; but that not in opposition to those that are adult, or *of fall age*, as Heb 5:14 1Co 3:1, but in opposition to their former corrupt and unregenerate state, in which they were destitute of all spiritual life; and so this agrees, not only to young converts, but generally to all regenerate persons.

*Desire;* being new-born babes, act as such in earnestly desiring and longing for that spiritual nourishment, which is so needful for you, even as children, as soon as they come into the world, are lingering after the breast.

*The sincere milk of the word:* the Greek may be rendered (and is by some) reasonable milk, viz. such as is for the soul, not for the body; that whereby the mind is nourished and strengthened; or, wordy milk, the substantive from which it is derived properly and first signifying word, or speech, and being used for *the word of God*, Heb 4:12. But this not being proper English, our translation renders it best, the *milk of the word*, i.e. the word

which is milk. The apostle useth an adjective for a substantive, but that adjective doth not signify the quality of the subject, *milk*, as the other, *sincere*, doth, but the subject of itself. The like phrase we have, 1Pe 3:7; Greek, female, or wifeish, weaker vessel, which we turn by the substantive, *wife*, who is said there to be *the weaker vessel*. So that the doctrine of the gospel is here to be understood, as Isa 55:1, and believers are to be nourished by the same word, as their food, by which, as the seed, they are said to be begotten, 1Pe 1:23. This milk of the word is said to be *sincere*, i.e. pure, without mixture or adulteration, not blended, or diluted, (as vintners do by their wine, to whose practice Paul alludes, when he speaks of men's corrupting the word, 2Co 2:17 4:2), with human fictions or traditions. Infants love the sweetness of their mothers' milk, and desire it pure, as it is: believers should desire the word pure, as it is in itself, not mixed with any thing that may lessen its sweetness and hinder its efficacy.

*That ye may grow thereby*; that by the word, as your spiritual nourishment, ye may grow more in spiritual life and strength, till ye come to be perfect men, Eph 4:13.

### 1 Peter 2:3

Ver. 3, *If so be*; this doth not imply a doubting, but a supposition, as was before observed, 1Pe 1:17.

*Ye have tasted*; not lightly tasted by a bare ineffectual knowledge, as Heb 6:4; but experienced and perceived by the taste of your spiritual palate; your spiritual sense, and ability to judge of spiritual things, being restored to you, with your new birth. He refers to Ps 34:8, and possibly to Isa 66:11.

*The Lord*; the Lord Jesus Christ, as appears by the next verse.

*Is gracious*; good, kind, or rather, sweet: the same word is applied to wine, Lu 5:39. The sense of the whole is: If ye have by faith received the gospel as glad tidings, and worthy of all acceptation, 1Ti 1:15, and therein perceived and experienced the sweetness of those consolations which are in Christ Jesus, Php 2:1; or, which is the same, how sweet he is, who, in the

preaching of the gospel, exhibits himself to your spiritual senses, to be fed upon and tasted by you.

### 1 Peter 2:4

Ver. 4. *To whom;* to which Christ.

*Coming;* by faith: q. d. In whom believing, Joh 6:35,44,45. The word is in the present tense, the apostle describing here not their first conversion to Christ, but their present state, that they, being in Christ, were daily coming to him in the continued exercise of their faith.

*As unto a living;* not, only having life in himself, but enlivening those that by faith adhere to him.

*Stone;* viz. a corner-stone, as 1Pe 2:6. Being about to set forth the church as a spiritual building, he first mentions Christ as the foundation, and corner-stone.

*Disallowed indeed of men;* rejected, not only by the unbelieving Jews and their rulers formerly, but still by the unbelieving world.

*But chosen of God;* either chosen to be the foundation of the building, and then it is the same as foreordained, 1Pe 1:20; or *chosen* is the same as choice, excellent.

*And precious:* a different expression of the same thing. Here seems to be an allusion to those stones which men count precious, and have in great esteem; and Christ's being precious in the sight of God, is set in opposition to his being disallowed of men, to intimate, that their unbelief, and rejecting Christ, doth not make him less valuable in himself, when his Father so much honours him.

### 1 Peter 2:5

Ver. 5. *As lively;* viz. as being enlivened by Christ. The word here translated *lively*, and *living* in the former verse, is the same; but being there spoken of Christ, it is to be understood actively, and here being applied to believers, who receive their spiritual

life from Christ, it must be taken passively.

*Stones*; each particular believer is here called a stone, as all together a house or temple, 2Co 6:16 Eph 2:21, and in respect of their union among themselves, and with their foundation; though elsewhere, in respect of God's inhabitation, even particular believers are called his temple, 1Co 3:16,17 6:19.

*Are built up*; viz. upon Christ the principal Corner-stone, Eph 2:20. This may be understood, either:

1. Imperatively. q. d. Be ye built up; and then it is an exhortation, and relates not only to their continuing in Christ, but their being further built up on him by faith, and is of the same import as 1Pe 2:2, *that ye may grow*: or rather:
2. Indicatively; the apostle as yet being engaged in showing the dignity and privileges of believers, and not entering upon his exhortation till 1Pe 2:11. The words being in the present tense, implies the building to be still but going on, and not yet finished.

*A spiritual house*; in distinction from the material one, relating to those scriptures where the tabernacle or temple is called God's house, Ex 23:19 34:26 De 23:18. The material house built of dead stones, was but a type of the spiritual house made up of lively stones, and built upon Christ the living Stone; and this he brings (the truth being always more excellent than the type) to heighten the privileges of the gospel church.

*An holy priesthood*; either the abstract is put for the concrete, *an holy priesthood* for holy priests; or it may note the whole college or society of evangelical priests, consisting of all particular saints, to whom, in the New Testament, this title is given, but never appropriated to gospel ministers: Christ being a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec, had no partner with him in his priesthood, but was himself only to offer a propitiatory sacrifice to God for sin.

*To offer up spiritual sacrifices*; the immediate end of gospel priests, to offer, not bodily, but spiritual sacrifices; in general themselves, whom they are to consecrate to God, Ro 12:1; particularly prayer, thanksgivings, alms, and other duties of

religion, Php 4:18 Heb 13:15,16.

*Acceptable to God by Jesus Christ:* by, and through whom alone, as the persons, so the performances, of believers (though in themselves imperfect) are pleasing to God, Christ presenting them to his Father by his intercession, and covering their defects by his own most perfect righteousness, Some refer this clause, *by Jesus Christ,* to the foregoing verb, *to offer up;* and then the words run thus, to offer up spiritual sacrifices by Jesus Christ, acceptable to God; but the former seems most proper, and includes this latter: we are therefore to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God by Christ, because they are acceptable only by him, Heb 13:21, compared with Heb 13:15,16.

### 1 Peter 2:6

Ver. 6. *Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture:* the Greek word being of an active form, makes great difference among expositors about these words; not to trouble the reader with variety, the plainest way of understanding them seems to be, either:

1. That God be understood here, and supplied out of the former verse: Wherefore God contains it in the Scripture: or:
2. That the word, though of an active termination, be yet taken in a passive signification, contains, for is contained; so our translators do, and this way of speaking is not unusual with other writers.

*Behold, I;* I the Lord, not man, Ps 118:23.

*Lay in Sion;* viz. by the preaching of the gospel, wherein Christ was declared to be the only foundation of the church, and whereby faith was wrought in the hearts of men, who were thereby actually built on Christ, as their foundation, and so the spiritual house, 1Pe 2:5, erected.

*Sion;* either by synecdoche, Jerusalem, (whereof Sion was a part), where by the preaching of Christ first, and the apostles after his ascension, and sending the Spirit, this foundation stone was first laid, and God's temple begun to be built, Ps 110:2 Isa

2:3 Mic 4:2 Lu 24:47. Or rather, Sion here is to be understood of the gospel church, whereof Sion was a type.

*A chief corner-stone;* or, Head of the corner, Ps 118:22; that which both supports the building, and unites the parts; Christ being the foundation not of a part only, but of the whole church; all the parts of which, Gentile, as well as Jew, are jointly built on him, and upheld by him, Eph 2:20.

Elect, precious: see 1Pe 2:5.

*And he that believeth on him shall not be confounded;* shall not be disappointed of his expected salvation, and so shall have no cause to be ashamed of his hope. This is according to the LXX., the Hebrew hath it, shall not make haste, i.e. he that believes in Christ shall not through haste, or distrust, or unwillingness to wait God's time and way, seek after any other way of salvation than by Christ; and so (as before) not being disappointed, shall have no cause to be ashamed; whereas they that do not believe, but make haste, coming short of their expectation, are at last filled with confusion. (See Isa 28:16 Ro 9:33).

### 1 Peter 2:7

Ver. 7. *Precious;* the margin reads it, according to the Greek, an honour; either the abstract is put for the concrete, an honour, for honourable, or *precious*, ( as the text hath it), and then the sense is plain, that Christ, as he is precious in himself, and to his Father, so he is to them that believe. Or, honour may be put for the cause of honour, and when it is opposed to shame and confusion before mentioned, and the sense is: Ye that believe, shall be so far from being ashamed, or having your faith frustrated, that ye shall be honoured, and saved by Christ. And this agrees well with what follows in this and 1Pe 2:8.

*Disobedient;* unbelievers, who were disobedient to the great command of the gospel concerning faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

*The builders;* the high priests, scribes, Pharisees, and rulers of the Jews, whose duty it was to build up the church, as having not only the name, but the power then residing in them.



*Disallowed;* rejected him, and would not acknowledge him for the promised Messiah, and the great foundation upon which the church of God was to be built.

*The same is made the head of the corner:*

*Question.* How is Christ to be *made the Head of the corner* to them that reject him?

*Answer.* Either:

1. Something is here to be understood, viz. this is said, or spoken, which follows, the stone which the builders, &c.: q. d. They despised him, but God hath honoured him; they would allow him no place in the building, but God hath given him the best, made him the Head-stone of the corner. Or:
2. Christ may be said to be made to the disobedient, in spite of their rejecting and opposing him, the Head of the corner; i.e. a King and a Judge to restrain and curb them in, seeing they would not be ruled by him.

### 1 Peter 2:8

Ver. 8. *And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence;* i.e. a stone at which they stumble, a rock at which they are offended; and so it implies Christ not to be the cause of their stumbling, but the object of it; they of their own accord, and through the pravity of their nature, without any just occasion given by him, being offended, either because cause they find not that in him which they expected, viz. outward encouragements; or find that in him which they do not like, the holiness of his law, and purity of his doctrine, contrary to their corruptions and lusts, and especially his requiring of them faith in him for the justification of their persons, which was so contrary to the pride of their hearts, and which was one great reason of the Jews stumbling at him, as seeking to establish their own righteousness, and therefore not submitting to the righteousness of God, Ro 9:32,33, compared with Ro 10:3. This stumbling includes not only their falling into sin, but into destruction too, the punishment of sin, Isa 8:14,15; whereof Christ can be no more than the inculpable occasion, but

their own unbelief the proper cause.

*Which stumble at the word, being disobedient;* these words may have a double reading: one according to our translation; and then the sense is, that stumble at the word of the gospel, i.e. are disobedient to it, in rejecting Christ therein offered to them: or, that stumble, being disobedient to the word; i.e. stumble at Christ preached to them in the word, and therefore will not obey it; they show that they are offended at Christ, by their not receiving his doctrine, nor accepting his offers.

*Whereunto also they were appointed;* either this may refer:

1. To 1Pe 2:6, where Christ is said to be laid (the same word in the (greek with that which is here translated by *appointed*) in *Sion*, as a *chief corner-stone, elect and precious*, on whom whosoever *believeth, shall not be confounded*. The apostle then adds, that even these unbelievers were *appointed* (viz. in their external vocation, as being taken into covenant with God) to be built on Christ by faith but they stumbled, by their unbelief, at the word of the gospel, and consequently at this stumbling-stone. And then it is a high aggravating the unbelief of the Jews, that they, being God's peculiar people, should reject that salvation which was sent to them, and to the first offer of which they were designed, Ac 13:26,46,47. Or:
2. To the words immediately going before, *which stumble at the word, being disobedient;* and then the sense is, (speaking concerning the reprobate Jews), that God appointed them to this stumbling, in his decreeing not to give them faith in Christ, but to leave them to their unbelief, and to punish them justly for it: see Ro 9:17 1Th 5:9 Jude 1:4. The scope of the apostle in this whole verse seems to be, to keep weak Christians from being offended at the multitude of unbelievers, and especially at their seeing Christ rejected by the Jewish rulers and doctors; and this he doth by pointing them to the Scripture, where all this was long since foretold, and therefore not to be wondered at now, nor be any occasion of offence to them: see the like, Joh 16:1,4.

1 Peter 2:9

Ver. 9. *But ye;* ye believers, in opposition to those reprobates that are disobedient to the word. He shows that those dignities and privileges, which were mentioned by Moses as belonging to their forefathers, did much more belong to them; and that they had the real exhibition in Christ, of those good things whereof their fathers had but a taste, and which the rest of the Jews had lost by their unbelief.

*Are a chosen generation;* a people chosen of God, not only out of the world, but from among the rest of your own nation, and not only to an external adoption, and outward privileges, (as the whole body of the nation was), but to eternal salvation.

*A royal priesthood;* or, kingdom of priests. He called them *an holy priesthood*, 1Pe 2:5, now he calls them *a royal priesthood*, to show that they were made not only spiritual priests, but spiritual kings; which privilege they had not as Jews, but as believers, who are all of them as priests in respect of God, to whom they are consecrated, and to whom they offer up spiritual sacrifices; so kings in respect both of their enemies, over whom they are victorious, and of the kingdom they are hereafter to inherit.

*An holy nation;* Moses calls your fathers *an holy people*, De 7:6, in respect of their separation from the impurities of the Gentiles, their dedication to God, and the many laws God gave them, obliging them to external and ceremonial purity, whereby they were admonished of internal and real holiness; but ye are a holy nation in respect of that true and inward holiness itself, whereof that ceremonial holiness was but a signification. He seems particularly to allude to Isa 62:12.

*A peculiar people:* Ex 19:5, it is *a peculiar treasure*; so the same word is rendered, *a special people*, De 7:6, and, *a peculiar people*, De 14:2; the word used by the LXX. implying as much; but Mal 3:17, where we render it *jewels*, the LXX. use the same word which Peter doth here, which is as much as, a people of acquisition, or which God hath acquired to himself for his peculiar possession or treasure. God had rescued the Israelites from their Egyptian bondage, and taken them to be his peculiar people above all others, and claimed a right to them, and counted them precious, as having redeemed them with a strong hand, and got possession of them at the expense of so much power, and so

many miracles. This deliverance of theirs was the type of Christ's delivering the church from the tyranny of Satan, the spiritual Pharaoh, and the world, the spiritual Egypt, and a state of sin, the worst bondage; upon the account whereof God's people are called *a peculiar people*, or *a people thus acquired*, Tit 2:14, and *a purchased possession*, Eph 1:14, where the same word is likewise used. *That ye should show forth, &c.*: this notes the end of all these privileges vouchsafed them, viz. that they should glorify God in the enjoyment of them. He seems to refer to Isa 43:7,21: *This people have I formed for myself*, ( or acquired, as the LXX. hath it), *they shall show forth my praise*.

*Show forth*; publish and declare, both in words and deeds, that others may be excited to glorify, God in the like manner. The praises of him; or virtues, that wisdom, power, goodness, righteousness, truth &c., which God hath manifested in his vouchsafements to you, and in the acknowledgment of which he may be glorified.

*Who hath called you*; by an effectual calling, according to his purpose, Ro 8:28.

*Out of darkness*; the darkness of ignorance, unbelief, sin, and misery. The time before the publication of the gospel, was a time of darkness, Mt 9:16 Lu 1:79.

*Into his marvellous light*; the light of knowledge, faith, holiness, comfort: see Eph 5:8. It is called *marvellous*, because men see what they never saw before, wonderful things out of God's law, Ps 119:18; and because it is a marvellous thing, that they who sat in so gross darkness should be translated into so glorious a light.

### 1 Peter 2:10

Ver. 10. *Which in time past were not a people*; either, *were not a people*, i.e. a formed state, or commonwealth, being dispersed in several countries, among other people, and not worth the name of a people: or, *were not the people of God*, (supplying *God* out of the opposite clause), since he had given them a bill of divorce, and said *Lo-ammi* and *Lo-ruhamah* to them, Hos 1:1-11. These were the Jews of the dispersion, and such as had not returned out of the Babylonish captivity, together with many of other tribes

mixed with them, who, before their conversion to Christ, seemed cut off from the body of that people, had no solemn worship of God among them, and were tainted with the corruptions of the heathen, with whom they conversed.

*But are now the people of God;* really God's people, restored to their old covenant state and church privileges, by their believing in Christ.

*Which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy;* the mercy of being God's people, and enjoying their privileges, being justified, at peace with God, &c. Lest they might any way abuse what he had said in the former verse concerning their great dignity and privileges, so as to ascribe any thing to themselves, the apostle intimates here, that all they enjoyed was merely out of God's mercy.

#### 1 Peter 2:11

Ver. 11. *Strangers and pilgrims;* not only strangers in the several countries where ye inhabit, (being out of your own land), but strangers in the world, as all believers are, 1Ch 29:15 Ps 39:12 Ps 119:19 Heb 11:13,14.

*Abstain from fleshly lusts;* not only sensual desires, but all the works of the flesh, Ga 5:19-21, the carnal mind itself being enmity against God, Ro 8:7.

*Which war;* as enemies, oppose and fight against, Ro 7:23 Jas 4:1.

*Against the soul;* the inner man, or regenerate part, or Spirit, which is opposed to fleshly lusts: see Ga 5:17.

#### 1 Peter 2:12

Ver. 12. *Having your conversation honest;* irreprehensible, fruitful, such as may gain men's love, and commend the religion you profess.

*Among the Gentiles;* who, by reason of their differing from your

religion, are the more likely to observe you. This proves this Epistle to be written to the Jews.

*They may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God;* not only think more favourably of you, but of your religion; acknowledge the grace of God in you, and more readily subject themselves to him, (the best way of glorifying him), it being usual with God to make way for the conversion of sinners by the holy conversation of saints.

*In the day of visitation;* viz. a gracious visitation, when God calls them by the gospel to the knowledge of Christ, Lu 1:68,78 7:16 Lu 19:44.

### 1 Peter 2:13

Ver. 13. *Every ordinance;* of all kinds, whether supreme or subordinate.

*Ordinance of man;* Greek, human creatures, which may be understood either, as Mr 16:15, every human creature for every man, only restraining it to the present subject whereof he treats, viz. magistrates, and the sense is, to every magistrate: or rather, (though to the same effect), to every human ordinance; or, as we translate it, *ordinance of man;* the word creature being taken for an ordinance, or constitution, and creating for ordaining, or appointing: so CECumenius will have the word to signify, Eph 2:15, *to make of twain one new man*. But this creature, or ordinance, here is to be understood of the magistrate; (as appears by the following words), which is called human, not as if magistracy were not an ordinance of God, (for, Ro 13:1, *the powers that are* are said to be *ordained of God*), but either because it is only among men, and proper to them; or because it is of man secondarily and instrumentally, though of God primarily and originally, God making use of the ministry of men in bringing them into the magistracy; as, though church offices are God's ordinance, yet he makes use of men to put them into office.

*For the Lord's sake;* for God's sake, who commands this obedience; and gave them the authority, and is represented by them, and honoured by that obedience which is yielded to them

in all things agreeable to his will. The phrase seems to be of the same import with that of being obedient *in the Lord*, Eph 6:1.

*To the king;* to Caesar, the then supreme magistrate, under whose jurisdiction the Jewish Christians were; and this being a general command extending to all Christians, it follows, that obedience is due from them to those chief magistrates whose subjects respectively they are.

*As supreme;* not only above the people, but above other magistrates.

### 1 Peter 2:14

*Ver. 14. Or unto governors;* he seems immediately to intend the governors of provinces under the Roman emperors, such as Pilate, Felix, Festus were in Judea, Sergius Paulus in Cyprus, Ac 13:7; and other places; see Lu 3:1; but so as to imply, under the name of governors, all inferior magistrates, as under the name of king he doth all supreme.

*As unto them that are sent by him;* either:

1. By the king, or supreme magistrate, and then the next words show what should be his end in sending, or appointing officers, or subordinate rulers under him: or rather:
2. Sent by God, from whom all rulers, subordinate as well as supreme, have their authority, and which is the great motive on which they are to be obeyed; and then the following words show what is God's end in appointing them, and another reason for yielding obedience to them, viz. their being set up for the common good of the societies which they rule.

*For the praise of them that do well:* praise is a kind of reward, and is here to be taken by a synecdoche for all sorts of rewards given to those that do well, and are obedient to the laws: see Ro 13:3,4.

### 1 Peter 2:15

Ver. 15. *For so is the will of God;* his command. *That with well-doing;* all manner of offices of humanity, whereof obedience to magistrates is a principal one.

*Ye may put to silence;* Greek, muzzle, stop the mouths, Tit 1:11; viz. by taking away all occasion of evil-speaking.

*The ignorance;* either their ignorance of the state and conversation of believers, which may be the occasion of their speaking evil of them; or their ignorance of God and his ways, to which Christ imputes the fury of persecutors, Joh 16:3. They that know not God themselves, are most ready to reproach and slander those that do.

*Of foolish men;* true wisdom consisting in the knowledge of God, they that are destitute of that knowledge, as unbelievers are, are called foolish.

#### 1 Peter 2:16

Ver. 16. *As free;* he prevents an objection; they might pretend they were a free people, as Jews, and therefore were not to obey strangers, De 17:15 Joh 8:33; and made free by Christ. He answers: That they were free indeed, but it was from sin, and not from righteousness, not from obedience to God's law, which requires subjection to magistrates, for they were still the servants of God.

*And not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness;* not using your liberty to cover or palliate your wickedness, excusing yourselves from obedience to your superiors by a pretence of Christian liberty, when, though ye be free from sin, yet ye are not from duty.

*But as the servants of God;* and so still bound to obey him, and your rulers in him.

#### 1 Peter 2:17

Ver. 17. *Honour all men;* viz. according as honour is due to them, according to their dignity, power, gifts, &c.: see Ro 12:10



Ro 13:7 Php 2:3.

*Love the brotherhood;* though all may challenge suitable respects, yet there is a more special affection owing to believers, 1Pe 1:22 Ga 6:10.

*Fear God;* with a filial fear or reverence. This command is interposed, either to show what is the true spring and fountain from which all the duties we perform to men are to proceed, viz. the fear of God, because where that doth not prevail no duty to men can be rightly performed; (they love the brotherhood best, and honour the king most, that truly fear God); or to show the due bounds of all the offices we perform to men, that nothing is to be done for them which is inconsistent with the fear of God. Honour the king; with that honour which is peculiarly due to him above all others.

1 Peter 2:18

Ver. 18. Servants; the word is not the same which Paul useth, Col 3:22, but may well comprehend the servants he speaks of, as implying not only slaves, but those that were made free, yet continued still in the family; and so signifies servants of whatsoever condition.

*Be subject to your masters with all fear;* not only reverence of masters, and fear of offending them, is to be understood, but fear of God, as appears by the parallel place, Col 3:22: see Eph 6:5-7.

*Not only to the good and gentle;* by *good* he means not gracious or holy, but, as the next word explains it, gentle, just, equal.

*But also to the froward;* morose, crabbed, unjust, unmerciful.

1 Peter 2:19

Ver. 19. For this is thank-worthy; in the Greek the substantive is put for the adjective: the sense is either, this is acceptable to God, and will be graciously rewarded by him; or, this is praise-worthy, and will be your glory, as 1Pe 2:20.

*For conscience toward God;* out of respect to God, and a desire of pleasing him.

### 1 Peter 2:20

Ver. 20. *For what glory is it?* What praise or glory do you get by it? Or, what great matter do you do? This interrogation hath the force of negation, but is to be understood comparatively; it is worthy of praise to suffer patiently, even when men suffer justly, but worthy of little in comparison of suffering patiently when unjustly.

*This is acceptable with God:* this shows what is meant by *thank-worthy*, 1Pe 2:19; and the apostle adds what kind of thanks or praise he intends, viz. not that which is of man, (which many times may fail, even when men patiently suffer injuries), but that which is of God, to which believers should especially have respect.

### 1 Peter 2:21

Ver. 21. *For even hereunto;* viz. to patient bearing of sufferings even for well-doing.

*Were ye called;* viz. to Christ and the fellowship of his kingdom; q.d. Your very calling and profession, as Christians, requires this of you.

*Also;* there is an emphasis in this particle, it is as much as if he had said: Even Christ our Lord and Head hath suffered for us, and therefore we that are but his servants and members must not think to escape sufferings.

*For us;* or, as in the margin, for you, which agrees with the beginning and end of the verse, where the second person is used; but most read it as we do, in the first person, and the sense is still the same; only the apostle from a general proposition draws a particular exhortation: Christ suffered for us, (therein he comprehends the saints to whom he writes), and left an example for us all; do ye therefore to whom, as well as to others, he left this example, follow his steps, Joh 13:15 1Jo 2:6.

*Leaving us an example,* as of other graces, so especially of patience.

### 1 Peter 2:22

Ver. 22. i.e. There was no guile in his mouth; it is a Hebraism; to be found is the same as to be, and not to be found the same as not to be, Ge 2:20 Isa 39:2: see Ro 7:10. This signifies Christ's absolute perfection, in that he did not offend so much as with his mouth, Jas 3:2. The sense is, Christ was free from all manner of sin, and yet he suffered patiently; and therefore well may ye be content to suffer too, though wrongfully; seeing, though ye may be innocent in your sufferings, yet you come so far short of Christ's perfection.

### 1 Peter 2:23

Ver. 23. By Christ's being *reviled*, we are to understand all those injurious words, reproaches, slanders, blasphemies, which his persecutors cast out against him.

*Reviled not again;* therefore when he told the Jews they were of their father the devil, Joh 8:44, that was not a reviling them, but a just accusation of them, or reproof of their devilish behaviour.

*When he suffered;* when he was affected not only with verbal but real injuries, buffeted, spit upon, crowned with thorns, crucified.

*He threatened not;* he was so far from avenging himself, or recompensing evil for evil, that he did not so much as threaten what he would afterward do to them.

*But committed himself;* or his cause; neither is in the Greek, but either may be well supplied, and to the same purpose: the sense is, Christ did not retaliate, nor act any thing out of private revenge, but so referred himself, and the judgment of his cause, to his Father's good pleasure, as rather to desire pardon for his persecutors, than vengeance on them, Lu 23:34.

*To him that judgeth righteously:* the apostle adds this of God's judging righteously, for the comfort of servants to whom he speaks, as Eph 6:8,9 Col 3:24 4:1, and for the terror of masters, that the former might learn patience, and the latter moderation.

### 1 Peter 2:24

Ver. 24. *Who his own self;* not by offering any other sacrifice, (as the Levitical priests did), but by that of himself.

*Bare our sins;* or, took up, or lifted up, in allusion to the sacrifices of the Old Testament, the same word being used of them, Heb 7:27 Jas 2:21. As the sins of the offerer were typically laid upon the sacrifice, which, being substituted in his place, was likewise slain in his stead; so Christ standing in our room, took upon him the guilt of our sins, and bare their punishment, Isa 53:4, &c. The Lord laid on him our iniquities, and he willingly took them up; and by bearing their curse, took away our guilt. Or, it may have respect to the cross, on which Christ being lifted up, (Joh 3:14,15 Joh 12:32), took up our sins with him, and expiated their guilt by undergoing that death which was due to us for them.

*In his own body;* this doth not exclude his soul but is rather to be understood, by a synecdoche, of his whole human nature, and we have the sufferings of his soul mentioned, Isa 53:10,12 Joh 12:27; but mention is made of his body, because the sufferings of that were most visible.

*On the tree;* on the cross.

*That we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness;* another end of Christ's death, the mortification of sin, and our being freed from the dominion of it, Ro 6:2,6, and being reformed to a life of holiness.

*By whose stripes ye were healed;* viz. of the wound made in your souls by sin: this seems to relate to the blows that servants might receive of cruel masters, against which the apostle comforts them, and to the patient bearing of which he exhorts them, because Christ by bearing stripes, (a servile punishment), under which may be comprehended all the sufferings of his

death, had healed them of much worse wounds, and spiritual diseases, the guilt of their consciences, and the defilement of their souls.

### 1 Peter 2:25

Ver. 25. *For ye were,* while ye continued in your Judaism, and had not yet received the gospel, *as sheep going astray,* from Christ the great Shepherd, and the church of believers his flock, and the way of righteousness in which he leads them. Ye were alienated from the life of God, bewildered and lost in the way of sin, Isa 53:6.

*But are now returned,* in your conversion to the faith, *to the Shepherd;* Christ the good Shepherd, Joh 10:11,14,16, that takes care of souls, as a shepherd doth of his sheep.

*And Bishop of your souls;* superintendent, inspector, or, as the Hebrews phrase it, visitor, i.e. he that with care looks to, inspects, and visits the flock. This he adds for the comfort (as of all believers, so) particularly of servants, that even they, as mean as they were, and as much exposed to injuries, yet were under the care and tuition of Christ.

### 1 Peter 3:1

#### Chapter Summary

1Pe 3:1-7 The apostle teacheth the duty of wives and husbands,

1Pe 3:8-13 exhorting all men to unity and love, and to return good for evil,

1Pe 3:14-18 to suffer boldly for righteousness' sake, and to give a reason of their hope with meekness and fear ; taking especial care to suffer, as Christ did, for well-doing, and not for evil-doing.

1Pe 3:19,20 The preaching of Christ by his Spirit to the old world.

1Pe 3:21,22 After what manner Christian

baptism saveth us.

Ver. 1. *To your own husbands;* this he adds both to mitigate the difficulty of the duty, *subjection*, in that they were their *own* husbands to whom they were to be subject, and likewise to bound and circumscribe their obedience, that it was to be only to their own husbands, not to others; and so while he persuades them to subjection, he cautions them against unchastity.

*That if any obey not the word;* the word of the gospel. He exhorts not only them that had believing husbands, but unbelieving ones, to be in subjection to them.

*They also may without the word:* not that they could be converted to Christ without the knowledge of the word, when faith cometh by hearing, Ro 10:17, but that they who either would not endure their wives' instructing them, or who had before rejected the word, yet, by seeing the effects and fruits of it in their wives, might be brought to have good thoughts of it, and thereby be the more prepared for the hearing of it, whereby faith might be wrought in them.

*Be won;* or gained, viz. to Christ and his church: the same metaphor Paul useth, 1Co 9:19-21 Php 3:8.

### 1 Peter 3:2

Ver. 2. *Chaste conversation;* free from all manner of impurities, and any thing contrary to the marriage covenant.

*Coupled with fear;* such a fear or reverence of your husbands, whereby out of the fear of God, and conscience of his command, you give them all due respect, and do not willingly displease them. See Eph 5:1-33; subjection is required, Eph 5:22, and fear, Eph 5:33.

### 1 Peter 3:3

Ver. 3. *Let it not be;* let it not be chiefly, or not so much the adorning of the outward man as the inward; the negative here is

to be taken as a comparative, as Ex 16:8 Lu 14:12. The apostle doth not absolutely condemn all kind of ornaments, or rich attire, which we find used sometimes by the godly themselves in the Scripture, Ge 24:22,30 Es 5:1; compared with Ps 45:9,13, where the spiritual ornaments of Christ's spouse are set forth by terms taken from the external ornaments of Solomon's wife; and Eze 16:12, these things are spoken of as God's gifts. But he taxeth all vanity, levity, immoderate sumptuousness or luxury in apparel, and bodily ornaments in women, (or men), whatsoever is above their place and condition in the world, or above their estate and ability; such as proceeds from any lust, (pride, wantonness, &c.), or tends to the provoking or cherishing any, or is accompanied with the neglecting or slighting of inward beauty and spiritual ornaments.

#### 1 Peter 3:4

Ver. 4. The hidden man of the heart; the inward man, Ro 7:22 2Co 4:16; either the soul in opposition to the body, or the image of God, and graces of his Spirit in the soul, called elsewhere *the new man*, and opposed to natural corruption, or the old man, Eph 4:24 Col 3:9,10.

*In that which is not corruptible*: this relates to what follows, *the ornament of a meek*, &c., and is opposed to those external ornaments before mentioned, which are of a fading, perishing nature, whereas this is constant and durable: and therefore women who are more apt to be overmuch pleased with external dresses, and bodily ornaments, are exhorted rather to enrich and beautify their souls with Divine graces, than their bodies with gaudy clothes.

*Even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit*: this notes the particular grace or graces (parts of the new man) in which the spiritual beauty and adorning of women's souls consists; and either these two words, *meek* and *quiet*, are but indifferent expressions of the same grace; or, by meekness may be meant gentleness, easiness and sweetness of spirit, in opposition to moroseness, frowardness, pride, passion, &c.; and by quietness, a peaceable, still, modest temper, in opposition to pragmatcalness, talkativeness, clamorousness. These two usually go in conjunction together, and the latter is the effect of

the former: see 1Ti 2:9-12.

*Which:* either this refers to *spirit*, or to the whole sentence, *the ornament of a meek*, &c., but the sense is still the same.

*Is in the sight of God;* who can best judge, (as looking to the inner man, which is not obvious to the eyes of others), and whose judgment is most to be valued: here God's judgment is opposed to the judgment of vain women, who think to commend themselves to others by outward bravery, and of a vain world, which esteems such things.

*Of great price:* the excellency of grace and spiritual ornaments is set in opposition to gold and costly apparel: q.d. If women will be fine that they may appear beautiful, let them choose the best ornaments, those of the mind and heart, a meek and quiet spirit, which are precious in the sight of God himself, rather than these external ones, which serve only to draw men's eyes toward them.

### 1 Peter 3:5

Ver. 5. *Holy women;* and therefore worthy of imitation.

*Who trusted in God;* whose only hope was in God, and therefore their care to please him.

*Adorned themselves;* viz. with a meek and quiet spirit, counting that the best ornament.

### 1 Peter 3:6

Ver. 6. *Even as Sara;* after her name was changed from Sarai, my lady, to Sarah, simply a lady or princess, because kings were to come of her, Ge 17:15,16: yet even then she *obeyed Abraham*; and this is spoken in commendation of her obedience.

*Calling him lord;* not merely in compliment, but in reality, hereby acknowledging his authority and her own subjection.

*Whose daughters ye are;* not only according to the flesh, but spiritually, according to the promise.



*Ye are;* either ye are made or become, viz. by imitation of her faith and holiness, as well as ye are by kindred and succession; or, ye are declared and known to be, as the phrase is elsewhere used, Joh 15:8.

*As long as ye do well;* follow her in good works, 1Ti 2:10.

*And are not afraid with any amazement;* or, afraid of any amazement, any thing frightful, or which might terrify you, taking *amazement* for the object or cause or fear, as 1Pe 3:14 Ps 53:5 Pr 3:25; and the sense may be, either, so long as ye perform your duty with a resolute mind, and keep from that which is contrary to your faith; or, as long as you subject yourselves to your husbands willingly, cheerfully, and without slavish fear of being losers by your obedience, and faring the worse for your patience and submission.

### 1 Peter 3:7

Ver. 7. *Dwell with them;* perform all matrimonial duties to them; by a synecdoche, all the duties of that relation are contained under this one of cohabitation.

*According to knowledge;* either, according to that knowledge of the Divine will, which by the gospel ye have obtained; or, prudently and wisely, and as becomes those that understand their duty.

*Giving honour unto the wife;* not despising them because of their weakness, or using them as slaves, but respecting them, caring for them, (as Mt 15:6 1Ti 5:3), using them gently, covering their infirmities.

*As unto the weaker vessel;* weaker than the husbands, and that both in body and mind, as women usually are. In Scripture any instrument is called a vessel, and the wife is here called so, as being not only an ornament, but a help to the husband and family, Ge 2:18. This he adds as a reason why the husband should give honour to the wife, viz. her being *the weaker vessel*; weak vessels must be gently handled; the infirmities of children bespeak their pardon when they offend; and *those members of*

*the body which we think less honourable, on them we bestow more abundant honour, 1Co 12:23.* It is a part of that prudence according to which men should dwell with their wives, to have the more regard to them because of their infirmities, (in bearing with them and hiding them), lest they should be discouraged, if they find their weakness makes them contemptible.

*And as being heirs together:* another reason why husbands should give honour to their wives, viz. because though by nature they are weak and unequal to their husbands, yet they are equal to them in respect of their being called to the same grace and glory, there being neither male nor female in Christ, Ga 3:28.

*Of the grace of life;* i.e. eternal life, which is the gift of grace; or, is to be given out of grace.

*That your prayers be not hindered;* either, that ye be not diverted and hindered from praying; or, that the efficacy of your prayers be not hindered, viz. by those contentions and differences which are like to arise, if you do not dwell with your own wives according to knowledge, and give them the honour that belongs to them.

### 1 Peter 3:8

Ver. 8. *Be ye all of one mind;* either, be of one mind in the things of faith, and then this implies the consent of the understanding, and the next, that of the affections; or, be united both in faith and affection: see Ro 12:16 2Co 13:11 Php 4:2.

*Having compassion one of another:* mutually affected with each other's good or evil, Ro 12:15 Heb 10:34 13:3. This he joins with the other as the consequent of it; they that are united in faith and love are of the same body; and where one member suffers, the rest suffer, 1Co 12:26.

*Love as brethren;* viz. in Christ: see 1Pe 3:17.

*Be pitiful;* ready to show mercy, of a merciful disposition, Eph 4:32 Col 3:12.

*Be courteous;* kind, affable, humane, of a sweet conversation, in

opposition to sourness and moroseness: the same word is used, Ac 27:3.

### 1 Peter 3:9

Ver. 9. *Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing;* not recompensing evil either in words or deeds, Pr 24:29: See Poole on "1Pe 2:3", see Ro 12:14,17,19,21. *But contrariwise blessing;* praying for, and, as ye can, doing good to, those that do evil to you, or speak evil of you, Mt 5:39,44 Lu 16:27,28.

*Knowing that ye are thereunto called;* either:

1. To bless those that do evil to you, that so by patient bearing of injuries, forbearing private revenge, &c., ye might obtain a blessing. Or:
2. Ye are called hereunto, viz. to inherit a blessing.

*Called;* in your conversion to the faith of Christ.

*That ye should inherit a blessing:* this either shows how believers came to partake of the blessing, viz. by way of inheritance; or it implies the perpetuity of it, that, whereas they can exercise their patience in suffering injuries but a little while, their recompence shall be for ever.

*A blessing;* either:

1. Eternal life, as the greatest blessing: or:
2. The good things of both lives, temporal, spiritual, and eternal mercies, which are all promised to the godly, 1Ti 4:8, and which they have by right of inheritance, Ps 37:11 Mt 5:5: and this seems to agree with 1Pe 3:10-12.

### 1 Peter 3:10

Ver. 10. *He that will love life;* he that earnestly desires to lead a quiet and comfortable life here, and to enjoy eternal life hereafter.

*And see good days; peaceable and prosperous; as evil days are such as are grievous and calamitous, [Ge 47:9](#).*

*Let him refrain his tongue from evil: from evil-speaking, railing, reviling, open detraction.*

*And his lips that they speak no guile; tell no lies of his neighbour: or, this may imply whispering, backbiting, or any way secretly and closely speaking evil of him. Under these two, all the vices of the tongue, whereby our neighbour may be wronged, are contained, and the contrary virtues commanded, under the name of *blessing*.*

### 1 Peter 3:11

Ver. 11. *Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him not only in general avoid all sin, and exercise himself in all well-doing, (as the prophet's meaning, cited in the margin, seems to be), but particularly, let him avoid all sin against his neighbour, not recompensing evil to him, and doing him all the good he can, and overcoming evil with good; and to this the apostle accommodates the prophet's words.*

*Let him seek peace; not only with God and his own conscience, but with his neighbours, which is here especially meant.*

*And ensue it: either seeking and ensuing signify the same thing, viz. an earnest desire of peace, and use of all lawful means to obtain it; or, ensuing it may signify the difficulty of obtaining it; when we seek it, it may seem to fly from us, men may not let us have peace when we would have peace, [Ps 120:7](#), and therefore we must follow it, [Heb 12:14](#).*

### 1 Peter 3:12

Ver. 12. *For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers; God watcheth over them, looks favourably on them, and hears their prayers: see [Ps 34:15](#). This he lays down as a motive to patience under injuries, and to keep us from tumultuating passions, and desires of revenge; that*

God sees all we suffer, hath a care of us, and is ready to hear, and in due time to help us.

*But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil;* his anger, or indignation; *face* being here taken not for God's favour, (as many times it is), but in the contrary sense, as Le 17:10 20:5 Ps 68:1,2. Men show by their countenances whether they be angry or pleased; and hence it is that God's face is sometimes taken for his favour, sometimes for his displeasure. A further argument to persuade us to patience, that God undertakes to plead our cause against our enemies, and avenge us on them; whereas if we think to secure ourselves against them by undue means, we make God an enemy to us.

### 1 Peter 3:13

Ver. 13. *And who is he that will harm you?* i.e. none or few will harm you, as being convinced and overcome by your good deeds, whereby even they are many times mollified and melted that are of themselves most wicked and hard-hearted, 1Sa 24:16,17.

*If ye be followers of that which is good;* either followers of God, who doth good to the evil and unkind; but then it should be rendered, followers of him who is good, or rather, followers of those things that are good: q. d. If you be diligent in doing good to others, none will have the heart to do you hurt.

### 1 Peter 3:14

Ver. 14. *But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake;* if ye suffer unjustly, whether it be for the true profession of the gospel, or in the exercise of righteousness, being followers of that which is good, and walking in the practice of the duties before mentioned.

*Happy are ye;* both in the spiritual benefit you gain by sufferings, viz. your edification in faith, patience, humility, &c.; the glory which redounds to God, who supports you under and carries you through them; and the reward you yourselves expect after them, Mt 5:10, &c.

*And be not afraid of their terror;* either be not afraid after the manner of carnal men, (as the prophet's meaning is, Isa 8:12,13), or rather, (the apostle accommodating the words of the prophet to his present purpose), be not afraid of those formidable things wherewith they threaten you; or, be not afraid of themselves and their threatenings, whereby they would strike terror into you: and so here is a metonymy in the words; fear, the effect, being put for the cause; thus fear is taken, Ps 64:1 91:5 Pr 1:26.

*Neither be troubled;* viz. inordinately, with such a fear as is contrary to faith, and hinders you from doing your duty, Joh 14:1.

### 1 Peter 3:15

Ver. 15. *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts;* exalt him in your hearts, and give him the honour of all his glorious perfections, power, wisdom, goodness, faithfulness, &c., by believing them, and depending upon his promises for defence and assistance against all the evils your enemies may threaten you with.

*And be ready always;* prepared to answer when duly called to it.

*To give an answer;* or, to make an apology or defence, viz. of the faith ye profess; the word is used, Ac 22:1 1Co 9:3.

*To every man that asketh you;* either that hath authority to examine you, and take an account of your religion; or, that asks with modesty, and a desire to be satisfied, and learn of you.

*A reason of the hope that is in you;* i.e. faith, for which hope is frequently used in Scripture, which is built upon faith: the sense is: Whereas unbelievers, your persecutors especially, may scoff at your hope of future glory, as vain and groundless, and at yourselves, as mad or foolish, for venturing the loss of all in this world, and exposing yourselves to so many sufferings, in expectation of ye know not what uncertainties in the other; do ye therefore be always ready to defend and justify your faith against all objectors, and to show how reasonable your hope of salvation is, and on how sure a foundation it is built.

*With meekness and fear;* either with meekness in relation to men, in opposition to passion and intemperate zeal, (your confession of the faith must be with courage, but yet with a spirit of meekness and modesty), and fear or reverence in relation to God, which, where it prevails, overcomes the fierceness of men's spirits, and makes them speak modestly of the things of God, and give due respect to men; or, *fear* may be set in opposition to pride, and presumption of a man's own wisdom or strength; q.d. Make confession of your faith humbly, with fear and trembling, not in confidence of your own strength, or gifts, or abilities.

### 1 Peter 3:16

Ver. 16. *Having a good conscience;* this may be read either:

1. Indicatively, and joined (as by some it is) to the former verse; and then the sense is: If ye be always ready to answer every one that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, ye shall have a good conscience: or rather:
2. Imperatively (which our translation favours); q.d. Not only be ready to make confession of your faith, but let your life and practice be correspondent to it, in keeping yourselves pure from sin, and exercising yourselves unto godliness, from whence a good conscience proceeds; here therefore the effect is put for the cause, a good conscience for a good life, Ac 23:1.

*That whereas they speak evil of you, &c.;* the sense is, that whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil-doers, your good conversation may bear witness for you, confute their calumnies, and make them ashamed, when it appears that their accusations are false, and that they have nothing to charge upon you but your being followers of Christ.

*Your good conversation in Christ;* i.e. that good conversation which ye lead as being in Christ; viz. according to his doctrine and example, and by the influence of his Spirit.

### 1 Peter 3:17

Ver. 17. *If the will of God be so;* viz. that ye must suffer; intimating that this is an argument for their patience and submission in their sufferings, and a ground of comfort to them, that they are led into them by the providence of God, (not by their own folly or rashness), and have him for a witness and judge both of their cause and deportment.

### 1 Peter 3:18

Ver. 18. *For Christ also hath once suffered;* in opposition to the legal sacrifices which were offered from day to day, and from year to year, Heb 7:27 9:25; and Heb 10:12; and this shows, as the perfection of Christ's sufferings, (in that they needed not be repeated), so our conformity to him in deliverance from ours; that as Christ underwent death (the principal part of his sufferings) not often, but once only, and then his glory followed; so likewise, if in this life we suffer for righteousness' sake, according to Christ's example, there remains no more suffering for us, but we shall be glorified with him, 2Ti 2:12.

*For sins;* i.e. for the expiation of sin. This is another argument for patience under sufferings, that Christ by his sufferings hath taken away the guilt, and freed us from the punishment, of sin; so that our sufferings, though they may be not only by way of trial, but of correction, yet are not properly penal or vindictive.

*The just for the unjust;* and therefore well may we, who are in ourselves unrighteous, be content to suffer, especially for his cause and truth.

*That he might bring us to God;* i.e. reconcile us to God, and procure for us access to him with freedom and boldness, Ro 5:2 Eph 3:12.

*Being put to death in the flesh;* his human nature, frequently in Scripture called *flesh*, as 1Pe 4:8 Joh 1:14; and though his soul, as being immortal, did not die, yet he suffered most grievous torments in it, and his body died by the real separation of his soul from it.

*But quickened by the Spirit;* i.e. his own Godhead, Joh 2:19 Joh 10:17,18. The former member of this sentence speaks of the



subject of his death, his *flesh*, which was likewise the subject of his life in his resurrection; this latter speaks of the efficient cause of his life, his own eternal *Spirit*.

### 1 Peter 3:19

Ver. 19. *By which also;* by which Spirit, mentioned in the end of the former verse, i.e. by, or in, his Divine nature, the same by which he was quickened.

*He;* Christ. This notes the person that went and preached, as the former doth the nature in which, and so shows that what is here spoken of the person of Christ, is to be understood of him according to his Divine nature.

*Went;* or, came, viz. from heaven, by all anthropopathy, by which figure God is often in Scripture said to go forth, Isa 26:21, to *come down*, Mic 1:3, and *go down*, Ge 18:21 Ex 3:8; which two latter places are best understood of the Second Person. This therefore here notes in Christ not a change of place, but a special operation, and testification of his presence.

*And preached;* viz. by Noah, inspired by him, that he might be a preacher of righteousness, to warn a wicked generation of approaching judgment, and exhort them to repentance.

*Unto the spirits;* souls of men departed, which are frequently called spirits, Ec 12:7 Ac 7:59 Heb 12:23.

*In prison;* i.e. in hell, so it is taken, Pr 27:20; compare with Mt 5:25 Lu 12:58, where *prison* is mentioned as a type or representation of hell; and the Syriac renders the word by *Sheol*, which signifies sometimes the grave and sometimes hell. See the like expression, 2Pe 2:4,5 Jude 1:6.

### 1 Peter 3:20

Ver. 20. *Which;* which spirits in prison.

*Question.* When were these spirits, to whom Christ preached by Noah, in prison?

*Answer.* Then when Peter wrote this Epistle. The Greek participle of the present tense is here to be supplied, and the word thus read, preached to the spirits which are in prison, viz. now at this time; and so the time of their being in prison is opposed to the time of their being disobedient; their disobedience going before their imprisonment; q.d. They were disobedient then, they are in prison now.

*Sometime;* viz. in the days of Noah, when they were upon earth.

*Were disobedient;* would not believe what Noah told them in God's name, nor be brought to repentance by his preaching.

*When once;* not always, but for a determinate time, viz. one hundred and twenty years; which term being expired, there was no hope left for them that they should be spared.

*The long-suffering of God;* i.e. God in his patience and long-suffering.

*Waited;* for the repentance and reformation of that rebellious generation.

*In the days of Noah;* till the one hundred and twenty years were run out, and the ark, which was preparing for the security of him and his family, were finished.

*Eight souls;* i.e. eight persons, Noah, and his wife, his three sons, and their wives.

*Were saved by water;* either:

1. *By water* is here put for in, as Ro 4:11, *that believe, though they be not circumcised*: the same Greek preposition is used as here, and the words may be read, by, or through, or rather in uncircumcision; for uncircumcision was not the cause or means of their believing. See the like use of this participle, 2Pe 3:5. Thus, saved in the water, is as much as, notwithstanding the water, or the water not hindering; so 1Ti 2:15, *saved in childbearing*, where the same preposition is used. Or:
2. *By water;* the water which drowned the world, lifting up the

ark and saving Noah and his household.

*Question.* Doth not this place countenance the papists' limbus, or the place where the souls of the Old Testament fathers were reserved (as they pretend) till Christ's coming in the flesh?

*Answer.* No: for:

1. The spirits here mentioned were disobedient, which cannot be said of the fathers of the Old Testament, who were true believers.
2. The spirits here mentioned are not said to be delivered out of prison, but only that Christ by his Spirit preached to them, and to his preaching to them their disobedience is opposed.
3. According to the papists, Noah and his family must be in their limbus, whereas they are opposed to those disobedient spirits to whom Christ is said to preach.

### 1 Peter 3:21

Ver. 21. *The like figure;* Greek, the antitype. Twice this word occurs in Scripture; once Heb 9:24, where it signifies simply a type, or exemplar, or representation; and here, where it implies either the likeness or correspondence of one type with another in signifying the same thing: so that here may be two types, the deliverance of Noah and his household in the flood, and baptism, whereof the former was a type of the latter, yet so as both represent the salvation of the church; in that as the waters of the flood lifting up the ark, and saving Noah's family shut up in it, signified the salvation of the church; so likewise baptism signifies the salvation of those that are in the church (as in an ark) from that common destruction which involves the rest of the world: or, it signifies the truth itself, as answering the type or figure; and thus the temporal salvation of Noah, &c. from the flood, in the ark, was the type, and the eternal salvation of believers by baptism is the antitype, or truth figured by it. Our translation seems to favour the former.

*Whereunto;* i.e. the saving eight persons by water; q. d. The salvation of believers now by baptism, answers to the

deliverance of Noah then; and so this relative, *whereunto*, answers to the foregoing sentence, as its antecedent.

*Even baptism doth also now save us; viz. with an eternal salvation, in answer to the temporal deliverance of Noah by water; and that not only as it is a sign, but a seal whereby the Spirit of God confirms in the hearts of believers the faith of their justification purchased by Christ's death, and witnessed by his resurrection, Ro 4:25.*

*Not the putting away of the filth of the flesh; not merely the washing of the body with water, or the external part of baptism, which can of itself have no further effect than other bodily washings have, viz. to cleanse the flesh. And so he answers an objection which might be made: How baptism can be said to save us, when so many perish who are baptized, by declaring, as follows, what it is in baptism which is so effectual.*

*But the answer of a good conscience: the Greek word here used is several ways rendered, and so this place differently interpreted: the best translation seems to be, either:*

1. The petition of a good conscience, and then it notes the effect of baptism, viz. that holy confidence and security wherewith a conscience, sprinkled with the blood of Christ, addresses itself to God in prayer, as a Father. Thus the word is taken, Mt 15:23 16:2 Ro 10:20. Or rather:
2. The stipulation, which by a metonymy is taken for the answer, promise, or restipulation required; and this agrees with our translation.

In baptism there is a solemn covenant, or mutual agreement, between God and the party baptized, wherein God offers, applies, and seals his grace, stipulating or requiring the party's acceptance of that grace, and devoting himself to his service; and when he out of a good conscience doth engage and promise this, which is to come up to the terms of covenant, that may properly be called *the answer of a good conscience*. It seems to be an allusion to the manner of baptizing, where the minister asked the party to be baptized concerning his faith in Christ, and he accordingly answered him; Dost thou believe? I believe. Dost thou renounce the devil, &c.? I renounce. See Ac 8:37.

*A good conscience;* a conscience purified by faith from internal and spiritual defilements, (in opposition to putting away the filth of the flesh), which only sincerely answers to what God requires in baptism.

*Toward God;* i.e. in the presence of God, with whom conscience hath to do in baptism, and who alone is the Judge of conscience, and knows whether it be good and sincere, or not: or, *toward God,* is to God; and then it relates to *answer,* and implies the answer or engagement of conscience to be made to God.

*By the resurrection of Jesus Christ:* either these words are to be joined to the verb *save,* and the rest of the verse to be read in a parenthesis, according to our translation; and then the sense is, that baptism saves us by the faith of Christ's resurrection, or by virtue derived from Christ's resurrection, under which is comprehended his death and sufferings: or they are to be joined to *answer,* supplying which is; and then, without a parenthesis, the text runs thus, the answer of a good conscience, which is by the resurrection of Christ; and the meaning is, that the answer of a good conscience toward God is by the resurrection of Christ, as the foundation of our believing the promise of forgiveness and free grace, inasmuch as it testifies God to be fully satisfied for sin, and Christ to have fully overcome sin, the devil, &c. For where this faith is not, there can be no good conscience, nor any sincere answering what God requires of us in baptism: if men do not believe the satisfaction of Divine justice by Christ's death, which is evidenced by his resurrection, they will not close with the offers of his grace, nor engage themselves to be the Lord's. See 1Pe 1:3 1Co 15:17.

### 1 Peter 3:22

Ver. 22. *Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God:* see Ro 8:34 Heb 1:3. This is added as another ground of faith and a good conscience.

*Angels and authorities and powers:* see Ro 8:38 Eph 1:20,21 Col 1:16 Col 2:10.

*Being made subject unto him;* viz. by his Father, to whom this

subjecting all things to Christ is elsewhere ascribed, 1Co 15:27  
Eph 1:22 Heb 2:8.

1 Peter 4:1

### Chapter Summary

1Pe 4:1-6 The apostle exhorteth to cease from sin, in regard of Christ's having suffered for it, and of a future judgment.

1Pe 4:7 From the approaching end of all things, he urgeth to sobriety, watchfulness, a prayer,

1Pe 4:8 to charity,

1Pe 4:9 hospitality,

1Pe 4:10,11 and a right use of spiritual gifts.

1Pe 4:12-19 Sundry motives of comfort under persecution.

Ver. 1. The apostle having in the former chapter exhorted believers to patient bearing of afflictions by the example of Christ, 1Pe 4:18, proceeds in this to persuade them to improve the crosses they bore outwardly to inward mortification. Christ's death is proposed to us in Scripture as an exemplar both of external mortification in bearing reproaches, persecutions, &c., (this the apostle prosecutes in the former chapter), and of internal, in the destroying the body of sin; this he exhorts to in this chapter, and indeed draws his argument from Christ's death, not only as the exemplary, but efficient and meritorious, cause of our mortification, and which hath a real influence upon it, in that Christ by his death did not only merit the pardon of sin, but the giving the Spirit, whereby corruption might be destroyed, and our natures renewed.

*Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us; viz. not only as an exemplar of patience and submission to the will of God, but for the taking away of sin, both in the guilt and power of it, and that he might be the procurer as well as pattern of our mortification.*

*In the flesh;* in his human nature, as 1Pe 3:18.

*Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind;* strengthen and fortify yourselves against all temptations, and unto the mortification of your lusts, with the consideration of these ends, and the mighty efficacy of Christ's death, he suffering in his flesh, i.e. in his human nature, that you might suffer in your flesh, i.e. in your sinful, corrupt nature; or, (which comes to the same), *with the same mind* which Christ had, who, in his death, aimed not only at the pardon of your sin, but the destruction of it, and the renovation of your natures: or, *arm yourselves with the same mind*, viz. a purpose of suffering in the flesh, i.e. of dying spiritually with Christ in the mortification of your flesh, Ro 6:6,7; as Christ died, and suffered in the flesh, so reckon that you, by the virtue of his death, must die to sin. and crucify your flesh, with its affections and lusts, Ga 5:24: or else, what *the same mind* is, he declares in the following clause.

*For;* or rather, that, the Greek word here seems rather to be explicative than causal.

*He that hath suffered in the flesh;* i.e. the old man, his corrupt flesh, (*flesh* being taken here in a different sense from what it was in the former part of the verse), he that is spiritually dead with Christ, whose old man is crucified with him.

*Hath ceased from sin;* from sinning willingly and delightfully, and yielding himself up to the power of sin; compare Ro 6:1-23, which explains this: what Peter here calls suffering in the flesh, Paul there calls a being dead to sin, Ro 6:2,11; and what Peter calls a ceasing from sin, Paul calls a living no longer in sin, Ro 6:2, and a being freed from it, Ro 6:7. And this may be the *mind*, or thought, with which they were to be armed, that they being dead with Christ to sin, should not live any longer in it; having their flesh crucified, should not indulge its affections and lusts.

### 1 Peter 4:2

Ver. 2. *In the flesh;* i.e. in the body, meaning his natural life: *flesh* is here taken in a third sense, different from the two former: so Ga 2:20 Php 1:22. By *the lusts of men*, he means the corrupt desires and sinful ways of carnal men, to which they were not to

conform themselves, or make them the rule of their living, Ro 12:2 1Co 3:3 Col 2:8 Tit 1:14.

*But to the will of God;* the holy will of God revealed to us in his law, (which is the rule by which we are to walk), in opposition to the lusts of men; we are to live not as men would have us, but as God commands us.

### 1 Peter 4:3

Ver. 3. *For the time past of our be may see:* the apostle doth not mean by this expression merely that they should forbear their former lusts out of a satiety and weariness, as having had their fill of them, but to stir them up to holiness by minding them of their former sinful life; q.d. Ye are concerned to run well now, when ye have for so great a part of your time run wrong. It is a figure whereby he mitigates and lenifies the sharpness of his reproof for their former sinful life: see the like, Eze 44:6 45:9 Mr 14:41.

*Us;* some copies read, ye, and that agrees with the following verse, where the second person is made use of: or if we read, according to our translation, *us*, it is a figure called anacoenosis, whereby Peter assumes to himself in common with them what yet, in his own person, he was never guilty of, as Isa 64:6,7 Da 9:5, &c.; or else it may be an analogy of the person, whereby the first is put for the second.

*To have wrought the will of the Gentiles;* viz. those that were profane and ignorant of God and Christ, and so it is the same as the lusts of men, 1Pe 4:2.

*When we walked;* had our conversation, as Eph 2:3, walking being taken for the course of man's life; and sometimes in an evil way, as 2Pe 2:10 3:3 Jude 1:16,18; and sometimes in a good, as Lu 1:6.

*In lasciviousness;* especially outward acts, here set in distinction from *lusts*, which implies those inward motions from which those outward defilements proceed.



*Excess of wine, revellings; unseasonable and luxurious feasting, Ro 13:13 Ga 5:21.*

*Banquetings: compotations, or meetings for drinking, Pr 23:30 Isa 5:11,12.*

*And abominable idolatries:*

*Question.* Why doth Peter charge the Jews with idolatry, who generally kept themselves from it after the Babylonish captivity?

Answer.

1. Though most did, yet all might not.
2. It is a sort of idolatry to eat things sacrificed to idols, which many of the Jews, being dispersed among the idolatrous Gentiles, and being invited by them to their idol feasts, might possibly do; and, being under the temptation of poverty, might too far conform themselves to the customs of the nations among which they were.
3. Probably this idolatry might be the worship of angels, frequent among the Gentiles, particularly the Colossians, inhabiting a city of Phrygia, which was a part of Asia where many Jews were, 1Pe 1:1.
4. The churches to which he wrote might be made up of Jews and Gentiles, and the apostle may, by a synecdoche, ascribe that to all in common, which yet is to be understood only of a part.

1 Peter 4:4

*Ver. 4. Wherein they think it strange:* Greek, are strangers, i.e. carry themselves as strangers, wondering (as at some new thing) at the change the gospel hath made in you, and your no more conforming yourselves to their wicked courses; they seem to be in another world when among you.

*That ye run not with them:* this seems to signify the eagerness and vehemency of these Gentiles in pursuing their lusts, and may

perhaps have some respect to the feasts of Bacchus, to which they were wont madly to run, and there commit the abominations mentioned 1Pe 4:3.

*To the same excess of riot;* or, profuseness, or confusion, of riot or luxury, and then it suits well with that heap of sins before mentioned, whereof this seems to be comprehensive.

*Speaking evil;* Greek, blaspheming, or speaking evil; *of you* is added by the translators: this may therefore be understood not only of their speaking evil of believers, as void of humanity and enemies to civil society, but of God and the Christian religion, as a dull, morose, sour way, and which they could not embrace without renouncing all mirth and cheerfulness.

#### 1 Peter 4:5

Ver. 5. *Who shall give account to him;* of their evil speaking as well as of other sins, Jude 1:15; it is a metaphor taken from stewards giving account to their masters, Mt 18:23 Lu 16:2.

*That is ready;* not only prepared for it, but at hand to do it, Jas 5:9.

*To judge the quick and the dead;* those that shall be alive at Christ's coming, and those that died before, but then shall be raised, and brought to judgment. Hereby he intimates, for their comfort, that though their enemies and ill-willers might outlive them, yet they shall not escape God's judgment.

#### 1 Peter 4:6

Ver. 6. *To them that are dead;* either:

1. Spiritually dead, i.e. dead in sin, viz. then when the gospel was preached to them; or:
2. Naturally dead, viz. when the apostle wrote this Epistle. The verb *are* not being in the Greek, the words may be understood either way, by supplying *were*, according to the former exposition, or *are*, according to the latter, which our

translators favour. See the like, Ru 1:8.

*That they might be judged according to men in the flesh:* either:

1. That they might be judged or condemned in the flesh, i.e. that their old man and carnal conversation, according to men walking in their carnal lusts, might be destroyed and abolished; and then, to be judged in the flesh, is of the same import as to suffer in the flesh, 1Pe 4:1; to be dead to sin, Ro 6:2: or:
2. That they might be judged or condemned in the flesh, according to men, and so far as they could reach, not only by censures, reproaches, and evil speeches, but even death itself, as it had fallen out already to Stephen, James, &c.

*But live according to God in the spirit;* that they might live a spiritual life in their souls according to the will of God, and an eternal life with him. To *live in the spirit, to the will of God, to walk in newness of life, &c.*, are phrases of a like import in the language of the apostles. According to the latter exposition of the former clause, the apostle seems in the whole to remove the scandal of these Christians, being reproached and condemned by unbelievers for their strictness in religion, and nonconformity to the world, by telling them, that their condition was not singular, but so it had fared with others before them, (though now dead), to whom the gospel was preached, with the same event as to the judgment of worldly men who censured and condemned them, and yet with the same hope of fruit and benefit, viz. that though they were condemned by men in the flesh, or as to their outward man, yet as to their souls, (meant here by spirits), they might live a holy, spiritual life, a life to God in this world, ending in a life with him in the other.

1 Peter 4:7

Ver. 7. *But the end of all things:* the last judgment, which will put an end to all the evils as well as good things of this world.

*Is at hand:* see Jas 5:8,9.

*Be ye therefore sober;* both in mind, prudent, moderate, 2Co

5:13 Tit 2:6; and in body, temperate in meats and drinks, &c.

*And watch*: the word signifies both sobriety, in opposition to drunkenness, 1Th 5:6,8, and watchfulness, 2Ti 4:5, and this signification agrees best with this place, the former being implied in the word *sober*.

*Unto prayer*; the end for which they should be sober and vigilant, viz. that they might observe every season fit for prayer, and might still keep themselves in a praying frame.

### 1 Peter 4:8

Ver. 8. *And above all things*: see the like expression, Jas 5:12, and on the same occasion, Col 3:14.

*Have fervent charity*; not only labour after charity diligently and carefully, but let it be fervent, intense, strong.

*For charity shall cover the multitude of sins*; partly by preventing anger, railings, revilings, contentions, that they break not out, and partly by repressing, concealing, pardoning them when they do break out, 1Co 13:7: see Jas 5:20.

### 1 Peter 4:9

Ver. 9. *Use hospitality*; Christian hospitality in entertaining strangers, those especially that are brought to need your kindness by suffering for the gospel.

*Without grudging*; or murmuring, either at the expense you make, or the carriage of those ye entertain; q.d. Use hospitality willingly, freely, cheerfully, Ro 12:8 2Co 9:7.

### 1 Peter 4:10

Ver. 10. *As every man hath received the gift*; any gift, office, faculty, or ability, whereby he may be serviceable to the good of others, all which are received of God, 1Co 12:11 Eph 4:7.

*Minister the same one to another;* dispense and communicate modestly and humbly, not lifting himself up above others upon the account of his gifts, but remembering he hath received them, and is a steward to dispense them.

*As good stewards;* and therefore faithful in distributing his Lord's goods.

*Of the manifold grace of God:* by grace he means the same as by gift before; and so by manifold grace, the various gifts given to them of God, 1Co 12:4-6.

### 1 Peter 4:11

Ver. 11. *If any man speak;* viz. authoritatively, and by way of office, as a public teacher in the church; though this may be accommodated to private Christians in their charitable instructions of others, yet it seems especially meant of teaching officers.

*Let him speak as the oracles of God:* this relates not only to the manner of speaking, that it be with faith in that word the preacher speaketh, and a due reverence of it, but to the matter likewise, that he preach nothing but the pure word of God, and do not obtrude upon the hearers the fancies, figments, or traditions of men, instead of the oracles of God.

*If any man minister:* this may be understood either:

1. More particularly of the work of deacons, Ac 6:1-15, who were to *serve tables*, Ac 6:2, distribute the alms of the church, and take care of the poor; or:
2. More generally of any ministry in the church, distinct from that of teaching, (of which he spake before), as the dispensing of sacraments, exercise of discipline, &c.

*Let him do it as of the ability which God giveth;* i.e. not remissly and coldly, but diligently and strenuously, and with his might, as far as God enables him; this being to do it faithfully, which is especially required in a steward, 1Co 4:2.

*That God in all things may be glorified;* in all your gifts, and the communications of them: q.d. God doth not adorn you with his gifts so as to bereave himself of his glory, but that you should give him the honour of them.

*Through Jesus Christ;* from whom ye have received the gifts, Eph 4:8, and by whom you are enabled to glorify God; and by whom alone what ye do can be accepted of God. See Eph 3:21.

### 1 Peter 4:12

Ver. 12. *Think it not strange;* be not offended or troubled at persecution, as at a thing unusual or never heard of; it implies that they should reckon upon it beforehand, that they might not be surprised with it when it comes. The same word is used, 1Pe 4:4.

*Concerning the fiery trial;* the heat or burning, whereby he means great afflictions, especially those that are for righteousness' sake, as appears, 1Pe 4:14, which are often compared to fire, as being alike painful and grievous to them as fire is to men's bodies; and because men are tried by them as metals are by fire, Ps 66:10 Isa 48:10.

*Which is to try you:* this he adds as the reason why they should not think strange of persecutions, viz. because they were sent by God, not for their destruction, but for the trial and exercise of their graces.

### 1 Peter 4:13

Ver. 13. *But rejoice;* be so far from being offended at your sufferings, as rather to reckon that there is great matter of rejoicing in them; their being trials makes them tolerable, but your being in them partakers of Christ's sufferings makes them comfortable.

*Inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings;* i.e. ye suffer:

1. As Christ did, for the confession of the truth, and so ye are

such kind of sufferers as Christ was.

2. As members of Christ, ye suffer those evils which are laid out for those that belong to Christ, 1Th 3:3.
3. Ye are hereby conformed to Christ your Head.
4. Ye partake of the influence of what Christ suffered, for the sanctification of your sufferings: see Php 3:10.

*That, when his glory shall be revealed;* viz. at his second coming, 1Pe 1:7 Col 3:4 2Th 1:7.

*Ye may be glad also with exceeding joy;* a joy without any the least mixture of pain or grief. The rejoicing of the saints here is mixed with pain and heaviness, but shall be pure hereafter; they rejoice in hope now, but in enjoyment then.

#### 1 Peter 4:14

Ver. 14. *Happy are ye;* viz. because of the Spirit's dwelling in you, which is both the means and evidence of your happiness.

*The spirit of glory and of God;* i.e. the glorious Spirit of God, or that Spirit of God which is likewise a Spirit of glory, as being not only glorious in himself, but a glory to them in whom he dwells, and the cause of their future glorification. This he adds in counterbalance to the reproaches they suffered for the name of Christ; q.d. It is a greater glory to you to have the Spirit of Christ dwelling in you, (whereof your patient bearing reproaches and persecutions is an argument), than all the calumnies and obloquies wherewith your enemies load you can be a shame to you.

*Resteth upon you:* in allusion to Isa 11:2; dwells in you, and shall abide with you for ever, Joh 14:16, not leaving you in your sufferings.

*On their part he;* either Christ, or rather the Spirit.

*Is evil spoken of;* the reproaches your enemies cast upon you, reach that Spirit himself that dwells in you, when they revile that

good confession into which the Spirit led you, deride the consolations he gives you, and speak evil of your persons, who are the temples in which he dwells.

*But on your part he is glorified;* viz. by your patience and constancy in your sufferings, which shows forth the power of that Spirit which resteth upon you, in that he works so mightily in you, as to enable you to bear what without the assistance of his grace were intolerable.

#### 1 Peter 4:15

Ver. 15. *But let noise of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief:* keep clear of those crimes which may expose you to suffering by the hand of justice, and carry yourselves so innocently, that you may never suffer from men but unjustly.

*Or as an evil-doer;* either this is a general term, denoting them that offend against any public law; or, it may signify those that are guilty of any offence against the laws, though less than murder or theft.

*Or as a busy-body in other men's matters;* either a covetous person, that looks with an evil eye upon what others have, and is ready to catch it as he can; or rather, one that goes beyond the bounds of his own calling, and invades the callings of others, pragmatically intruding into their business, and making himself a judge of those things which belong not to him. Some nations are said to have punished those that were busy through idleness, impertinently diligent in other men's matters, and negligent of their own. However, if this pragmatcalness did not expose the Christians to the laws of the Gentiles, yet it might make them odious, and expose them to their reproaches.

#### 1 Peter 4:16

Ver. 16. *Yet if any man suffer as a Christian;* if his Christianity be his only crime, and the cause of his sufferings.

Let him not be ashamed: see 2Ti 2:12.



*But let him glorify God on this behalf;* i.e. on the account of his sufferings; let him bless God for keeping him from suffering as an evil-doer, and for counting him worthy to suffer for Christ's sake, Ac 5:41, as well as for giving him patience, and courage under sufferings.

#### 1 Peter 4:17

Ver. 17. *For the time is come;* or season, viz. that which is fixed by God: the afflictions that befall God's people come in the time appointed, and so are never unseasonable. Or this may imply, that what the prophets spoke in their time, Isa 10:12 Jer 25:29, doth especially agree to gospel times, viz. that judgment begins at the house of God.

*Judgment;* viz. temporary, and for good, in opposition to the destructive judgment he implies in the latter part of the verse; he means all those afflictions God brings upon his children for their correction, trial, instruction, mortification, 1Co 11:31,32.

*Must begin at the house of God;* the church of God, and the members of it, called here his *house*, as 1Ti 3:15 Heb 3:6, and typified by the material house or temple of God under the Old Testament.

*What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?* How miserable, how dreadful will be the end of all those that would not obey the gospel! Implying, that they shall be in a much worse condition if God take them in hand. If he spare not his children, much less will he his enemies. If the one sip of the cup of God's wrath, the other *shall wring out the dregs, and drink them*, Ps 75:8.

#### 1 Peter 4:18

Ver. 18. *Scarcely be saved;* with much labour and difficulty, through many tribulations, Ac 14:22, as going in the narrow way, and entering in at the strait gate, Mt 7:13,14.

*The ungodly and the sinner;* unbelievers and impenitent sinners of all sorts; both words signify the same, in opposition to *the*

*righteous* before mentioned.

*Appear;* he shall not be able to stand in God's judgment against the sentence of condemnation then to be pronounced, Ps 1:5: q. d. If the righteous scarcely be saved, the wicked shall certainly perish.

#### 1 Peter 4:19

Ver. 19. *Let them that suffer;* viz. any manner of affliction or persecution for righteousness' sake.

*According to the will of God;* according to that will of God, whereby he hath appointed them to suffer such things, 1Pe 3:17 1Th 3:3.

*Commit;* commend into his hands, or lay up, or intrust with him as a depositum, Ps 31:5 2Ti 1:12.

*The keeping of their souls;* as the most precious things while they live, and most to be cared for when they die; that they may be kept from sin under afflictions, and from perishing in death: or rather, *their souls* here includes their bodies, and so committing their souls is committing their whole selves to God.

*In well-doing;* not being deterred from well-doing by the evils they suffer, but by persevering in holiness notwithstanding their afflictions, making it appear to the last, that they do not suffer as evil-doers.

*As unto a faithful Creator;* one who, as Creator, is able to keep what they commit to him; and being faithful to his promises, certainly will do it.

#### 1 Peter 5:1

### Chapter Summary

1Pe 5:1-4 The elders are exhorted to feed the flock of Christ conscientiously, looking to the chief Shepherd for a reward.

1Pe 5:5 The younger are required to submit to the elder, and all to practise humility toward each other, 1Pe 5:6,7 with resignation to God, 1Pe 5:8,9 to be sober, watchful, and stedfast in the faith, resisting the devil. 1Pe 5:10-14 The Epistle is concluded with a prayer and benediction.

Ver. 1. *The elders which are among you I exhort;* viz. those that were such, not so much by age as by office, as appears by his exhorting them to *feed the flock*, 1Pe 5:2; he means the ordinary ministers of the churches among the believing Jews.

*Who am also an elder:* elder is a general name, comprehending under it even apostles themselves, who were elders, though every elder were not an apostle.

*And a witness;* either:

1. In his doctrine, in which he held forth Christ's sufferings, whereof he had been an eye-witness, in which respect the apostles are often called *witnesses*, Lu 24:48 Ac 1:8,22 2:32.  
Or:
2. In his example, in that he in suffering so much for Christ, did give an ample testimony to the reality of Christ's sufferings, and that Christ had indeed suffered: or, both may well be comprehended.

*The glory that shall be revealed;* viz. at Christ's last coming, 1Pe 1:5 4:13 Ro 8:17,18.

### 1 Peter 5:2

Ver. 2. *Feed;* teach and rule, Mt 2:6 Joh 21:15-17 Ac 20:28.

The flock of God; the church.

*Which is among you;* which is with you, or committed to your charge; intimating that the flock not being their own, they were

to give an account of it to him that had set them over it.

*Taking the oversight thereof;* or, being bishops, or acting as bishops over it, i.e. superintending, inspecting, and watching over it with all care, Ac 20:28,29.

*Not by constraint;* not merely because ye must: what men do out of compulsion, they do more slightly and perfunctorily, as those that would not do it if they could help it: see the like expression, 2Co 9:7.

*But willingly;* cheerfully and freely, as Ex 36:2 Ps 54:6: compare 1Co 9:17.

*Not for filthy lucre;* not out of covetousness, or a design of making a gain of the work; it being a shameful thing for a shepherd to feed the sheep out of love to the fleece: see Tit 1:7 1Ti 3:3,8.

*But of a ready mind;* out of a good affection to the welfare of the flock, in opposition to the private gain before mentioned. He doth not do his work freely, and of a ready mind, who is either driven to it by necessity, or drawn by covetousness.

### 1 Peter 5:3

Ver. 3. *Neither as being lords;* not exercising any such lordship or dominion over the people, as temporal lords and magistrates exercise over their subjects, Mt 20:25,26, &c.; Lu 22:25: compare 2Co 1:24.

*Over God's heritage;* the Lord's clergy, the same as *flock* before; the Greek word is plural, and so it signifies the several churches or flocks which were under the charge of the several elders or pastors. The church of Israel is often called God's inheritance, which as it were fell to him by lot, (as the Greek word signifies), and which was as dear to him as men's inheritances are to them: see De 4:20 9:29 32:9 Ps 33:12 74:2 78:71. Accordingly now the Christian church, succeeding it, is called God's inheritance, and the word *clerus* is no where in the New Testament peculiarly ascribed to ministers of the gospel. This title given here to the Lord's people, implies a reason why

the elders should not lord it over them, viz. because they are still the Lord's inheritance, and not their own; God having not given them a kingdom but a care, and still retaining his right to his people.

*But being ensamples to the flock;* in holiness of life, practising before their eyes what you preach to their ears, Php 3:17 2Th 3:9 Tit 2:7.

#### 1 Peter 5:4

Ver. 4. *And when the chief Shepherd;* the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Prince of pastors, called the *great Shepherd of the sheep*, Heb 13:20, as here *the chief Shepherd*, not only for his supereminent dignity over all other pastors, but because of the power he hath over them, they being all subject to his authority, receiving their charge from him, and exercising their office in his name, and being accountable to him for their administrations.

*Shall appear:* see 1Pe 1:7,13 4:13.

*Ye shall receive;* or, carry away, viz. from Christ, who, as the Judge, shall award it to you.

*A crown of glory;* either, a glorious crown; or, that glory which shall be as a crown to you. It is called *a crown of righteousness*, 2Ti 4:8; *a crown of life*, Jas 1:12.

*That fadeth not away;* in opposition to those crowns which were given to conquerors in war, and in public games, which were made of perishable flowers or herbs: see 1Pe 1:4 1Co 9:25.

#### 1 Peter 5:5

Ver. 5. *Ye younger;* either he means those that were inferior to the church officers, and then he here prescribes the people their duty, as he had done the ministers; or rather, those that were younger in years, and then he passeth from the more special to the general.

*Submit yourselves:* under subjection, he comprehends all those

offices which the younger owe to the elder; as, to reverence them, take their advice, be guided by them, &c. Or, if younger be taken in the former sense, this precept falls in with that of the apostle, Heb 13:17.

*To the elder:* either elders by office, who were likewise usually elders in years, the younger sort being more rarely chosen to be officers; or rather, elder in age.

*Yea, all of you be subject one to another;* viz. in those mutual duties which they owe to each other, as husbands to wives, parents to children, &c. Those that are superior to others, yet are not so exempt from subjection as not to owe some duty: see Php 2:3.

*And be clothed with humility;* or, wrapt up, or covered, with humility, as with a garment which is put on over other garments; q.d. Adorn yourselves with humility as with a beautiful garment or robe. The metaphor of putting on is frequent, where mention is made of any grace or virtue, Ro 13:12 Eph 4:24 Col 3:10,12.

#### 1 Peter 5:6

Ver. 6. *The mighty hand of God;* by this he means God's omnipotence, which sometimes is called *a strong hand*, Ex 3:19, *a mighty hand*, Ex 32:11 De 3:24, *the right hand of power*, Mt 26:64; by which he is able to beat down those that are proud and high, and to defend or exalt those that are humble and lowly.

*In due time;* Greek, in season, viz. that which God sees most fit and conducing to his own glory and your real welfare.

#### 1 Peter 5:7

Ver. 7.  *Casting, as a burden, ally our care upon him;* your care for all sorts of things, even which concern this life, that care which will otherwise cut and divide your hearts, (as the Greek word in Matthew imports), and be grievous and tormenting to you.

*For he careth for you;* God concerns himself in the affairs of his

servants, and in whatsoever befalls them, and takes diligent care that no good thing be wanting to them, Ps 84:11 Php 4:6.

### 1 Peter 5:8

Ver. 8. Be sober: see 1Pe 1:13 4:7: q. d. Ye have to do with a mad enemy, a raging devil; ye had need yourselves be sober; not only in meats and drinks, &c., but as to the cares of this life, and whatsoever it is that is apt to intoxicate your minds, and expose you to him.

*Be vigilant;* spiritually watchful and circumspect, careful of your salvation, and aware of Satan's snares and temptations, Mt 24:42 Mt 25:13 26:41 1Th 5:6.

*Because your adversary;* or, that adversary of yours; he that contends with you, is plaintiff against you, Mt 5:25 Lu 12:58. It answers to the Hebrew word *Satan*, Zec 3:1.

*The devil;* your accuser, he that maligns you, calumniates you, informs against you: he is so called, Mt 4:1 13:39, and elsewhere, because of his accusing God to men, Ge 3:4,5, and men to God, Job 1:7 2:2 Re 12:10, as well as each to other, Joh 8:44.

*As a roaring lion;* i.e. strong, fierce, cruel, especially when hungry, and seeking his prey and roaring after it.

*Walketh about;* is diligent and restless in his attempts, either by circumventing or assaulting you: see Job 1:7.

*Seeking whom he may devour;* not lightly hurt, but swallow up and utterly destroy, by himself or his instruments.

### 1 Peter 5:9

Ver. 9. Whom resist; by not yielding to his temptations, Eph 4:27, and by employing your spiritual armour against him, Eph 6:11-13, &c.: see Jas 4:7.

*Stedfast in the faith;* either:

1. Hold your faith, persevering in it, which the devil would fain bereave you of, (as soldiers used in war to look to their shields, it being dishonourable to lose them), and without which ye will never be able to stand out against the devil: or:
2. Stedfast or strong by faith; intimating, that faith is a Christian's greatest strength, it being by faith that he engageth the power of God and grace of Christ on his side, whereby he comes to be victorious over all his enemies, 1Jo 5:4.

*Knowing that the same afflictions;* either:

1. The devil's temptations, which here he calls *afflictions*, because believers are passive in them, and count them the greatest afflictions; or rather:
2. Persecutions, which though they come upon them immediately from the men of the world, yet it is by the instigation of the devil, the prince of the world, who hath a principal hand in them, and acts by men as his instruments: so that when men oppress them, they are to resist the devil, who thereby tempts them. They have a spiritual enemy to deal with even in temporal afflictions.

*Are accomplished in your brethren;* or, fulfilled, or perfected: either:

1. Others of your brethren are filling up the measure of sufferings God hath allotted them, for the mortifying of the flesh, and conforming them to Christ their Head, as well as you are filling up yours, Col 1:24; or:
2. He speaks of the community of their sufferings: q.d. What afflictions ye endure, others endure too, and therefore ye should not grudge to suffer, when ye have so good company in your sufferings.

*That are in the world;* either this notes the sufferings of the saints to be universal, so as to reach them all, wheresoever they are dispersed throughout the world; or, to be short, as being confined to the time only of their abode in the world.



## 1 Peter 5:10

Ver. 10. *But the God of all grace;* i.e. the author and giver of all grace, from whom ye have received what you have, and expect what you want.

*Who hath called us unto his eternal glory;* that eternal glory whereof believers at the last day shall be made partakers, which is called God's glory, because it is that which he hath promised to them, and will at last put them in possession of: see 1Pe 5:1 Ro 5:2; and because they shall after a sort partake of the Divine glory which they behold.

*By Christ Jesus;* for Christ's sake, as the meritorious cause of our effectual calling, and by him as the great Apostle of our profession, Heb 3:1. Or, *by Christ Jesus* may refer to *glory*, Christ being the cause of their glorification as well as calling.

*After that ye have suffered a while;* this he adds for their encouragement, that whatsoever they suffered would be but short, as 1Pe 1:6 2Co 4:17.

*Make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you;* either:

1. *Perfect* that which is begun, Heb 13:20,21, *stablish* that which is right, 2Th 2:16, *strengthen* that which is weak, *settle* or found (by a firm union and conjunction unto Christ) that which is already built, Eph 3:17,18 Col 1:23: or:
2. These four words may be but different expressions whereby the apostle sets forth the same thing, viz. God's confirming and establishing those saints unto their final perseverance; and his using so much variety of expressions may imply, that it is a matter of very great difficulty to hold on our Christian course, without failing or coming short of the goal, and therefore we need singular assistance from God to enable us to it.

## 1 Peter 5:11

Ver. 11. *To him;* to God.

*Be glory and dominion;* see 1Pe 4:11. The verb *be* in the text is not in the Greek, and so it may be read with a supply of a verb either of the imperative mood, and then it is a doxology, as we render it; or of the indicative, he hath glory and dominion; or, to him belongs glory and dominion, or glorious dominion or power; and then it tends to encourage these saints, in that he, whom the apostle prays to stablish and strengthen them, is of power sufficient to do it.

### 1 Peter 5:12

Ver. 12. *By Silvanus;* either Silas, Ac 15:1-41 16:1-40, whom Peter therefore here calls *a faithful brother* to them, that they might the more readily receive him, though a minister of the uncircumcision; or else this *Silvanus* was some other that had preached to them, and is therefore said to be *a faithful brother* to them: the former is more probable.

*As I suppose;* this doth not signify any doubt, but rather a firm persuasion, of Silvanus's faithfulness; q. d. I reckon him faithful, having hitherto found him so: or, it may relate to the briefness of the Epistle; q.d. I suppose it will seem brief to you, as being from one that loves you, and about matters that so much concern you.

*Exhorting;* viz. to constancy in the faith, and diligence in duty.

*And testifying;* bearing my testimony to the truth ye have received; this the apostle witnesseth, that being more fully convinced of it, they might more constantly adhere to it. See the like phrase, Ne 9:29,30 13:15.

*That this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand;* the true doctrine of God, wherein he sets forth the grace of Christ: q.d. Ye are in the right way; the doctrine ye have embraced is indeed the truth of God.

### 1 Peter 5:13

Ver. 13. *The church that is at Babylon;* Babylon in Chaldea, where it is most probable the apostle was at the writing of this

Epistle; the Jews being very numerous in those parts, as having settled themselves there ever since the captivity, and Peter being an apostle of the circumcision, his work lay much thereabout. The papists would have Babylon here to be Rome, as Re 17:1-18, and that

Peter gives it that name rather than its own, because, being escaped out of prison at Jerusalem, Ac 12:12,25, he would not have it known where he was. But how comes he, that had been so bold before, to be so timorous now? Did this become the head of the church, the vicar of Christ, and prince of the apostles? And is it probable he should live twenty-five years at Rome, (as they pretend he did), and yet not be known to be there? Wherever he was, he had Mark now with him, who is said to have died at Alexandria the eighth year of Nero, and Peter not till six years after. If Mark then did first constitute the church of Alexandria, and govern it (as they say he did) for many years, it will be hard to find him and Peter at Rome together. But if they will needs have Rome be meant by Babylon, let them enjoy their zeal, who rather than not find Peter's chair, would go to hell to seek it; and are more concerned to have Rome be the seat of Peter than the church of Christ.

#### 1 Peter 5:14

Ver. 14. *Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity:* see Ro 16:16 1Co 16:20 2Co 13:12.

*In Christ Jesus;* united to him by faith, and members of him.

## 2 Peter 1:1

### THE ARGUMENT

It cannot be denied, but that some question there hath been, both about the penman and the authority of this Epistle. The former hath been questioned, because of the difference of the style of this from that of the former Epistle. But, to say nothing of a great likeness of style in both, observed by some; why might not the same person see fit on different occasions, and according to the different things he wrote about, to change his way of writing? Or why may not the Holy Ghost use his instruments in what way he please, and not only dictate to them the matter they are to write, but the expression and phrase? Why must an infinite and sovereign Agent be bound up, and confined to the parts and qualifications of the men he inspired? And if we set aside the judgment of several councils and fathers, (which yet might go far), two great arguments may be drawn from the first chapter, to prove Peter to be the penman of this Epistle. One from the inscription of it, where we have both his names, *Simon* and *Peter*, prefixed to it. Another from 2Pe 1:16, where he affirms himself to have been present with Christ at his transfiguration; from whence we may well argue, that none having ever ascribed it to John, and James being dead before, (though if he had been alive, it cannot be imagined that he should put Peter's name to any epistle of his own writing), and there being none but they two present with our Lord at that time besides Peter, Mt 17:1, none but he could be the writer of it. And indeed, as some observe, if this Epistle be not Peter's, when his name is set to it, it is so far from being canonical, that it is not fit so much as to be reckoned among the apocryphal books, having so great a lie in the front of it. As for the authority of it, there can be no doubt of that if Peter were the writer, when nothing concurs in it repugnant to other parts of Scripture, or unbecoming the grace and style of an apostle. And though some of the ancients have questioned it, yet many more have acknowledged it; nor was it ever numbered among apocryphal writings. And its not being found in the first Syriac version, can but argue its being questioned by some, not its being rejected by all. It seems to be written to the Jews of the dispersion, as the former was, which appears by 2Pe 3:1,2, where he mentions the former written to them; and this was written not long before his death, 2Pe 1:14. The scope of it is, partly to call to their remembrance the truths he had preached among them, that so, when they should be destitute of the

apostles' preaching to them, yet they might remember the pure doctrine they had learned of them, 2Pe 1:12,15, and might thereby be fortified against the errors of false teachers, 2Pe 2:1; and partly to persuade and stir them up to diligence in holiness and constancy in the faith. As in his First Epistle he had exhorted them to patience under the tyranny of persecutors, lest they should yield to them; so in this he exhorts them to perseverance in the truth of the gospel, against the deceptions of heretics, lest they should be seduced by them, 2Pe 2:1-22, and continue in holiness, notwithstanding the profaneness of scoffers, 2Pe 3:1-18.

### Chapter Summary

2Pe 1:1-4 The apostle, saluting the Christians, admonisheth them of the gifts and promises of the gospel, and their tendency to promote a godly life.  
2Pe 1:5-9 He exhorteth them to add to their faith such virtues as would make it fruitful,  
2Pe 1:10,11 and thereby to make their calling and election sure,  
2Pe 1:12-15 He is careful to remind them hereof, knowing his dissolution to be near,  
2Pe 1:16-21 and urgeth the evidence of what he had seen and heard in the holy mount in confirmation of Christ's second coming, together with the word of prophecy, which he recommendeth to their regard.

Ver. 1. *A servant and an apostle;* i.e. such a servant as is likewise an apostle. The former agrees to all gospel ministers generally, the latter is a title of a greater eminency; and so he intimates, that he wrote to them not merely as an ordinary minister, but in the authority of an apostle, an officer of the highest degree in the church.

*Like precious faith;* not in respect of the degree or strength of it, but in respect of the object, Christ, and the benefits that come by it, justification, sanctification, adoption, &c., in which respect the faith of the weakest believer is as precious as that of the strongest.

*With us;* either with us apostles, or with us Jewish Christians, born or inhabiting in Judea.

*Through the righteousness of God;* the Greek preposition which we render *through*, may likewise be rendered *with*, as 2Pe 1:5 Ac 7:38, *in the church*, that is, with the church; and so the sense is either:

1. Through the righteousness, i.e. truth and faithfulness, of Christ in his promises, whereof the faith of the saints was an effect: or:
2. Through the righteousness of Christ, as the meritorious cause of their faith: or:
3. With the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, and made theirs upon their believing. They had obtained like precious faith as the apostles themselves and others had, together with the righteousness of Christ, an interest in which always accompanies faith, Ro 4:22.

*And our Saviour Jesus Christ:* there being but one article in the Greek, these words are to be understood conjunctly, the particle *and* being but an explicative, and the sense is: Through the righteousness of our God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ, who is God: see the like, 2Pe 1:11 3:18 Joh 20:28 Tit 2:14.

### 2 Peter 1:2

Ver. 2. *Through the knowledge of God;* or acknowledgment, i.e. faith, whereby we are made partakers of all the saving graces of the Spirit; and whereby being justified, we are at peace with God, Ro 5:1.

*And of Jesus our Lord;* there being no saving knowledge of God, or faith in him, but by Christ.

### 2 Peter 1:3

Ver. 3. *According as;* this may refer either:

1. To what goes before: *Grace and peace be multiplied unto you, &c., according as his divine power hath given unto us, &c.;* and then in these words the apostle shows what reason there was to hope, that grace

and peace should be multiplied to them, and perfected in them, viz. because God hath already given them all things pertaining to life and godliness; q. d. He that hath done thus much for you, will do more, and finish his work in you. Or:

2. To what follows; and then the Greek phrase rendered *according as*, is not a note of similitude, but of illation, and may be rendered, since, or seeing that, and so the words are not a part of the salutation, but the beginning of the body of the Epistle, and relate to 2Pe 1:5: Seeing that *his Divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain, &c., add to your faith virtue, &c.*; as God hath done his part, so do you yours in the diligent performance of what he hath enabled you unto.

*Divine power* may relate either to God, or rather to Christ, immediately going before; and then it tends to the confirming their hope of the multiplication of grace and peace to them, not only from God, but from Christ, in that they had already experienced his Divine power in giving them *all things pertaining to life and godliness*, i.e. whatever may be helpful to it, the Spirit, faith, repentance, &c., Joh 7:39 2Co 4:6 2Ti 2:25.

*Unto life*; either:

1. Spiritual life, and then *godliness* may be added by way of explication, that life which consists in godliness, or a godly life; or, by *life* may be meant the inward, permanent principle of spiritual acts, and the exercise of them may be called *godliness*, as the perfection of that principle is called *glory*. Or:
2. Eternal life, to which we attain through godliness, as the way; and then likewise they are understood distinctly, *life* as the end, and *godliness* as the means; and so *life* in this verse is the same as *peace* in the former, and *godliness* the same as *grace*.

*To glory and virtue*: according to our translation, *glory* may be the same as *life* before, and *virtue* the same with *godliness*; and then the words set forth the end of God's calling us, viz. unto *glory* or *life* hereafter, as well as *virtue* or *godliness* now. But the Greek preposition  $\delta\iota\alpha$  is no where (as some observe) in the New Testament found to signify *to*; for in Ro 6:4 (which some allege) it is best rendered *by*, *glory* being there put for God's

power; and therefore our margin here reads it *by* glory and virtue; which may either be, by an hendiadis, for glorious virtue, taking virtue for power, that glorious power of God which is put forth in calling us, Eph 1:18,19, or his goodness and mercy which appear in the same calling, in which sense the word may be understood; see Tit 3:4,5 1Pe 2:9; or, (which comes to the same), glory being often taken for power Joh 2:11, by *glory and virtue* may be meant God's power and goodness, or mercy.

## 2 Peter 1:4

Ver. 4. *Whereby*: this word may be rendered, in that, for that, inasmuch as, and then this is an explication of the things that pertain to life and godliness, to glory and virtue, all those things being contained in the promises; or *whereby* may be understood of the glory and virtue last mentioned, taking them in the latter sense explained, 2Pe 1:3; q. d. By which glorious goodness and mercy to us.

*Are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises*: by *promises* we may understand either the matter of the promises, the things promised, Heb 10:36, such as redemption by Christ, reconciliation, adoption, &c., and then they are called *exceeding great and precious*, in comparison of all temporal and worldly things; or else the promises themselves, which are called *great* because of the excellency of the things contained in them, and *precious* in relation to us; great things being not only contained in the promises, but by them secured to us.

*That by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature*: we are said to be partakers of the Divine nature, not by any communication of the Divine essence to us, but by God's impressing upon us, and infusing into us, those divine qualities and dispositions (knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness) which do express and resemble the perfections of God, and are called his image, Eph 4:24 Col 3:10. And we are said to be made partakers of this Divine nature by the promises of the gospel, because they are the effectual means of our regeneration, (in which that Divine nature is communicated to us), by reason of that quickening Spirit which accompanieth them, 2Co 3:6, works by them, and forms in us the image of that wisdom, righteousness, and holiness of God, which appear in them; or of that *glory of the Lord*, which when by faith we behold in the glass of



gospel promises, we are *changed into the same image, even as by the Spirit of the Lord, 2Co 3:18*. Or, *the Divine nature* may be understood of the glory and immortality of the other life, wherein we shall be conformed to God, and whereof by the promises we are made partakers.

*Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust; either by corruption* here we are to understand:

1. Destruction, to which the greatest part of the world is obnoxious through lust, and then corruption must be opposed to *life* and *peace* before, and *lust* to *virtue* and *godliness*: or rather:
2. All the pravity or wickedness of human nature, which is here said to be, i.e. to reign and prevail, *in the world*, or worldly men, *through lust*, or habitual concupiscence, which is the spring and root from which it proceeds; and then the sense is the same as Ga 5:24. This *corruption through lust* is opposed to *the Divine nature* before, and *escaping* this corruption agrees with being *partakers* of that Divine nature: see Eph 4:22-24 Col 3:9,10.

## 2 Peter 1:5

Ver. 5. *And beside this, giving all diligence*: here the apostle begins his exhortation, that since God had done so much for them, 2Pe 1:3,4, they would likewise do their duty; and that their care and diligence in improving the grace they had received, might be added to his bounty in giving it them.

*Add to;* or, minister unto; or it may be a metaphor taken from the ancient way of dancing, in which they joined hands one with another, thereby helping and holding up one another.

*Faith* is here set forth as the first grace, and which (as it were) leads up, the rest following it, and attending upon it, yet all in conjunction one with another. Faith is set in the first place as the prime grace of a Christian, the foundation and root of all other, as being that without which nothing else can be pleasing to God, Heb 11:6. By *virtue* he seems to understand universal righteousness, or a complication of all those graces by which

faith is wont to work; and this being more general, he proceeds from it to others that are more special.

*Knowledge*; by this may be meant spiritual prudence, which governs and directs other virtues in their actings; and it is called *knowledge*, because it consists in the practical knowledge of the will of God: see 2Co 6:6 1Pe 3:7.

### 2 Peter 1:6

Ver. 6. *Temperance*; a grace which represseth, and curbs in, not only sensual lusts, but all inordinate appetites, Ga 5:22 Tit 1:8.

*Patience*; that Christian fortitude whereby we bear afflictions and injuries, so as to persevere in our duty without being moved by the evils that attend us in the doing of it.

*Godliness*; which respects our immediate duty to God, and comprehends all the duties of the first table. This is joined to *patience*, as being that which teacheth us, in all we suffer, to acknowledge God's providence, and promises of deliverance and recompence.

### 2 Peter 1:7

Ver. 7. *Brotherly kindness*; a love to those that are of the household of faith. This is joined to *godliness*, to show that it is in vain to pretend to true religion and yet be destitute of brotherly love.

*Charity*; this is more general than the former, and relates to all men, even our enemies themselves.

### 2 Peter 1:8

Ver. 8. *For if these things be in you, and abound*; if ye not only have these graces in you, but abound or grow in them, both as to the inward degree and outward exercise of them.

*They make you;* either they make you, or declare you, not to be barren, or both; they will be both the causes and evidences of your not being barren.

*Barren;* or, slothful, idle, unactive.

*Nor unfruitful;* void of good works, which are frequently compared to fruits, Mt 3:10 7:17-19 Ga 5:22.

*In the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ;* i.e. the faith of Christ. But more is implied here than expressed; q. d. They will make you be active and fruitful in the knowledge of Christ, and declare you to be so, and thereby make it appear that ye have not in vain learned Christ.

## 2 Peter 1:9

Ver. 9. *But he that lacketh these things;* he that doth not live in the exercise of the forementioned graces.

*Is blind;* spiritually blind, as being destitute of saving knowledge.

*And cannot see afar off:* the Greek word is variously translated; the most probable account of it is either:

1. That it signifies to feel the way, or grope, as blind men do; and then the meaning is, he that lacketh these things is blind, and, as a blind man, gropes, not knowing which way to go; he is really destitute of the knowledge he pretends to: or:
2. To be purblind, or short-sighted, so as to see things near hand, but not *afar off*, as our translation hath it; and then the sense is, That such a one sees only the things of the world, but cannot look so far as heaven to discern things there, which if he did, he would walk in the way that leads thither, viz. in the practice of the duties before prescribed.

*And hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins:* he is judged in the sight of God to forget a benefit received, that is not effectually mindful of it, in living suitably to it. And so here, he that professeth himself to have

been purged from his old sins, in justification and sanctification, by the blood and Spirit of Christ, 1Co 6:11 Eph 5:25-27, and yet still lives in sin, and in the neglect of the duty he is engaged to, practically declares his forgetfulness of the mercy he professeth to have been vouchsafed him; and accordingly may be interpreted to have forgotten it, in that he acts like one that had. Or, if this be understood of one that is really purged from his old sins, yet he may be said to forget that so far as he returns again to them, or lives not up to the ends of his purgation, Lu 1:74,75.

### 2 Peter 1:10

Ver. 10. *Give diligence;* viz. in the exercise of the forementioned graces.

*To make your calling,* your effectual calling to the faith of Christ, *and election,* your eternal election to grace and glory, *sure,* not in respect of God, whose counsel is in itself sure and stable, Ro 11:29 2Ti 2:19; but in respect of yourselves, who may best discern the cause by its effects, and so your election by your good works to which you were chosen, Eph 1:4, and which prove your calling, (as being the proper genuine fruits of it, Eph 4:1,2, &c.), as that doth election, from whence it proceeds, Ac 13:48 Ro 8:30.

*For if ye do these things,* the things prescribed, 2Pe 1:5-7, *ye shall never fall;* not wholly apostatize from God's ways, nor so fall through temptation into any sin, as not to recover out of it.

### 2 Peter 1:11

Ver. 11. *Abundantly;* or richly: while ye minister, or add one grace to another, one good work to another, 2Pe 1:5, &c., God likewise will minister, (the same word is here used as 2Pe 1:5), or add largely or richly, the supplies of the Spirit, in grace, and strength, and consolation, and whatsoever is needful for you in the way, whereby your faith may be increased, your joy promoted, and your perseverance secured, till ye come into the possession of the everlasting kingdom.

## 2 Peter 1:12

Ver. 12. *I will not be negligent;* i.e. I will be diligent and careful.

*Though ye know them:* he prevents an objection; q. d. Though ye know these things already, yet being things of great moment, and you being beset with temptations, encompassed about with infirmities, and, while you are on the earth, being in a land of forgetfulness, it is necessary to put you in mind of what you know, that ye may remember to do it. See the like, Ro 15:14,15 1Jo 2:21.

*The present truth;* the truth of the gospel now revealed to you; that which was the great subject of the apostles' preaching and writings, that Jesus Christ was the Christ; that redemption was wrought by him; that he was risen from the dead; that whosoever believeth on him, should receive remission of sins, &c.; the promise made to the fathers being now fulfilled, Ac 13:32,33, and what was future under the Old Testament being present under the New.

## 2 Peter 1:13

Ver. 13. *In this tabernacle;* in the body; q. d. Having not long to live, I would live to the best purpose, and so as I may do the most good. He calls his body a tabernacle both in respect of its short continuance, its mean structure, and his laborious life in it.

*To stir you up;* to awaken and rouse you up, as ye have need, the flesh being slothful; and lest ye should by security and slightness lose the benefit of what ye have learned: where knowledge is not wanting, yet admonitions may be useful.

## 2 Peter 1:14

Ver. 14. *I must put off;* a metaphor taken from garments; the soul, while in the body, is clothed with flesh, and death to the godly is but the putting off their clothes, and going to bed, Isa 57:2.

*This my tabernacle:* see 2Co 5:1.

*Even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me:* Joh 21:18,19, Christ tells Peter of the kind of his death, that it should be violent, but speaks nothing there of the circumstance of the time; and therefore either this apostle had a twofold revelation of his death, the former as to the manner of it, and this latter concerning the time; or, if this here were no other but that, Joh 21:1-25, it may be said, that, Joh 21:18,22 Christ intimates that Peter's death should be before John's, who should live till he came, viz. in judgment against Jerusalem to destroy it, which Peter now (observing the affairs of the Jews, and considering his Master's words, Mt 24:1-51) perceived to be nigh at hand; and thence infers, that his own death was not far off.

### 2 Peter 1:15

Ver. 15. *These things;* the doctrine before delivered concerning faith in Christ, the practice of good works, and their continuance in both.

*Always;* this may be joined either to *endeavour*, and so relate to the apostle himself; he would always be diligent, and do his part, that they might have these things in remembrance: or rather, (according to our translation), to having *in remembrance*, Peter being now near his end; and therefore this *always* may better refer to them that were to live after him, than to himself that was so soon to die.

*In remembrance;* or, to commemorate them, viz. to the benefit and edification of the church; and this includes their having them in remembrance, but implies something more.

### 2 Peter 1:16

Ver. 16. *Cunningly devised fables;* human figments artificially contrived, either to please and gratify men's fancies, or to deceive and pervert their judgment: q. d. The things we have preached unto you (the sum of which is the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ) are the true sayings of God, not the fictions of men: and so he may have respect both to heathenish and Jewish fables. See 1Ti 1:4 4:7 2Ti 4:4 Tit 1:14.

*The power;* this relates to the Divine nature of Christ with its glorious effects, the efficacy of his doctrine, the miracles whereby he confirmed it, and especially his resurrection from the dead, Ro 1:4.

*And coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;* this respects his human nature, his coming in the flesh, in which he manifested the power before mentioned; both together contain the sum of the whole gospel, viz. that Christ, the promised Messiah, is come in the flesh, and that he was furnished with power sufficient and ability to save sinners to the utmost. Or, Christ's coming here may be his second coming, to which the word here used is for the most part applied in the New Testament, and whereof his transfiguration, in the following verse, was a representation and a forerunner; and in the belief of which the apostle would confirm these saints against those that scoffed at it, 2Pe 3:3,4.

*But were eye-witnesses of his majesty:* by Christ's majesty may be understood all that glory which did shine out in him during the whole time of his abode upon earth, Joh 1:14, but especially that more eminent manifestation of it in his transfiguration, in the next verse.

## 2 Peter 1:17

Ver. 17. Either *honour and glory* for glorious honour; or *glory* may relate to that lustre which appeared in the body of Christ at his transfiguration, Mt 17:2, and *honour* to the voice which came to him from his Father, and the honourable testimony thereby given him.

*From the excellent glory;* either from heaven, or from the glorious God, the Father of Christ, who, by this voice, did in a special manner manifest his glorious presence.

*This is my beloved Son;* i.e. This is the Messiah so often promised, and therefore all that was spoken of the Messiah in the law and the prophets centres in him.

*In whom I am well pleased:* this implies not only that Christ is peculiarly the Beloved of the Father, but that all they that are adopted to God by faith

in Christ, are beloved, and graciously accepted, in and through him, Mt 3:17 Joh 17:26 Eph 1:6.

## 2 Peter 1:18

Ver. 18. *We*; I, and James, and John.

*Heard*: the apostle avoucheth himself to have been an ear-witness, as well as eye-witness, of Christ's glory, hereby intimating that there was as much certainty of the gospel, even in a human way, as could possibly be obtained of any thing that is done in the world, seeing men can be humanly certain of nothing more than of what they perceive by their senses: compare 1Jo 1:1,3.

*The holy mount*; so called, not because of any inherent holiness in it, but because of the extraordinary manifestation of God's presence there; in the same sense as the *ground* is called *holy* where God appeared to Moses and to Joshua, Ex 3:5 Jos 5:15.

## 2 Peter 1:19

Ver. 19. Peter having proved the certainty of the evangelical doctrine, by their testimony that had seen Christ's glory in his transfiguration, and heard the Father's testimony of him, now proves the same by the testimony of the prophets under the Old Testament, and calls the *word of prophecy a more sure word*, comparing it either:

1. With the voice from heaven, than which he calls the word of prophecy more firm or sure, not in respect of truth, (which was equal in both), but in respect of the manner of its revelation; the voice from heaven being transient, and heard only by three apostles; whereas the word of prophecy was not only received by the prophets from God, but by his command committed to writing, confirmed by a succession of their fellow prophets in their several generations, and approved by Christ himself, and by him preferred before miracles themselves, Lu 16:29,31.  
Or:



2. With the testimony of Peter and the other two apostles concerning that voice which came to Christ, than which testimony the word of prophecy is said to be more sure; not simply and in itself, but in respect of those to whom the apostle wrote; it was more firm in their minds who had received it; or, more sure as to them that were Jews, and had so fully entertained the writings of the prophets, and had them in so great veneration, being confirmed by the consent of so many ages; whereas the testimony of these apostles did not so fully appear to them to be Divine, as not being heretofore expressed in Scripture.

*Whereunto ye do well that ye take heed;* i.e. that ye search and study it, subject your consciences to the power of it, and order your conversations according to it.

*A light;* or, lamp, to which the word is often compared, Ps 119:105 Pr 6:23; because, as a lamp or candle lighted dispels the darkness, and gives light to those that are in the house or room where it is; so the word gives light to all that are in God's house, as the church is called, 1Ti 3:15.

*A dark place;* or, dirty, squalid, because places that have no light are usually filthy; the dirt which is not seen is not removed.

*Until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts;* either,

1. The last day, called *the day* by way of excellency, because when it once begins it will never end, and will be all light without any darkness: and then what is said of the word of prophecy is to be understood of the whole Scripture; and the sense is, that whereas the whole time of this life is but a kind of night of error and ignorance, God hath set up his candle, given us the light of the Scripture to guide us and lead us, till we come to the glorious light of the future life, in which we shall have no need of the light of the Scripture to direct us, but shall see God as he is, and face to face, 1Co 13:12. According to this exposition, the dawning of the day, and the day-star arising, do not signify different parts of the same day, but rather the whole day, as opposed to that darkness which would totally overspread us, were it not for the light the word affords us: our minds of themselves are dark, in them the light of the word shines, and dispels the darkness by degrees, according as the Spirit gives us more understanding of it; but yet the darkness will not be

wholly removed, till the day of eternal life dawn upon us, and the day-star of the perfect knowledge of God in the beatifical vision arise in our hearts. Or:

2. By the day dawning, and the day-star arising, may be understood a more full, clear, and explicit knowledge of Christ, and the mysteries of the gospel; and then this relates particularly to the prophecies of The Old Testament; and, as Paul calls the times of the Old Testament a *night*, Ro 13:12, as being a time of darkness and shadows, in comparison of the light and knowledge of Christ under the New Testament; so Peter here compares the writings of the prophets to a candle, which gives some, but less light, and the preaching of the gospel to the dawning day, and day-star arising; and commends these Christian Jews to whom he wrote, for making use of and attending to even this lesser light, till they attained to greater degrees of illumination, and the day-star of a more full and clear knowledge of Christ, as revealed in the gospel, did arise in their hearts. This exposition is favoured by Ac 17:11; they there, and so the Jewish converts here, did search the Scriptures, to see if the things spoken by the apostles did agree with what was before written by the prophets; and as they there, so these here, are commended for their diligence in so doing, and intimation given them, that they must attend to the light of the Old Testament prophecies, till they were thereby led into a greater knowledge and understanding of the gospel revelation.

## 2 Peter 1:20

Ver. 20. *Knowing this first;* either, principally and above other things, as being most worthy to be known; or, knowing this as the first principle of faith, or the first thing to be believed.

*That no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation:* the Greek word here used may be rendered, either:

1. As our translators do, *interpretation*, or explication; and then the meaning is, not that private men are not to interpret the Scripture, only refer all to the church; but that no man nor company of men, no church nor public officers, are to interpret the Scripture of their own heads, according to their own minds, so as to make their private sense be the

sense of the Scripture, but to seek the understanding of it from God, who shows them the meaning of the word in the word itself, (the more obscure places being expounded by the more clear), and by his Spirit leads believers, in their searching the Scripture, into the understanding of his mind in it: God himself being the author of the word, as 2Pe 1:21, is the best interpreter of it. Or:

2. Mission or dismissal; a metaphor taken from races, where they that ran were let loose from the stage where the race began, that they might run their course. The prophets in the Old Testament are said to *run*, as being God's messengers, Jer 23:21, and God is said to *send* them, Eze 13:6,7. And then this doth not immediately concern the interpretation of the Scripture, but the first revelation of it, spoken of in the next verse; and the question is not: Who hath authority to interpret the Scripture now written? But: What authority the penmen had to write it? And consequently, what respect is due to it? And why believers are so carefully to take heed to it? And then the meaning is, that it is the first principle of our faith, that the Scripture is not of human invention, but Divine inspiration; that the prophets wrote not their own private sense in it, but the mind of God; and at his command, not their own pleasure.

## 2 Peter 1:21

Ver. 21. *The prophecy;* the prophetic writings, or word of prophecy, 2Pe 1:19.

*Came not in old time by the will of man;* the prophets spake not of themselves what and when they pleased.

*But holy men of God;* prophets, called men of God, 1Sa 2:27 9:6 1Ki 17:18, and elsewhere. They are here called *holy*, not only because of their lives, wherein they were examples to others, but because they were the special instruments of the Holy Ghost, who sanctified them to the work of preaching, and penning what he dictated to them.

*Spake as they were moved;* or, carried out, or acted, i.e. elevated above their own natural abilities. This may imply the illumination of their minds with the knowledge of Divine mysteries, the gift of infallibility, that they

might not err, of prophecy, to foretell things to come, and a peculiar instinct of *the Holy Ghost*, whereby they were moved to preach or write.

## 2 Peter 2:1

### Chapter Summary

2Pe 2:1-6 The apostle foretelleth the appearance of false teachers, the impiety of them and their followers, and the judgments that would overtake them.

2Pe 2:7-9 The godly shall be delivered, as Lot was out of Sodom.

2Pe 2:10-19 The wicked principles and manners of these seducers described.

2Pe 2:20-22 The mischief of relapsing into sin.

Ver. 1. *But there were false prophets also:* the apostle having been exhorting them to continuance and progress in faith, admonishes them here of such as might labour to draw them from it; and having made mention of the Old Testament prophets, holy men of God, he hereby takes occasion to tell them of, and caution them against, false teachers which would be among themselves. This also in the text plainly relates to what went before: q. d. Together with those prophets which were sent by God, there were likewise false prophets, such as were not sent of him.

*Among the people;* the people of Israel.

*Even as there shall be false teachers;* teachers of false doctrine,  
Mt 7:15 Ac 20:29.

*Among you;* among you Jewish, as well as among the Gentile

Christians; or, among you as Christians and God's people under the New Testament, in opposition to the people of God under the Old.

*Who shall privily bring in:* the Greek word signifies either to bring in slyly and craftily, under specious pretences, and without being observed, Ga 2:4 Jude 1:4; or, to bring in over and above, or beside the doctrine of the gospel, which they did not renounce; or both may be implied.

*Damnable heresies;* Greek, heresies of destruction, i.e. destructive, such as lead to destruction, viz. eternal, or damnation.

*Even denying;* either in their words or their practices, either directly, or by consequence of their doctrines or actions; they that profess they know God, but contradict that profession in their lives, are said to deny him, Tit 1:16.

*The Lord;* either:

1. God the Father, so called, Lu 2:29 Ac 4:24, &c., and probably Re 6:10; nor is there any necessity, but, Jude 1:4, the word may be understood of God the Father. Or rather:

2. Christ.

*That bought them:* if we understand it of God the Father, the sense is, either:

1. Denying God that bought them, or acquired them and made them his,

viz. by calling them out of the darkness and gross wickedness of the world, to the knowledge of Christ and the gospel, and the fellowship of his church. In this general sense the word buying is sometimes taken, Isa 55:1 Re 3:18. Or:

2. Denying God that bought the people of Israel (whereof these false teachers that should be among the Christian Jews were to be a part) out of Egypt, to make them his peculiar people, whereof they would boast themselves, and yet by their wicked practices deny that God that bought them; the words seem to be taken out of De 32:6:  
*Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee?* As likewise from 2Pe 2:5 of that chapter. Peter calls them *spots*, 2Pe 2:13 of this chapter.

But if we understand it of Christ, which seems most probable, the sense is, either:

1. That Christ bought or redeemed them, (in which sense the word is sometimes taken), in that by his death he purchased the continuance of their lives, and the staying of their execution, and rescued them from that present destruction which, without Christ's interposition, had seized on them, as it had likewise on the whole visible creation immediately upon the apostacy of mankind. Or:

2. This is spoken not only of their pretences, that they should profess themselves redeemed by Christ, but in the

style of the  
visible church, which should judge them to be so  
till they declared  
the contrary by their wicked actions; and it  
likewise holds true in  
a forensical or judicial style, according to which  
whosoever  
professeth himself to be redeemed by Christ, and yet  
denies him in  
his deeds, is said to deny the Lord that bought him;  
it being alike  
as to the greatness of the crime, whether he be  
really redeemed,  
or, professing himself to be so, denies his  
Redeemer.

*And bring upon themselves swift destruction;* shall  
hasten their  
own destruction, it may be temporal in this world; to  
be sure, eternal  
in the other. It may be called *swift*, as coming upon  
them  
unawares, and when they think least of it, as 1Th 5:3.

## 2 Peter 2:2

Ver. 2. *And many shall follow their pernicious ways;* Greek, their destructions, i.e. those ways of error which are attended with destruction (the effect being put for the cause by a metonymy); and the sense is, that as these false teachers shall bring destruction upon themselves by their heresies; so others, running with them into the same errors, shall fall into the same destruction.

*By reason of whom;* or, by whom, viz. these false teachers, or their followers, or both.

*The way of truth;* the gospel, so called, as being the doctrine of saving truth. It is called the way, Ac 9:2 19:9 22:4; *the way of salvation,* Ac 16:17; *the way of God,* Ac 18:26.

*Shall be evil spoken of;* blasphemed, whether by false teachers themselves and their followers, or by others taking occasion by them: see Ro 2:24 1Ti 6:1 Tit 2:5.

## 2 Peter 2:3

Ver. 3. *With feigned words;* deceitful speeches, which have a show of truth to hide their errors.

*Make merchandise of you;* as of slaves or beasts: it seems to be a metaphor taken from merchants that speak great things of bad wares, the better to vend them; the sense is, with specious words, and pious pretences, they shall deceive you to make a gain of you.

*Whose judgment;* or, condemnation.

*Now of a long time;* being of old determined by God, and foretold in the Scripture, and so nearer than they themselves imagine.

*Lingereth not;* i.e. goes on apace, and hastens on them.

*And their damnation;* or, destruction.

*Slumbereth not:* i.e. watcheth, as ready to overtake them in its time: it may be a metaphor taken from a traveller, as Pr 6:11; or the apostle alludes to De 32:35, where the like expression is found: see 2Pe 2:1.

## 2 Peter 2:4

Ver. 4. *For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell:* elsewhere called *the deep*, Lu 8:31, and *the bottomless pit*, Re 9:1 11:7 17:8 20:1,3. This implies a change:

1. Of the state of those sinning angels, that whereas before it was the highest among the creatures, now it is the lowest.
2. Of their place, that whereas they were before the throne of God with the rest of the angels, they are now thrust down into a lower place, agreeable to their sin and misery. What place that is we find not expressed in Scripture, and therefore we are not to be over curious in our inquiries after it; but may rest satisfied, that they are excluded from the place of their primitive happiness, and are in a place where they are afflicted with the pain both of loss and sense.

*And delivered them into chains of darkness:* either to be bound, or held with darkness as with chains; or kept in *chains under darkness*, as Jude 1:6; where *darkness* may imply the misery and horror of their condition, and *chains*, their



obduracy in their wickedness, their despair of deliverance, their expectation of future judgment, [Heb 10:27](#), together with the providence and power of God, watching over and holding them in that condition, till final vengeance come upon them. It is a metaphor taken from malefactors condemned, who are bound in chains, and kept in the dungeon till execution.

*To be reserved;* so kept that they cannot escape.

*Unto judgment;* viz. that of the last day, the time of their full torment, in which the wrath of God, which they feel in a great measure now, will come upon them to the utmost.

## 2 Peter 2:5

Ver. 5. *And spared not the old world: the world,* for men in the world, viz. those that lived in it before the flood.

*But saved Noah the eighth person;* viz. together with the other seven, his wife, three sons, and their wives, [1Pe 3:20](#). Noah may be particularly named, because God had a special respect to him, and for his sake spared others.

*A preacher:* constituted to be so by Divine authority and commission.

*Of righteousness:* i.e. not only:

1. Of the righteousness of God, who had threatened to destroy the world for its wickedness; but:
2. Of the righteousness of Christ upon all them that should believe. It is not to be doubted but he preached the same righteousness whereof he himself was heir, and that was the righteousness of faith, [Heb 11:7](#); and this he did not in words only, but in his actions; in that he built the ark for the saving himself and his household, which was a type of the salvation of believers by Christ. And:
3. Of the righteousness of sanctification, in his exhorting the men that then were to repentance and holiness, if possibly thereby they might prevent the approaching deluge.

*Bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;* the whole multitude of wicked men then living in the world.

## 2 Peter 2:6

Ver. 6. *The cities of Sodom and Gomorrha;* which being the chief of the five, include Admah and Zeboim, Zoar, the fifth, being spared for Lot's sake, Ge 14:18, compared with Ge 19:25.

*Condemned them with an overthrow;* i.e. punished them with a total subversion, or brought that destruction upon them to which he had condemned them.

*Making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;* of his wrath and vengeance ready to be poured out upon others that should live ungodly, to deter them from the imitation of the sins of those that had so miserably perished. The word may be rendered a type, (as it is, Heb 8:5, and Heb 9:23), viz. of hell-fire, which is to be the punishment of wicked men at the last day: Jude 1:7 implies as much. As the deliverance of the Israelites out of Egypt was a kind of type of the deliverance of all God's people to the end of the world; so the subversion of these cities was so memorable an instance of Divine vengeance, that the Scripture frequently alludes to it, as a type or pattern, when it speaks of the general destruction of the wicked of the world.

## 2 Peter 2:7

Ver. 7. *Vexed;* grievously afflicted or wearied.

*The wicked;* unjust, lawless, (understand men), such as had no respect to law or justice, in opposition to Lot, whom he calls *just* and *righteous*.

## 2 Peter 2:8

Ver. 8. *Seeing and hearing;* their wickedness was so open and shameless, that he not only heard the report of it, but saw them commit it, Isa 3:9.

*Vexed;* Greek, tormented, i.e. extremely afflicted and troubled his own soul, provoking himself to godly sorrow at the sight and fame of their unlawful deeds. His grief was voluntary, and he active in it; the like is said of Christ, on occasion of Lazarus's death, Joh 11:33, where the margin reads, he troubled himself.

## 2 Peter 2:9

Ver. 9. *The Lord knoweth;* according to the common rule, that words of

knowledge in Scripture connote affections, as Ps 1:6. God's knowing here implies not only his infinite wisdom, whereby he is never at a loss, but knows all the various ways whereby the godly may be delivered; but likewise his love and good will to them, whereby he is ready to do it, hath a heart for it: so the word is taken, Ec 4:13 Am 3:10; the text reads, *will no more be admonished*, the margin, knows not, &c.

*How to deliver the godly*; those that walk in the steps of just Lot and Noah, who was perfect in his generation. This concludes what the apostle began, 2Pe 2:4: the sum is: If God spared neither wicked angels nor wicked men, destroying the old world and Sodom, but delivered Lot and Noah, righteous persons; he still hath wisdom, power, and will to deliver other godly men, and punish other wicked men.

*Out of temptations*; afflictions, Jas 1:2,12.

*And to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished*: the Greek word is in the present tense, which may be understood, either:

1. As put for the future, and then the sense is as in our translation, that though God many times lets the wicked alone in this world, so that they escape present punishment, yet they shall not escape future torment; they are a while spared, but never pardoned; and when free from temporal evils, are reserved for eternal vengeance. Or:
2. It may be understood as in the present tense, which agrees well with the instances of God's vengeance before mentioned, which was executed on wicked men in this world; and then the sense is: The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations when he sees fit, even in this life, and how to reserve those wicked men, whom he punisheth with temporal judgments here, to a much more severe and dreadful punishment at the day of judgment hereafter.

## 2 Peter 2:10

Ver. 10. *But chiefly them*: the apostle here applies the general doctrine delivered to false teachers, whose character he gives in several particulars; the sense is, that God reserves all wicked men to the day of judgment, but those especially that second their corrupt doctrine with a wicked conversation. The verb *reserve* is to be repeated from the former verse.

*That walk after the flesh*; to walk after the flesh is either:

1. To follow the conduct of the sensual appetite, like brute beasts, which are led by sense, not by reason or judgment: or:
2. More especially it implies their giving up themselves to filthy lusts, probably unnatural ones, Jude 1:7, *going after strange flesh*.

*In the lust of;* i.e. through, or out of, implying the cause or spring from whence their actual uncleanness came, viz. their own lust.

*Uncleanness;* or, pollution; q. d. In the lust whereby they are polluted, or in their impure lusts.

*And despise government;* i.e. governors, or magistrates; as *brotherhood* for brethren, 1Pe 2:17.

*Presumptuous;* Greek, bold, or daring, viz. because *they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities*.

*Self-willed;* stubborn, refractory, addicted to their own ways, and therefore will not be ruled by others.

*Dignities;* or, glories, viz. rulers and magistrates, whom God hath made glorious, or on whom he hath put the honour of being above others, and made them his own lieutenants and vicegerents upon earth.

## 2 Peter 2:11

Ver. 11. *Angels;* good angels, Jude 1:9.

*Greater;* either greater than these audacious false teachers, or else greater than the forementioned dignities.

*In power and might;* i.e. greater in their natural strength, and in their dignity.

*Bring not railing accusation;* use not reviling, reproachful language; the same with speaking evil in the former verse.

*Against them;* either:

1. Against dignities, 2Pe 2:10; and then the meaning is, that good angels, great and powerful as they are, yet bring not a railing accusation before the Lord against

magistrates and princes, but when they have had any thing against them, yet have carried themselves with modesty, and due respect to that dignity in which God had placed such, having a regard to civil government as God's constitution, and being themselves, at God's appointment, guardians and keepers, even of wicked kingdoms, as Da 10:1-21 and Da 11:1-45. Or:

2. Against themselves, as in the margin; and then the sense is, that angels do not reproach nor revile each other, nay, not the devil himself as appears, Jude 1:9, which place may explain this; and therefore it did ill become these false teachers, who were so much below angels, to contemn, revile, or rail on princes and civil magistrates, who were so much above themselves, and had their authority from God.

## 2 Peter 2:12

Ver. 12. *But these;* the false teachers before mentioned.

*As natural brute beasts;* beasts which are void of reason, and follow only their sensual inclination.

*Made to be taken and destroyed;* being made for men's use, and so to be a prey to them; while they hasten after their food, they are taken in nets and snares, and being taken are destroyed.

*Speak evil of the things that they understand not;* either the great mysteries of religion, whereof they are stupidly ignorant; or rather, dignities, before mentioned, which they, (not knowing, or not considering, them to be of God, and of so great use to men), following the inclination of their own corrupt natures, speak against.

*And shall utterly perish in their own corruption;* or, shall be corrupted in their own corruption, i.e. shall be utterly destroyed by their own fault and folly; penal corruption (or perdition) following upon sinful. The sum is: That as brute beasts, which have no reason, follow their brutish appetite, till it lead them into destruction, and where they sought their meat they find their death, Pr 7:23; so these false teachers, not being guided by reason, much less by the light of the Spirit, but merely by sway of their natural inclinations, in speaking evil of that ordinance which God hath honoured, shall bring upon themselves that destruction they have deserved.

## 2 Peter 2:13

Ver. 13. *And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness:* under this general term, all the several sins they are charged with are comprehended.

*As they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time;* this is said to aggravate their sin, and signifies either their impudence in it, that they had cast off all shame, and practised their luxury by day light, whereas ordinary sinners are wont to choose the night for such works of darkness, Ro 13:12,13 1Th 5:7; or their security, that they spent the day of their life in their pleasures, placing their happiness in present enjoyments, unmindful of a future reckoning and an eternal state.

*Spots they are and blemishes;* not only altogether polluted themselves, but such as defile others, and are blemishes to the church whereof they profess themselves members.

*Sporting themselves with their own deceivings:* some read *αγαπαις* instead of *απαταις*, leaving out the pronoun, rendered *their own*; and understand this of the love feasts, in which they luxuriously gorged themselves. This might well agree with Jude 1:12, but that the generality of Greek copies read *απαταις*, which we turn *deceivings*, i.e. either errors, taking the word passively; q. d. They do but make a sport of sin, and please themselves with it; and this agrees too with Jude 1:12, *feeding themselves without fear*: or cheatings, or imposings upon others, taking *deceivings* actively; q. d. They sport themselves while they so finely deceive you, pretending love in their feasting with you, when they do it only to gratify their appetites; or sporting themselves, and making merry, with what they have cheated you of.

*While they feast with you;* viz. in your feasts of charity, with the specious pretence of which they covered their naughtiness.

## 2 Peter 2:14

Ver. 14. *Having eyes;* he mentions the eyes, both because they let in the objects of lust into the heart, Job 31:1 Mt 5:28, and because the signs of lust in the heart appear especially in the eyes, Ge 39:7 Pr 6:25.

*Full of adultery;* full of an adulteress, which either may be a Hebraism, the concrete being put for the abstract, as drunken for drunkenness, and thirsty for

thirst, De 29:19; or it may be a proverbial expression of the wretchedness of such men's hearts, when they still carried an adulteress in their eyes.

*That cannot cease from sin;* never satisfied with looking upon, or still looking about for, such objects as might inflame their lusts; or still seeking with wanton looks to entice others to folly.

*Beguiling;* either alluring them by their wantonness to embrace their false doctrines, promising them pleasures and carnal liberties, 2Pe 2:18; or enticing them to lewdness, by instilling false doctrines into them, which tend to licentiousness.

*Unstable souls;* those that were not well grounded in the faith and doctrine of holiness, who might therefore easily be drawn aside.

*An heart they have exercised with covetous practices;* a heart wholly intent upon getting gain, accustomed to it, and skilful in it.

*Practices;* the word is in the plural number, to show that the seducers had several arts and ways of exercising their covetousness.

*Cursed children;* Greek, children of the curse. It may be taken either actively, for such as were causes of a curse, brought a curse with them; or passively, for such as were worthy of a curse, or obnoxious to it; as *children of wrath*, Eph 2:3.

## 2 Peter 2:15

Ver. 15. *The right way;* the way of truth, 2Pe 2:2, i.e. the way of faith and holiness, which is the only right way to happiness.

*Are gone astray;* into the by-paths of error. There is but one right way, and many wrong, in which they wander that leave the right. He seems to allude to Balaam, Nu 22:1-41, who left the way of God, which was, to be obedient to God, and not go beyond his word, Nu 2:18, and ran into the way of sin, when he went with Balak's messengers to curse God's people; and therefore his way is said to be perverse, Nu 2:32.

*Following the way of Balaam;*

1. In respect of their false doctrine: for, as Balaam was disobedient to God, and, against his command, went to Balak; so these men forsook the way of truth prescribed by God in his word.

2. In respect of their wicked lives: Balaam taught Balak to entice the children of Israel to *commit fornication*, and *eat things sacrificed unto idols*, Re 2:14; and these taught men to commit lewdness, and indulge themselves in their sensualities.
3. Chiefly in respect of their covetousness, as follows.

*Of Bosor*; either this is the name of his country, called *Pethor*, Nu 22:5, and by change of two letters, *P* into *B*, and *th* into *s*, ( frequent in the Syriac language), *Besor*, or *Bosor*: or, the name of his father, called *Beor*, in Numbers, having two names; unless the apostle call him *Bosor* in allusion to *Basar*, flesh, as being of a fleshly mind, as the false teachers here were. Thus *Beth-el* was called *Beth-aven*, Ho 4:15; and *Beelzebub* called *Beelzebul*, the god of dung, Mt 10:25.

*Who loved the wages of unrighteousness*; the reward which Balak offered him for an unrighteous act, viz. the cursing of God's people.

## 2 Peter 2:16

Ver. 16. *But was rebuked*; not only by the angel's speaking to him, but by the ass's, as follows.

*The dumb ass speaking with man's voice, forbade*; not in express words, that we read of, but the ass's speaking with human voice, discerning the angel before Balaam did, and going back, when he, carried out by the power of his covetousness, would needs go forward, were so prodigious things as might sufficiently convince him of his sin, in going to Balak contrary to God's command at first given; and it was no small dishonour put upon him, that he who would not hearken to God, should have an ass for his teacher.

*The madness*; in going against God's command, and to curse those who, God had told him, were blessed.

*Objection*. Balaam had leave given him to go with Balak's messengers, Nu 22:20, and refused Balak's offers, 2Pe 2:18.

*Answer*.

1. Balaam did not condemn the gifts offered, but had a desire after them, as appears by his inquiring of God the second time, 2Pe 2:19, though God had fully revealed his will to him before, 2Pe 2:12.



2. God bade him go that he might bless the people, 2Pe 2:12, compared with 2Pe 2:20, whereas he went not out of a respect to God's answer, but out of a covetous mind, and a desire to curse Israel, as appears by Jos 24:9,10, and by the cursed counsel he gave, Nu 25:1, compared with Nu 31:16, and Re 2:14.

*Of the prophet:* Balaam is called a prophet here, either:

1. Because he pretended to be so: thus the false prophets are sometimes called absolutely *prophets*, Jer 6:13 26:7,8,11. Or:
2. Because he really was a prophet, though a wicked and covetous one; for he inquired of God, and had answers from him, Nu 6:22 8:9,10,18,19; and Moses says expressly, that *the Lord put a word in Balaam's mouth*, Nu 23:5,16; and that prophecy concerning the Messiah, Nu 24:17, could not but be of God, yet it is probable that Balaam, out of covetousness, might sometimes use divination, nay, it is plain in some cases he did, Nu 24:1.

## 2 Peter 2:17

Ver. 17. *These are wells without water:* he compares seducers:

1. To *wells without water*; because as a well invites a traveller to it in hope of quenching his thirst, but being without water, mocks his expectation; so false teachers, making a show of true wisdom and saving knowledge, draw men to them, but being destitute of it, delude them, and make them no wiser than they were.

*Clouds that are carried with a tempest;*

2. To *clouds*, &c.; because as clouds many times, promising rain and refreshment, either are scattered by the wind, or break out into a tempest; so these, when they promise to refresh their hearers' souls with the truth of God, being themselves destitute of it, do them no good, or with their pernicious errors, or corrupt manners, do them much harm. By this comparison he sets forth:
  - (1.) Their inconstancy, that, like clouds driven with the wind, they are tossed to and fro, from one doctrine to another, Eph 4:14. And:
  - (2.) Their deceitfulness, that they make a show of what they have not, as clouds do of rain, when yet they are scattered, without yielding any.

*The mist of darkness;* i.e. the darkest darkness, called *outer darkness*, Mt 8:12 22:13 25:30; by which the torments of hell are sometimes set forth, as well as sometimes by fire.

## 2 Peter 2:18

Ver. 18. *Great swelling words of vanity;* i.e. big words, full of sound, and void of sense, at least of truth. He seems to tax the affected, vain speech of seducers, who were wont to clothe their erroneous doctrines (if not disguise the truths of God) with strange, uncouth phrases, which made a show of some rare discoveries, or deep mysteries, whereas indeed they were empty of any thing solid, or tending to edification.

*They allure:* as with a bait; a metaphor taken from the manner of taking fish.

*Through the lusts of the flesh;* to which they give liberty, as a bait to draw men after them.

*Through much wantonness;* this explains the former, and shows what lusts they indulge men in, viz. wantonness and uncleanness.

*Those that were clean escaped;* truly, or really, which seems the better reading than that in the margin: and this is said of them:

1. In respect of the profession they made of a real conversion.
2. In respect of the assent they gave to the word by which they were called.
3. In respect of the change that appeared in their outward conversation.

*From them who live in error:* whether the error of Judaism, or heathenism, wherein they had been formerly involved, and others still were. This might be the case of some in whom yet there was no saving change wrought; that they might be brought off from these more foul ways of sin and error in which they had walked and yet might afterward return to the same, or as bad, Mt 12:43 13:21.

## 2 Peter 2:19

Ver. 19. *While they promise them liberty;* liberty for their lusts, and so from the yoke of the Divine law. They abused the name of Christian liberty, and extended it to licentiousness.

*They themselves are the servants of corruption;* under the power and dominion of sin.

*For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage:* he alludes to the law of war, according to which, he that is overcome, and taken captive by his enemy, becomes his servant. These false teachers, that talked so much of Christian liberty, yet being overcome by their own lusts, and kept under by them, were the worst of slaves.

### 2 Peter 2:20

Ver. 20. *The pollutions of the world;* those more gross wickednesses in which most of the world still lieth, 1Jo 5:19.

*Through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;* such a knowledge of Christ as brings with it an outward reformation of life, though it do not purify the heart. For that the apostle doth not here speak of those that were rooted in Christ by a saving and heart purifying faith, appears by 2Pe 2:14, where he calls them *unstable souls*.

*They are again entangled therein, and overcome;* return to their old sins, yield up themselves to them, and continue in them.

### 2 Peter 2:21

Ver. 21. *It had been better for them not to have known;* their sin had been less if they had not known the truth, but now they sin against knowledge, and therein their apostasy is much worse than their ignorance would have been.

*The way of righteousness;* the way of obtaining righteousness by Christ, and of living godly in Christ, 2Ti 3:12, prescribed in the gospel; the same which is called *the right way*, 2Pe 2:15, and *the way of truth*, 2Pe 2:2.

*The holy commandment;* the same in other words. It is called *holy*, not only as proceeding from God, who is holy, but as teaching nothing but what is holy, and being the means God useth in making men holy, and as being opposed to the pollutions of the world before mentioned.

## 2 Peter 2:22

Ver. 22. *But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb:* this is added, to prevent the scandal that might arise from their apostacy;

q. d. It is not to be wondered at that they are again entangled in and overcome by their former pollutions, when there never was a thorough change wrought in their hearts. Dogs and swine (beasts unclean by the law) they still were, under the greatest appearances of reformation, and such they now show themselves to be by their vile apostacy.

*The dog is turned to his own vomit again:* as dogs vomit up what is burdensome to them, but, still being dogs, and not having changed their natures by easing their stomachs, lick up their own vomit again; so these, under a fit of conviction, through the power of the word, disgorge those sins which burdened their consciences, but having thereby gotten some ease, and their old nature and love to their former lusts still remaining, they again return to the same sins they had for a time forsaken.

*The sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire:* as swine, that naturally love the dirt and mire, if sometimes they be washed from it, yet, still retaining their former disposition, return again to it; so likewise these here mentioned, however they may be washed from the pollutions of the world, and by the preaching of the gospel brought off from their former ways of sin, and brought into a profession of holiness, yet, still retaining their old nature and corrupt dispositions, they are easily prevailed over by them, and so relapse into their former abominations.

## 2 Peter 3:1

### Chapter Summary

2Pe 3:1-7 The apostle declareth it to be the design of both his Epistles to remind the brethren of Christ's coming to judgment, in opposition to scoffers.

2Pe 3:8,9 No argument can be drawn against it from the delay, which is designed to leave men room for repentance.

2Pe 3:10-14 He describeth the day of the Lord, and exhorteth to holiness of life in expectation of it.

2Pe 3:15,16 He showeth that Paul had taught the like in his Epistles,

2Pe 3:17,18 and concludeth with advice to beware of

seduction, and to grow in Christian grace and knowledge.

Ver. 1. *This second epistle:* this confirms what has been said, that this Epistle was written by Peter, as well as the former.

*I stir up your pure minds;* or, sincere minds: the sense is either:

1. I stir up your minds, that they may be pure and sincere; and then he doth not so much commend them for what they were, as direct and exhort them to what they should be, that they might receive benefit by what he wrote, there being nothing that contributes more to the fruitful entertaining of the word, than sincerity and honesty of heart, when men lay aside those things which are contrary to it, and might hinder its efficacy, 1Pe 2:1,2. Or:
2. I stir up your minds, though pure and sincere, to continuance and constancy in that pure doctrine ye have received.

*By way of remembrance:* see 2Pe 1:13.

## 2 Peter 3:2

Ver. 2. *The words which were spoken before by the holy prophets;* the word of prophecy, 2Pe 1:19: he joins the prophets and apostles together, as concurring in their doctrine, and so useth it as an argument to persuade them to constancy in the faith of the gospel, that what the apostles preached to them was confirmed by what the prophets under the Old Testament had taught before, Ac 26:22 Eph 2:20.

*And of the commandment of us;* by this he means the whole doctrine of the gospel preached by him and the other apostles: see 2Pe 2:21 1Jo 3:23.

*The apostles of the Lord and Saviour;* who was the author of this commandment, and the principal in giving it, and from whom the apostles received it, who were but ministers and instruments in delivering it to others.

## 2 Peter 3:3

Ver. 3. *Knowing this first;* especially, as being very necessary to be known. The apostle having in the former chapter cautioned these saints against the more close enemies of the gospel, seducers and false teachers, here he foretells them of more open enemies, profane scoffers.

*In the last days:* see 1Co 10:11 2Ti 3:1.

*Scoffers;* profane contemners of God, and deriders of his truth, Ps 1:1 119:51 Isa 28:14,22.

*Walking after their own lusts;* such as are natural to them; lusts of ungodliness, Jude 1:18.

## 2 Peter 3:4

Ver. 4. *And saying, Where is the promise?* Questioning or denying the great truths of the gospel, thereby to encourage themselves in walking after their own lusts.

*Of his coming;* viz. Christ's, mentioned 2Pe 3:2. Possibly these scoffers might drop the name of Christ by way of contempt, not vouchsafing to mention it, as the Jews did, Joh 9:29; q. d. Where is the promise of his coming whom you expect?

*His coming,* to judge the world; q. d. His promised coming doth not appear, the promise of it is not fulfilled.

*For since the fathers,* who died in the faith of Christ's coming, and had the promise of it, *fell asleep;* i.e. died; the usual phrase of Scripture, which these scoffers seem to speak in derision;

q. d. It is so long since the fathers fell asleep, (as you call it), that it were more than time for them to be awakened, whereas we see the contrary.

*All things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation;* i.e. the world continues to be the same it was, and hath the same parts it had;

we see nothing changed, nothing abolished, but still nature keeps its old course. Thus they argue, that because there had been no such great change, therefore there should be none; because Christ was not yet come to judgment, therefore he should not come at all; not considering the power of God, who is as able to destroy the world as to make it, nor the will of God revealed in his word concerning the end of it.

## 2 Peter 3:5

Ver. 5. *For this they willingly are ignorant of;* they will not know what they ought to know, and, if they would search the Scripture, might know.

*That by the word of God;* the command of God, or *word of his power,* as it is called, Heb 1:3: see Ge 1:6,9 Ps 33:6 148:5.

*The heavens were;* were created, or had a being given them, Ge 1:6.

*Of old;* from the beginning of the world.

*And the earth;* the globe of the earth, which comprehends likewise the seas and rivers, as parts of the whole.

*Standing out of the water and in the water:* according to our translation, the sense of these words may be plainly this, that the earth, standing partly out of the water, (as all the dry land doth, whose surface is higher than the water), and partly in the water, (as those parts do which are under it), or in the midst of the water, as being covered and encompassed by seas and rivers. But most expositors follow the marginal reading, and render the Greek word by consisting; and then the meaning may be, either:

1. That the earth consisting of water, as the matter out of which it was formed, (Moses calling the chaos which was that matter, *waters,* Ge 1:2), and by water, from which it hath its compactness and solidity, and without which it would be wholly dry, mere useless dust, unfit for the generation and production of natural things. If we understand the words thus, the argument lies against the scoffers; for the earth thus consists of and by water, yet God made use of the water for the destroying of the world; and so natural causes are not sufficient for its preservation

without the power of God sustaining it in its being; and whenever he withdraws that power, in spite of all inferior causes, it must perish. Or:

2. The words may thus be read, the heavens were of old, and the earth (supply from the former clause) was out of the water, and consisting by, or in, the water; and the meaning is, that the earth did emerge, or appear out of, or above, the water, viz. when God gathered the waters together, and made the dry land appear; and doth consist by, or among, or in, the midst of the waters, as was before explained.

### 2 Peter 3:6

Ver. 6. *Whereby;* by which heavens and water, mentioned in the former verse, the fountains of the great deep being broken up, and the windows of heaven opened, Ge 7:11. Or, by the word of God, as the principal cause, and the water as the instrumental, which, at his command, was poured out upon the earth both from above and below.

*The world;* the earth, with all the inhabitants of it, eight persons excepted. This the apostle allegeth against the forementioned scoffers, who said that all things continued as they were, when yet the flood had made so great a change in the face of the lower creation.

### 2 Peter 3:7

Ver. 7. *The heavens;* the ethereal, or starry heaven, as well as aerial; for, 2Pe 3:10,12, he distinguisheth the heavens that are to perish by fire, from the elements; and 2Pe 3:13, he opposeth a new heaven to that heaven which is to be consumed; but the new heaven is not meant merely of the aerial heaven. And why should not this be meant of the same heavens, which elsewhere in Scripture are said to perish? Job 14:12. Ps 102:26: *All of them wax old, &c.*

*By the same word;* the same as 2Pe 3:5.

*Are kept in store;* are kept safe as in a treasury, and untouched for a time, that they may be destroyed at last.



*Reserved unto fire;* that they may be consumed by it. The destruction of the world by fire at the last day, is opposed to the destruction of it by water in the flood.

*Against the day of judgment;* the general judgment.

*And perdition of ungodly men;* this the apostle speaks with an emphasis, because they were *ungodly* against whom he here bends his discourse.

### 2 Peter 3:8

Ver. 8. *Be not ignorant of this one thing;* i.e. be sure of it: the same word is here used as 2Pe 3:5; and so he cautions them against the ignorance of scoffers, and to prevent it, would have them certainly know *this one thing*, which is extant in the Scripture, which foretells Christ's coming.

*That one day is with the Lord;* the Lord Jesus Christ, of whose coming he speaks.

*As a thousand years;* by a synecdoche, *a thousand years* is put for any, even the longest revolution of time; and the sense is, that though there be great difference of time, long and short, with us, who are subject to time, and are measured by it; yet with Him who is eternal, without succession, to whom nothing is past, nothing future, but all things present, there is no difference of time, none long, none short, but a thousand years, nay, all the time that hath run out since the creation of the world, is but as a day; and we are not to judge of the Lord's delay in coming by our own sense, but by God's eternity.

### 2 Peter 3:9

Ver. 9. *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise;* i.e. doth not defer the fulfilling of it beyond the appointed time, Isa 60:22.

*As some men count slackness;* either the scoffers here mentioned, who, because of Christ's not yet coming, questioned whether he would come at

all, as if God had changed his purpose, or would not fulfil it: or believers themselves, who, through the weakness of their faith, and greatness of their sufferings, might grow into some degree of impatience, and think Christ slow in coming to avenge their cause, and give them their reward. So much may be gathered from Re 6:10.

*But is long-suffering to usward;* to us believers, or us elect.

*Not willing that any should perish;* any that he hath ordained to life, though not yet called.

*But that all should come to repentance;* all whom he hath elected; he would have the whole number of them filled up, and defers the day of judgment till it be so: or this may be meant not of God's secret and effectual will, but of his revealed will, whereby he calls all to repentance promiscuously that hear the gospel preached, hath made it their duty, approves of it, hath prescribed it as the way of salvation, commanded them to seek salvation in that way, and is ready to receive and save them upon their repenting: see 1Ti 2:4.

## 2 Peter 3:10

Ver. 10. *But the day of the Lord;* the day of judgment is here called *the day of the Lord* by way of eminence, as *the great day*, Jude 1:6, and the *great day of God Almighty*, Re 16:14, and *the day of the Lord Jesus*, 1Co 1:8 5:5 2Co 1:14 Php 1:6,10.

*Will come as a thief in the night;* as a thief comes suddenly and unexpectedly, when he thinks all in the house are most secure.

*In the which the heavens;* viz. those that are visible, in distinction from the empyreal heaven, or place of glorified spirits.

*Shall pass away;* either wholly, so as to cease to be; or rather, as to their present being and condition, so as to cease to be what they now are, and to give place to the new heaven, Re 21:1. The same word is used, Mt 24:35 Lu 16:17.

*With a great noise;* either swiftly and violently, or with such a noise as is usually caused by such violent and speedy motions.

*The elements,* in a natural sense, as integral parts of the universe, air, water, earth.

*Shall melt with fervent heat;* so 2Pe 3:12, where another word is used in the Greek, which properly signifies melting, or being on fire, or burning, shall be dissolved or destroyed. So the word signifies, Joh 2:19 1Jo 3:8.

*The earth also;* the habitable part of the world. Though the earth, as a part of the world, be included in the elements before mentioned, yet here it may be taken with respect to its inhabitants, and the things contained in it.

*And the works that are therein shall be burned up;* not only artificial, men's works, but natural, all that variety of creatures, animate and inanimate, wherewith God hath stored this lower world for the present use of man; and so all those delectable things in which carnal men seek their happiness.

## 2 Peter 3:11

Ver. 11. *Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved;* seeing the coming of the Lord will be so terrible, as to bring with it the consumption of the world, and the destruction of these things here below, upon which we are so apt to set our affections.

*What manner of persons ought ye to be;* how prudent, accurate, diligent, zealous, and every way excellent persons! The Greek word is often used by way of admiration of some singular excellency in persons or things, Mt 8:27 Mr 13:1 Lu 1:29.

*In all holy conversation and godliness:* the words in the Greek are both in the plural number, and may imply not only a continued course of holy walking throughout our whole time, but likewise diligence in the performance of all sorts of duties, and exercise of all those various graces wherewith the Spirit of God furnisheth believers in order thereto.

## 2 Peter 3:12

Ver. 12. *Looking for;* patiently waiting for, and expecting.

*And hasting unto;* by fervent desire of it, and diligent preparation for it.

*The coming of the day of God;* the day of the Lord, 2Pe 3:10.

## 2 Peter 3:13

Ver. 13. *Nevertheless we, according to his promise:* see Isa 65:17 Isa 66:22 Re 21:1,27, to which this text seems to refer, speak of a new state of the church here in the world, yet by way of allusion to the renovation of the world, which is ultimately there promised, and the perpetuity of the gospel church till then is thereby assured.

*Look for new heavens and a new earth;* instead of the present world, which is to be consumed by fire, 2Pe 3:10,12, or the first heaven and earth, which pass away, Re 21:1. These will be new heavens and a new earth, either as to their substance, or as to their qualities, refined and purified from all defilement, and free from all that vanity to which the creature was made subject by the sin of man, Ro 8:20,21.

*Wherein dwelleth;* i.e. perpetually abideth, and not only for a time, Ro 8:11 2Co 6:16 2Ti 1:14.

*Righteousness;* either this may be understood of righteousness in the abstract, that together with the destruction of the world the kingdom of sin shall be destroyed, and God's elect, the inhabitants of the new world, shall be filled with righteousness, whereas before sin had dwelt in them: or else the abstract may be put for the concrete, and by *righteousness* may be meant righteous persons, who only shall be the inhabitants of the new world, the wicked being turned into hell, Re 21:27; and by this way of expressing it may be implied the perfection of the righteousness of such. Not only the new heaven is mentioned, but the new earth, because the whole world will then be the possession and kingdom of the saints, who follow Christ wherever he goes.

## 2 Peter 3:14

Ver. 14. *Such things;* Christ's coming to judgment; the destruction of this world; a new heaven and a new earth, in which dwells righteousness.

*Of him;* Christ the Judge.

*In peace;* at peace with God, from whence proceeds peace of conscience, and an amicable, peaceable disposition toward others; all which may here be comprehended.

*Without spot, and blameless:* either:

1. By these words he means absolute perfection; and then he shows what we are to design and aim at in this life, though we attain it not till we come into the other: or:
2. A thorough sanctification through faith in Christ, a being got above fleshly lusts, and the pollutions of the world, and any such carriage as our hearts may reproach us for, 1Ti 6:14. If it be objected, that such, having sin still in them, cannot be said to be *without spot, and blameless*, in the sight of God; it may be answered, that though they have sin in them, yet being, through the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, justified in the sight of God, and accepted in the Beloved, Eph 1:6, he overlooks their infirmities, and imputes no sin to them, sees no spot in them, so as to condemn them for it. The apostle seems here to reflect on the seducers before mentioned, whom, 2Pe 2:13, he had called *spots and blemishes*; and he persuades these saints to look to themselves, that they might be found of Christ (not such as the other were, but) *without spot, and blameless*; or, as it is translated, Eph 5:27, *without blemish*, i.e. in a state of sanctification, as well as justification.

## 2 Peter 3:15

Ver. 15. *And account;* reckon with yourselves, and be confidently persuaded; or take for granted.

*The longsuffering of our Lord;* viz. in his not yet coming to judgment, and bearing with so much sin in the world without presently punishing it.

*Is salvation;* i.e. tends or conduceth to salvation, in that hereby he gives space for repentance to the elect unconverted, and alloweth time for the building up and perfecting those that are converted, 2Pe 3:9.

*Even as our beloved brother Paul;* not only brother in Christ, as a saint, but in office, as an apostle.

*According to the wisdom given unto him;* that eminent and profound knowledge in the mysteries of the gospel in which Paul did excel, 1Co 2:6,7 Eph 3:3,4. Peter makes such honourable mention of Paul:

1. That he might commend to the Jewish Christians the doctrine Paul had preached, though a minister of the uncircumcision;
2. To show that he had nothing the worse thoughts of him for being so sharply reprov'd by him, Ga 2:1-21; and:
3. That he might arm the saints against those heretics that abused Paul's writings, and wrested them to their own meaning, probably, to patronize their errors.

*Hath written unto you;* unto you Jewish believers, viz. either:

1. In his Epistle to the Romans, Ro 2:4, where is a passage very like this: or:
2. In his Epistle to the Hebrews, which, though it were not entitled to the Jews of the dispersion, yet was written to their nation; and in that Epistle several places there are of the same purport with this here; (see Heb 9:28 10:23,25,36,37); and other Epistle of Paul to the Jews we have none: and in this he shows much of that *wisdom* God gave him in the mystery of the gospel; and in this likewise are many things *hard to be understood*.

## 2 Peter 3:16

Ver. 16. *As also in all his epistles;* to make the sense complete, we must supply here from the former verse, *he hath written.*

*Speaking in them of these things;* viz. concerning the second coming of Christ, and end of the world, the patience that should be exercised in waiting for it; about avoiding scoffers that deny these truths, and the other instructions contained in these two Epistles, but especially in the two latter chapters of this Second Epistle.

*In which are some things hard to be understood;* in which Epistles, or rather, in which things contained in Paul's Epistles, for the Greek relative is of a different gender, and cannot agree with *Epistles*:

q. d. Some of the doctrines delivered by Paul in his Epistles are hard to be understood. And so this doth not prove Paul's Epistles, much less the whole Scripture, to be obscure and dark: the style and expression may be as clear as the nature of the things will bear, and yet the things themselves so expressed may be hard to be understood, either by reason of their own obscurity, as prophecies, the excellency and sublimeness of them, as some mysterious doctrines, or the weakness of men's minds, and their incapacity of apprehending spiritual things, 1Co 2:14, compared with 1Co 13:9,10.

*Which they that are unlearned;* they that are ignorant of the Scripture, *unskilful in the word of righteousness,* Heb 5:13; or indocible, that will not be instructed.

*And unstable;* such as are ill grounded, and therefore unstedfast, and easily deceived, 2Pe 2:14: see Eph 4:14.

*Wrest;* pervert the Scripture, and offer violence to it, and, as it were, rack and torture it to make it confess what it never meant.

*To their own destruction;* eternal destruction, viz. while they use the Scriptures to countenance their errors; or stumble at some things in them, which are obscure, thereby taking occasion to deny the truth of God; and so make the Scripture the instrument of their perdition, which God appointed to be the means of salvation.

2 Peter 3:17

Ver. 17. *Seeing ye know these things,* which I have been now writing to you of, viz. That the Judge will certainly come; or, that heretics, deceivers, and scoffers will come; or both may be comprehended.

*Beware lest ye also;* as well as others have been.

*Fall from your own stedfastness;* the stedfastness of your faith. This admonition he gives them, not to discourage them with fear of apostacy, but to awaken them to that holy care which would be a means to prevent it; and so to keep them from security, and trust in themselves, not to weaken their faith, and reliance on the promise.

2 Peter 3:18

Ver. 18. *But grow in grace;* in all those spiritual gifts ye have received from Christ, especially sanctifying.

*And in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ;* in faith, whereby ye are sanctified, and made partakers of that grace.

*To him be glory both now and for ever;* which belongs only to God; and therefore this proves Christ to be God.



## 1 John 1:1

### THE ARGUMENT

Concerning the penman of the First Epistle, it doth not appear there hath been any doubt, the ancients generally ascribing it to the apostle St. John. The time of his writing it is uncertain, some assigning to it an earlier, others a later date. It is thought to have been written directly to the Christian Jews, not living in Judea, but remote in Parthia, (where it appears great numbers of them resided), being styled by a noted father, "The Epistle to the Parthians." The design of it is to confirm them in the great fundamental doctrine of Christianity: That our Lord Jesus was the Messiah, against the attempts of divers apostate or degenerate Christians, who (whether this Epistle were of the former or latter date) did in his time deny, or essentially deprave, that most important article. And not only to induce them all most stedfastly to believe it, but to impress it more deeply upon their souls, to reduce the more licentious, to raise and quicken the dead and carnal to a more strict, lively, vigorous Christianity; and (which is greatly inculcated) to excite and inflame mutual Christian love among them, as that which would more strongly fortify them against the endeavours of seducers, and render their communion more pleasant among themselves. The other two Epistles are very much of the same argument, (though the latter hath somewhat of a different and peculiar concernment), but doubted by some whether by the same penman, upon very insufficient grounds, the matter and style, plainly enough, showing them to be this apostle's.

### Chapter Summary

1Jo 1:1-4 The apostle professeth to declare what he had formerly seen and known of the Word of life, to the end that others might have fellowship with him.

1Jo 1:5-10 The substance of his doctrine is: That to have fellowship with God, we must be holy as he is holy; and that if we confess our sins, we shall be forgiven through the blood of Christ.

Ver. 1. The order of discourse requires we begin with the last thing in this verse, *the Word of life*. This phrase, *the Word*, is by this apostle (not here

to inquire in what notion some, both Jews and pagans, before took it) familiarly used, to signify the eternal Son of God: and whereas this is his usual style in speaking of this sacred Person, as in the entrance of his Gospel, (so very like that of this Epistle), so often over in his Revelation, Re 19:13, and that afterwards in this Epistle itself, 1Jo 5:7, he so readily falls into the mention of him by this name, (as not doubting to be understood), it is scarce to be supposed, that being so constant to himself herein, he should use the same form of speech without any such intendment in this place, where the circumstances do both allow and invite us so to understand him. Nor doth the addition to it here, the *Word of life*, render it the less fit to be applied to this purpose, but rather the more; as serving to denote the peculiar excellency of this Word, that he is the living and vivifying Word; whereupon he also styles him in the following verse, simply, *the life*, and, *that eternal life*, ( which is fit to be noted here, viz. that these three expressions, *the Word of life*, *the life*, and *that eternal life*, do, by the contexture of the discourse, plainly mean the same thing, and seem in their principal intendment to be set down as so many titles of the Son of God), designing to represent him as the original and radical life, the root of the holy, divine life, to all who partake thereof, agreeably to his own words concerning him in the Gospel, Joh 1:4, *In him* (viz. the Word) *was life*, and *the life was the light of men* (i.e. the Word was a vital, enlivening light); and 1Jo 5:20, He (viz. the Son of God) *is eternal life*: and to our Lord's words of himself, *I am the life*, Joh 11:25 14:6; and that *the Father had given him to have life in himself*, Joh 5:26, and consequently, to be capable of being to others an original or fountain of life. Yet whereas by *the Word*, and *the Word of life*, is often signified the gospel, (1Jo 2:5 Php 2:16; and elsewhere), it seems not incongruous or disagreeable to this context, to understand the apostle, as designing to comprehend both the meanings together in one expression, apt enough to include them both. See Dr. Hammond in loco. Nor are they of so remote an import, considered in their relation to us, as not fitly to admit of being both intended at once. The Son of God being his internal Word, the Word of his mind, his Wisdom, (another appellation of him, frequent in Scripture, Pr 8:1-36 and elsewhere), comprehending all ideas of things to be created or done; to us, the immediate original of light and life, and by whose vivifying beams we are especially to be transformed into the Divine likeness: the gospel being his external word, the word of his mouth, the radiation of those beams themselves. As we do ourselves first conceive, and form in our minds, what we afterwards utter and express: only

whereas our thought, or the word of our mind, is fluid, and soon vanishes; God's (in whom is no change) is permanent, consubstantial and coeternal with himself: *The Word was with God, and the Word was God*, Joh 1:1. Neither are these two senses of *the Word of life* less fitly (or with more impropriety) comprehended together under that one expression, than in common discourse: speaking of the sun in reference to ourselves, we often comprehend together in our meaning, both the body of the sun itself and its beams; as when we say it enlightens us, revives us, shines in at this window, or upon that dial, we do not intend (as reasonably we cannot) to exclude either, but mean the sun doth it by its beams. And now the notion being settled of *the Word of life*, (which was necessary first to be done, and which required a larger discourse), we may the more easily perceive, how what is here said of it may, in the one sense or the other, be applied thereto.

*That which was from the beginning*; so the living Word, in the first sense, was, viz. when all things also began; which is not said itself then to have begun, as Joh 1:1: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and,* at the next step, *the Word was God*. And with what is said by this Word himself, (then taking another, but an equivalent, name, the Wisdom of God), Pr 8:22-30: *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When, &c. —Then I was by him, as one brought up with him, &c.:* where *from the beginning*, and *from everlasting*, we see is all one. See 1Jo 2:13,14. *Which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled*: these are all expressions indifferently applicable both:

1. To the person of the Son of God, primarily meant by *the Word of life*; for that same glorious Person who was from the beginning with the Father, viz. being now incarnate, became the object of these their very senses, to this and the other apostles, who had so frequent opportunity to hear, and see, and behold him, and even to handle him with their hands, Lu 24:39 Joh 20:25. And:

2. To the gospel revelation, a secondary (not unintended) notion of *the Word of life*, and whereof these latter expressions seem more especially meant; they denote the perfect certainty the apostles had (the rest of whom his manner of speaking seems purposely to comprehend with

himself) of that truth, which, as he after speaks, they testified; it being their office and business as apostles so to do; see Joh 15:27 Ac 1:21,22 4:20; and it was necessary they should be able to do it with such assurance as these expressions import.

Therefore having said, *which we have heard*, which imports a more overly notice, it is added, *which we have seen*, a much more certain way of knowing, as 2Pe 1:16,17; and *with our eyes*, a more lively expression of that certainty, as Job expresses his expected sight of his Redeemer, Job 19:27: and to signify it was not a casual, transient glance, it is further said, *which we have looked upon*, εθεασαμεθα, i.e. studiously, and of set purpose, bent ourselves to contemplate. Unto all which it is moreover added, *and our hands have handled*, εψηλαφησαν, which though literally not otherwise applicable than to the person of our Lord incarnate, yet is a most emphatical metaphor, elegantly representing their most certain knowledge and lively sense of his excellent doctrine; as the expression is usual of a palpable truth, to signify a most evident one. So is that implied to be a truth that may be felt, that this world hath a mighty and bountiful Sustainer and Lord, Ac 17:27; ψηλαφησειαν.

### 1 John 1:2

Ver. 2. He interrupts the stream of his discourse by this seasonable parenthesis, while he therein gives an account how *the Word of life, the life, that eternal life*, (already noted to be here all one, and chiefly to mean the Son of God), which being *with the Father* must be to us invisible, came to be so sensibly known to mortal men on earth; which he doth by telling us he *was manifested*; and that was sufficiently done, both who he was, and what he designed, in his partaking with us of flesh and blood, and *being found in fashion as a man*, whereby he subjected himself to the notice of our senses; and was hereupon said to have been *manifested in the flesh*, 1Jo 3:5 1Ti 3:16; the glory of his Divinity also shining forth most conspicuously in his God-like conversation, and wonderful works, through this veil, and confirming the truth of his heavenly doctrine, which more distinctly declared both that it was the Son of God who was come down into this wretched world of ours, and what the kind design was of his descent hither. So that what here the apostle says more briefly, that he was *manifested*, well admits the larger account which he gives of it in his Gospel, Joh 1:14: *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.* Whereupon (as he adds) he bears witness, and shows forth what he had seen so manifested, as it belonged to his

apostolical office to do.

### 1 John 1:3

Ver. 3. He now proceeds with what he intended, not only professing to testify most certainly known things, (which he further with great earnestness inculcates), but declaring also the end of this testimony; viz. not merely that they to whom he writes might know them too, (as if the being a Christian did only stand in having some peculiar notions from other men, and that they were only to know for knowing' sake), but that they might *have fellowship*, i.e. partake and communicate with them (viz. the apostles, and the whole community of living Christians) in all the vital influences, holy practice, the dignities, pleasures, and consolations belonging to the Christian state; whereupon he adds, *and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ*: q. d. Nor are the advantages of that state, in their kind and nature, terrene, sensual, secular, but Divine and heavenly, such as are imparted to us by *the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ*; or, wherein we are truly said to participate, and have a communion with them. That blessed Spirit, who is the immediate author to us of all gracious communication, (whence this is also styled *the communion of the Holy Ghost*, 2Co 13:14), being in reality the Spirit of the Father and the Son.

### 1 John 1:4

Ver. 4. Not insipid, spiritless, empty, as carnal joy is, apt through the deficiency of its cause to admit of intermingled qualms; but lively and vigorous, 2Jo 1:12, well grounded, Joh 16:24, such as is of the right kind, and will grow up into the perfect plenitude and fulness of joy, Ps 16:11.

### 1 John 1:5

Ver. 5. It being the professed scope and design of his writing, to draw men to a final participation and communion with God in his own blessedness, he reckons nothing more necessary to it, than to settle in their minds a right notion of God. Which, that it might be the more regarded, he introduces with a solemn preface;

*This then is the message,* &c., (though the word also signifies promise, it here more fitly bears this rendering), to notify:

1. That this which follows was not an imagination of his own concerning God, but his true representation of himself.

2. That it was given him in charge to be delivered and communicated to others; a message a man neither hath of himself, nor is to reserve to himself, *we have heard it of him, and declare it to you*, as (consonantly hereto) he speaks. It is the Divine pleasure it should be published to the world, and that all men should know that as from him, i.e. that he is not a Being of mere power, as some, or of mere mercy, as others, are apt to fancy of him, either whereof were a very maimed and most disagreeable notion of the Deity: power without goodness were apt to run into fury; goodness without wisdom and righteousness would as naturally turn to a supine indifferency, and neglect of distinguishing judicially between good and bad; things neither suitable to the Governor of the world, nor possible to the absolutely perfect Being.

*God is light*; in God all true perfections and excellencies must be understood eminently to concur; and of them more could not have been comprehended under one word, (especially that belong to him considered relatively to his creatures, of which perfections it concerns us to have more distinct, formed, positive conceptions in all our applications to him), than are here some way represented or resembled by *light*, viz. that he is a Being of most lively, penetrative vigour, absolute simplicity, immutability, knowledge, wisdom, sincerity, righteousness, serenity, benignity, joy, and felicity, and especially of most bright and glorious holiness and purity; and in whom *is no darkness at all*, nothing contrary or repugnant hereto.

### 1 John 1:6

Ver. 6. Light and darkness are frequently put for holiness and wickedness, Lu 16:8 Ro 13:12 Eph 5:8 1Th 5:5. The sum then is: That if any pretend to friendship with God, or to have received holy and gracious influences from him, and do yet lead wicked lives, they are liars, even guilty of a practical lie, doing what makes their profession false and insincere.

### 1 John 1:7

Ver. 7. *But if we walk*; which is a continued and progressive motion, i.e. do persevere and improve in holiness.

*In the light*; being transformed into the holy image and likeness of God, and showing themselves *the children of light*, as he is *light*, and *the Father of lights*. *We have fellowship one with another*; have fellowship with him, μετ αυτου, as one copy reads: however, we must comprehend God, and

this the contexture of discourse shows.

*And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin;* καθαριζει lest our purity and holiness should be thought to have deserved such a privilege, it is cautiously added, *and the blood,* &c. is that which alone expiates, or makes atonement for our sins (the proper notion of cleansing here). Our former sinfulness and present imperfect holiness render it impossible God should admit us to communion with him for our own sakes, or without such an intervening sacrifice; καθαματα usually signifying expiations. And if we further extend the notion of cleansing, so as to comprehend internal subjective purification, (which also the word may admit), the further meaning is, that even that purifying influence, whereby we are qualified for present holy walking with God, and for final blessedness in him, we owe to the merit and procurement of the Redeemer's blood.

### 1 John 1:8

Ver. 8. In pursuance of which scope, he fitly adds: *If we should say,* i.e. either profess it as a principle, or think in our minds, or not bear in our hearts a penitential, remorseful sense, correspondent to the contrary apprehension; such as is implied in confessing, 1Jo 1:9; for saying usually signifies the habitual bent and disposition of the heart and practice, Job 21:14 Jer 22:21.

*That we have no sin;* viz. that we are so innocent creatures as not to need such an expiatory sacrifice as that above mentioned, and such purifying influence thereupon, but that we may be admitted to communion with God upon our own account, and for our worthiness' sake, without being beholden to the blood of Christ.

*We deceive ourselves,* delude our own souls.

*And the truth;* i.e. the system and frame of gospel doctrine, as 2Jo 1:1,2,4.

*Is not in us;* cannot be duly entertained, lies not evenly and agreeably with itself in our minds, or hath no place with effect in us, as Joh 8:37.

## 1 John 1:9

Ver. 9. But on the contrary, *if we confess our sins*, if we apply ourselves to him suitably to the condition of sinners, confessing ourselves such, with that self-abasing sense of sin which may dispose us to accept and apply his offered remedy, (upon which it is implied we will do it), *he is faithful*, so true to his promise, *and just*, fidelity being a part of justice; or there is with him that equity and righteousness, (which sometimes signify goodness, or clemency, 1Sa 12:7 Ps 112:9, and which, more strictly taken, permit him not to exact from us the satisfaction which he hath accepted in the atonement made by his Son, in his own way applied, and upon his own terms to be reckoned unto us), that he will not fail *to forgive us our sins*.

*And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness;* which may either be added as a further expression of the same thing; or may, moreover, signify his vouchsafing that purifying influence of the Spirit of Christ, (obtained also by his blood), which shall both purge away, and prevent, the defilements that would render us incapable of his own holy communion.

## 1 John 1:10

Ver. 10. *If we say that we have not sinned:* see 1Jo 1:8,9.

*We make him a liar;* which they make him that believe not his word, 1Jo 5:10, expressly charging all men with sin, Ro 3:19,23.

*And, consequently, his word, or truth,* as 1Jo 1:8, which we contradict, *is not in us*. The sum is: That we are not to be received into God's holy society and communion under the notion of always innocent and unoffending persons, but as pardoned and purified sinners.

## 1 John 2:1

### Chapter Summary

1Jo 2:1,2 Christ is our advocate with the Father, and a propitiation for the sins of the whole world.

1Jo 2:3-6 Rightly to know God is to keep his commandments,

1Jo 2:7-11 the chief of which is, to love one another.



1Jo 2:12-14 The apostle addresseth Christians of all ages severally,  
1Jo 2:15-17 and warneth them against an inordinate love of this world,  
1Jo 2:18,19 and against deceivers, who were many.  
1Jo 2:20-28 He showeth the means they had of knowing the truth, and of distinguishing false teachers; and pointeth out their obligation to abide in the truth which they had been taught,  
1Jo 2:29 he that doeth righteousness is born of God.

Ver. 1. He endeavours in this to steer them a middle course, that they might neither presume to sin, nor despair if they did; and bespeaks them with a compellation, importing both authority and love; well becoming him as then an aged person, an apostle, their teacher, and who was their most affectionate spiritual father. And lets them know, the first design of what he was now writing (had hitherto written, and was further to write) was: That they might to their uttermost avoid sinning at all: but adds, if, through human frailty, they did sin, *we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous*; implying our need of Christ for renewed as well as first pardon; and not of his death only, but continual intercession; and represents the advantages Christ hath for success in his interposing for us, in respect both of his relation to God as his Father, (which is put indefinitely, *the Father*, that the consideration might not be excluded of his being our Father also), and his righteousness, by which he could not but be acceptable to him.

### 1 John 2:2

Ver. 2. *And he is the propitiation for our sins*: the adding of these words, shows that our Lord grounds his intercession for pardon of sin unto penitent believers, upon his having made atonement for them before; and therefore that he doth not herein merely supplicate for favour, but (which is the proper business of an advocate) plead law and right; agreeably to what is said above, 1Jo 1:9.

*And not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world*; nor is his undertaking herein limited to any select persons among believers, but he

must be understood to be an Advocate for all, for whom he is effectually a Propitiation, i.e. for all that truly believe in him, (Ro 3:25), all the world over.

### 1 John 2:3

Ver. 3. This faith is often in the Holy Scripture signified by the name of knowledge, Isa 53:11 Joh 17:3, viz. an appropriative, transformative knowledge, by which we own and accept God in Christ, as ours, (expressed also by acknowledgment, επιγνωσις, Eph 1:17 Col 2:2), and are changed into his likeness, 2Co 3:18. The meaning then is: That we perceive, or discern ourselves to be sincere believers, and consequently that Christ is both our Propitiation and Advocate, when it is become habitual and easy to us to obey his commandments.

### 1 John 2:4

Ver. 4. *A liar*; a false, hypocritical pretender, as 1Jo 1:6.

### 1 John 2:5

Ver. 5. His faith *worketh by love*, Ga 5:6; his love is *perfected*, and attains its end in obedience, whereof it is the vital principle, 1Jo 5:3 Joh 14:15. Such an efficacious governing knowledge of him, therefore, as, by the power of the love which it produces, subdues our souls to the obedience of him, is a certain proof to us of our union with him, 1Jo 5:20, and relation to him.

### 1 John 2:6

Ver. 6. And this proof we ought to give. For whereas our Lord Jesus Christ was not only our Lawgiver, but our pattern, and practised himself what he commanded us; if indeed we have an abiding, real union with him, we partake of his Spirit, Ro 8:9, which must be understood to work uniformly, and enable us *to walk* (in the main of our course, according to our measure

of that Spirit) *as he walked*.

### 1 John 2:7

Ver. 7. This commandment must be that which he insists on, 1Jo 2:9-11, and which in different respects he calleth both *old* and *new*. Not *new*, he says, in opposition to their Gnostic seducers, to intimate he was not about to entertain them with vain novelties, as they did; all whose peculiar doctrines were no other than innovations upon true Christianity: but *old*, viz. a part of original Christianity, as it came pure first from our Lord Christ himself; the *commandment*, or word, *which they had*, or had heard, *from the beginning*. This phrase, *from the beginning*, being here put in conjunction with some act of theirs, *ye had*, or have heard, as also 2Jo 2:5,6, shows it to intend a much later term of commencement than 1Jo 1:1. Though also, considering them as Jews, whom he here writes to, it might run up as high as the law given by Moses; or, even as men, to the creation, and the first impression of the law of nature (whereof this was a very noble part) upon the heart of man.

### 1 John 2:8

Ver. 8. Yet also he calls it *a new commandment*, as our Saviour did, Joh 13:34, upon the subjoined accounts.

*Which thing is true;* i.e. evident, or verified, fulfilled, exemplified.

*In him;* viz. in that new and high demonstration he had given of the sincerity and greatness of his own love, laying down his life for us, as Joh 15:13.

*And in you;* or, us, (as some read), i.e. the mind of God herein is by a new and fresh light most evidently and gloriously signified in or among you, (the subject being here collective and plural, admits this varied and very usual sense of the particle *in*), inasmuch as *the darkness is past;* i.e. the heathenish ignorance that made the world barbarous; a darkness in which the furious lusts and passions of men are wont to rage, turning this earth into another hell, Ps 74:20, is in a great measure vanished; and also the

dark umbrage of the Judaic dispensation, (some read σκια for σκοτια, not *darkness*, but *shadow*), in which the love of God to men was more obscurely represented, is past away and gone, *and the true light now shineth*; the love and grace of God towards sinners (the pattern and argument of our mutual love to one another) shines with *true light*, that is evident, in opposition to darkness, or immediately substantial, in opposition to type or shadow, as Joh 1:9,14,17: representing the gracious design of God, and his very nature, who *is love*, 1Jo 4:8,16, with so bright and glorious beams as ought to transform us into his likeness; and which therefore render the mutual hatred of one another the most incongruous thing to us in the world. Whereupon he adds ... (see 1Jo 2:9).

### 1 John 2:9

Ver. 9. To be *in the light*, signifies to be under the transforming, governing power of it, as the phrases import of being *in the flesh*, and *in the Spirit*, Ro 8:9, being expounded by walking *after the flesh*, and *after the Spirit*, 1Jo 2:1. He therefore that *hateth his brother*, a thing so contrary to the design of the gospel, whatever he pretends, *is still in darkness*, under the power of the unregenerate principle of impure and malignant darkness: the gospel hath done him no good, is to him but an impotent and ineffectual light, in the midst whereof, by stiff winking, and an obstinate resistance, an exclusion of that pure and holy light, he creates to himself a dark and a hellish night.

### 1 John 2:10

Ver. 10. *His brother*, put indefinitely, must be understood universally, i.e. he that loveth not this or that fellow Christian, upon some personal or private reason, but *all*, upon one and the same common and truly Christian account.

*Abideth in the light*; shows or doth demonstrate the settled, constant power, the regenerate, Divine principle hath over him.

*And there is none occasion of stumbling in him*; Greek, no scandal; no inconsistent thing, that ought to occasion him to judge otherwise of

himself, or others to think otherwise of him.

### 1 John 2:11

Ver. 11. Hath no principle to guide or govern him, but what is common to the unregenerate world, so that his whole life is a continual error; nor doth he understand or consider the tendency of his course, being still under the power of an affected darkness, that makes his eyes, or understanding, of no more use than if he were quite blind, or had none at all. So weighty and important is the precept which he had to lay down, 1Jo 2:15, of not loving the world, &c., that he introduces it with the solemnity of a most pathetic preface, contained in these three following verses, wherein he applies himself severally to the distinct orders and ranks into which Christians were capable of being reduced, the matter being of common and equal concernment to all of them. And he speaks suitably to the condition and state of each, such things as whereby he might most effectually insinuate with them, and oblige them deeply to consider what he had to say; doubling also his application to each of them, out of the earnestness of his intention and endeavour to fasten the exhortation upon them which was to follow.

### 1 John 2:12

Ver. 12. He here uses an appellation before (1Jo 2:1) applied to all in common, being put alone; but being now set in contradistinction to others, must be understood to intend a distinct rank of Christians, viz. those more newly entered into the Christian state; and to them he suggests the free remission of their sins *for his name's sake*, i.e. for his own sake, as the reason why they should, out of ingenuity, and a new, recent sense of God's mercy towards them, comply with his holy pleasure in the following precept. The remission of their sins being a first and most early privilege with them, that commenced from the beginning of their sincere Christianity, and which was sealed to them in their late baptism, it is the more fitly mentioned to this first rank of Christians.

### 1 John 2:13

Ver. 13. *Unto fathers*, because to such belong much experience, and the knowledge of ancient things, he ascribeth the knowledge of *him who is* the Ancient of days, *from the beginning*, and than whom none is more ancient, and whom they should be supposed so well to know by their long continued course in religion, as fully to understand his good and acceptable will, what would be pleasing and what displeasing to him.

*I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one:* to such as were in the flower of their strength and age in Christianity, he attributeth victory; to whom therefore it would be inglorious to slur the honour of that noble conquest they had gained over *the wicked one*, the *god of this world*, as he is elsewhere called, 2Co 4:4, by suffering themselves again to be entangled in its snares and bands. His method is, we see, to place this order of Christians last, as a middle state, which he would have us conceive afterwards to be interposed between the other two; which method we find he observes in going over them again the second time.

*I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father:* he again first begins with his *little children*, whom he now bespeaks by another compellation in the Greek, (before  $\tau\epsilon\kappa\nu\iota\alpha$ , now  $\pi\alpha\iota\delta\iota\alpha$ ), importing no material difference, except this latter signify more capacity of instruction; and he now also gives them another character, which implies so much, that he not only considers them as the passive subjects of a privilege, remission of sins, which they were capable of in the first moment of their being born into the Christian state, (as the word  $\tau\epsilon\kappa\nu\iota\alpha$ , above, seems to intimate), but as being able to use their understanding, and consider whose children they were, *because ye have known the Father*; before said also of the eldest sort of Christians; but he is there mentioned by a description more suitable to their more aged state; and therefore the knowledge ascribed to the one, and to the other, though the same in kind, must, in respect of degrees, be accommodately understood.

### 1 John 2:14

Ver. 14. To the former sort he only repeateth what he had said before,

supposing their greater wisdom to need no more; (see L. Brugens. Not. in Bibl. Sacr. of the insertion of this clause); only the repetition importeth his earnest desire they would again and again consider it. The other he also puts in mind of their active strength and vigour, and of the rootedness which the gospel must now be supposed to have in them, whereby they were enabled to *overcome the wicked one*. And by all which endowments they were all both enabled and obliged to comport the better with the following precept, and its enforcements.

### 1 John 2:15

Ver. 15. What he here means by the forbidden object of our love, must be gathered from his own explication, 1Jo 2:16. The love itself forbidden, in reference thereto, is that excess thereof, whereby any adhere to terrene things, as their best good; wherewith, as he adds, any sincere love to God is inconsistent, as Mt 6:24 Lu 14:3: a consideration so awful and tremendous, that it is not strange the precept it enforces should have so solemn and urgent an introduction.

### 1 John 2:16

Ver. 16. Here he explains his meaning, what, under the name of *the world*, and *the things* of it, we are not to love, or under what notion we ought not to love it, viz. the world as it contains the objects and nutriment of these mentioned lusts; either more grossly sensual, called *the lust of the flesh*, viz. of gluttony, drunkenness, whoredom, &c. Ro 13:13,14; or that which is excited more immediately by the fancy, unto which the eye especially ministereth, the excessive appetite of much wealth, and great possessions; which the eye is therefore said to desire, and not to be satisfied with, Ec 2:8-10, and Ec 4:8; called therefore *the lust of the eyes*. And again, the ambitious affectation of the pomp and glory of the world, vain applause, the unmerited and overvalued praise and observance of other men, with power over them, affected for undue ends, or only with a self-exalting design, meant by *the pride of life*, forbidden by our Saviour to his disciples, Mt 20:25,26. This triple distribution some observe to have been before used by some of the ancient learned Jews, and imitated by certain of the more refilled heathens; whence, as being formerly known and

understood, the apostle might be induced to make use of it. And these lusts are therefore argued to be inconsistent with the love of the Father, as not being of him, but *of the world*; not from the Divine Spirit, but the spirit of the world.

### 1 John 2:17

Ver. 17. He sets the difference in view, of living according to the common genius, will, or inclination of the world, (which is lust), and according to the Divine will, that he who unites himself in his will and desire with the former, which vanishes, (objects and appetite altogether), must (which is implied) perish therewith; but he that unites himself with the supreme eternal good, by a will that is guided by and conformed to the Divine will, *abideth for ever*, partakes a felicity coeternal with the object and rule upon which his heart was set, and which it was guided by.

### 1 John 2:18

Ver. 18. *The last time*; the time here referred to seems to be the destruction of Jerusalem, and the finishing of the Jewish state, both civil and ecclesiastical. In the Greek, the last hour, the approaching period of Daniel's seventy weeks, as Mr. Mede understands it, in his Apostacy of the Later Times. Whereas therefore it was now a known and expected thing among Christians, that the eminent *antichrist*, or antichristian state, (expressly foretold, 2Th 2:1-17), was to come, or take place; therefore the apostle says, *ye*, i.e. the generality of Christians, *have heard* so much. So he says, *even now*, as the forerunners of that eminent one, *are there many antichrists*, (foretold also by our Saviour, Mt 24:5,24), viz. noted heretics and seducers then in being: not such falsely assuming vicarious Christs, as only pretended to do that part which the Jews expected from their Messiah, the delivering them from the Roman tyranny, and so set up to be merely civil or secular Christs, having themselves never been Christians, but such as had revolted from Christianity, and now laboured fundamentally to subvert it, denying Christ to be *come in the flesh*, 1Jo 2:22 2Jo 1:7; having been before professed Christians, as appears by the following words.



### 1 John 2:19

Ver. 19. *If they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us:* sincere and living Christians are so strongly held in with Christ, and the truly Christian community, by a union and bond of life, and by sense of pleasures which thereupon they find in that holy communion, with the expectation which their lively faith gives them of eternal life at last, that there is *no doubt* of their continuance.

*But they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us:* others, that are Christians upon external inducements, alter, as these do, and are permitted to do so, that the difference may appear between true and counterfeit ones, 1Co 11:19.

### 1 John 2:20

Ver. 20. See Poole on "1Jo 2:27".

### 1 John 2:21

Ver. 21. He prudently intimates his confidence concerning them, together with the pleasure he himself took (as any one would) in communicating the sentiments of holy truth to prepared, receptive minds; implying also, that any part of false doctrine doth so ill match and square with the frame of Divine truth, that judicious Christians may discern they are not of a piece.

### 1 John 2:22

Ver. 22. Especially may the ill accord be discerned between Divine truth and a lie, when the lie is so directly levelled against the foundations upon which the whole fabric is built, as the denying Jesus to be the Christ strikes at all. And though he that doth so, seems not only an *antichrist* as directing his opposition but against Christ, he really as much *denieth the Father*, who testified of him.

### 1 John 2:23

Ver. 23. To have the Father and the Son, is, by faith, love, and obedience, vitally to adhere to the one and the other. The latter part of this verse, though it be not in the ordinary Greek copies, is in some of the versions, and said to be in some Greek manuscripts also, whence it is supplied very agreeably to the apostle's scope, and usual way of writing.

### 1 John 2:24

Ver. 24. He only exhorts them to persevere in that faith which they at first received, whereby their union with God in Christ would be preserved entire.

### 1 John 2:25

Ver. 25. Which perseverance they are highly encouraged to by the promise of so great a thing as eternal life at length.

### 1 John 2:26

Ver. 26. So much he thought requisite to be said, in respect of their danger by seducers, though their safety was principally to depend upon what he next mentions ... See Poole on "1Jo 2:27".

### 1 John 2:27

Ver. 27. *But the anointing which ye have received:* it is evident, that the ancient anointing of persons to some eminent office, was not a mere empty rite of investiture, or authorization, but also a symbol of their qualification by another Spirit then coming upon them. Whereupon our Lord Jesus was eminently *the Christ*, or *anointed One*, not only as denoting his solemn investiture with the sacred offices of King, Priest, and Prophet, which were all wont to be entered into by unction; but as signifying also his receiving

the Spirit, (*not by measure*), by which he was most perfectly qualified for them. And whereas he is also said to have made those that believe on him, in a far inferior sense, *kings and priests to his Father*; to them also he imparts of the same Spirit, Ro 8:9, whence they are said to be anointed too, 2Co 1:21,22. And hence, as is here said, and 1Jo 2:27, they do not *need*, &c.

*Ye need not that any man teach you*; not as if they had absolutely no need at all of human teaching, for the apostle supposes not himself to be now doing a vain or needless thing; but that they had less need, having the internal principles of light and life in them, they were in a great measure capable of steering their own course. They had in themselves a living, ingrafted word, enabling them to teach and commune with themselves, as De 30:11,12 Ro 10:7-9. Hereupon their own reins could instruct them, Ps 16:7. Or, they could instruct themselves, εαυτους, as that may be read, Col 3:16, *the word of Christ dwelling richly* in them. Therefore they did not so need to be taught, as those that know not the first principles of the oracles of God.

*Teacheth you of all things*; i.e. all such necessary and essential things to the life and being of Christianity, of which sort that doctrine concerning the Messiah was, which he was now speaking of; not *all things* simply, for that had been to attribute to them far higher knowledge than he could pretend to himself, even that which was peculiar to God only. Nor was that knowledge which they had of those necessary things to be thought the effect of an immediate inspiration, but such as by ordinary external means they had already learned, but made vital and efficacious by the special sanctifying influence and operation of the Holy Ghost; who having begotten in them a correspondent impress to those great truths which are after godliness, formed the new creature in them, which is begotten of the word of truth, had made them capable of dijudication, or of distinguishing by a spiritual sense, Php 1:9,10, between things that were grateful, suitable, and nutritive to the life of the new creature in them, and such things as were noxious and offensive. Whereas, in reference to things more remote from the vitals of religion and godliness, none can assure themselves of such a privilege. And as to these, they are to expect it in the way of their own sincere and diligent endeavours and prayers, as the effect of the habit of grace, maintained and kept up in life and vigour; and a reward of their sincere resignation and subjection of heart and soul to the

governing power of truth, so far as it should be understood and known of them, according to that of our Saviour, Joh 7:17: *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, &c.* And thus they might certainly keep their station, and *abide in him*; unto which they are therefore exhorted.

### 1 John 2:28

Ver. 28. He condescendingly includes himself with them, *that we may have confidence*; intimating, for their encouragement, the common mutual joy they should have together at Christ's appearance; he, that he had not been wanting in his endeavours that they might persevere; and they, that they had persevered; which is implied in the menace of the contrary, upon the contrary supposition.

### 1 John 2:29

Ver. 29. Lest he should be thought only solicitous to preserve among them the right notions of the Christian doctrine, as if that alone would suffice them for their salvation and blessedness, (which was the conceit of the Gnostics, touching their own notions, that the entertaining of them would save men, whatsoever men they were, or howsoever they lived), he subjoins this serious monition: *If ye know, &c.*, intimating, that whatsoever they had of the knowledge of God would avail them nothing, if, whereas *he is righteous*, they were not transformed by it into his likeness, and enabled thereby to *do righteousness*, which alone would evidence their Divine birth, since God hath no children destitute of his image, or who resemble him not.

### 1 John 3:1

#### Chapter Summary

1Jo 3:1,2 It is a mark of God's singular love toward us, that we are now called his sons, and designed for further happiness hereafter,

1Jo 3:3-10 and therefore we must obediently keep his commandments,  
1Jo 3:11-24 and love one another with true brotherly kindness and actual beneficence.

Ver. 1. So late mention having been made of that great thing, in the close of the foregoing chapter, being born of God, the holy apostle is here in a transport, in the contemplation of the glorious consequent privilege, to be *called his sons*; and of that admirable love, from whence the whole hath proceeded.

*What manner; ποταπην* or, how great!

*Called*, here, (as often referring to God as the author), signifies to be made, or to be, Mt 5:9,45 Joh 1:12 Ro 4:17. He confers not the name without the thing; the new, even a Divine nature, 2Pe 1:4, in regeneration; the real advantages and dignity of the relation by adoption; and all of mere (and the greatest) kindness and good-will, Tit 3:5-7. Hence he intimates, it ought not to be counted grievous, that *the world knoweth us not*, i.e. doth not own or acknowledge us for its own, is not kind to us, yea, hates and persecutes us; knowing often (after the Hebrew phrase) signifying affection, 1Co 8:3 2Ti 2:19; and accordingly, not knowing, disaffection, and the consequent effects, Mt 7:23. Nor should it be thought strange, *because it knew him not*: the Father, and the whole family, are to it an *invisum genus*, hated alike.

### 1 John 3:2

Ver. 2. Our present state he affirms to be unquestionably that of *sons*, whatsoever hardships from the world, or severer discipline from our Father, we must for a while undergo; but for our future state, it is much above us to comprehend distinctly the glory of it; *it doth not yet appear*, it is yet an unrevealed thing, Ro 8:18; a veil is drawn before it, which is to be drawn aside at the appointed season of the manifestation of the sons of God, 1Jo 3:19. But so much we in the general know of it, (so certain are the apprehensions of faith), that *when he shall appear*, or display his own glory in the appearance of his Son, who is then *to come in the glory of his Father*, Mt 16:27 1Ti 6:14-16, *we shall be like him*, as it befits children to

be unto their Father; i.e. his image shall then be perfected in us, which was defaced so greatly in the apostacy, is restored imperfectly in regeneration, Eph 4:24 Col 3:10, must be daily improved in progressive sanctification: so that as God was above said to be light, Christians are to *shine as lights*, as *the sons of God, without rebuke*, representing and glorifying their Father, Mt 5:16 Php 2:15 1Pe 2:9: but is then to be advanced in us to a far higher pitch than ever, in respect both of holiness and blessedness.

*For we shall see him as he is;* i.e. so far as the limited capacity of our natures can admit; and are therefore by that likeness to be qualified for such vision: which eternal, efficacious vision doth also continue that likeness, the causal particle, *for*, admitting both those references: see Ps 17:15.

### 1 John 3:3

Ver. 3. *Purifieth himself;* i.e. not only is obliged hereto, but by the efficacious influence of this hope, if it be of the same kind, (that *lively hope*, unto which Christians are said to be *begotten*, 1Pe 1:3), is daily more and more transformed, through a continual intention of mind towards the holy God, upon whom that hope is set, (for it is said to be hope *in him*, or rather upon him,  $\epsilon\pi\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omega$ ), into the image of the Divine purity; knowing also, (which must be a potent inducement to very earnest endeavour this way), that our future conformity to God in glory and blessedness hereafter, depends upon our present vigorous and effectual pursuit of conformity to him in holiness here, Mt 5:8 Heb 12:14. And it is enforced by what follows.

### 1 John 3:4

Ver. 4. Which is added, to signify nothing can be more unreasonable, than the expectation of partaking with God in the glory and blessedness of the future state, if we now allow ourselves in a course of sin, or of transgressing his holy law, which is the very notion of sin; and is again further enforced from the design of our Redeemer.

### 1 John 3:5

Ver. 5. Implying how great an absurdity it were, to expect salvation and blessedness by our sinless Saviour, and yet indulge ourselves in sin, against his design, not only to expiate our sins, but make us sinless like himself.

### 1 John 3:6

Ver. 6. By *sinneth*, he meaneth the same thing as afterwards by *committeth sin*: see 1Jo 3:8,9. Seeing and knowing intend inward union, acquaintance, and converse; such as abode in him implies: see Joh 5:37 3Jo 1:11.

### 1 John 3:7

Ver. 7. This caution implies the zealous endeavour of the seducers of that time, to instil their poisonous doctrine and principles of licentiousness; and his own solicitude, lest these Christians should receive them, and be mischiefed by them. Whereas therefore they were wont to suggest, that a merely notional knowledge was enough to recommend men, and make them acceptable to God, though they lived never so impure lives; he inculcates, that only they that did righteousness, viz. in a continued course, living conformably to the rules of the gospel, were righteous; and that they must aim to be so, *even as he is righteous*; not only making the righteousness and holy life of Christ the object of their trust, but the pattern of their walking and practice.

### 1 John 3:8

Ver. 8. *He that committeth sin*: the apostle's notion of committing sin may be interpreted by his own phrase, 3Jo 1:11, ο κακοποιων, *a doer of evil*; and by that, used in both Testaments, *a worker of iniquity*; which is not every one that doth any one single act of sin; as his ο ποιων δικαιοσυνην, 1Jo 3:7, *a doer of righteousness*, and ο αγαθοποιων, 3Jo 1:11, *a doer of good*, is not every one that doth any one righteous or good

action; any more than we call him a worker or maker of any thing, (as signifying a manual occupation), who only makes a single attempt, but him who hath acquired the habitual skill, and doth ordinarily employ himself accordingly. A worker or maker of sin, (as we may fitly render this ο ποιων την αμαρτιαν), is an habitual or customary sinner; one that sinneth with deliberation, not by surprise, from a prevailing habit, that either continueth him in a course of actual known sin, or that withholdeth him from repenting sincerely, and turning to God from the sin which he hath committed; by which repentance he should not only refrain from further gross acts of sin, (which an impenitent person upon other inducements may do), but mortify and prevail against all sinful habits and inclinations. In the same sense he useth the expression of sinning, 1Jo 3:6,9. And such a sinner, he says, *is of the devil*; as if he were born of him, were his child, really conformed to him, and having his sinning nature. As our Saviour tells the Jews, having applied to them the same phrase before of committing sin, Joh 8:34, that they were of their father the devil, Joh 8:44. As also this apostle, 3Jo 1:11, says: *He that doeth good is of God*, i.e. born of God, or his child; as we find he uses the expressions of being *born of God*, and being *of God*, promiscuously, and with indifference, 1Jo 3:9, 10 5:18,19, the latter being elliptical in reference to the former. Whereas sin was therefore originally the devil's work, he adds, (as a further engagement against it), that *the Son of God was manifested*, (as 1Jo 3:5), appeared in the flesh, showed himself in this world of ours, on purpose *to destroy*, or (as the word signifies) that he might dissolve the frame of all such works.

### 1 John 3:9

Ver. 9. To be *born of God*, is, (in the words of a very learned annotator, Dr. Hammond), "to have received some special influence from God, and by the help and power of that, to be raised to a pious life. Agreeably, γεγεννημενος εκ του θεου, *he that hath been born of God*, is literally, he that hath had such a blessed change wrought in him, by the operation of God's Spirit in his heart, as to be translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of his own dear Son; transformed in the spirit of his mind, i.e. sincerely changed from all evil to all good; from an obedience to the flesh, &c., to an obedience to God. Only it is here to be noted, that the phrase is not so to be taken, as to denote only the act of this change; the



first impression of this virtue on the patient, the single transient act of regeneration; or reformation; and that, as in the preter tense, now past, but rather a continued course, a permanent state: so as a regenerate man and a child of God are all one, and signify him that lives a pious and godly life, and continues to do so," &c. To the same purpose this author also speaks, note on Joh 1:13, and in his paraphrase on that verse: "Those which live according to the will of God, and neither the natural, nor carnal, nor bare moral principle." This change, introducing the consequent course, divers texts of Scripture explain, Joh 3:3,5,6 2Co 5:17 Eph 2:10 4:24 Jas 1:18, &c. Now of one thus born of God, it is said, he *doth not commit sin*, as 1Jo 3:8, and for the reason here alleged.

*His seed*; the principles of enlivened holy truth, as 1Pe 1:23 Jas 1:8.

*And he cannot sin*: which is not to be understood simply, as if he could not sin at all, which were to contradict what he had said before, 1Jo 1:8, and supposed, 1Jo 2:1; but he cannot commit sin, as 1Jo 3:8. And it is plain the apostle intends by these two expressions the same thing. He cannot *sin*, i.e. do an act of known, gross sin, deliberately, easily, remorselessly, maliciously, as Cain, 1Jo 3:12, out of a hatred of goodness: or, do not such acts customarily, or not so *unto death*, ( as 1Jo 5:16), but that through the advantage of inlaid principles, or the remaining seed, by dependence upon the grace, Spirit, and covenant of God in Christ, he may timously recover.

*Because he is born of God*; i.e. inasmuch as it belongs to his temper and inclination, in respect of the holy new nature received in regeneration, to abhor from the grosser acts, much more from a course of sin; see Ge 39:9 Ac 4:20 2Co 13:8 Ga 5:17: and to his state, as he is a child of God, to have that interest in the grace of Christ, that he may implore, trust, obtain, and improve it, to his being kept from such destructive sinning. And it being evident, by his deep and thorough change, that he is born of God, and chosen to be an heir of eternal life, (as his children are heirs), he may and ought (not in a way of presumptuous negligence, but of vigilance and humble dependence) certainly to expect being so kept. Nor is it strange so much should be affirmed, upon so unspeakably better grounds, of the Christian state, when such boasts are to be read concerning some among the pagans, that one might as soon divert the sun from its course, as turn such a one from the course of righteousness. Though we may also suppose this form of speech might be intended by the apostle to be understood by

the more superficial professors of Christianity, (who might be generally apt enough to look upon themselves as born of God, and his children), as parenetical, and more enforcingly hortatory, in pursuance of his former scope, to keep them off from the licentious courses of their seducers; q. d. It cannot be, that you, who avow yourselves born of God, should do like them. So we usually say, that cannot but be, or cannot be, which we apprehend more highly and clearly reasonable should be, or not be. *Non potes avelli*, &c. Such rhetoric the apostle uses with Agrippa, *I know that thou believest*, as if it were impossible he should not.

### 1 John 3:10

Ver. 10. Upon what was said, he reduces all men each to their own family and father, concluding it manifest whither they belonged; i.e. he shows, upon the grounds before expressed, who do not belong to God and his family, leaving it thence to be collected, since two fathers and families divide the world, to which they must be reckoned; i.e. they belong not to God, and consequently to that worst of fathers, who first, in the general, do not righteousness; the devil being the first sinner, they are his descendants; and who next, particularly, love not their brethren, which most expressly demonstrates a diabolical nature.

### 1 John 3:11

Ver. 11. *From the beginning*: see 1Jo 2:7,8: q. d. They cannot be of God, therefore, that cross so fundamental a precept, so expressive of his nature and will.

### 1 John 3:12

Ver. 12. And what again, on the other hand, (q. d.) can be more devil-like, than such a temper as Cain's was, whose hatred of his brother brake out into actual murder, upon no other account but because his brother was better than he? Which showed him to be *of that wicked one*, of the serpent's seed: so early was such seed sown, and so ancient the enmity between seed and seed.

### 1 John 3:13

Ver. 13. This being so devilish a quality, and the world so generally under his power, as *the god* of it, 2Co 4:4, it is not to be thought strange, that good men should be the marks and designed objects of the world's hatred.

### 1 John 3:14

Ver. 14. The notion of *brother* must not be understood so narrowly, as only to signify such as we have particular inclination to, as being of our own party and opinion, or kindred, or who have obliged us by special kindness; for to confine our love within such limits, were no argument of our having *passed from death unto life*, or more than is to be found with the worst of men, Mt 5:46,47. Nor must it be understood exclusively, of the regenerate only; but must be taken, first, more generally, in the natural sense, for all mankind, in the same latitude as *neighbour* in that summary of the second table: *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*; originally intended not to Jews, as such, but men; and therefore excludes not our enemies, by our Saviour's interpretation, Mt 5:43,44. Secondly, in a more special (viz. the spiritual) sense, for such as are our brethren by regeneration, so the children with us of the same Father; i.e. whereas the blessed God himself is the *primum amabile*, the first object of love, all others (persons or things) ought to be loved proportionably to what prints or characters of the Divine excellency we find impressed upon them. Human nature hath resemblances in it of his spiritual, intelligent, immortal nature; regeneracy, of his holiness. And so he loves his creatures himself, severing their malignity, (where that is to be found), that is of themselves, from what of real good there is in them, which is from him. When therefore a correspondent frame of love is impressed upon us, and inwrought into our temper, his image, who *is love*, is renewed in us, which, in this noble part of it, the devil had so eminently defaced in the world, possessing the souls of men with mutual animosities and enmities against one another, but especially such as should be found to have upon them any impress of the most excellent kind of goodness, i.e. of true piety and holiness. And by this renovation of his image in us, whereby we are enabled to love others for his sake, and proportionably to what characters

of him are upon them, we appear to be his children, Mt 5:45, begotten of him into a state of life, out of that death which is upon the rest of the world, Eph 2:1, and wherein every one still abides that thus loves not his brother.

### 1 John 3:15

Ver. 15. That life into which the regenerate are begotten, is nothing else than the beginning or first principle of eternal life, Joh 4:14, whereof they cannot but be destitute who hate their brethren; a thing so contrary to the Divine life, nature, and image, and which makes the person affected with it, in the temper and habit of his mind, a very murderer.

### 1 John 3:16

Ver. 16. *He laid down his life for us:* the intimate union between the Divine nature and the human in Christ, gives ground for the calling Christ's life as man the life of God; as, Ac 20:28, his blood is said to be God's *own blood*. And this testimony of God's love to us, his laying down his life for us, ought so to transform us into his likeness, that out of the power of that Divine principle, the love of God in us, (so that implanted love is called, 1Jo 3:17, *the love of God*), we should never hesitate, or make a difficulty, to lay down our lives for the Christian community, or even for the common good and welfare of men, being duly called thereto.

### 1 John 3:17

Ver. 17. i.e. If the love of God in us should make us lay down our lives for the brethren, and we be not willing, in their necessity and our own ability, to relieve them, how plain is the case, that it is not in us!

### 1 John 3:18

Ver. 18. q. d. It is a vain thing to make verbal pretences of love, without any real proof of it.

### 1 John 3:19

Ver. 19. *And hereby we know that we are of the truth;* i.e. this shall demonstrate to us, that we are the children of the truth, begotten by it, Jas 1:18, when we resemble it, have the correspondent impress of the gospel (that great representation of the love of God) upon us.

*And shall assure our hearts before him;* so shall our hearts be quieted, and well satisfied concerning our states God-ward.

### 1 John 3:20

Ver. 20. *If our heart,* or our conscience, *condemn us,* viz. in plain things, (as this of loving our brother is), and wherein the mind of God is evidently the same with our own conscience; his superiority, to whom our conscience is but an under-judge, ought much more to awe us, especially considering how much more he knows of us than we do of ourselves; as 1Co 4:4.

### 1 John 3:21

Ver. 21. But for their not condemning us, though the expression be merely negative, it must imply somewhat positive; for there are many whose hearts condemn them not, through ignorance of their rule, or oscitancy, self-indulgence, or neglect of themselves. But if after thorough search, with sincerity in the sight of God, our hearts do not condemn, but acquit us, as upright towards him, not willing to allow ourselves in any ill temper or practice, (such as, for instance, this of not loving, or neglecting, our brother), *then we have confidence* (liberty of speech the word literally signifies, which well suits with what follows) *toward God;* we have nothing to hinder or lie as a bar against us in our recourse to him.

### 1 John 3:22

Ver. 22. It is supposed, where there is that accord with God, that what was last, and is next after, said implies, there will be no disposition to ask any thing disagreeable to his will, or otherwise than as he hath expressed his will about the matter of prayer. And then, *whatsoever we ask, we receive*, i.e. are as sure to receive it, in the kind or in equivalence, as if we had it, 1Jo 5:14.

*Because we keep his commandments;* i.e. this is the cause of our certainty, being the evidence of our state God-ward, Ps 66:18,19; not of our receiving the things prayed for, which we only owe to his free promised mercy in Christ.

### 1 John 3:23

Ver. 23. Thus briefly is comprehended the whole of our duty towards God in Christ, and one another, in a like summary as that, Ec 12:13.

### 1 John 3:24

Ver. 24. *He that keepeth his commandments*, i. e. he whose whole soul is thus formed to obediencial compliance with the Divine will, *dwelleth in him*; hath most intimate union with God in Christ; which is evident by that Spirit given to us, which hath effected both that holy frame, and that union: see Joh 14:23.

### 1 John 4:1

#### Chapter Summary

1Jo 4:1-6 The apostle warneth to try by certain rules the spirits that pretend to come from God.

1Jo 4:7-21 He presseth the obligation of mutual love upon Christians from the example and commandment of God.

Ver. 1. *Believe not every spirit;* i.e. not every one pretending to inspiration, or a revelation; *spirit*, whether good

or bad, being put for the person acted thereby.

*But try the spirits;* there being a judgment of discretion or discerning, common to Christians, *de jure*, and which they ought to endeavour for and to use upon such occasions, Ac 17:11 Php 1:9,10 1Th 5:21; and the attainment and exercise whereof is, in reference to the great essentials of religion, more facile and sure: as when heretofore among the Jews, any should attempt the drawing them off from the true God, as De 13:1,2; and so when with Christians it should be endeavoured to tempt them away from Christ, as the *false prophets* or teachers did, now *gone out into the world*.

### 1 John 4:2

Ver. 2. He here gives them the general rule, both affirmative and negative, which would suffice them to judge by in their present case; this being the great controversy of that time with the Jews: Whether Jesus were the Messiah? And whether the Messiah were as yet come or no? And with the Gnostics: Whether he were really come in the flesh, in true human nature? Or were not, as to that appearance, a mere phantasm? And he affirms: They that confessed him so come, were of God; i.e. thus far they were in the right, this truth was of God. Of the two litigating parties, this was of God, the other not of God; this took his side, that was against him. Yea, and they that not only made this true confession, but did also truly confess him, i.e. sincerely, cordially, practically, so as accordingly to trust in him, subject and devote themselves to him, were born of God, his very children, acted and influenced hereunto by his own Holy Spirit, as 1Jo 5:1,5 Mt 16:16,17 1Co 12:3.

### 1 John 4:3

Ver. 3. But on the contrary, concerning them who against so plain evidence denied him to be so come, the case was plain; as with the Jews, Joh 8:24, and with the present heretics, who denying the true manner, could not but deny the true end of his coming; and who also lived so impure lives as imported the most open opposition and hostility thereto, and so discovered must evidently that antichristian spirit, which it was foreknown would show itself in the world.

### 1 John 4:4

Ver. 4. Their being born of God, and their participation of a directive and strengthening influence from him, kept them from being overcome by the plausible notions, the alluring blandishments of the flesh and sense, the terror of persecution used towards them by these antichristian or pseudo-christian tempters; and enabled them to overcome, because the Divine Spirit in them was stronger than the others' lying, impure spirit.

### 1 John 4:5

Ver. 5,6. He giveth here a further rule whereby to judge of doctrines and teachers, viz. what they severally savour of, and tend to. The doctrines and teachers whereby these Christians were assaulted and tempted, were of an earthly savour and gust, tending only to gratify worldly lusts and inclinations, and to serve secular interests and designs; and therefore men only of a worldly spirit and temper were apt to listen and give entertainment to them. On the other hand, says he, (in the name of the asserters and followers of true and pure Christianity, comprehended with himself):

*We are of God;* i.e. our doctrine and way proceed from God, and tend only to serve, please, and glorify him, and draw all to him; therefore such as *know God,* i.e. are his friends, and converse much with him, *hear us;* the things we propose and offer are grateful and savoury to them, (as Joh 8:37,47), having manifestly no other aim than to promote serious godliness. And hereby may *the spirit of truth and the spirit of error* in matters of this nature be distinguished; the one being next of kin to purity, and holiness, and a godly life; the other, to sensuality, and a design only of gratifying the animal life.

### 1 John 4:7

Ver. 7. *Beloved, let us love one another:* in opposition to the malice and cruelty of these enemies to true and pure Christianity, he exhorteth to mutual love, not limited to themselves, as undoubtedly he did not intend,



see note on 1Jo 3:14; but that they should do their part towards all others, letting it lie upon them, if it were not reciprocated and mutual.

*For love is of God;* this he presses as a further discrimination; nothing being more evidential of relation and alliance to God, than a duly regulated love, which is of him.

#### 1 John 4:8

Ver. 8. Yea, since love is his very nature, and that *God is love*, those that love (upon the account and in the way above expressed) are born of him, partake from him that excellent and most delectable nature, know him by a transformative knowledge: but they that love not, they are mere strangers to him, and never had to do with him.

#### 1 John 4:9

Ver. 9. There could be no higher demonstration of his love, Joh 3:16.

#### 1 John 4:10

Ver. 10. In comparison of this wonderful love of his, in sending his Son to be a sacrifice for sins, our love to him is not worthy the name of love.

#### 1 John 4:11

Ver. 11. We discover little sense of this love of his to us, if we do not so.

#### 1 John 4:12

Ver. 12. The essence of God is to our eyes invisible, incomprehensible to our minds; but by yielding ourselves to the power of his love, so as to be transformed by it, and habituated to the exercise of mutual love, we come to know him by the most pleasant and most apprehensible effects,

experiencing his indwelling, vital, operative presence and influences, whereby he is daily perfecting this his own likeness and image in us. This is the most desirable way of knowing God, when, though we cannot behold him at a distance, we may feelingly apprehend him nigh us, and in us.

#### 1 John 4:13

Ver. 13. The near inward union between him and us, is best to be discerned by the operations of his Spirit, which is the Spirit of all love and goodness, 1Jo 3:24 Eph 5:9.

#### 1 John 4:14

Ver. 14. He here signifies we are not left at any uncertainties, touching that matter of fact, wherein lies this mighty argument for the exercise of mutual love among Christians, God's having *sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world*; for, as he again inculcates, we testify upon eye-sight, having beheld him, and conversed with him, living and dying.

#### 1 John 4:15

Ver. 15. This discourse is most studiously and observably interwoven, of these two great things, mentioned 1Jo 3:23, faith in the Messiah, and the love of one another, as being the principal antidotes against the poisonous insinuations of the apostates. Of confessing: See Poole on "1Jo 4:2".

#### 1 John 4:16

Ver. 16. Inasmuch as the transformative efficacy of God's love upon us depends upon our certain apprehension of it, he doubles the expression of that certainty:

*We have known and believed,* i.e. we are assured of it, both by experimented effects, and by faith; implying, that by having this

conception of God thoroughly settled in our souls, that he *is love*, (as was also said, 1Jo 4:8), we shall be so thoroughly changed into his very nature and image, as to  *dwell in love*, as in our own element, or a thing now become wholly con-natural to us. Which will indeed be (by consequence) to be so intimately united with God, that he and we may truly (though in a sense most remote from identification, or being made the same, a horrid notion! Not only not inferred by what is here said, but inconsistent with it and refused by it, for things united are thereby implied to be distinct) be said to indwell one another.

#### 1 John 4:17

Ver. 17. And by this means (viz. of our inwardness with God) doth our love grow to that perfection, that we shall have the most fearless freedom and liberty of spirit in the judgment day; our hearts no way misgiving to appear before him as a Judge, whose very image we find upon ourselves, he having beforehand, made us such even in this world, though in an infinitely inferior degree, as he is, compositions of love and goodness. Or, if *the day of judgment* should mean, as some conceive, of our appearance before human tribunals for his sake, such a temper of spirit must give us the same boldness in that case also.

#### 1 John 4:18

Ver. 18. That he proveth from the contrary natures of fear and love. The fear which is of the baser kind, viz. that is servile, and depresses the spirit, hath no place with love, but is excluded by it, by the same degrees by which that love grows up to perfection, and shall be quite excluded by that love fully perfected: inasmuch as love is a pleasant, fear a tormenting, passion, which, as such, while it remains, shows the imperfection of love.

#### 1 John 4:19

Ver. 19. His is the fountain love, ours but the stream: his love the inducement, the pattern, and the effective cause of ours. He that is first in love, loves freely; the other therefore loves under obligation.

## 1 John 4:20

Ver. 20. The greater difficulty here is implied, through our present dependence upon sense, of loving the invisible God, than men that we daily see and converse familiarly with. Hence, considering the comprehensiveness of these two things, the love of God, and of our brother, that they are the roots of all that duty we owe to God and man, the fulfilling of the whole law, Mt 22:37-39, he lets us see the falsehood and absurdity of their pretence to eminent piety and sanctity, who neglect the duties of the second table.

## 1 John 4:21

Ver. 21. Both ought to be conjoined, being required both by the same authority.

## 1 John 5:1

### Chapter Summary

1Jo 5:1-3 He that loveth God loveth God's children, and keeth his commandments.

1Jo 5:4,5 A true faith will enable us to overcome the world.

1Jo 5:6-10 The witnesses of our faith.

1Jo 5:11-13 God hath given to believers eternal life through his Son,

1Jo 5:14-17 and will hear and grant their petitions, made according to his will.

1Jo 5:18-20 God's children are distinguished from the world by abstaining from sin, and by a right knowledge.

1Jo 5:21 A caution against idolatry.

Ver. 1. *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ;* this is not meant of a mere professed, or of a slight and superficial, but of a lively, efficacious, unitive, soul-transforming, and obediential faith in Jesus as the Christ,

which is elsewhere made the effect of the regenerating power and grace of God, Joh 1:12,13. And as nothing can be more connatural to such a heaven-born faith, than the loving of him that hath begotten us to it; so nothing can be more certainly consequent and agreeable, than the loving of them too who are begotten also of the same Father, viz. with a correspondent love to the more excellent characters and image of God upon them, than are upon other men.

### 1 John 5:2

Ver. 2. It is not otherwise to be known that we truly love the children of God, as such; for if we do, we must love them upon God's account, in conformity to him, and obedience to his commandments; wherefore our true love to them supposes our love to him, and is to be evinced by it.

### 1 John 5:3

Ver. 3. *For this is the love of God,* i.e. this is the most lively, certain expression and effect of our love to God, our keeping his commandments, which are so little grievous, that true love can make no difficulty of doing so, Mt 11:30 Ps 19:11.

### 1 John 5:4

Ver. 4. He explains himself, viz. that to one who is born of God his commandments are not grievous, because such a one, in that divine birth, hath received a life and nature that makes him far superior to this world, exalts him above it, makes him victorious over the worldly spirit, (as 1Jo 4:4), over all worldly desires, and fears, and hopes, and joys, which are the great hinderances of our obedience to God.

*This is the victory;* i.e. the instrument, the weapon, by which they overcome, and which virtually includes in itself this victory over the world, as effects are included in the power of their cause, is their *faith*, that principle which in their regeneration (as above) is implanted in them.

### 1 John 5:5

Ver. 5. For that faith, viz. *that Jesus is the Son of God*, ( or the Christ, as 1Jo 5:1), fills the soul with so great things concerning him, and the design of his coming among us, and what we are to expect thereupon, as easily turn this world into a contemptible shadow, and deprive it of all its former power over us.

### 1 John 5:6

Ver. 6. For the explaining of this obscure place we must proceed by degrees.

1. It is evident, that *water and blood* cannot be here meant literally.
2. It is therefore consequent, that they must be intended to signify somewhat or other by way of symbolical representation, or that they must have some mystical meaning.
3. They ought to have such a meaning assigned them, as will both be agreeable to the expressions themselves, and to the apostle's present scope and design.
4. It will be very agreeable to the expressions, to understand by *water* the purity of our blessed Lord, and by *blood* his sufferings.
5. His manifest scope and design is, to show the abundantly sufficient credibility of the witnesses and testimony we have, to assure us that Jesus was the Christ, or the Messiah, and to induce us to believe this of him, with so efficacious and transforming a faith, as should evidence our being born of God, and make us so victorious over the world, as constantly to adhere to this Jesus by trust and obedience, against all the allurements and terrors of it.
6. This being his scope, it supposeth that the mentioned coming of Jesus, as Messiah, was for some known end, unto his accomplishment whereof these two, his purity and his sufferings, were apt and certain means, as that

they were to be considered under the notion of means, his being said to have come  $\delta\iota\alpha$ , by them, doth intimate. And in pursuance of this scope, he must be understood to signify, that his coming so remarkably by these two, did carry with it some very convictive proof and evidence of his being the Son of God, and the Messiah, sufficient to recommend him as the most deserving object of such a faith, and render it highly reasonable we should hereupon so trust and obey him, and entirely resign ourselves to his mercy and government. Wherefore also:

7. This his coming must here be understood in a sense accommodated hereunto, and is therefore in no reason to be taken for the very act or instant, precisely, of his entrance into this world, but to signify his whole course in it, from first to last, a continued motion and agency, correspondent to the intendment of his mission. To the clearing of which notion of his coming, some light may be gained, by considering the account which is given, 2Th 2:9,10, of the coming of antichrist, which is said to be *after Satan*, (as it were by his impulsion, and in pursuance of his ends and purposes), *with all power, and signs, and lying wonders*, and all deceivableness of unrighteousness; where it is manifest, coming must signify a continued course of doing business. So here, our Lord's coming must signify his continual employment for the despatch of the business about which he was sent.

8. The known business and end for which he was sent, was to reduce and bring back sinners to God.

9. How apt and necessary means these two, his purity and sufferings, were to this end, the whole frame of the gospel shows. His sacrifice of himself, in his sufferings, was necessary to our reconciliation; so he was to come and effect his work *by blood*: his purity was requisite to the acceptableness of his sacrifice; so it was to be done *by water*; without which, as was wont to be proverbially said among the Hebrews, there could be no sacrifice.

10. For the evidence his coming so remarkably by these two carried with it, for the inducing of us to believe him to be the Messiah, with such a faith, as whereby we should imitate his purity, and rely upon the value of his sufferings. We may see it in the note upon 1Jo 5:8, where the testimony of these two witnesses, the water and the blood, comes to be given in its own place and order.

11. Nor is it strange the apostle should use these mystical expressions to this purpose, if we consider what might lead him thereto: for we must remember, first: That he was a spectator of our Lord's crucifixion, and then beheld, upon the piercing of his side, the streaming forth of the water and blood; which, it appears, at that time made a very deep impression upon his mind, as his words about it in his writing his Gospel import: *There came out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe,* Joh 19:34,35.

That he there lays so great a weight on it, imports that he apprehended some great mystery, if not intended, yet very apt to be signified by it. And, secondly: That he was a Jew, and (as is probable) wrote this Epistle to Jews, among whom the so frequent ablutions with water, as well as the shedding the blood of sacrifices, were most known things, and intended to typify (what they ought to have understood, and he now intimates) these very things, the purity and dying of the Messiah. Not to insist upon what he had long ere now occasion to observe in the Christian church, baptism, and the supper of our Lord, representing in effect severally the same things. Neither was this way of teaching unusual, nor these expressions less intelligible, than our Lord's calling himself (as this evangelist also records) a *shepherd*, a *door*, a *vine*, &c.

*And it is the Spirit that beareth witness:* that the Spirit is said to bear witness, see 1Jo 5:7,8.

### 1 John 5:7

Ver. 7. Having mentioned the Spirit's testifying in the close of 1Jo 5:6, he returns to give us in order, in these two verses, the whole testimony of the truth of Christianity, which he reduces to two ternaries of witnesses. The matter of their testimony is the same with that of their faith who are born of God, *that Jesus is the Son of God*, and the Messiah, as may be collected from what was said before, 1Jo 5:1,5, and what is said afterwards, 1Jo 5:9. What they believe, is no other thing than what these testify. For the first three, *in heaven*, that is not said to signify heaven to be the place of their testifying; for though the same thing concerning Jesus be also no doubt



testified to the glorious inhabitants of that world, yet that is not the apostle's present scope, but to show what reason we have, who inhabit this world, to believe Jesus to be Christ, and the Son of God.

*In heaven* therefore is to be referred to *three*, not to *bear record*, or witness; as if the text were read, which it may as well: There are three in heaven who bear witness; the design being to represent their immediate testifying from thence unto us, or the glorious, heavenly, majestic manner of their testifying. So the Father testified of the man Jesus by immediate voice from heaven, at his baptism and transfiguration: *This is my Son*, &c. The eternal Word owned its union with him, in that glory with which it so eminently clothed his humanity, and which visibly shone through it in the holy mount, whereof this apostle was a spectator, and whereto he seems to refer in his Gospel, Joh 1:14: *We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father*, i.e. such as sufficiently testified him to be so, even the very Son of God. And the Holy Ghost testified, descending *as a dove* in a visible glorious appearance upon him, at his baptism also.

*And these three are one*, viz. not only agreeing in their testimony, as 1Jo 5:8, but in unity of nature: an express testimony of the triune Deity, by whatsoever carelessness or ill design left out of some copies, but sufficiently demonstrated by many most ancient ones, to belong to the sacred text: of which L. Brug. Not. in loc., with the other critics, and at large, Dr. Hammond.

### 1 John 5:8

Ver. 8. And for the three that are said to *bear witness on earth*; there is, first, *the Spirit*, who, though the Holy Ghost were in the former triad, needs not here be taken for another Spirit, but may be the same, considered under another notion, and as testifying in another manner; not transiently and immediately from heaven, as there, but stably, and as inacting instruments here on earth; extraordinarily, the man Christ Jesus, all his apostles and first disciples, in all the wonderful works which they did for the confirmation of the Christian doctrine; and ordinarily, the whole church of true Christians; for it animates the whole living body of Christ, and makes it, though in an imperfect measure, by a uniform course of actions, tending to God and heaven, an extant visible proof to the world of

the truth of that religion which obtains in it, and of his Divine power and nature who is the Head of it. Next, *the water*; i.e. the continual untainted, God-like purity of our Lord Jesus, through the whole course of his terrestrial state, manifestly showed him to be the Son of God, an incarnate Deity, inhabiting our world. And lastly, *the blood*, his suffering of death, considered in the circumstances, was a most conspicuous, clear testimony and indication who he was; so exactly according to the predictions of the prophets, attended with wonderful amazing concomitants, ending in so glorious a resurrection. And in and with both these *the Spirit*, complicating his testimony, did bear witness too, as is intimated (after the former mention of them both) in the latter part of 1Jo 5:6. It testified all along, both in his clear, immaculate life, and in the bloody death in which it assisted him, which it accompanied with so marvellous effects, and out of which at length it fetched him, Ro 1:4. And that part it took, as being *the Spirit of truth*, 1Jo 5:6, and, as it is there expressed, in the (more emphatical) abstract, truth itself.

#### 1 John 5:9

Ver. 9. A testimony above exception, being wholly Divine, as he himself argued, Joh 5:36,37 8:13,14,17,18.

#### 1 John 5:10

Ver. 10. i.e. If he truly believe, he hath the effectual impress of this testimony on his own soul; if not, he gives God the lie, as we do to any one whose testimony we believe not. See Poole on "Joh 3:33".

#### 1 John 5:11

Ver. 11. His testimony, that this is his Son and the Christ, imports so much, that eternal life is in him, as the source and fountain of it; so that he gives it to us in no other way than in and by him.

### 1 John 5:12

Ver. 12. And therefore, that we partake this life, or partake it not, as by faith we are united with him, or not united.

### 1 John 5:13

Ver. 13. That, discerning their own faith, they might be in no doubt concerning their title to eternal life, and might be thereby encouraged to persevere in the same faith.

### 1 John 5:14

Ver. 14. Viz. *according to his will*, not negatively, as it only doth not forbid our praying for, or enjoying, such and such things, but positively, i.e. according to his will signified:

1. By his commands, i.e. when the matter of our prayers is some spiritual good thing, which was before the matter of our duty; as when we pray for grace to enable us to be and to do what he requires us, as far as our present state will admit.
2. By his promises, which are more absolute and particular in reference to things of that nature, Mt 5:6 Lu 11:13.

In reference to things of an inferior nature, of a conditional tenor; or more general, the things promised coming under the common notion of good things, not in themselves only, but for us, in present circumstances; which, whether they be or no, he reserves to himself the liberty of determining, and doth only promise them, if they be; and so we are only to pray for them; for that is praying, according to what signification he hath given us of his will, in such cases. And so we are always sure to be heard in the former case, in the very particular kind, about which his will is expressly made known beforehand.

### 1 John 5:15

Ver. 15. In the latter, in that, or somewhat equivalent, or better; for if he determine that thing to be best for us, all circumstances considered, we shall have it; if he determine otherwise, (supposing we pray according to his will), we desire it not: for every one intends good to himself, when he prays for any thing, not hurt. And God answers his children according to that general meaning of their prayers, not always according to the particular (which may be often a much mistaken) meaning. According whereto, supposing the thing would be really and in truth hurtful, (and God's judgment is always according to truth), they constructively pray to be denied it; and the denial is the equivalent, nay, the better thing than what they particularly prayed for; and so they truly have their petitions: see 1Jo 3:22. Nor can any be understood to pray according to God's will as the rule, if it be not to his glory as the end, as the order and connexion of petitions shows in that admirable platform prescribed by our Lord himself. And is it possible to be the sense of any one that hath a sincere heart in prayer, that God would gratify him against himself? Therefore that latitude allowed the apostles, Joh 14:13,14 15:16 16:23, &c., must be understood to respect the service of the Christian interest, and is to be limited thereby, as some of the expressions show.

### 1 John 5:16

Ver. 16. *If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death; viz. that appears not obstinate and incurable; he shall ask, i.e. with confidence, as 1Jo 5:14. But there is a sin unto death, i.e. which doth not barely deserve death, as all sin doth, nor which argues a person to be probably in a present state of death or unregeneracy, which the sinful ways may do of many that never made profession; but of such as have apostatized from a former specious profession into heresy and debauchery, and continue obstinate therein, against all methods of recovery; that are, as Jude 1:12, even twice dead, &c.*

*I do not say that he shall pray for it; i.e. I do not give that encouragement to pray for such, with that hope and expectation of success, as for others; though he doth not simply forbid praying for them neither.*

### 1 John 5:17

Ver. 17. He intimates they should be cautious of all sin, especially more deliberate, (which the word *αδικια* seems to import), but would not have them account that every sin would make their case so hopeless, as such sin, which he called sinning unto death, would do.

### 1 John 5:18

Ver. 18. The great advantage is here signified of the regenerate, who, by the seed remaining in them, (as 1Jo 3:9), are furnished with a self-preserving principle, with the exercise whereof they may expect that co-operation of a gracious Divine influence by which they shall be kept, so as *that wicked one*, the great destroyer of souls, shall not mortally touch them, to make them sin unto death.

### 1 John 5:19

Ver. 19. And this he doth not exclusively assume to himself, but expresses his charitable confidence of them to whom he writes, that it was their privilege, in common with him, to be thus *of God*, or born of him; notwithstanding the generality of men were under the power of that before-mentioned wicked one, (as that phrase may be read), or in the midst of all impurity and malignity.

### 1 John 5:20

Ver. 20. It is here signified how satisfying a knowledge and certainty sincere Christians had, that Christ was indeed come, by that blessed effect they found upon themselves, viz. a clear and lively light shining, by his procurement and communication, into their minds, whereby they had other apprehensions, more vivid and powerful than ever before, of *the true God*, as Joh 17:3, so as thereby to be drawn into union with him, and to be *in him*: or, which in effect is the same thing, (so entire is the oneness between the Father and the Son), *we are in his Son Jesus Christ*, who also is *the*

*true God*, as Joh 1:1, and *eternal life*, as he is called, 1Jo 1:2.

1 John 5:21

Ver. 21. i.e. From those idolatrous communions with the Gentiles in their worship and festivals in their temples, which these pseudo-christians had latitude enough for, as appears by the apostle St. Paul's discourses, 1Co 8:1-13 10:14 (especially if any danger did urge); wherein, instead of that communion with the Father and the Son, which (1Jo 1:3) he was inviting them to, they should have *fellowship with devils*, as that other apostle tells his Corinthians, 1Co 10:20,21. And he might also have reference to the peculiar idolatries, which this sort of men are noted to have been guilty of towards their great sect master.

## 2 John 1:1

### Chapter Summary

2Jo 1:1-4 The apostle testifieth his regard and good wishes for a certain pious matron and her children, and his joy in their good behaviour.

2Jo 1:5-9 He exhorteth them to persevere in Christian love and belief, that they lose not their full reward, 2Jo 1:10,11 and to have nothing to do with those seducers that bring not the true doctrine of Christ.

2Jo 1:12,13 He hopeth to see them shortly, and concludeth with salutations.

Ver. 1. *The elder*; a general name of office, fitly appropriated with eminency here, he being the only apostle, probably, now surviving on earth.

*The elect lady*; this appears to have been some noted person, whom both her singular piety, and rank in the world, made eminent, and capable of having great influence for the support of the Christian interest, which her general value with all that had *known the truth*, (i.e. the Christians in those parts), shows. The opinion that a church is intended by this appellation, had it greater probability, is of no great importance, and need not here be disputed.

## 2 John 1:2

Ver. 2. The indwelling of evangelical truth, which is here meant, signifies its deep radication, and powerful transforming efficacy, in the soul, so as to be productive of holiness, as Joh 17:17; than which nothing can be a greater inducement among Christians of mutual love.

## 2 John 1:3

Ver. 3. Such salutations see explained where they have formerly occurred.

## 2 John 1:4

Ver. 4. Some of her sons, it is probably conjectured, he had met with, upon their occasions, at Ephesus, where, it is thought, he now resided, and found them to have a good savour of religion, and to walk according to rule, which was matter of great joy to him.

## 2 John 1:5

Ver. 5. He inculcates that great precept, of which see 1Jo 2:7,8.

## 2 John 1:6

Ver. 6. From this particular command he passes to what is more general, requiring in all things a strict and unanimous adherence to the pure and primitive doctrine of the gospel, which would be the best expression of love to God, and the true centre and bond of love to one another, as 1Jo 5:1,3.

## 2 John 1:7

Ver. 7. See 1Jo 2:18,22 4:3.

## 2 John 1:8

Ver. 8. Such changes of the person, as we here find, are neither unusual, nor, in exhortation, inelegant; but some copies read in the two latter clauses *ye*. He presses to constancy in the true, incorrupt Christian profession.

*That we receive a full reward;* that the expected recompence be not lost in the whole, or in any part, as Ga 3:3,4.



2 John 1:9

Ver. 9. See 1Jo 2:23.

2 John 1:10

Ver. 10,11. Such as bring any contrary doctrine, (as Ga 1:8), ought not to be harboured or countenanced by any encouraging salutation, lest we involve ourselves in the participation of their guilt, 1Ti 5:22.

2 John 1:12

Ver. 12. The latter *write* is not in the Greek text; but the words bear this sense, that having many things to write, I would not by *paper and ink* impart them to you, (the expression being elliptical), but hope to come, &c.

2 John 1:13

Ver. 13. They were, it is probable, with him at Ephesus, and took the occasion by him now writing, to transmit their salutations.

*Amen*; this concluding *Amen* imports his sincerity in what he had written.

3 John 1:1

### Chapter Summary

3Jo 1:1-4 The apostle, after a kind salutation to Gaius, testifieth his joy in his piety,

3Jo 1:5-8 commending his hospitality towards the preachers of the gospel.

3Jo 1:9,10 He censureth Diotrephes, and threateneth him for his ambitious opposition.

3Jo 1:11 The ill example of such is not to be followed.

3Jo 1:12 He beareth testimony to the good character of Demetrius.

3Jo 1:13,14 He hopeth to see Gaius shortly, and concludeth with salutations.

Ver. 1,2. This *Gaius* was well known by the apostle, not only to be a stedfast professor of the truly Christian, uncorrupted faith, (which is implied in his avowing his love to him *in the truth*, or upon the Christian account), but to be so improved and well-grown a Christian, that he reckons he might well make the prosperous state of his soul the measure of all the other prosperity he could wish unto him.

3 John 1:3

Ver. 3,4. *The truth* is familiarly used to signify the pure doctrine of Christianity, which in its principal design aims at correspondent practice. That his *children*, i.e. such as had been converted to Christ by his ministry, (as 1Co 4:15), of whom it appears Gaius was one, did *walk in the truth*; ( an apt expression of such correspondent practice); was greatest matter of joy to this holy apostle, especially when the godly lives of such, to whose conversion he had been instrumental, were so observable, as to gain them a testimony from all others that knew them, as it was in the present instance.

### 3 John 1:5

Ver. 5. Charity to Christians is reckoned fidelity to Christ, being shown to them upon the Christian account, which is intimated to have been done by this pious person, who so kindly treated *the brethren, and strangers*, i.e. even though they were strangers.

### 3 John 1:6

Ver. 6. *After a godly sort*; i.e. after a manner (as the Greek expression is) worthy of God, viz. as becomes them who bear the name of God, as thou dost, or are intent upon his work, as they are; which latter notion is confirmed by what follows.

### 3 John 1:7

Ver. 7,8. *They went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles*; it thence appears these were Jews, who went out from their own country to serve the interest of the gospel, which therefore he should serve in helping them.

### 3 John 1:9

Ver. 9,10. *I wrote unto the church*; this was probably some church of which Gaius was.

*Diotrephes*, one who had received or usurped some office or authority in it, to so ill a purpose, as when he had no inclination to be hospitable himself to fellow Christians, prevented others from being so; and upon pretence of the little differences of these Jewish from the Gentile Christians, excluded them their communion.

### 3 John 1:11

Ver. 11. *Follow not;* Μη μιμου by following here he means imitation, i.e. the deformity of evil appearing in the practice of some, and the beauty of true goodness in others, (examples being given of both sorts, 3Jo 1:9, and 3Jo 1:12), he exhorts to decline the former, and imitate the other; and enforces the exhortation by the weightiest arguments.

*He that doeth good;* a doer of good, one made up of kindness and benignity (as the contest draws the sense to that special kind of goodness); αγαθοποιων and ο κακοποιων, signify doing well or ill, from a fixed, prevailing habit, 1Jo 3:7,8.

*Is of God;* is allied to heaven, born of God, his offspring.

*But he that doeth evil hath not seen God;* an evil-doer, on the other hand, such a one as is a composition of spite, envy, and malice, is a mere stranger to him, hath not been, or known, or had to do with him.

3 John 1:12

Ver. 12. Some eminent Christian, whom he could with confidence recommend as a pattern.

3 John 1:13

Ver. 13. Having much more to say, as 2Jo 1:12, he resolved on a more immediate, grateful, and effectual way of imparting and even impressing his sense, as the term, writing, is used in a greater latitude, Pr 3:3, and elsewhere.

3 John 1:14

Ver. 14. *Speak face to face;* στομα προς στομα, viz. by oral conference, which he hoped ere long to have opportunity for. He concludes with the usual Christian salutations.

## Jude 1:1

### THE ARGUMENT

Some question there hath been concerning the penman of this Epistle, and some have thought that Jude the apostle was not the man, whoever were;

1. Because he doth not give himself the title of apostle: but that is objected against James too, and hath been already answered.
2. Because the writer of this Epistle speaks of himself as coming after the apostles, Jude 1:17. But what necessity is there for his coming behind them in office and authority, because he doth in time?
3. Because he mentions the contention about the body of Moses, and the prophecy of Enoch, which are no where to be found in Scripture. But when there were divers traditions among the Jews, (whereof this about Moses's body seems to be one), why might not the Holy Ghost assert some that were true (though before doubtful) by this apostle, and make them certain, as well as he doth by Paul the names of *Jannes and Jambres*, 2Ti 3:8, which were known only by tradition; and Moses's quaking and fearing at Mount Sinai, Heb 12:21, whereof no mention had been made in the Scripture? As for the prophecy of Enoch, it seems to have been a tradition too, (for he mentions no writing), and then the same may be said as to the other. Yet if it were a book, and an apocryphal one too, his citing of it doth not make it to be canonical; for Jude might as well cite a passage out of an apocryphal writer, as Paul doth several out of heathen authors, Ac 17:28 1Co 15:33 Tit 1:12. And:
4. Because much of this Epistle seems to be transcribed out of 2Pe 2:1-22, and therefore not to be dictated by the Spirit. But to this it may be said, that though many passages in this Epistle agree with what Peter speaks, yet there is so much difference in the whole, that it is plain they are not transcribed thence. And yet why might not the Spirit dictate the same truths to several penmen, either to be published to several persons, or the same persons at different times? Most of Obadiah's prophecy is to be found in Jeremiah's; Ps 60:1-12 is in a great part the same with Ps 108:1-13, and Ps 14:1-7 the same with Ps 53:1-6; and Paul by the same Spirit wrote many of the same things to the Ephesians, and to the

Colossians. And what is alleged of the ancients questioning the authority of this Epistle, it is not so considerable, as it might be alleged, even out of them, for the confirmation of it.

Sure we may say, the spirit of an apostle breathes in this as well as in others; the same majesty, purity, and efficacy appear in it, and whatever may evidence its Divine authority. It is written to the Christian Jews. The matter of it agrees very much with 2Pe 2:1-22, and the scope is mostly the same, viz. to arm them against those who, by their wicked errors and wicked manners, secretly and slyly brought in, might infect them, and seduce them into the same wickedness with themselves, whereby they might be exposed to the same judgment, which he pronounceth were like to come upon such.

### Chapter Summary

Jude 1:1-3 After a general address, Jude exhorteth Christians to constancy in the received faith.

Jude 1:4-19 He foretelleth the punishment of certain false teachers crept into the church, and describeth their evil doctrine and manners.

Jude 1:20,21 He exhorteth true Christians to persevere in the right faith, and in the love of God,

Jude 1:22-23 and to seek the reformation of others.

Jude 1:24,25 He concludeth with ascribing glory to God.

Ver. 1. Jude; called also *Lebbaeus*, and *Thaddaeus*, Mt 10:3.

*The servant of Jesus Christ*; not only in the general notion, as a believer, but in a more special, as an apostle. Priests and prophets in the Old Testament are peculiarly called God's servants, Ps 134:1-3 Am 3:7; and so are ministers in the New, 2Ti 2:24.

*And brother of James*; that James who was the son of Alphaeus, Mt 10:3. He mentions his brother to distinguish himself from Judas Iscariot; and his brother rather than his father, because James was most famous in the church, Ac 15:1-41 Ga 2:9 1Co 9:5; as likewise to show his consent with his brother in his doctrine, and to make his Epistle the more acceptable.

*To them that are sanctified by God the Father, viz. as the prime efficient cause of sanctification, which he works in believers by the Son, through the Spirit.*

*And preserved in Jesus Christ: their salvation, and perseverance, and deliverance from dangers, not being in their own power; he intimates, that Christ was appointed to be their King, and Head, and Keeper, the *Author and Finisher of their faith*, Heb 12:2, and furnished with power for their protection and security, and that by him they were kept unto the salvation purchased for them, viz. by his powerful operation and gracious influence maintaining their faith and union with himself.*

*And called, with an effectual calling, the beginning of their sanctification, before mentioned. The copulative, *and*, is not in the Greek; and the words may be read, sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, as being called; and so *called* may be understood as going before the other two; and then the sense is, to the called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ; or, to them who, being called, are sanctified, &c.*

### Jude 1:2

Ver. 2. *Mercy unto you;* which is the fountain of reconciliation, and all the grace vouchsafed you: see 1Ti 1:2 2Ti 1:2 Tit 1:4.

*Love;* either he means God's love to them, or their love to God and each other.

*Be multiplied;* mercy in the effects of it, peace in the sense of it, and either the love of God in the manifestation of it, or their love to God and their neighbours in the degrees and exercise of it.

### Jude 1:3

Ver. 3. *When I gave all diligence to write unto you:* the apostle here declares the first cause of his writing to them, viz. his own inclination and readiness, according to the duty of his place, (as an apostle), so to do: q. d. Being of myself willing, and earnestly desirous to promote your welfare,

when absent from you, by writing unto you.

*Of the common salvation;* i.e. those things which concern the salvation of us all in common, or that salvation which is common to us all; there being but one salvation for all believers, and one way to it.

*It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you;* the second reason of his writing, viz. the necessity of it, in respect of the danger they were in, as follows, Jude 1:4.

*That ye should earnestly contend;* by constancy in the faith, zeal for the truth, holiness of life, mutual exhortation, prayer, suffering for the gospel, &c.; against those that would pervert the gospel.

*For the faith;* the doctrine of the gospel; *faith* is taken for the object of faith.

*Which was once;* either, once for all, because it was delivered by all the apostles as the only unchangeable rule of governing their lives, and obtaining salvation, to which nothing is to be added, and from which nothing is to be taken away; or it implies, that it was therefore delivered to them that they might never forsake it, and that if they do, they miss of their salvation, as being never like to have another way made known to them.

*Delivered unto the saints;* viz. by God, not invented by men.

#### Jude 1:4

Ver. 4. *Who were before of old ordained;* Greek, forewritten, i.e. of whom it was formerly written, or foretold, viz. by Christ and his apostles; or rather, it is to be understood according to our translation, *before ordained*, viz. in the eternal counsel of God; God's decree being compared to a book, in which things to be done are written down. This the apostle adds to prevent any offence that might be taken at the wickedness of these seducers; and therefore lets these saints know, that though such men crept in unawares to them, yet it was not without the providence of God so ordering it.

*To this condemnation;* or, judgment; and it may be understood, either of a



reprobate sense, to which they who thus perverted the gospel were given up by God, according to his preordination; or of that damnation he decreed should follow upon their wickedness, in making shipwreck of the faith themselves, and subverting others. This seems best to agree with 2Pe 2:3.

*Turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness;* abusing the doctrine of the grace of God, and benefits of Christ revealed in the gospel, especially the doctrine of Christian liberty, to the encouraging themselves and others in the vilest lusts, 2Pe 2:1.

*And denying the only Lord God:* either this may be understood of the Father distinctly from Christ, expressed in the following clause, and *only* is put in not to exclude either of the other Persons of the Trinity from being God, but to exclude idols and false gods: or it may be understood of Christ, as well as the words following; not only because there is but one article in the Greek relating to the whole sentence, but because it seems best to agree with the parallel place, 2Pe 2:1, which is most generally understood of Christ; and because the heresies of those times, which Jude cautions these saints against, struck especially at the Godhead of Christ, which he therefore the more expressly asserts.

#### Jude 1:5

Ver. 5. *Though ye once:* this may be joined either with the verb following, *knew*, according to our translation, and the sense is, though ye knew this certainly, as the word *once* is taken, Ps 89:35, or perfectly and thoroughly, or once for all; or rather, with what goes before, and the words may be read, I will yet once (*viz.* while I am in this tabernacle) put you in remembrance of this, though you know it; as 2Pe 1:12.

*Having saved the people;* the people of Israel.

*Afterward destroyed them;* *viz.* in the wilderness, by plague, fiery serpents, &c.

*That believed not;* he sets forth the Israelites' unbelief, as the original of all their disobedience and rebellions, and the great cause of their destruction. See Heb 3:17-19 4:2.

Jude 1:6

Ver. 6. *Kept not their first estate;* in which they were created, their original excellency, truth, holiness, purity, Joh 8:44, as well as dignity.

*But left their own habitation;* viz. a heavenly one, from whence, though they were righteously thrust out by God, 2Pe 2:4, yet they may be truly said to have left it themselves, in that they voluntarily rebelled against the law of their creation, and committed that sin which they knew would certainly be punished with such a dejection.

*He hath reserved in everlasting chains;* into which, Peter says, they were delivered.

Jude 1:7

Ver. 7. *The cities about them;* Admah and Zeboim, Jer 49:18 Ho 11:8.

*In like manner,* as Sodom, and Gomorrah did, likeness of sin inferring likeness of punishment.

*Strange flesh;* margin, other flesh; he means male flesh, which is other than what God appointed for that use they made of it; or, as we render it, *strange flesh*, i.e. that which is strange, improper, and unfit for such an end. It is the description of the unnatural filthiness of the Sodomites, Ge 19:5; see Ro 1:26,27.

*Are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire:* eternal fire may be joined either:

1. With *example*, and the words thus placed, are set forth for an example of eternal fire, suffering vengeance; and the meaning is, that the vengeance they suffered in being destroyed by fire, is an example, or type, of eternal fire, that of hell: or
2. With *vengeance*, according to our reading; and then the sense is, they

*are set forth for an example, ( viz. to those that after should live ungodly, 1Pe 2:6), suffering the vengeance of eternal fire; the vengeance they suffer is an example to deter others from the like wickedness. This fire is called *eternal*, either because of the still continuing effects of it, or rather, because it was a type or representation of the fire of hell, and to those miserable Sodomites the very beginning of it, they being brought by these temporal flames into everlasting burnings.*

### Jude 1:8

Ver. 8. *Likewise also;* notwithstanding so many judgments of God upon others, which should have kept them from the like sins.

*These filthy dreamers:* either this may be taken properly, and joined to the next clause, *defile the flesh;* and then it may note the impurity of these wretches, who dreamed of what they loved, and acted over that filthiness in their sleep, to which they were so much addicted when awake: or metaphorically, and so they are called *dreamers*, as having the sense of their minds overcome and laid asleep by their sensual pleasures; or being like men in a dream, deluded by their absurd, though pleasing imaginations.

*Defile the flesh:* this notes all those lascivious practices, to which, like the Sodomites, they had given themselves over; and whereby they defiled themselves and others: *the lust of uncleanness*, as it is in Peter.

*Despise dominion;* in their minds, judgments, desires, they reject, make void, and abrogate civil government, as a thing not fit to be.

*Dominion;* not only governors, but government itself.

*And speak evil of dignities;* either spiritual governors, or rather, civil, called *dignities*, because of the honourable titles given them, and gifts bestowed on them: see 2Pe 2:10.

Jude 1:9

Ver. 9. Michael the archangel: either this is understood of Christ the Prince of angels, who is often in Scripture called an Angel, or of a created angel; and that either:

1. One of the archangels: Da 10:13, *Michael* is called *one of the chief princes*, which though the word archangel be not found in the plural number in Scripture, may well imply a plurality of them; for what is one of the chief princes among the angels, but an archangel? Or:
2. A principal angel, or one that is chief among others.

*When contending with the devil;* it may be meant either of Christ contending with the devil, as Mt 4:1-25, in his temptation, and Zec 3:1,2, and Re 12:7; or rather, of Michael, a created angel.

*He disputed about the body of Moses:*

1. If *Michael the archangel* be meant of Christ, then *the body of Moses* may be taken figuratively, for that body whereof the Mosaical ceremonies were shadows, Col 2:17, i.e. the truth and accomplishment of the law given by Moses; that accomplishment was to be in Christ, who is represented by Joshua, Zec 3:1-10: him Satan resists in the execution of his office, and by him strikes at Christ, whose type he was, and whom he afterward opposeth in the execution of his office, when he was come in the flesh. Or:
2. If we take *Michael* for a created angel, which agrees best with the parallel place in Peter, then the body of Moses must be taken properly, (as most take it), and the dispute seems to be: Whether Moses's body should be so buried as to be concealed from the Israelites? De 34:6, it is said God *buried him*, ( which might be by the ministry of Michael the archangel), and that *no man knoweth of his sepulchre*. The devil opposeth the angel, desiring to have the place of his burial known, that in after-times it might be a snare to that people, and a means to bring them to idolatry. And this seems very probable, if we consider what work the devil hath made in the world with the bodies of saints and martyrs, and how much idolatry he hath brought in thereby. This

passage Jude, most probably, had (as was observed in the argument) from some known tradition among the Jews, the truth of which we are now sure of, because certified here concerning it.

*Durst not bring against him;* or, could not endure, (as the Greek word is often taken among profane writers), or find in his heart, not from fear of punishment, but by reason of the holiness of his own nature, and to give an example to us. And this sense agrees to the scope of the place, whether we understand it of Christ, or of a created angel, Heb 12:3 1Pe 2:23.

*A railing accusation:* see 2Pe 2:11.

*But said, The Lord rebuke thee;* i.e. put thee to silence, restrain thy insolence, hinder thy design, &c.: hereby the angel refers the cause to God.

#### Jude 1:10

Ver. 10. *But these speak evil of those things which they know not;* the same as 2Pe 2:12; unless this be more generally to be understood of all those spiritual things whereof they were ignorant.

*But what they know naturally;* without reason or judgment.

*In those things they corrupt themselves;* debauch and degrade their natures by extreme sensualities, whereby they bring destruction upon themselves: see 2Pe 2:12.

#### Jude 1:11

Ver. 11. *Woe unto them!* This is either a lamenting the misery that was to come upon them, or a foretelling it come, not a wishing that it might: see Mt 11:21 1Co 9:16.

*For they have gone in the way of Cain;* followed his manners, and fallen under his punishment. Their likeness to Cain, both as to their actions and the event of them, seems to be implied in this and the following clause, as well as it is plainly in the last. Cain hated his brother, and slew him; they

hate their brethren, and by their pernicious doctrines and deceits, murder their souls, and probably stir up persecution against their persons.

*And ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward;* covetousness, to which being excessively addicted, or, as the Greek implies, poured out, they did for the sake of filthy lucre corrupt the doctrine of Christ: see 2Pe 2:15.

*And perished in the gainsaying of Core:* Korah, (whom he here names alone, as being the ringleader of the rebellion, in which others joined with him, Nu 16:1), affecting the priesthood, rose up seditiously against Moses and Aaron, and perished in the attempt. These imitate him in their rebellion against Christ himself, the state and order of whose church they seditiously disturb, as well as that of the civil state, in despising dominion, and speaking evil of dignities, and that to their own destruction.

### Jude 1:12

Ver. 12. *These are spots:* see 2Pe 2:13.

*In your feasts of charity;* feasts used among the primitive Christians, to show their unity among themselves, and promote and maintain mutual charity, and for relief of the poor among them.

*Feeding themselves without fear;* unreasonably cramming themselves, without respect to God or the church.

*Clouds they are without water, carried about of winds;* empty, making a show of what they have not, Pr 25:14; and inconstant: see 2Pe 2:17.

*Trees whose fruit withereth;* he compares them to trees, which having leaves and blossoms, make a show of fruit, but cast it, or never bring it to maturity, or it rots instead of ripening; so these here make a show of truth and holiness, but all comes to nothing.

*Without fruit;* without any good fruit, (which only deserves to be called fruit), brought forth by them, either in themselves or followers, who never get any real benefit by them.

*Twice dead;* wholly dead; dead over and over; dead by nature, and dead by that hardness of heart they have contracted, or that reprobate sense to which God hath given them up.

*Plucked up by the roots;* and so never like to bear fruit, and fit only for the fire; it notes the incurableness of their apostacy, and their nearness to destruction.

### Jude 1:13

Ver. 13. *Raging waves of the sea;* not only inconstant as water, but inquiet, turbulent, restless, that cannot cease from sin.

*Foaming out their own shame;* that wickedness whereof they should be ashamed; *like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt,* Isa 57:20.

*Wandering stars;* either planets properly called, or rather meteors called running stars, inconstant in their motion, uncertain in their shining, making a little show, but presently vanishing; such was the doctrine of these, which had a show of light, but a deceitful and inconstant one.

*To whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever;* the thickest darkness, viz. that of hell; they would be counted lights, but are themselves cast into utter darkness, 2Pe 2:17. As blackness of darkness shows the horror of their punishment, so its being reserved for them shows the certainty of it.

### Jude 1:14

Ver. 14. *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam;* either to distinguish him from Enoch the son of Cain, or to show the antiquity of the prophecy.

*Prophesied;* he doth not say wrote, and therefore from hence it cannot be proved that there was any such book as Enoch's prophecies, received by the Jews as canonical Scripture; but rather some prophecy of his delivered to them by tradition, to which here the apostle refers, as a thing known among them; and so

argues against these heretics from their own concession, as Jude 1:9. So here; q. d. These men own the prophecy of Enoch, that the Lord comes to judgment, &c., and they themselves are in the number of those ungodly ones, and they to whom the prophecy is to be applied.

*Of these;* not that he did directly and expressly prophesy of them in particular; but that his prophecy of the destruction of the world for the same kind of crimes whereof they were guilty, did reach them, and so he foretold what should befall them as well as others.

*With ten thousand;* innumerable multitudes; a definite for an indefinite.

*Of his saints;* holy angels, Mt 16:27 Da 7:10 Zec 14:5 2Th 1:7 Re 5:11. Believers likewise may be here included, as attendants upon Christ when he comes to judgment.

### Jude 1:15

Ver. 15. *To execute judgment upon all;* either upon all the wicked in general, who afterwards may seem to be distinguished into different sorts, or else the Greek preposition  $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha$  is put for  $\pi\epsilon\rho\iota$ , and the word *all* is to be understood of all universally, good and bad; and the words may be read, to execute judgment over all, i.e. to judge all.

*And to convince all that are ungodly among them:* if we take the words in the latter sense mentioned, then he distinguisheth those that are to be judged into good and bad, and the Lord comes to execute judgment over all, having convinced the wicked among them; but if in the former, the *ungodly* here may be taken for those that are more notoriously so, those that have obstinately rejected the gospel, or wickedly perverted it, or persecuted the saints, &c.

*Which they have ungodly committed;* i.e. with an ungodly mind, willingly, delightfully, perseveringly.

*Their hard speeches;* i.e. blasphemous, irreverent, against God, his truth and ways.

*Which ungodly sinners have spoken against him;* he executes judgment,



though upon all the wicked, yet especially upon these *ungodly sinners*, i.e. that are such both in their words and deeds *against him*, in his truths, ways, ordinances, people, &c., and therefore are the worst of sinners.

### Jude 1:16

Ver. 16. *Murmurers, complainers*; either these two words signify the same thing; or *murmurers* may be meant with relation to God's decrees, laws, providences, and his ordinations in the church or state, 1Co 10:10; and *complainers*, with respect to their own condition, with which they were discontented.

*Walking after their own lusts*; minding neither the law of God nor man, but making their lusts their law, and being wholly subject to them, led by them, 2Pe 2:10.

*And their mouth speaketh great swelling words*: though they were mere slaves to their own lusts, yet they would speak big, and use high and exotic strains in their language, that they might be applauded and admired: see 2Pe 2:18.

*Having men's persons in admiration because of advantage*; flattering and magnifying the greater and richer sort of men, not considering what they were, so they could gain them to their party, or get gain by them.

### Jude 1:17

Ver. 17. Especially Paul and Peter: see Ac 20:29 and 2Pe 3:2, besides the places in the margin. From this passage it appears that this Epistle was written late, and, likely, after the other apostles, except John, were dead.

### Jude 1:18

Ver. 18. *Told you*; whether in their preaching or writing.

*Ungodly lusts*; Greek, lusts of ungodliness; a Hebraism; the vilest lusts.

### Jude 1:19

Ver. 19. *These be they who separate themselves;* viz. from the true doctrine and church of Christ, as being in love with their carnal liberties, and loth to come under the yoke of Christ's discipline.

*Sensual;* or carnal, or animal, 1Co 2:14; such as are mere men, and have no higher principle in them than human nature, which, left to itself, and being destitute of the sanctifying Spirit, is generally overpowered by sense, and inclines to fleshly lusts.

*Having not the Spirit;* the Spirit of God, by which they should be led, and to which they so much pretend; having neither the light, nor grace, nor comfort of the Spirit.

### Jude 1:20

Ver. 20. *Building up yourselves;* he compares them to a house, which is to be built up, whereof faith is the foundation: the same metaphor is used, 1Co 4:9 Eph 2:20-22 1Pe 2:5.

*Most holy;* so he calls faith, as being the means of purifying their hearts, and working holiness in them; and in opposition to the false faith of the heretics he warns them against, which did consist with so much impurity.

*Faith;* this may be understood either:

1. Of the grace of faith; and then that is compared to the foundation, as being the first and principal grace in a Christian, and of greatest necessity and use; and then they are here bid to build themselves up in other graces which follow upon faith, as 2Pe 1:5. Or:
2. Of the doctrine of faith, that on which their faith itself is founded; and then the meaning is, that they should not rest satisfied in what measure of faith they had already attained, but still be improving it, and making further progress in it, not only hold fast the truth of the gospel, the right

foundation on which they had begun to be built, but get themselves, by the due study and meditation of the word, more and more confirmed in the belief of it.

*Praying in the Holy Ghost;* i.e. by the assistance of the Spirit, who teacheth what to pray for, and how; from whom faith, fervency, and all praying graces do proceed. Ro 8:26,27: *The Spirit maketh intercession (prays) in us,* to note the excitations of his grace; here we are said to *pray in the Holy Ghost,* to note the concurrence of our faculties.

### Jude 1:21

Ver. 21. *Keep yourselves in the love of God;* i.e. in love to God, or that love whereby ye love God; this implies love to each other, as the cause doth the effect.

*Looking for;* viz. by hope: and so in these two verses we have the three cardinal graces, faith, hope, and charity.

*The mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life;* the merciful or gracious sentence of Christ the Judge, whereby he puts believers in possession of eternal life, Mt 25:34. This reward of eternal life is promised, but being promised freely, and out of mercy, it is called *mercy*, 2Ti 1:18, the effect being put for the cause.

### Jude 1:22

Ver. 22. *And of some have compassion;* use them gently, mildly reproving and admonishing them, that thereby ye may gain them.

*Making a difference:* he makes two sorts of offenders, or misled brethren, who might be restored; and that they might, they should be dealt with in different ways, and suitably to their respective conditions and circumstances; the former, who might be discouraged with roughness, should be handled with more tenderness and compassion.

### Jude 1:23

Ver. 23. *And others;* those that are further gone, not so easily reducible, and in great danger.

*Save;* i.e. labour to save them, as instruments under God.

*With fear;* by more severe courses, sharper reprehensions, setting before them God's judgments against obstinate sinners, 1Co 5:5.

*Pulling them out of the fire:* it is a proverbial speech, Zec 3:2: the sense is, that as they that are in the fire, and like to be destroyed by it, must not be gently exhorted to come out of it of themselves, but speedily and forcibly pulled out, in consideration of their eminent danger; so they that are more stubborn sinners, being in apparent danger of being destroyed by the fire of their lusts, and being as it were in the mouth of hell, must be more harshly and severely dealt with, by setting the Lord's terrors before them, 2Co 5:11, and inflicting church censures on them.

*Hating even the garment spotted by the flesh:* it is an allusion to that ceremonial law, Lev 15:4,17, where he that touched a defiled garment was himself defiled. The sense is, either:

1. That where there is danger of infection from heretics and obstinate sinners, all converse with them, and any thing whereby the contagion of their doctrine or manners may reach us, is to be avoided: or:
2. That when we reprehend others, we should do it with suitable affections, and though we would save themselves, we should hate their vices, and any thing that promotes them or savours of them.

### Jude 1:24

Ver. 24. *Able to keep you from falling;* from stumbling in your spiritual course, and so able to make you persevere to the end.

*Before the presence of his glory;* or, his glorious presence, i.e. before himself, Eph 5:27. Having exhorted these saints to perseverance in the

faith, he now tells them in whose strength they must stand, and to whom they are to give the glory of it.

Jude 1:25

Ver. 25. *To the only wise;* only wise infinitely, and of himself.

*God our Saviour;* either God, who is sometimes called by this title, 1Ti 2:3 Tit 1:3 3:4; or rather Christ.

*Be glory:* see 1Pe 4:11 5:11.

*And majesty;* or, magnificence, Heb 1:3 8:1: it seems to signify the height and excellency of God's glory.

*Dominion and power;* authority, and right to govern, which here is ascribed to God, as well as strength or sufficiency for it.

## Revelation 1:1

### The Preface To The Annotations Upon The Revelation

Although some particular heretics, such as Cerdon and Marcyon, have doubted the Divine authority of this mysterious piece of holy writ, and some better men in the primitive times doubted of it, the manuscript copy of it having been at first reserved in few hands, and (as some think) in the fewer because of the affairs and fate of the Roman empire revealed in it; yet, besides its general reception as such by the church in all late ages, there is in it such a harmony, both with Daniel's prophecy in the Old Testament, and with the types made use of by the holy prophets; such manifest allusions to the whole order and economy of the Jewish church; such an agreement of the doctrine contained in it with the doctrine of the Old and New Testament, concerning God and Christ, the resurrection from the dead, and the day of judgment; and of the promises and threatenings contained in it, with the promises and threatenings in other parts of holy writ; that none who hath not a vanity to question the whole canon of Scripture, can reasonably dispute the Divine authority of this part of it.

It appeareth from Re 1:1, that John was the penman of it; and that this John was the beloved disciple, he that was the penman of one of the Gospels, hath been doubted by very few, and with very little reason, as will appear to him that will but wisely consider the terms and phrases used in it almost peculiar to this apostle, and hardly to be found in Scripture any where but in this book and the Gospel of John, such as calling Christ *the Word*, of which he *bare record*, &c. Nor is their objection of any validity, who object, that in the Gospel he ordinarily concealeth his name, which this author doth not; considering that in that he wrote a relation or history of things past, to be proved by many eye and ear witnesses; but here a Revelation or prophecy of things to come, to which his name was necessary, that men might judge by what authority he thus wrote.

For the time of his writing it, himself tells us, Re 1:9, that he received this Revelation from God, while he was in *Patmos*, *for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ*; this was (if we may believe history, and we have nothing else to inform us) in the time of Domitian the Roman emperor, about the 94th or 95th year after the nativity of Christ; so as this

book pleads a prescription of near sixteen hundred years, in which very few ever questioned its Divine authority.

For the scope of it, it is plainly told us, Re 1:1, *δειξαι τοις δουλοις αυτου α δει γενεσθαι εν ταχει*, *to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass*. The like we have repeated, Re 22:6: upon which account it is called a *Revelation* and a *prophecy*, neither of which terms agree to a narration or history, the object of which is some thing or things that are already past.

I will not undertake to give the certain and infallible sense of the several passages of this mysterious prophecy: *In magnis voluisse sat est*. But I have proceeded upon these few *postulata*:

1. That the whole of this book is no historical relation of things that were past before the year 95 or 96, or at least not long before, but of things to come; which hath made me wholly reject the notions of Grotius and Dr. Hammond, so far as they concerned the siege or destruction of Jerusalem, which was past twenty-six or twenty-seven years before John heard of this Revelation. I cannot understand how this can agree with Re 1:1, or Re 22:6.

2. That it contains a prophecy of the most remarkable things that happened either to the Roman empire, or to the church (all which was within the latitude of that in St. John's time) during the whole time of that; or which should happen after the decay of that, throughout the church, to the end of the world.

3. That this time is reasonably divided into three periods; the first determining with the Roman empire's, continuing pagan, 310 or 325 years after Christ: the second with the total ruin of antichrist; when that shall be I cannot tell: the third with Christ's coming to the last judgment. The first is by some called *Regnum draconis ethnicum*; the second, *Vicarius draconis antichristianus*; the third, *Regnum Christi*, or, *Status ecclesiae tranquillus*.

4. I see no reason to dissent from those eminent men, who think that part of the Revelation which relates to the first period, and is predictive of what happened to the church of God until the time of Constantine the Great, 310

or 325 years after Christ, beginneth with Re 4:1-11 and endeth with Re 7:1-17; and that the *silence in heaven for half an hour*, mentioned Re 8:1, relateth to the rest which the church had from Constantine's time till the end of Theodosius's reign, about seventy or seventy-five years.

5. Where to fix the epocha, or beginning, of the one thousand two hundred and sixty years, or forty-two months, I cannot tell. That *the mystery of iniquity* begun to work in the apostles' time, is evident from 1Th 2:7; and reason will tell us, that Rome, as it now stands, or as it was in the year 1606, was not built up in a day, the great corruptions then in it came in and grew up by degrees; but I cannot tell how to count antichrist's reign, but from the time Phocas humoured the pope with the title and style of "supreme" or "universal bishop"; from which time I should rather reckon the one thousand two hundred and sixty years, than from any time before.

6. I do agree with those who think the first eleven chapters contain the sum of whatsoever is prophesied concerning the two first periods, though many things falling within them are more particularly and fully opened, Re 12:1-19:21. Re 12:1-17 gives us a particular account of the church during the first two periods. Re 13:1-18 gives us a more particular account of antichrist, both in the secular power and in his ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Re 15:1-8 and Re 16:1-21 more fully open to us what should be done under the sixth trumpet. In Re 17:1-18 we have a more full description of the beast with two horns, mentioned Re 13:11, which signified antichrist as sitting in the temple of God. Re 18:1-24 more fully describes his fall, summarily before mentioned, Re 14:1-20. Re 19:1-21, so far as it concerneth the praise given to God for this, relates to that great dispensation of providence.

7. I take the third state of the church (to which I cannot conceive we are yet come, which I called its serene and quiet state) to be foretold and described, Re 20:1-15; after which shall be the battle with all the wicked of the earth, which shall end in Christ's coming to judge the world, and the general resurrection in order to it.

8. I take the last two chapters to describe a state of the church agreeing to none but the church triumphant, and have accordingly interpreted them.



If any differ from me in any of these things, it will be no wonder if he disagree with me in the explication of the chapters and verses relating to them.

I dare not be positive as to the sense I have given, but shall only say it is what appeareth to me most probable. There have been found some in the tents of protestants, that have taken much pains to free the papacy from the imputation of antichrist. This I conceive was Grotius's design, in his interpretation of this book, as if it had been a history rather than a prophecy, and if a prophecy, fulfilled in less than two hundred and fifty years after it was published. As to the papacy being antichrist, I think that great person spake well, who would not be peremptory in the case, but said, it had so many of his marks, that upon a hue and cry for antichrist, he should apprehend him. I shall add, that if he were so apprehended and tried, he could never acquit himself either at the bar of Scripture or reason.

### Chapter Summary

Re 1:1-3 The preface.

Re 1:4-6 John's salutation to the seven churches of Asia.

Re 1:7 The coming of Christ,

Re 1:8 his eternal majesty.

Re 1:9-20 John relateth his vision of the Son of man with the seven stars and the seven golden candlesticks.

*The Revelation of Jesus Christ;* the Apocalypse, (as this book is sometimes called), that is, the discovering or unveiling of some hidden things; so the word *revelation* signifieth. The Greek word is often used in the New Testament, and is ordinarily translated so. It is called *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* because Christ received it from his Father, as the next words show.

*Which God gave unto him,* as he was Mediator: by *God,* here, is to be understood the Father, not exclusively to the Son, as if he were not God, but to show the order of working in the Holy Trinity, Joh 7:16 Joh 14:10. Christ in his state of humiliation is said to learn of the Father; in his state of exaltation, to receive from the Father.

*To show unto his servants;* to John, and by him to all saints that will be studious of things revealed.

*Things which must shortly come to pass;* α δει γενεσθαι εν ταχει. This phrase puts us out of doubt, that this book is not a relation or narrative of things past, but a revelation or prediction of things to come: see also Re 22:6,16. Which makes me wonder at the confidence of a learned annotator of our that all things here relate, either to the siege of Jerusalem (which was past more than twenty years before this Revelation to St. John), or to pagan Rome, which, indeed, continued two hundred and odd years after this. But his notion is contrary to the general sense of all interpreters, whether the ancient fathers or modern writers. The phrase, indeed, signifies *shortly*, but never what was past, nor always what shall in a few days come to pass; see Lu 18:8 Ro 16:20; though indeed sometimes it signifies the time immediately following a command, as Ac 12:7 Ac 22:18: and considering it is God's phrase, to whom *a thousand years are but as yesterday*, Ps 90:4, and who calls the things that are not as if they were, and who manifestly calls all those years between Christ's coming and the end of the world (almost one thousand seven hundred of which are past already) the *last days*, we may allow him to say, those things should be *shortly*, which soon after should begin to be effected, though not finished till Christ's second coming. Though therefore we may allow this verse the key to open the whole Apocalypse, yet we must judge the learned author hath turned it the wrong way. Christ had foretold the ruin of Jerusalem, Mt 24:1-51, nor was it now the matter of a prophecy, but history. The first six seals plainly show the state of the Christian church under Rome pagan; what shall we say to all things represented under the seventh seal, &c.?

*And he sent and signified it by his angel;* first by one angel, and then by another, or (possibly) constantly by the same.

*Unto his servant John:* who this John was, we shall declare further, Re 1:2,4.

### Revelation 1:2

Ver. 2. *Who bare record of the word of God:* this phrase determines the

controversy about the penman of this part of holy writ, and puts it out of doubt that it was John the apostle and evangelist; the phrase so agrees to Joh 1:19,32,34 19:35. The word in the Greek signifies, bare testimony to, or of, the word of God. Some understand Christ, so called, 1Jo 1:2. Some would have the gospel meant by it; and if any think this the more probable sense, because, though Christ be elsewhere called *the Word*, yet he is not called *the word of God*; and it is not here in the dative, but the accusative case; I see no reason to contradict them.

*And of the testimony of Jesus Christ:* by the testimony of Christ is to be understood the doctrine of Christ, called so, because it is a testimony concerning him; or rather, that which he testified, who is elsewhere called *the true and faithful witness*.

*And of all things that he saw:* this may be understood with reference to what went before; so it agreeth with 1Jo 1:1-10; or to what followeth in this Revelation, made to him in visions in a great measure.

### Revelation 1:3

Ver. 3. *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy:* from hence is well concluded, that this is a portion of holy writ to be read publicly and privately, otherwise no blessing would have been pronounced to the readers or the hearers of it. It is also well from hence concluded, that this book is no history of things done, but a prediction of things to come to pass; for though *prophecy* in some scriptures signifieth more largely the revelation of the Divine will, yet here it must signify strictly.

*And keep those things which are written therein;* that keep it in memory, and live in view of it, and as persons that believe it; they are *blessed*, as they will from it be comforted, concerning all the sufferings of the church, and people of God.

*For the time is at hand;* the season for the accomplishment of these things is nigh, not past, but the time when they shall begin to happen is not very far off.

## Revelation 1:4

Ver. 4. *John to the seven churches which are in Asia:* John, the apostle and evangelist, writes either to all the churches of Asia under the notion of seven, (which is the number of perfection), or to those seven churches mentioned Re 1:11, *Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea*, seven famous places in Asia the Less, where the gospel was planted; which being the most famous churches in that part of the world, John is commanded to deposit this prophecy in their hands, by them to be communicated unto other churches. These churches were in the most famous cities of the Lesser Asia: some think John was the apostle that preached most in Asia, and founded these churches; others, that though they were founded by Peter and Paul, yet after their death John took upon him the charge of them. It is the opinion of some learned men, that the apostle did not, in the epistles to the churches in Asia, design only to tell them of their error, and prescribe to their cure; but that in writing to them, he assigns both a prophetic instruction of us all concerning the state of the church in all periods from that time to the day of judgment, and also to reprove and counsel all present and succeeding churches; but of this we may possibly speak more afterward.

*Grace be unto you, and peace:* grace and peace is the common apostolical salutation, as to the sense of which we have often spoken: the apostle wisheth them the free love of God, that is, *grace*, and the seal of it, Ro 5:1, *peace* with God and their own consciences, and each with other.

*From him which is, and which was, and which is to come:* these words are a description of God, particularly of Jesus Christ in his eternity and immutability: he was from eternity; he is now; and he shall be for ever. Or, (as some), he was in his promises before his incarnation; he is now God manifested in the flesh; and he is to come as a Judge, to judge the quick and the dead. This was an ancient name of God, Ex 3:14, *I am that I am.* —*I AM hath sent me unto you.* These words interpret the name *Jehovah*.

*And from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;* it is very difficult to determine what is meant by *the seven Spirits* here *before the throne*: we read of them also, Re 3:1 4:5 5:6. Christ is described, Re 3:1, as having *the seven Spirits of God*. It is said, Re 4:5, that *the seven lamps of fire burning*

*before the throne, are the seven Spirits of God;* and Re 5:6, that the Lamb's *seven eyes* were *the seven Spirits of God*. This is all the light we have from Scripture. Some think they are seven angels that are here meant. We read, Re 8:2, of *seven angels that stood before God*; and in Re 15:6-8, there is a like mention of *seven angels*; and Zec 4:2,10, Zechariah had a vision of *seven lamps*, and *seven pipes*, which, Re 1:10, are said to be *the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth*. But John saluting the churches with grace and peace from these seven Spirits, and joining them with Christ, they do not seem to be creatures, angels, that are here meant, but such a Being from whom grace and peace cometh. Others therefore understand by them, the seven workings of Divine Providence in his management of the affairs of the world, with relation to the church, of which we shall read after; but this also seems hard. The sense seems to be, and from the Holy Ghost, who, though but one spiritual Being, yet exerteth his influence many ways, and by various manifestations, called here *seven Spirits*, because all flow from the same Spirit. They are therefore called, Re 4:5, *burning lamps*; the Holy Ghost descending in the appearance of fire, Ac 2:3,4, and being compared to fire, Mt 3:11. They are called the Lamb's *seven eyes* and *seven horns*, Re 5:6. Christ had the Spirit without measure; and the Holy Spirit is oft called the Spirit of Christ. This seemeth the best sense; the reader may find the objections to it answered in Mr. Pool's Synopsis Criticorum upon this verse.

### Revelation 1:5

Ver. 5. *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness:* here is an express mention of Jesus Christ, because he was the procurer of our redemption, and our Mediator, to whom the Father committed all power as to the church. He is called *the faithful* and *true witness*; 1Ti 6:13, he *witnessed a good confession before Pontius Plate*; he bare record of himself, Joh 8:13,14: see also Isa 43:10 55:4 Joh 18:37.

*And the first begotten of the dead;* that is, who first rose from the dead, viz. by his own power, Joh 10:18, and to die no more: see Ac 13:34 1Co 15:20.

*And the prince of the kings of the earth:* the *King of kings*, Re 17:14 19:16 1Ti 6:15. The first name here given to Christ speaketh his prophetic

office, the second his priestly office, this last his kingly office.

*Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood:* here begins a doxology, or giving glory to Christ, (such forms are frequent in the Epistles), first, as he that *washed us from our sins*, both from the guilt and from the power and dominion of our sins, with *his blood*, paying a price, and satisfying God's justice for, and meriting our sanctification: see Heb 9:14 1Jo 1:7.

### Revelation 1:6

Ver. 6. *And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father: kings*, to rule over our own appetite, and govern ourselves by the law of his word, to fight and conquer the world, the flesh, and the devil. Kings in a spiritual sense, for our kingdom is like his from whom we derive it, *not of this world*; therefore he adds, *unto God*, to the honour and glory of God, for his service, who is the Father of Christ.

*Priests*, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through the Beloved, 1Pe 2:5; our *bodies as a living sacrifice*, Ro 12:1; part of our estates, Php 4:18; *the sacrifice of praise, the fruit of our lips*, Heb 13:15. So as all the privileges of the Jews, Ex 19:6, belong to us, and that in a more eminent manner. Through Christ we also are *a royal priesthood, a peculiar people*.

*To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen:* let all praise, and honour, and acknowledgments be paid, and all power ascribed, to him for ever.

### Revelation 1:7

Ver. 7. St. John being to speak of the various afflictions of the church of God, which should immediately begin, and hold on during the whole time that Rome should continue heathen, and one thousand two hundred and sixty years after, during the whole reign of the beasts, prepareth Christians for it, by calling them by the eye of faith to see (though at a great distance) Christ coming to judgment, whom he speaks of as already coming,

according to the usual style of prophets, who use to speak of those things that shall shortly be done, or certainly, as if they were already done. He describes the manner of Christ's coming to judgment, and saith, *he cometh with clouds*, that is, in a glorious manner; *in the clouds with power and great glory*, Mt 24:30; *in his glory, and all the holy angels with him*, Mt 25:31; *with ten thousand of his saints*, Jude 1:14; *with a shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God*, 1Th 4:16; here, *with clouds*, bright and glorious clouds, not obscuring him, but making his appearance more glorious and terrible.

*And every eye shall see him*; he shall come visibly, for, Ac 1:11, he shall so come, as he was seen going up to heaven: see Isa 40:5.

*And they also which pierced him*; they also which pierced him shall look on him, Zec 12:10; yea, not those only which pierced him with their spears, but every sinner who hath pierced him with his sins, Heb 6:6. From whence we may observe, that the resurrection will be general; and those in the Great Mogul's country are like to awake out of their sleep in the grave, as well as others.

*And all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him*; all the nations of the earth, (Greek, the tribes of the earth), shall wail, not with a mourning of repentance, the time for that will be past, but with a wailing of despair and horror.

*Even so, Amen*: these words are either a prophetic assertion, confirming the truth of what he had said, or a pious prayer or desire, or rather both together.

### Revelation 1:8

Ver. 8. *Alpha* and *Omega* are the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet, as *Aleph* and *Tau* are in the Hebrew alphabet: the meaning of these is expounded, *the beginning and the ending*; he who was before all, and shall continue to exist when all creatures shall cease to be; the first and the last, as the same terms are expounded, Re 22:13: so Isa 41:4 43:13.

*Which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty*: see Re 1:4:

He addeth *the Almighty*, to show that he was able to make his words good. Thus in this verse, omnipotency, eternity, and immutability, are all applied to God, and particularly predicated of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

### Revelation 1:9

Ver. 9. *I John, who also am your brother;* the same mentioned Re 1:4, the apostle of Jesus Christ, yet he disdaineth not to call those his brethren whom his Lord so called.

*And companion in tribulation:* the pagan persecutions were now begun. Nero first began them about twenty-three years after Christ was ascended into heaven, but he died within three years' time after he had began that course. Then the Christians had some rest for twelve years, by reason of the short reigns of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, and the kindness of Flavius and Titus Vespasianus; but about eighty-two years after Christ began Domitian to reign, and to persecute the Christians about the year 90. He lived not long, for he was slain Anno 97, but in those seven years he put to death, imprisoned, and banished many. John is said to have been banished by him, Anno 91, and to have had this revelation, 94 and 95. Domitian lived but four or five years after this. After his death John is said to have come back to Ephesus, and to have died there three years after, about the year 98. But for five years John was the Christians' *companion in tribulation*.

*And in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ;* either the kingdom of grace, a member of the Christian church; or the kingdom of glory, which is to be arrived at both by patient waiting and by patient suffering for Jesus Christ, or waiting for the second appearance of Christ, in order to his glorious kingdom.

*Was in the isle that is called Patmos:* this island, geographers tell us, was an island in the Icarian or AEGean Sea, about thirty-five miles in compass, one of those fifty-three islands called the Cyclades.

*For the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ:* he tells us how he came to be in Patmos, viz. for preaching the word of God, and those truths to which Christ had given testimony: he did not voluntarily go



thither to preach the gospel, (for those isles have in them few inhabitants), but he was banished thither by the emperor Domitian's officers. Banishment was a very ordinary punishment amongst the Romans, in case of what they would call sedition. Eusebius tells us, that one Flavia Dometilla, though she was niece to the consul, was banished upon the same account at this time.

### Revelation 1:10

Ver. 10. *I was in the Spirit;* not only in spiritual employment, suppose meditation and prayer, but in an ecstasy; my soul was (as it were) separated from my body, and under the more than ordinary influence and communications of the Spirit, as Ac 10:10 11:5 16:9 18:9.

*On the Lord's day;* upon the Christian sabbath, called *the Lord's day*, ( as the eucharist, or breaking of bread, is called *the Lord's supper*, 1Co 11:20), because Christ instituted it; or, because the end of its institution was the remembrance of Christ's resurrection, (as the end of the Lord's supper was the commemoration of Christ's death), or because it was instituted for the honour of Christ.

*And heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet:* John in the isle of Patmos was keeping the Christian sabbath in spiritual services, meditation and prayer, and fell into a trance, wherein he had a more immediate communion with the Holy Spirit, which begun with his hearing a loud voice, as it were, behind him, as loud as the sound of a trumpet.

### Revelation 1:11

Ver. 11. *I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last;* I, who speak unto thee, am the eternal, immutable God.

*What thou seest, write in a book;* what thou shalt presently see, write in a book, not in loose papers. Whence we may observe, that this book is not only the revelation of the will of Christ, but written by his direction.

*And send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia;* not to all that lived

within the jurisdiction or compass of these cities, but only to those Christians who lived in or near these places, which are all cities in the Lesser Asia.

*Ephesus* was the most famous, where Paul preached, Ac 19:10, &c., and stayed three years, Ac 20:31. It was a noble city in that part of Greece which was called Ionia.

*Smyrna* was a sea-port city in the same country.

*Pergamos* was a city of Troas, or Phrygia.

*Thyatira* was a city in Lydia, or Mysia.

*Sardis* also was a city in Lydia, near the mountain Tmolus.

*Philadelphia* was a city in Lydia, next Mysia.

*Laodicea* was a city in Asia, near the river Lycus. In all these cities there were congregations of Christians formed into churches, to whom God here ordereth St. John to send these visions, when he had written them in a book. Our countryman, Mr. Brightman, asks: Where Rome was all this while? And how it came to pass God directed not these mysteries to be sent, and kept in their archives, especially if (as the papists say) the bishop there be Christ's successive vicar? And considering, too, how great friends Peter and John were wont to be? But the forementioned author tartly replies to his own question: That that church, it seems, could never err, and therefore needed not any correptory or monitory epistle.

### Revelation 1:12

Ver. 12. *And I turned to see the voice that spake with me;* that is, to see the person whose voice I heard speaking to me: or else, by seeing is meant understanding; but that he might have done without turning; he therefore turned, hoping to see the person that spake.

*And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks:* by these seven candlesticks which he saw, are meant the seven churches; so we find it

infallibly expounded, Re 1:20. We shall find in this book frequent allusions to the Jewish temple: here they begin. In the Jewish tabernacle there was one golden candlestick, and seven lamps, to give light against it; so Nu 8:2 Zec 4:2. John here seeth seven. God had but one church of the Jews, but many amongst the Gentiles. This notion, or comparison of churches to golden candlesticks, both showeth us the nature and office of the churches of Christ, they do not give light of themselves, only hold lights, and it is their duty to keep in them the pure word of God, which is a light to our feet, and a godly ministry; and it also lets us know, that they ought to keep themselves pure (as beaten gold) from all corruption as to doctrine, and their members from all scandalous conversation.

### Revelation 1:13

Ver. 13. *And in the midst of the seven candlesticks;* that is, of the churches, resembled by the golden candlesticks.

*One like unto the Son of man:* we say, no like is the same; but Christ, who was the Son of man, and who ordinarily calls himself so throughout the gospel, is undoubtedly here meant, as appeareth by Re 1:17,18, which description can agree to him alone. He is said to have come in the *likeness of sinful flesh*, though he came in true human flesh; and Php 2:7, he *was made in the likeness of men*. John saw one who appeared to him as a man in the midst of seven golden candlesticks, which was Christ in the midst of his churches; placed in the midst, partly to let us know his observation of them all, and partly to let us know his being at hand to them all, to help, protect, and defend them.

*Clothed with a garment down to the foot;* ποδηρη the word signifieth a long garment reaching to the feet, whether of linen or woollen, or what other material, is not expressed; so as it seemeth to me hard to determine, whether it was to signify his priestly or kingly office, or neither. It is a habit of gravity. *And girt about the paps with a golden girdle;* nor dare I determine the significancy of the golden girdle about his loins. It was a habit like that in Daniel's vision, Da 10:5. They were both symbols of majesty, authority, and dignity, and the appearance agreed very well to him, who was both a High Priest and a King.

### Revelation 1:14

Ver. 14. *His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow:* whiteness signifies purity; whiteness of hair signifies old age ordinarily, which commonly is attended with more prudence, as having most experience: hence this appearance of Christ may denote both his purity and wisdom, and that he is *the Ancient of days*; see Da 7:9,13,22; though there the term of *Ancient of days* belongs to God the Father, yet it also agreeth to Christ, who is equal with the Father, as to his Divine nature.

*And his eyes were as a flame of fire;* such an appearance is applied to God, Eze 1:27 Da 10:6; and to Christ, Re 19:12, to denote either Christ's knowledge, wisdom, and omniscience; or his grace in purifying souls, as fire doth metals; or his wrath and anger against his enemies.

### Revelation 1:15

Ver. 15. *And his feet like unto fine brass:* there are nice disquisitions what this chalcobalanum (which we translate, *fine brass*) was: vid. Poli Synopsin. I understand not of what profit the determination will be to us. By the feet of Christ (probably) are signified his ways, counsels, and methods, in ordering and governing his church, which are compared to fine brass, for the beauty and glory of them, and for their firmness, strength, and steadiness.

*As if they burned in a furnace;* they appeared like brass filled with fire, as if it were burning, and red-hot in furnace.

*And his voice as the sound of many waters;* loud and terrible, like the noise of the sea dashing upon a rock, or the shore.

### Revelation 1:16

Ver. 16. *And he had in his right hand seven stars:* the right hand is the hand of power, Ps 21:8; and of favour, Ps 44:3; and of honour and dignity, Ps 110:1. The *seven stars* are expounded, Re 1:20, to be the ministers of

the gospel, his messengers to his churches, who having in all times been most exposed to the malice and rage of enemies, Christ is said to hold them in his right hand, as to signify the dignity he hath put upon them and the favour he hath showed them, so also to show his resolution to protect them, according to his promise, Mt 28:20.

*And out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword;* either his gospel and word, compared to a two-edged sword, Heb 4:12; or a sword of justice, which he will use till he hath perfectly overcome and vanquished his enemies.

*And his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength;* that is, was very glorious, so as the apostle was not able to behold him.

### Revelation 1:17

Ver. 17. *I fell at his feet as dead;* astonished at the majesty and glory of the appearance: see Jos 5:14 Da 8:17,18 Mt 17:6 Ac 9:4.

*And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not;* to comfort me, and let me know, that I had no reason to be afraid, he would do me no harm.

*I am the first and the last:* see Re 1:8,11.

### Revelation 1:18

Ver. 18. *I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore;* the living God, who had life in myself, and gave life to the world, but assumed the human nature, and was made man, and in that nature died; but I rose again from the dead, and shall die no more, but ever live to make intercession for my people.

*Amen;* this is a great truth.

*And have the keys of hell and of death;* and have a power to kill, and cast into hell; or, I have the power over death, and the state of the dead, so as I

can raise those that are dead to life again: I have the command of death, whether temporal or eternal; as he who hath the keys of a house can let in and shut out of it whom he pleaseth, so I bring to heaven and throw to hell whom I please.

### Revelation 1:19

Ver. 19. *Write the things which thou hast seen;* either the things which thou hast seen from the beginning of the gospel; for John, Mt 4:21, was a companion of Christ from the time presently following his baptism and temptations: or, the vision of me which thou hast now had; which I judge most probably the sense, not understanding why our Lord should set John to write what (though they were not yet written, yet) Christ knew should be written in another book by John himself, viz. in his Gospel, and by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, in their histories of the Gospel, and in the Acts of the Apostles; especially considering they were to be written plainly, so as he who runs may read them; and what John was to write here, was to be written enigmatically, and darkly represented in visions: and it is against reason to think the same things should be first revealed plainly, and then more darkly, and both by direction from God.

*And the things which are;* the present affairs of the church; we have the history till Paul was carried prisoner to Rome, (which was about the 60th year after Christ), in the Acts of the apostles; so that I conceive the farthest that John looked back was but thirty-five years; for he was in Patmos about the year 93, and is conceived to have written this book, 96. Hence the matter of the Revelation is easily concluded:

1. The things which were the present affairs of the church, Anno 96, or looking back only to 60, which things are supposed to be written by John, in Re 2:3.

*And the things which shall be hereafter;* to the end of the world, under the reign of the dragon, (the pagan Roman empire), and the reign of antichrist, or the beast, for one thousand two hundred and sixty years, and from thence until Christ shall come to judgment.

## Revelation 1:20

Ver. 20. *The mystery of the seven stars, and the seven golden candlesticks:* see Re 1:12,16.

*The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches;* that is, they signify the angels of the seven churches. By *angels* he means God's messengers and ambassadors to the seven churches, called *angels*, both in respect of their office, being the ambassadors of Christ, 2Co 5:20, and of that holiness which they should show forth in their doctrine and life. To interpret the term of *angels* by nature, seems not agreeable to what we shall hereafter meet with said to some of them; Christ would never have ordered John to have charged them with a loss of their first love, or to admonish them to be faithful unto death, or to repent. Whether the term *angel* denoteth any particular superior minister or bishop in those churches, or is to be taken collectively for all the ministers in those churches, I shall not dispute. Certain it is, *αγγελος* signifieth no more than is common to all ministers, viz. to be God's messengers, and move upon his errand.

*And the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches;* the seven churches mentioned Re 1:11: or else, seven being the number of perfection, all the churches, which are fitly represented by *candlesticks*, in the same sense as they are called *pillars of truth* in Paul's Epistle to Timothy, because they have not the light they show from themselves, only hold it forth from Christ. But it is the opinion of very learned writers upon this book, that our Lord, by these *seven churches*, signifies all the churches of Christ to the end of the world; and by what he saith to them, designs to show what shall be the state of the churches in all ages, and what their duty is. That by the church of Ephesus, was represented the purest state of all the Christian churches, which determined thirty years before this book was written. By the church of Smyrna, the state of all Christian churches till the year 300. By the church of Pergamos, all the Christian churches till antichrist got up into the saddle, and the Albigenses and Waldenses were so persecuted. By the church of Thyatira, the state of the churches from that time till our Reformation. By the other three, the state of all churches for one hundred and fifty years last past, and which shall be to the end of the world. See Dr. More, Mr. Mede, Cocceius, and Forbes, as learned and diligent inquirers into the sense of this book as any

have been, who give many reasons for this:

1. Because no reason else can be given, why epistles should not be written to other churches as well as these.
2. He doth not call them the seven churches of Asia, but seven churches.
3. The number seven is a number used to signify perfection.
4. What is said of Christ's walking in the midst of the golden candlesticks, having the stars in his right hand, &c., agreeth to him with reference to all churches, not to these seven only.
5. His calling ministers *angels*, speaks this a prophecy, for that is a prophetic style.
6. The mentioning the same number of churches and ministers, as of the seals, speaks this part of the Revelation as comprehensive, with respect to time, as the other.
7. It is not probable that these epistles would have been ushered in with such a vision, if they had been merely historical and didactic, not prophetic also.
8. They argue from Re 1:19, where John is bid to write not only what is, but what shall come to pass.
9. They argue from the matter of the epistles. —Let the curious reader see more of this in the authors themselves, as also in Mr. Brightman.

### Revelation 2:1

#### Chapter Summary

Re 2:1-7        What John was commanded to write in  
commendation or reproof to the angels of the churches  
of Ephesus,  
Re 2:8-11    Smyrna,  
Re 2:12-17   Pergamos,



Re 2:18-29 Thyatira.

### Chapter Introduction

Some things are to be observed of all the epistles, before we come to the particular epistles.

1. God's writing in this form, (as a man to his friend), speaks Christ's love to the church, his spouse.
2. There were not seven books written, but one book in which these seven epistles were, out of which each church, or the church in its several periods, might learn what concerned it.
3. These epistles concerning matters of faith and manners, are written plainly, not in mysterious expressions.
4. The scope of them all is to instruct, reprove, commend, and comfort.
5. They are all directed to the ministers of the churches, as their heads, but the matter concerns the whole church.
6. It is also observed, that Christ, in the beginning of every epistle, notieth himself by some one of those things mentioned in the vision in the former chapter.

Re 2:1, *These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars*, Re 1:16. Re 2:8, *The first and the last, which was dead and is alive*, Re 1:17,18. Re 2:12. *These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges*, Re 1:16. Re 2:18, *The Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet like fine brass*, Re 1:14,15. Re 3:1. *He that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars*, Re 1:4,16. Re 2:7, *He that hath the key of David, that is holy and true, that openeth, &c.*, Re 1:5,18. Re 2:14, *The faithful and true witness*, Re 1:5.

Ver. 1. *Ephesus* was the principal city of Asia the Less, it lay in the western parts of it, upon the Ionian Sea; a city of great riches and trade, but much given to idolatry and superstition, famous for the temple of Diana.

Paul was there twice; at his second coming he stayed thereabouts three years, Ac 18:1-20:38. He was by a tumult driven thence into Macedonia, and left Timothy there, 1Ti 1:3. It appears from Ac 20:17, that there were more ministers there than one; but they were all angels, and from the oneness of their business are all called an *angel*.

*These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand;* that is, Christ, Re 1:16,20, who hath put an honour on his ministers, showeth special favour to them, and will protect them.

*Who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;* who hath a special eye to his church, being not an idle spectator, but present with his church, to observe how all in it walk and perform their several parts, and is at hand, either to reward or punish them.

### Revelation 2:2

Ver. 2. *I know thy works:* these words being in the front of all the seven epistles, cannot be interpreted as signifying a knowledge of approbation, as Ps 1:6, but of a comprehension in the understanding, and as signifying Christ's omniscency; though it be true, that the Lord both understood and approved of some of the works of this church particularly.

*And thy labour, and thy patience;* their labour in propagating the knowledge of Christ and doctrine of the gospel, and their patient taking up and bearing the cross.

*And how thou canst not bear them which are evil;* and their zeal and warmth, that they would not endure either persons erroneous in judgment, or lewd in their lives, in their communion.

*And thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not:* in the primitive church there were some that falsely pretended an immediate call or mission from Christ, to preach what they did, but this church would not endure them. It appears from Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy, that there were then false teachers very busy in that church; possibly Ebion and Cerinthus, (who both lived in this time, and Cerinthus preached in Asia), or their disciples, might be some of them. They tried them, possibly, by the

word of God, according to the rules given in it to try the spirits.

*And hast found them liars;* and found that they had no such immediate mission, no authority from Christ.

### Revelation 2:3

Ver. 3. *And hast borne* the contradiction of false teachers, and the persecutions of Jews and pagans; for at this time the second persecution was began by Domitian.

*And hast patience;* grace (with quietness and submission) to bear the will of God in any sort of evils.

*And for my name's sake hast laboured;* and for me hast laboured actively in propagating the truths of my gospel, as well as passively in the furnace of trials and persecutions.

*And hast not fainted;* and hast persevered so as thou hast neither been seduced to other doctrine by false teachers, nor lost thy integrity and holiness of conversation.

### Revelation 2:4

Ver. 4. *Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee;* something to accuse thee of, and blame thee for.

*Because thou hast left thy first love;* of late thou hast not been so warm in the propagation of my gospel, and maintaining my truth. The love of many in this church, both toward God and their brethren, probably was cooled, though not wholly extinguished.

### Revelation 2:5

Ver. 5. *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen;* that is, in what degree thy love was formerly, and compare it with what it is now.

*And repent;* repentance in man, signifieth both the change of the heart and of the actions.

*And do the first works;* recover thy former warmth of love, and zeal for good works.

*Or else I will come unto thee quickly;* if thou do not, I that know thee, and walk in the midst of thee, will show myself an enemy to thee.

*And will remove thy candlestick out of his place;* and unchurch thee, and say unto thee, Lo-ammi, You are not my people. Which threatening is long since made good; for where is now the famous church of Ephesus?

#### Revelation 2:6

Ver. 6. *But this thou hast;* thou hast yet thus much to commend thee.

*That thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes;* thou hatest the deeds of those who teach the lawfulness of a common use of wives, and eat things offered to idols; for these, they say, were the tenets of the Nicolaitanes, so called from one Nicholas; but whether he were one of the first deacons, named Ac 6:5, (who, they say, to avoid the imputation of jealousy, brought forth his wife, being a beautiful woman, and prostituted her), or from some other of that name, I cannot determine.

*Which I also hate:* God, as a lover of his own order, and of human society, hateth such doctrines and practices as are contrary to the rule of his word, and tend to the confusion of human societies.

#### Revelation 2:7

Ver. 7. *He that hath an ear, let him hear;* to whom God hath given an ability and power to understand what I say. It is a form of speech which Christ often used, when he would quicken up people's attention, Mt 11:15 13:9,43 Mr 4:9,23 7:16: we shall find it again in these two chapters six times; from which some would conclude, that in these epistles there is

something mysterious, parabolical, and prophetic, it being a form of speech prefixed to many parables.

*What the Spirit saith;* the Holy Spirit of God, from whose inspiration all Scripture is.

*Unto the churches;* not only at Ephesus, but elsewhere in Asia, or any other part of the world.

*To him that overcometh;* that is, a conqueror in fighting the good fight of faith, against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

*Will I give to eat of the tree of life;* I will give him a share in my merits, and eternal life; which blessed enjoyments are set out unto us under the notion of eating, Lu 12:37 22:28, &c.; Joh 10:28.

*This is the promise that he hath promised us,* 1Jo 2:25. Heaven is expressed to us under this notion, with reference to the tree of life, mentioned Ge 2:9, which was in the old Paradise; for it is added, *which is in the midst of the paradise of God;* or, which is the same, Christ himself is here intended, who is the free of life, mentioned Re 22:2; and the happiness of heaven is thus expressed, 1Th 4:17, *We shall be ever with the Lord*. This is the sum of the epistle to the first mentioned church, by which those that judge these epistles prophetic, understand all the primitive churches during the apostles' age, or the most of their ages, for John himself lived under the second persecution.

### Revelation 2:8

Ver. 8. *Smyrna* was a city in Ionia; we read not when, or by whom, the gospel was first planted and a church gathered there; nor can we tell who are meant by *the angel* of this church: see Re 1:20. That it was no single person is probable, for he speaks plurally, Re 2:10, *the devil shall cast some of you, εἰς ὑμῶν, into prison*.

*These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive:* for the meaning of this phrase, see annotations on Re 1:8,17,18; only it is observable how Christ, speaking to this church under great tribulation and

persecution, fits a name proper to comfort them; for he himself *was dead*, and yet now *alive*, and he living, those that believe in him, because he lives, shall live also, Joh 14:19; and as he was *the first*, so he will be *the last*, surviving all his enemies, and be at last a conqueror over them.

### Revelation 2:9

Ver. 9. *I know thy works, and tribulation:* though the term *know* doth not necessarily signify approbation, yet, both as to the church of Ephesus and Smyrna, the particular works mentioned assure us, that God approved their patient suffering affliction for his name.

*And poverty;* and the poor condition (as to outward things) into which they had brought themselves, for their owning and profession of the gospel of Christ, having their estates rent from them, &c.

*But thou art rich;* but yet they were rich, both really in the love and favour of God, and also in the esteem of God, who accounteth them rich who abound in spiritual habits, and good works, the exercise of those habits.

*And I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not:* God also knows the evil speeches of his church's enemies, whether native Jews, glorying in circumcision and the law, and that they were descended from Abraham; or false Christians, who may be here meant (called Jews by a figure; the Jews being once the only church of God).

*But are the synagogue of Satan;* but are indeed a collection of devils, or the children of the devil, whose works they do, continually reviling true Christians, and murdering the saints, after the manner of their father, who *was a murderer from the beginning.*

### Revelation 2:10

Ver. 10. *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer;* thou art like to suffer yet sharper things than thou hast suffered, the persecutions are but begun; but pluck up a good courage, fear not your enemies, Mt 10:28.

*Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison; you shall be cast into prison, by Jews and pagans, who are the devil's instruments, and execute his malice against you; which should both encourage you, that your fight is with the common enemy of mankind, and teach you to pity and pray for your persecutors, who are but the devil's instruments, whose hearts he hath filled with malice against you.*

*That ye may be tried; that your faith, love, patience, obedience, may be tried.*

*And ye shall have tribulation ten days:* interpreters are divided about these *ten days*, what space of time is meant by them; some think the whole time of the ten persecutions, but they lasted above two hundred years; others will have them the ten years of Trajan's persecution, from the year 99 to 109. Others observe, that in ten days are two hundred and forty hours, which make up the number of years from 85, when the second persecution began, (under which John at this time was), to 325, when all the persecutions ceased. But to let these fancies go: it is either a certain number put for an uncertain; or, it signifies many days; as in Ge 31:42, *Thou hast changed my wages ten times*, that is, many times; so 2Sa 19:43 Job 19:3. Or else it signifies a little time, as in Ge 24:55 Am 5:3 6:9. If we understand this epistle as only concerning the church of Smyrna at that time, it may signify a small time. If we understand it prophetically, describing the state of all churches, till the pagan persecution ceased, (which was more than two hundred and forty years), ten days signifies a long time.

*Be thou faithful unto death, hold fast to thy profession of faith and holiness to the end of thy life here, and I will give thee a crown of life, and I will give thee eternal life and salvation, which shall be a great reward. It is called a crown of righteousness, 2Ti 4:8.*

### Revelation 2:11

Ver. 11. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh:* for the opening of these passages: See Poole on "Re 2:7".

*Shall not be hurt of the second death;* we read of *the second death*, Re 20:6,14: the meaning is, that he shall escape the eternal damnation of soul and body in the day of judgment.

Those that make these epistles prophetic say, that the church of Smyrna was a type of all the churches of Christ to the year 325, (when Constantine overcame Lycinius, and gave rest and peace to the churches of Christ), which was all a time of severe persecution under the Roman emperors, who to that time were all heathens. It is very observable, that Christ blameth nothing in this church; the church of God keeps always its purity best in the fire; but doubtless there were in this time many apostacies, and other errors, but God allows much to his people's temptations; hence, though Job showed much impatience, yet we are called to behold him as a pattern of patience.

#### Revelation 2:12

Ver. 12. *Pergamos* was a famous city of Troas; we read of Pergamos no where else in Scripture, but of Troas we read of Paul's being there, Ac 16:8,11 20:5,6, and preaching Christ there, 2Co 2:12.

*These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges:* see the notes on Re 1:16.

#### Revelation 2:13

Ver. 13. *I know thy works, and where thou dwellest;* God knows all his people's circumstances, where they dwell, as well as what they do, and how they behave themselves in their habitations.

*Even where Satan's seat is;* where the devil rules by his pagan deputies and antichrist's officers.

*And thou holdest fast my name;* the word of my truth, by which I am known, as a man by his name.

*And hast not denied my faith;* neither by the words of thy mouth, nor by



any apostacy from this profession, notwithstanding the temptations thou hast had from suducers and from persecutors, and the sight of those who have been put to death for their profession.

*Even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr:* it is much no ecclesiastical history makes mention of this martyr Antipas, which argueth him to have been a person but of an obscure note in the world; but Christ seeth and taketh notice of those little ones who belong to him, though the world overlooks them. Our being able from no history to give an account of this martyr, hath inclined some to think this epistle wholly prophetical, and that Antipas signifieth not any particular person, but all those that have opposed the pope, as if it were *Antipapa*. But certainly there was such a martyr as Antipas belonging to the church at Smyrna at that time, who suffered for the truth, though we do not allow this church to have been typical of all the gospel churches for many years.

#### Revelation 2:14

Ver. 14. *But I have a few things against thee;* though I have much to commend thee for, yet I have some things to accuse thee of, and to complain of thee for.

*Because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam:* by the doctrine of Balaam, he means the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, (as he expounds himself, Re 2:15), which was like the doctrine of Balaam.

*Who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel;* that Balaam of whom we read, Nu 24:1-25:18, who being sent for by Balak the king of Moab to come and curse Israel, and finding that God restrained him, and turned his tongue from cursing them to pronounce blessings to them, instructed Balak at last how to lay a stumblingblock before them, to make them to fall, viz. to set the Moabitish women to tempt them to commit uncleanness with them, and so to feast with them in their idols' temples, and eat of their meat first offered unto their idols.

#### Revelation 2:15

Ver. 15. *So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes; so, saith he, thou sufferest in thy communion filthy persons, who maintain fornication lawful, and the lawfulness of eating meat offered to idols, which exactly corresponds with Balaam's doctrine or counsel given to Balak, in order to his weakening the Israelites by separating them from God. His counsel took place, to the destruction of twenty-four thousand Israelites.*

*Which thing I hate; I am the same God still, and hate such doctrines, as much as ever I did in the time of Balak.*

#### Revelation 2:16

Ver. 16. *Repent; thou that art guilty of conniving at such things, change thy mind and practice, and let those who have entertained these opinions, and run into those filthy practices, change their hearts and practices; or else I will come unto thee quickly; I will quickly come against thee, and punish thee: See Poole "Re 2:5".*

*And will fight against them with the sword of my mouth; and fight against them by my word; either convincing them, or pronouncing sentence against them; or, by raising up other teachers, who shall preach my word more faithfully, and whose doctrine shall be like a sword to devour and to destroy them.*

#### Revelation 2:17

Ver. 17. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh: see the annotations on Re 2:7.*

*Will I give to eat of the hidden manna; here is a manifest allusion to that bread from heaven, with which God fed his people in the wilderness, called angels' food, Ps 78:25. The story of it we have, Ex 16:31,32; a pot of which God ordained to be kept in the ark, for a memorial of God's mercy, Heb 9:4. It was a type of Christ, who was the true bread that came down from heaven, Joh 6:32,33. It here signifies Christ himself, with all the influences of his grace, whether for strength or comfort. As a feast was*

wont to follow a victory; so Christ promiseth to those that fought, and overcame in the spiritual fight, to feast them with himself and the influences of his Spirit.

*And will give him a white stone:* the use of stones anciently was so various, that it hath given a great liberty to interpreters to vary in their senses of the *white stone* here mentioned. They made use of them (as we since of counters) to count; they used them also in judgments, acquitting persons by white stones, on which their names were written, as they condemned others by black stones; they also used them in giving suffrages in elections, &c.; they also used them to mark happy or lucky days, and they used other stones to mark such days as they counted unlucky; and finally, they used them as rewards to those who conquered in their games. Hence interpreters vary in their opinions, whether this be a general promise of a reward, or a more particular promise of pardon and absolution; or, of the assurance of their election to life. It seems most properly to be interpreted of pardon, or the notification of pardon of sins, or more generally of a reward. By the *new name, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it*, the same thing seemeth to be signified, the Spirit witnessing with their spirits that they are the children of God. They say, that in those white stones (used in absolutions of persons, or in giving suffrages) the name of the person absolved or chosen was wont to be written, and none knew it but those that had it, unless they imparted it, to which custom this allusion is.

Those that make this church typical, say it typified the churches of the gospel during the times of popery, to the end of the persecutions of the Waldenses and Albigenses, when about one hundred thousand of them were destroyed by eight thousand papists; or, the time when antichrist first sat in the temple of God, as Re 13:1-18, and the woman fled into the wilderness, Re 12:1-17.

### Revelation 2:18

Ver. 18. *Thyatira* was a city of Mysia or Lydia, not far from Philippi, the chief city of Macedonia; for Lydia, who traded in purple, and was of this city, went to Philippi to trade, as we read, Ac 16:12,14.

*Eyes like unto a flame of fire:* see Re 1:14,15; it signifies either angry eyes, or quick and piercing eyes. The comparing of *his feet* to *fine brass*, seemeth to signify both the purity and holiness of his ways and methods of providence, and also his firmness and steadiness in them.

### Revelation 2:19

Ver. 19. *I know thy works;* the works of the ministry of this church were such as Christ knew, not only with a knowledge of comprehension, but approbation also.

*And charity;* such were his charity to Christians that were in distress.

*And service;* his diligence in his ministration.

*And faith;* his faith, and adherence to Christ, and the doctrine of the gospel.

*And thy patience;* his meek bearing of his crosses and trials.

*And thy works;* his other works, the fruit of faith and love.

*And the last to be more than the first;* and his proficiency both in spiritual habits, and good works, the fruits of them.

### Revelation 2:20

Ver. 20. *Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee:* See Poole on "Re 2:4", See Poole on "Re 2:14".

*Because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel:* the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, mentioned Re 2:6,15, is so plainly expressed in the latter part of the verse, viz. maintaining the lawfulness of eating things offered to idols, and of fornication; that whosoever this woman was, it is plain she was one of that filthy sect. It is also plain, that she is called *Jezebel* with allusion to that wicked woman of that name who was the wife of Ahab, of whom we read, 1Ki 16:31. She was an instrument to bring Ahab her

husband to serve and worship Baal. It is also plain, that she was one that pretended to Divine revelations; she *called herself a prophetess*; and that taught in public, which no women but prophetesses might do, 1Co 14:34 1Ti 2:11,12: and that she taught a community of women, and the lawfulness as of *fornication*, so of eating *things sacrificed to idols*, directly contrary to the apostle's doctrine, 1Co 9:10. But what she was cannot be determined; for though we allow this church to be typical of the church in the times of popery, and the popish synagogue, which maintaineth both these things to be the antitype; yet certainly there was some famous heretical strumpet in this church, which the governors did not restrain and cast out of their communion; which is the thing Christ had against this church, and the officers in it, who ought to have restrained her extravagancies both in teaching such doctrines, (being contrary to the apostle's doctrine in the places before mentioned), and from teaching at all, being no prophetess though she pretended to it.

#### Revelation 2:21

Ver. 21. I was not quick with her, but gave her a time of patience, and did not cut her off at first; but she was incorrigible, and went on in her sinful courses.

#### Revelation 2:22

Ver. 22. *I will cast her into a bed*; another kind of bed than she hath sinned in and by, not a bed of ease and pleasure, but of pain and torment. Nor shall the seduced escape, they shall also be cast into *great tribulation*, pains and torments of conscience, or afflictions more corporal, either from the more immediate hand of God, or the hands of men.

*Except they repent of their deeds*; this is to be supposed to all God's threatenings of judgments, the execution of them ordinarily may be prevented by repentance, and such is the patience of God, that he gives the vilest sinners a space to repent.

### Revelation 2:23

Ver. 23. *And I will kill her children,* those who are seduced by her, *with death;* I will destroy them; unless some special death, such as the plague, be here threatened. So shall all the churches near Thyatira know, that I am a God who do not only take notice of overt, scandalous acts, but of the secret thoughts, motions, counsels, and designs of men's hearts, Ps 7:10 Jer 11:20 17:10; and that I am a just God, who will deal with all according to their works.

### Revelation 2:24

Ver. 24. *But unto you I say;* you that are the ministers, for they are distinguished from the rest in Thyatira. The word again is plural, which lets us know these epistles were directed to no single persons.

*And unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine;* the rest of the members of the church in Thyatira, who have not embraced this doctrine of the Nicolaitanes published by Jezebel, &c.

*As they speak;* those seducers call their doctrine deep things, great mysteries revealed to them; as there are *the deep things of God,* 1Co 2:10, so these seducers would pretend their doctrines also were deep things: Christ calls them the devil's mysteries, deep things of Satan.

*I will put upon you none other burden;* I will lay no other burden of trials and afflictions.

### Revelation 2:25

Ver. 25. *But that which ye have already;* than you already groan under. Or, no other precepts than what you have had from the apostles: the precepts of God are called burdens, Mt 11:30 Ac 15:28.

*Hold fast till I come;* hold fast your profession, your faith and holiness, till I come to judgment.

### Revelation 2:26

Ver. 26. *And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end:* See Poole on "Re 2:7", See Poole on "Re 2:11", See Poole on "Re 2:17". Overcoming is here expounded by keeping Christ's works; that is, either the works by him commanded, or walking as he walked, and persevering therein to the end of his or their lives.

*To him will I give power over the nations;* either to judge those who live heathenish lives; or to convert nations to the faith; or, which is most probable, he shall sit with me upon a throne in the day of judgment, Mt 19:28, and *judge the world*, 1Co 6:2.

### Revelation 2:27

Ver. 27. *And he shall rule them with a rod of iron:* an iron rod either signifies a right rod, that will not be easily bent and made crooked; or a severe rod, which is most probably the sense: see Ps 2:9 Ps 12:5. The words by the psalmist are applied to Christ, and to the church, Re 12:5: to particular saints here, who rule the nations either in Christ their Head, or with Christ as their Chieftain, with the word of God powerfully convincing the world of sin and righteousness.

*As the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers;* and all paganism and heathen idolatries shall be broken in pieces. Or, in the day of judgment, the saints that persevere shall sit with Christ, and judge and condemn the world severely; and then they shall be broken in pieces, never again to be soldered or cemented.

*Even as I received of my Father;* for such a power and authority my Father hath given me, and I will give it to all them.

### Revelation 2:28

Ver. 28. Either the light of glory, the blessed vision of God, or a certain hope of eternal life; or the Holy Spirit, called so, 2Pe 1:19; or rather, of

myself. Christ himself is not called the *Sun of righteousness*, Mal 4:2, but *the Morning star*, Re 22:16, because he excelleth all other stars in glory, and scattereth the darkness of ignorance and error by the light of his gospel: I will make him partaker of myself.

### Revelation 2:29

Ver. 29. Here the same conclusion of this epistle as of all the rest, Re 2:7,11,17: See Poole on "Re 2:7".

Those who make this epistle typical and prophetical, make it a type of all the churches of Christ, from about the year 1260, or the end of the persecution of the Waldenses, until the protestant religion so far obtained, that whole nations owned it, which was about 1560, by which time England and Scotland had made it the religion of those nations: it had before this prevailed in Germany, Helvetia, France, and many other places, where it was the religion of whole cities and particular jurisdictions, &c.

### Revelation 3:1

#### Chapter Summary

Re 2:1-6 What John was commanded to write in commendation or reproof to the angels of the churches of Sardis,  
Re 2:7-13 Philadelphia,  
Re 2:14-22 and Laodicea.

Ver. 1. *The angel of the church:* See Poole on "Re 2:12". *Write:* See Poole on "Re 1:11".

*The seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars:* See Poole on "Re 1:3", See Poole on "Re 1:20".

*I know thy works:* this phrase here (as appears from what follows) can signify nothing but Christ's comprehension of the works of this church in his understanding, not his approbation of them.



*That thou hast a name that thou livest;* the ministry of this church had a name, that is, were reported as famous for their faith, diligence, and holiness; but their faith, without suitable works, was dead, and they were no better than hypocrites.

*And art dead;* spiritually dead.

### Revelation 3:2

Ver. 3. *Be watchful,* against sin, and unto thy duty, to perform it in a better manner than formerly.

*And strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die;* improve those gifts and good habits which are left thee as yet, but are faint and ready to die, if thou dost not look after the improvement and strengthening of them.

*For I have not found thy works perfect before God;* for I have not found thy works before God (whether thy works in thy ministry, or in thy conversation) such as they ought to be; thou mightest have done me more service, and thou mightest have done what thou hast done with more uprightness and sincerity.

### Revelation 3:3

Ver. 3. *Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard;* to wit, from the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. All true reformation, either of doctrine or manners, lies in the reduction of it to the doctrine delivered, and the rules of life given by them.

*And hold fast, and repent:* wherein our judgment or practice is conformable to theirs, it is to be held fast; wherein it hath varied, it is to be repented of.

*If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief;* if thou shalt not keep thyself free from gross sins or errors, and give diligence to

do it, I will come to thee, not as a friend to comfort and refresh thee, but as a thief to rob and destroy thee, and that suddenly.

*And thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee; I will surprise thee with my judgments, and thou shalt not know when my judgments shall overtake thee.*

### Revelation 3:4

Ver. 4. *Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, a few persons even in that polluted place, which have not defiled their garments;* who have kept their integrity and innocency. There is a garment of Christ's righteousness, which, once put on, is never lost, nor can be defiled; but there are garments of holiness also: hence the apostle calls to Christians to be *clothed with humility*. As sin is expressed under the notion of nakedness, so holiness is expressed under the notion of a garment, Eze 16:10 1Pe 5:5. Those who have not defiled their garments, are those that have kept a pure conscience.

*And they shall walk with me in white:* the Romans used to clothe their nobles, and such as were competitors for honours, in white garments; the priests and Levites also amongst the Jews, when they ministered, were clothed in white, 2Ch 5:12. God and his holy angels are in Scripture set out to us as clothed in white, Da 7:9 Mt 17:2 28:3. Those that triumphed upon victories obtained, were clothed in white amongst the Romans. To these usages, or some of them, the allusion is, and the meaning is, they shall be to me as kings, and priests, and nobles, they shall be made partakers of my glory: *for they are worthy;* though they have not merited it, yet I have judged them worthy; they are worthy, though not with respect to their merit, yet with respect to my promise.

### Revelation 3:5

Ver. 5. *He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment;* he that overcometh in the spiritual fight, shall be honoured as a triumpher.

*And I will not blot out his name out of the book of life;* that is, I will give him everlasting life: the phrase is an allusion to men who use to keep

books, and in them the names of persons to whom they will show kindness. The *book of life*; applied to God, signifieth his eternal predestination, or purpose to bring some to heaven; out of which book, though none can be blotted out whose name is once wrote in, yet those whose names are in this book may be under some fears and apprehensions to the contrary. Christ assures them to the contrary, that they shall certainly be saved, but lets them know that this assurance depends upon their perseverance; of which also some make this phrase a promise.

*But I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels;* in the day of judgment I will own them, and acknowledge them as mine before my Father and all the angels, Mt 10:32 Lu 12:8.

### Revelation 3:6

Ver. 6. The common conclusion of all the epistles: See Poole on "Re 2:7", See Poole on "Re 2:11", See Poole on "Re 2:17", See Poole on "Re 2:29".

Those who make these churches typical, and the epistles prophetical of the complexion of all the churches of Christ which shall be to the end of the world, say the church of Sardis typifieth those reformed churches after the year 1560, that should cast off antichrist, but continue in a more imperfect state, contenting themselves with a bare disclaiming antichrist, but not rising up to a perfect reformation.

### Revelation 3:7

Ver. 7. *And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:*

See Poole on "Re 1:20", See Poole on "Re 2:1". Of this Philadelphia we read no more in holy writ. We are told there were three cities of that name, one in Egypt, one in Syria, another in Phrygia, or in Mysia or Lydia, which is that here intended.

*These things saith he that is holy;* that is, the Holy One, Ac 3:14.

*He that is true;* true to his word of promise or threatening.

*He that hath the key of David;* that is, the key of the house of David, mentioned Isa 22:22; the key of the church, which answered the temple, the house David designed for God: the use of the key is to open and shut, or make fast.

*He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;* who admits into the kingdom of heaven whom he pleaseth, and none can hinder him, and shutteth out of heaven whom he pleaseth. The house of David typified the church, the church containeth the number of those that shall be saved; Christ is here described as he who hath the sole and absolute power of saving and condemning whom he pleaseth.

### Revelation 3:8

Ver. 8. *I know thy works:* it is very probable, that our Lord, by these ministers' works, understands the works proper to them in their function, their labour in preaching and propagating the gospel, which Christ did not only know and observe, but also approve of, and promiseth them a liberty to go on, and success in their labours, under the notion of *an open door*: see 1Co 16:9 2Co 2:12 Col 4:3.

*And no man can shut it;* so as it should not be in the power of adversaries to hinder his success.

*For thou hast a little strength;* both inward strength, and outward helps and advantages.

*And hast kept my word;* the doctrine of faith is by thee kept pure, as also my precepts for a holy life.

*And hast not denied my name;* and thou hast not been by any temptation prevailed upon to apostatize from the profession of the gospel.

### Revelation 3:9

Ver. 9. *Them of the synagogue of Satan;* so he calleth all Jews that

opposed Christianity, or all pretended but not real professors.

*Which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie: For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is of the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly, &c., Ro 2:28,29.* By this term also he may mean all false and hypocritical professors, who would make themselves the church, the only church of God, but are far enough from it, hating, maligning, and opposing those who would keep stricter to the rule of the gospel.

*Behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet; I will by my providence so order it, that these men shall come and honour thee, paying a civil respect and homage to thee.*

*And to know that I have loved thee; and to know that I have a greater kindness for thee than for them.*

### Revelation 3:10

Ver. 10. *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience:* the doctrine of the gospel is, unquestionably, the word here called the word of the Lord's patience, because it was that word, that doctrine, which (as those times went) could not be adhered to and observed without much patience in those that adhered to it; both actively, waiting for the promises revealed in it, and passively, enduring all manner of trials and crosses. To keep this word, was to keep close not only to the matters of faith revealed in it, but to the duty imposed by it upon ministers and others in the preaching and propagating of the gospel, and all the duties of a holy life.

*I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world;* for this faithfulness God promises to keep the ministers of this church from those persecutions which raged elsewhere, and were further, in Trajan's time, to come upon all Christians living under the Roman empire.

*To try them that dwell upon the earth;* to try those Christians that lived within that empire, how well they would adhere to Christ, and the profession of the gospel. This I take to be a more proper sense, than theirs

who would interpret this *hour of temptation* of the day of judgment, which is never so called.

### Revelation 3:11

Ver. 11. *Behold, I come quickly;* ταχυ, which certainly is the same with εν ταχει; and it might be as well concluded, that the day of judgment should come by that time Rome pagan should cease, as that all things written in this book had their accomplishment in that time, because Christ told John they should come to pass εν ταχει, Re 1:1 22:6. No other coming of Christ, but his coming to the last judgment, can be here meant.

*Hold that fast which thou hast;* κρατει, hold with a strong hand the doctrine of faith, which thou yet hast, pure, and thy pure worship, and discipline, and a pure conscience.

*That no man take thy crown;* that thou mayest not lose that reward which shall be the portion of those that persevere to the end, and of those only.

### Revelation 3:12

Ver. 21. *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God:* though by *the temple of God* in this place some understand the church of Christ on earth, where those always were, and are, and always shall be, most famous, who have overcome temptations best, from the world, the flesh, and the devil; yet, considering that all the promises before made to those who overcome are of another life, it seems best rather to interpret this so, that God would make such a one of fame and renown in heaven, *great in the kingdom of heaven,* Mt 5:19, to sit upon a throne there, Mt 19:28. He shall have a higher degree in glory, (for stars differ from one another in glory, 1Co 15:41), pillars being not only for support, but ornament, and principal parts in buildings.

*And he shall go no more out;* he shall have an eternal inheritance, of which he shall not be dispossessed.

*And I will write upon him the name of my God;* as men use, upon pillars

and monuments erected for their own use and honour, to write their names; so I will peculiarly own, and challenge such a one for myself.

*And the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem;* and I will write upon him: This man is an inhabitant of the new Jerusalem.

*And I will write upon him my new name;* I will glorify him with that glory of which myself was made partaker, upon my ascension after my resurrection, Joh 17:22,24.

### Revelation 3:13

Ver. 13. This we have met with at the close of every epistle: See Poole on "Re 3:7".

Those who think these churches were typical, and the matter of the epistles not only didactic and corrective, but prophetic, say, this church of Philadelphia was a type of all gospel churches which were to be in the world upon the Reformation; which more perfectly cast off antichrist, and would allow no key but that of the house of David, reforming themselves strictly according to the rule of the word, not according to state policy, and prudence.

### Revelation 3:14

Ver. 14. We read of this church, Col 4:16.

*Laodicea* was a city in Lydia, by the river Lycus: see Re 1:11.

*These things saith the Amen:* Amen, as we have oft noted, is a particle used in asserting, and in wishing, or praying; here it hath the use of a noun, and is assertive, he that is true, as it followeth. He may be conceived thus to preface his epistle, to ascertain to the ministers of this church the truth of what he blames in them; or of the threatenings or promises contained in it; to which purpose he also calls himself *the faithful and true witness*: see the notes on Re 1:5.

*The beginning of the creation of God:* those that deny the Divinity of Christ, are deceived in their thoughts that this text will afford them any defence for their error; for αρχη, the word here used, doth not only signify the cause, but principality, or the chief, or prince, Eph 3:10 Col 1:16. Hence Christ is said to be αρχη, which we translate the beginning, because he was the Creator, the efficient cause of the creation, or hath a lordship over the whole creation; all power both in heaven and earth being committed to him, and all knees both in heaven and earth bowing down to him, Php 2:10. Unless we had rather interpret it of the new creation, either in the world, so he was the beginning of the gospel; or in particular souls, so he is the beginning of regeneration and sanctification. But though this be a truth, and consistent enough with the Greek phrase, Ga 6:15, yet I see no reason why we should fly to it against the Arians, or their spurious offspring; for taking the creation, as ordinarily it signifies, the giving all creatures their first being, Christ was the efficient cause of it, and so the beginning of it, *without him was nothing made*; and he hath a lordship and dominion over it.

### Revelation 3:15

Ver. 15. *I know thy works;* I know and observe thy behaviour, thy ministerial function.

*That thou art neither cold nor hot;* thou art neither openly profane and grossly scandalous, like heathens, or such as make no profession; nor yet hast thou any true zeal or warmth, either for the faith once delivered to the saints, or in love to God, seen in keeping his commandments, having the power and efficacy of godliness, teaching thee to deny *all ungodliness and worldly lusts*, Tit 2:12. Thou hast a form of godliness, but deniest the life and power thereof.

*I would thou wert cold or hot:* we must not think Christ wisheth any persons cold absolutely, but comparatively, intimating to us, that the condition of a downright atheist, or profane person, is more hopeful than that of a close, formal hypocrite: the latter is in the road to hell as well as the other, and no more pleaseth God than the other. It is better not to have known the truth, than knowing it, to live contrary to it, Lu 12:48 2Pe 2:21. Commonly such men also are proud, and self-conceited, having something



to stop the mouth of their natural conscience, harder to be convinced of their evil state, Mt 21:32,33.

### Revelation 3:16

Ver. 16. *Neither cold nor hot;* partly good, partly bad, having something of profession, nothing of the life and power of religion; contenting thyself that thou art not a Jew, nor a pagan; not a superstitious, idolatrous person; but a Christian, a protestant, a minister, or member of the Reformed church; yet neglecting thy duty both as a minister, and as a Christian, living in a sensual satisfaction of thy lusts.

*I will spue thee out of my mouth;* I will cast thee off, as men vomit up lukewarm things.

### Revelation 3:17

Ver. 17. *Because thou sayest, I am rich:* it was said before, that one reason why the condition of a formalist is worse than that of an atheist, or more openly profane person, is, because the former is ordinarily proud and self-conceited, and hath something to stop the mouth of his natural conscience with, which the other wanteth. This is made good in the instance of this lukewarm angel; he said he was rich in a spiritual sense, in his state as a Christian, in spiritual gifts and endowments.

*And increased with goods;* and every day increasing and growing richer.

*And have need of nothing;* and needed nothing to make him happy and blessed.

*And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked;* in the mean time he was as miserable as one could be. These words used, are several words signifying persons under various bodily afflictions, and applied to signify this angel's forlorn spiritual state, which, in the general, was wretched and miserable, and such as had need of mercy, wanting the true righteousness, wherein any could appear before God not naked, and wanting all true riches; and to complete his misery, he

was spiritually blind, and knew not the sad circumstances he was under.

### Revelation 3:18

Ver. 18. Buying being the usual way amongst men to procure what they want, it is not to be wondered at, that the procuring of that spiritual blessing here mentioned is expressed under this notion; though our buying of God spiritual good things be (as the prophet expresseth it, Isa 55:1) *without money and without price*. It is not to be doubted, but that which is here propounded to be bought (that is, obtained, and procured by such ways and means as God hath directed) is Christ himself, with all his benefits, in whom there is a sufficient spiritual supply for all our spiritual wants; that which to the soul will answer whatever gold serveth the body for; and which to the soul answereth what clothing is to the body, viz. righteousness, wherein a soul may stand before God; and that which will answer what salves are to the body for the cure of its wounds, viz. consolation, and healing of all spiritual wounds and infirmities; in short, whatever thou hast need of, considered either as poor, wretched, and miserable, or as blind and naked.

### Revelation 3:19

Ver. 19. *I rebuke and chasten;* ελεγχω και παιδεω the words may be translated, I convince and instruct, or deal with them as children; but it also signifies to *chasten*, and is so translated, 1Co 11:32 Heb 12:7; we translate it *learn*, 1Ti 1:20. By these words Christ lets this angel know, that although he had in this epistle dealt smartly with him, yet he had done it from a principle of love, as a father to a child, Heb 12:7.

*Be zealous therefore, and repent;* he adviseth him therefore to quit himself of his luke warmness, and to recover a warmth and zeal for God, repenting of his former coldness and negligence in his duty.

### Revelation 3:20

Ver. 20. There is a double interpretation of this text, each of them claiming

under very valuable interpreters; some making it a declaration of Christ's readiness to come in to souls, and to give them a spiritual fellowship and communion with himself; others interpreting it of Christ's readiness to come to the last judgment, and to take his saints into an eternal joyful fellowship and communion with himself: hence there is a different interpretation of every sentence in the text.

*I stand at the door;* either, in my gospel dispensations, I stand at the door of sinners' hearts; or, I am ready to come to judge the world.

*And knock,* by the inward monitions and impressions of my Spirit, or my ministers more externally; or, I am about to knock, that is, I am ready to have the last trump sounded.

*If any man hear my voice, and open the door;* that is, if any man will hearken to the counsels and exhortations of my ministers, and to the monitions of my Spirit, and not resist my Holy Spirit; or, if any man hath heard my voice, and opened his heart to me.

*I will come in to him;* I will come in by my Spirit, and all the saving influences of my grace; or, I will come to him as a Judge to acquit him.

*And will sup with him, and he with me;* and I will have a communion with him in this life, he shall eat my flesh, and drink my blood; or, I will have an eternal fellowship and communion with him in my glory. The phrase seems rather to favour the first sense; the so frequent mention before of Christ's coming to judgment, and the reward of another life, as arguments to persuade the angels of the churches to their duty, favours the latter sense.

### Revelation 3:21

Ver. 21. *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne;* I will give him great honour, dignity, and power; he shall judge the world in the day of judgment, 1Co 6:3, the twelve, tribes of Israel, Mt 19:28; he shall be made partaker of my glory, Joh 17:22,24.

*Even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne;*

but they must come to my throne as I came to it. I overcame the world, sin, death, the devil, and then ascended, and sat down with my Father in his throne: so they that will sit down with me in my throne of glory, must fight the same fight, and overcome, and then be crowned, sitting with me in my throne.

### Revelation 3:22

Ver. 22. We have had this in the conclusion of every epistle before: see Re 2:7,11,17,29, and in Re 3:6,13.

Those who make these churches typical of all Christian churches, from the time John had this Revelation, and prophetic of the complexion of the Christian churches in all ages, say, that the church of Laodicea typifieth the churches towards the end of the world till Christ cometh; but this necessitateth them to think there shall be no such pure and glorious state of the church just before the end of the world, as many believe there shall be, but that the state thereof shall grow yet worse and worse, of a Laodicean temper, so as when Christ cometh he shall hardly *find faith on the earth*.

For my part, I could allow the seven epistles to be typical and prophetic, but can by no means judge them to be purely prophetic; believing there were such churches when John wrote, and that their complexion is in the first place described in these epistles; though possibly, as face answers face in a glass, so succeeding churches have answered, and shall answer, the face of these churches, even to the last day.

This chapter concludes John's first vision. In the following chapters we have a representation in visions of what was to happen in the world more remarkably, with reference to the church of God, from the year 95, to the end of the world.

There are very different opinions about the epocha, or the time, when the visions began to be fulfilled. My opinion is, it began soon after John had the vision; for it is twice said, Re 1:1 22:6, that the visions were to be about things that shall come to pass, (not that were come to pass), and that

shortly; but we cannot fix the certain year, which maketh the interpretation difficult.

There are also divers opinions how far in this book the revelations go that concern the state of the church under Rome pagan, and where they begin that foretell the state of the church under antichrist. But of these we shall speak more particularly as we go along with the several chapters.

### Revelation 4:1

#### Chapter Summary

Re 4:1-3 John seeth the throne of God in heaven,  
Re 4:4,5 encompassed with four and twenty elders,  
Re 4:6,7 and four beasts full of eyes before and behind.

Re 4:8-11 The continual adoration and worship offered by the beasts and elders before him that sat on the throne.

Ver. 1. *After this;* after I had the first vision, mentioned Re 1:1-20, and had written what it was the pleasure of God I should write to the churches, in a book, perceiving the way God designed to reveal himself to me was by vision.

*I looked;* I looked again, hoping and being desirous to see something further as to the mind of God.

*And, behold, a door was opened;* I saw the heavens opened, as Mt 3:16 Ac 7:56.

*In heaven;* he, doubtless, meaneth the third heavens. Such a vision, as to this particular, John had at Christ's baptism, Mt 3:1-17, and Stephen when he was stoned. He also heard the voice of one speaking aloud to him, like the voice he heard, Re 1:10; *which said, Come up hither,* into heaven, the new Jerusalem which is above; as the old Jerusalem stood upon a hill, or rising ground, so as they who went thither are constantly said to *go up*, Isa 2:3 Ac 11:2 Ga 1:17,18 2:1.

*And I will show thee things which must be hereafter;* not which have been, (for to what purpose had that been)? But which shall happen hereafter both to my church and to her enemies: from which it appears, that God did not here show his prophet the destruction of Jerusalem, for that was already past, in the time of Titus Vespasian the Roman emperor, about the year 69, or 70, after the incarnation; this (as all confess) was in Domitian's time, about the 11th or 12th year of his reign, about twenty-six or twenty-seven years after that was past, which makes the notion of two late annotators very strange.

#### Revelation 4:2

Ver. 2. *In the Spirit;* in an ecstasy, as Paul, 2Co 12:2, and Peter, Ac 10:10, and Ezekiel, Eze 3:12, and himself was both before and after this, Re 1:10 17:3 21:10.

*A throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne:* God is constantly described, in the prophetic visions, as sitting upon a throne, to denote his power and dominion, that he is the King of kings, and Lord of lords. See Da 7:9, &c.

#### Revelation 4:3

Ver. 3. This is all but a description of the glory of God, as he appeared to John in this vision. The *jasper stone* is famous for its transparency, and variety of colours it offereth to the eye, and may signify the various and infinite perfections of God. The *sardine stone* is red, and of a bloody colour, which may signify the power, justice, and terror of God. The *rainbow* was the sign of God's covenant with Noah, signifying his being so far reconciled to the world, as that he would not again destroy it by water, Ge 9:13. The *emerald* is green, and pleasant to the eye. So as this vision of God represents God powerful, just, and good, and of various and infinite perfections.

#### Revelation 4:4

Ver. 4. Some think (and not improbably) that here is an allusion to the twenty-four courses of the priests and Levites, established by God for his service in the sanctuary and temple of old, 1Ch 24:18 25:31; and that these twenty-four elders either typified the whole church under the New Testament, the number of the tribes of Israel (which made up the church under the Old Testament) being doubled to show the increase of the church's territories under the gospel, or the heads of the church, either under the Old Testament or New, there being twelve patriarchs and twelve apostles. They are represented *sitting*, to denote their state of rest and ease; and *clothed in white raiment*, to denote their purity and holiness, or being clothed with Christ's righteousness; and having *crowns of gold on their heads*, to denote that state of dignity and glory to which God had advanced them.

#### Revelation 4:5

Ver. 5. *And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices*: these words denote a very glorious and terrible appearance of God, denoting his majesty, and power over his enemies. There is, possibly, an allusion to God's appearance at the giving of the law, Ex 19:16; only we read there but of one voice, and that of a trumpet, inarticulate. The *lamps of fire before the throne*, have a correspondence with the seven lamps of the tabernacle, which gave light to the whole house of God, Ex 27:20; and are here expounded to be *the seven Spirits of God*, that is, the Holy Spirit in his seven-fold (that is, manifold) dispensations of grace, 1Co 12:4,5, by which he enlighteneth, quickeneth, healeth, and comforteth the several souls that are the true members of his church. See Poole on "Re 1:4".

#### Revelation 4:6

Ver. 6. *And before the throne*; the throne mentioned before, Re 4:2,3, upon which *one sat*, &c.

*A sea of glass like unto crystal*; another allusion to the tabernacle or temple, in which was a sea, that is, a large vessel full of water; it was for

Aaron and his sons to wash their hands, and feet, and sacrifices in, Ex 30:19 1Ki 7:23; it was ten cubits broad, five cubits high, and thirty cubits about. Here it is said to have been *of glass*; this, probably, signified the blood of Christ, in which all those souls and services must be washed which are accepted of and acceptable unto God. Its being represented here as of glass, may signify the purity and spotlessness of him whose blood it was. Other guesses there are many at the significancy of this *sea of glass*, but this seems to me most probable, because the use of the sea in the temple is made good in Christ. John in this vision also saw *four beasts*, which beasts are said:

1. To be *in the midst of, and round about the throne*.
2. To be *full of eyes before and behind*.
3. They are, Re 4:7, said to have resembled *a lion, a calf, a man in the face, and a flying eagle*; Re 4:8, *each of them had six wings, and they were full of eyes within*, and incessantly glorified God.

*Question.* Whom did these beasts signify?

*Solution.* There are various notions about them. Some judge them the four evangelists; but John himself was one of these, and yet alive. Some will have them four apostles that were mostly at Jerusalem; but I see no ground for that. Some will have them angels; others, glorified saints; but we shall afterwards find them distinguished from both these. Others will have them the whole church. But the most probable sense is, that they represented the ministers of the church, who are living creatures, whose place is between God and his church, as those beasts are placed between the throne and the elders; and who are but four to the twenty-four elders, being but few in comparison with the multitude of believers; and yet have eyes on all sides, being enough to see to the affairs of the whole church of Christ on the earth. In this sense I rest; only here remains a question, how these are said to be *in the midst of the throne, and yet round about the throne*? To which various answers are given; that which pleaseth me best is,  $\epsilon\nu \mu\epsilon\sigma\omega$ , in the middle, is not to be strained to signify a place at equal distance from two extremes, but more largely and proverbially for near the throne, or near him who sat upon the throne. See the several notions about this phrase in Mr. Pool's Latin Synopsis.



### Revelation 4:7

Ver. 7. It is observed concerning these four living creatures, (for so they were, not beasts in a strict sense, as it is opposed to flying things, for the fourth was a fowl):

1. That they were the same mentioned in Ezekiel's vision, Eze 1:10; only each one there is said to have had the four faces of these creatures, here each one had a single face proper to it.
2. That these were the four creatures whose portraitures were in the four ensigns of the Israelites as they were marshalled into four companies, allotting the men of three tribes to each company.

Judah's standard had a lion in its colours, according to Jacob's prophecy of that tribe, Ge 49:9, Ephraim had an ox, Reuben had a man, Dan an eagle. This the learned Mede proves from the Rabbins, who, though fabulous enough, yet in such a thing may be credited. It is also thought they answered the four cherubims in the temple.

*Question.* But what is signified by these four living creatures?

*Solution.* Some say the four evangelists; others, four apostles, &c. But certainly they judge best who say, that by them is signified the various gifts with which God blesseth his ministers, giving to some more courage and fortitude, that they are like lions; to others more mildness and meekness, that they are like oxen or calves; others have more wisdom and prudence, which most adorn a man; others a more piercing insight into the mysteries of God's kingdom, rendering them like eagles.

### Revelation 4:8

Ver. 8. *And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him: the seraphims in Isaiah's vision, Re 6:2, had so; there their use is declared, — with twain he covered his face, with twain his feet, and with twain he did fly.* If we understand all the wings here for flight, they signify the readiness

of God's ministers to move every way that God will send them: if we understand them as interpreted by Isa 6:2, they signify their various graces, their fear, dread, and reverence of God; their humility and modesty; their agility, or readiness to obey all the commands of God.

*And they were full of eyes within:* this denotes that large measure of knowledge, and diligence, and watchfulness, which should be in a minister of Christ.

*And they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty:* this was the song of the seraphims, Isa 6:3, and shows how much it should be the care of ministers to make God known in all his attributes, his holiness especially, and his power.

*Which was, and is, and is to come;* and his eternity and simplicity, as he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, without variableness or shadow of change.

#### Revelation 4:9

Ver. 9. *And when those beasts,* the living creatures before expressed, signifying the ministers of the gospel, *give glory, &c.;* when they praise God who is eternal.

#### Revelation 4:10

Ver. 10. The whole church also paid an homage of reverence and adoration to the same God; acknowledging all the good done to them, or wrought in them, to proceed from God, and the glory of it to be due unto God alone. The ministers of the gospel are, by their preaching unto people their duty, an occasion, or instruments, of that homage and adoration which he hath from all his people.

#### Revelation 4:11

Ver. 11. All the praises, homages, and acknowledgments of all the

creatures is thy due; as then art he who gavest the first being to all creatures, and therefore gavest it them, that they might praise, honour, serve, and obey thee.

## Revelation 5:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 5:1-3 The book sealed with seven seals, which no man is worthy to open.

Re 5:4,5 John weeping thereat is comforted.

Re 5:6,7 The Lamb that was slain taketh the book to open it.

Re 5:8-10 The beasts and the elders praise him that had redeemed them with his blood.

Re 5:11-14 The angels join with them in ascribing glory to God and to the Lamb.

### Chapter Introduction

The same vision yet proceedeth. Hitherto John had only seen a throne, with a person sitting upon it in a very glorious habit and appearance, twenty-four grave persons, and four living creatures, in the shape of a lion, a calf, a man, and an eagle, each of them with six wings, and full of eyes, about the throne; and heard the twenty-four living creatures constantly giving glory to God, and the twenty-four elders harmonizing with them, and joining likewise in the high praises of God. Now the vision proceedeth.

Ver. 1. The disputes what this *book* was are very idle; for it was certainly the book of which we read hereafter, that it was opened, and to which the seven seals mentioned in the following chapters were annexed, of the opening of all which we read; and this could be no other than *codex fatidicus*, ( as Mr. Mede calls it), the book of the counsels, decrees, and purposes of God relating to his church, as to what more remarkable things should happen to it to the end of the world; which book was in the hand of the Father.

*Written within, and on the back-side;* very full of matter, so as it was written on all sides.

*Sealed with seven seals;* hitherto concealed from the world, and to be revealed by parts, as to the bringing to pass of those things decreed in it; though all at once by God here revealed, in a degree, by visions unto John.

### Revelation 5:2

Ver. 2. There were no weak angels, but possibly this angel might, in appearance to John, look as if he were stronger than others; or rather, so judged from the great and *loud voice* he used.

*Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?* Not that he thought any was able, or worthy. We can only conclude from hence the impotency of men to search, and find out, and expound the deep things of God, and consequently the unlawfulness of too narrow a prying into his secret mysteries.

### Revelation 5:3

Ver. 3. None of the angels *in heaven*, nor any man upon the *earth*, nor any of them whose bodies are *under the earth* and their souls in heaven, nor any infernal spirits; none was found sufficient *to open the book*, and *to look on it*. There was none who replied to the angel's question, Re 5:2.

### Revelation 5:4

Ver. 4. As it is the nature of man to desire to know secret and hidden things, especially such as we apprehend of concernment to ourselves, or those whom we love, or are interested in it; and to be troubled, if we know they may be known, and are at a loss for due means whereby to come to the knowledge of them.

## Revelation 5:5

Ver. 5. We must remember that John is here describing a vision, and that part of it which is but introductory to the material parts of it. He had in his vision seen a book in the right hand of God the Father, sitting upon his throne of glory; he had heard an angel proclaiming: If any were worthy, he should open the book, and loose the seals. None appeared to answer that voice; he was troubled; he thought he heard one saying to him: Be not troubled, the book shall be opened. Christ shall open the book, and loose the seals of it, who is here expressed under a double character:

1. *The Lion of the tribe of Judah;* he is so called, undoubtedly, with allusion to Jacob's prophecy, Ge 49:9,10, wherein Judah was compared to *a lion's whelp*, because he should be victorious. Christ was to be born of this tribe, and was to be a great Conqueror.
2. He is called *the Root of David;* he was a *Branch of David*, as he was man, but *the Root of David*, as he was God; therefore David, Ps 110:1, called him *Lord*, though he was his Son.

*Hath prevailed* with his Father to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof; for leave to open the book, and loose the seals thereof; i.e. to reveal those things that are the counsels and purposes of God relating to his church, and the affairs thereof, to the world's end. I do not think we are at all concerned to inquire who is here meant by *one of the twenty-four elders*. As in parables there are some things put in merely to complete the feigned history, so in the relation of visions some things of that nature are put in, which need not a particular explication. The sum is: That while John was troubled for fear he should not know what was in the book, he was told by one of those who attended the throne, that he need not be troubled, for Christ had obtained a liberty from his Father (in whose power only times and seasons for future things were) to reveal these counsels of God as to things to come.

## Revelation 5:6

Ver. 6. *And I beheld;* hearing the mention of a Lion of the tribe of Judah, he looks about wistly to see if he could see any justifying that

representation.

*And, lo, in the midst the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb:* instead of a Lion he seeth a Lamb; Christ Jesus, called a *Lamb* by this apostle, Joh 1:29,36, and very often in this book; a Lamb, for whiteness and innocency, 1Pe 1:19, for meekness and patience, Ac 8:32, but here with reference to the paschal lamb.

*As it had been slain;* for he appears wounded and pierced, as if he had been slain; and to show that he was equal with the Father, he appears in the midst of the throne; and in the midst of the elders, and of the four living creatures, to show his presence with his church and ministers, Mt 28:20, and his walking (as was said, Re 2:1) in the midst of his churches, which were the golden candlesticks there mentioned.

*Having seven horns;* he appeareth now with seven horns, which are members in which the beasts' strength, power, and beauty is much seen, to denote his glory and beauty, and the power he had now received to offend and conquer all his enemies.

*And seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God;* and with seven eyes, which were the seven Spirits of God, mentioned Re 1:4 4:5; endued with the Spirit of God, (which is also called his Spirit), not given to him by measure.

*Sent forth into all the earth;* which spiritual gifts and perfections he exerciseth over all the earth, both with relation to his church, and to his church's enemies.

### Revelation 5:7

Ver. 7. This Lamb with seven horns and seven eyes, having been slain, and having prevailed with his Father to open this book, mentioned Re 5:1, of all the secrets, counsels, and purposes of God relating to his church, he came and took it of his Father, in whose right hand it was, as Re 5:1.

From hence to the end of this chapter, are nothing but songs sang by the living creatures which John saw, and the twenty-four elders which he saw,

and an innumerable company of angels, to the honour and glory of Jesus Christ, as the Redeemer of man, and the Head of the church, upon this taking of the book from the right hand of his Father.

### Revelation 5:8

Ver. 8. When the Lamb that had been slain had obtained of him that sat on the throne to open the book of God's secret counsels relating to his church, mentioned Re 5:1, and had taken it out of his right hand, John saw *the four beasts*, the four living creatures, mentioned Re 4:6-8, by which seemed to be represented the ministers of the gospel, or the whole church of Christ; *and the four and twenty elders*, that had on their heads crowns of gold, mentioned Re 4:4, by which, we said, were represented either the ministers of the church, or the whole church.

*Fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours:* he alludeth to the worship of God under the Old Testament, where in the temple they were wont to praise God with instruments of music, and offering up of frankincense: see 1Ch 13:8 15:16 2Ch 5:12 Neh 12:27 Ps 33:2 141:2 150:3. These *vials of odours*, he tells us, signified *the prayers of the saints*. The whole verse signifies the prayers and praises, even all that adoration which God, under the gospel, should have from his ministers and people, for constituting his Son the Head of his church, and making him their Prophet, Priest, and King.

### Revelation 5:9

Ver. 9. *And they sung a new song:* by a *new song* is either to be understood an excellent song, (for new songs are usually most valued), or (which pleaseth me best) *new* as to the matter of it; for the servants of God under the Old Testament could not bless God for the actual redemption of man by the blood of Christ, but only rejoice in hope, embracing the promises seen afar off by the eye of faith.

*Saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof;* they acknowledge Christ worthy to be intrusted with his church, and the revelations of the counsels of God, with relation to it, to open them.

*For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us, &c.; because he had redeemed his church, scattered over all the world, from sin, death, and hell, unto God, to serve him, and to live for ever with him, and that with no less price than his own blood; Wherefore (as the apostle tells us, Php 2:9) God hath exalted him.*

### Revelation 5:10

Ver. 10. The four living creatures and four and twenty elders (by which are represented the ministers and members of the church of Christ) go on in showing why they had reason to proclaim Christ worthy to be the Prophet to his church, to open the counsels of God to them, viz. because of the great love he had showed to them, not only in redeeming them with his blood from the guilt and power of sin, but in making them kings and priests; giving them the same privileges that the Jewish church had, who were called a royal priesthood, Ex 19:6; giving them a power (as priests) to offer up not such bloody fleshly sacrifices as they offered, but) *spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God* through the Beloved, 1Pe 2:5: and also (as kings) to rule over their lusts and sensitive appetite; and to *reign* hereafter *on the earth*, judging the world (1Co 6:3) at the great day, with the great Judge of the quick and the dead.

### Revelation 5:11

Ver. 11. *And I beheld,* I still attended diligently, *and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders;* and I heard many angels, with the living creatures and the elders; (from whence we gather, that we must not, by the living creatures, or elders, understand angels, for they are mentioned apart by themselves, neither could they say, as Re 5:9,10, that Christ had redeemed them with his blood); these angels joined in this harmony with the church to give glory to Christ.

*And the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;* their number was infinite, not to be numbered. See the like, Da 7:10.



### Revelation 5:12

Ver. 12. *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain;* the Lamb mentioned Re 5:6, with *seven horns and seven eyes*, viz. Jesus Christ.

*To receive power, and riches;* he is worthy of those horns he weareth, emblems of power and strength given unto him; for all power was given him in heaven and earth.

*And wisdom;* and of those seven eyes he hath, i.e. of the spirit of wisdom, Isa 11:2, the riches of grace and wisdom.

*And strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing;* and of all the homage, glory, praise, blessing, and obedience, which people can give him. I know not whether there be any thing in the observation made by some, that the number of things here mentioned, of which the Lamb is worthy, answereth the number of the seven Spirits of God, before mentioned.

### Revelation 5:13

Ver. 13,14. The meaning of the several phrases here used, is not to be strictly and particularly examined; the sense of them all in general is, to show the consent of all the angels and glorified saints, and of the whole church, in giving praise unto God, and particularly to the Lord Jesus Christ, (the Lamb), for the work of man's redemption; and their particular consent, that Christ is to be worshipped as the Father; and the consent and acquiescence of the whole creation in the counsel and purpose of God, and in the work of his providence, constituting Christ as the King, Priest, and Prophet of his church. And though inanimate creatures, or sensitive creatures, cannot speak, yet they are also said to join in these praises, as the glory of God shineth in them, and they, by him, shall be freed from that vanity under which they groan, Ro 8:19-21, and enjoy something of the liberty of the sons of God; and shall all be subject and obedient unto Christ in their respective stations and orders, Php 2:9,10, and fulfil his will in the execution of his counsels and purposes in the government of the world, in order to the preservation of his church.

## Revelation 6:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 6:1-17 The opening of six of the seals in order, and what followed thereupon.

### Chapter Introduction

We are now come to the prophetical, and therefore the most difficult, part of this mysterious book; as to which I judge it reasonable, before we come to open the mysterious text, (after Mr. Pool's method in his Latin Synopsis), to premise some things which may instruct the reader of these notes, both of the things wherein the difficulties lie, and of the fairest way to find out the sense of them. Hitherto we have met with no great difficulties; what have been, have been chiefly:

1. Concerning the seven Spirits of God.
2. Concerning the seven churches, and epistles to them; whether the churches be to be considered typically, and what was written to them be to be understood in a prophetic, as well as a didactic, or a corrective sense?

But in what follows we shall find great (if not some inextricable) difficulties. To prepare a way for the explication of which:

1. I shall first take it for granted, that from this chapter to the end of the book, is revealed the most remarkable things which have happened, or shall happen, to the church of God over all the earth, from the time of this Revelation first made to John, to the end of the world.

2. Hence it followeth, that many of the things prophesied are fulfilled; but how many is hard to determine, because the time is not set when these revelations should take place; whether (as some would have it) from the beginning of Christianity, which, to me, seemeth not probable; because at this time ninety-five years were elapsed since that time, and this prophecy

was concerning the things that were to be after the time of John's being in Patmos, Re 1:1 22:6; or from the beginning of the time when the Jewish church and state ceased, which was twenty-six or twenty-seven years before this; or from the time when this Revelation was, which was Anno 95, or thereabouts, in the time when Domitian was the Roman emperor, and had began his persecution of the Christians, which (as historians tell us) was but five years before he was slain, for he was slain in September, 97. And for those that are fulfilled, the things spoken are so applicable to various accidents happening in that period of time, that it is very difficult oftentimes to assert the sense of the prophecy.

3. I take it for granted also, that things happened in the same order as is here described; so as the things under the second seal came not to pass till those prophesied of under the first seal were, in a great measure, accomplished, &c.

4. I agree with those who think, that what we have, Re 12:1-13:18, Re 17:1-18:24, are but a prophecy of other things that happened to the church at the same times spoken of, Re 6:1-10:11.

5. I do believe the visions of the seals, trumpets, and vials, Re 6:1-17, 8:1-13, 15:1-8, 16:1-21, the principal prophecies, and contain the revelation of things in order as they were to happen; and of these, that of the seals is the principal.

6. I agree with those who think, that God, by the first six seals, intends the whole space from the time when the things written in this book began to be fulfilled, unto the time when paganism was rooted out of the Roman empire, which some make the year 310, some, 325. In which time (counting the beginning from the time when John was in Patmos, which was in Domitian's time) the emperors of Rome were Nerva, Trajan, Adrianus, Antoninus Pius, Antoninus Philosophus, Antoninus Verus, Commodus, Severus, Caracalla, Macrinus, Heliogabalus, Alexander Severus, Maximinus, Gordianus, Philippus, Decius, Valerianus, Gallienus, Claudius, Aurelianus, Tacitus, Probus, Carus, Numerianus, Dioclesianus with Maximinianus, Constantius Chlorus with Galerius, Constantius with Galerius, Constantinus; in all, twenty-seven, in about two hundred years: they were all persecutors, and God allowed them short reigns. So as what we have revealed in and under the first six seals, happened within the

Short space of the three hundred or three hundred and twenty-five first years after Christ; I am apt to think, after ninety-eight or one hundred of them were elapsed. These things being premised, let us now come to consider the text.

Ver. 1. John's vision continueth still: by *the Lamb* he means Christ, the Lamb oft mentioned Re 5:1-14; and by *one of the seals*, one of the seven seals mentioned Re 5:1, that were set upon the book which John saw in the right hand of God the Father, given to Christ, Re 5:7. Christ began to discover the counsels of God relating to that first period of his church. And John heard one of the four living creatures speaking to him with a great and terrible voice, like *the noise of thunder*. Inviting him to come near, or to attend and see.

### Revelation 6:2

Ver. 2. Some, by this *white horse*, understand the gospel; others, the Roman empire. And by him that sat thereon with a bow, some understand Christ going forth with power to convert the nations; others (and in my opinion more probably) the Roman emperors, armed with power, and having the imperial crown, carrying all before them. So as that which God intended by this to reveal to St. John, was, that the Roman emperors should yet continue, and use their power against his church. Those that understand by the *white horse*, the gospel, or God's dispensations to his church under the first period, and by the rider, Christ, (amongst whom is our famous Mede), think, that hereby all the time is signified from Christ's ascension, which was in the thirty-fourth year after his incarnation, till the time that all the apostles were dead, that is, the first hundred years after Christ (for so long histories tell us John lived). It was the age then current, and so may take up part of the vision of things that were to come. The history of all but forty of those years we have in the Acts, till Paul was carried prisoner to Rome. In this period ruled Augustus Caesar, (in whose time Christ was born, Lu 2:1), Tiberius, Claudius, and Nero, Galba, Otho, F. Vespasianus, Titus, and Domitian, Nerva, and Trajan, ten or eleven in all. They went on *conquering, and to conquer* the world. But till Nero's time, about the year 66, they did not begin to persecute the Christians; nor did Vespasian and Titus much rage, nor Domitian, till he had reigned eight years: so as I leave it indifferent to the reader, whether to understand by

the *white horse* and his rider, God's dispensations of providence to his church these first years, causing his gospel to prevail much, and conquering many to the profession of it, or the Roman empire, with those that ruled it: what is said is true of both.

### Revelation 6:3

Ver. 3. *The second seal;* the second of those seven seals with which the book, mentioned Re 5:1, was sealed.

*The second beast;* the *beast like a calf*, Re 4:7.

*Come and see;* inviting John to attend.

### Revelation 6:4

Ver. 4. *And there went out another horse that was red;* signifying blood and slaughter.

*And power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth;* either to Christ, (as some say), or to those that ruled the affairs of the Roman empire at that time, to disturb the peace of the church.

*And that they should kill one another:* this was a time of much blood.

*And there was given unto him a great sword;* and therefore a sword is given to him that rode upon the this horse. Some think that this period began with Nero, thirty-four years before the other ended (according to what was said before); others make it to begin with Trajan, and to comprehend eighty years, until the time of Commodus; in which time Trajan, and Hadrian, and the three Antoninuses successively ruled the Roman empire: the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian took up near half the time, in which time this prophecy was most eminently fulfilled; for in Trajan's time the Jews rebelling, and killing many subjects of the Roman empire, to the number of twenty-two thousand in one place, and two hundred and forty thousand in another place, themselves were as miserably handled by the Roman forces sent by Trajan and Hadrian, who slew of

them (as histories tell us) five hundred and fourscore thousand: nay, the Jews themselves say, they lost double the number of those who came out of Egypt, and more than they lost by Nebuchadnezzar, or by Titus when their city was taken: on the other side the Romans lost very many. Many Christians also were put to death during this period, during which was the third and fourth persecution.

### Revelation 6:5

Ver. 5. *The third beast* was he who had *the face of a man*, who also inviteth John to *come and see* what came forth upon his opening *the third seal*. He seeth *a black horse*, and a rider upon him, with *a pair of balances*. There is a difference amongst interpreters what should be signified by this *black horse*; some by it understand famine, because a scarcity of victuals bringeth men to a black and swarthy colour; some understand by it justice, because the rider is said to have *a pair of balances in his hand*; others understand by it heresies, and great sufferings of the church by heretics and others.

*He that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand*; either to give men their bread by weight, (as is usual in times of great scarcity), or to measure out every one their due.

### Revelation 6:6

Ver. 6. *A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny*: interpreters are at so great a loss here to fix the sense, that some think this phrase signifies famine and scarcity; others think it signifies great plenty. The Greek word here used, signifieth, say some, half a bushel; others say it signifieth so much bread corn as is sufficient for four loaves; others say, something more than a quart; others, so much as was allowed servants for maintenance for a day: let it be which it will, it signifies no great scarcity; for the word signifying *a penny*, signified but as much in our money as came to seven pence halfpenny. I think therefore Mr. Mede judgeth well, that by the *black horse* was signified not a time of famine and scarcity, but of plenty; and the rather, because it is added, *hurt not the oil and the wine*: and that the *balances* in the rider's hands

signified not scales to give men their bread by weight, (as in a time of scarcity), but the balance of justice; nor will the colour of the horse conclude the contrary. The whole therefore of this prophecy seemeth to foretell that this period, from the time of Commodus the Roman emperor, who ruled the empire from the year 180 to 197, and was followed by Severus, Macrinus, Caracalla, Hellogabalus, and Alexander Severus, the son of Mammeas, who came to the empire Anno 222, and reigned to 237, should be a time of great plenty and civil justice. Histories tell us of no famine in that time, but large stories of the great care of two of those emperors especially, for supplying their countries with corn, and for the administering of civil justice. The things foretold by the opening of this seal, our famous Mede makes to have had their accomplishment with the determination of the reign of Alexander Severus.

#### Revelation 6:7

Ver. 7. The beast mentioned Re 4:7, that had the face of a *flying eagle*, inviteth John to attend to the opening of *the fourth seal*, that is, the revelation of the counsels of God, as to what should happen to the church (within the Roman empire) in the fourth period, which is conceived to have begun with Maximinus, about the year 237, and to have ended with the reign of Dioclesian, 294.

#### Revelation 6:8

Ver. 8. *A pale horse*; a horse of the colour of his rider, *Death*, which makes men look pale, and bringeth them into the state of the dead, (here translated *hell*), whether heaven or hell, as they have lived.

*And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth; over a great part of the earth.*

*To kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth; to kill men all manner of ways, with the sword, famine, pestilence, and by throwing them to wild beasts. Interpreters judge that here was prophesied what should happen to the Roman empire, and the church within it, from the time when Maximinus was made emperor,*

which was about the year 237, to the time of Aurelianus, which was about 271. Some extend it to Dioclesian's time, which ended about 294; but Mr. Mede rather reserveth that for the fifth seal. If the former time only be taken in, there was within it the seventh, eighth, and ninth persecutions; Dioclesian began the tenth and greatest of all. Within this time this prophecy was eminently fulfilled: Maximinus destroyed all the towns in Germany, for three or four hundred miles. There was a plague lasted fifteen years together in the time of Gallus, who had the empire Anno 255. Three hundred and twenty thousand Goths were slain by Flavius Claudius. Maximinus and Gallienus were both great butchers, both to their own subjects that were heathens, and to Christians. Gallienus is said to have killed three or four thousand every day. Such wars and devastations could not but be followed with famine; besides that we are confirmed in it, both by the testimony of Eusebius and Cyprian, the latter of whom lived within this period.

### Revelation 6:9

Ver. 9. *And when he had opened the fifth seal:* this and the next seal's opening, is not prefaced with any living creature calling to John to *come and see*. We must consider:

1. The number of the beasts was but four, who all had had their courses.
2. Some have thought that it is, because here is no mention of any new persecution, but a consequent of the former.
3. But this vision was so plain, it needed no expositor.

*I saw under the altar;* still he speaks in the dialect of the Old Testament, where in the temple was the altar of burnt-offering and the altar of incense; the allusion here is judged to be to the latter.

*The souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held;* from whence we may not conclude, that the souls of men and women when they die do sleep, as some dreamers have thought. These are said to be the souls of them that were slain *for the word of God*, &c., for preaching the word, and their profession of the gospel,



bearing a testimony to Christ and his truths. Mr. Mede thinks that under this seal is comprehended the ten bloody years of Dioclesian's persecution, which of all others was most severe; paganism at that time (as dying things are wont) most struggling to keep itself alive. This tyrant is said, in the beginning of his reign, within thirty days to have slain seventeen thousand, and in Egypt alone, during his ten years, one hundred and forty-four thousand. He thinks that the souls of those which this wretch had slain throughout all his dominions, within his short period of ten years, were those principally which were showed John upon the opening of this seal.

### Revelation 6:10

Ver. 10. *And they cried with a loud voice; their blood cried, or their souls cried to God, saying, How long, O Lord, holy; and therefore thou canst not abide iniquity, and of all iniquity canst least abide innocent blood, which is the blood of thy saints, whose blood is precious in thy sight.*

*And true; and who art true to thy word of threatenings against blood thirsty men, and to thy promises for the deliverance of thy people.*

*Dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? Dost thou not judge our cause, and avenge us, who have committed vengeance to thee, not daring to avenge ourselves upon wicked men, who dwelling upon the earth are seen, and their practices known to and by thee, and are under thy power, so as thou canst at pleasure do it.*

### Revelation 6:11

Ver. 11. *And white robes were given unto every one of them; white robes of glory; for the white robes of Christ's righteousness, and of a holy life, were by them put on before they were slain.*

*That they should rest yet for a little season; that they should be satisfied, and acquiesce in God's dispensations.*

*Until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were; for God had yet more faithful witnesses to be martyred,*

(though not in such flocks as before), who should die for the same faith and profession.

*Should be fulfilled;* when the number of those his martyrs should be completed, he would avenge their blood upon their enemies.

### Revelation 6:12

Ver. 12. *And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal;* the sixth of those seals with which the book was sealed, mentioned Re 5:1: this signifieth the revelation of some things which should happen in some certain period of time, but what period is the question, as to which interpreters differ. Some think, the time when Jerusalem was taken; but this was a time past twenty-six or twenty-seven years before John was in Patmos, where he had this vision about things that shall be, Re 1:1 22:6. Some think, that period of time which shall be immediately before the day of judgment; but that guess seemeth worse, for after this there was a seventh seal to be opened. Some think, the period of the church's conflict with antichrist. But Mr. Mede's judgment (followed by many other famous men) seems best, that it denotes that period when Constantine, the first Christian emperor, restored peace to the church, by overturning the whole pagan state, and making Christianity the religion of the greatest part of the world. This was about the year 311, and perfected upon his victory over Licinius, 325. In this I acquiesce. Let us now see how what is said in this and the following verses about this period will agree to that time.

*And, lo, there was a great earthquake:* the great question is here, what is meant by this great earthquake, the darkening of the sun, the moon becoming as blood, &c. No history recording any such prodigies, hath made many (taking these things in the natural, literal sense) to say the period under the first seal signifies either the time when Jerusalem was taken, or the day of judgment; but there is a metaphorical sense of these expressions, very usual in the prophetic writings, to show great changes in states; and in this sense it is to be taken here. Thus the prophet describeth the great change God would make in Jerusalem, Isa 29:6, *Thou shalt be visited of the Lord of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire:* and Jer 15:9, *Her sun is gone down whlie it was yet day.* And, Eze 32:7, the

change God would work in the ruin of Egypt, is thus expressed: *When I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee.* So Joe 2:10,31, and Joe 3:15. What is an earthquake, but the shaking of the earth? And under this notion God expresseth the changes he makes in states and kingdoms, Isa 2:19,21 24:18 Hag 2:6,7. Thus by *earthquake* here is to be understood a great change in the Roman empire.

*And the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood:* the *sun* signifies those that are in the highest power; the *moon*, those that are next to them in place and dignity.

#### Revelation 6:13

Ver. 13. This is but another phrase signifying a great change: the whole verse is much the same with Isa 34:4. Literally these things were never yet fulfilled. It is a phrase signifying the fall of great and mighty men.

#### Revelation 6:14

Ver. 14. Two expressions more signifying the same thing. The first is used by the prophet, to signify the change God would make in the state of the Edomites, Isa 34:4, as will appear by comparing what that prophet saith, with what Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Obadiah say, upon the same argument, Jer 49:7-22 Eze 35:1-15.

*And every mountain and island were moved out of their places;* all sorts of people shall be destroyed, or all the paganish religion shall be rooted out.

#### Revelation 6:15

Ver. 15. A terror shall fall upon all sorts of men, high and low; and, like men affrighted, they shall seek for themselves hiding places, where they can think themselves most secure: see Isa 2:19.

### Revelation 6:16

Ver. 16. *And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us:* see Hos 10:8 Lu 23:30. They shall be in a great consternation, and be ready to take any course for security.

*From the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;* from the wrath of God, and of Jesus Christ.

### Revelation 6:17

Ver. 17. For this judgment that is upon us, is the effect of his wrath for our abusing and persecuting his members; and we, with all our courage, might, and power, are not able to abide his wrath. These words import, that in this great change, as the greatest persons should be at a loss what to do, so they should perish under a conviction that the great vengeance of God was come upon them for their opposing the gospel, and provoking Christ by persecuting of his members.

There are other more particular explications of the *sun, moon, stars, heavens, &c.*, but they all centre in this general, that here is prophesied a great and universal change of the religion of the world, which should strike a great terror into the pagan rulers, and issue in the overturning of all their altars and temples, and the ruin of the great men, relating either to their civil or ecclesiastical state; and that they at last should know that, God was God, and that these judgments came upon them for their opposition to Christ. And (which addeth strength to this interpretation) Mr. Durham hath observed, that no so short period of time hath produced so many remarkable judgments, and extorted so many ingenuous confessions from enemies, that what came upon them was for their persecutions; and a catalogue of which may be found in Mr. Mede, and in Mr. Durham. Mr. Mede reckoneth Galerius, Maximinus, and Licinius. Galerius was eaten up of worms, being before he died sensible of his guilt, ceasing from his persecution, and begging the Christians' prayers. Maximinus, another Roman emperor, (or partner in the empire with the former), being beaten by Licinius, fled to Tarsus, and there fell upon his pagan priests, who had deceived him by their lying oracles, and made a decree for the Christians'

liberty; but God would not suffer so bloody a wretch to die after the ordinary death of man; he died miserably through intolerable pain, his eyes dropping out of his head. Licinius was a Christian, and joined a while with Constantine, but apostatized, was overcome in two battles, taken, and by him put to death. All these three were within the space of eighteen years. Mr. Durham to these adds the instances of Dioclesian and Maximinian, little above twenty years before, in the heat of their persecution making a stop, and through a horror of conscience laying down their imperial dignity; and Maxentius, drowned in the river Tiber; and he says Licinius, before mentioned, before he died, revenged himself upon his idolatrous priests that had persuaded him to forsake Constantine's God. The change was so great in the empire, upon Constantine the Great's coming to the throne, by the death of some great persons, turning others out of place, destroying the whole frame and practice of the pagans' religion, that it might well be expressed by earthquakes, the sun turning black, the moon as blood, the stars falling from heaven to earth, the heavens departing like a scroll, and the removal of islands and mountains, and by the consternation it would bring all the pagan great men into, &c. And this time, which was a period of about twenty-five or twenty-seven years, is thought to be understood to be the time predicted upon the opening of the sixth seal. Thus we see the dragon's reign at an end in about three hundred and eleven or three hundred and twenty-five years after Christ; the empire, as pagan, persecuting the church of Christ, and following it with ten successive persecutions, quite overturned, and a Christian emperor, Constantine the Great, ruling it. But we must understand these great things were not perfected in a few months; some relics of paganism remained; for though Constantine shut up the pagan temples, yet all the idols in them were not destroyed until the time of Theodosius, who began to rule in the empire Anno 379, and reigned sixteen years. Between Constantine and him were Constantius and Constans, Julian the Apostate, and Jovianus, Valentinianus, Valens, and Gratian; during some of whose reigns (Julian's especially) the Christians suffered much both from pagans and Arians, so that the Christians had not a full and perfect quiet till after the year 390.

### Revelation 7:1

#### Chapter Summary

Re 7:1

John seeth four angels holding the four

winds,

Re 7:2,3 and another angel coming to seal the servants of God in their foreheads.

Re 7:4-8 The number of them that were sealed out of each of the tribes of Israel.

Re 7:9,10 An innumerable multitude out of all other nations stand before the throne in white robes, with palms in their hands, praising God and the Lamb.

Re 7:11,12 The angels, elders, and beasts, worship and glorify God.

Re 7:13-17 One of the elders showeth John who they are that are clad in white robes, and what is their blessedness for ever.

Ver. 1. The first sufferings of the church under the Roman emperors that were pagans, was foretold under the first six seals, as hath been showed; but they had yet more, if not greater, things to suffer, which are discovered to John, as we shall see when we come to the opening of the seventh and last seal in the next chapter; only it pleaseth God by a vision, in this chapter, to comfort his church: so as though this vision relateth to the sixth seal, and was before the opening of the seventh, yet it hath a relation to that, to show the care that God would take of his church under those great evils that should happen upon the opening of the seventh seal, or when the things foretold upon the opening of it should come to be accomplished.

*I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth; four good angels; God is called their God, Re 7:3.*

*Holding the four winds of the earth; that is, to whom God had given it in charge that they should inflict his judgments upon all the parts of the earth; for God often useth, by his prophets, the metaphor of winds, to express stormy, troublesome dispensations, as Jer 18:17 49:36 51:1.*

*That the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree: this phrase is interpreted variously, God making use of the winds:*

1. In a way of judgment, to throw down buildings and trees.
2. In a way of mercy, to purify the air, and by their gentle breathings to cherish things. Some interpret this command to the angels, into a

command to these angels to forbear awhile those storms of judgment which were coming, till the servants of God should be sealed.

Others interpret them into a command to bring judgments, either corporal or spiritual, which they think is signified by the winds not blowing. The last seemeth to be favoured by the next verse, *to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea;* which seemeth to me to interpret the blowing mentioned in this verse of a hurtful blowing.

*The earth, the sea, and the trees,* seem to signify all the sublunary world, especially the church.

### Revelation 7:2

Ver. 2. By this other *angel*, some understand an angel by nature; some, a man, Elijah, or Constantine; others, Christ himself, called *an Angel*, Ex 23:20. It is not much material whether we by this angel understand Christ, or some angel which he made his instrument. He gives a command to those *four angels*, whom God had made the ministers or executioners of his wrath and justice in the world.

### Revelation 7:3

Ver. 3. A manifest allusion to Eze 9:4, and, as some think, to the usage of some eastern countries, for masters to set their names upon the forehead of their slaves, by which they were known to be theirs, as we mark our sheep or other beasts. Men as vainly dispute what this seal should be, as what the  $\aleph$  meant in Eze 9:1-11, the mark set upon those that mourned for the abominations of Jerusalem. The place where they were to be sealed signified the end of their sealing to be not so much for confirmation, for which seals are used, as notification, to signify to others they belong to God; so as it was of the same use as the blood upon the two side-posts and the upper door-posts of the Israelites in Egypt, Ex 12:13.

### Revelation 7:4

Ver. 4-8. For the understanding of these five verses several things are to be noted.

1. That the whole number is one hundred and forty-four thousand, which is the product of twelve, as the original number, (setting aside the ciphers), for twelve times twelve make one hundred and forty-four. The number of one hundred and forty-four, Re 21:17, was the measure of the wall of the new Jerusalem. Twelve, which is the root of this number one hundred and forty-four, seemeth to be God's number, and used in Scripture about one hundred and forty-four times, and almost generally in things belonging to the church; which had twelve patriarchs, twelve tribes under the Old Testament, twelve apostles (as its head) under the New Testament: and the new Jerusalem from heaven, Re 21:12, is said to have *twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels*; Re 7:14, *the wall had twelve foundations*; the length of it, Re 7:16, *twelve thousand furlongs*.

2. That we must not by one hundred and forty-four thousand understand a certain, but an uncertain number, which yet was very great.

3. That by the tribes of Israel mentioned here, are to be understood the several gospel churches of the Gentiles, who are now God's Israel ingrafted into the true olive.

4. That the tribe of Dan is here left out, and Ephraim is not named, though included in Joseph. Of the tribe of Dan there were none sealed. Dan was a great ringleader to idolatry, so was Ephraim; see Jud 17:1-18:31; and at Dan it was that Jeroboam set up his calves. Levi is put in instead of Dan, and Joseph instead of Ephraim, by which means here are yet twelve tribes; which teacheth us this: That Christians, if idolaters, must not look for any special protection or favour from God in a day of evil.

5. These tribes are not set in order, according to their birthright.

*Juda* was Leah's fourth son, Ge 29:35, put first, because Christ descended from him.

*Reuben*, her eldest son, is put next, giving place only to the Messiah's tribe.



*Gad*, Jacob's son by Zilpah, Ge 30:11, is put next.

*Aser*, Jacob's son by Zilpah, in the fourth place, Ge 30:13.

*Nephtalim* is put next, who was Jacob's son by Bilhah, Rachel's maid, Ge 30:8.

*Manasses* is put next, who was Joseph's son.

*Simeon*, Jacob's second son by Leah, Ge 29:33, is put in the seventh place. *Levi*, Leah's third son, Ge 29:34, in the eighth place.

*Issachar*, Leah's fifth son, Ge 30:18, is put in the ninth place.

*Zabulon*, Leah's sixth son, is put in the tenth place, Ge 30:20.

*Joseph* is put in the eleventh place, for Ephraim his son.

*Benjamin*, Rachel's second son, is put in the last place.

If there be any mystery in this order, differing from all other scriptures where there is a mention made of the twelve patriarchs, it is probable that Mr. Mede hath hit upon it, in regard of the, good or ill deserts of these tribes, some of which are mentioned by him; all may be learned from the history of the Jews recorded in holy writ. Hence we may learn, that the summary sense of all these verses is this: That although within that period of time which is signified under the seventh seal, there should be great persecutions of the church, yet God would preserve unto himself a great number in all his churches, which should not apostatize, and who in the persecutions should not be hurt; so as his church should not fail, though the archers should shoot sore at it; for though men raged, yet it was by God's permission; and his angels overruled it, who should take notice of those numbers that he had sealed, and marked in their foreheads.

### Revelation 7:9

Ver. 9. If we inquire who these were, we are told, Re 7:14, by the best Interpreter: *These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, &c.* So that they do not seem to be the one hundred and forty-four thousand mentioned for preservation in and from the evil, Re 7:4, but such as had escaped, or were not in or going into tribulation, but come out. The number of the former was determined; it is said of these, it could not be numbered. These were glorified ones, not militant; they *stood before the throne, and the Lamb, clothed with white robes; clothed in the habits of such as amongst the Romans had fought, and conquered, and triumphed; and to this end they are said to have carried palms, the ensigns of victory, in their hands.*

### Revelation 7:10

Ver. 10. They acknowledge their temporal, spiritual, and eternal salvation to the gift and free mercy of God, in whom they had trusted, and to the Lord Jesus Christ, by whose merits and Spirit they had got the victory.

### Revelation 7:11

Ver. 11. *And all the angels stood round about the throne;* the good angels, who always in heaven behold the face of their and our heavenly Father.

*And about the elders;* and about the twenty-four elders, mentioned Re 4:4.

*And the four beasts;* and the living creatures, mentioned Re 4:6.

*And fell before the throne on their faces;* the angels, elders, and living creatures, all fall down on their faces, in a reverential sense of the infinite distance between them and their Creator.

*And worshipped God;* thus paying an homage to God fitted to their glorified state, in consideration of his excellency.

### Revelation 7:12

Ver. 12. These words only signify the union and harmony of the angels and saints in praising God: See Poole on "Re 5:12".

### Revelation 7:13

Ver. 13. Not that he did not know, but to try whether John knew, or rather to set John upon inquiring.

### Revelation 7:14

Ver. 14 John confessing his own ignorance, applies himself to this elder for instruction, who tells him: These were the souls of them that came out of great sufferings and persecution; but he addeth, that they were such as were washed in the blood of Christ. Suffering will not bring us to heaven without having our souls washed with the blood of Christ.

### Revelation 7:15

Ver. 15. *Therefore are they before the throne of God;* not that they by their sufferings have merited heaven, but because it pleaseth God of his free grace so to reward them; therefore it was said, not only that they were such as came out of tribulation, but that they had washed their garments in the blood of the Lamb, whose blood had paid the price of their salvation.

*And serve him day and night in his temple:* by the *temple*, some understand the church in this life, but it is foreign to the true sense of the text; for John saw only their souls before the throne, their bodies were in their graves. By the *temple* is meant heaven, where God dwelleth, and is worshipped more gloriously and constantly than he was in the Jewish temple, or in any part of the militant church.

*And he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them;* as God by his gracious presence dwelt in the Jewish temple, so God by his glorious presence shall dwell amongst his glorified saints.

### Revelation 7:16

Ver. 16. This is taken out of Isa 49:10. They are all metaphorical expressions, all signifying the perfect state of glorified saints; they shall have no wants, nor be exposed to any afflictive providences.

### Revelation 7:17

Ver. 17. *For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne;* Christ, the Lamb mentioned Re 5:6.

*Shall feed them, &c.;* shall take care of them, to satisfy and to protect them, and give them the best supplies, and both make them to forget their former sorrows, and prevent any timher cause of sorrow and affliction to them. A perfect description of the glorious and happy state of saints in heaven. For wherein lieth the happiness of heaven, but in a freedom from all the evils that encumber us in this life, and the enjoyment of all the happiness we are capable of, and being ever with the Lord Jesus Christ, under his influence and conduct? So as I cannot agree with Mr. Mede, or any of those who think this vision and these phrases describe any happy, peaceable state of the church in this life, after the throwing down of antichrist; but do think that John was showed this great reward of martyrs, to encourage the church of God under all those evils they were to suffer under antichrist and the beast, in that period of time which is described mystically upon the opening of the seventh seal, which we now come to in the next chapter.

### Revelation 8:1

#### Chapter Summary

Re 8:1 The seventh seal opened.

Re 8:2 Seven angels receive seven trumpets.

Re 8:3-5 An angel presenteth the prayers of the saints with incense on the golden altar before the throne.

Re 8:6-13 Four of the angels sound their trumpets, and

great plagues severally follow.

Ver. 1. *And when he;* that is, the Lamb, mentioned Re 5:7, who *took the book out of the hand of him that sat upon the throne,* the book of God's counsels, and had now revealed mysteriously to John what should come to pass (under all the pagan emperors) to the church of Christ, until the time of Constantine the Great, who, (as was said), about the year 325, had settled the Christian religion, and shut up all the idols' temples, having conquered the apostate Licinius.

*Had opened the seventh seal;* he cometh now to open the seventh seal, that is, to reveal to John what should be in the succeeding time of the church to the end of the world.

*There was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour:* but before the great evils should break out, which were to come to pass in this time, there was in the church a rest for a small time; for from the year 317, when Constantine bare the greatest sway in the empire, or 325, when he had got a full victory over Licinius, the church had a great peace for a little time, till 339, when the empire being divided, and Constantius having the eastern part, and Constans the western, (both sons of Constantine), Constantius, being an Arian, (who denied the Godhead of Christ), began again to persecute the Christians; and after him Julian, who apostatized to paganism. But after him they had a little further respite to the year 395, when Theodosius died, and the Christians' quiet died with him. I rather choose to interpret this thus, than with those who understand the *silence in heaven,* of a silence in the third heavens, in allusion to the Jewish order; who, though they sung during the time of the sacrifice, and played upon instruments of music all that time, yet kept silence while the incense was offering. For (as divers have noted) it seemeth hard to judge, that in this Revelation there should be no mention of that short truce which the church had during the reign of Constantine, and for a small time after.

### Revelation 8:2

Ver. 2. *The seven angels which stood before God;* the seven mentioned hereafter, which blew with the trumpets; for we presently read, that *seven*

*trumpets* were given to them. Trumpets were used to call the people together, to proclaim festivals, and in war. The use of these trumpets we shall hereafter read, which was to proclaim the will and counsels of God, as to things to come.

### Revelation 8:3

Ver. 3. *And another angel came;* by this angel I understand Christ, as do many very valuable authors; nor, indeed, can what is said of this angel agree to any other but him, who is called an *Angel*, Ge 48:16, and the *Angel of the covenant*, Mal 3:1. Here is a manifest allusion to the order of the Jewish worship; they had an altar of incense, Ex 30:1, upon which the high priest was to burn incense every morning and evening, Re 8:7,8. Whilst the priest was burning incense, as appears, Lu 1:10, the people, were without, praying. Christ is here represented as *having a golden censer*. The high priest's censer amongst the Jews was of brass; but he was a more excellent High Priest.

*And there was given unto him much incense;* by which is meant the infinite merit of his death, to be offered up by himself (who is *the golden altar*) *with the prayers of all his saints*. By all this Christ is represented to us, as interceding for his saints that were to live after this time, during all troubles that were immediately to begin, and to follow on, during the reign of antichrist.

### Revelation 8:4

Ver. 4. This only denotes the acceptableness of Christ's intercession, and God's people's prayers, through the virtue of that intercession, unto God.

### Revelation 8:5

Ver. 5. I doubt not but by *fire* here, is to be understood the wrath of God, often in holy writ compared to fire, poured out upon the Roman empire, or the visible church. Upon which followed great judgments, and confusions, and tumults, expressed here, or ushered in, as before, Re 6:1, with

*thunderings*; which being here more generally mentioned, are by and by more particularly expressed.

#### Revelation 8:6

Ver. 6. The angels are God's ministers, by which he bringeth his counsels to pass in the world: they hearing the *thunderings* and *voices*, knew the time was come when they were to begin the execution of God's judgments upon the earth; the execution of which was intrusted to them, and they are therefore set out (though they be always ready) after the manner of men, preparing themselves to execute what God had intrusted them with the execution of.

#### Revelation 8:7

Ver. 7. *The first angel sounded*; the first of the seven angels to whom the seven trumpets were given, Re 8:2, began to execute his commission; the consequents of which were *hail and fire mingled with blood, cast upon the earth*: by which some understand the primitive church's persecutions by the Jews and the heathen emperors; but these were over. Some understand God's revenge upon the Jews; but this also was taken some hundreds of years since. Some understand unseasonable weather in many parts of the world; but we read nothing like this in history. Some understand contests happening in the church; others understand heresies. But I cannot but rather agree with the reverend Mr. Mede, who expounds it of great troubles, and blood, and slaughter which should happen; and thinks that this prophecy began to be fulfilled about the death of Theodosius, Anno 395. For in this very year (saith he) Alaricus the king of the Goths brake into Macedonia, with a great army went into Thessalia, and so into Achaia, Peloponnesus, Corinth, Argos, Sparta, burning, wasting, and ruining all places; and so went on till the year 400; then fell upon the eastern empire, and committed the same outrages in Dalmatia and Hungary; then went into Stiria and Bavaria, thence into Italy and to Venice. After this, in the year 404, these barbarous nations invaded Italy, and took divers places. In the year 406 the Vandals and Alans, with many others, invaded France, Spain, and Africa: all which he proveth from the testimony of Jerome, Ep. 3. 11. This he judgeth the effect of the first angel's sounding, and to have been

signified by the *hail and fire mingled with blood*, consonant to other scriptures. Isaiah, Isa 28:2, compareth Shalmaneser to a storm of hail; and, Isa 30:30, he so likeneth the ruin to come upon the Assyrians. By the *trees burnt up*, are (saith he) the great and rich men to be understood, ordinarily in Scripture compared to trees, Isa 2:13 14:8 Zec 11:2; and by the *green grass*, the ordinary common people. Thus he judgeth the effects of this first trumpet's sounding to have been determined in fifteen years, viz. from the year 395 to 410.

### Revelation 8:8

Ver. 8. There is a great variety of senses also about this *mountain of fire cast into the sea*. Some by it understand things happening in Judea; but this had been not to have showed John the things which should be, but which had been. Others will have the devil understood; others, the power of the Roman empire; others, some great war stirred up amongst people; others, some notable heresy or heretic; others, some famous persons in the church: but I most like Mr. Mede's notion again here, who understands by this mountain, Rome, the seat of the western empire; great cities being called *mountains* in Scripture phrase, Isa 37:24 Jer 51:25.

*And the third part of the sea became blood:* this phrase speaks only the great effusion of blood upon the taking of Rome by its enemies.

### Revelation 8:9

Ver. 9. Phrases all signifying the miserable catastrophe that should follow the destruction of this city, by the slaughter of men, the ruin of houses and towns in Italy, &c. History (as Mr. Mede showeth) excellently agreeth with this. In the year 410, Rome was taken by Alaricus; this was followed with great devastations both in France and Spain. Honorius, to recover the empire, was glad to give the Goths a seat and government in France, and the Burgundians and Vandals a place near unto the river Rhone; and, Anno 415, to the Vandals a place in Spain; and, Anno 455, Rome was again taken by Gensericus the Vandal, who divided the whole empire into ten kingdoms:



1. That of the Britons, ruled by Vortimer.
2. The Saxons, ruled by Hengist.
3. The Franks, ruled by Childeric.
4. The Burgundians, ruled by Gundericus.
5. The Visigoths, ruled by Theodoricus II.
6. The Alans and Suevi, ruled by Riciarius.
7. The Vandals, ruled by Gensericus.
8. The Germans, ruled by Sumanus.
9. The Ostrogoths, ruled by Theodemirus.
10. The Grecians, ruled by Marcianus.

This is the sum of what Mr. Mede saith, and to this tract of time, between the years 410 and 455, the second trumpet seemeth to relate.

#### Revelation 8:10

Ver. 10. *There fell a great star from heaven:* stars, in their metaphorical notion, signify some eminent persons in the state, or in the church; accordingly interpreters are divided in their senses; some thinking that it is meant of a political star, some eminent civil governor, and apply it to Caesar Augustulus, who, about the year 480, was forced to give over the empire, by Odoacer; of him Mr. Mede understands this prophecy. Others understand it of some ecclesiastical star, who apostatized, and apply it to Pelagius. I do rather incline to those who apply it to some ecclesiastical star; and Pelagius might be pointed at, as probably as any other in these times, for he was a great professor, and so burned *as a lamp. And it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;* and did corrupt a great part of the church.

#### Revelation 8:11

Ver. 11. His doctrine was as bitter as wormwood; and he was the ruin of many souls. But if any do rather choose to understand it of a political star, Mr. Mede's notion bids as fair for the sense as any, because the western empire determined in Augustulus, and he reigned but a very short time; and he was a prince of many sorrows and afflictions, and many perished with him in those sorrows and afflictions which he underwent. Whether we

understand it of some eminent political magistrate, (such was Augustulus), or some eminent light in the church, (such was Pelagius), they both fell about this time, the one from his terrene dignity, the other spiritually from the honour he had in the church; and many fell with them, either in a civil or in a spiritual sense.

### Revelation 8:12

Ver. 12. Interpreters (setting aside one or two, who conceit the Revelation is nothing but a repetition of things that happened in Judea before John's time) generally agree, that the period of time to which this prophecy relates, is from the year 480, when the western empire ceased. The history of the age next following, both relating to civil and ecclesiastical things, doth so fit this prophecy, that interpreters are much divided about the sense of it, whether it be to be understood of the miseries befalling the Roman empire or the church in that time; for, as great princes in the former, so great lights in the latter, are metaphorically expressed in Scripture under the notions of *the sun, moon, and stars*, in regard of the great influence they have upon men, as those luminaries of heaven have upon the earth. Mr. Mede understands it of political magistrates, here expressed (as in Joseph's dream) by *the sun, moon, and stars*: and to show us how the event fitted the prophecy, he tells us out of the best authors, that when Odoacer had routed Augustulus, and turned him out of the empire, himself ruled Rome under the title of a king sixteen years, and destroyed all their old magistracy, but after two years restored it. That Theodoricus, following him in the government of Italy, restored all their rights again, which so continued under three kings (all Goths) for near fifty years. But after the year 546, Rome was taken and burnt once and again, and a third part of it demolished by Totilas. Others understand it of Pelagius, or some famous heretic in that time. But to speak freely, the words of the prophecy, and the histories we have, rather agree to Mr. Mede's sense; for (except Pelagius, who began about the year 406) we read of none in this age to whom the words of this prophecy will agree in any good sense.

### Revelation 8:13

Ver. 13. This verse is but an introduction to the other three angels

sounding, declaring that the times which were to follow would be much more full of miseries and woes *to the inhabitants of the earth*; by which I understand all those countries which lately were subject to the Roman empire. Others understand the more earthy, unsound, hypocritical part of the church. The *woe* is thrice repeated, either to show the greatness of the calamities, or rather correspondently to the number of the angels yet to sound.

## Revelation 9:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 9:1 At the sounding of the fifth angel a star falleth from heaven, to whom is given the key of the bottomless pit,

Re 9:2-11 he opens the pit, and there come forth locusts like scorpions, who have power to hurt men for a time.

Re 9:12 The first woe past.

Re 9:13-21 At the sounding of the sixth angel four angels which were bound are loosed, and bring great plagues on the earth for a limited time.

Ver. 1. *And the fifth angel sounded;* the fifth of the seven angels mentioned Re 8:2, to whom were given seven trumpets. It denoteth the beginning of a new period of calamities and miseries to the earth, or to the church.

*And I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth:* what this star falling from heaven means, is not easy to resolve. Those who think it the devil, once a star, but fallen, forget that John is not here told a story of what was in the beginning of the world, but what should be, and that five hundred years after Christ's coming. And the same reason holds against those who think those seditious persons are meant, who did so much mischief in and about Jerusalem during the siege; this had been to have revealed to John those things which he knew were done many years before. Amongst those who think some particular eminent minister of the church, who apostatized, is meant, those seem to me to judge better, who think that Boniface the Third is meant, who, in the year 606, obtained the privilege

of the pope's supremacy, than those who understand it of Arius or Pelagius, who both of them fell two hundred years before this. It seems very harsh to interpret it of Christ, or any good angel's descending from heaven, because the word *πεπτωκοτα* is rightly by us translated falling, and not to be interpreted so softly as descending. In all probability, therefore, the first apostacy of the bishop of Rome was here prophesied. But how *to him was given the key of the bottomless pit*, (by which hell is meant here, as often in Scripture), is hard to say; unless we understand it of his instrumentality, to send many thousands to hell by that corrupt doctrine and worship, which by him then began to obtain. But his key was borrowed, (if God had not permitted him he could not have done it), and it turned but one way; he had only a power to open it, not (as Christ) both to open and shut it.

### Revelation 9:2

Ver. 2. *And he opened the bottomless pit;* he was a means of hell's breaking loose, by loosing Satan.

*And there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace:* I had rather interpret this generally of the great influence upon the world, that the devil, being loosed, had, in filling the world with ignorance, error, and wickedness, (for which this and the following age are infamous in all histories), and then particularly of the errors this time abounded with.

*And the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit;* this influence of the devil darkened the sun of the gospel, and the whole church of that age, with ignorance, error, and abominable superstition in the worship of God, attended with the lewdness and debauchery of men in their lives, which usually go together.

### Revelation 9:3

Ver. 3. *And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth;* from the influence which the devil thus let loose had upon the world, came forth a generation of men, that in their practices resembled locusts. Who are to be understood by these *locusts*, is not easy to resolve. The locusts were an

insect with which God sometimes plagued the Egyptians; they are much in the Eastern countries. It was an east wind which brought them upon Egypt, Ex 10:12,13. God often hath punished people with them, they are therefore threatened, or mentioned as a judgment in case of disobedience, De 28:38,42 1Ki 8:37 Joe 1:4 Joe 2:25. Two things are to be remarked of them:

1. They were wont to go in infinite numbers: Pr 30:27: *They go forth by bands*: Na 3:15, *Make thyself many as the locusts: without number*, Ps 105:34.
2. The mischief they do is expressed there, Ps 105:35, *to eat up the herbs of the land, and to devour the fruit of the ground*: so they did in Egypt.

We have a little specimen of them in our caterpillars in times of drought, usually caused from the wind hanging long in the east. The psalmist, Ps 105:34, joineth the locusts and the caterpillars together. By the following description of these locusts, and the mischief which they did, Re 9:4,7-10, it appeareth plainly that these were no natural, but metaphorical locusts, men that, for their numbers and the mischief they did in the world, did resemble locusts; but who these were is the question. I find but two opinions that have any probability: the one is of a late learned writer, who judgeth them the popish clergy, to whom, indeed, many things agree.

1. They come *out of the smoke*, that is, the great influence which the devil hath upon the world.
2. They are numerous.
3. Their king is Abaddon; they destroy every green herb, nipping religion, in all places, in the bud.

But I cannot see how two or three things can agree to them:

1. That they do no hurt to the Lord's sealed ones, whenas their particular malice is against the purest and strictest profession.
2. That they do not kill, but only torment men, Re 9:5.

3. And (which is the greatest) I cannot see how the period of time agreeth to them.

For this prophecy seemeth to respect the sixth and seventh age; and though all these things agree to the Romish clergy in later ages, especially since the Jesuits grew numerous, which is not much above one hundred and twenty years since, yet these three did not so agree to the Romish clergy in the sixth and seventh age. Their Benedictine orders began but in the year 530, and their orders of Dominicans, much more mischievous, not till upwards of the year 1200; the Jesuits, after the year 1500. I therefore rather agree with the learned and judicious Mr. Mede, with whom I also find John Napier and others agreeing, that by these locusts are meant the Turks and Saracens.

1. Their time agreeth; for they first appeared formidably to the world about the year 620.
2. They were always very numerous.
3. They came the locusts' road, from Arabia, and the eastern parts.

The Arabians (which the Saracens are) are called *the children of the east*, and said to be like *grasshoppers for multitude*. Two things are objected:

1. That these locusts are commanded not to hurt the Lord's sealed ones.
2. That their commission is but for five months.

As to the latter, we shall speak to it when we come to that clause. As to the former, why may it not denote the liberty that in their conquests they generally give to all religions, so as they put none to death upon that account? How far other things will agree to them, I leave to be further considered in the next verses.

*And unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power; that is, such a power as scorpions have. We shall have a more particular account of this, Re 9:10.*

#### Revelation 9:4

Ver. 4. *And it was commanded them;* that is, these locusts; God so ordered it by his providence.

*That they should not hurt, &c.:* this makes it appear, that these locusts were no insects so called, but typical; for natural locusts live upon green things; they were only to hurt profane men, and hypocrites. It is a sure rule, that when things are attributed: to living creatures which do not agree to their natures, the terms are to be understood typically, not literally. Locusts use not to kill men; we may therefore be assured, that the locusts here intended, were men, not insects.

#### Revelation 9:5

Ver. 5. Supposing the Saracens and Turks here meant by the locusts, here arise two difficulties:

1. How it can be said of them, that they had no power to *kill*, but only *torment* men.
2. How their time is set for *five months*, whereas they have already tormented the world more than a thousand years; and how long they shall yet continue to do so, God only knows: they are both great difficulties.

Alsted tells us: That Mahomet began in the year 622, and the Saracens entered Spain 714, where they were called Moors, and kept possession of that kingdom eight hundred years, and that in the year 719, they besieged Constantinople with a navy of three thousand ships and three hundred thousand land soldiers; that before this time they had made themselves masters of Arabia, Palestina, Syria, Persia, Egypt, Africa, and Spain; and in the year 726, carried into France an army consisting of three hundred and seventy-five thousand, where they were beaten by Charles Martell, father to King Pepin. Mr, Mede telleth us, that the Saracens grievously vexed the countries subject to the Roman emperor, but could not take either Rome or Constantinople. The latter was taken by the Turks, in the year 1457, commanded by Sultan Mahomet. This is but a hard

interpretation of those words, *that they should not kill them*; which, it may be, hath made some other interpreters choose to interpret these locusts to signify the Roman clergy, who indeed did not kill men for religion, of many years. But both the one and the other tormented the world enough, and that like a scorpion, which pierceth a man with a venomous sting, and puts him to great pain. For the *five months*, we shall again meet with them, Re 9:10.

#### Revelation 9:6

Ver. 6. The calamities of those days shall be so great, that men shall be weary of their lives.

#### Revelation 9:7

Ver. 7. This whole description of these locusts speaks them no insects, but to be mischievous men; they were very terrible to look upon, like horses harnessed ready to fight; so Joe 2:4.

*And upon their heads were as it were crowns like gold*; this signified they should be great and rich conquerors.

*And their faces were as the faces of men*; yet these were men.

#### Revelation 9:8

Ver. 8. *And they had hair as the hair of women*; dishevelled, or hanging loose; the Arabians were wont to go so; or this may signify, that they were beautiful as well as terrible to look upon.

*And their teeth were as the teeth of lions*; sharp and strong: see Joe 1:6.

#### Revelation 9:9

Ver. 9. *And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron*; armed



with the best armour of defence.

*And the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle; like locusts, they moved very swiftly. This agreeth to the Saracens, who made such haste in their conquests, that (saith Mr. Mede) in little more than eighty years they had subdued Palestina, Syria, both the Armenias, almost all the Lesser Asia, Persia, India, Egypt, Numidia, all Barbary, Portugal, Spain; and within a few more, Sicily, Candia, Cyprus, and were come to the very gates of Rome; so as they had many crowns on their heads, and moved as with wings.*

### Revelation 9:10

Ver. 10. *And they had tails like unto scorpions; a kind of venomous serpents that have their stings in their tails, with which they presently kill both men and beasts.*

*And their power was to hurt men five months; what these five months mean is very hard to say; certainly it is a certain number for an uncertain, and mentioned rather than any other time, because it is (as they say) the usual time of the life of locusts; though some observe, that five months have in them (counting as the Hebrews, thirty days to the month) one hundred and fifty days, and a day standing for a year, as in prophetic writings, it denoteth the just time the Saracens raged in Italy, from the year 830 to the year 980; as to which I refer my reader to search histories.*

### Revelation 9:11

Ver. 11. Solomon saith, Pr 30:27, *The locusts have no king, yet go they forth by bands;* according to which these locusts cannot be understood of insects so called; or, if they have a king, yet it is certain the devil is not their king, who is here called *the angel of the bottomless pit.*

*Abaddon;* from אבדן he hath destroyed.

*Apollyon;* that is, a destroyer; intimating that the whole business of this barbarous enemy should be to ruin and destroy nations.

### Revelation 9:12

Ver. 12. One period of time is over, in which God hath plagued the world with a very great judgment; but there are two more to come, which will be equally, if not more, calamitous.

### Revelation 9:13

Ver. 13. That is, from God, I heard him give a command, which *voice* is said to have proceeded *from the golden altar*, ( in allusion to Ex 30:3), because there God received the prayers of his people; and this voice proceeding from that place, might signify the following judgment to come, in answer to the prayer's of his servants' souls from thence crying to him for vengeance. See Re 6:9,10.

### Revelation 9:14

Ver. 14. By these *four angels*, or instruments of God to execute his vengeance, I find the most valuable interpreters understanding the Turks, considered as distinct from the Saracens, and succeeding of them, whose empire began in Ottoman, Anno 1296, or thereabouts. Mr. Mede saith these four angels denote so many sultanies or kingdoms, into which the Turks were dispersed, having passed the river Euphrates, which river is famous for four things:

1. It was the boundary of David and Solomon's kingdom, De 11:24 Jos 1:4.
2. It was that river by which Babylon stood, Jer 13:4-6.
3. It was the boundary of the Roman empire, beyond which it could never extend itself.
4. And it also was the seat of the Turks, who having some years before come over the Euphrates, first divided themselves into a tetrarchy; of

which one in Asia, another at Aleppo, another at Damascus, a fourth at Antioch.

Mr. Mede gives us a table or diagram of it, Clav. Apoc. 40. p. 102. Here they were bounded for a while, but about the year 1300 they were loosed, and began further to invade Europe; which is the severe providence of God, conceived to be here foretold as the consequent of this sixth angel's sounding. The Turks who, though come over the river Euphrates, had hitherto by the providence of God been bounded near unto it, not much contending to enlarge their territories, now joined together with the Saracens under Ottoman, and went further into Europe, and could by no means be stopped till they had got the empire of Constantinople.

#### Revelation 9:15

Ver. 15. *For an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year;* that is, say some, for any time whatsoever God would have them move; or for that certain time which God had determined; but Mr. Mede hath here a peculiar notion; he observeth that an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, make just three hundred and ninety-six years. In a year are three hundred and sixty-five days in a month thirty, which make three hundred and ninety-five, to which add the odd day, they make three hundred and ninety-six. The Turks began their empire under Ottoman, who began his reign Anno 1296: but their leader, Tangrolipix, upon the taking of Bagdad was inaugurated, and put on the imperial robe, Anno 1057. Constantinople was taken by them Anno 1453, between which are just three hundred and ninety-six years. In which time they slew a numberless number of men, called here *the third part*.

#### Revelation 9:16

Ver. 16. He saith nothing of the infantry, but leaves us to conjecture how great that must be, from the number of the horse; we must not think there was precisely this number, but the meaning is, that the armies should be vastly great, as we know all the Turkish armies are. Magog's army is described from the cavalry, Eze 38:4,15.

### Revelation 9:17

Ver. 17. We have no such description or representation as this in any other place of holy writ. Some understand it of the several coloured breastplates that the soldiers wore; some of a red and flaming colour, like fire; others blue, like the jacinth; some pale: all such as wear them look terribly. Mr. Mede hath here again a peculiar notion; thinking that the Holy Ghost doth here signify their fighting with great guns, (not known before the siege of Constantinople), which throw out fire and smoke, &c., and so alter the air, the medium by which we see, that the opposite party in fighting appear to those that use these arms, as if they were covered with breastplates that were red, and blue, and pale. To confirm this, he tells us of Chalcondylas's report of this siege, who mentioneth great guns used at it of that vast bigness, that one of them required threescore and ten yoke of oxen and two thousand men to draw it, &c. It is at least a very ingenious conjecture, and I could not but mention it in honour to the learned author; leaving it to my reader's liberty, whether he will, with Mr. Mede, judge this literal sense of the text is best, or interpret all these phrases more generally, only of a terrible appearance of those armies.

### Revelation 9:18

Ver. 18. That is, a great part of men were killed by these numerous armies. No such devastations were ever made by any enemies that ever appeared in the world, as by the Turks have been; nor ever were there such vast great guns made, out of which came *fire, and smoke, and brimstone.*

### Revelation 9:19

Ver. 19. By *their tails* some understand their infantry or foot soldiery; others, their serpentine craft and subtlety: as the locusts, Re 9:10, are compared to scorpions, whose sting was in their tails, and who were said to hurt with their tails; so the same thing is said of these armies, intimating that the Turks should be mischievous by the same arts and means as their predecessors the Saracens. These are said to have had heads in their tails, which was not said of the locusts; the reason of which interpreters judge to

have arisen from the different animals by which they are represented.

### Revelation 9:20

Ver. 20. *And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues;* the two-thirds of men that should be left, for we read of one-third part destroyed; and this also must be understood of men dwelling in countries subject formerly to the Roman empire on this side of the Euphrates.

*Yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils:* this leaves this applicable to none but papists; for there are none else but them who worship demons, Greek, δαιμονια, or idols of gold and silver. By *devils* are meant demons, that is, persons that are dead, whom the heathens made their petty gods, and worshipped as middle beings between them and the supreme gods, according to their notion; which is the same thing the papists are guilty of, with this only difference, (as Mr. Mede excellently observeth), that the heathens made many supreme gods, and these modern idolaters own but one in that notion, but as many *deastri* or demons as they did, which are all those saints to whom they pay an adoration, as to those who should present their desires to God, which, as Mr. Mede sufficiently proves from writers, was the very work the pagans allotted for those whom they canonized after death. From whence came the names of Baal and Bel, &c., but from Belus, who is said to have been the first prince, whom, being dead, they made a god, and adored? Which demons God in Scripture calleth devils. Nor do any but they now worship images, the works of men's hands, made of *gold, silver, brass, and wood*, who are here described in the same words as by the psalmist, Ps 115:4 135:15. Notwithstanding God's great judgment executed upon the Grecian churches, yet they repented not of their idolatry and superstition; so as God hath brought them wholly under the power of those barbarous enemies; and though the Romish party seeth this, yet neither do they repent; which may give them cause to fear that God should make use of the same adversary to destroy them likewise; especially considering that neither to this day do they repent.

### Revelation 9:21

Ver. 21. *Neither repented they of their murders;* of their murdering the saints of God, but go on in that practice; *nor of their fornication,* which is publicly allowed amongst them; *nor of their theft* and sacrilege, and other wickedness, but are as infamous for their debaucheries as for their superstition and idolatry. How long this great judgment of the Turk shall continue upon Christians we cannot tell; it is Mr. Brightman's opinion that it shall determine in the year 1696; but of that the Scripture hath not informed us, and guessing is a vanity, where we have no sure foundation; and so many have appeared to have been mistaken in such particular determinations, that he lightly exposeth his reputation that will adventure further upon such rocks.

## Revelation 10:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 10:1-4 A mighty angel appeareth with a book open in his hand,  
Re 10:5-7 and sweareth by him that liveth for ever, that there shall be no more time.  
Re 10:8-11 John is commanded to take and eat the book, and to prophesy.

### Chapter Introduction

We have had in the former chapters Christ's revelation to St. John of what should happen in the Roman empire under the first six seals, that is, during their pagan state, which determined in Constantine's time, Anno 310, or 325. Under the seventh seal (that is, from Re 8:1) he hath revealed to him what should happen after that time to the Roman empire by the Goths and Vandals under the first four trumpets, and by the Saracens under the fifth trumpet, and the Turks under the sixth trumpet, who are yet rampant and going on in their outrages. The seventh trumpet in course should sound next, but we come not to that till Re 11:15. In this chapter, and to the 15th verse of the next chapter, seems an interruption of the history, that Christ might reveal to his prophet the main things that should concern his church. About the sense of this interpreters are divided, some thinking this a distinct prophecy relating to the affairs of the church, yet

not in a continued story, but made up of several visions, some contemporary with the times before mentioned, some continuing to the time after the sixth trumpet; which prophecy, as they judge, beginneth at Re 11:1, to which what we have in this chapter is introductive. Of this mind are our Dr. More, Mr. Mede, and other very valuable interpreters, whose reasons may be read in Mr. Pool's Latin Synopsis upon this chapter, and some of them may be noted by us as we go through this chapter. Others think it is no distinct prophecy.

Ver. 1. *And I saw another mighty angel;* the most and best interpreters understand by this angel, Christ, formerly represented to us as a *Lamb*, here as an *Angel*; none but he could call the two witnesses, Re 11:3, his witnesses; besides, the glorious appearance of this angel speaketh him no ordinary angel.

*Come down from heaven;* God being about to do or speak some great thing, is oft thus set out as coming down from heaven.

*Clothed with a cloud;* Christ is described as coming with clouds, Re 1:7.

*The Lord hath said that he would dwell in the thick darkness,* 2Ch 6:1.

*And a rainbow was upon his head;* which was the sign of the covenant made with Noah, Ge 9:16, and fitted Christ's head, as he that brought peace to the world, and to his church in special.

*And his face was as it were the sun:* see Mt 17:2.

*And his feet as pillars of fire;* signifying the steadiness and efficacy of his actions.

## Revelation 10:2

Ver. 2. *And he had in his hand a little book open;* the same book with that mentioned Re 5:1; though some by it understand the Scriptures. There it was represented to John as *sealed with seven seals*; here *open*, to let us know that all the counsels of God, however sealed as to us, are open to Christ, and that he would open to John what should come to pass in his

church to the end of the world.

*And he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth;* to let us know the dominion he had over the whole world, as well the more unquiet as quieter parts of it.

### Revelation 10:3

Ver. 3. *And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth:* this voice suited him who is the Lion of the tribe of Judah: the lion's voice is both loud and terrible.

*And when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices:* interpreters judge these seven thunders to signify those judgments of God which should be executed in the world upon the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and precedaneous to the day of judgment, which we shall find more fully opened under the seventh trumpet by the seven vials poured out, which signify the same thing; yet some understand by these *seven thunders* the powerful preaching the gospel; but the other seemeth more probable.

### Revelation 10:4

Ver. 4. *I was about to write;* to write what he understood of the voices of these thunders.

*Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not;* he was forbidden the publication of them, because they concerned things to be fulfilled at some distance of time, and should be afterward more fully revealed.

### Revelation 10:5

Ver. 5. *And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth:* see Re 10:2; which Angel was Christ.

*Lifted up his hand to heaven;* as Da 12:7, with which prophecy this



agreeth. It is an ordinary gesture used in swearing.

#### Revelation 10:6

Ver. 6. *And sware by him that liveth, &c.;* that is, by God; for this description can agree to no other, neither is it lawful to swear by any other: see Da 12:7.

*That there should be time no longer;* there shall be an end of the world, so some; but this John knew well enough. It is rather to be understood of the time of the fourth monarchy, the Roman empire should come to an end; or, the time of the afflictions of the church, whether by pagan or antichristian enemies, should be no more.

#### Revelation 10:7

Ver. 7. *But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel;* of whom, and his sounding, we shall read, Re 11:15.

*When he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished;* from that time that he beginneth to sound shall begin the mystery of God to be finished; either the mystery mentioned Re 11:15, when *the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and his Christ;* or, more generally, whatsoever God hath revealed concerning the propagation of the gospel, the ruin of antichrist, and the end of the world.

*As he hath declared to his servants the prophets;* whatsoever God hath declared by his servants the prophets about these things, (as to which see Isa 24:1-23 26:1-27:13, 66:1-24 Da 7:11,12 Zec 14:1-21 Mal 3:4), it shall be fulfilled, and begin to be fulfilled when the seventh angel shall begin to blow; within which period of time most interpreters judge we are, as being begun some time since.

#### Revelation 10:8

Ver. 8. *And the voice which I heard from heaven;* the voice mentioned Re

10:4.

*Go and take the little book;* the little book mentioned Re 10:2. John is bid to take this book, by which some understand the Scriptures; but it is most probably the book mentioned Re 5:1, before sealed, now open.

#### Revelation 10:9

Ver. 9. *Take it, and eat it up:* thus Ezekiel was bidden to eat the roll; and it was in his mouth as sweet as honey, Eze 2:8 3:3. The eating of a book signifies the due reading of it, digesting it, and meditating upon the matters in it.

*And it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey;* it should be sweet in his month, as it was the revelation of the mind and will of God, (which is sweet to all pious souls; see Jer 15:16), but in his belly it should be bitter, being the revelation of the Divine will, as to the bringing such terrible judgments upon an impenitent people.

#### Revelation 10:10

Ver. 10. *And I took the little book, and ate it up;* according to the command, Re 10:9.

*And it was in my mouth sweet as honey;* as it was the revelation of God's will.

*And as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter;* but when he came to think upon it, it was either so mysterious that he could not comprehend it, or the matter of it was so sad that it gave him great trouble.

#### Revelation 10:11

Ver. 11. *Thou must prophesy again:* these words (as many think) evince this a prophecy distinct from the former; he must *prophesy again*.

*Before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings;* who shall be concerned to hear what shall now be revealed to thee concerning the rise of antichrist, his rule and tyranny, and his fall and ruin, which are things began long before, during the periods of time, when the six before mentioned trumpets sounded, but were not there clearly revealed; which things I will reveal unto thee, that thou, and after thee the ministers of the gospel, may in their several periods reveal them in the hearing of *many people, and nations, &c.*; so that hereby John (as some think) was constituted a prophet to reveal the state of the church under antichrist, and his tyranny, and finally his ruin, which began at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, Re 11:15; but when it shall be finished, God alone must inform the world by the issues of his providence.

## Revelation 11:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 11:1,2 John is commanded to measure the temple, all but the outer court.  
Re 11:3,4 The two witnesses that shall prophesy,  
Re 11:5,6 their power,  
Re 11:7 the beast shall fight against them, and kill them,  
Re 11:8-10 they shall lie unburied three days and a half,  
Re 11:11,12 and then rise again, and ascend into heaven.  
Re 11:13 A great earthquake.  
Re 11:14 The second woe past.  
Re 11:15-19 The seventh trumpet sounded: the heavenly choir celebrate the glories of God's kingdom.

Ver. 1. *And there was given me a reed like a rod;* the next words tell us the use of this reed. It was a *measuring reed*, such a one as Ezekiel in his vision (Eze 40:3) saw in the man's hand. There, the measuring was in order to a rebuilding; here, in order to preserving.

*And the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God:* we cannot well understand what followeth, without understanding the

structure of the temple. The Jews, for the place of their worship, had first a tabernacle, then a temple. The tabernacle was a movable house, which they took down and carried about with them in their journeyings, and pitched down when in any place they pitched their tents. We read of it, Ex 40:1-38. We read but of one court in that, into which only the priests and Levites entered; the people were without it, pitching their tents round about it. It had in it an altar of gold for incense, Ex 40:5, which stood before the ark, Ex 40:26,27; and an altar for burnt-offering, which stood by the door of the tabernacle, Ex 40:29. The temple was built by Solomon, 1Ki 6:1-38, and afterwards rebuilt by Zerubbabel, upon their return out of captivity. That was built with two courts; an inner court, 1Ki 6:36, in which was the altar; and an outward court, which is called *the great court*, 2Ch 4:9, and in Ezekiel, many times, the *outward court*. This is called *the house*, in 1Ki 6:17. It was in length forty cubits; the oracle was within it, 1Ki 6:19, where stood the ark covered with the cherubims. Into the inward court the priests and Levites only came; into the outward court came any of the Israelites. Herod, upon the additional building to the temple, added another large court, called *the court of the Gentiles*; but that not being of God's direction, nor in Solomon's temple, or Zerubbabel's, is not here mentioned. This *temple* was a type of the church under the New Testament, 1Co 3:17 2Co 6:16, and is so to be interpreted generally in this book: for the material temple at Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans more than twenty years before this prophecy, never to be built more; not one stone was left upon another; so that John here was bid to measure the church.

*And the altar, and them that worship therein;* yet not the whole church, but that part of it which the inner court typified; the altar, and those that worshipped within that space where that was, which of old were only the priests and Levites; and under the New Testament signified those who were to be *a holy priesthood, a spiritual house*, those that should offer up *spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*, 1Pe 2:5, who could endure a measuring by God's reed, the word of God.

### Revelation 11:2

Ver. 2. There is no great doubt, but the same persons are here to be understood by *the court which is without the temple*, ( that is, without the

inward court), *and the holy city*; and by them, both the generality of those people who come under the name of the Christian church, who are all of them, in some sense, *a holy people*, 1Co 7:14, as all the Jews were; yet, for the greatest part of them, John is commanded to omit, or neglect them, as those who would not endure a measure by the reed, and of whose preservation God would take no such care, but give them up to the Gentiles, to be trodden under foot; by which many learned and good men understand God's suffering antichrist to have a power over and against them. I find some understanding by *the altar, and them that worship therein*, the primitive church, that for some hundreds of years after Christ kept close to the Divine rule, whom God preserved, though in the midst of the ten first persecutions: and by the outward *court*, the church after that time, which God suffered to fall under the power of the beast, and antichrist, that is, the papacy; which are well enough called *the Gentiles*, as bringing in Gentilism again into the church, and hardly differing in any thing, saving that the old heathens owned many supreme gods, and these new Gentiles but one. God showeth John here, that he would give up the outward court, or this *holy city*, the generality of Christians, to these Gentiles, that they should rule and domineer over them for *forty and two months*, the meaning of which we shall by and by show. A late pious and learned writer differs a little in his sense, as thinking that God here showeth John something further, viz. that under the sixth trumpet he would give the generality of those called Christians, that will not endure the measure of the reed, so over to antichrist, that they shall turn papists, and help to kill the Lord's witnesses; of which we shall speak, Re 11:3. So as this is not a new prophecy, but a continuation of what shall happen after the sounding of the sixth, and before the sounding of the seventh trumpet: if so, I conceive that those words, *shall they tread under foot forty and two months*, must be understood, until the end of the forty-two months; for the forty-two months being the whole time of antichrist, or the beast, must be in a great measure spent before the sounding of the sixth angel. But it seems to be the opinion of this learned man, that a very great part of those who pretend to constitute the Reformed protestant church at this day, but are but as the outward court, not such as worship within the oracle, shall, before the sounding of the seventh trumpet, apostatize, and fall off to popery, until antichrist's one thousand two hundred and sixty days shall expire, and join with papists in the killing of the witnesses. The truth of which we must leave to the providence of God in time to discover; although whoso considereth the face of things this day in Europe, (within

which the greatest part of the Christian church is), will judge there is too great a probability of what this learned man saith; but I dare determine nothing in it.

### Revelation 11:3

Ver. 3. *And I will give power unto my two witnesses:* there hath been a great dispute amongst godly and learned men, who these *two witnesses* should be: some have thought them to be Enoch and Elijah, who, though long since glorified, they have thought (with no great probability, as I suppose any indifferent person will judge) shall come again, and be killed on the earth; yet this is the general notion of the popish writers. Others would have them the two sorts of gospel churches, one of which was made up of native Gentiles, the other of Jews proselyted to the Christian faith. Others have interpreted it of the Old Testament and the New: others, of some two eminent divines; and as to them there have been various guesses: others, of the ministers whom God employed upon the Reformation: others, of a Christian magistracy and ministry. For my own part, the name of *witnesses* is so often applied to the first ministers of the gospel, Ac 1:22 2:32 3:15 4:33 5:32 10:41 22:15 26:16 1Pe 5:1; that I cannot but understand it of that faithful part of the ministry, who preach the gospel faithfully during the whole reign of antichrist. Neither do I think that the number *two* at all relates to their number, but to their witness bearing; *two* being the number which God ordained as sufficient to establish all civil things, De 17:6 De 19:15 Mt 18:16 Heb 10:28; unless there be a regard had to those pairs, which all along the Old Testament bare testimony for God; Moses and Aaron, Caleb and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha; and after the captivity, Zerubbabel and Joshua, and the two olive trees, mentioned Zec 4:11,14, to which plainly this text hath relation, Re 11:4. To which some also add Abraham and Lot, Ezra and Nehemiah, Haggai and Zechariah, Paul and Barnabas, Peter and John; and note, that when Christ first sent out his apostles, Mt 10:1-42, he sent them out two by two.

*And they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth:* we read before, that *the holy city*, that is, the true church, should be trodden under foot by the Gentiles *forty and two months*; we read here, that the witnesses should *prophesy in sackcloth a thousand two hundred and threescore days*. It is apparent, that in the

prophetical style a day signifies a year, Nu 14:34, *Forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years.* So Eze 4:6, *I have appointed thee each day for a year.* So Da 9:24, the *seventy weeks* must signify four hundred and ninety years, (for in seventy weeks there are four hundred and ninety days), or else the promise as to the coming of the Messiah failed. So the prophetical year contains three hundred and sixty years, and the prophetical month thirty years (for they did count thirty days to each month); so forty-two months are just one thousand two hundred and sixty days, that is, one thousand two hundred and sixty years. We shall find, Re 12:6, that the woman (that is, the church) was in the wilderness just this time, one thousand two hundred and sixty days; and in Re 13:5, this was also the time of the beast that rose up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns: by which it appeareth, that these four things ran all parallel at the same time; the beast arising, and exercising his power; the new Gentiles trampling upon the church, the holy city; the woman's abiding in the wilderness; and the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth. If we could find out where any one of these began, we should find out the time of all the rest. Those who fix the rise of the beast in or about the year 400, must add to this 1260. Then in 1660 antichrist's reign should have determined, and also the time of the church's persecution, and the time when faithful ministers should prophesy in sackcloth: but if the rise of the beast were in the year 500, the expiration must be in 1760; if it be fixed in 600, all these things will determine in 1860; for the same number of days being assigned to all the four, it is manifest that all four began together, and shall end together, and that at the end of a thousand two hundred and sixty years after the beginning of them. For my own part, I look upon it as very hard to determine: but the difficulty lies in finding out the time when the beast first arose; for that being once found out, it is easy to conclude from Scripture, when both the popedom shall have an end, and the calamitous time for the church, especially the ministry of it, shall cease. That which God showeth John in this verse, is only, that his faithful ministers that should truly reveal his will, (which is here called prophesying), should have a mournful time for a thousand two hundred and threescore years.

#### Revelation 11:4

Ver. 4. Here is a manifest allusion to Zechariah's vision, Zec 4:2,3,11-14,

though with some little difference. He saw *a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which were upon the top thereof: and two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.* The angel tells him, that *these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes did empty the golden oil out of themselves,* were the *two anointed ones,* or the two sons of oil, *that stood by the Lord of the whole earth.* By which some understand Zerubbabel and Joshua; some, those godly magistrates and priests, which after the captivity the Jewish church should have, and prefigured a gospel ministry, who being filled with knowledge and grace, should feed the Lord's church (as pastors after his own heart) with wisdom and understanding, from the gifts and graces of God's Holy Spirit, which they should receive; which further confirmeth me, that by the *two witnesses,* Re 11:3, we are to understand a godly magistracy and ministry, or rather the latter only, to whom prophesying most strictly agreeth, and who have a more special relation to the candlesticks here mentioned, by which churches are meant, Re 1:20.

*And the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth:* in Zechariah's vision was but one candlestick, how comes here a mention to be made of two? Mr. Mede confesseth himself at a loss here, unless here another candlestick be added to signify the Gentiles' conversion to Christ. Others think that it denoteth the small number of gospel churches that should be left; they were reckoned seven, Re 1:20; here they are reduced to two. Possibly it may denote the different state of God's church. In the Old Testament God had but one church, viz. that of the Jews; but now he hath many churches, and they are all fed from faithful ministers, as olive branches pouring out their oil of grace and knowledge upon them.

### Revelation 11:5

Ver. 5. *And if any man will hurt them;* that is, my faithful ministers, the two olive branches before mentioned, which fill the candlesticks with oil.

*Fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies:* here is a plain allusion to the stories of Moses and Elijah, calling for fire from heaven; but God showeth, that the victory of his ministers under the gospel shall not be by a miraculous fire called for down from heaven, (as Elijah



hurt the captains and their bands sent to apprehend him), but by *fire out of their mouths*; according to that, Jer 5:14, *Behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them*: see also Jer 1:9,10. This also is according to Zechariah's vision before mentioned, and the revelation of the will of God in it, Re 11:6: *Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts*. The meaning is, that they shall be too hard for them, either by their faithful, lively, and powerful preaching, or by their fervent prayers.

### Revelation 11:6

Ver. 6. It is plain that here is an allusion to Elijah, who *prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months*, Jas 5:17; see the story, 1Ki 17:1: and to Moses, who turned the waters into blood in Egypt; and after was an instrument to smite the land of Egypt with plagues. But what power analogous to this the ministers of the gospel have had, or have, is not easy to determine. It is certain, the apostles had a miraculous power, but they rarely used it, but in doing good to men; Ananias and Sapphira indeed were struck dead upon their word, Ac 5:1-11; and Elymas the sorcerer was struck blind by them; but this power is long since ceased. Mr. Mede understands this power of the keys of doctrine and church censures the ministers of the gospel should be intrusted with; so as they should not preach the gospel unto such as contemned their ministry; by the withholding of which means of grace, also, they would be deprived of the dew of heavenly grace. And, indeed, this seemeth more proper than to understand it of the keys of discipline; for what power of this nature have ministers over those who are without? I take a general explication to be the best. If any hurt them, God shall revenge their cause, not only by spiritual, but by temporal judgments, bringing all manner of evils upon their adversaries. They are said to have power to do it, because God will do it in the revenge of the injuries done unto them.

### Revelation 11:7

Ver. 7. *And when they shall have finished their testimony; οταν τελεσωσσι* Mr. Mede notes, that this is ill translated by the preterperfect

tense; the true English of it is, when they shall be about to finish their testimony: when they have prophesied in sackcloth the most of their twelve hundred and sixty years, they shall meet with *ultimum conatum antichristi*, the last struggle of the beast for life.

*The beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit*, that is, the beast mentioned Re 13:1,4, (by which the papacy is meant, whom they have plagued all the time of their prophecy, though continual sufferers from it), *shall make war against them; shall get life again, and make one push more, possibly the sharpest yet made; and shall overcome them, and kill them; and be too hard for them, and kill them.* It is a great question, whether this be to be understood of taking away their natural lives, or of a civil death relating to them as witnesses, making them as if they were naturally dead. The latter of these seemeth to me much the more probable, for these reasons:

1. Supposing the godly magistracy, or ministry, or the latter alone, to be the *two witnesses*, it doth not seem probable that ever the papacy shall so far prevail, as to kill all such over the face of the whole church.
2. Neither is the Holy Ghost here speaking of them as men, but as *witnesses*.
3. Nor would either friends or enemies suffer dead bodies to be unburied three days and a half, in the street of a great city, as Re 11:8,9.
4. Neither is their resurrection, mentioned Re 11:11, to be understood of a corporal resurrection. I take therefore the killing here mentioned, to be understood of a destroying them as witnesses, turning magistrates out of their places, and ministers out of their places; though it be not probable that such a malice and hatred as should cause this, should terminate without the blood of some of them; but that surely is not the thing principally here intended.

### Revelation 11:8

Ver. 8. Their bodies dead, in the sense before mentioned, shall continue so for three days and a half, of which we shall speak, Re 11:11. But what is

here meant:

1. By *the great city*?
2. By the *street of the great city*?

Some, by *the great city*, would have Jerusalem understood; but that was now far from a great city, nor do the addition of those words in the latter end of the verse prove it; for Christ was not crucified in that city, but without the gates. Most judicious interpreters, by *the great city* here, understand Rome, which is seven or eight times (under the name of Babylon) so called in this hook, Re 14:8 Re 16:19 18:10,16,18,19,21; nor is any other city but that so called. This great city is here said, in a spiritual sense, to be *Sodom and Egypt*; *Sodom*, for whoredom and filthiness; *Egypt*, for oppression of the Lord's Israel. As to the second question, what is here meant by *the street of the great city*? Mr. Mede hath irrefragably proved, that it cannot be meant of any parish, or such place in this city, as we call a street:

1. Because our Lord was crucified neither in any street, or parish, or any other place within the walls of Jerusalem.
2. Both Jerusalem and Rome had many more than one street.
3. Because the bodies being dead, doubtless lay in the place where they were slain; but men do not use to fight in the streets of cities.
4. Nor was that a place for all people, kindred, tongues, and nations, to see them in.

He therefore rightly judgeth, that the Greek word which we translate *street*, signifies the territories and jurisdiction of this city. See what he says to justify this in his *Clavis Apocal.* 40. p. 138. And this makes the last clause plain; for though our Lord was not crucified within any city, or in the street of any city, yet he was crucified in a place belonging to the jurisdiction of the Roman emperor; and it is very likely that it is in Europe that the witnesses shall be slain, which, in this sense, was all of it a street belonging to the city of Rome.

## Revelation 11:9

Ver. 9. *And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations; that is, a multitude of people of all sorts shall take notice of this suppression of these two witnesses in their bearing witness for God, and all the cruel dealings with them.*

*Shall see their dead bodies three days and an half:* there are great disputes what time these *three days and an half* denote: it cannot be understood of three natural, or artificial days; for (as it is noted by the most judicious interpreters) this is much too short a time for all people to *see their dead bodies, to rejoice over them, and to make merry, and to send gifts one to another* in testification of the satisfaction of their lusts, upon the victory got over them. I find some understand these *three days and an half* of the one thousand two hundred and sixty years, wherein they prophesied in sackcloth, Re 11:3, which they thus make out; they first conclude, that these are prophetical days, and so signify three years and a half; then they resolve each of those years into days, and count three times three hundred and sixty days (for in those countries they say the year was counted to contain but three hundred and sixty days); to which they add one hundred and eighty, the half of three hundred and sixty, for the half day, which make up one thousand two hundred and sixty days, or forty-two months; which is the just time both of the beast's reign, and of the woman's abode in the wilderness, and of the witnesses' prophesying in sackcloth, and of the Gentiles' treading down the outward court.

1. But it seems very hard, thus first to make the three days three years in a prophetical sense, and then again to resolve those years, into days, and make those days so many more years; this looks as much like oppression to the text, as the counting interest upon interest to a debtor.
2. It plainly confounds the time of the prophesying of the witnesses in sackcloth, with the time of their lying dead.

Now although the time of their lying dead must be within the one thousand two hundred and sixty days, in the latter end thereof, (for it must be within the beast's forty-two months, mentioned Re 13:5), yet it seems hard to make it as long as the beast's reign. It certainly signifies a time toward the

end of the beast's reign, when there shall be a more eminent and universal suppression of the faithful witnesses of Christ than ever was before: it seemeth therefore rather to be understood more generally for a short time, as much such a phrase or way of speaking is used, Hos 6:2, or else for a determinate time of such three years and a half as we ordinarily count. I must confess the half day being added, makes me more incline to the latter; for though it be usual with us to express a short time by, two or three days, and this seems by that text of Hosea to have been an ancient way of speaking, yet we do not use to put in half days when we so speak. I do therefore agree with those who think the time here specified is to be understood of three ordinary years and a half; and the rather, because this is the very time that Christ was under the power of the Pharisees. As three days (that is, part of them) was the time of his being under the power of death, so three years and a half was the just time of all the indignity that he suffered from his manifestation to the world, to his death: and (as we read in 1 Macc.) it was the just time of Antiochus's oppressing of the Jews, whom divines judge that Daniel, in his 11th chapter (Da 11:1-45), makes a type of antichrist.

*And shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves:* divines are divided whether these words be to be understood of enemies or friends. If it be to be understood of friends, the death being a civil death principally that was spoken of, it signifieth the providence of God so working for his witnesses, by the adherence of a party to them, that their adversaries the popish party should not wholly extinguish them; which hath been seen all along the story of the church: though their adversaries have been warring against them, overcome and killed them, yet they have not been able to bury them; nor shall they be able to do it at this last pinch, when they shall have a greater victory over them than ever before, and kill them to a further degree. But methinks the phrase rather signifies this an act of enemies, who, to show their further malice to them, and contempt and scorn of them are said to be so inhuman, as not to suffer their dead bodies to be buried.

### Revelation 11:10

Ver. 10. It is plain by the repeating of the same words in the close of the verse, that by those that  *dwell upon the earth*  are meant earthly, carnal

men, whether papists or atheists; men that are mad upon their lusts; for these are those in whose consciences faithful and powerful preaching breeds a torment and uneasiness, so as they always count godly ministers their enemies, (as Ahab told Elijah), and are not able to bear their words (as the Israelites could not bear the words of Amos).

*Shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another;* these therefore shall keep holiday, when they see these their enemies conquered, and show all signs and expressions of joy. These preachers were they that hindered them from a quiet sleep in their beds of lust.

*Because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth;* and though they fought against them only with a fire going out of their mouths, as prophets declaring the will of God to be contrary to their lewd practices, and denouncing God's wrath against those that did such things; yet their preaching made their heads ache, partly by alarming their consciences, so as they often flew in their faces; and by it they were exposed to the reproach of people, as living directly contrary to the Divine rule, and in defiance of his law: thus they torment wicked men, who therefore always did, and always will, triumph in their suppression, or in any evil that shall betide them. And as they see their suppression greater than ever before, (as it will be undoubtedly during these three years and a half), so the triumph of lewd and wicked men will be proportionably more, though it will be but like a widow's joy, for a short time, for it will appear that their dead bodies were not put into the grave.

### Revelation 11:11

Ver. 11. *And after three days and an half;* after that short time which God had determined for antichrist, (just before his time should be expired), or after the precise time of forty-two months, or three years and a half, was expired, when the Gentiles thought they had fully prevailed, and should be no more troubled with Christ's witnesses.

*The Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet;* God, who alone can quicken the dead, reviveth them, and restoreth them again to their employment as his prophets; for it is plain this cannot

be understood of a corporal resurrection: for:

1. Their death was not of that nature; nor:
2. Doth the Scripture give us any hints of any such resurrection before the coming of Christ to the last judgment.

*And great fear fell upon them which saw them;* this strikes a great fear into all their enemies amazed to think what God was about to do, and rightly presaging this would be their ruin.

It is a great question now, whether the time here spoken of for slaying the witnesses, and their rising again, be past, or yet to come. I must confess, the papacy had got such a victory over the faithful witnesses of Christ for some ages before the Reformation began in Germany, about the year 1517, and there was so sudden a resurrection of them in the first Reformers, brought to pass and carried on by such a stupendous series of providences, that I cannot wonder that some did think the time past: but we who have outlived that time more than one hundred and fifty years, seeing the Turks (whom all judicious interpreters make the four angels, bound by the river Euphrates, loosed) still so rampant, and the papacy still so predominant, and daily treading down the outward court, have no reason to judge the slaying of the witnesses yet over, at least that they are yet risen, and standing upon their feet; or that the seventh angel hath yet sounded; but that we are as yet under the period of time signified by the sounding of the sixth trumpet; and to expect a further degree of this evening before it will be light over the universal church (for we must not think any particular church intended here): and this appears most probable also from what followeth before the sounding of the seventh angel, Re 11:15.

### Revelation 11:12

Ver. 12. *And they,* that is, the two witnesses, so often before spoken of, *heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither;* heard God by a singular providence calling them again to their former work and station in his church; or (as some) to a higher and more famous place in his church than they formerly enjoyed; for by *heaven* the most and best interpreters understand the church, as it often signifies in this book.

*And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them; and this was done in the face of their enemies. In this sense of this verse I find the generality of judicious interpreters agreed.*

### Revelation 11:13

Ver. 13. *And the same hour;* that is, about the same time, when the Spirit of life from God entered into the witnesses, and they were again restored.

*Was there a great earthquake;* by *earthquake* doubtless is here meant a great confusion in the world, and shaking of nations by differences one with another, and wars: See Poole on "Re 6:12".

*And the tenth part of the city fell;* by *the city* is doubtless meant *the great city* before named, *spiritually called Sodom and Egypt;* elsewhere, *Babylon;* by which Rome is to be understood. What is meant by the tenth part of it falling, is not so well agreed; some by it understanding many kingdoms falling off from its jurisdiction; others, a great part of its tribute or dominion.

*And in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand:* these words seem to intimate that the restoration of the witnesses shall not be without opposition, and that the opposition shall not be great; seven thousand is a small number to fall in such a quarrel: but the papal party shall appear to have cheated the world so with their impostures, and so to have imposed upon them, that the world shall grow sick of them, and when the time comes for God to put a final period to them, the number shall be but few that adventure for them.

*And the remnant were affrighted;* others shall be *affrighted*, either from their own consciences, or from the stupendous dispensations of Divine Providence in the fall of the great city.

*And gave glory to the God of heaven;* and give glory to God, by confessing their errors, and turning to an ingenuous and sincere acknowledgment of the truth. Instead of worshipping saints, and angels, and images, worshipping the true and living God of heaven and earth only.



### Revelation 11:14

Ver. 14. *The second woe is past;* that is, here endeth the misery that is like to come upon the world in that period of time which shall follow the sounding of the sixth trumpet.

*And, behold, the third woe cometh quickly:* the *third woe* signifies those calamities which should come in that period of time prophesied of by the sounding of the seventh trumpet; this makes a late learned author think that all that which went before, viz. the Gentiles treading down the outward court, the slaying of the witnesses, and their resuscitation, must be under the sixth trumpet; which period endeth not until the church's enemies be ready to be destroyed; whose destruction is afterwards opened to us in the angels pouring out their vials.

### Revelation 11:15

Ver. 15. *And the seventh angel sounded;* the last of those angels mentioned Re 8:2.

*And there were great voices in heaven, saying;* St. John in his vision heard great acclamations and shoutings for the victory which Christ and his gospel had got over the beast.

*The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever;* so that a great part of the world, casting off the papacy, that new Gentilism, together with all their abominable idolatries and superstitions, embraced the truth of the gospel. Here ariseth a great question, whether the seven vials, of which we shall find the 16th chapter treating (Re 16:1-21), do belong all to the seventh trumpet, or some of them belong to the sixth trumpet, of which mention hath been before made. Great divines are on both sides as to this question. Mr. Pool, in his Latin Synopsis, hath collected together their reasons, of which I shall give a short account, leaving my reader for a fuller satisfaction to the Latin Synopsis.

Those who think that the seven vials do all relate to the seventh trumpet, and contemporize with it, in defence of their opinion say:

1. That the seven seals, and the seven trumpets, and the seven vials, are all mentioned in the same form of speech; and therefore the seven vials are not to be divided, some to one trumpet, some to another.

2. Because the seventh trumpet and the seven vials are one and the same thing, nothing being revealed under the seven vials which doth not belong to the seventh trumpet; they agree in their titles of woes, in the nature of the revelations, in their objects, both the one and the other declaring the ruin of antichrist; both of them are mentioned as the last plagues to come upon the world before the last day.

3. All the vials are of the same nature, declaring but the judgments by which God, setting up the kingdom of Christ, would ruin antichrist; they only differ in the degrees of the plagues, each one rising higher than the other.

4. The seventh trumpet cannot declare the ruin of antichrist, unless the seven vials be poured out under it, for they show the means by which he must be destroyed.

5. The seventh trumpet soundeth immediately upon the slaying of the witnesses, and contemporizeth with the whole course of their renewed liberty, and therefore the period signified by it must be before the fall of antichrist, declared by the sixth vial.

6. The seventh trumpet soundeth immediately after the expiration of the twelve hundred and sixty days; before the end of which none of the vials were poured out.

Those who think that divers of the vials were poured out, or shall be poured out, before the sounding of this seventh trumpet, say, that the beast's kingdom beginning to fall under the sixth trumpet, several of the vials, declaring the degrees of his falling, must belong to that. It appeareth by all we have in this chapter Re 11:7-15, that antichrist's kingdom was in a great measure weakened under the sixth trumpet, particularly from Re 11:11-13. To which those who think that all the vials related to the seventh

trumpet say, that they grant that there were some preparations to the final ruin of antichrist, during the period of the sixth trumpet, but the seven vials signify the further progress and perfection of his ruin, which falls under the period signified by the seventh trumpet. This being premised, I proceed with the text.

It is doubted here whether those words, *are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ*, be to be understood as being actually so, or now beginning to be so. Those who make the sense that they now actually were so, must understand the time to be the day of judgment, or some time next to it, and consequently must think that five at least of the seven vials, mentioned Re 16:1-21, belonged to the sixth trumpet. Those who make the sense, are beginning to become the kingdoms of the Lord, or shall shortly be so, may make all the seven vials to belong to the seventh trumpet. By becoming the kingdoms of the Lord Christ, he means in outward profession; so as antichrist shall reign no more, but they shall be ruled by the officers of the Lord Christ, until they be taken up to reign with him in glory.

#### Revelation 11:16

Ver. 16. I take this to signify no more than the triumph of the saints and angels in heaven upon this victory of the Lord over antichrist, and the promoting of Christ's kingdom; and certainly if there be joy in heaven upon the conversion of *one sinner*, as we are told, Lu 15:7, we must imagine a much greater joy upon the conversion of nations and kingdoms unto Christ.

#### Revelation 11:17

Ver. 17. *Which art, and wast, and art to come;* it is a phrase denoting God's eternity and immutability; we met with it before, Re 4:8.

*Because thou hast taken to the thy great power, and hast reigned;* those celestial beings bless God for exerting his power, and recovering the kingdom of Christ out of the hands of antichrist, and setting his King upon his holy hill of Zion.

### Revelation 11:18

Ver. 18. *And the nations were angry;* those who have not been of thy true Israel, but old or modern Gentiles, they have been angry long enough.

*And thy wrath is come;* now it is time for thee to show thyself angry, and thou hast begun to do it.

*And the time of the dead, that they should be judged;* the time is come for thee to judge the cause of thy faithful witnesses, and all those who have died in testimony to thy truth.

*And that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets;* and for thee to reward such as have faithfully revealed thy will.

*And to the saints;* and not only them, but all thy holy ones.

*And them that fear thy name, small and great;* without respect to their quality in the world, be they little or great.

*And shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth;* the time also is come, when thou hast destroyed, or wilt destroy, that antichristian brood, which so long hath plagued the earth, and destroyed thy people in it.

### Revelation 11:19

Ver. 19. *And the temple of God:* some here, by *the temple of God*, understand the representation of the temple in Jerusalem; others understand the church triumphant; others, the church of Christ militant here upon earth.

*Was opened in heaven:* accordingly, by *heaven* they understand either the natural heavens, or the Christian church: it seemeth to be a plain allusion to the Jewish church, whose temple was ordinarily shut up in the time of wicked and idolatrous princes, who regarded not the true worship of God; so as all the time of Saul's reign the ark abode in the private house of

Obed-edom; and when Josiah came to reign, he found the temple neglected all the days of his father Amon and grandfather Manasseh, and the book of the law in the rubbish. But when good princes came to the throne, such as Hezekiah and Josiah, they opened the temple, restoring the true worship of God. So under the New Testament, during the whole reign of antichrist, where he prevails, idolatry and superstition obtain, and the true worship of God is suppressed; but his time being now expiring, God showeth John that there shall be a restoring of the true worship of God, and a liberty both to ministers and people to worship God according to his will. For though antichrist was not yet wholly destroyed, nor his party extinguished, yet he had lost his power and dominion, and God was now beginning to reckon with him for the blood of his saints; which was all to be done before all the kingdoms of the world should become the kingdoms of the Lord Christ.

*And there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament:* in the temple of old, the ark of the covenant was the great symbol of God's presence; hence God is said to have dwelt between the cherubims. In the ark were the two tables of the law; so as this phrase may either note the pure, free, and ordinary expounding of the law of God, which should be upon the downfall of antichrist; or the presence of God with his church in that more pure and reformed state. But such a work of providence being not like to be effected without the ruin of antichrist,

God showeth it shall be ushered in with *lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail; by terrible things in righteousness,* as the psalmist speaketh. The consequents of which were the seven vials, of which we shall read, Re 16:1-21, pouring out plagues upon the antichristian party, until they should be wholly rooted out and Christ alone should be exalted in his church, and rule as King upon his holy hill of Zion.

From this mysterious portion of holy writ thus opened, it appeareth that God, in these foregoing chapters, hath (though more summarily) instructed his prophet in what should come to pass to the final ruin of the Roman empire, (considered as pagan, that is, till Constantine's time), and also of the reign of antichrist. From whence it must needs follow, that whatsoever followeth this chapter, and cannot be applied to the time of Christ's kingdom, must contemporize with something which went before, and belong to some period comprehended under the vision of the seals, or of

the trumpets. The next three chapters are judged to relate wholly to things past, God therein representing to his prophet the state of his church (as some think) from the nativity of Christ; however, from his time, during the whole time that Rome continued pagan, or should continue antichristian; the following chapters showing the gradual destruction of antichrist by the seven last plagues.

## Revelation 12:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 12:1,2 A woman clothed with the sun travaileth,  
Re 12:3,4 A great red dragon standeth ready to  
devottr her child,  
Re 12:5,6 She is delivered, and fleeth into the  
wilderness,  
Re 12:7-9 Michael and his angels fight with the  
dragon, who is cast out of heaven with his angels.  
Re 12:10-12 The victory proclaimed in heaven.  
Re 12:13-17 The dragon, cast down to the earth,  
persecuteth the woman.

Ver. 1. *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven:* I see no reason to doubt, but that John was all this while in heaven, whither he was taken up, Re 4:2, where he saw in a vision *a great wonder*, or a most remarkable thing.

*A woman clothed with the sun;* I find all valuable interpreters agreeing, that this woman represented the church, well enough compared to a woman;

1. As she is the spouse of Christ (though here expressed as his mother).
2. As the woman is the weaker sex, and the church hath always been the weakest part of the world.

(I look upon the interpretation of it by popish authors, with reference to the virgin Mary, as very idle; for when did she flee into the wilderness? When

was she with child, and pained to be delivered?) Interpreters also are as well agreed, that by *the sun*, with which she is said to be *clothed*, is meant Christ, called *the Sun of righteousness*, Mal 4:2, and he who giveth light, Eph 5:14; and believers (of whom the church consists) are said to have *put on Christ*, Ro 13:14 Ga 3:27.

*And the moon under her feet*: by *the moon*, most understand the world, by reason of its mutability and uncertainty, which the church of Christ despiseth, and hath under her feet, minding heaven and heavenly things. But Mr. Mede rather understands it of the Jewish worship, which, as to its times, was much directed by the moon; which *hand-writing which was against us* (the apostle tells us, Col 2:14) Christ took away, *nailing it to his cross*; so as the gospel church hath it under her feet. The apostle calls them *carnal ordinances*, Heb 9:10, and *the rudiments of the world*, Col 2:20, yea, *beggarly elements*, Ga 4:9.

*And upon her head a crown of twelve stars*; the ministry of the gospel, preaching and building upon the true foundation, the doctrine of the prophets, and twelve apostles, which is the honour of any church.

### Revelation 12:2

Ver. 2. *Being with child*; not with Christ considered personally, who was long before brought forth by the virgin Mary, but with the truth, and gospel of Christ, or with Christ mystical.

*Cried*; desiring to bring many children to the kingdom of Christ; or to bring forth Christ in the souls of others: of this burden and labour she desired *to be delivered*. The phrase is judged to signify both the primitive church's desire to propagate the gospel, and also her many sufferings for that endeavour.

### Revelation 12:3

Ver. 3. *And there appeared another wonder in heaven*; there appeared to John, being yet in his vision, another amazing sight, which was a sign or type of something differing from what it appeared like.

*And behold a great red dragon:* see Re 12:7,9,17. Most judicious interpreters, by the *great red dragon*, understand the Roman emperors that first persecuted: the Christian church, of which Claudius was the first; yet some understand it of the devil, the old serpent; but the most and best interpreters understand it of the pagan emperors, by whom the devil did this work, called a *great dragon*, because of the vastness of that empire; a *red dragon*, for their cruelty against the Christians.

*Having seven heads;* the Holy Ghost, Re 17:9, hath expounded these *seven heads*, by *seven mountains*. The *ten horns* are thought to signify the ten provinces belonging to that empire, the governors of which ruled like ten kings. It is expounded by *ten kings*, Re 17:12. Strabo tells us, that Augustus Caesar divided the whole empire into twenty provinces; ten of which, being more quiet, he gave to the people to govern, the other ten he reserved to his own government. The *seven crowns* are expounded by *seven kings*, Re 17:10, of which we shall speak more when we come so far.

#### Revelation 12:4

Ver. 4. The *tail* of the *red dragon* signifies his followers, his civil and military officers, whosoever were by him employed to execute his commands. By *the stars*, here, are either meant the ministers of the Christian church, or the professors of it.

*And did cast them to the earth;* turning them out of their places and stations, making them as useless as he could.

*And the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born;* that is, before the church that was ready to propagate itself, watching upon her increase to devour them. I take this to be a much more probable sense than theirs who understand it of Constantine; for I know not, with reference to him, who should be understood by the *red dragon*. Mr. Mede hath ingeniously observed, that Pharaoh was a type of this red dragon. He is resembled by a dragon, Ps 74:13,14 Isa 51:9 Eze 29:3, and watched upon God's ancient church to destroy it, as the pagan emperors did upon the Christian church.



### Revelation 12:5

Ver. 5. By this *man-child* some understand Constantine the Great; others understand Christ mystical, or many children brought forth unto God. As the Jews multiplied, do Pharaoh what he could to destroy them, so the church increased, notwithstanding all the malice and rage of her enemies. Interpreters accordingly are divided concerning the person or persons here spoken of, that should *rule all nations with a rod of iron*. It was prophesied of Christ, Ps 2:9, that he should *break the nations with a rod of iron*. It is applied to the servants of Christ, who overcome, and keep Christ's words to the end, Re 2:27. So as it is here applicable to believers, whom the church should bring forth, who shall *judge the world*, as the apostle tells us; and I had rather thus interpret it, than concerning Constantine the Great.

*And her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne:* these words are something hard to be interpreted. To interpret it of Christ's being taken up into heaven, is to turn a mysterious prophecy into a plain relation, or history of things past. To interpret it concerning Constantine the Great, seemeth very hard; for how was he, more than any other Christians, *caught up unto God, and to his throne*? If we say, when he died; so are they: if we say the imperial throne is here understood by God's throne, it seemeth to me very hard; for although of magistrates God saith, *I have said, Ye are gods*, yet their thrones are never called God's throne. I had rather give this phrase a more general interpretation, viz. God took this offspring of the woman into his royal protection, so as the dragon could not devour it, it was out of his reach.

### Revelation 12:6

Ver. 6. *And the woman fled into the wilderness:* as the Israelites, when they fled from Pharaoh, went into the wilderness; and Joseph, watched upon by Herod, fled into Egypt; so the church did hide herself during the antichristian persecutions, every one shifting for themselves as well as they could.

*Where she hath a place prepared of God; God provided for them in some more obscure places.*

### Revelation 12:7

Ver. 7. *And there was war in heaven: by heaven,* in this place, doubtless is meant the church of God; and supposing that the pagan emperors are to be understood by the *dragon*, ( which is pretty generally agreed), there can be no great doubt, but by this *war in heaven*, is to be understood those persecutions which the primitive church endured between the years 64 and 310.

*Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels:* the two parties were the pagan emperors, and their officers, and party, and *Michael and his angels*. But who is here meant by *Michael and his angels*? Some, by this *Michael*, understand a principal angel called *the archangel*, Jude 1:9, *one of the chief princes*, Da 10:13. Others, by *Michael* here understand Christ himself, who, they think, is understood by *Michael*, Da 12:1. The matter is not much; it is most certain that the battle is not ours, but Christ's. It is as certain that Christ exerciseth his power by his angels, and that they have a ministration about his church. The meaning is no more than this, that Christ and his party opposed the pagan persecutors and their party.

### Revelation 12:8

Ver. 8. The pagans were at length routed in this battle; the Christians overcame them by the preaching of the gospel, and by their faith and patience; and paganism found no place within the same territories where the church was. This was fulfilled in the time of Constantine the Great, who altered the face of the Roman empire; and more eminently in the time of Theodosius, about the year 380.

### Revelation 12:9

Ver. 9. *And the great dragon was cast out;* the dragon mentioned Re 12:3,

which typified the pagan emperors. In casting them out, *the devil* who influenced them, was cast out, who is here called the *old serpent*, with reference to the form in which he seduced Eve, as well as his malignity to man.

*The devil*, that is, the accuser of the brethren, (of which we have an instance in Job 1:1-22), and *Satan*, which name he hath from his opposition to Christ and all Christians.

*Which deceiveth the whole world;* by seducing them to idolatry and superstition.

*He was cast out into the earth;* cast down from his former state.

*And his angels were cast out with him;* the instruments he used in persecuting the church, were put out of power. Mr. Mede understands it of the demons which the heathens worshipped as inferior gods. John, being in his trance still, thought he saw a great red dragon, (which he judged to be the devil), and Christ, or the good angels, fighting with and overcoming him; and that he saw the devil, and those evil angels assisting him, thrown down to the earth. This prophetically and typically signified; that though the Roman emperors, being pagans, should persecute the church upwards of three hundred years, yet they should be overthrown, and paganism, with all its idolatry and superstition, should be rooted out; which occasioned a great deal of glory to God from the praises and thanksgivings of his people, expressed in the next three verses.

### Revelation 12:10

Ver. 10. *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven:* John undoubtedly heard this voice as in the third heaven, whither he was caught; but it is not only expressive of the joy and satisfaction which the glorious angels and glorified saints had, upon their knowledge of what was done upon the earth, but prophetic of the great joy which should be over all the church, upon Constantine's stopping the persecution. and restoring peace to the church, by casting out all pagan idolatries and superstitions.

*Now is come salvation;* temporal salvation, and deliverance from

persecutors.

*And strength;* now God hath showed himself a strong and mighty God.

*And the kingdom of our God;* and the King of kings, who reigneth over all the earth.

*And the power of his Christ;* now Christ hath shown his power.

*For the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accused them before our God day and night;* for the devil, who incessantly accuseth the saints, is overcome. Two things are here observable:

1. That the holy angels call the saints *brethren*.
2. That the accusers of Christians, for their piety towards God, are of their father the devil, for his works they do.

Informers show who is their father, by accusing others, by murdering the servants of God; they differ no more than as elder and younger brethren, both are children of the same father.

### Revelation 12:11

Ver. 11. *And they overcame him;* Michael and his angels, mentioned Re 12:7, overcame the dragon and his angels: the Christians overcame the pagans.

*By the blood of the Lamb:* some translate  $\delta\iota\alpha$  here, *propter*, because of, as denoting the meritorious cause, which is true; for Christ's blood was both the meritorious and exemplary cause of their victory. But this will not agree with the usage of the term in the next words. Others therefore rather choose to translate it, *by*, as denoting the efficient cause, whether principal (as was the blood of the Lamb) or instrumental.

*And by the word of their testimony;* as was their preaching, and professing the gospel.

*And they loved not their lives unto the death; and by their patient bearing the cross, not shunning the danger of death, that they might preach Christ, and own his truths, and live up to the holy rule of his gospel.*

### Revelation 12:12

Ver. 12. *Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them:* he calls to the angels and saints again to rejoice; some think, to the church also: these tell us, that *the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea,* in St. John's writings, always signify the enemies of the church, earthly, carnal men.

*For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath;* the devil now being divested of the power he exercised against the church, will fall upon you; for though he principally hateth the saints, as most opposite to him, yet he is the common hater of mankind.

*Because he knoweth that he hath but a short time;* and he hath but a little time to execute his malice, he shall shortly be confined to the bottomless pit. It is hard to say whether here be intended all in general, or the worsè part of the world only; for great judgments after this came upon the whole Roman empire by the Goths and Vandals, and upon the church by the Arians, and by antichrist, of whose rise we shall read in the next chapter.

### Revelation 12:13

Ver. 13. *And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth;* when the devil saw that he could not uphold his kingdom by paganism, nor further execute his malice by pagan emperors, but was wholly routed and overcome, as to that power.

*He persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child;* to let us know that he retained his malice, though he had lost his former power, he goes on in pursuing the church of God to its ruin, only doth it in another form; heretofore in the form of a pagan, now under the pretence of a Christian; by heretics, the spawn of Arius and Photinus, (who were before this time), and by Pelagius, Nestorius, and Eutyches, who all were between the years 400 and 500, and by antichrist, the *beast* we shall read of, Re

13:1, with *seven heads and ten horns*.

Revelation 12:14

Ver. 14. *And to the woman;* to the sincerer part of Christians, represented by *the woman*, Re 12:1, and by *the temple, and altar, and them that worship therein*, viz. in the oracle where the altar stood, Re 11:1.

*Were given two wings of a great eagle:* the eagle being the ensign of the Roman empire, and Theodosius having two sons, Honorius and Arcadius, between which he divided the empire, making Honorius the emperor of the west, and Arcadius of the east, leadeth some very judicious interpreters to expound this passage of the providence of God (by this division of the empire about the year 390) in some measure securing his church from the great troubles that presently ensued. For in the year 411, Alaricus king of the Goths took Rome, and continual troubles so ensued, that by the year 480 the western empire was quite extinguished, ending in Augustulus, who, because of his manifold afflictions, is supposed to be the *star* mentioned Re 8:10,11, called *Wormwood*, who fell upon the sounding of the third trumpet.

*That she might fly into the wilderness:* by *the wilderness* is here undoubtedly meant some places which were like a wilderness for solitariness, where the church might have some rest.

*Into her place;* the place said to be by God prepared for the church, Re 12:6.

*Where she is nourished;* where God hid, and protected, and provided for his people a certain time, expressed in the next words. I know not whether we need be so critical or no, or whether it be not safer to expound all the foregoing words more generally, viz. that God graciously provided for his people hiding-places against the storm now coming upon the whole Roman empire, bearing them, as it were, *on eagles' wings*, as he did his old Israelites when he brought them out of the land of Egypt. It is the very phrase used by God, Ex 19:4.

*For a time, and times, and half a time:* it is apparent, that the same space

of time is here meant that is mentioned Re 12:6, and called *a thousand two hundred and threescore days*. Most interpreters agree, that it signifieth three years and a half, consisting each of them of three hundred and sixty prophetic days, that is, years; for although we count three hundred and sixty-five days to the year, (and there are strictly so many, besides some odd hours), yet anciently they counted but three hundred and sixty, leaving out the five odd days, as we do now the odd hours and minutes, which in four years make up an odd day, which makes every fourth year leap year. Now three times three hundred and sixty make up a thousand and eighty, to which add one hundred and eighty for the half year, it makes just a thousand two hundred and sixty, the number of days mentioned Re 12:6. If any inquire why what was expressed by one thousand two hundred and sixty days there, is thus expressed here? It is answered: To make this comport with the prophecy of Daniel, Da 7:25 12:7, where it is thus expressed.

### Revelation 12:15

Ver. 15. *And the serpent;* the devil, the old serpent, mentioned Re 12:9, being able no longer to execute his malice as a dragon, by the civil power of the heathen emperors, tearing Christians in pieces, but discerning the church secured by the special providence of God, went to work another way.

*Cast out of his mouth water as a flood;* corrupting the judgments of several persons, who, out of the abundance of error in their hearts, preached corrupt doctrine. Such were the followers of Arius, Nestorius, Eutyches, Pelagius, &c. *The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters,* Pr 18:4. *The mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things,* Pr 15:28.

*That he might cause her to be carried away of the flood;* on purpose to ruin the church: and, indeed, such were the ill effects of these heresies, that he who is but meanly versed in the history of the fifth age, will see reason to adore the providence of God, that the Roman emperors, upon the sight of them, did not again turn pagans, and add their force to the malice of these pretended Christians against the sincerer part of the church.

### Revelation 12:16

Ver. 16. *And the earth helped the woman:* there are divers notions here of *the earth*; to me theirs seemeth most probable, who understand by *the earth* the Goths and Vandals, &c., who, Anno 410, invaded the Roman empire, and gave it continual trouble, till they had put an end to the western empire, Anno 480. By whose continual contests with the subjects of the Roman empire, the church enjoyed some quiet in the exercises of religion; and though all this while they were troubled by the broods of Arians, Pelagians, Nestorians, and Eutychians, yet they could do them no great hurt; and the church had a liberty to condemn them by the second and third general councils; in which, it is probable, there were many too that deserved no better name than *the earth*.

*And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth;* but yet they served, in a great measure, to swallow up that flood of heresies which the devil threw out of his mouth by these heretics.

### Revelation 12:17

Ver. 17. *And the dragon was wroth with the woman:* the devil hath been defeated in two designs against the whole church; he could not wholly root it out by the ten persecutions under the Roman emperors, nor by the water thrown out of his mouth, pestilent doctrines which he influenced some to broach; but he was angry still, his rage was not extinguished.

*And went to make war with the remnant of her seed;* he gives over his design to ruin the whole church, as not practicable, but resolves to do all the mischief he could to the remnant of her seed, to particular Christians; those especially, which kept closest to the doctrine of faith, called here *the testimony of Jesus Christ*, and to the rule of a holy life, which is meant by keeping *the commandments of God*. Hence antichrist's rage hath not been against Christians in general, as was the pagans', but only against such Christians as he hath not been able to bring over to him, in a compliance with his corruptions in doctrine, worship, and discipline.



## Revelation 13:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 13:1-10 A beast with seven heads and ten horns riseth out of the sea, to whom the dragon giveth his power, wherewith he blasphemeth God, and vexeth the saints.

Re 13:11-17 Another beast cometh up out of the earth, which supporteth the worship of the former beast.

Re 13:18 The number of the beast.

### Chapter Introduction

God is now coming to show his prophet that grand enemy of his church, who is emphatically called antichrist; after the determination of whose time of one thousand two hundred and sixty years, the kingdom of Christ shall begin, whether in the day of judgment, or in some period of time before that, and here upon the earth, I dare not determine.

The rise, power, and prevalency of this adversary, is described in this chapter; the opposition made to him by Christ and his followers, Re 14:1-20; his fall, Re 15:1-18:24; for which praise is given to God, Re 19:1-21.

This enemy of the church is showed to John by the symbol or representation of two beasts; the one having the body of a leopard, the feet of a bear, and the mouth of a lion; the other having two horns like a lamb, but speaking like a dragon, Re 13:11.

The reader must understand, that the rise of these beasts, their rage, and prevalency, was contemporaneous with some of the six trumpets, mentioned Re 8:1-13 and Re 9:1-21. For, Re 9:15, upon the sounding of the seventh trumpet antichrist began to fall; whose gradual fall we shall find more fully described in Re 16:1-21, by pouring out of the vials; only (as was before said) there is from Re 12:1-17 a more particular description of what should happen to and in the church under the first six trumpets.

The best interpreters, by these two beasts, understand the antichrist, (for in a larger sense there are more antichrists than one), and by the antichrist

they understand the pope, as armed both with a secular and ecclesiastical power; yet I durst not conclude from that notion, the civil magistracy of the Roman empire, who either helped the pope into his chair, or held him there.

The greatest loss we are at, is to determine the time when the papacy began: it could not be before the pagan empire was thrown down, that was about the year 325, nor before the *silence in heaven for half an hour* was over, which (if that by it the rest be meant which the church enjoyed in the time of Constantine and Theodosius) was about the year 390, or 400; but if we fix the rise of the papacy there, I know no ground for it, and it would, besides, have been determined in the year 1660, or thereabouts. I think, therefore, we must distinguish between the rise and reign of antichrist. It doth not seem to me reasonable to make his reign to commence higher than the year 600, or 606, when he arrogated to himself the primacy; and that was confirmed to Boniface the Third by Phocas, in requital of Boniface's kindness to him, who had got the empire by the base murder of Mauritius his master, and of all his children, and stood in need of the pope's help to support him. From that time, I judge, the one thousand two hundred and sixty years should be counted; but *Nemo repente fit pessimus*, we must allow the papacy some time to come to this virile estate from his cradle. And I see no great harm of allowing the two hundred years, from the year 400 to 600, for this. So that I do think that in this chapter is shortly revealed what should happen to the church from about the year 400, or the space of forty-two months, or one thousand two hundred and sixty years, the time of the beast's reign.

Ver. 1. *And I stood upon the sand of the sea:* the place of John's present residence was Patmos, which was an island, Re 1:9. He was yet in a vision, but thought he was upon the sea-shore, either in Patmos, or elsewhere.

*And saw a beast rise up out of the sea;* that is, as I should think, unexpectedly; for who would expect to see a leopard rise from thence?

*Having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns:* this beast is described like the dragon, Re 12:3, (only that is described with but seven crowns), by which we understand the devil in the heathen emperor's of Rome; and we shall find it, Re 13:2, so answering Daniel's vision of the four monarchies, that I cannot but think the Roman emperors, after the

time of Theodosius, are meant, several of which were Arians, as also were the Goths and Vandals, (many of them), who from the year 402 invaded the empire, and were not beaten out till 564, little above forty years before Boniface was confirmed in his primacy.

*And upon his heads the name of blasphemy:* the Arians denying the eternal existence of Christ as God, may well be said to have *the name of blasphemy* upon them, or upon their *heads*: but whether by these ten heads be meant the ten sorts of governors made use of in the empire, or the ten governments into which the Goths and Vandals divided the empire, is not easy to determine, nor, possibly, much material. There are other notions about this beast: some would have it to be the devil, but he is plainly distinguished, Re 12:2,4, from the dragon. Some would have it to be the Turk; but we read of the worshipping of this beast, which is what we read not done to the Turkish emperors, who also began not till above the year 1200, (though indeed the Saracens began five hundred years before), but Rome, which never was the Turk's seat, is made the seat of this beast. Some would have it to be idolatry itself; this was Grotius's notion: see the reasons against it in Mr. Pool's Synopsis Latina. Some would have it the pagan empire of Rome; but John never saw the first rise of that. This is a beast that rose after the dragon was cast down; which must be the Roman empire under the dominion of the papacy, in which respect only it is now one beast again; for otherwise in civil respects it is divided into ten crowned horns, i.e. distinct, independent kingdoms or principalities.

### Revelation 13:2

Ver. 2. Daniel, in his vision of the Chaldaic, Persian, Grecian, and Roman monarchies, by which the world was successively ruled from his time to St. John's, and many years after, had the first represented to him by a lion, for its nobleness and fierceness; the second by a bear, for its cruelty; the third, by a leopard, for the smallness of its bulk, the swiftness of its conquests, its strength, &c.; the fourth, by a beast (not named) strong, and exceedingly terrible, that had great iron teeth, that devoured, and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue under its feet. This beast is certainly here described, which had several forms: John saw it at first under the representation of a red dragon, which signified that empire, while pagan, for three hundred years after Christ; in which time the old serpent could

prevail nothing against the church. Then (after a rest to the church of a few years, which ended with Theodosius about the year 380 or 400) he saw it under the form of *a leopard*, ruled by Arian emperors till near 600. This beast had *the feet of a bear* and *the mouth of a lion*. These emperors, with the Goths and Vandals that were Arians, were as cruel to true Christians as the pagan emperors had been. Gitimer, king of the Vandals, Anno 530, and the Goths under Totilas, 540, made miserable havoc amongst the Christians.

*And the dragon gave him his power;* these together inherited both the power of the heathen emperors, *and their seat*, and Rome, which was their seat, or throne, and exercised there *great authority*. All this was done in the form of *a leopard*, not so terrible as that of a dragon; for the Arians disclaimed paganism, and the worship of pagan idols. All this while the papacy was creeping up, but till the year 552, or thereabouts, the Goths and Vandals, and other barbarous nations, were not driven out of Italy. Totilas (who took Rome Anno 547) was then killed, and Thejas succeeded him, who was the last king of the Goths in Italy, who about twenty years after was beaten by Narsetes, and driven out, after the Goths and Vandals had reigned in Italy about seventy-seven years.

### Revelation 13:3

Ver. 3. *And I saw one of his heads;* that is, the leopard's head.

*As it were wounded to death:* the seven heads of this beast are interpreted by the Spirit of God himself, to be *seven kings*, Re 17:10, i.e. seven forms of sovereign government in the Roman state, and these successive one to another; for it is said there: *Five are fallen, and one is, and the other is yet to come:* so that this head must be either that then in being, or that to come; it cannot be that to come, because that does not receive its fatal blow and deadly wound till the final dissolution of the Roman (as the fourth metal) monarchy; therefore it must be that head then in being, viz. that of the pagan emperors: and the wounding of this head to death, is the conquering the pagan emperors, and the abolishing of paganism and idolatry, and putting a stop to persecution by the Christian emperors; *and his deadly wound was healed;* and consequently this wound was healed when idolatry (for substance the same with the heathenish, though in a

new dress) and persecution was restored (gradually) by the doctrine and practice of the Romish Church.

#### Revelation 13:4

Ver. 4. *And they worshipped the dragon:* by *the dragon*, here, is to be understood the devil.

*Which gave power unto the beast;* who gave power to these emperors; not that they did so directly, but interpretatively; they worshipped idols, which ordinarily in Scripture are called devils.

*And they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast?* Possibly worshipping in this latter clause is not to be understood of a Divine adoration, but a civil subjection; people, upon the driving out of these their enemies, generally gave themselves up to the obedience of their emperors and the bishops of Rome, commanding them idolatrous worship; and admired these two, as those by whom they had been delivered from those enemies who had plagued them so long.

#### Revelation 13:5

Ver. 5. *And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies:* by *him* here must be meant antichrist, (as appears by the forty-two months, his period, being the same with one thousand two hundred and sixty days), both the secular power of the emperors of Rome at this time, and the ecclesiastical power of the bishops of Rome concurred to make one antichrist. God permitted, and the devil influenced, this beast to speak *great things*, as Da 7:11, which is interpreted by the term *blasphemies*. Blasphemies against God signifies strictly any reproachful speeches against him, whether attributing to him the creature's imperfections, or denying him the perfection proper to him, or giving to the creature what belongs to God only, which blasphemy must be in all idolatry; for adoration is due unto God alone, and when this is given to any creature, there is both blasphemy in the doctrine which teacheth the lawfulness of it, and idolatry in the practice of it.

*And power was given unto him to continue forty and two months:* these forty-two months are (as hath been before showed) the same term of time with one thousand two hundred and sixty days, and must be the term of antichrist, which was given him to tread down the outward court in; so as the beast here spoken of must be the antichrist, who began in the civil power of the Roman empire, but was quickly metamorphosed into the ecclesiastical power of the bishop of Rome; in comparison of whose power (after he had obtained the primacy) indeed the emperor's power was very small.

### Revelation 13:6

Ver. 6. That is, antichrist opened his mouth to blaspheme God. Mr. Mede noteth well, that antichrist's time must not be counted from his beginning to persecute, but from his beginning to blaspheme, either by maintaining pernicious doctrine, or setting up idolatrous worship; for till the year 1206, when the Inquisition was set up, (the doctrine of transubstantiation having been about that time decreed by Innocent the Third, and confirmed by the council of Lateran), the persecution was not great. It is also the observation of the same learned author, that the threefold idolatry of the Church of Rome is here described to us; their blaspheming the Lord's name, by giving Divine adoration to images; their blaspheming the human nature of Christ, (which he thinks is here to be understood by the Lord's *tabernacle*, ) by their doctrine of transubstantiation, giving every mass-priest power to make it of a piece of bread; and their putting the glorified saints in the place of the pagan demons, by their invocation of saints. The observation is very ingenious, but whether the sense of this text I doubt; for we are now about the period when antichrist began to reign, which we suppose to be soon after the year 600. The blasphemies here mentioned, were his first-fruits: but the doctrine of transubstantiation, though it might be broached one hundred years before, yet was made no doctrine of their church of six hundred years after the first beginning of the papacy; and therefore cannot well be reckoned amongst antichrist's first blasphemies. But whoso is acquainted with the history of the church after the year 606, will find enough to justify this text, though we do not restrain their blasphemy to these three things.

### Revelation 13:7

Ver. 7. God showeth John, that after antichrist had gone on blaspheming the name, and tabernacle, and saints of God, some years, the devil should influence him also *to make war* against God's holy ones, and he would suffer him *to overcome them*; and he should have a *power over all the nations* of that part of the world, where God had his church. This was eminently fulfilled after the year 1200, when the doctrine of transubstantiation was established. The Inquisition was set up in Spain, 1206; the number of those murdered by it was exceeding great. But yet this was too slow a work, the pope quickly raised vast armies against the Albigenses, first under the conduct of his legate, then of Simon de Montford. Perionius (one of their own) saith, that more than a million were slain in these wars of these poor people, merely for not complying with the Church of Rome in her apostacy. But what were these to those slain in the valleys of Piedmont, Provence, Calabria, Alsatia, Bohemia, before the year 1517, when the Reformation began in Germany? What slaughters have been since made in Germany, Hungary, Flanders, Ireland, &c., every one knows. The latter clause was eminently verified until the year 1517, there being no nation in Europe but was subject to the pope of Rome, so as he had a *power over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations*. The poor Albigenses thought themselves concerned in this prophecy; for when the popish general, Simon de Montford, had made a vast slaughter of them, and the archbishop of Tholouse interceded for those that survived, upon condition that they would embrace the Romish faith, they boldly refused, sending the archbishop word, that they were the overcome servants of Jesus Christ; and all died comforting themselves with the prophecy of this text.

### Revelation 13:8

Ver. 8. God here showed his prophet the general subjection that would be of all people to the papacy, except some few, whom he had chosen to eternal life and salvation, whom Christ had redeemed with his blood, and would preserve from this pollution.

### Revelation 13:9

Ver. 9. Either, let him hear what hath been already said, and take heed that he be not one of those that worship the beast; or, let him hear what followeth concerning the ruin of antichrist and his adherents: but from the usage of this phrase in other scriptures, where it is oft made use of to stir up attention to some remarkable thing, it seemeth rather to be applied to what went before. The phrase also further lets us know, that (comparatively) the number of those who should refuse to worship the beast would be very small, as indeed it proved.

### Revelation 13:10

Ver. 10. As it was God's manner by the prophets of old, when he had denounced judgments against his people, to comfort them by a prediction of the ruin of their enemies; so here, by this his New Testament prophet, he assureth his church, that antichrist also should have his period, and have the same measure meted to him which he had meted out to others, by leading into captivity, and killing with the sword: and indeed, there are no sins which God doth so ordinarily punish by retaliation, as sins against justice and mercy, (of which nature persecutions are the most eminent), Isa 33:1,2.

*Here is the patience and the faith of the saints;* that is, there is a time for God's people to exercise their faith and patience: patience, because they are like to wait for deliverance a long time, and to suffer many sharp things in the mean time; and faith, because their deliverance will be a thing out of sight, of which they will have no security but from the promise of God.

### Revelation 13:11

Ver. 11. There are great disputes about this other beast, who is represented or signified by it. The popish writers say it is some eminent impostor, who shall appear in the world before the coming of antichrist. Others would have it to be magic practised by Apollonius Thyaneus, the vanity of which notion Dr. More hath sufficiently demonstrated. The generality of



protestant writers agree it to be antichrist himself, the same beast which was before spoken of, only in another form. The design, and time, and power of both is the same; neither hath this other beast any other figure assigned to him; and in the end of this chapter we shall find mention but of one beast, the *mark, name, and number* of the beast, mentioned Re 13:16-18, is but of one beast; and we shall find the power of both to be the same; only he is called *another*, because appearing in another form, or under another type. The former beast typified the civil power of antichrist; this, his ecclesiastical power. He is said to have come up *out of the earth*; either because he was of a meaner extraction than the other, or because he stole upon the world insensibly. The pope and the clergy are judged by the best interpreters to be here meant.

*And he had two horns like a lamb*; he pretends to the power of Christ, as his vicar, and therefore is said to have *horns like a lamb*.

*And he spake as a dragon*; but he should speak terribly; or his doctrines should be such as the apostle calls *doctrines of devils*; or his words and practice should be like those of the great red dragon.

### Revelation 13:12

Ver. 12. *The power of the first beast was to speak great words and blasphemies, and to make war with, and overcome the saints, Re 13:5,7.* This power also should be exercised by the papacy, (according to this prophecy), and time hath witnessed the truth of it. And as, before he arrived at the height of power, he had persuaded the latter emperors to establish idolatry and superstition; so having now the power in his own hands, and being by the first beast made head of the church, he now vigorously causeth all under his power to obey the edicts, decrees, and commands of that nature, which those emperors had published; choosing rather to do this in the name of others, than from himself; that in case of the non-compliance of any, he might charge them with sedition or disobedience to the imperial laws, or dissenting from antiquity, &c. Hence he *causeth them to worship the first beast* rather than himself.

### Revelation 13:13

Ver. 13. *And he doeth great wonders; lying wonders,* 2Th 2:9, such as, by God's permission, false prophets might do, De 13:1,2. Prophets were to be judged true or false, not from any signs or wonders which they did, but from the doctrine they taught, and would by those signs establish.

*So that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men;* wonders as great as those which Elijah wrought.

### Revelation 13:14

Ver. 14. The Lord showeth his prophet by what means the papacy should cheat the world, viz. by pretences of miracles, which it had a power to work, (the doctrines of the Church of Rome to this are sufficiently known), all which are done *in the sight of the beast*, that is, to his honour, and to gain him a reputation. As God gave his prophets and apostles a power to work true miracles for the confirmation of their mission from him, and of the doctrines which they brought; so he permitted others to work *lying wonders* for the confirmation of their false doctrine. The apostle therefore describeth the coming of antichrist to be *with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness*, 2Th 2:9,10.

*Saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live:* these words show the design of this last mentioned beast, viz. to *make an image to the beast which had the wound by a sword*. Mr. Mede's notion here seemeth best to me, that by *the beast which had the wound by a sword*, is to be understood the dragon, of whose wound we read, Re 6:1-17. He was the type of the pagan emperors, whom God rooted out. Antichrist's design was to make an image of that old beast, in which it might again live; which he did by his setting up the veneration of images, and the invocation of saints; the pagan idolatry lying chiefly in their adoration of persons (who had been famous amongst them) when they were dead, making them their mediators to their supreme gods, and in the veneration of their images and statues. The making the image of this beast, was the restoring of the same idolatry, changing only the names of princes and great soldiers, whom the pagans worshipped after their death, into the names of saints; in which

image the dragon lived again: and it is sufficiently known how the Romish clergy deceiveth people into this idolatry by their stories of miracles done by such saints.

#### Revelation 13:15

Ver. 15. The beast, mentioned Re 13:11, *had power to give life* unto this new formed idolatry, conformable to that of the pagans, in which the old beast again lived: he gave life to it by his decrees and bulls, and canon laws, and by his excommunications and censures of those that would not comply with his idolatry as heretics; after which the persons so adjudged were delivered up to the secular power to be put to death.

#### Revelation 13:16

Ver. 16. No particular character is here to be understood, but only the general imposition of the Romish faith upon all sorts of persons. His *mark* was nothing else but either the profession of his faith and religion, or a vowed subjection to his commands, which we know is the practice of the papacy where it obtaineth in any country.

#### Revelation 13:17

Ver. 17. *And that no man might buy or sell:* this the popish church effects by its excommunications; it was begun in the council of Lateran, anathematizing all who entertained any of the Waldenses, or traded with them; and the late learned bishop of Armagh, in his book *De Successione Ecclesiae*, hath given us an account of such a canon of a synod in France, which in express terms forbade any commerce with heretics in buying or selling. Paraeus tells us Pope Martin the Fifth hath best interpreted this prophecy, in his bull added to the council of Constance, where he prohibits Roman Catholics to suffer any heretics to have any dwellings in their countries, or to make any bargains, or use any trades, or to perform to them any civil offices.

*Save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his*

*name*: there have been great disputes about the *name* and *number of the beast*. I must profess myself not able to distinguish between the *mark*, *name*, and *number* of the beast; they may all signify the same thing, viz. the profession of the Romish religion. Some think the number is contained in the name, and that the name is ΔΑΤΕΙΝΟΣ, in which the number six hundred and sixty-six is contained; of which we shall speak more by and by.

### Revelation 13:18

Ver. 18. *Here is wisdom*; that is, Herein is the wisdom, the unsearchable wisdom, of God seen in the trial of his church; or, (which is more probably the sense), this is a point will exercise the wisdom of men.

*Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast*; let him that is spiritually wise count the number of the beast.

*For it is the number of a man*; it is such as may be numbered after the way men use to number.

*And his number is Six hundred threescore and six*: what this meaneth hath exercised the wits of the greatest divines in all ages. A late learned and valuable writer thinks that 666 doth not signify a certain definite number, but an indefinite number, and that not of years, but of pernicious errors, by the broaching and upholding of which antichrist may be known. But the most interpreters think a number, and that a definite, certain number, of years is to be understood here: but they are again divided; some thinking them determining the time of the fall of this beast; others judging them to determine or define the year or time of his beginning to reign, the time from whence his period and term of forty-two months, or one thousand two hundred and sixty years, commenceth: most of those who think this number determinative of the time when he should fall, understood by it the year 1666, which raised the expectation of many good and some learned men (though we see in this thing they were deceived) upon that year. A countryman of our own, who hath written an English Dissertation about the Name, Number, and Character of the Beast, hath with much more probability judged this number definitive of the time when he began to reign under the title of "universal bishop", which was about the year 606;

but there seemeth to be a want then of sixty years; to answer which objection, the aforesaid author (N. Stephens) undertaketh to make out, that the year which according to our account was 606, was according to Daniel's chronology 666; for it is the six hundred and sixty-sixth year of the Roman monarchy, which, saith he, is to be counted from the time when that empire first invaded the church, which was when Cicero and Antonius were consuls, about sixty years before Christ; for then the Romans first subdued the Jews, the ancient church of God. As to this notion, there is nothing to be proved, but that 666 must be counted from that epocha; for admitting that, the time of the beast's reign, as to the beginning of it, fell much about the year 666. I shall only say of it, that I do not judge it a contemptible notion. This makes this prophecy a prediction of the time when this beast should begin to show his power, and therefore it is called *the number of his name* (*name* in Holy Scripture often signifying dominion and power). But there is yet another notion, which is the most learned Dr. Potter's, in his book called *The Interpretation of the Number Six Hundred and Sixty-six*; a book justly valuable both for the great wit and learning in it, and much magnified both by Dr. More, and Mr. Mede, whose judgment of it is prefixed to it; in which he saith: It is the happiest tract that ever yet came into the world, —and though at first he read the book with much prejudice, yet when he had done it, it left him possessed with as much admiration. The foundation on which he goeth is, that this number is to be interpreted by the opposite number of 144, Re 21:17, as the measure of the wall of the new Jerusalem; which is to be understood of square measure, as he proveth, Re 6:1-17; for the wall could not be 144 cubits high, nor 144 cubits broad; but in square measure so much, that is 12 cubits high and 12 cubits broad (for the length cannot be understood); it being impossible that a wall 144 cubits long, should encompass a city 91 furlongs about. In like manner he thinks 666 ought to be counted by the square root of that number, which is 25???. Hence he concludeth, that as 12, the square root of 144, is God's number, so 25 is the square root of antichrist's number 666; and by this enigmatical expression we are taught that antichrist should be a political body, that should as much affect the number of 25, as God seemeth to have in his church affected the number of 12. Under the Old Testament God built his church upon twelve patriarchs, it was made up of twelve tribes: Jerusalem, mentioned by Ezekiel, Eze 48:31, and in this book, Re 21:12, *had twelve gates*; Re 21:21, *these were twelve pearls; at the gates*, Re 21:12, *were twelve angels*; *the wall*, Re 21:14, *had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles*; Re 21:16, the

measure of the city was *twelve thousand furlongs*; Re 22:2, the tree of life had *twelve manner of fruits*: by all which it appears that 12 was the number God affected to use with reference to his church, and the square root, both of the 144 cubits, which were the measure of the wall, Re 21:17, and likewise of the 144 thousands, mentioned in the next chapter as the number of Christ's retinue. On the contrary, 25 is the square root of 666, (adding the fraction), which is the beast's number; and that learned author proves, that the pope and his clergy as much affected the number of 25 in their first forming their church, as God did the number of 12. They at first divided Rome into 25 parishes, (instead of the old 35 tribes), over which they set 25 cardinals, (which were their first number), who had 25 churches: they made 25 gates to the city; at last they also brought the articles of their creed to 25. This that learned author abundantly proveth, Eze 17:1-20:49 22:1-31, He also, Eze 24:1-26:21, showeth how in a multitude of things of lesser moment they affected this number of 25. This seemeth a very probable notion. I further refer my reader to the learned author's book, where he enlargeth upon these things with great wit and learning. In this variety I shall positively determine nothing, but have shortly mentioned the senses I think most probable, as to this mysterious number 666.

## Revelation 14:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 14:1-5 The Lamb with his company standing on Mount Sion,  
Re 14:6,7 an angel preacheth the gospel,  
Re 14:8 another proclaimeth the fall of Babylon,  
Re 14:9-12 and a third, the punishment of them that worship the beast.  
Re 14:13 The blessedness of those that die in the Lord.  
Re 14:14-16 The harvest of the world.  
Re 14:17-20 The vintage and winepress of God's wrath.

Ver. 1. God, in this part of the vision, showeth his servant John, that during the whole reign of antichrist, till the voice mentioned Re 14:8,

*Babylon is fallen*, should be heard, notwithstanding all his rage, he would preserve his church, though it would be but a small number, bearing no better proportion to the whole world than one hundred and forty-four thousand (the number of those sealed of each tribe of Israel, Re 7:1-17) bare to whole Israel, which were above six hundred thousand upon both their numberings, Nu 1:26. The *Lamb* here signifieth Christ, Re 5:6.

*Mount Sion* signifieth the church of the gospel, typified by Mount Sion amongst the Jews where the temple stood.

*An hundred forty and four thousand* is the same number that was sealed of all the tribes of Israel, Re 7:1-17: not that there was just so many which made up the church under antichrist's persecution; but it signifies:

1. A small number in comparison of such as should be of another stamp.
2. It is a number made up of twelve times twelve, by which is signified that they were a people that should answer the Israelites indeed of the Old Testament, that remnant of the twelve tribes whom God had chosen, who adhere to the doctrine and precepts of the twelve apostles.

*Having his Father's name written in their foreheads*; making an open profession of being the children and servants of God: as those servants and soldiers did that had anciently the names of their masters and generals in their foreheads; it being an ancient custom for masters to brand their servants, and captains their soldiers, as we do our beasts at this day.

### Revelation 14:2

Ver. 2. *As the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder*; a loud voice, and terrible also to the followers of antichrist.

*The voice of harpers harping with their harps*; a musical, melodious voice, as of persons rejoicing. Mr. Mede rather thinks, that *the voice as of many waters*, signifies no more than *a great multitudes*, and indeed it is so expounded, Re 19:6.

### Revelation 14:3

Ver. 3. *And they sung as it were a new song before the throne: by the throne* here is meant the throne of God in glory. The *new song* here spoken of, is probably the same with that we met with before, Re 5:11,12, sang by *the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: called new*, either for the excellency of it; or, because sung unto God after Christ was manifested in the flesh; the design of it was to declare the worthiness of Christ to *receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing: see Re 5:12. Mr. Mede saith thus of it; "If God shall at any time make me fully to understand it, I will happily more largely explain it, for it is deeply settled in my mind, that the whole mystery of evangelical worship is in it contained." And quite through the Scripture generally, a *new song* signifies a song which praiseth God for some new benefits received from him.*

*And before the four beasts, and the elders; the throne, beasts, and elders*, described before, Re 4:1-11, *And no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth: during the reign of antichrist none could learn this new song, viz. to give glory to Jesus Christ alone, ascribing to him power, riches, wisdom, strength, honour, glory, and blessing; but a small number redeemed through the blood of Christ, from that vain conversation received by tradition from their fathers, 1Pe 1:18. All the other part of the world gave Christ's honour and glory to the virgin Mary, angels, and saints, &c.*

### Revelation 14:4

Ver. 4. *These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins;* that is, that would not comply with antichristian idolatry and superstition; for idolatry is all along in holy writ compared to whoredom and fornication.

*Which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth;* that follow the Lord Christ fully, in all things keeping close to the rules of worship and life which he hath given.

*These were redeemed from among men;* these show themselves to be



redeemed by the blood of Christ from the vain conversation of men, whether towards God, in matters of worship, or towards men.

*Being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb;* that are consecrated to, and accepted of God, as the first-fruits were, being the only part of the world that are not profane.

#### Revelation 14:5

Ver. 5. Not that any liveth and sinneth not against God, but it is to be understood comparatively; they are without fault in comparison of the rest of the world, they have not in them the guile of hypocrisy, they are sincere. Or, possibly by *guile* is here understood a lie. All idolaters are liars, Ro 1:25, and idols are called lies, Jer 16:19 Am 2:4. Mr. Mede expoundeth this text by Zep 3:13. The words may either more generally signify the holiness of these persons, in opposition to profaneness and hypocrisy; or more particularly, their freedom and purity from antichristian superstitions and idolatry.

#### Revelation 14:6

Ver. 6. God having in a vision showed unto his servant John the reign and rage of antichrist, Re 13:1-18, and in this chapter the care he would extend toward his church for the preservation of a godly seed during his reign, he now cometh by further visions to instruct him in what should be done during antichrist's reign of forty-two months. The gospel should be preached: this I take to be the substance of this verse. This angel seems to me to represent faithful ministers' speed and diligence to preach the gospel in all parts of the world. It is called *the everlasting gospel*, either with reference to the time past, as much as to say, the old gospel; or to the time to come, it being that doctrine of salvation, besides which there neither is, nor ever shall be, revealed any other while the world endureth, Ac 4:12.

#### Revelation 14:7

Ver. 7. These angels, or ministers of God, whether civil or ecclesiastical

witnesses, cried aloud against the papal idolatry, in worshipping saints and images, admonishing all men to give Divine adoration only to the true and living God, who was the Creator of all things. The worshipping of images began soon after antichrist began to reign: we find it decreed in a synod held at London about the year 710, but it was abolished by a synod at Constantinople, 712. In 723, it was again established by a synod at Mentz. By a synod in Syria it was defended, Anno 725, and the emperor Leo Isaurus was excommunicated for opposing it; but in 730, a synod at Constantinople decreed for Leo against it. Another synod, held there Anno 755, under the emperor Constantinus Copronymus, decreed against it; but two other synods held in Bavaria, 765, 766, again decreed for it. In the year 786 the second synod of Nice established it; since which time it hath constantly obtained amongst the papists. But as from the first broaching of this idolatry it was opposed by five emperors of Constantinople, so it hath all along been declaimed against by the faithful ministers of Christ, preaching the everlasting gospel, and calling upon men to perform Divine adoration only to *him who made heaven and earth*.

#### Revelation 14:8

Ver. 8. The apostle is shown, that other messengers of God should come forth, during the reign of antichrist, that should declare his ruin as certainly as if it were already effected.

*Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city:* these words are taken from Isa 21:9, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath brokers unto the ground.* So Jer 51:8, *Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed.* There is no doubt but both the prophets spake of that Babylon into which the Jews were carried captive; but that Babylon was typical of another Babylon, called here the *great city*, and *great Babylon*, Re 16:19 17:5 18:10,21; and *the mother of harlots*, Re 17:5. There neither is, nor ever was, any city in the world to whom these things could agree, but to Rome, rightly enough called *the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth*, Re 17:5, both in respect of carnal filthiness there tolerated to make the bishop of Rome a revenue, and spiritual whoredom, which is idolatry: called also *Sodom and Egypt*, Re 11:8, the former of which was famous for beastly lusts, the latter for idolatry, and oppression of God's Israel. The ruin of old Babylon is denounced by the prophet, Isa 21:9,

because of her idolatry in image worship, for which the new Babylon is every whit as famous.

*Because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication:* the word translated *wrath*, though it oft so signifies, yet should rather be here translated *poison*, as we translate it, De 32:33 Job 20:16. The LXX. in those texts use the same word that is here used, θυμος; so the sense is, with the poisonous wine of her idolatry, intimating to us the venomous condition of Romish superstitions and idolatries, to entice ignorant people to be in love with them; as harlots use with their philters, or poisoned cups, to make men in love with them. If we better approve of our translation of the term *wrath*, *the wine of the wrath of her fornication* signifieth her fornication which brings wrath upon them that join with her in it.

#### Revelation 14:9

Ver. 9. God letteth his servant John know, that during the reign and rage of antichrist, as he would have ministers of the gospel that should preach the truth, and mind men to keep themselves from idols, worshipping God alone; and others that should assure them the papacy should go down, mystical Babylon should fall; so he would have others that should give warning to men and women of those dreadful plagues that should come upon them that entered themselves in this great city, either worshipping the devil after the pagan manner, or the image of the beast, i.e. committing idolatry after the antichristian, popish fashion, or that should either be subject to this idolatrous head, or be a soldier to fight for it. What those judgments should be, God showeth in Re 14:10, and possibly there is not a more severe denunciation of judgment in the whole book of God.

#### Revelation 14:10

Ver. 10. Those that do yield a subjection to him, and profess his faith, *shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God;* that is, shall feel the severity of God's judicial dispensations, which in Scripture are expressed by *the wine cup of his fury*, Jer 25:15; see also Job 21:20 Ps 75:8 Isa 51:17; either from the intoxicating quality of wine, or the stupifying quality of it, when

mixed with myrrh, or other stupifying things. But here it is said *without mixture*, which signifies their sensible feeling of the effects of Divine wrath.

*And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb;* that is, in short, he shall go to hell at last; the exquisiteness of which torments, as to the pain of sense, is set out by *fire and brimstone*; brimstone being a material in which fire holds longest to torment any flesh put into it.

### Revelation 14:11

Ver. 11. *And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever;* that is, their torments shall be everlasting, as well as most exquisite, and causing the most acute pain.

*And they have no rest day nor night;* this is but the same thing in other words; their torments shall be such as shall give them no rest at any time.

*Who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name:* the sense of these two verses is no more than this: That all idolaters shall fall under the vengeance of God in this life, and at last shall be thrown to hell; not only such as worship the beast, committing paganish idolatry, worshipping stocks and stones, and devils, as the term of their worship, but such as worship the image of that beast set up by antichrist, worshipping of angels and saints, or their images. From hence an easy answer may be given to that question, Whether a man can be saved in that which at this day is called the Roman Catholic religion? If they either worship the beast, or the image of the beast, they cannot: whether they do or no, let the reader judge from what hath been before said.

### Revelation 14:12

Ver. 12. *Here is the patience of the saints:* God having in the former chapter shown his servant John the reign and rage of antichrist in his time of forty-two months, and in this chapter what shall be the end of him and all his adherents; here concludeth with telling him: This is a period of time

wherein the patience of his holy ones will be tried, both in waiting for their deliverance, and also in their patient enduring antichrist's oppression and tyranny.

*Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus;* and here will be the trial of men, whether they will keep to the faith of Christ, and obedience of God's commandments, by coming out of, or keeping in, this spiritual Babylon: those that come out of her will show both; those that keep in that idolatrous communion will show neither.

### Revelation 14:13

Ver. 13. *And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write:* these words denote the excellency of the following saying; it is *a voice from heaven*, therefore worthy of our attention. John is commanded to *write* it, to be kept in memory for the comfort and encouragement of God's people, who might be discouraged at the hearing of those calamitous times which they were like to meet with during the reign of antichrist, in which many of them were like to be put to death.

*Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord:* this phrase of dying in the Lord, is applicable to any persons that die united to Christ by a true and lively faith; all such die in the Lord. But if we consider the Scriptural usage of it, it seems rather to signify martyrs, such as die for the Lord; for *ev* often in Scripture signifieth *for*, Ro 16:2,8,12 1Pe 4:14, &c. If any shall be put to death for adherence to Christ, they shall be no losers; for they shall be blessed, and that not only upon the account of that glory into which they shall pass, but upon the account of that *rest* which their death will give them from the troubles of the calamitous times before or hereafter mentioned.

*From henceforth:* there is some little difference amongst interpreters about the sense of this particule: certain it is, it is not to be understood of the time following this revelation exclusively, as to those who before died to Christ; for they also were blessed, they also rested from their labours, &c.; yet the particule seems to refer to the time to come. The emphasis of the particule seems to be, to obviate the doubts of those who should happen to die under antichrist's rage, because they died not by the hands of pagans and avowed

enemies of the gospel, but of such as should call themselves Christians; such, saith God, die for the Lord, and are blessed, and shall be blessed.

*Yea, saith the Spirit;* the Spirit of truth affirms it.

*That they may rest from their labours;* they shall be at rest from the troubles of this life.

*And their works do follow them;* and their good deeds and patient sufferings shall follow them, as witnesses for them before the Judge of the quick and the dead.

Here follow two visions, the one of a harvest, the other of a vintage; there is no great difficulty in determining, that they both signify some judicial dispensations of God, that he would bring upon the world, or some part of it, the latter of which should be greater than the former: yet Dr. More and Mr. Mede have another notion of them. But there is some doubt amongst interpreters, whether they signify God's general judgment in the last day, or some particular judgments before that day, mentioned Re 15:1-8 and Re 16:1-21, and belong to the vials which we there read of. Those who think that the last judgment is here showed to John, are led to it from the representation of the day of judgment, under the notion of a harvest, Mt 3:12 13:39. But I rather agree with them who think that the harvest here mentioned, is a representation of some judicial dispensations of God before that time, particularly God's vengeance upon the beast, more fully expressed, Re 16:1-21. For:

1. The last judgment is fully described afterward, Re 19:1-20:15.
2. To express that, there needed not two types, the one of a harvest, the other of a vintage.
3. Here is no mention of the resurrection, which must go before the last judgment.

Mr. Mede hath noted, that there are three things belonging to a harvest;

- (1.) Cutting down of corn.

(2.) Gathering it into the barn.

(3.) Threshing it.

Whence, in Scripture, it signifieth either cutting and destroying, or safety and preserving, which is the end of gathering corn into the barn. We have examples of the former, Isa 17:3,5 Jer 51:33; but of the latter we have only examples in the New Testament, Lu 10:2. It is his opinion, that the conversion of the Jews, going before the great slaughter mentioned Re 19:1-21, is that which is here meant; but I rather agree with those who think, that by this parable is signified God's judgments upon antichrist, and that the general scope of both the parables is to declare, that God would grievously punish antichrist, first by lesser, then by greater judgments, as is more particularly expressed in the two next chapters, to which this, to me, seemeth prefatory. Let us now come to the text itself ... See Poole on "Re 14:14".

#### Revelation 14:14

Ver. 14. The description here can agree to none but Christ, sitting, as it were, upon clouds, and coming out in his judicial dispensations of providence, to execute judgment upon his enemies, to which purpose he is said to have *in his hand a sharp sickle*.

#### Revelation 14:15

Ver. 15. Most interpreters understand this of the prayers of God's people, from the church, soliciting the Lord Jesus Christ (say some) to gather in the Jews, or the number of his elect, the fields being now white to that harvest, (as Christ useth the metaphor of the Samaritans, Joh 4:35), or, (as others say, with whom I rather agree), to execute vengeance on antichrist and his adherents.

#### Revelation 14:16

Ver. 16. According to the before mentioned different notion of the harvest,

there is amongst them a different interpretation of this verse; some interpreting it of God's calling in the Jews, or his elect, by the preaching of the gospel; others, of his vengeance upon antichrist and his adherents, more fully expressed, Re 15:1-16:21.

#### Revelation 14:17

Ver. 17. This angel some will have to be some instrument God would make use of to cut down antichrist: others would have it to be the word of God in the mouth of his ministers, which, Heb 4:12, *is sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit*; and thus they judge this angel to be the same with the rider upon the white horse, Re 19:11-21, out of whose mouth went a sharp sword, Re 14:15.

#### Revelation 14:18

Ver. 18. *From the altar*; the place of sacrifices and burnt-offerings.

*Which had power over fire*; which had commission to execute God's judgments, compared to fire, Ps 11:6 21:9 1:3.

*And cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying*: God's holy ones cry unto him who hath a power to execute vengeance.

*Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth*; put an end to the rage of antichrist, and gather those clusters which grew upon this vine of Sodom, and were as the clusters of Gomorrah.

*For her grapes are fully ripe*; for their iniquities were come to the full, and they were now ripe for judgment. Our learned Dr. More expounds this ripeness, of a readiness for conversion, as well as for destruction, and thinks the first is here rather intended: the last words of the next verse incline me to judge otherwise.

#### Revelation 14:19



Ver. 19. Dr. More thinks the sense of this is, that men were pressed in conscience upon the sharp conviction of Christ's powerful ministers, with sorrow for their sins, and so felt the wrath of God in them. But Mr. Mede, with whom (as to the sense of this text) I rather agree, tells us, that the treading of the vintage, in parabolical Scripture, constantly signifies a cruel, bloody, and deadly slaughter; he thinks that it is the same slaughter mentioned Re 19:19-21, as to which, Re 14:15, much the same metaphor is used, *he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath, of Almighty God.*

### Revelation 14:20

Ver. 20. *And the winepress was trodden without the city: by the city,* Dr. More thinks Babylon is here meant, and that the meaning is, that the powerful convictions of the word before mentioned, shall not reach Babylon, the Romish hierarchy and polity, as being hardened against any such thing. But Mr. Mede and others think, that the city of Jerusalem is here meant, or the Holy Land, which comprehends exactly one thousand six hundred furlong, that is, two hundred Italian miles, or one hundred and sixty Grecian miles. But what that place shall be, where this slaughter shall be, is a great secret.

*And blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs:* it is plain it shall be a great slaughter, by the depth of the blood mentioned, and the length of the ground which it should to that depth overflow. It is very probable, that great battle is meant, mentioned Re 19:20,21, in the place called Armageddon, upon the pouring out of the sixth vial, Re 16:16. In so difficult a business nothing can be positively determined.

### Revelation 15:1

#### Chapter Summary

Re 15:1 The seven angels with the seven last plagues.  
Re 15:2-4 The song of them which overcome the beast.  
Re 15:5-8 This seven angels receive the seven golden vials full of the wrath of God.

Ver. 1. *And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous;* that is, a representation which appeared to John great and wonderful.

*Seven angels;* ministers of God, used by him in the dispensations of his providence.

*Having the seven last plagues;* having a commission to execute the seven last judgments of God, by which he designed to destroy antichrist.

*For in them is filled up the wrath of God;* for by them the wrath of God was to be executed upon him to the uttermost.

### Revelation 15:2

Ver. 2. This *sea of glass* (as our learned More thinks) hath either an allusion to the *sea of glass like unto crystal*, reflected upon by the *lamps of fire burning before the throne*, Re 4:5,6, or to the waters of the Red Sea congealed (while the Israelites passed over) reflected upon by the pillar of fire. Others make it the church gathered out of all nations, said to be of glass, because of its splendour and glory. Others make it to signify the world, which is said to be *of glass*, to let us understand God seeth through it. It seemeth to me to signify heaven; for it is mentioned as the place of the glorified saints, who had overcome all temptations to idolatry, either from pagans, (which were *the beast*), or from antichrist and his party, (which are called the *image* of the beast), and had avoided all kind of compliance with them in profession of the religion which he would endeavour to impose upon them.

*Harpes of God* signify either the most excellent harps, or holy harps. Mr. Forbes saith well, they signify hearts tempered with joy, and love, and a grateful sense of the mercies of God towards them.

### Revelation 15:3

Ver. 3. *And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God;* the song

which Moses sang upon God's delivery of the Israelites from the danger of Pharaoh, which we have, Ex 15:1-27; not that they sang those words, but to the same sense.

*And the song of the Lamb;* a song to the honour of Christ, to the same sense that Moses sang, and upon a much like occasion.

*Saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty;* admiring the greatness and marvellousness of what God had done in their deliverance, and giving him the glory of his Almighty power.

*Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints;* acknowledging, that all the acts of his providence were both *just*, God in them giving to every one their due, and *true*, God by them but justifying his promises and threatenings. These words are taken out of Ps 145:17.

#### Revelation 15:4

Ver. 4. Acknowledging, that for this God deserved to be worshipped and served by all the world, because of his holiness, much seen in the justice and truth of his ways; declaring their faith and hope, that now all nations should own and acknowledge Christ, and be subject unto him, now that his judgments upon antichrist, and his justice in all his dispensations, was made so evident to the world.

#### Revelation 15:5

Ver. 5. Here is a plain allusion to the Jewish tabernacle or temple, in which was the holy place, and the holy of holies; into the latter the high priest only entered. There were kept in the ark the two tables of God's law, often called *the testimonies of God*. From this *tabernacle of the testimony* proceeded God's oracles, there God gave answers from the mercy-seat, and therefore in the Book of Kings it is called *the oracle*. The sense some put upon this is: That God here showed unto his prophet the liberty that should be, after the downfall of antichrist, to preach the gospel. But in this sense it must be an anticipation of what orderly should have come in after the pouring out of the vials: I had rather understand it of God's being now

about to give out an answer to his people's prayers for a deliverance from the tyranny of antichrist; as the place called *the oracle* in the Jewish temple was opened when the high priest had been inquiring of God, to give an account of the answer he had.

### Revelation 15:6

Ver. 6. *And the seven angels;* the seven ministers of God's vengeance on antichrist, to whom the vials were given.

*Came out of the temple;* that is, out of *the tabernacle of the testimony*; for in Moses's tabernacle there was only this inward court for the priests, the people worshipped without. They came (as the high priest was wont) out of the oracle to bring God's answer to all his saints' prayers.

*Having the seven plagues:* the answer was *seven plagues*, that is, that God had employed them to bring seven plagues successively upon the antichristian party, and all the enemies of his church, till by them they should be consumed.

*Clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles;* these angels came in the habit of high priests, when they went in to inquire of God, or came out with an answer from God.

### Revelation 15:7

Ver. 7. *And one of the four beasts;* one of those four beasts *round about the throne*, Re 4:6.

*Gave unto the seven angels;* the seven angels mentioned Re 15:6.

*Seven golden vials:* a vial is a plain pot or glass with a wide mouth, used to drink in: these were *full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever*. The meaning is no more than that the seven angels, before mentioned, were commissioned from God, by one plague after another, to bring antichrist to his ruin.

## Revelation 15:8

Ver. 8. *And the temple;* that is, the church, as *temple* most ordinarily signifieth in this book.

*Was filled with smoke:* by *smoke*, doubtless, is meant confusions and troubles.

*From the glory of God, and from his power;* caused by God's glorious manifestation of his power, in bringing antichrist to ruin, who had so twisted his interest with that of the civil magistracy in several kingdoms, that there was no rooting him out, without a terrible shaking of all those parts of the earth where he set his foot.

*And no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled;* so as no part of the church could be at rest until God had fulfilled his ruin by these plagues: nor must any quiet state of the church be expected, until this great work be effected.

## Revelation 16:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 16:1 The seven angels are commanded to pour out their vials on the earth.

Re 16:2-14 Great plagues follow thereupon.

Re 16:15-21 Christ cometh suddenly as a thief: blessed are they that watch.

### Chapter Summary

God having showed unto his servant John in the vision of the first six seals, the fate of the church under the pagan emperors of Rome, Re 5:1-6:17, and its fate under antichrist, in the vision of the six first trumpets, under the seventh seal, Re 8:1-9:21, and diverted him by the vision of the little book opened, Re 10:1-11, and by the contents of it, Re 12:1-14:20,

and instructed him concerning the affairs of the church during all the time of the reign of the dragon, and antichrist, who was the image of the dragon, comes now to instruct him particularly how and by what means he would ruin antichrist, and restore peace to his church.

Ver. 1. *And I heard a great voice out of the temple;* either out of the church triumphant, Christ, the Head of it, commanding the executioners of his justice to go and do their office; or out of the church militant, by their prayers soliciting God to execute vengeance upon the beast. All the beast's territories, or the several parts of his kingdom, are expressed in this chapter, under the notions of *the earth, the sea, the rivers and fountains, the sun,* and *the seat of the beast.* The first command to the executioners of God's justice, is, to pour out his wrath on *the earth.* By *the earth;* Pareus understands some parts of the earth; others, the common people; others, the Roman empire; but others, considering the earth as the firmest part of the universe, say, that by *the earth* is meant the popish clergy, the basis of the papacy; and I am very much inclined to judge that the most probable sense of it, not only because there is little of heaven in them, and their whole frame and model is the product of earthly policy, but because experience hath told us that the pope here received his first wound, in the diminution of their power and authority, and a contempt of them. God hath used many instruments to pour out this vial, even so many (whether princes or ministers) as he hath made use of to root out monasteries and abbeys, and to expose mass priests to scorn and contempt. Mr. Mede seemeth to be of another mind, thinking, that by *earth* is meant the commonalty of the people, whose defection from the pope was his first plague: but that which is to be understood by *the earth,* being the affected part of antichrist, I cannot agree with that learned man; for though the beast suffered by the defection of the commonalty, yet I cannot see how those that made the defection suffered at all by it.

### Revelation 16:2

Ver. 2. Here is a plain allusion to the plagues which God brought upon Pharaoh king of Egypt for his oppression of his ancient Israel; God hereby showing us, that he would deal by this Romish beast for his persecutions of his gospel churches, as he dealt by Pharaoh: as he turned the Egyptian rivers into blood, so as the fish died, and the waters stunk, Ex 7:20,21, and

as he plagued the Egyptians with boils and blains, Ex 9:9; so he would plague the papacy by proportionable judgments, until, as Pharaoh with his whole party was at last drowned in the Red Sea, so all the antichristian party shall be rooted out. Here are two of the Egyptian plagues mentioned, but this vision begins with the sixth of the Egyptian plagues, viz. that of boils breaking out in blains. What is meant by this *grievous sore* I must profess myself not to understand, but think Dr. More speaks very probably, interpreting it of trouble and vexation, which the popish party should have upon the first prospect of their kingdom's going down; it being of the nature of sores to vex and disturb those that are affected with them, so as they are very uneasy so long as they are affected with them. And, indeed, I find many interpreters agree in this notion.

### Revelation 16:3

Ver. 3. This answered the first plague upon Pharaoh, Ex 7:20, *All the waters that were in the river were turned to blood; and the fish that was in the river died.* By *the sea* here Dr. More understands the jurisdiction and dominion of the papacy, wherein he agrees with Mr. Mede. I rather agree with those who understand the whole system of the popish religion; their rites and ceremonies, their doctrines of indulgences and purgatory, &c. God showeth his prophet, and instructeth us, that he will bring the papacy to ruin:

1. By bringing his clergy (which are *the earth* upon which he stands) into scorn and contempt; discovering their frauds and cheats.
2. By discovering the folly and vanity of their pompous and theatrical religion, consisting only in vain shows, and idle rites and ceremonies, without any regard to that religion which is spiritual, and pure, and undefiled before God; discovering the cheats of their confessions and absolutions, their masses, pardons, and indulgences; making them appear to be not only idle, but pernicious and damnable; so as Christians could not live in the communion of their church, but it must be damnable to those who keep in the communion of it.

#### Revelation 16:4

Ver. 4. Mr. Mede and Dr. More both agree in interpreting this of the Jesuits and other popish emissaries, and the laws made for the execution of them in England in the time of Queen Elizabeth, not excluding those civil powers which are the upholders and maintainers of antichrist, as the Spaniard, who also within these last hundred years hath had blood enough given him to drink, both in 1588, and in the Low Countries. It seemeth a little hard to interpret a prophecy relating to the whole church, by what is done in so small a part of it. We know in what credit these emissaries are at this day, both in the empire, and in Spain, and in France, and Venice, from whence they sometime were expelled. We have, indeed, laws against them in England, but principally relating to those of them who, being native subjects of England, have apostatized. So as I had rather think this vial is not yet poured out, or that interpreters mistake the meaning of these *rivers and fountains*, than agree with them in that interpretation of this prophecy. I am much disposed to believe that we are not further than the pouring out of the second vial. God, indeed, hath made the Romish clergy contemptible enough, and hath vexed and enraged them sufficiently. He hath also made their scenical religion as contemptible to, and justly abhorred by, a great part of the Christian world; but how far he hath proceeded further to the ruin of antichrist, I do not understand.

#### Revelation 16:5

Ver. 5. This and the two following verses do but express the honour and glory that shall be given unto God, when he shall have accomplished his great work in destroying those who feed, and uphold, and maintain the beast, partly by those instruments he shall use in that work, expressed here by *the angel of the waters*, partly from others.

*Thou art righteous. O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus;* acknowledging the Lord's justice and righteousness in such destruction.

#### Revelation 16:6



Ver. 6. Because of their persecutions of, and cruelty towards, God's faithful ministers and people, which rendered the spilling of their blood but a condign punishment suited to their sin.

#### Revelation 16:7

Ver. 7. Others also, either members of the church triumphant or militant, or both, shall in that day give glory to God, as a God of power, able to do such things; of righteousness, thus giving these bloody men their due; and of truth, thus fulfilling both his promises to his people and his threatenings against his enemies. But it is easier to determine who shall thus rejoice, than the time when this joy shall be. This certainly is God's work, but *in fieri*, now doing, but not yet done.

#### Revelation 16:8

Ver. 8. Here we have no history to guide us in the government of our fancies and judgments, but their opinion seems most probable to me, who, by *the sun*, understand some great prince or potentate, or the whole civil power in the antichristian heaven; suppose the Spaniard, or the emperor. It seems to signify either some destruction of such civil powers, or some defection of them from the papacy, which will vex and enrage antichrist and his party, as if they were scorched with fire. This I look upon as much more probable than theirs who interpret it of the natural sun, or the word of God.

#### Revelation 16:9

Ver. 9. What the damned do in hell, where the wrath of God is poured out upon men to the utmost, that reprobates do upon earth, they are *scorched with great heat*, the vengeance of God cometh upon them; they are mad and enraged, and speak evil of a just and righteous God, who bringeth such plagues on them; but they have no sense of their sins, nor any thoughts of turning to God, confessing their sins, and giving him glory. This will be the upshot of God's lesser judgments upon the papacy: they will be mad at them, and rage, and reproach God's justice, but prove a hardened

generation, given over to ruin, that will never be sensible that these judgments come upon them for their idolatries and superstitions, and for their persecutions, and the shedding the blood of God's holy ones. Not that all adhering to that church will be so, (many, probably, will convert, and be brought to acknowledge the truth), but there will be a great party of them, whom nothing but the wrath of God come upon them in the bottomless pit to the utmost, will ever make sensible that they have done amiss, being given up to strong delusions, to a blind mind, and a hard heart, and a reprobate judgment.

### Revelation 16:10

Ver. 10. *And the fifth angel;* the fifth of the seven angels mentioned Re 16:1: by which, as was said, is to be understood the instruments which God will use gradually to destroy the papacy; the fifth rank of persons, whom God will employ in the execution of this his purpose, by his acts of providence.

*Poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast;* shall execute God's wrath upon the city of Rome itself, wholly destroying the papacy in their power.

*And his kingdom was full of darkness;* upon which his whole kingdom shall be full of the darkness of misery, trouble, and affliction. (Darkness was one of the plagues of Egypt).

*And they gnawed their tongues for pain;* and they shall be full of calamities, like men in so much pain that they bite their own tongues for pain. When this shall be God alone knows. I think, and experience hath proved, that they were much too hasty in their speculations, that prophesied it should be in the year 1656, or 1660, or 1666. For my own part, I do not believe it will be before 1866, or between that and the year 1900. The determination of it depends upon the right fixing of the epocha, or beginning of the forty-two months, or one thousand two hundred and sixty prophetic days, which I think most probably fixed upon the year 606, or (according to Mr. Stephens's notion) 666, which, according to the Julian account, is the same: See Poole on "Re 13:18".

## Revelation 16:11

Ver. 11. This is the same that was said, Re 16:9, of a former party belonging to the beast, and doth but signify, that there will be found the same vein of blindness of mind, hardness of heart, and reprobacy of sense, running through that whole party, until they be wholly ruined.

## Revelation 16:12

Ver. 12. *Upon the great river Euphrates;* upon the Turkish empire: See Poole on "Re 9:14".

*And the water thereof was dried up;* their force, power, and strength shall be destroyed.

*That the way of the kings of the east might be prepared;* that a way may be prepared for the conversion of the Jews. This I find to be the sense of the most learned and judicious interpreters of this mysterious book, amongst whom I count Mr. Mede, Dr. More, Pareus, Mr. Durham; &c. But it will be reasonable to say something further to show the probability of this sense. Euphrates was a great river that ran by Babylon, the depth of it was (as historians tell us) about two men's height. When Cyrus and Darius came to conquer Babylon, they diverted this river, Jer 51:32,36. Here is an allusion to that history. The Turks first took up their habitation about this great river, as was said in our notes on Re 9:14, where the providence of God restrained them for many years, till the sixth trumpet sounded. The Jews, who are observed to be in greatest numbers in the Eastern countries, having had a promise, Ex 19:6, to be a *kingdom of priests*, may well be called here *the kings of the east*. Two things hinder their embracing the Christian faith:

1. The image worship and idolatry of the papists.
2. The power of the Turks, with the success they have had against Christians.

But both these being taken away, by the fall of Babylon and the ruin of the Turks, the way seems to be prepared for the Jews' receiving of the

Christian faith. In a case where nothing can be certainly determined, this seemeth a very probable opinion. To which it contributes a little, that it is probable, that *the sixth vial* answereth *the sixth trumpet*; and that as they were the people first let loose by Euphrates, where they were bound, so they are the people to be destroyed under the notion of drying up the waters of Euphrates: and this seemeth to be a work of providence brought forth after the ruin of Rome, and the total breaking of the power and dominion of the papacy. Thus we have foretold the breaking both of pope and Turk, and all their upholders; but we must not imagine them so ruined, but that parties of both should be left in the world, which combining, made up the army to fight the devil's last battle in Armageddon, of which we shall read, Re 16:16.

#### Revelation 16:13

Ver. 13. God here showeth John, that after the power and strength both of the pope and Turks should be broken, the devil would yet make one push more; to which purpose he would influence some on the behalf of the antichristian secular power, others on the behalf of *the beast* with two horns, or *the false prophet*.

#### Revelation 16:14

Ver. 14. Which, from the influence of the devil, should solicit the kings of the earth to join together in a battle against the church. This is, undoubtedly, the battle in Armageddon, Re 16:16.

#### Revelation 16:15

Ver. 15. *I come as a thief*; that is, I come suddenly and unexpectedly: see Mt 24:43,44 Lu 12:39 1Th 5:2 Re 3:3. It may be understood either of Christ's coming to the last judgment, or of his coming in his vindicative providence to be revenged on his enemies.

*Blessed is he that watcheth*, he is a happy man that maketh it his business to keep himself from sin, in prospect of any such coming, *and keepeth his*

*garments, and that persevereth in my ways and truth; lest he walk naked, and they see his shame; for if he doth not, he will be found one of those that are not clothed with my righteousness, and his hypocrisy will appear to all men.*

### Revelation 16:16

Ver. 16. Either the devil brought them together, or God by his providence ordered that they should be gathered together, into the place where God designed to destroy them and their armies, for so the word *Armageddon* signifieth, say some; but others make it to signify the mountain of the gospel, or the mountain of apples, or fruits; but the first etymology in this place seems best. The word doth not signify any particular place; but here is an allusion, as some think, to that *Megiddo*, mentioned Jud 5:19, where Barak overcame Sisera with his great army, and where Josiah was slain, 2Ki 23:30. Of the issue of this last battle with the enemies of the church of Christ we shall read more, Re 19:1-21.

### Revelation 16:17

Ver. 17. *And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air:* I take this to be best interpreted (as Mr. Mede doth it) by *the power of the air*, of which Satan is called *the prince*, Eph 2:2, that is, upon all the children of the devil, that had so long given disturbance to the church of Christ.

*It is done;* that is, the work of God is done, his counsels for the destruction of his enemies, and the deliverance of his people, are brought forth in the issue of his providence, not fully yet brought to an issue, but accomplishing.

### Revelation 16:18

Ver. 18. See Re 4:5 6:12 11:13,19. Either declarative of the majesty and power of God, (as Ex 19:16, when God came forth to give his law), the violation of which God here was coming out to punish; or of the great stirs and confusions in that part of the world where the beast's greatest interest

lay. Or, the *voices, thunders, and lightnings*, may be understood as declarative of the former, and the *great earthquake* of the latter.

### Revelation 16:19

Ver. 19. *The great city*; Rome, afterwards called *great Babylon* in this verse.

*Was divided into three parts*; the pagan part, the evangelical part, and the antichristian part, (saith Dr. More), the three parties that made up the armies that fought in Armageddon: or else this is added as the effect of the great earthquake.

*And great Babylon came in remembrance, &c.*; God now took vengeance on the papacy, and all their adherents, though he had for twelve hundred and sixty years spared them, notwithstanding their idolatries and persecutions, and behaved himself toward them as if he had forgot them.

### Revelation 16:20

Ver. 20. *These are the effects of great earthquakes*: see Re 6:14. Some, by *islands* and *mountians*, understand the inhabitants of both. I know not whether those reverend authors, who by this term understand their idol worship and superstition, or ecclesiastical dignities, (I suppose because the heathens, and Jews, in imitation of them, committed idolatry on mountains and high hills), be not here too critical.

### Revelation 16:21

Ver. 21. The hail was another of the Egyptian plagues, Ex 9:22-25. The allusion also may be to the hailstones by which God fought against the five Canaanitish kings, Jos 10:11. It signifies only further great judgments with which God will pursue the beast and his party, until they all be destroyed. The latter words only show the continued hardness of heart of the beast, and all his party; wherein also they answered Pharaoh and the Egyptians, (their type), who would relent with no steadiness and certainty, until they

were all ruined by the waters of the Red Sea. In all this prediction of the final ruin of the papacy, Pharaoh and the Egyptians are apparently made the type of the pope and all his party:

1. As to their sins, which were idolatry, and the oppression of God's Israel.
2. In the plagues by which they were destroyed gradually; turning waters into blood, boils and blains, darkness, hail.
3. In their impenitency, and hardness of heart; only with these two differences, by which the antitype exceeded the type in wickedness:
  - (1.) We read of Pharaoh oft relenting, though his goodness was like a morning dew, and he returned to his former stubbornness.
  - (2.) We read nothing of the Egyptians blaspheming God, because of their plagues, which is often said of these Egyptians.

### Revelation 17:1

#### Chapter Summary

Re 17:1-4 John's vision of the great whore, sitting upon the scarlet coloured beast, arrayed in purple and scarlet, with a golden cup in her hand.

Re 17:5 Her name.

Re 17:6 She is drunken with the blood of saints.

Re 17:7-17 The interpretation of the mystery of the beast, and of his seven heads and ten horns,

Re 17:18 and of the woman.

Ver. 1. This whole verse is but a preface to a new vision which John had; not new, as to the matter revealed in it; for it plainly revealeth matters relating to antichrist; and the matter of it contemporizeth with the three last vials, about the final ruin of antichrist, who was before described under the notion of a *beast*, here under the notion of a *great whore*. A whore properly signifies one that is married, and is false to her husband's bed; and so very well suits the Church of Rome, (if they yet deserve that name), *whose faith* was formerly *spoken of throughout the world*, Ro 1:8, but is

long since turned idolatrous (idolatry, in the prophetic style, being quite through the Scripture called whoredom). She is said to *sit upon many waters*, either because she exerciseth a jurisdiction over much people, or with allusion to old Babylon, (which gave her her name), which was situated near Euphrates, a river in which there was a great collection of waters. John is called to hear the counsels of God concerning her destruction, which though more generally and shortly revealed before, yet God here designs to reveal to John more fully, particularly, and plainly.

### Revelation 17:2

Ver. 2. *With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication;* with which *great whore* several princes of the world have committed spiritual fornication, receiving her idolatrous worship, yielding to her authority, and following her example.

*And the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with, the wine of her fornication;* and not the kings only of the earth, but the generality of the people, have been influenced with a mad heat, and *with the wine of her fornication*, that is, with that wine by which she enticed them to commit idolatry with her. By this *wine* are meant honours, riches, preferments, pleasure, the gaudery of her worship, the magnificence of the apostolic see, their pretended antiquity, unity; in short, whatsoever specious arguments papists use to entice persons into the idolatrous communion of their church.

### Revelation 17:3

Ver. 3. *So he carried me away in the spirit;* that is, being in *an ecstasy*; see Re 4:2; whether in the body or out of the body he could not tell, as Paul expressth it, 2Co 12:2.

*Into the wilderness;* a place not, or not much, inhabited, either as fittest for contemplation. or to signify that this *great whore*, which had driven the spouse of Christ into the wilderness, should shortly herself come into her state, according to the fate of old Babylon, Jer 1:13.



*And I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast; the great whore,* mentioned Re 17:1, upheld by the Roman emperors.

*Full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns;* the same which is mentioned Re 13:1: See Poole on "Re 13:1". Here a great question ariseth, who this *woman* is, or, (which is the same, as appeareth by Re 17:5), what city is meant by *Babylon*, mentioned Re 17:5; a question (as Mr. Pool noteth) of high concernment; for whoever this *woman* is, or whatsoever this *Babylon* signifieth, the people of God are upon pain of damnation admonished to avoid any communion with her, and to come out of her, Re 14:9,10. Mr. Pool hath diligently collected into his Latin Synopsis all opinions about it, and showed what is to be said for or against them; I will give my reader the sum of what he saith.

1. Some would have it to be the whole world of wicked men. Against this it is said:

- (1.) That John speaks here of a certain great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth, Re 17:18: this cannot be meant of the wicked world.
- (2.) The world of wicked men are those *inhabitants of the earth*, whom this woman *made drunk with the wine of her fornication*: now she that made them drunk, and those that were made drunk, cannot be the same.
- (3.) This woman sitteth on seven mountains, Re 17:9, and so do not all the wicked of the world.
- (4.) We are commanded to come out of this Babylon, but we are not obliged to go out of the world.

2. Others would have this *woman*, or this *Babylon*, to be the old Chaldean Babylon. But:

- (1.) Where then is the *mystery*, mentioned Re 17:5?
- (2.) The Babylon here mentioned, is by all agreed to be the seat of antichrist; so was that never.

3. The generality agree it to be Rome. Amongst the ancients, Tertullian, Jerome, Ambrose, CECumenius, Augustine, Eusebius: of later writers, Beda, Aquinas, Salmeron, Pererius, Bellarmine, Lapede, Ribera, (all papists), besides a multitude of protestant writers.

- (1.) That city is also like old Babylon for power and greatness, for oppression and tyranny of and over God's Israel; besides, the city here mentioned is described by two characters, agreeing to none but Rome, Re 17:9, dwelling upon seven hills.
- (2.) Reigning over the kings of the earth: for the first Rome is the only city in the world founded upon seven hills, and famed for it by its old poets, Ovid, Virgil, Horace, Propertius, &c. It is attested to be so founded by Plutarch, Pliny, Dionysius, Halicarnassaeus. The names of these hills are known: Palatinus, Quirinalis, Aventinus, Celius, Veminalis, Esquilinus, Capitolinus. Both papist and protestant writers agree that here by Babylon Rome is meant; but they are divided, whether it be to be understood of Rome in its old pagan state, or in its present state, or in a state yet to come.

4. Some would have it to be Rome in its pagan state; of this mind are Grotius, and Dr. Hammond, and some others. But against this many things are said:

- (1.) It is manifest that God here describes Rome not as under its sixth head, viz. the pagan emperors, but as it was under its last head, the eighth king, Re 17:11, as it should ascend out of the bottomless pit, Re 17:8.
- (2.) What John saw herein mentioned as a secret about the blood of the saints, which he wondered at; now the pagan emperors' spilling the blood of saints was a thing long since done.
- (3.) The desolation of the Babylon here mentioned was to be final, never to be repaired, as appears by Re 18:21-23; but pagan Rome was never made so desolate.
- (4.) If Rome pagan be here meant, then, after its fall, Rome Christian was the habitation of devils, Re 18:2.

(5.) Rome pagan fell upon our saints with downright blows, not with allurements, making them *drunk with the wine of her fornication*, as Re 17:2.

5. The papists, who grant that by *Babylon* Rome is meant, would have it to be Rome toward the end of the world, when, they say, Rome shall apostatize from the pope to paganism again; but for this opinion there is no foundation in Scripture, nor the judgment of the ancients, and some of the papists themselves reject it as improbable and detestable.

6. The generality and best of protestant writers understand by *Babylon*, and by this *woman*, Rome, as it is at this day under the conduct of the pope, for which they give these reasons.

(1.) Because it cannot be understood of Rome in either of the other notions, as hath been proved.

(2.) Because antichrist is to *sit in the temple of God*, 2Th 2:4, as God, therefore not in any pagan city. *The mystery of iniquity* was working in the apostle's time, but, Re 17:7, the Roman empire hindered the appearance of antichrist till the popes had wrung Rome out of their hands, and were the sole rulers there; then antichrist showed himself.

(3.) Because there is nothing said of this *great whore*, or this *Babylon*, but admirably agreeth to Rome in its present state.

#### Revelation 17:4

Ver. 4. *And the woman was arrayed in a purple and scarlet colour; purple was the colour of kings and princes: this woman*, Re 18:7, said she was *queen*.

*Scarlet* also was a rich and noble colour, anciently most used in a time of war. How much it is in use with the pope and his cardinals, is sufficiently known.

*And decked with gold and precious stones and pearls;* this shows the

worldly riches of the papacy.

*Having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication;* alluring and tempting persons to idolatry, as whores use to do with their philters, or enchanted cups, allure and provoke men to sensual satisfactions.

### Revelation 17:5

Ver. 5. *And upon her forehead was a name written;* as public harlots were wont to write their names, some upon the fronts of their houses, some upon their foreheads: it denotes the open guilt and impudence of this spiritual harlot.

*Mystery;* that is, there is a mystery in what follows in her name.

*Babylon the great;* not to be understood of the Chaldean Babylon, but of a city or polity under the gospel; as, Re 11:8, she was *called spiritually Sodom and Egypt*, so also in a spiritual or mystical sense she is called *Babylon*, because a city like to Babylon for idolatry and persecution of God's Israel.

*The mother of harlots;* not it mere harlot but one that bred up harlots, and nursed up idolatry, communicating it to others. This is the true name of Rome instead of "holy mother church."

*And abominations of the earth;* a place in which not only idolatry reigneth, but all abominable things committed in the world; carnal whoredom tolerated by them, and sodomy, &c.

### Revelation 17:6

Ver. 6. *And I saw the woman,* the papacy, *drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus;* filled with the blood of those holy ones, which she caused to be slain for bearing testimony to Jesus Christ.

*And when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration;* which he would not have done had it been a pagan Rome he had seen in this vision. But that any that owned Christ, and called themselves the holy church, should kill men for bearing testimony to Christ, and adherence to his rule of faith and life, this caused in John a just wonderment.

### Revelation 17:7

Ver. 7. The angel promiseth to open this vision, it being the key of the former vision, and is the only vision expounded throughout this whole book.

### Revelation 17:8

Ver. 8. *The beast that thou sawest;* this beast was the Roman empire, the *scarlet coloured beast* which carried the whore, Re 17:3.

*Was, and is not;* was of old, in Rome's pagan state, and *is not*, not in that form, not now pagan; *and yet is* (as is said in the close of the verse) the same in another form, idolatrous and persecuting.

*And shall ascend out of the bottomless pit;* either, out of the sea, which signifies a multitude of people; or, from hell; the word signifies both.

*And go into perdition;* and shall certainly be destroyed.

*And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, &c.:* but before he goes into perdition he shall so cheat the world, that the generality of the people shall wonder at the beast, (see Re 8:8), setting aside those who are chosen of God to eternal salvation; the one hundred and forty-four thousand, mentioned Re 14:3. I conceive that which hath made interpreters so divided in their notions about this beast is, because those words, *and yet is*, are not added in the beginning of the verse, which being understood, there appears no difficulty considerable; for it is certain the Roman empire was from before Christ, and continued pagan till the year 310; then was not pagan, but Christian, yet after some years was again as idolatrous and bloody against Christians, as the old pagan empire was; especially when

swallowed up by the pope, *the beast with two horns like a lamb*. This is *the beast with seven heads and ten horns*, Re 13:1.

### Revelation 17:9

Ver. 9. *And here is the mind which hath wisdom*; that is, here is that which requireth a mind endued with spiritual wisdom.

*The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth*; the *seven heads* which he saw the beast with, signified *seven mountains* or hills upon which Rome is situated; they were named before: See Poole on "Re 17:3". They tell us now Rome is situated in Campo Martio. *Resp.* Whatever it now is, certain it is, that in St. John's time it was situated upon them, and they are now within the compass of Rome.

### Revelation 17:10

Ver. 10. *And there are seven kings*; the *seven heads* do not only signify seven hills or mountains, but also *seven kings*, that is, (according to the best interpretation I meet with), seven forms of government which ruled Rome; the term *kings*, in Scripture, signifying rulers, whether the government was in single persons, or more, as De 33:5. Rome was governed:

1. By kings.
2. By consuls.
3. Tribunes.
4. Decemvirs.
5. Dictators.
6. Emperors that were pagans.
7. Emperors that were Christians.

*Five are fallen*; five of these were fallen, extinguished before John's time, viz. the government by kings, consuls, tribunes, decemvirs, dictators.

*And one is*; the government by pagan emperors was at that time in being.

*And the other is not yet come;* the government by Christian emperors was not yet in being.

*And when he cometh, he must continue a short space;* and when it came, it held but a little time before the bishops of Rome wrested the government of Italy out of their hands. This to me seemeth the most probable interpretation of this difficult text.

### Revelation 17:11

Ver. 11. *And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth;* this made the eighth succession of governments in the Roman empire.

*And is of the seven;* this was of the seventh head; for although this was the eighth government in order as we have counted them, yet one of these, viz. the seventh, (which was that of true Christian emperors), must not be counted as one of the seven heads, which were all idolatrous: so though this was the eighth government, yet he was one of the seven heads, i.e. idolatrous governments.

*And goeth into perdition;* and to be destroyed as they were.

### Revelation 17:12

Ver. 12. *And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings:* possibly by *ten kings* here are not meant monarchs, but governments.

*Which have received no kingdom as yet;* which were not in being in John's time, nor in many years after.

*But receive power as kings one hour with the beast;* but should, during some time of the beast's reign, have power with the papacy, employing their power with his to establish his idolatry. But who these ten monarchs are, or what these ten governments are, I must confess myself at a loss to determine. It is plain they should be:

1. Such as should be contemporaneous with the reign of the beast.

2. Such as employed their power in conjunction with his.
3. Such as should afterwards be instruments to ruin the papacy, Re 17:16,17.

The beast's reign being twelve hundred and sixty years, there hath been, and will be, such a variety of princes and governments, as it is very hard to determine who they shall be. But their being contemporaneous with the beast, makes me think it cannot be understood either of any that were in the world before the year 606, when the beast's reign began (though *the mystery of iniquity* was working, and the *image of the beast* was making, long before); as also that the ten barbarous nations that disturbed Italy from the year 410 till near 600 could not be meant, being all before antichrist came to any reign; nor did they ever show any great love or hatred to the pope; sometimes serving, sometimes opposing him, as suited their respective civil interests. I am very inclinable to think the prophecy to concern some kings nearer the end of antichrist's reign, who though for a while they served the papacy, yet shall at last be instruments to ruin him; but who they are shall do this, or when it shall be, I cannot determine.

#### Revelation 17:13

Ver. 13. They shall all be papists, and for a while shall employ all their power and strength to uphold the popish religion.

#### Revelation 17:14

Ver. 14. *These shall make war with the Lamb;* these ten kings shall a while oppose themselves to the gospel, taking part with antichrist.

*And the Lamb shall overcome them;* Christ shall overcome them by the power of is gospel, or some of them that way; others, that will not be converted, shall be confounded, some way or other brought to ruin.

*For he is Lord of lords and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful;* for he hath a power above others, and



knows how to fit instruments for his purpose; so as those whom he shall make use of in this work, shall be chosen persons, and faithful in discharge of the trust committed to them.

### Revelation 17:15

Ver. 15. John saw *the great whore* sitting upon *seven mountains*, Re 17:9, and *upon many waters*, Re 17:1; these signified her dominion and jurisdiction over many people.

### Revelation 17:16

Ver. 16. *And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast*: see Re 17:3,12.

*These shall hate the whore, &c.;* the ten kings shall apostatize from the papacy, and be great instruments of God to ruin it. When we see some other kingdoms, now in vassalage to the pope, do as much as hath been done in England, and Scotland, and Sweden, and some other places, we may possibly understand this prophecy better than we yet do.

### Revelation 17:17

Ver. 17. *For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will*; that is, what he hath determined shall be done; not what he commandeth men to do, or approveth their doing of; his permissive will.

*And to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast*; for God puts malice against himself and his Son into the hearts of none, which is the cause of any persons' assisting the beast.

*Until the words of God shall be fulfilled*; nor shall they do this any longer than till the forty-two months be expired, which he by his word hath declared he hath allowed to these mongrel Gentiles, to tread down the outward court: but till that time be expired, these kingdoms will agree to give their power to the beast, whom about the expiration of that time they

shall hate, and help to destroy.

### Revelation 17:18

Ver. 18. *And the woman which thou sawest:* see Re 17:3.

*Is that great city;* that is, signifieth that great city, *Babylon the great:* see Re 17:5.

*Which reigneth over the kings of the earth,* commanding and punishing them as she pleaseth. To what person or power that either now is, or ever was, upon the earth, is this applicable, but to the pope, who makes emperors hold his stirrup, sends his edicts to princes to execute, excommunicates them, and interdicts their subjects, and arms them against them if they refuse? So that if the pope sits upon seven hills, or Rome he built upon them; if the papacy hath allured the inhabitants of the earth to idolatry; if in her idolatries she be the image of the old pagan idolaters; if to her many princes have given their power and strength; if she reigneth over the kings of the earth; and these things be applicable to no other person or government; there is no more doubt, whether the pope be antichrist, and Rome mystical Babylon, which shall certainly be destroyed for her idolatries and shedding the blood of God's holy ones, than there is of what we have Re 1:1,2, that this book contains *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; which he sent and signified by his angel unto his servant John; who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.*

### Revelation 18:1

#### Chapter Summary

Re 18:1-3 A mighty angel declareth the fall of Babylon.

Re 18:4-7 God's people commanded to depart out of her.

Re 18:8 After judgment.

Re 18:9,10 The kings of the earth,

Re 18:11-16 and the merchants,  
Re 18:17-19 and mariners, lament over her.  
Re 18:20 The saints are excited to rejoice over her.  
Re 18:21-24 A millstone cast into the sea denoteth her  
irrecoverable fall.

Ver. 1. It is a matter of no great moment, whether by this *angel* we understand Christ, or a created angel; the description agreeth to Christ, and may agree to a created angel.

*Having great power;* to whom God had given power and authority to declare the ruin of Babylon.

*And the earth was lightened with his glory;* and he had communicated to him a great glory, suited to his splendour and greatness whose messenger he was.

### Revelation 18:2

Ver. 2. *And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen:* whoever was meant by the *angel* whom John saw, Re 18:1, his business was to give warning to the whole world, (therefore he crieth *with a strong voice,* ) that Rome, the *great city, the mother* of spiritual *harlots*, should fall. This angel was a prophet, and the messenger of him who calls the things that are not as if they were; and therefore he speaks in a Divine, prophetic style: the prophets (ordinarily) speaking of things to come as past, or present, to denote the certain futurity of them, and doubling their words to assure us of it; for this, *is fallen,* is; expounded by *shall be thrown down,* Re 18:21. We read of this angel, Re 14:8; but it is ordinary with prophets to repeat the same things, and it is done as to the Chaldean Babylon, the type to this antitype, both Isaiah and Jeremiah declared in more than one sermon its certain approaching ruin. These words are taken from Isa 21:9, where the word *fallen* is doubled, as here. They are found also, Jer 51:8. God here explaineth what he had said before, Re 14:8.

*And is become the habitation of devils, &c.:* the words are such as might signify a sinful fall, or apostacy; and what is here, is true of it in that sense;

idols in Scripture being ordinarily called *devils*: but they seem rather to be understood of a penal fall, for such is that spoken of Isa 21:9, after which it should become a habitation of devils, and a cage of unclean birds. See the like spoken of literal Babylon, Isa 13:19-21; wild beasts and hateful birds usually frequenting desolate places.

### Revelation 18:3

Ver. 3. *For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication;* that is, her fornications which have brought this wrath upon her.

*And the kings of the earth have committed, &c.;* she hath not only herself committed idolatry, but allured others to it, teaching them to break the commandments of God, and hath influenced princes to establish, and propagate, and to uphold, and maintain it; and all sorts of men have been bewitched by her, growing rich by her abundance, and being drenched in her luxury.

### Revelation 18:4

Ver. 4. *And heard another voice from heaven, saying:* a command from God.

*Come out of her, my people:* they are the words of God by his prophet, Jer 50:8 51:6, calling to his people, that the years of their captivity being now expired, and they having a liberty to go back to Jerusalem, they would not linger longer in Babylon, nor partake *of her sins*; for God was about to destroy that place; and if they were found in it, they would be in danger of being destroyed with it, especially if they were found partakers of its sins. But they are also a general warning to all to take heed of any fellowship with idolaters; and so the apostle applieth part of these words, 2Co 6:17. Here they are applied to mystical Babylon, which is Rome antichristian. God calls to all that either love him, or their own souls, to forsake the communion of it; for while they continue in it, they must partake of its sins, worshipping the beast, by paying, at his command, a Divine homage to saints and angels, to the virgin Mary, to images and statues, nay, to a piece

of baker's bread; and doing so, they will be involved in her *plagues*. This text looks terribly upon those who apostatize to that idolatry; and instead of coming out, (in obedience to the command of God), being come out, go in again, and that not by compulsion, but out of choice, and voluntarily.

### Revelation 18:5

Ver. 5. *For her sins have reached unto heaven;* that is, the cry of her sins; according to what is said of Sodom, (one of the types of antichrist), Ge 18:20,21.

*And God hath remembered her iniquities;* the time is come when God will punish her for her idolatry and persecution, and all the abominable things done and committed by her.

### Revelation 18:6

Ver. 6. This verse soundeth in mine ears, as if God had reserved he ruin of the papacy to be effected by some protestant hands, some of those whom they had persecuted; if not some of their persons, yet some of the same faith.

### Revelation 18:7

Ver. 7. *How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her:* this speaketh thus much; That whenever God's time cometh for the ruin of the papacy, the condition of all that party shall appear as miserable as it appears now splendid and happy.

*For she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow;* and one great reason of this so great affliction, will be the pride, presumption, and security of that faction, much after the rate of old Babylon, Isa 47:8. Old Babylon thought itself impregnable; and new mystical Babylon thinks herself infallible and impregnable too; the only church, (if we will believe her), against whom the gates of hell shall not

prevail.

### Revelation 18:8

Ver. 8. *Therefore shall her plagues come in one day;* as was threatened to old Babylon, Isa 47:9.

*In one day;* that is, in a short time.

*Death, and mourning, ad famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire;* all manner of judgments, till she be fully consumed.

*For strong is the Lord God who judgeth her;* for she hath to do with a strong Lord: she thinks she hath secured herself from man, by interesting kings and princes in her quarrel; but it is the Lord that judgeth her, and she will find him strong enough to accomplish his word upon her.

### Revelation 18:9

Ver. 9. Not all of them, for some of them shall help to burn her, Re 17:16; but such as God had left to their hardness of heart, that they still live in her fellowship and communion: or, if others also, it must proceed from their humanity, not being able to see so splendid a city, as that of Rome, ruined, and so many ruined as will perish by her fall, without the moving of their bowels by some pity and commiseration.

### Revelation 18:10

Ver. 10. As well as they loved her, they will not come nigh her in the time of her torments; the fire will be too hot for them, they will only stand aloof off, and pity her, that so great and brave a city should be so suddenly ruined; such a gay and splendid church, so politicly founded and put together, should be in a sudden so broken to pieces.

### Revelation 18:11

Ver. 11. As the merchants, Eze 27:27, lamented for Tyre, that they could barter and truck no more there, because all the trade thereof was destroyed; so those ecclesiastical merchants, that were wont to trade with Rome for indulgences, and pardons, and dispensations, and faculties, for cardinals' caps, and bishoprics, and prebendaries, and other church preferments, shall lament when the papacy falls, that there will be no more such merchandise to be bought or sold there.

### Revelation 18:12

Ver. 12-14. Here is a large enumeration of several sorts of wares, such as were most precious, *gold, silver, precious stones*; such as were most useful for ornament, *fine linen, purple, silk, scarlet*; most gratifying the exterior senses, *thyine wood, odours, ointments, &c.*; most necessary, *beasts, sheep, horses, chariots*; all which, as is prophesied, shall depart from Rome: that is, whatsoever she had, which allured men into her idolatrous communion; all their idols and images, cardinals' caps, priests' copes, all their preferments and dignities, whatsoever served the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, or the pride of life; whatsoever their own carnal and ambitious minds, or the carnal and ambitious minds of others that courted this whore, thirsted after, which brought them to seek her communion; they should all perish, and she be despoiled of them. It is very remarkable, that here is one piece of merchandise to be had no where but at Rome, viz. the *souls of men*; which lets us know they are no earthly merchants that are here understood. As souls are to be sold a thousand ways, so they are to be bought; by paying for pardons, indulgences, dispensations, so the silly chapmen think they buy their own souls; by purchasing of cardinals' caps, bishoprics, great livings, all manner of ecclesiastical dignities and preferments, so they really buy the souls of others; but when the papacy shall be wholly destroyed, none of these things shall any more be found.

### Revelation 18:15

Ver. 15. Not knowing how to help her, and fearing lest the buyers and sellers should be punished both alike; yet bewailing themselves that their trading is destroyed, and they are like to buy such pennyworths no more.

### Revelation 18:16

Ver. 16. *Alas, alas that great city!* The Church of Rome, that was so gay, and splendid, and rich, and glorious.

### Revelation 18:17

Ver. 17. *In one hour;* that is, suddenly. The term denotes rather the surprisal of this judgment, than the short space of time within which it should be effected.

### Revelation 18:18

Ver. 18,19. We all know ship masters and sailors are persons that live by carrying merchants' goods; and therefore, properly, the terms signify all such persons (of what rank and order soever) who get their livings by serving this mystical Babylon, whether silversmiths that make shrines for Diana, or clerks, or notaries, or any officers in that church, employed in gathering its revenues of annats and first-fruits, selling of offices, gathering of Peter-pence, drawing of pardons and indulgences, or dispensations, or such as in that synagogue hold any offices of profit. All who will be highly concerned in the ruin of the papacy, as that by the upholding of which they live, by reason of the great riches thus coming in, the whole rabble of their ecclesiastical hierarchy, with all their petty officers, seem to be here meant.

### Revelation 18:20



Ver. 20. *Rejoice over her, thou heaven;* that is, over her ruin, which is not a more proper object for the sorrow and mourning of all her adherents and dependants, than of the joy of all spiritual, heavenly persons, which are the true church, who oppose this antichristian synagogue.

*And ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her:* you also that were apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, and such as have been exercised as prophets in revealing to men God's mind and will, do you rejoice, for God hath revenged you upon her, for your doctrine corrupted by her, your rules of worship violated, and some of your blood that hath been spilt, and for all the indignities you have suffered from her.

### Revelation 18:21

Ver. 21. *And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast, into the sea;* for a sign or symbol of the irreparable ruin of Rome, signified by that great millstone which had ground to powder so many of God's holy ones. By this sign God shows his prophet:

1. That Rome shall be ruined.
2. That it shall be done with violence.
3. That it shall be a total, utter ruin, from whence it shall never recover.

### Revelation 18:22

Ver. 22,23. *And the voice of harpers, &c., shall be heard no more at all in thee;* all these seem to me but the expression of an utter ruin and desolation, by various phrases and expressions; they should have no more occasion of mirth, nor any more business done in their city. If any will understand these expressions, of their organs, and other musical instruments used in worship, and of spiritual craftsmen, I shall not contradict it; but I think it more proper to understand the words more largely.

*For thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries*

*were all nations deceived:* though thou hast had a trade with great men, and by thy enchanted cups of the wine of thy fornication hast intoxicated many in all nations, yet thou shalt use that trade no more; the nations shall be deceived no more by thee; here shall be an end of thee. And one thing that brings thee to thy ruin, shall be thy seducing others to idolatry, so as they have seemed to reasonable men to be bewitched by thee.

### Revelation 18:24

Ver. 24. In the rubbish of Rome, when destroyed, will be found the blood of all those holy servants of God, whether ministers of the gospel, or professors of it, who ever since the year 606, when the pope came first to his power, have been put to death for the testimony of Christ, and a faithful adherence to the purity of doctrine by him delivered, the purity of worship by him prescribed and directed, or the purity of discipline by his direction set up. As it is storied, that upon the dissolution of abbeys, and monasteries, and nunneries here in England, there were found in holes of walls, and ponds, the skulls and bones of many infants, the supposed bastards of those fathers: so, though men cannot or will not see it now, yet when the papacy shall have its period, men shall understand, that no prophet nor righteous man hath violently been put to death for the truth out of Rome, that is, out of the jurisdiction and influence of Rome; but though it may be they have been no professed papists that have been the cause or instruments of their death, yet they have done it as influenced from that bloody city; and the principles have been perfectly popish and antichristian which madly hurried them on to such cruelties. It was one of Luthers reasons why he would have none put to death for heresy, (as they call it), because he would have this particular character reserved for that antichristian synagogue. —But ah, Lord Jesus! When shall these things be? Or who shall live when the wise providence of God shall effect them, to join with the whole church, both triumphant and militant, in the song which we have prophesied of upon this occasion in the next chapter.

*It is not for us to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power, Ac 1:7.*

## Revelation 19:1

### Chapter Summary.

Re 19:1-5 God is praised in heaven for judging the great whore, and avenging the blood of his saints.

Re 19:6-9 The triumph because of the marriage of the Lamb.

Re 19:10 The angel who showed John these things, refuseth to be worshipped.

Re 19:11-16 The vision of the Word of God sitting upon a white horse, and followed by his armies.

Re 19:17-19 The fowls called to feast on the flesh of those that took part with the beast.

Re 19:20,21 The beast and false prophet cast into the lake of fire and brimstone; and the rest slain.

Ver. 1. *And after these things;* after the pouring out of the fifth vial upon the seat of the beast, Re 16:10; for Re 17:1-18:24, as we have formerly hinted, is but a parenthesis to the history. God, in this chapter, more fully describes the effects of the pouring out that vial.

*I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying:* it may be understood either of the third heavens, or the heaven upon earth, the church of God; for the church triumphant and militant both will concur in praising God for the ruin of antichrist's power.

*Alleluia* is a Hebrew word, and signifies: Praise ye the Lord.

*Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:* all these are but terms of honour and praise given unto God, acknowledging that the church's salvation is from him, the effect of his power; and that to him, upon that account, all honour and glory imaginable is due, as having shown himself his people's God.

## Revelation 19:2

Ver. 2. *For true and righteous are his judgments:* the Lord's judgments, in holy writ, sometimes signify his precepts, sometimes his dispensations of

providence, either more generally, or more specially; in which last sense it signifies (as here) his punishment of sinners: these are just and righteous, and therefore called *judgments*.

*For he hath judged the great whore, for he hath punished the papacy, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, which corrupted a great part of the earth with its idolatry.*

*And hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand; and by these judicial dispensations God hath also taken vengeance on them for the blood of his saints shed by them. It is remarkable, that all along this book idolatry and persecution are made the beast's provoking sins.*

#### Revelation 19:3

Ver. 3. As the church proceeded in her praises, so God proceeded in his judgments upon the great whore, until she was ruined past recovery.

#### Revelation 19:4

Ver. 4. See Poole on "Re 4:1", and following verses to Re 4:11. All the heavenly choir praise God upon this account, desiring that the Lord would fulfil what he had begun.

#### Revelation 19:5

Ver. 5. *And a voice came out of the throne, from Christ, declaring it the will of God, that all holy ones should praise him upon this account.*

#### Revelation 19:6

Ver. 6. By this *multitude* most understand the church. Some understand the Jews as well as the Gentiles, supposing that they shall be before this time converted and added to the church. Others think their conversion is the marriage spoken of in the next verse. The saints do not rejoice in the ruin

of their adversaries, but in the glory of God advanced by it, and as his kingdom is by it promoted.

### Revelation 19:7

Ver. 7. A late reverend author tells us: That as there is a three-fold resurrection mentioned in Scripture;

1. A rising to a newness of life, Eph 5:14;
2. The conversion of the Jews, called *life from the dead*, Ro 11:15;
3. In the end of the world:

so there is a threefold marriage of the Lamb;

1. To particular souls, when by faith they are united to Christ;
2. To his church completed, when the Jews shall be called;
3. When all his elect shall be made one with him in glory, after the general resurrection.

He seemeth to understand it of all these. Probably the conversion of the Jews stayeth for the fall of the papacy, whose worship and persecution are great scandals to them. Probably also, upon the fall of it, many will be converted besides the Jews, and the general resurrection will not be far off. The learned Dr. More seems to restrain it to the Jews' conversion; I had rather understand it more generally.

### Revelation 19:8

Ver. 8. *And to her was granted;* that is, to the Lamb's wife, whether Jews or Gentiles, or both.

*That she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white;* that she should be clothed with the righteousness of Christ, reckoned to her for

righteousness. This is *the righteousness of the saints*; called *the righteousness of God*, Ro 1:17; a righteousness *through the faith of Christ*, Php 3:9: called *righteousness*, in the Greek, because there are many saints to be clothed with it; and because it is imputed both for justification and sanctification, not to excuse us from holiness, but to make up our defects.

### Revelation 19:9

Ver. 9. *And he saith unto me, Write;* write it, as a business of moment, of which a record is fit to be kept.

*Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb*; that is, (say those who understand by *the marriage of the Lamb* the Jews' conversion), who live in this happy period of time when the Jews shall be converted, and with the Gentiles make one gospel church. But this seems to me not sufficient. The *marriage* is one thing, the *supper* another, and (ordinarily) consequential to the marriage itself. The kingdom of glory seems to me rather intended, and those are called to it, who are *made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light*.

*These are the true sayings of God*; that is, these are the undoubted truths of God, and therefore to be called into question by none.

### Revelation 19:10

Ver. 10. *And I fell at his feet to worship him:* prostration, or falling at the feet of superiors, to pay them an homage in consideration of their superiority, was ordinarily used in those Eastern countries, Ge 44:14 1Sa 25:24 2Ki 4:37 Es 8:3. To *worship him*, therefore, here must be understood of prayer or praise, which are pieces of Divine adoration, which it is not probable this great apostle would have offered, had he not mistaken him, and thought him an uncreated angel.

*And he said unto me, See thou do it not;* but the angel doth not only refuse it, but with some indignation;  $\text{Ὁρα μη}$ , Have a care you do it not. From whence we may observe, what a fig leaf they have made to cover the

papists' idolatry, in worshipping the bread in the eucharist, who (to show us their great skill in divinity) think they may be excused from idolatry in it, because *they think* the bread is turned into the body of Christ; idolatry is not to be excused by *think so's*.

*I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus:* the angel gives him a reason why there was no adoration due to him, because he was his equal in office, though not in nature; he was both his and all their brethren's fellow servant, who by preaching the gospel give a testimony to Christ. Well, therefore, Re 2:1-3:22, may the ministers of churches be called *angels*.

*Worship God;* there is no prayer, no praise, due but to the Creator.

*For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy:* there are divers senses given of the last phrase; but of all given, there are two which seem to me most probable: either:

1. *The spirit of this prophecy,* by which I have revealed these things to thee, is not mine, it is *the testimony of Jesus;* he therefore is to be adored, not I. Or:
2. Thy preaching the gospel, which is thy testimony to Christ, is as much from the Spirit of God, as my spirit of prophecy: we are therefore equals, and I am not to be worshipped more than thou art.

We have the same, Re 22:8,9, to let us know that even good men may twice run into the same error; and to let us know, that by the mouth of these two witnesses this truth ought to have been established, so that papists should not after this have paid any Divine adoration to angels, much less to saints; and if invocation be no Divine adoration, nothing is. This deserveth the consideration of them, who think it so easy to excuse the popish religion from idolatry.

### Revelation 19:11

Ver. 11. The remaining part of this chapter is conceived more fully to open what shall come to pass under the sixth and seventh vials, mentioned Re

16:12,17, more especially the battle in *Armageddon*, mentioned there, Re 16:16. There mention was made only of the armies' being gathered together; here it is more fully described. At the beginning of the gospel, (saith a late learned annotator), John saw only a door opened, Re 4:1. At the resurrection of the witnesses, he saw the temple opened, Re 11:19. Here, after the ruin of Babylon, he seeth *heaven opened*.

*And behold a white horse*: John saw such a horse, Re 6:2. Dr. More observes, that the horse with his rider signifies rule; and the white colour, prosperity and success. It appears that the rider was Christ, because he is called *Faithful and True*, which agrees with Re 1:5; and by the names in the following verses, Re 19:13,16, given to him.

### Revelation 19:12

Ver. 12. *His eyes were as a flame of fire*: see Re 1:14 2:18. This denoted either his piercing knowledge, or his infinite wisdom and understanding.

*And on his head were many crowns*; and there needs must be so; for, Re 19:16, he is said to be the *King of kings, and Lord of lords*.

*And he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself*; this denoted the incomprehensibleness of his Divine essence and perfections.

### Revelation 19:13

Ver. 13. *And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood*; either to denote that he was he who redeemed us by his blood; or rather, to signify that he was now coming forth to shed the blood of his enemies, both in vindication of his own honour and glory, or of his people; in which notion it also agrees with Isaiah's vision of him, Isa 63:1-3: *Their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment*.

*And his name is called The Word of God*:

See Poole on "Joh 1:1". He is also called *the Word*, Re 1:2, a name given him hardly by any except this apostle.



### Revelation 19:14

Ver. 14. *And the armies which were in heaven followed him;* the glorious angels, 2Th 1:7, and ten thousands of his saints, Jude 1:14, who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

*Upon white horses;* to prophesy success and victory.

*Clothed in fine linen, white and clean;* to denote their glory, purity, and holiness.

### Revelation 19:15

Ver. 15. *And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword:* I can easily agree that this two-edged sword is the word of Christ coming out of his mouth, but not the gospel, (the time was past for that, it was the time of the sacrifice in Bozrah), but his word of command, calling out his people to take vengeance upon the remainder of his enemies. The sword was both the sword of the Lord, commanding it to be drawn, and the sword of his people, whose hands were to wield it.

*That with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron:* with this he now smites the remainder of his enemies, and breaks them to pieces.

*And he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God:* his enemies were the grapes, that now were put into the winepress of God's watchful providence; Christ trod them there: see Isa 63:3.

### Revelation 19:16

Ver. 16. The same name as in Re 17:14 1Ti 6:15; See Poole on "Re 17:14", See Poole on "1Ti 6:15"; denoting the sovereign power and authority which he had. This he always had, but he now comes forth openly to manifest it; therefore this name is said to be *written on his*

*vesture and on his thigh, that all might take notice of it.*

#### Revelation 19:17

Ver. 17. The best conjecture I can find at the sense of these words, is, that they signify the preachers' of the gospel bold and clear foretelling the ruin of antichrist. There are divers kinds of fowls; amongst others, some that feed on flesh. These are those fowls here mentioned, such as feed upon dead carcasses. They are invited *to the supper of the great God;* called so, because it is made and prepared by the power of him who is the great God, or because it is a sacrifice to the justice of God: see 1Sa 17:46 Isa 18:6 Jer 12:9 Eze 39:17. God's justice upon his enemies is called *a sacrifice*, Isa 34:6 Jer 46:10 Eze 39:17. Idolaters were wont upon their sacrificing to have a feast; God hath also a feast upon this his sacrifice, but it is for the fowls and beasts, that feed on dead carcasses.

#### Revelation 19:18

Ver. 18. In the former verse God invited all the ravenous fowls to a supper, he here showeth their cheer. The meaning is no more than this, that in the great battle of Armageddon, which was for the destruction of all the remainder of the enemies of the church, whether papists, or atheists, or Turks; men of all sorts and orders should be slain, and their dead bodies made meat for the fowls of heaven, that feed on dead flesh.

#### Revelation 19:19

Ver. 19. *The beast*, whether by it be understood *the dragon*, or *the beast with seven heads and ten horns*, or *the beast with two horns*, or all of them, shall before this time be all destroyed, that is, as to their power and dominion; but there will be relics left, both of pagans, and Turks, and papists, of whom it is probable that this is to be understood; viz. that after God, upon the pouring out of the fifth vial, shall have deprived the papacy of their dominion; and by the pouring out of the sixth vial, shall have deprived the Turk of his dominion; that yet such pagans, Turks, and papists, as shall be left, shall be gathered together, and make one or more

great armies, with whom the Jews and Gentiles (now united in one church) shall fight under the conduct of Christ, as the Captain general of his church, by whom they shall be overcome; and that this shall be the great battle in Armageddon, mentioned Re 16:16.

### Revelation 19:20

Ver. 20. The issue of this great battle will be the total ruin of all enemies of the church, their bodies being made meat for the fowls of the heaven, their souls cast into the bottomless pit of hell. The secular part of antichrist is here meant by *the beast*; the ecclesiastical antichrist, by *the false prophet*, that had cheated credulous princes and credulous people, with his pretended miracles, into an idolatry, that was but the image of the old idolatry of the heathens, in worshipping demons, and the images of such as were in great estimation amongst them while they were alive.

*These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone*; both these, the laic and secular popish party, and all their church party, that should be left to this day, shall all now be destroyed. In a matter of fact, not likely to appear in the world yet of two hundred years or more, and thus darkly foretold, who can be positive and particular? But this seemeth the sense of it, upon the former hypotheses: That *the beast with the seven heads and ten horns*, mentioned Re 13:1, and *the beast with two horns*, also there mentioned, Re 13:11, are antichrist, beginning with those Roman emperors that favoured the idolatry introduced by the bishops of Rome, and ending in ending in the universal bishop, or popes of Rome, and their clergy, who quickly wormed out the emperor's power, and for one thousand two hundred and sixty years reigned, setting up idolatry and superstition, and corrupting the doctrine of faith, and for the six hundred years of time, persecuting the true church of Christ more notoriously. After which God will begin to reckon with him, gradually pouring out five vials upon him. I am very inclinable to think, that we in this age are yet under the pouring out of the second of these vials, seeing little yet effected towards the ruin of the papacy, more than the exposing of their idolatries and cheats to several princes and states, and to the generality of thinking people; nor hath the providence of God proceeded far in that as yet. The three other vials are yet to be poured out upon the papacy, besides that upon Euphrates, and then this last upon all the enemies of the church

together: and who shall live when God shall do these things?

### Revelation 19:21

Ver. 21. In all armies there are are common soldiers as well as officers. What the issue of this battle shall be, as to the leaders in it, the former verse told us: this tells us how it shall fare with those under the command of them. It seems they shall not be excused because they followed their leaders, and did only what they bade them; Christ commands that they also should be slain.

*And all the fowls were filled with their flesh;* and this bloody day (whenever it comes) will be a day of great slaughter, for the dead bodies will be enough to sup and fill all the fowls of heaven.

### Revelation 20:1

#### Chapter Summary

Re 20:1-3 Satan bound for a thousand years.

Re 20:4-6 The first resurrection.

Re 20:7-9 Satan again let loose gathereth Gog and Magog to battle, who are devoured with fire.

Re 20:10 The devil cast into the lake of fire and brimstone.

Re 20:11-15 The general resurrection, and last judgment.

#### Chapter Introduction

We are now come to the darkest part of the whole revelation. What is meant by the *thousand years*, and *the first* and *second resurrection*, and by *Gog and Magog*, Re 20:1-15, or *the new heavens and new earth*, and the *Jerusalem coming down from heaven*, discoursed on, Re 21:1-22:21, is very hard to say, and possibly much more cannot with any probability be conjectured as to them than hath been already said. I shall only tell my reader that, leaving him to judge what is most probable, and leaving it to

he Divine Providence to give us a certain and infallible exposition of what is contained in these last three chapters.

Ver. 1. The description of this angel can agree to none but Christ, or one that exerciseth a power by delegation from him: for, Re 1:18, it is he who hath the power *of hell and death*; and it is he who alone is stronger than the devil, which must be supposed to him that binds him, or we must think the devil much tamer than he is.

### Revelation 20:2

Ver. 2. There can be no question who is meant by *the dragon* here, and the *old serpent*, for the Holy Ghost interpreteth it, *the devil*, the enemy of mankind.

*And bound him:* by binding also is meant the restraint of the devil in the exercise of his natural power, or the power God had before allowed him to exercise for the trial of his saints' faith and patience. The devil is restrained in the restraint of his instruments. It is expounded, Re 20:3, *that he should deceive the nations no more.*

*A thousand years:* whether these *thousand years* signify that certain space of time, or a long time, I cannot say; only it is probable, that if it signifies an uncertain, indefinite time, it is much longer time than any other period of time spoken of, (which have all hitherto been expressed by days, or months, or a lesser number of years), by far. But what the complexion of the world shall be during this long time, or when the epocha or beginning of these *thousand years* shall be, are both of them very hard questions. It was the opinion of the old Chiliasts or Millenaries, that six thousand years of the world should pass, then antichrist with all wicked men should be destroyed; that in the next thousand years Christ should appear, and be upon the earth, ruling it with his saints; after which there would be another time of sharp persecution, according to what is said, Re 20:7, to which Christ should put a period by coming to the last judgment. It is plain that (if most men be not mistaken, that have counted the years from the beginning of the world) these men were mistaken; for more than six thousand years are passed, yet there is no such thing come to pass. Divers very good and learned men (leaving out the age of the world when these

thousand years should begin) have judged, that after the great battle in Armageddon, (which, as was said before, shall be after the ruin both of Turk and pope), the church of Christ shall for a thousand years enjoy great quiet under the conduct of Christ, (as some think), who in these thousand years shall personally be upon the earth; or of such a godly magistracy in all places of the church, as shall do and execute what Christ would have done and executed. After which the enemies of the church (mentioned here, Re 20:8, under the notions of *Gog and Magog*) shall rally again, but be destroyed by Christ appearing to the last judgment. This opinion hath had, and hath, many learned and grave patrons. I shall only say this, that I do not understand what these *thousand years* mean, if they do not denote a serene and calm time for the church of God, of long continuance, before the day of judgment. Whether Christ shall be here personally, or none but saints shall be in places of power, or the power of Christ only shall be seen in so ruling and governing all magistrates, that they shall not, as before, impose superstition and idolatry, and kill or ruin men for not complying with them; but the servants of God, that worship him in spirit and truth, shall under magistrates live quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty; I cannot determine; but do in my own thoughts most incline to the last, that the *thousand years* only denote a large space of time, (as yet at a great distance), when the church of God shall freely enjoy their liberty, without such temptations to idolatry, superstition, or other wickedness, as they have yet all along had, either from Jews, pagans, or antichrist's party.

### Revelation 20:3

Ver. 3. *And cast him into the bottomless pit;* that is, into hell, his proper place: he shall no longer, or at least not till these thousand years be expired, exercise his power, as *prince of the power of the air*, Eph 2:2, or compassing the earth, and *walking up and down in it*, as Job 1:7.

*And shut him up, and set a seal upon him;* he shall be restrained as much as one shut up in prison, whose doors are sealed up.

*That he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled;* that till this time of God's counsel for the quiet of his church be run out, he shall not deceive people by his old arts.

*And after that he must be loosed a little season; and after that he shall have a liberty again (as Re 20:7) for a little time.*

#### Revelation 20:4

Ver. 4. This is a very difficult text. *Thrones* are places of dignity and judicature; they seem here to signify only places of dignity.

*And they sat upon them;* those mentioned afterward in this text sat upon them.

*And judgment was given unto them;* that is, a power of judgment, 1Co 6:2,3, to be executed afterward. The persons sitting upon these thrones are described to be:

1. Such as had kept themselves from idolatry, or any compliance with antichrist, either in the form of the beast, or of the image of the beast.
2. And for that non-compliance had suffered death, and for witnessing to the truths of Christ contained in his word.

These are described as living with Christ in honour and dignity, all that space of the church's rest and tranquillity before expressed. Our learned Dr. More interprets the *thrones* and *judgment*, concerning those thrones or places of judicature, upon which the dragon's officers sat to condemn the saints of God, from whence issued the putting to death of many of the saints of God, and thinks that in this vision there is a recourse to the second thunder. Now these saints are said to *live and reign with Christ a thousand years;* that is, say some, in heaven, in a blessed state of glory, while the militant church upon the earth enjoyed great rest and quiet on earth. Others have thought that these should be raised from the dead, and live with Christ on earth these thousand years. Which notion (if true) will solve a great phenomenon, and render it not improbable, that the number of the saints on earth will, during these thousand years, be enough to rule the world, and overbalance the number of all the wicked of the earth. Those who think thus, judge there will be two resurrections; the first, of martyrs, which shall antedate the general resurrection a thousand years: but the Scripture no where else mentions more than one resurrection. For

my own part, I shall freely confess that I do not understand this and the two next verses, nor shall I be positive as to any sense of them: for the spiritual resurrection, as to the martyrs, it was long since past, or else they had died in their sins. But of this see more in the next verse (Re 20:5).

### Revelation 20:5

Ver. 5. By *the rest of the dead*, some understand all except martyrs; only that party who adhered to antichrist. Those who by *the rest* understand all the dead, both good and bad, (the martyrs alone excepted), judge that there will be two resurrections: the first more particular, of those that have suffered death for Christ; the second general, of all the rest of the dead. I must confess I find a difficulty to allow this; it is too great a point to found upon a single text, in a portion of holy writ so clouded with metaphors as this, and I know no suffragan text. Those who understand by *the rest of the dead*, only the wicked, understand by this living again, a politic life, that is, recovered not their former power, continued as dead men, able to do no mischief, till the thousand years of the church's peace and tranquillity were expired. May this sense of living, and living again, be allowed, it will deliver us from almost all our difficulties about the sense of these verses; for then, by living, in the foregoing verse, is signified a political living, not a resurrection from a natural death. But then ariseth a question: If these beheaded saints did not rise from their natural death, how could they be restored to places of dignity with Christ in the church? To which they answer: That those formerly suffering for the name of Christ, and all the saints upon the earth, are to be considered as one church; and so those formerly beheaded, lived and reigned with Christ in their successors in the same faith; that is, those alive at that time, being restored to their peace, and liberty, and reputation in the world, the martyrs, who were members of the same body, are also said to live. This appears to me the most probable sense: for that the glorified saints should leave heaven (as to their souls) to be again clothed with flesh, and in it to live a thousand years, and be concerned in the following troubles the church should meet with after these thousand years, seems to me to be utterly improbable, and to lay a foundation for so many difficult questions, as will pose the wisest man to answer to reasonable satisfaction. But yet there remains a difficulty, how this restoring God's holy ones to a better state can be called *the first resurrection*. That it may be called a *resurrection* is plain, as the



conversion of the Jews, and restoring them to their former state as the church of God is called *life from the dead*, Ro 11:15; and the restoration of the witnesses, Re 11:11, is called so; though neither the one nor the other were naturally dead. Nor is it unusual in Scriptural and prophetic writings, to speak of people recovered to their former and better state, as being risen from the dead. It may be called *the first*, with reference to that far more excellent state which they shall be put in after the last judgment, when they shall live and reign with Christ in a more happy and glorious manner. If this may not be allowed as the sense of these two verses, I must confess this such a *δυσνοητον*, or difficulty of Scripture, as I do not understand. I shall proceed with the following verses upon this hypothesis, that this is the sense, though I dare not be positive in it.

#### Revelation 20:6

Ver. 6. That is, they only are holy ones that shall be thus restored to share in the church's happiness, and such as shall not perish eternally; but they shall be as priests to God and Christ, glorifying him with the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise, and shall enjoy a quiet and honourable station with Christ upon the earth for a long time.

#### Revelation 20:7

Ver. 7. When the long time expressed under the notion of a thousand years shall be expired, God shall take off his restraint from the devil, so as he shall influence the wicked of the earth once more to make opposition to his church.

#### Revelation 20:8

Ver. 8. *And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth;* that is, the devil, being got from under the restraint of Divine Providence, shall fall upon his old work, going about to deceive men over all the world, either tempting them to idolatry, or heresy, or lewdness of life, or (which seemeth most probable) stirring them up to one attempt more to ruin the church. These people are called *Gog and Magog*,

about the meaning of which there are various opinions. We read of *Magog*, Ge 10:2; he was one of the sons of Japheth; see also 1Ch 1:5; he inhabited that country called Syria, and from thence, his posterity being multiplied, (as some think), transplanted some colonies into America. We read of *Gog* no where in Scripture but in Ezekiel, Eze 38:1-39:29, where both *Gog* and *Magog* are mentioned as the great enemies of God's ancient Israel. *Gog* there, Eze 38:2, is named as *the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal*. There are disputes who are meant by *Gog and Magog* in those two chapters. The Jewish rabbies apply the terms to some nations whom the Messiah (expected by them) shall encounter and overcome; but if we consider that prophecy as made in Babylon, and to comfort the people in that captivity, we can hardly think the enemies there intended were to appear at such a distance of time as more than two thousand years, for so many, and more, are elapsed already since Ezekiel's prophecy. The best interpreters therefore rather think, that Antiochus, and the race of Seleucus, (a king of Syria, who in those quarters of the world succeeded Alexander, of whom we read in the book of Maccabees), is there intended, whose ruin is there foretold, as being a great enemy to the Jews after their return from Babylon; yet some think, that in both these chapters Ezekiel prophesied of the same *Gog and Magog* here intended, which should be the last enemies of the church. The papists, who (according to their interest) contend for antichrist as yet to come, make *Gog and Magog* here to signify some king or kings that shall join with antichrist when he appeareth. Others think that *Gog and Magog*, in this place, signifies more generally, a colluvies, or mixed company of all wicked men, a very great multitude, who shall come from all parts, only typified by the *Gog and Magog* in Ezekiel, as being like them,

1. For number;
2. In their design to ruin the church, upon its restoration to a more quiet, peaceable state;
3. And who shall be ruined like them, by the more than ordinary providence of God; for the *Gog and Magog* mentioned in Ezekiel, are described in three texts of that prophecy as coming from the north, but these are described as coming from the four quarters of the world: this seemeth a much more probable opinion than theirs, who will have them some particular nations, whether Americans, Turks, or Indians.

*The number of whom is as the sand of the sea:* these enemies shall make a vast number, therefore compared to the sand of the sea; and in this they hold a proportion also with the *Gog and Magog* mentioned in Ezekiel, who were a *great company*, Eze 38:4, *many people*, Eze 38:6, *covering the land*, Eze 38:9.

### Revelation 20:9

Ver. 9. *And they went up on the breadth of the earth;* that is, in all parts of it where the church of Christ was.

*And compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city;* the church of God (typified by old Jerusalem, which was God's beloved city) they encompassed in a military order and manner, designing to destroy it, or make it subject to their lusts.

*And fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them:* thus Ezekiel prophesied of the issue of the *Gog and Magog* by him mentioned, Eze 38:18-22: Eze 38:22, *And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.* The meaning is, that God would destroy them with a quick and terrible destruction, such as is that destruction of persons and places which is by fire.

### Revelation 20:10

Ver. 10. After this shall be the end of the world, when the devil shall be restrained to hell, the place of torments, where he shall have all heathens, and all the rabble of antichrist, who shall be there tormented constantly and for ever and ever.

### Revelation 20:11

Ver. 11. God now giveth his prophet a vision of the last day, the day of

judgment. He seeth *a throne*, a place of judicature; said to be *great*, to denote its gloriousness; *white*, to signify Christ's purity and holiness in his judging the world. And he saw Christ sitting upon it, and all old things passing away. Peter thus describes this flying away of the earth and heavens; *The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works therein shall be burned up, 2Pe 3:10. All these things shall be dissolved, 2Pe 3:11.*

### Revelation 20:12

Ver. 12. The former verses gave us an account of Christ, the great Judge of the quick and the dead in the last day; the Lord Jesus Christ sat upon a throne of glory, about to execute his last holy and righteous judgment. Now he describes the persons to be judged, viz. all, both *small and great*.

*And the books were opened:* to show the justice and righteousness according to which this Judge would proceed, books are said to be opened. What books? The book of God's law; the book of God's omniscience; the book of men's consciences. In the former is contained what all men should have done; the two latter will discover what they have thought, spake, or done in the flesh.

*And another other book was opened, which is the book of life;* the book of life, mentioned Re 3:5, by which is to be understood the book of God's election, wherein are the names of all those who, being from eternity chosen to life, were redeemed with the blood of Christ, and afterwards effectually called, justified, and sanctified.

*And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works;* according to these books shall the last judgment be, Ro 2:16, with respect had unto every one's work.

### Revelation 20:13

Ver. 13. By *hell* is meant all places where the dead are; whosoever shall be at that day in the state of the dead; the bodies of men, whether buried in the earth or sea; and the souls of men, whether they be in the place of

torments or happiness, shall all be re-united to their bodies, that they may both in soul and body receive their final doom of eternal happiness, or eternal misery, accordingly as they have lived in the world; and those who shall be alive at that day, who shall be *changed*, ( as the apostle speaks, 1Co 15:51), are to be counted dead in the sense of this text, their change being instead of death to them. It is not said they shall be judged for their works, (though that as to the wicked is true), but *according to their works*; which is true as to the elect, who though their names be written in the book of life, yet must work righteousness; and they shall have judgment of absolution, not according to the perfection, but the sincerity, of their works, done in obedience to the will of God.

#### Revelation 20:14

Ver. 14. *And death and hell were cast into lake of fire*; there shall be no more natural death, nor any more separate state of souls, (so αἰς signifies), they shall all be swallowed up in the issue of the last judgment, where some shall go into life, some into eternal condemnation. Dr. More expoundeth it of the whole region of mortality being set on fire at the last thunder.

*This*, as to the wicked of the earth, *is the second death*, mentioned Re 2:11.

#### Revelation 20:15

Ver. 15. *The book of life*: See Poole on "Re 20:12".

#### Revelation 21:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 21:1 A new heaven and a new earth.  
Re 21:2 The new Jerusalem.  
Re 21:3-7 The blessedness of God's people.  
Re 21:8 The judgment of the wicked.  
Re 21:9-27 A description of the heavenly Jerusalem.

## Chapter Introduction

This chapter begins with the vision of *the new heaven and the new earth*, by which all understand a new state of the church, but are divided in their opinions, whether what is spoken be to be understood of the church militant upon the earth, or of the church triumphant in heaven. Those who understand it of the church militant here upon earth, are divided in their opinions as to that period of the church which is here spoken of; some understanding it of the thousand years after the time of Constantine, for which I see no reason (nor, I believe, will any that wisely considers the state of the church in that time); others understanding it of the thousand years mentioned Re 20:1-3, in which (as was said) the church should enjoy great quiet and peace. I must confess I choose much rather to agree with them who judge it signifieth the church triumphant, being overcome with the reasons given by those reverend authors, a summary of which may be found in Mr. Pool's Latin Synopsis.

1. That interpretation carrieth on the history in order; whereas, according to the other, we must say the history, Re 20:1-5, was interrupted by the battle with Gog and Magog, and the account of the day of judgment, Re 21:7,15.
2. In reason, as the close of the former chapter gave us an account of the issue of the day of judgment, as to wicked men, so this should give us some account how it should fare with the saints.
3. We shall find some things in the *new Jerusalem* here described, which will agree to no state of the church upon earth: see Re 21:22,23.

Ver. 1. *A new heaven and a new earth;* a new and glorious state of things relating to the church.

*For the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea;* for now there was an end to the world, and all the troubles that the people of God had met with in it, as well as the material earth, heaven, and sea, were passed away. This new heaven was prophesied of of old by Isaiah, and more lately by Peter, 2Pe 3:13.

### Revelation 21:2

Ver. 2. *The holy city, new Jerusalem;* that is, the whole chorus or number of the elect of God, answering God's chosen people in Jerusalem.

*Coming down from God out of heaven;* not locally coming down, but who had their original from heaven, and were all persons of heavenly minds.

*Prepared as a bride adorned for her husband;* in their best robes of glory, such as brides use to wear, when on their wedding day they adorn themselves for their bridegrooms.

### Revelation 21:3

Ver. 3. What is said here, is applicable to the church of God in this life, yea, to every true believer, whose body is said to be *the temple of the Lord*, and in whom the Lord *dwells*, according to the phrase of the Holy Ghost in many places of the New Testament; of whom it is also true, that God is *with them, and will be their God;* but more especially applicable to the church triumphant, as dwelling signifies a constancy of abode, and more full manifestation of a person. The state of the saints in glory is thus described by a being *ever with the Lord*, 1Th 4:17.

### Revelation 21:4

Ver. 14. Scarce any of the passages in this verse, taken in the plain, literal sense, are applicable to any state of the church in this life: for though in the thousand years, mentioned Re 20:1-3, the state of the church (as it is presumed) will be very happy comparatively to what it ever was before, and free from its enemies' molestations and persecutions; yet I think none hath asserted that in that time no members of it shall die, or be sick, or have any sorrow or pain. There must be a great allowance of figures, if we will apply this to any state of the militant church; but all will be literally true as to the church in heaven.

### Revelation 21:5

Ver. 5. *And he that sat upon the throne, that is, Christ, said, Behold, I make all things new;* behold, I will put a new face upon all things; the state of my people shall not for ever be a troubled and afflicted state.

*And he said unto me, Write:* because the vision is to be for an appointed time, and what I now tell thee will not be accomplished of many years, and yet the knowledge and prospect of it, and meditations upon it, are of highest importance to keep up the spirits of my people

under all their sufferings, during that time of the dragon (the Romish heathen emperors) not yet run out, and the twelve hundred and sixty years of antichrist, &c., therefore write it, that all my people in all ages may know it, believe it, and suffer patiently in the hopes of it.

*For these words are true and faithful;* for, what I tell time is what comes from the true and faithful Witness, and shall have a certain being in its time.

### Revelation 21:6

Ver. 6. *And he said unto me, It is done;* the world is at an end, and all my threatenings against my enemies, and promises to my people, are now fulfilled, in the eternal damnation of the one, and deliverance and salvation of the other.

*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end:* I first made the world, and I have put a period to it. I first gave out those promises and threatenings, and I have now fulfilled them.

*I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely;* and my people who have thirsted after my righteousness and salvation, now have it freely, and shall drink, and drink abundantly.



### Revelation 21:7

Ver. 7. *He that overcometh, shall inherit all things:* God revealed this to John almost sixteen hundred years since; and how long it shall be before this glorious time shall come, God alone knows: the most of this time hath been, and will be, a time of fighting with the world, the flesh, and the devil; but whoever he be that shall fight this good fight, and come out of it a conqueror, shall inherit all the joys and happiness of heaven.

*I will be his God, and he shall be my son:* I will be to him all in all; I will be his God to love and glorify him, and he shall be with me as my son, to live with me for ever and ever.

### Revelation 21:8

Ver. 8. All those who are without the church invisible, whether protime persons, (such are murderers, whoremongers, sorcerers, liars), or idolaters, or unbelievers and hypocrites, shall all be cast to hell.

*The fearful,* who, through fear of losing their reputation, estates, honours, or lives, deny me, or shall not dare to own me.

*And unbelieving;* such as will not agree to the proposition of my gospel; or will not come to me that they might have life.

*The abominable;* sodomites, and such as live in beastly lusts.

*Murderers;* such as, without any warrant from God, take away men's lives wilfully, *Whoremongers;* such as defile their neighbours' wives.

*Sorcerers;* such as exercise witchcraft, consult the devil, and trade with familiar spirits.

*Idolaters;* whether they commit the idolatry of Ahab, giving Divine adoration to the creatures, as the term of their worship; or the idolatry of Jeroboam, worshipping the true God by images.

*And all liars;* and all such as are liars with their tongues, speaking what

they know to be false; or liars in practice, that is, hypocrites, seeming to be what they are not.

*Shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death: all these, and all such like, shall be eternally damned.*

### Revelation 21:9

Ver. 9. *One of the seven angels; one of those mentioned Re 15:6.*

*I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife; I will show thee the whole church, (invisible heretofore), the glorious state of the church triumphant, under the representation of a great city.*

### Revelation 21:10

Ver. 10. *And he carried me away in the spirit; in a trance or ecstasy, as before.*

*To a great and high mountain; from whence men use to have the best prospect of cities, or other places.*

*And showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God; there he caused me to see the whole triumphant church, answering as the antitype to Jerusalem, but more holy; being not of the earth, earthly, but from heaven, heavenly; founded, built up, and adorned by God.*

### Revelation 21:11

Ver. 11. *Having the glory of God; a most excellent glory, received from God.*

*And her light, that is, (as some interpret it), that which gave her light, (as the sun is called the light of the earth), or her enlightener, was like unto a*

*stone most precious*, was Christ himself, who is a stone most precious: Re 21:23, *The Lamb is the light thereof*.

*Like a jasper stone*: see Re 4:3. God is there compared to a *jasper stone*; here, to a *jasper stone, clear as crystal*. They say of the jasper stone, that it is very glorious to the eye, precious and pure; so it is very fit to resemble in part a pure and glorious God.

### Revelation 21:12

Ver. 12. *And had a wall*, that is, this city, by which is meant the church of God, *had a wall great and high*. Walls are for the protection and defence of a place; the higher and greater they are, the greater defence and protection they give. By this God is meant, who is often called his people's Rock and Defence.

*And had twelve gates*: the use of the gates of a city, are to let persons in and out. The church is said to have twelve gates, because of the free liberty of access to the church while it was militant, and to signify that the church in heaven will be made up of persons come into it from all parts; or for the greater state and glory of it. Some think, because of the twelve apostles, who were the first ministers of the gospel who admitted men into this church.

*And at the gates twelve angels*; denoting the guard of angels about the church; unless by *angels* ministers be to be understood, proportioned to the several parts of the church.

*And names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel*; because as, of old, only the twelve tribes of God's chosen people Israel made up the church in that period; so only God's elect and peculiar people, typified by that Israel, come in at the gates of this church. It is very observable, how God affects the number of twelve in the affairs of his church.

### Revelation 21:13

Ver. 13. To signify it was made up of persons from all parts of the world. This agreeth with Ezekiel's vision, Eze 48:31-34. The triumphant church will be a collection of believers, who from all nations have come into it.

#### Revelation 21:14

Ver. 14. *And the wall of the city had twelve foundations;* the ancient church of God was founded in twelve patriarchs, and twelve tribes; the gospel church in twelve apostles; Christ is the only foundation of both, 1Co 3:11, but he is the foundation upon which the church: is built. The twelve apostles are called the foundations *per quoe* or *per quos*, by which the gospel church had its beginning.

*And in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb;* as workmen sometimes set their names upon foundation stones, by which it is made known who were they that builded the wall.

#### Revelation 21:15

Ver. 15. This seemeth to signify the transcendency of the state of the church now, to what it was before; it was then measured by a man, Re 11:1-19, now by an angel; then by an ordinary reed, now by a golden reed.

#### Revelation 21:16

Ver. 16. The church militant, measured by the reed of the word, is unequal in its parts; some parts of it are purer than others; but in the new Jerusalem all parts shall be equal in perfection and purity, as all the sides of a thing four square are equal.

#### Revelation 21:17

Ver. 17. This could not be the measure of the compass, (it was for that much too little), nor of the height or breadth, (for either of them it was much too great), from whence Dr. Potter concluded, it must be the square

measure; so as the height and breadth of it was twelve cubits, for twelve times twelve make one hundred and forty-four.

*According to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel; as men use to measure, and as this angel measured, who appeared as a man in this action.*

### Revelation 21:18

Ver. 18. *And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; strong and impregnable, not subject to impressions from enemies, as it is said of the jasper, that no hammer will break it.*

*And the city was pure gold; all that make up this city are perfect and noble.*

*Like unto clear glass; pure, without spots.*

### Revelation 21:19

Ver. 19. *And the foundations of the wall of the city, by which, we noted before, are to be understood the apostles, who, building upon the one foundation, Christ Jesus, by their holy doctrine laid the beginnings of the gospel churches, the first stones, (upon the Rock Christ), which were afterwards multiplied, others being builded upon them, till the whole church was perfected.*

### Revelation 21:20

Ver. 20. I cannot tell what to make of these *precious stones*, with which they are said to be *garnished*, unless it be their spiritual gifts and habits of grace; the various manifestations of the Holy Spirit given to the apostles to profit the church withal, with which they adorned the doctrine of the gospel, and won upon the pagan world, making themselves admirable in the eyes of men and women. Nor were it hard to descant upon these several sorts of stones, and to show of what graces they may be types: the *jasper*, of steadiness and constancy; the *sapphire*, of heavenly

mindedness (it being a stone of the colour of the heavens); the *chalcedony*, of zeal; the *emerald* of vigour and liveliness; the *sardonyx*, ( a stone of various colours), of various gifts and graces; the *sardius*, of courage and fortitude, and a readiness to shed their blood for Christ; the *chrysolite*, of love, or wisdom, and knowledge; the *beryl*, of a quickness of sight and understanding; the *topaz*, of searching out Divine mysteries; the *chrysopterus*, of gravity and severity; the *jacinth*, of spiritual joy, calmness, and serenity of mind; the *amethyst*, of sobriety and temperance. But it seems to me too great curiosity to philosophize so far upon the nature of these stones; take them together, they probably signify all the gifts and graces of the blessed apostles, by which the religion of the gospel was first commended, and made to appear lovely to the world.

### Revelation 21:21

Ver. 21. I am not willing to descant further in particulars, conjecturing (for it is no more) what each metaphorical term signifies in this unusual description of a city. I do think the scope of the whole is no more, than to let us know that the mansions of heaven will be most glorious places, giving the souls of those to whom God shall give to enter into them, an infinite satisfaction, beyond what the most rich and glorious things in the world can give our outward senses.

### Revelation 21:22

Ver. 22. *And I saw no temple therein:* I cannot take *temple* so strictly here, as those who understand all this but as a description of the blessed state of the militant church, during the thousand years; but understand it of all such worship and ordinances as we serve God in, and by, in this life.

*For the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple it;* the immediate fruition of God shall there supply all, God shall be *all in all*, 1Co 15:28. Ordinances are but perspectives, of use in this life to see God at a distance; means, whereby we know in part: there we shall see God face to face, and know him as we are known. The saints there shall want nothing, and therefore shall not need a house of prayer; they shall know perfectly, and therefore will not need any to teach them; they shall always see Christ, and

so will need no sacraments whereby to remember him.

### Revelation 21:23

Ver. 23. *The sun and the moon* are the two great luminaries of the world, which God hath made, the one to rule the day, the other to rule the night; in heaven there will be no need of any of these.

*Light*, in Scripture, (in its metaphorical notion), signifies knowledge or comfort; there will in heaven be no need of any created beings, to help us to either of these; God and Christ shall there fill the souls of his saints with knowledge and joy not to be expressed.

### Revelation 21:24

Ver. 24. *And the nations of them, which are saved shall walk in the light of it;* all that go to heaven shall be thus happy.

*And the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it;* and such kings of the earth as shall come into heaven, shall see all their honour and glory swallowed up in the glory and honour of that place and state; and confess that all their crowns are infinitely short of this blessed and glorious crown, all their thrones nothing to these thrones.

### Revelation 21:25

Ver. 25. *And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day:* the reason of shutting a city's gates, is either to shut out enemies, or to keep in such as are within: there will be no need of shutting these gates on either of these accounts; there will be no enemies to fear, and those that are within this city will have no need nor desire to go out.

*For there shall be no night there:* we do not ordinarily shut our city gates by day, but there shall be nothing but day, no night in a natural or metaphorical sense.

## Revelation 21:26

Ver. 6. Whatsoever is excellent or desirable in the world, shall be supplied to the souls of those that are in heaven, by good of another make, but which shall be equally (nay, infinitely more) satisfactory to the soul.

## Revelation 21:27

Ver. 27. *And there shall in no wise enter into it:* in the Greek there are two negative particles, which though in the Latin they make an affirmative, yet in the Greek make a stronger negative, which we translate *in no wise*, or by no means.

*Any thing that defileth:* this strongly denying particle is brought to make the bar excluding all unclean persons from heaven evident. And alas! How often had this need be denied, to make men and women, mad of their lusts, believe it! The word translated, *that defileth*, signifieth, what is common; nothing, no person that hath not by a holy life separated himself from the world, and all sin and wickedness, and dedicated himself to God.

*Neither whatsoever worketh abomination;* no profane or lewd person.

*Or maketh a lie;* nor any false or lying hypocrites, nor any idolaters, for idols are lies.

*But they which are written in the Lamb's book of life;* none but those whose names are written in the book of life, predetermined to salvation, and redeemed with the blood of Christ. Some am not pleased with this sense; but what other thing can be meant? This is, at least, the sixth time we have met with this phrase in this book, Re 3:5 Re 13:8 17:8 20:12,15. It is also mentioned, Php 4:3. And what else can be meant in Moses's prayer, Ex 32:32? It is twice (Re 13:8 17:8) said, that names were written in it *from the foundation of the world*. God hath a particular, certain, infallible knowledge who are his, and had it from eternity; and whence he should know it, without willing of it, is very hard to conceive. It is called *the Lamb's book*, to let us know, that the act of redemption by Christ bears proportion to the counsels of election.



## Revelation 22:1

### Chapter Summary

- Re 22:1,2 The river and tree of life.  
Re 22:3-7 The glorious state of the servants of God.  
Re 22:8,9 John is forbidden by the angel to worship him,  
Re 22:10,11 and commanded to seal up the prophet.  
Re 22:12,13 Christ's coming and eternity.  
Re 22:14-17 The blessedness of them that do God's commandments.  
Re 22:18-20 Nothing must be added to or taken from this prophecy.  
Re 22:21 The concluding benediction.

Ver. 1. *And he;* the angel, who showed him all before mentioned.

*Showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal:* no place can be happy without the accommodation of water; those places have the best accommodation of it that are near a river, especially a pure river. To let us know, that in heaven there shall be no want of any thing that can make the saints happy, it is described as having by it, or running through it, *a pure river*, whose water is clear, and no ordinary water, but such as giveth and preserveth life. What could this signify, but the pure and unmixed joys of heaven?

*Proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb;* flowing from the saints thee enjoying of God and Jesus Christ.

## Revelation 22:2

Ver. 2. *In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life:* trees, especially fruit trees, and those laden with fruit, and variety of fruit, and such as, instead of being prejudicial to life, are wholesome, and give life, are very beautiful, especially in or near a city. The city in Ezekiel's vision, Eze 47:7, is thus described. This expression

further shows the infinite pleasure and soul satisfaction the saints shall have in heaven. But we are further told here, that the tree here was *the tree of life*; a manifest allusion to a tree so called in old Paradise, Ge 2:9; and who can this agree to, but Christ?

*Which bare twelve manner of fruits*; in whom all fulness dwelt, the fulness of the Godhead, and who was anointed, and received the Spirit without measure.

*And yielded her fruit every month*; and is daily distributing of his fulness to his people.

*And the leaves of the trees were for the healing of the nations*; and in whom there is nothing useless, but what tends either to the life or healing of his people out of all nations.

### Revelation 22:3

Ver. 3. *And there shall be no more curse*; nothing that is devoted to the devil,  $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\nu\alpha\theta\epsilon\mu\alpha$ , no accursed person, or thing.

*But the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it*; the presence of a holy and pure God will prevent and forbid that.

*And his servants shall serve him*; it is a place in which God alone shall be served by his own servants.

### Revelation 22:4

Ver. 4. *And they shall see his face*; it is a phrase by which the happiness of the glorified saints is oft expressed, Mt 5:8 1Co 13:12 Heb 12:14 1Jo 3:2; they shall enjoy him immediately.

*And his name shall be in their foreheads*; there shall be none that have the name of the beast on their foreheads; they shall have God's name on their foreheads, and be so manifested to be the sons of God.

Revelation 22:5

Ver. 5. See Poole on "Re 21:23".

Revelation 22:6

Ver. 6. All the words of this book, particularly the things of the last vision, are such as proceed from him who is *the faithful witness*, Re 1:5 3:14; from him who *was called faithful*, Re 19:11; and which God will show himself true and faithful in bringing to pass: and such things as God hath revealed to his prophets under the Old Testament in part, and now to me his prophet, to show to his people the things that shall come to pass, and shall shortly begin to be accomplished: See Poole on "Re 1:1".

Revelation 22:7

Ver. 7. *I come quickly* to the last judgment. He is a happy man that observeth and keepeth in memory, that understandeth, believeth, and liveth up to *the prophecy of this book*.

Revelation 22:8

Ver. 8. *I John saw these things*; I saw the vision.

*And heard them*; I heard the words spoken to me relating to them.

Revelation 22:9

Ver. 9. *See thou do it not*: See Poole on "Re 19:10".

*For I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets*; whose employment is the same with thine, to reveal the will of God; *and of them which keep the sayings of this book*; yea, and a brother to all the servants of God. Thou mistakest the object of thine adoration, I am a created being,

and can accept no such homage.

#### Revelation 22:10

Ver. 10. *And he saith unto me;* this *he* is Christ, as appeareth from Re 22:12,13.

*Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book;* let these things be open to be promulgated, and published to the whole church.

*For the time is at hand;* for it will not be long before they shall begin to be fulfilled.

#### Revelation 22:11

Ver. 11. *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still:* it may be the keeping of this book open, and the publication of it, will displease wicked and filthy men; but let them be displeased, the truths of God must not be concealed.

*And he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still:* it will, on the other side, confirm the servants of God in their faith, patience, and holiness, and all the fruits of righteousness.

#### Revelation 22:12

Ver. 12. *I come quickly,* to the last judgment, as before, Re 22:7.

*And my reward is with me;* I bring with me a power and authority to recompense every man according to what he hath done, Re 20:13 Da 12:2 Mt 25:34,35, &c.; Ro 2:6.

#### Revelation 22:13

Ver. 13. See Poole on "Re 1:8". See Poole on "Re 21:6".

### Revelation 22:14

*Blessed are they that do his commandments;* That believeth in the Lord Jesus Christ (for that is the great Commandment of the Gospel) and live in conformity to the Law of God.

*that they may have right to the tree of life;* To Christ, called before, *the Tree of Life*, ver. 2. by virtue of the Promise, Rev. 2:7. for no Works of ours will give us a right of Purchase to it.

*and may enter in through the gates into the city;* That they may enter into Heaven; the Joys and Pleasures of which have been described under the Metaphor of a great and glorious City.

### Revelation 22:15

Ver 15. *For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie;* Without Heaven; that is, in Hell shall be all Dogs that bark at, and bite, and devour the Church of God, all Profane Persons, Idolaters, and Hypocrites, See Poole on Rev 21:8, 27. See Poole on 1Cor. 6:9-10.

### Revelation 22:16

Ver. 16. *I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches;* In these words Christ owneth the Revelation as his, the Angel did but testify, John did but hear, and write it.

*I am the root and the offspring of David;* David's Lord, and yet his Son: His Root, as I am God, and gave a Being to his Family, as to all the Families of the Earth; and yet his Son, a branch out of the Root of Jesse.

*and the bright and morning star; Who, as the Morning-Star, first brings, or prognosticates Light to the World, so have my self first published my Gospel, or this Revelation, to give Light to my People, concerning the Fate of my People to the last day.*

### Revelation 22:17

Ver. 17. *And the Spirit; The Spirit in the Hearts of Believers, or rather the Holy Spirit.*

*and the bride say, Come; Because the Bride, that is, the Church is also mentioned, to desire the second coming of Christ to Judgment.*

*And let him that heareth say, Come; And every one that heareth of, and believeth these things, should also desire the same thing.*

*And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely; And in order to that, every one that wanteth, and is sensible of his want of Righteousness, or any Habit of Grace, is also invited unto Christ, under the Notion of the Water of Life, to take him freely, as [Isa. 55:1](#).*

### Revelation 22:18

Verse 18. *For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book; I Christ, or I John, testify to every one to whose Hands or Ears the words of this Book shall come.*

*If any man shall add unto these things; That if any Man shall invent new Prophecies contrary to the Prophecies contained in this Book.*

*God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; God shall severely punish him, by adding to the Plagues threatned against Sinners, in this Book.*

### Revelation 22:19

Verse 19. *And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy;* But Divines generally do further extend the sense of these two Verses, considering this as the last Portion of Holy Writ, not only placed last in our Bibles, but revealed and written last. They conceive these Verses the Seal of all *Canonical Scripture*, and that God here denounceth a Curse to those who shall pretend any new Revelations of his Will, other than what are to be found in the Books of the Old and New Testament; as also against all those who shall deny, corrupt, or deprave any part of them.

*God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book; God as to such Persons, saith, they shall not have any such Part of Portion in Heaven as they would pretend a Right to, or seemed to have.*

### Revelation 22:20

Ver. 20. *He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly;* That is, Christ, who publisheth these things by his Angel, or by his Servant *John*, saith he is quickly coming to Judgment.

*Amen; John replies, Lord, let it be so.*

*Even so, come, Lord Jesus;* This expounds *Amen* used here as a Particle of wishing and desiring, though it may be interpreted as an assertive Particle, and joined to the former part of the Sentence.

### Revelation 22:21

Verse 21. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen;* This is a Salutation used by the Apostles in all their Epistles containing a desire of the fulness and increase of al Grace, very proper here upon the Prospect which John

in this Revelation had, of the long, and great trials the Church would meet with, before the glorious Appearance of our Blessed Lord and Saviour.

To God the Author of this, and all the other Books of Holy Writ, be Honour and Glory.