

John 1:1

THE ARGUMENT

The penman of this Gospel is generally taken to have been John the son of Zebedee, Mt 10:2, not either John the Baptist, or John surnamed Mark, Ac 15:37. He was a person mightily honoured by Christ's personal favours, and therefore often called *the beloved disciple*; you may read of these favours in these scriptures following, Mt 17:1 Lu 9:28 22:8 Joh 13:23 19:26,27 20:2 Ac 3:3 Ac 4:13 Ga 2:9. Thus far the Scripture guides us. He is thought to have gone to and continued in Asia till the third of the ten persecutions in the time of Trajan. He was by Domitian banished into Patmos, where he wrote the Revelation.

The time when he wrote this Gospel is uncertain; some think about the latter part of his life: he died the last of all the apostles, judged about a hundred years after the birth of Christ. It is said that the heresies of Ebion and Cerinthus, who denied Christ's Divinity, and of the Nicolaitanes, who held many absurd things about his person, gave occasion to the writing of this Gospel; himself mentions the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, Re 2:6; and Ebion and Cerinthus are thought to be those antichrists which he in his Epistles reflects upon.

Two things are observed of him:

1. That he insists more on the proof of Christ's Divinity, than any of the evangelists; producing his miracles most evidently to prove it.
2. That he mentions very little reported by the other evangelists:

to which I think may be added, that he delivereth the history of the gospel after Christ's resurrection more fully than any of them; he gives us also a more distinct account of the four passovers happening after Christ's baptism; the necessity of faith in Christ, and regeneration; the doctrine of our mystical union with Christ; the sending of the Holy Spirit, and end of his mission, and the advantage that the apostles and others should receive from it. His Gospel is most particularly remarkable for the sublimeness and mysteriousness of the matter, and sweetness of the phrase.

Chapter Summary

Joh 1:1-5 The Divinity of Christ.

Joh 1:6-13 The mission of John, and end of Christ's coming.

Joh 1:14 The incarnation of the Word.

Joh 1:15-18 Christ's superior dignity witnessed by John, and

evinced by his gracious dispensation.

Joh 1:19-28 John's record of himself to the messengers of the

Jews.

Joh 1:29-34 His public testimony to the person of Christ.

Joh 1:35-42 Two of his disciples, hearing it, follow Jesus: Simon

is brought to Christ, and surnamed Cephas.

Joh 1:43-51 Philip is called, who bringeth Nathanael to Jesus.

Ver. 1. In the beginning; in that beginning which Moses mentions, Ge 1:1, the beginning of all things, when the foundations of the world were laid, Pr 8:27,28; the beginning of time; for before that was no measure of time, all was eternity.

Was the Word, that is, the eternal Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom more is spoken afterward. Nor is Christ in this text alone called *the Word*, but 1Jo 1:1, *the Word of life*; so Re 19:13: and there are some who think he is so called, Lu 1:2, comparing that text with 2Pe 1:16, as also Ps 33:6. Nor is it an improper term by which to express the Son of God; for it both expresses something of his ineffable generation, as the word is begotten in our thoughts, and is the express image of them; and also his office in the revelation of his Father's will unto the sons of men, and revealing his Father to us, Mt 11:27: and there are some (if they be not too curious in their notion) who think by that phrase of David, 2Sa 7:21, *For thy word's sake*, (expounded *for thy servant's sake*, 1Ch 17:19, which is the title of Christ, Isa 42:1), that Christ is meant. Besides, it is observed, that this term was more acceptable both to the Jews and the heathens, than the term of *Christ*, or *the Son of God*, would have been; for there was

nothing more abhorred by the Jews than the latter; and the heathen writers made (as is noted by divers) a great use of this term, to express the name and the power of God. Nor is any thing more ordinary with the Chaldee paraphrast than this expression: Isa 45:12, *I have made the earth*; Chald. I in my word have made the earth. So Isa 48:13, *Mine hand hath laid the foundation of the earth*; Chald. By my word I have laid the foundations of the earth: this is taken from Moses's describing the creation by God's word of command, *Let there be light, and there was light*; the manner of expressing it by the word command, is significative that all things were made by his eternal Word; for would any Jew deny, that God by his word created the world? The evangelist therefore calleth Christ, to whom he was about to attribute the creation, *the Word*; not the word of God (so the Scriptures are called); to distinguish Christ in this notion from the revelation of the Divine will to the prophets, he is only called *the Word*, though he was the Son of God. Nor is it said, that in the beginning was the Word created, (as is said of the heavens and the earth, Ge 1:1), but *was* the Word: this proveth the eternal existence of the Second Person in the Trinity; for what *was* in the beginning did not then begin to be: the term *the Word*, without the addition of God, speaketh him a subsistence; and it being said, that in the beginning he *was*, speaks his eternal existence; for what had a being in the beginning of time must needs be eternal, nothing being when time began but what was eternal. To this purpose are those texts, Ps 90:2 Pr 8:22-31 Joh 17:5 Eph 1:4 2Th 2:13, which two texts compared show, *In the beginning*, here used, to be the same with *before the foundation of the world*: so 2Ti 1:9.

The Word was with God: lest any should say, Where was this Word before the foundations of the earth were laid? The evangelist saith, *with God*, which agreeth with Pr 8:27,30. This both distinguishes Christ from all creatures, (none of which were with God in the beginning), and also showeth the vanity of Sabellius, and those we call quakers, who will not allow Christ to be a distinct subsistence, or person, from his Father: it also denotes the Son's co-existence and his equality with his Father; and yet his filial relation; for God is not said to have been with the Word, but the Word was with God, which also speaks a perfect unity and consent between them.

And the Word was God: lest any should say, What but God can be eternal, or be said to have been and had an existence in the beginning of the world?

The evangelist addeth, that *the Word was God*: that is, the person or subsistence spoken of and intended by him was the Divine Being, which is but one; though in it there be three distinct subsistences, all make but one and the same Divine Being. The first thing spoken here of Christ attributes to him eternity; the second speaks his relation to the Father; this speaks the oneness and sameness of his essence with that of the Father. The term *God*, which in the foregoing words is to be taken personally for God the Father, is here to be taken essentially, as it signifieth the Divine Being.

John 1:2

Ver. 2. These words of the evangelist are a further confirmation and explication of what the evangelist had said before; asserting the eternity of the Son, and his relation to the Father, and oneness of essence with the Father. Whether the evangelist, forewarned by the Spirit of God, did add this repetition to forearm Christians against those errors which did afterward trouble the church, I cannot say; but certain it is, that these words do effectually confute the Eunomians, who distinguished between the Word which in the beginning was with God, and that Word by which all things were made; and the Arians, who make the Father to have existed before the Son; as also the Anomians, who would make the Father and the Son diverse both in nature and will. Some others make this verse a transition to Joh 1:4, and the sense to be, This same was not manifest to the world from the beginning of the world, but was with God until he came to be manifested in the flesh: thus, 1Jo 1:2, it is said, he *was with the Father, and was manifested unto us. He was manifested in the flesh, 1Ti 3:16.*

John 1:3

Ver. 3. *All things were made by him*: the Divine nature and eternal existence of the Lord Christ, is evident from his efficiency in the creation of the world: what the evangelist here calleth *all things*, the apostle to the Hebrews, Heb 1:2, calleth *the worlds*; and St. Paul, Col 1:16, calleth, *all things that are in heaven and earth, visible and invisible*; Moses calls, *the heaven and the earth*, Ge 1:1. These were all made by the Word; not as an instrumental cause, but as a principal efficient cause; for though it be true,

that the preposition $\delta\iota\alpha$ is sometimes used to signify an instrumental cause; yet it is as true, that it is often used to signify the principal efficient cause; as Joh 6:57 Ac 3:16 Ro 5:5 11:36 Eph 4:6, and in many other texts: it here only denotes the order of the working of the holy Trinity.

Without him was not any thing made that was made; nothing that was made, neither the heavens nor the earth, neither things visible nor invisible, were made without him. There is nothing more ordinary in holy writ, than after the laying down a universal proposition, (where no synecdoche is used), to add also a universal negative for the confirmation of it: so Ro 3:12, *There is none that doeth good;* then is added, *no, not one;* La 2:2, and in many other texts. The term *without him*, doth not exclude the efficiency either of the First, or Third Person in the Trinity, in the creation of all things; the Father created the world by the Son, his Word; and the creation of the world is attributed to the Spirit, Ge 1:1 Job 33:4 Ps 33:6.

John 1:4

Ver. 4. *In him was life;* in this Word was life corporal, spiritual, eternal; it was in him as in the fountain. Some understand this of corporal life, both in the first being and preservation of it; it is certain that this is in Christ, for he *upholdeth all things by the word of his power*, Heb 1:3 Ac 17:28; and thus it is another demonstration of the Deity of Christ. Others think that here is rather a transition from creation to redemption; *you hath he quickened*, Eph 2:1. Others understand it of eternal life, because our evangelist most generally taketh the term *life*, as a benefit flowing from Christ, in this sense, as Eph 3:16, and Eph 4:14, and in a multitude of other texts. I know no reason why we should not understand it of all life; all life being in Christ, as God equal with the Father; and spiritual and eternal life flowing also from him in a more peculiar consideration, as Mediator.

And the life was the light of men: but though as God he distributes life according to their degree to all his creatures, yet he is the peculiar *light of men*, enlightening their minds with light of which vegetative and sensitive creatures are not capable; so as by *light* is not here to be understood the emanations of any lucid bodies, as that of the sun or stars, for other creatures as well as men are capable of that; nor is it to be understood of the light of reason, though that be the candle of the Lord in the soul; but

that light by which we discern the things of God; in which sense the apostle saith, Eph 5:8, *Ye were darkness, but now ye are light in the Lord*. And therefore he saith *of men*, exclusively to angels, who though lightsome, noble creatures, yet had not their nature assumed by Christ, Heb 2:16. Besides that it is said in the next verse, that this light *shineth in darkness*, that is, amongst many men who yet had reasonable souls, *but the darkness comprehended it not*. That cannot be, that men did not comprehend reason, but even rational men comprehended not this light of supernatural revelation. So John is said to have come to testify of that light; who did not come to testify of Christ, as the author of reason. Nor is there any text of Scripture in which the term light signifieth reason.

John 1:5

Ver. 5. *The light shineth in darkness*: he had said before, that life was in Christ, in him as in the fountain; and the life in him was the light of men, giving light to men. Now this light which was in him had its emanations (as light in the sun); *and the darkness*, that is, men of dark minds, (the abstract being put for the concrete), *comprehended* (that is, received) *it not*. This was true concerning the Jews in former times, upon whom Christ the true Light had shined in many types and prophecies; it was also true concerning the Jews of that present age, to whom, through the favour of him who had undertaken the redemption of man, the means of grace were continued; through the blindness of their minds and hardness of their hearts, they wilfully rejected those means of illumination which God granted to them.

John 1:6

Ver. 6. *There was a man sent from God*; not the Christ, not an angel, but *a man*; yet one, than whom (as our Saviour saith) there had not risen a greater amongst those that were born of women. He did not come of his own head, but was *sent*; for it was he of whom it was written, Mal 3:1, *Behold, I will send my messenger before thy face*, &c., Lu 7:27, he was not sent of men, but *from God*, foretold by the angel, as to his existence, name, work, and success, Lu 1:13-17.

Whose name was John; his name was John, named by the angel, Lu 1:13, before he was born; by his father and mother, Lu 1:60,63, when he was born. John signifieth *grace*; and doubtless the Baptist obtained that name, because he was to be the first and a famous preacher of the grace of the gospel which came to the world through Jesus Christ.

John 1:7

Ver. 7. *The same came for a witness:* John was called a *messenger* to denote his authority; a *witness*, to denote his work, which is the work of every true minister of the gospel. John was the first witness, and witnessed a thing wholly unknown (before him) to the generality of the world; for though the shepherds, and Simeon, and Anna, had given some testimony to Christ, when he was born, and brought into the temple to be offered to the Lord, yet that was thirty years since, and generally forgot; neither could they bear a testimony to him as an actual minister of the gospel. The apostles were to be *witnesses* to Christ, Ac 1:8; *witnesses of his resurrection*, Ac 1:22 4:33 5:32 10:41 13:31. All the prophets bare witness to him, that whosoever believeth in his name should be saved, Ac 10:43. So did John also; and John further pointed to him passing by, and witnessed that it was he of whom the prophets spake. So that the apostles, and so following ministers, were and are greater witnesses than John the Baptist. The prophets witnessed that he should come, John Baptist witnessed that he should come; the apostles witnessed that he was not only come, but had died, and was again risen from the dead. *To bear witness of the Light;* for John's office was to give a testimony to Christ the true Light, mentioned before; so called, because he maketh manifest, Eph 5:13. He revealeth his Father, Mt 11:27. He is *the brightness of his Father's glory*, Heb 1:3, who *is light*, 1Jo 1:5, and the world is by him enlightened. It was prophesied of his times, Isa 11:9, that *the earth should be full of the knowledge of the Lord. That all men through him might believe;* the end of John's testimony was, that multitudes of all sorts might believe by him, or by it, as an instrumental cause of their faith. If we read it *by him*, it is most proper to understand the pronoun of John the Baptist; for we are not said to believe by Christ, but *in him, in his name, &c.*

John 1:8

Ver. 8. *He was not that Light:* John the Baptist was a light, as all saints are *light in the Lord*, Eph 5:8; nay, in a peculiar sense our Saviour beareth him witness, that he *was a burning and shining light*; but he was not that Light before mentioned, Joh 1:5, that *shineth in darkness*; and again Joh 1:9 *which lighteth every man that cometh into the world*. John borrowed his light from that original Light; that Light was God, he was but a man sent from God. The men of the world are ordinarily in extremes, either wholly rejecting God's ministers and witnesses, or else adoring them; as the world is concerned to take heed of the former, so the ministers of Christ are also highly concerned not to admit the latter. See Lu 7:33 Ac 14:13,14; but both John here, and Paul there, were very cautious not to rob their Master of the honour due unto him alone.

But was sent to bear witness of that Light: John, as was said before, came only *to bear witness of that Light*, that he was come, and shined forth, and was the true Light, as it followeth.

John 1:9

Ver. 9. *That was the true Light:* *true* is sometimes opposed to what is false, Eph 4:25; sometimes to what is typical and figurative, Joh 1:17; sometimes to what is not original, and of itself: in opposition to all these Christ is the *true Light*; he who alone deserved the name of light, having light in himself, and from himself, 1Jo 2:8, and shining more gloriously than the prophets or apostles.

Which lighteth every man that cometh into the world; he lighteth not the Jews only, (as the prophets of old), but both the Jews and Gentiles. Some understand this of the light of reason; but besides that reason is no where in holy writ called light, neither did this illumination agree to Christ as Mediator. It is rather therefore to be understood of the light of gospel revelation, which Christ caused to be made to all the world, Mt 28:19 Mr 16:15. Those who interpret it of the more internal illumination by the Holy Spirit of God, by which Christ is not revealed *to us* only, but *in us*, say, that Christ hath done what lay in him (as a Minister of the gospel) so to enlighten all that came into the world; and that Christ is said to enlighten

every man, because none is enlightened but by him, and that some of all sorts are by him enlightened; in one of which two latter senses the terms *all* and *every man* must be interpreted in a multitude of texts in the Gospel. The words in the Greek are so, as they may either be translated as we read them, or thus, who coming into the world, enlightened every man: a more universal spiritual light, or means to come to the knowledge of God, overspreading the world after Christ's coming, than before. So Joh 7:46, *I am come a light into the world*. And it is by some observed, that the phrase *cometh into the world*, doth not barely signify a being born, but being sent into the world by the Father, being sanctified, as in Joh 10:36 17:18.

John 1:10

Ver. 10. *He was in the world;* he was in the place called *the world*, and amongst the men of the world; for so the term *world* is often taken, Joh 16:28 2Pe 3:6. Christ, before he came in the flesh, was in it; filling both the heavens and the earth, and sustaining it by the word of his power, and manifesting his will to it, more immediately to Moses and to the prophets, and more mediately by Moses and by the prophets.

And the world was made by him; and the heavens and the earth, all things visible and invisible, (as was said before), were made by him.

And the world knew him not; and the men of the world took no notice of him, did not acknowledge him, believe in him, nor were subject to him; so the word *knew* often signifies, (according to the Hebrew idiom), Joh 10:14,15,27; not a bare comprehension of an object in the understanding, but suitable affections: so Mt 7:23 1Jo 3:1. This is not to be understood of all individual persons in the world; for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and David, and many particular persons, did in this sense know him; but the generality of the world did not. The heathens did not, (who are sometimes called the *world*, distinctively from the Jews, 1Jo 2:2 1Co 1:21), and most of the Jews did not, though some did.

John 1:11

Ver. 11. *He came unto his own;* Christ came into the world, which being

made by him, was in the most proper sense his own; or, to the Israelites, which were as his own house, land, and possession, Ps 85:1 Joh 16:32. The Greek word is in the plural number, and used in the places before mentioned, as also Ac 21:6; sometimes signifying men's proper country, sometimes their proper house. But it is a further question, what coming is here spoken of: though it be generally (or by many at least) interpreted of Christ's coming by his incarnation, yet that seemeth not to be the sense; partly, because that coming is spoken of, Ac 21:14; and partly, because in that sense the Jews did receive him; nor was it in their power to hinder his manifestation in the flesh. The coming therefore here mentioned seemeth to be intended of his coming by his prophets, John the Baptist, and his own personal preaching of the gospel.

And his own received him not; whom in this way of coming they did not receive, believing neither the testimony given by his prophets, nor by the Baptist, nor by himself, Joh 5:43.

John 1:12

Ver. 12. *But as many as received him;* though the generality of those amongst whom Christ came received him not in the manner before expressed, yet some did own him, believed in him and submitted to him; and to as many as thus received him, not into their houses only, but into their hearts, *to them gave he power to become the sons of God;* he gave a power, or a right, or privilege, not that they might if they would be, but to be actually, to become, or be, the sons of God by adoption; for believers are already the sons of God, Ga 3:26, though it doth not yet appear what they shall be in the *adoption*, mentioned Ro 8:23, which the apostle calls the *redemption of our body*, viz. in the resurrection; hence the children of God are called the *children of the resurrection*, Lu 20:36.

To them that believe on his name; this is the privilege of all that believe in the name of Christ; by which term he opens the former term of receiving: to receive Christ, and to believe in his name, are the same thing. To believe in his name, is either to believe in him, Ac 3:16 or in the revelation of himself in the promises of the gospel. The proposition of God's word is the object of faith of assent: but the person of the Mediator is the object of that faith which receiveth Christ; and those alone have a right to be the

sons of God, and to the privileges peculiar to sons, who believe in Christ as revealed in the promises of the word of God, and there exhibited to men.

John 1:13

Ver. 13. *Which were born, not of blood;* not of the blood of men and women; or, not of the blood of Abraham (which was the boast of the Jews, *We have Abraham to our Father*).

Nor of the will of the flesh; nor from the lusts of the flesh.

Nor of the will of man; nor from a power in man's will, or men's free act in adopting other men's children. To be born, signifieth to receive our principle of life: those who are the children of God had not the principle of their life, as they are such, from the motions of nature, nor from the will of men.

But of God: whatever be the sense of the former words, these words plainly affirm God to be the principal efficient, and procreant cause, of all those who are the sons of God; for faith, by which we are the children of God, Ga 3:26, is the work of God, Joh 6:29, his gift, Php 1:29; and men are *born again, not of corruptible seed, but of that which is incorruptible, 1Pe 1:23; they are sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water by the word, Eph 5:26; *the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, Tit 3:5.**

John 1:14

Ver. 14. *The Word was made flesh;* the Son of God, called *the Word*, for the reasons before specified, was made truly man, as *flesh* often signifieth in holy writ, Ge 6:12 Ps 65:2 Isa 40:5,6; not a vile, despicable, mortal man. The evangelist rather saith he was made flesh, than he was made man, more plainly to distinguish the two natures in Christ; to assert the truth of his human nature; to let us know that Christ assumed human nature in common, not the particular nature of any; to commend the love of God, and to let us see, that his plaster was proportioned to our sore, it reached

all flesh.

The evangelist saith not he was changed into flesh; but, by assuming, *he was made flesh. And dwelt amongst us:* and he tabernacled amongst us; amongst us men, or amongst men that were his disciples: the word signifieth properly, he made no long stay.

And we beheld his glory; and we beheld the signs and effects of his glory; many of which were seen, both at the time of his transfiguration, and at his passion, resurrection, and ascension; the glory of his grace, holiness, truth, miraculous operations, &c.

The glory as of the only begotten of the Father; which glory was the glory of the only begotten of the Father; for the particle *as* here doth not signify likeness, but truth, Ne 7:2 Job 24:14.

Full of grace and truth, as he was God manifested in the flesh. *Grace* signifieth love and good will, out of which it was that he delivered us from the curse and rigour of the law (to which grace is opposed). He was also full of *truth*, both as truth is opposed to falsehood, and to the shadows and figures of the law; and Christ was full of truth as he was the antitype to all the ceremonies, and all the promises had and have their completion and reality in him: see Joh 14:17 Rom 15:8 2Co 1:20. Truth also may signify the sincerity and integrity of Christ's life, as he was without guile.

John 1:15

Ver. 15. *John bare witness of him, and cried, saying:* John was not he, but only a witness to him; and he continueth to bear witness (the verb is in the present tense); nor did he give an obscure or cold testimony, but an open, and plain, and fervent testimony, according to the prophecies, his testimony was the *voice of one crying in the wilderness. This was he of whom I spake;* he first testified that Christ was he of whom he had before spoken; possibly when he was preaching in the wilderness, and Christ came to him to be baptized of him, Mt 3:11,14.

He that cometh after me is preferred before me; be that cometh after me, in order of time, or in the ministerial office and employment, or, as if he were

my disciple, Joh 8:12, is become, or is made, before me.

For he was before me, both in the eternal destination, and in respect of his Divine nature; as also in dignity and eminency, considered as a prophet, i.e. one that revealeth my Father's will. This John said before, though not in terms, yet in effect, when he said, Mt 3:11, *He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear, &c.* So Mr 1:7 Lu 3:16. This is the first thing which is here mentioned, as John's testimony concerning Christ, respecting the excellency of his person.

John 1:16

Ver. 16. *And of his fulness have all we received;* of that plenty of grace which Christ hath, (who hath not the Spirit given him *by measure*, Joh 3:34, as other saints have, Ac 2:4,6,8), we who by nature are void of grace, whether taken for the favour of God, or gracious habits, have received, as the skirts of Aaron's garment received the oil which was plentifully poured out on Aaron's head.

And grace for grace: nor have we received drops, but grace upon grace; not only knowledge and instruction, but the love and favour of God, and spiritual habits, in proportion to the favour and grace which Christ hath (allowing for our short capacities); we have received grace freely and plentifully, all from Christ, and for his sake; which lets us see how much the grace receiving soul is bound to acknowledge and adore Christ, and may be confirmed in the receiving of further grace, and the hopes of eternal life; and it may mind all (according to that of the apostle, 2Co 6:1), to take heed that *they receive not the grace of God in vain.*

John 1:17

Ver. 17. *For the law was given by Moses;* the law, moral and ceremonial, came not by Moses, but was given by Moses as God's minister and servant; that law by which no man can be justified, Ro 3:28. In this was Moses's honour, of whom you glory, Joh 5:45. God indeed made an eminent use of him, as his minister, by whom he revealed his will to you; both in matters of his worship, according to that dispensation; and in

matters which concern you in your whole conversation; but yet there is an eminent difference between him and Jesus Christ. The law is no where called grace, neither doth it discover any thing but duty and wrath; it showeth no remission, in case that duty be not done, nor affordeth strength for the doing of it.

But grace and truth came by Jesus Christ; all that is from Christ; all the favour of God for the remission and pardon of sin, and for strength and assistance to the performance of duty, is (not given from God by Christ, as the law by Moses, but) from Christ as the fountain of grace; and not grace only, but *truth*, whether taken for solid and real mercy, or with respect to the law; the fulfilling of all the types and prophecies in it was by and in Christ.

John 1:18

Ver. 18. *No man has seen God at any time;* no man hath at any time seen the essence of God with his eyes, Joh 4:24; nor with the eyes of his mind understood the whole counsel and will of God, Mt 11:27 Ro 11:34. Moses indeed saw the image and representation of God, and had a more familiar converse with God than others; upon which account he is said to have talked with God face to face; Nu 12:7,8, God saith he would speak unto him *mouth to mouth, even apparently;* but he tells us how in the same verse, *and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold;* and God, who had spoken to the same sense, Ex 33:11, saith, Joh 1:20, *Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me, and live.* Now to whom he did not discover his face, he certainly did not discover all his secret counsels.

The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father; but he who is the only begotten and beloved Son, hath such an intimate communion with him in his nature, and such a free communication of all his counsels, as it may be said, he is continually in his bosom.

He hath declared him; hath declared him, not only as a prophet declareth the mind and will of God, but *as the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy work,* Ps 19:1; being *the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person,* Heb 1:3. So as the Father can only be seen in the Son; nor is so full a revelation of the

Father's will to be expected from any, as from the Son.

John 1:19

Ver. 19. John's former testimony was more private to the common people; this testimony was given to a public authority. *The Jews* (most probably the rulers of the Jews, who made up their sanhedrim, or great court, answering a parliament with us, for the cognizance of false prophets belonged to them) *sent priests and Levites*, which were Pharisees, Joh 1:24, of the strictest sect of the Jews as to rites and ceremonies; these came from Jerusalem, where the sanhedrim constantly sat, and the chief priests were, (if the message were not from the sanhedrim itself), to ask John Baptist who he was; that is, by what authority he preached and baptized? What kind of prophet he was? For they could not but know his name and family, he descending from a priest amongst them: and this appeareth to be their sense from what followeth.

John 1:20

Ver. 20. *And he confessed;* he being asked openly and plainly, professed, *and denied not;* and did not dissemble nor halt in his speech. These negatives are in Scripture often added to affirmatives, to exclude all exceptions, Job 5:17 Ps 40:10-12. *But confessed:* he did not tell them once so, but again and again, because many were musing about it, Lu 3:15.

I am not the Christ; I am not that great Messiah which God hath promised you, and in the expectation of whom you live, Lu 2:26,38 Lu 19:11 Joh 4:25. The diligence we shall constantly observe in the servants of God in holy writ, to avoid the arrogating of that honour to themselves which is due only to God and Christ; and this, together with John's steadiness and plainness, doth very well become all professors, but the ministers of the gospel especially.

John 1:21

Ver. 21. John was at Bethabara when these messengers came to him, Joh

1:28. They asked him if he were *Elias*. The Jews had not only an expectation of the Messiah, but of Elias to come as a messenger before him, according to the prophecy, Mal 4:5; as appeareth, Mt 17:10 Mr 9:11; of which they had a gross conception here, that Elias should come out of heaven personally, or at least that his soul should come into another body, according to the Pythagorean opinion. Now the meaning of the prophecy was, that one should come like Elias; and this was fulfilled in John, Lu 1:17, as our Saviour tells us, Mt 17:12 Mr 9:13; but they asked the question according to that notion they had of Elias. To which John answereth, that he was not; neither that Elias that ascended in a fiery chariot to heaven; nor any body informed with Elias's soul: and thus the words of our Saviour, Mt 17:12 Mr 9:12, are easily reconciled to this text. They go on, and ask him if he were *that prophet*, or a prophet. Some think that they meant the Prophet promised, De 18:18; but that was no other than Christ himself, which he had before denied himself to be; nor doth it appear from any text of Scripture that the Jews had any expectation of any other particular prophet; but it is plain from Lu 9:8, that they had a notion that it was possible one of the old prophets might rise again from the dead, for so they guessed there concerning Christ. But others think that the article in the Greek here is not emphatical, and they only asked him if he were a prophet; for the Jews had a general notion, that the spirit of prophecy had left them ever since the times of Zechariah and Malachi; which they hoped was returned in John the Baptist, and about this they question him if he were a prophet. To which he answereth, *No*; neither that Prophet promised, De 18:18, nor yet any of the old prophets risen from the dead; nor yet one like the prophets of the Old Testament, who only prophesied of a Christ to come; but, as Christ calls him, Mt 11:9, *more than a prophet*, one who showed and declared to them a Christ already come; for the law and the prophets prophesied but until John; the law in its types foreshowing, the prophets in their sermons foretelling, a Messiah to come; John did more. His father indeed, Lu 1:76, called him *the prophet of the Highest*; but there *prophet* is to be understood not in a strict, but in a large sense, as the term prophecy is taken, Ro 12:6. And the term prophet often signifieth one that revealeth the will of God to men; in which large sense John was a prophet, and yet more than a prophet in the stricter notion of the term; and in that sense no prophet, that is, no mere prophet: so, Nu 11:19, Moses tells the people they should not eat flesh one, or two, or five, or ten, or twenty days, because they should eat it a whole month together.

John 1:22

Ver. 22. Hitherto John had given them only a negative answer, and told them who he was not; he was neither Christ, nor the Elias, nor that prophet they expected; neither any of the old prophets risen from the dead; nor any prophet at all in a strict sense (as were the prophets of the Old Testament): they press him to a direct, plain, positive answer, that they might give an answer to those that sent them, who did not send them to inquire what he was not, but what he was. And there were various talks and discourses of the people about him, which they were not willing to take up and run away with; but they desired to have it from himself.

John 1:23

Ver. 23. We had the same, See Poole on "Mt 3:3", See Poole on "Mr 1:3". Chemnitius thinks, that John chose rather to preach and fulfil his ministry in the wilderness, than in the temple; to make an illustrious difference between himself, who was but the Lord's messenger, and whose office was but to prepare the Lord's way, and his Lord himself, of whom it was prophesied, Mal 3:1, *The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his holy temple;* upon which account Haggai prophesied. Hag 2:9, that *the glory of that latter house* (built by Ezra, and Zerubbabel, and Nehemiah) *should be greater than of the former.*

John 1:24

Ver. 24. Who these Pharisees were hath been before explained in our notes on Mt 3:7. They were of the strictest sect of the Jewish religion, Ac 26:5. The greatest part of their councils was made up of those of this sect, as may be learned from Ac 23:1-10. They were the men most zealous for and tenacious of the Jewish rites; and would allow nothing to be added to the Jewish worship to what they had received concerning it, either from the law of God, or the traditions of the elders.

John 1:25

Ver. 25. The Pharisees themselves would allow the Messiah, or Elias, or a prophet, to make any additions to or alterations in the worship of God, but none else: hence it is they ask, by what authority he baptized, if he were none of these? From whence we may learn, that although they might have some umbrage of that baptismal washing which was under the gospel, to commence into a sacrament, or federal sign, in the washing of their proselytes, or of Jewish children when they were circumcised; yet John's action was looked upon as new, who baptized adult Jews: now the care of the sanhedrim was to keep the worship of God incorrupt, and the Pharisees amongst them had a particular zeal in the case, especially so far as the traditions of the elders were concerned.

John 1:26

Ver. 26. This was no strict answer to their question, which was not, how, but why he baptized? But proper replies are often called answers in Scripture, though not apposite to the question. *I baptize with water; I baptize you with mere water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; but there hath stood one amongst you, εστηκεν, or (by a usual putting of one tense for another) there standeth one; Christ had been there with the crowd, Lu 3:15,21, and possibly was amongst them still when John spake these words; whom you know not, not so much as ore tenus, by face.*

John 1:27

Ver. 27. John the Baptist had before told them, *He that cometh after me is preferred before me, See Poole on "Joh 1:15".* He now repeateth those words; and it is observable, that the three other evangelists all put this passage before the history of Christ's coming to him to be baptized. So as it is probable that these messengers came to John as he was baptizing; and either immediately before or after Christ's baptism, Christ being yet in the crowd, he repeateth to his hearers what he had a little before said of him, that he was to be preferred before him.

Whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose; he here enlargeth upon it with a proverbial speech, which the other evangelists have, with a very little variation: Matthew saith, *Whose shoe's I am not worthy to bear;* that is, to perform unto him the very meanest service or office. We have such forms of speech in use at this day amongst us; when we would express the great preeminence of some one above another, we say of that other, He is not worthy to tie his shoes; or, to carry his shoes after him. There is a vast difference between Christ and the most excellent of his ministers; which as to baptism lieth here; the ministerial baptism is but with water; Christ baptizeth *with the Holy Ghost and with fire*, Mt 3:11, or, *with the Holy Ghost*, as Mr 1:8.

John 1:28

Ver. 28. The evangelist had before told us what was done, these words tell us where. Some ancient writers will have the place to have been Bethany; but they seem not to have so well considered Joh 11:18, where Bethany is said to have been but fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem, and consequently on this side Jordan; whereas the evangelist saith, that this place was *περαν, beyond Jordan*, in the tribe of Reuben, in the country of Peraea, *where John at this time was baptizing*, and probably had been so for some time.

John 1:29

Ver. 29. *The next day;* the most think, the day following that day when the messengers from Jerusalem had been examining the Baptist. Heinsius thinks it was the same day, and saith, the Hellenists usually so interpret *εν επαυπιον*, for *μετα ταυτα*, after these things; but the former sense is more generally embraced.

John seeth Jesus coming to him, out of the wilderness, as some think, where he had been tempted by the devil; but then it must follow, that he was not amongst the crowd, Joh 1:2, standing in the midst of them, when the messengers were there; and it should appear by Joh 1:32,33, that this which is here recorded happened after Christ's baptism by John (of which this evangelist saith nothing): it seemeth rather to be understood of another coming of Christ to John after he had been baptized, when John, seeing

him, pointed as it were with his finger to him, (for the term *Behold* seemeth to be here used demonstratively), showing them the person whom he would have them cast their eye upon; whom he calls, *the Lamb of God*, not only to denote his excellency, as we read of the *night of the Lord*, Ex 12:42, and *the bread of God*, Le 21:21; which indeed Christ was, being *without blemish*, 1Pe 1:19; but with reference to the lambs used in the Jewish sacrifices, not only at the passover, Ex 12:5, but in the daily sacrifice, Ex 29:38 Le 1:10, or the burnt offering; and in the peace offering, Le 3:7, and in the sin offering, Le 4:32. He calls Christ *the Lamb of God*, probably, because divers of the priests were there to hear, and (as appears, Joh 1:39) it was nigh the time of their daily sacrifice; that so he might remind them that Christ was the truth and Antitype to all their sacrifices.

Which taketh away the sin of the world; ο αἰρῶν, the word signifies both to take up, and to take away: *which taketh away the sin of the world*, as God, to whom it belongs to forgive sin; and this he did by taking it upon himself, (so it is translated, Mt 16:24), expiating it, which expiation is followed by a plenary remission, and taking it away, both the punishment of it, and the root, and body, and power of it; redeeming them as from the grave and hell, due to man for sin; so from a *vain conversation*, 1Pe 1:18; and not doing this for the Jews only, but for the Gentiles also, 1Jo 2:2, for many in the world, being he without whom there is no remission, Ac 4:12. Nor doth his gracious act cease at any time, it is a work he is always doing, and which none but he can do: ministers may persuade, priests of old offered lambs and other beasts in sacrifice; but he alone taketh away sin. So that, as what he said to the messengers of the sanhedrim gave all the honour of any valuable effect of baptism to Christ; so, what he saith here gives him all the honour of any good effect of preaching, or any good effect of our ministry; it is he alone, who (when we have said or done what we can) taketh away the sin of the world.

John 1:30

Ver. 30. And (saith he) this is he of whom I said, (as Joh 1:15), He cometh after me in order of time and ministry, but is more excellent than I am. See Poole on "Joh 1:15".

John 1:31

Ver. 31. This verse is best expounded by Joh 1:33, where the same words are repeated, *I knew him not;* and it is added, *but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, &c.* Lest any should think that Christ and John had compacted together to give one another credit, or that there was some near relation between John and Christ, John saith, *I knew him not;* for Christ had spent his time at home, Lu 2:51, John had lived in desert places; the providence of God so ordering it, that John should not know Christ so much as by face, until that time came when Christ was to be made manifest to Israel. But that God might make his *Son manifest unto Israel*, when God by an extraordinary mission sent John to baptize with water, he gave him this token, That he upon whom he should see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, as Joh 1:33, that was the Messiah, the Lamb of God, that should take away the sin of the world; he who should baptize with the Holy Ghost.

And *therefore* (saith John) *am I come baptizing with water.* I did not run without sending, nor introduce a new rite or sacrament without commission; but being thus sent of God, and that I might give Christ an opportunity of coming to me, that I might see the Spirit descending and remaining upon him. From whence we learn, that none but Christ can institute a sacrament. John baptized not, till he was sent to baptize with water.

John 1:32

Ver. 32. Saith John, According to the revelation which I had, when I received my extraordinary commission to baptize, so it fell out to me, I did see, when he was baptized, the heaven opening, and a representation of the Spirit of God (for no man can see God and live) descending. The form of the representation was like that of a dove. And it was not a mere transient sight, but it did for some time abide upon that person, in that sensible representation; by that token I knew that he was the Son of God.

John 1:33

Ver. 33. *And I knew him not;* I was a stranger to him; I knew him in a sense, when I leaped in my mother's womb, upon his mother's coming to see my mother, Lu 1:41; but that (as impressions made upon infants use to do) wore off. I had some impression upon me at that time when he came towards me to be baptized, which made me say to him, (as Mt 3:14), *I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?* But yet I was not certain, though I knew he was in the crowd of people, that he was the person designed, and whose work it should be to baptize with the Holy Ghost, until the same God that had given me that sign fulfilled it to me.

John 1:34

Ver. 34. But when I saw that, I could not but believe, and also bear an open testimony to the world, that this man was not mere man, but the eternal Son of that God, who sent me to baptize with water; reserving still to himself the Divine power of blessing that holy sacrament, and conferring the Holy Ghost in regenerating habits, working like fire, in purging away the dross of souls, and like water, washing away the filth of sin, Mt 3:11 Joh 3:5.

John 1:35

Ver. 35,36. *The next day after that the messengers who came from Jerusalem had been with John, John stood, and two of his disciples;* whether he was preaching or no it is not said; but John standing with them, saw Christ walking, whence, or whither, is not said; but as a good man is always taking opportunity to commend Christ to others, so John upon this occasion took advantage further to make Christ known to those two men, (who they were, we shall hear in the following verses), and repeats the words he had said before, *Behold the Lamb of God!* (See Poole on "Joh 1:27"). Thus good and faithful ministers will continually be inviting their disciples to Christ, taking them off from further consideration of themselves, and, as ministers, to show them the way to Christ.

John 1:37

Ver. 37. God blessed the verbal testimony that John had given so far, that they stood in no need of any miracle to confirm it, but upon their hearing John *speake*, they followed Jesus: as yet, not as his apostles; for their call to that office was afterward (as we shall hear); nor yet, so as no more to depart from him: but there was created in them a further desire of knowledge of him and acquaintance with him.

John 1:38

Ver. 38. Christ, as he walked, turning him, and seeing two men following him, inquires of their end, what they sought; to teach us, in all our religious motions and actions, to do the like; for the end will contribute much to specify the action, and to make it good or bad. They gave him that honourable title which was then in fashion, by and under which they were wont to speak to those upon whom they relied for instruction, whose doctrine they desired to know, and with whom they desired to converse, and to learn of him. They asked him where he abode, or where he lodged.

John 1:39

Ver. 39. Our Lord discerning the end of their following him to be sincere and good, invites them to *come and see* where his lodging was; for he elsewhere telleth us, that he had not a house wherein to hide his head.

They came and saw his lodgings; where, or of what nature they were, we are not told, but we never read that he during his whole pilgrimage amongst us had any stately or splendid lodgings.

The text saith that these two disciples *abode with him that day;* whether only the two or three remaining hours of the same day, (for it was now about four of the clock afternoon, which answers the tenth hour according to the Jewish account), or another whole day, being the sabbath day, (as some think), we are not told, nor can conclude; certain it is, they abode with him the remaining part of that day, from four of the clock till night.

John 1:40

Ver. 40. Concerning the call of this Andrew to the apostleship, See Poole on "Mt 4:18". See Poole on "Mt 4:19". See Poole on "Mr 1:16". See Poole on "Mr 1:17". That was at another time, and in another manner: Christ here only invited them to come and see where he lodged.

John 1:41

Ver. 41. It should seem that both the disciples (after their converse with Christ at the place where he lodged) went together to look for Peter, Andrew's brother. Andrew first found him, and tells him (with great joy) that he and that other disciple had *found the Messiah*, prophesied of by Daniel, and in the expectation of whom the disciples and the Jews lived. The term *Messiah* in Hebrew is the same with *Christ* in Greek, and both signify the same with *Anointed* in English. The article in this place is emphatic, not merely prepositive, as in other places, but signifying, that Anointed; for other kings, and priests, and prophets were also anointed, and God's people are called anointed; but he was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, having the Spirit not given him by measure.

John 1:42

Ver. 42. Andrew having found his brother Simon, conducts him to Jesus. Andrew, and Simon, and Philip were citizens of Bethsaida, Joh 1:44, which was a city of Galilee; how near to the place where John baptized, or Christ lodged, we cannot say. Probably Simon was one of John's disciples, and came to attend his ministry; so as the disciples only sought him in the crowd, and came with him to Christ. When Christ beheld him, he said, *Thou art Simon*; he knew him, and called him by name, and told him his father's name, *Jonas*, and giveth him a new name, *Cephas*, which by interpretation doth not signify a head, (as the popish disputant at Berne urged, to prove him the head of the church, as if it had been a Greek word, and came from κεφαλη; or, as he pretended, ridiculously enough, from an old Greek word, κεφας), but *a stone* (as this text tells us); by which name

we find him called, 1Co 1:12 3:22 9:5 15:5 Ga 2:9: in other places *Peter*, which signifieth a stone also, or a rock. Cephias is a Syriac word, Peter a Greek word: Christ gave him the name. Both Cephias and Peter are by interpretation, a stone. Beza thinks that our Saviour did not here give him that name, but foretell that he should be so called. Casaubon thinks that the name was here given to him, and with it a new spirit; that whereas before he was (according to his father's name Jonas, which signifies a dove) fearful and timorous, from this time forward he was as a rock, steady, firm, and full of courage and constancy: but it is a greater question how this text is to be reconciled with Mt 4:18-20, where Andrew and Peter are both said to be espied by Christ, *walking by the sea of Galilee*; and Lu 5:10, where Simon is reported to be called after they had taken a great draught of fish; and with Mr 3:13, and Lu 6:13, where all the apostles are named as called at one and the same time. Doubtless the calls were different. This in John seems rather to be a prophecy than a call. Those texts, Mt 4:18-20, and Lu 5:10, seem to be their calls to a discipleship. The other texts, Mr 3:13 Lu 6:13, respect their election to the apostleship, and the mission of them.

John 1:43

Ver. 43. All this while Christ seemeth to have been in Judea, which was the most famous province. The day after Peter had thus been with him, he had a mind to go *into Galilee*; out of that he designed to choose his disciples; and that being the country where he had been educated, he designed in a more special manner to honour it with the first fruit of his public ministry. There *findeth Philip* (the name signifieth, a lover of horses). He calleth him to be his disciple.

John 1:44

Ver. 44. This Philip was a citizen of Bethsaida (the word signifies in the Hebrew, The house of fruits, or of huntsmen). Andrew and Peter (mentioned before) both of them lived there. It was one of those cities where Christ did *most of his mighty works*, Mt 11:20.

John 1:45

Ver. 45. Philip having himself discovered Christ, is not willing to eat his morsels alone, but desires to communicate his discovery to others; he finds (whether casually, or upon search, is not said) one Nathanael, he was of Cana in Galilee, Joh 21:2. (The name is a Hebrew name, signifying, The gift of God; some think it the same with Nethaneel, 1Ch 15:24.) Having found him, he tells him with great joy, that they had found him of whom Moses had wrote in the law, *the Shiloh*, mentioned Ge 49:10, the Prophet, mentioned De 18:15, *the Branch of the Lord*, mentioned Isa 4:2, the *Messiah*, mentioned by Daniel, Da 9:25,26, and all the other prophets, him whom they usually called *Jesus of Nazareth*, (there he was conceived, there he was bred, Lu 2:4,51, though he was born in Bethlehem of Judah, Lu 2:4), and who was commonly thought to be *the son of Joseph*. If Philip did only *cum vulgo loqui*, speak as was commonly said, though himself knew and believed other things, he is not to be blamed; but the most think Philip discovered here his own weakness, both in thinking Christ the son of Joseph, and to have been born at Nazareth. It is certain that the apostles themselves at first, yea, and till Christ's resurrection from the dead, had a very imperfect notion of Christ as the true Messiah. Grace may consist with great weakness as to knowledge.

John 1:46

Ver. 46. The words of Philip begat a prejudice in Nathanael, as to what he said. It was prophesied, Mic 5:2, that the Messiah should come out of Bethlehem. So, Joh 7:41,42, some of the people said, *Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the Scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?* Nazareth was not only a poor little place, (for so Bethlehem also was), but a place which the Scripture never mentioned as the place from whence the Messiah should arise; a place that God had not honoured with the production of a prophet. By *any good thing* seems to be meant, the Messiah, or any prophet, or (more generally) any thing which is noble and excellent, and of any remark. So prone are we to think that the kingdom of God comes with observation, that we know not how to fancy how great things should be done by little means, and great persons should arise out of little, contemptible places. Whereas God chooseth the *foolish things of the*

world to confound the wise; and the weak things to confound the mighty; and base things of the world, to confound the wise, 1Co 1:25-28.

Philip saith unto him, Come and see; Philip, not knowing how to answer Nathanael's objection, and to remove his prejudice, wishes him himself to go, and make up a judgment. Wise men ought to do this, and not to take up prejudices from reports and common vogue.

John 1:47

Ver. 47. They are not all Israel, which are of Israel, Ro 9:6. For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, Ro 2:28,29. Christ seeing Nathanael (though he was prejudiced by Philip's mistake, or the common mistake of his nation) coming to see him, and seeing not only his body and bodily motion, but his heart also, and the motions of that, saith of him, Behold one who is not only born an Israelite, but is a true Israelite, like his father Jacob, a plain man, Ge 25:27; in whom is no guile; in whom there is no deceit, no doubleness of heart. Such ought Christians to be, no crafty, deceitful, double minded men, but men of great sincerity and plainness of heart, laying aside all malice, and all guile, 1Pe 2:1, like little children, Mt 18:3.

John 1:48

Ver. 48. Nathanael wonders how Christ should know him, having not been of his familiar acquaintance. Christ tells him he saw him under the fig tree, before ever Philip called him. That was a very hot country, wherein people sought shadowy places; hence we read of sitting under their own vines and fig trees, Mic 4:4 Zec 3:10; and it is likely that those being two luxuriant plants, that had large leaves, and ran out in long boughs, in hot weather they might under the covert of these plants not only sit as in an arbour to converse one with another, but also perform religious duties. Whether Christ saw him there eating and drinking, or conversing with friends, or reading, or praying, the Scripture saith not, and it is but vainly guessed; it is enough that by his telling this to him, he let him know that he saw him,

though he was not in his view, and so was omnipresent and omniscient. Christ seeth us, where we are, and what we do, when we see not him; and he seeth our hearts, whether they be single or double, plain, or false and deceitful; which as in many cases it affords us much comfort, so it admonishes us to be at all times in the fear of the Lord.

John 1:49

Ver. 49. The term *Rabbi*, which Nathanael here giveth to Christ, is of the same significance with Rabban, and *Rabboni*, Joh 20:16, Rabban, Rabhi, Rabbi, all which signify Master, and my Master; a name which in that age they usually gave their teachers, as a title of honour, Mt 23:7,8, titles that began about the time of our Saviour; for Buxtorf tells us, purer antiquity gave no such titles to their teachers or prophets, thinking it not possible to give those persons (extraordinarily sent of God) titles answerable to their dignity. They say, Hillel, about our Saviour's time, was the first who was so called; Rabban was counted the highest, Rabbi the next, Rabbi the least. Rabban, they say, lasted about two hundred years, given to seven after Hillel. Nathanael calls him also *the Son of God*, as Peter and the other disciples did, Mt 14:33, and Peter, Mt 16:16. But it appeareth, by many following passages, that they had but a faint persuasion of this, till he was *declared so with power, by his resurrection from the dead*, Ro 1:4. He acknowledgeth Christ also the *King of Israel*, that is, the true Messiah. This was the title of the Messiah, Mt 21:5 27:11.

John 1:50

Ver. 50. Christ encourages the beginnings of faith in the souls of his people, and magnifies Nathanael's faith from the revelation which he had, which was but imperfect; for Christ had said no more, than that he had seen him under the fig tree before Philip called him. He tells him that he should *see greater things than these*. To him that hath, shall be given. What those greater things are, which our Lord here meaneth, he telleth him, in part at least, Joh 1:51.

John 1:51

Ver. 51. These things he ushers in with a *Verily, verily,* and declareth them spoken not to Nathanael alone, but *unto you;* viz. all you that are my disciples indeed, who are (like Nathanael) true Israelites, in whom there is no guile. For the terms, Amen, Amen, (by us translated, *Verily, verily,*), some of the ancients accounted them an oath; but the most learned modern writers have seen no reason to agree with them. Surely (see a large discourse about these particles in our learned Fuller, his *Miscellan.* 1.1. cap. 2, to which nothing need be added) if Amen is never used in the Old Testament but as a term of prayer or wishing, in the New Testament it is used to assert or affirm a thing, or as a particle of wishing and prayer. The word in the Hebrew properly signifies, *truth,* Isa 65:16; whence Christ (the truth) is called *the Amen,* Re 3:14. As the prophets were wont to begin their discourses with *The word of the Lord,* and *Thus saith the Lord,* to assert the truth of what they were about to say; so Christ, to show that himself was God, and spake from himself, begins with Amen; and Amen, Amen, sometimes: it is observed that John constantly doubles the particle, and saith Amen, Amen, that is, *Verily, verily;* either (as interpreters say) for further confirmation of the thing, or to get the greater attention, or to assert as well the truth of the speaker as of the thing spoken. Now the thing spoken followeth as a thing promised, not to Nathanael only, but to all believers, that they should *see the heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.* Some think that hereby is meant the spiritual, metaphorical opening of heaven to believers by Christ. But it seems more properly to signify such an opening of the heavens as we read of, Mt 3:16. Some understand it of the appearances of angels to Christ at his passion, and resurrection, and ascension; but it seems rather to refer to the day of judgment, when ten thousands of angels shall wait upon Christ, as the Judge of the quick and the dead, and minister unto him; which ministration, they say, is expressed by the terms of ascending and descending, with reference (doubtless) to Jacob's vision, Ge 28:12: Jacob saw it sleeping, Nathanael and other believers shall see it with open eyes. Others interpret it more generally, viz. You shall see as many miracles as if you saw the heavens opened, and the angels ascending and descending. Others think it refers to some further appearances of the angels to Christ in their ministration to him than the Scripture records. Christ doth not say, You shall see angels ascending and descending upon me, but *upon the Son of man;* by which our learned Lightfoot saith, he did not only declare

himself to be truly man, but the Second Adam, in whom what was lost in the first was to be restored. It is observed, that only Ezekiel in the Old Testament, and Christ in the New Testament, are thus called; and that Christ was never thus called but by himself. Ezekiel was doubtless so called to distinguish him from those spiritual beings with which he often conversed: Christ, to distinguish his human nature from his Divine nature, both which (in him) made up one person. Christ's calling himself so was but a further indication of his making himself of no reputation, while he was in the form of a servant. Others think, that *the Son of man* in the gospel, used by Christ, signifies no more than I, and me; (it being usual in the Hebrew dialect for persons to speak of themselves in the third person); so, *upon the Son of man*, is, upon me, who am truly man. Chemnitius thinks, that as the term *Messiah* (by which the people commonly called Christ) was taken out of Daniel; so this term, by Christ applied to the same person, is taken out thence too, Da 7:13, where it is said, *one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, &c.*; and that Christ did ordinarily so call himself, to correspond with the prophecy of Daniel, to assert himself truly man, and to declare himself his Father's servant, according to the prophecy, Isa 42:1.

John 2:1

Chapter Summary

Joh 2:1-11 Christ turneth water into wine in Cana of Galilee.

Joh 2:12 He goeth to Capernaum.

Joh 2:13-17 Thence to Jerusalem, where he driveth the buyers and

sellers out of the temple.

Joh 2:18-22 He giveth his own death and resurrection for a sign.

Joh 2:23-25 Many believe in him because of his miracles, but he

would not trust himself unto them.

Ver. 1. Whether it was the third day after that our Saviour had left the province of Judea or the third day after Philip came to him, or after Peter or Nathanael came to him, is hardly worth the disputing; if it be to be

interpreted with relation to Joh 1:43, (which speaks of the day following), it must be the third day after Simon came to Christ, there happened to be *a marriage in Cana of Galilee*. Some reckon three cities of this name; one in the lot of Manasseh, another in the lot of Ephraim, another in rite lot of Asher. This Cana is concluded by most interpreters to be the same mentioned, Jos 19:28, which was in the tribe of Asher, which was in Galilee: some others say, it was another Cana, near to Capernaum. At this wedding feast was the virgin Mary, our Lord's mother; and it is probable that the persons for whose marriage the feast was solemnized were some of the virgin's kindred or near relations. Some think, from the virgin's taking notice of the want of wine, that it was a family where she had either a constant charge, or the charge for that day.

John 2:2

Ver. 2. Whether only the five disciples mentioned in the former chapter, or some others also, the Scripture doth not say. Christ and his disciples being at this marriage feast, both lets us know that feasting at such a time is proper, and that the most severe religious persons may lawfully be present at such meetings; only they are obliged to keep to rules of frugality, modesty, and sobriety, to a breach of which possibly such meetings may give more temptations.

John 2:3

Ver. 3. The word $\upsilon\sigma\tau\epsilon\rho\eta\sigma\alpha\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma$ may as well be translated, coming short, or behind, as wanting; and so some think it is to be understood; but Mary tells Jesus, they had *no wine*: they either had none, or she discerned it came short; they had not enough. It lets us know the frugality of him who made the feast. But whether Mary told her Son of it in expectation that he should supply it by a miracle, or that he should entertain the company with some pious discourse while the want should be supplied, is not so easy to determine: that which seems to oppose the first (and most generally received) opinion, is, that this was the first miracle he wrought, which we have upon record; nor had our Saviour by any words given her hope to see any miraculous operations from him; for though some say he had, from the last verse of the former chapter, yet the words can hardly be strained to

such a sense, nor doth it appear that Mary was in Judea to hear them. But yet it seems probable she had some such expectation, both from our Saviour's answer, Joh 2:4, and from her saying to the servants, Joh 2:5, *Whatsoever he say unto you, do it*; and though Christ had as yet done no public miracle, yet what the virgin might have seen of him in thirty years time, while he lived at home with her, we cannot tell.

John 2:4

Ver. 4. That it was ordinary with the Jews, speaking to women, to call them by the name of their sex, is plain from Mt 15:28 Lu 13:12 Lu 22:57 Joh 4:21. But that, speaking to their relations, they were wont to own their relation in their compellation, sometimes is also evident, from 1Ki 2:20, *Ask on, my mother*. So as our Saviour's here calling the blessed virgin, *Woman*, not mother, is agreed by most to signify to her, that in this thing he did not own her as his mother, and so clothed with an authority to command him. And indeed so much the next words (*what have I to do with thee?*) signify, which is a form of speech that both signifies some displeasure for her unseasonable interrupting him, and also that she had no right nor authority upon him in this thing. See the use of the same phrase, Jud 11:12 2Sa 16:10 Ezr 4:3 Mt 8:29 27:19. None was more obedient and respective to his parents than our Saviour, Lu 2:51, therein fulfilling the will of God, Jer 35:13,14; but in the business of his calling he regarded them not, Mt 12:48; Lu 2:49; and hath hereby taught us our duty, to prefer our obedience to our heavenly Father before our obedience to any earthly relation, Mt 5:37 Lu 14:26. He hath also hereby taught us, that the blessed virgin is not to be preferred before her Son (as the papists do). Besides this, our Lord giveth another reason for his not present hearkening to his mother, *mine hour is not yet come*; either, because the time was not yet come to work miracles publicly; or to show her, that she was not to prescribe the time to him when he should work miraculously; thereby also showing us, that for things in this life we are to submit our desires to the Divine will, and to wait God's leisure; yet by this expression he also gives her some hopes that he would in his own time supply this want.

John 2:5

Ver. 5. She plainly by these words declareth her confidence that Christ (notwithstanding the repulse he gave her) would supply this want; and therefore taking no notice of Christ's reprehension of her, she orders the servants to be absolutely obedient to him, doing, without disputing, whatsoever he bid them; and indeed such is the obedience which we all owe to God and Jesus Christ.

John 2:6

Ver. 6. The Jews were wont in their dining rooms to have waterpots standing; whether one for every guest (upon which account some think here were six) doth not appear. For the contents of these vessels, it is uncertain; the reason is, because the Jewish measures, both for things dry and liquid, are much unknown to us, most countries varying in their measures. According to our measures, these vessels should contain three hogsheads, or near it; but it is not probable that so great vessels of stone should stand in a room: the end of their standing there was for the people to wash in, before they did eat, Mt 15:2 Mr 7:3, and to wash their vessels in, Mr 7:4. We are certain of the number of the vessels, but not of the contents of them. Some say, they held so much water as, being turned into wine, was enough for one hundred and fifty persons; but we can make no certain judgment of it.

John 2:7

Ver. 7. Either the water was defiled by some persons washing in it, or else the vessels were not full. Our Lord commands them to be filled (the water pots, not wine vessels) *with water*, pure water; he commands them all to be filled by the servants, who could attest the miracle, that there was nothing in the vessels but pure water. Here was no new creature to be produced; he doth not therefore command the production of wine out of nothing; but only the transformation of a creature already existent into a creature of another kind. The servants dispute not his command, nor ask any reason of his command, but yield that ready and absolute obedience which we all of us owe to Divine precepts. They fill them, and so full that they could hold no more.

John 2:8

Ver. 8. The Jews had one who was to order the affairs of their feast, and who is upon that account called the master, or *governor*, of it; to whom our Saviour directs, that some of this newly made wine should be carried; either that they might not suspect it was by some art provided by him, or because he was of the best judgment in those affairs. The servants yield the same ready obedience to his commands which they had before yielded.

John 2:9

Ver. 9. Our Saviour's action, by which he turned the water into wine, being not obvious to the senses of any; but only the secret motion of his will, willing the thing to be; is not recorded, only the effect and the consequents of it are. The papists would from hence argue, that the bread in the sacrament may be called bread, though it be transubstantiated, as the water here is called water, though it were turned into wine; but it must be observed, that it is not here called water, without the addition of *that was made wine*: we have no such addition in the gospel, where the sacramental bread is called bread; it is not said, the bread which now is turned into the flesh of Christ; nor doth the Scripture any where (as here) attest any such transubstantiation. The governor of the feast had a cup of wine presented to him, but knew not whence it came; only the servants, who by Christ's command first filled the vessels, and drew out this cupful, they knew.

John 2:10

Ver. 10. The governor calls the bridegroom, (at whose cost the provision for the feast was to be provided), and minds him, that he seemed to have done contrary to the common practice of such as made feasts; for they used to bring forth their best wine first, when men's palates were quickest, and least adulterated; and worse after that they had drank well; so the word $\mu\epsilon\theta\upsilon\sigma\theta\omega\sigma\iota$ signifies, as appears by the Septuagint's translation of the Hebrew word so signifying, Ge 43:34 Hag 1:6; not only men's distemp'ring themselves with wine, which it also sometimes signifieth; and this speaketh our translation of it, 1Co 11:21, *are drunken*, something

hard, the word not necessarily nor always so signifying; and they must be very uncharitable to the primitive church of Corinth, who can think that it would permit persons actually drunken to come to the Lord's table. But the custom, it seems, was, if they had any wine worse than another, to bring it out to their guests after that the edge of their palates was a little blunted with the taste of better. Now this bridegroom, as the governor of the feast (who knew nothing of the miracle) thought, had kept his briskest and most generous wine to the last; thereby giving a great approbation of the miracle, not only owning it to be true wine, but much better than they had before at the feast.

John 2:11

Ver. 11. The sense is not, that this was the first miracle which Christ wrought in Cana of Galilee; but this was the first miracle which Christ wrought after he was entered upon the public ministry, and it was wrought in that Cana which is within the confines of Galilee, either in the lot of Zebulun or Asher: yet there are some who would not have it the first miracle which Christ wrought, but the first which he wrought in that place; but there is no reason for such an interpretation; for then there had been no reason for the following words, for Christ did not manifest his glory there only; though some object those wonderful or miraculous things happening at our Saviour's birth, of which we read, Mt 2:9 Lu 2:9. Yet as some distinguish between *mira* and *miracula*, so others give a more plain and satisfactory answer, telling us those were miraculous operations more proper to the Father and the Spirit, thereby attesting the Deity of Christ, than to Christ considered as God man. This was the first of those miraculous operations which were wrought by Christ Jesus as God man, by which he *manifested his glory*, the glory mentioned in Joh 1:14, *as of the only begotten of the Father*; his Divine majesty and power.

And his disciples, who before believed on him, Joh 1:41,45, now more firmly *believed on him*, Joh 14:1, as Mediator. In Scripture that is often said to be, which doth not commence, but increase from that time and occasion.

John 2:12

Ver. 12. *Capernaum* was a city lifted up to heaven, for mercies of all sorts, which Christ foretold, Mt 11:28, should be brought down to hell, for their contempt of his doctrine and miracles. It was in the tribe of Naphtali, whose lot was contiguous to Zebulun, and lay on the north east of it; a place where Christ afterwards preached much, and wrought many miracles, Mt 8:13,14 9:18 Mr 2:1 5:22; a place brought so low in Hierom's time, that it scarce consisted of seven poor cottages of fishermen. Thither at this time went Christ, *and his mother, and his brethren*, (by which term the Scripture often expresses any near kinsmen), *and his disciples*; whether only the five mentioned in the former chapter, or others also, is not said. But they did not at that time stay long there, probably because the passover time (when they were to be at Jerusalem) was so nigh, as would not admit any long stay before they began their journey; and it is likely that the company mentioned here to be with Christ at Capernaum, did also design to go along with him to the passover, of which we next read.

John 2:13

Ver. 13. Concerning the Jewish passover we have once and again spoken in our notes on the other evangelists. The institution of it was Ex 12:1-51. It was to be solemnized yearly in the place which the Lord should choose, according to the law, De 16:6. Christ, though he was not naturally subject to the law, yet to fulfil all righteousness, and to redeem his people from the curse of the law, Ga 4:5, kept the passover yearly, taking also advantage from the conflux of the people to Jerusalem at that time, to make himself and his doctrine more known. None of the other evangelists make mention of more than one passover between the time of Christ's baptism and death: John plainly mentions three, one here, another in Joh 6:4, the last, Joh 18:39; and some think that he mentions another, though more obscurely, Joh 5:1. Our Lord was at them all.

John 2:14

Ver. 14. Mt 21:12 Lu 19:45, is a piece of history so like this, that some have questioned whether it mentions not the same individual matter of

fact; but it is apparent that it doth not:

1. Because St. John mentions it as done three years before it, at the first passover; all the other evangelists mention what they report as done at the fourth passover.
2. The circumstances of the narrative make it appear.
 - a) John mentions only the ejection of the sellers; all the others mention the ejection both of the buyers and sellers.
 - b) Here, he only saith they had made his Father's house a place of merchandise; the others say, that whereas it was written, it should be called a house of prayer, they had made it a den of thieves.
 - c) Here he only bids them that sold doves take their goods away; the others say he overturned the seats of them that sold doves: so as our Saviour plainly appeareth to have done this twice, at his first passover and at the last.

For the more full explication of the parts of this history, See Poole on "Mt 21:12". See Poole on "Mr 11:15". See Poole on "Lu 19:45". The reason of their bringing oxen, and sheep, and doves into the temple, was to supply those that came afar off, and could not bring their sacrifices with them, with such sacrifices as the law required in several cases. The money changers were there, to change the people's money into half shekels, every one being obliged to offer his half shekel, Ex 30:13. Our Saviour did not condemn this course of accommodating of people; but blames the covetousness of the priests, who for their private lucre had made the temple their marketplace, whenas there was room enough elsewhere.

John 2:15

Ver. 15. It concerns not us to inquire where our Saviour had the small cords, of which he made his whip; there were doubtless cords enough at hand, taken off from beasts brought thither, though he was himself in no Franciscan habit, as the papists idly dream. But herein was the mighty power of God seen, that Christ, a single, private, obscure person, should

without any more noise or opposition drive out the multitude of these hucksters, and overturn their tables. Nor I think (after the consideration of this circumstance) need we inquire by what authority he did this? It was prophesied of him, Mal 3:1, that he should *come to his temple*; Mal 3:3, should *sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver*. Christ here, according to that prophecy, cometh to his temple, and begins to purge it.

John 2:16

Ver. 16. At this his first coming, he gives them that sold doves a liberty to take their goods away; but at the last coming, Mt 21:12, it is said, he overturned their seats. Those that think this precedent sufficient to vindicate private persons tumultuous pulling down images, seem not to consider, that Christ was no private person, (though so esteemed), and did what he did as Lord of his house. Those who urge it as inferring magistrates and superiors duty in this case, urge it well; for it may well be from hence concluded, that it is the will of Christ, that places set apart for public worship, should neither wickedly be made dens of thieves, nor yet indecently made places for men to buy and sell in; though we can ascribe no such holiness to any place as to the temple, which had not only a particular dedication, but was built by God's order, his acceptance of it declared, and had peculiar promises annexed to it; besides its prefiguration of Christ (of which we shall speak more afterward); yet even nature itself teacheth, that there is a decent reverence and respect due to such places. This action of Christ's also, before he had published the doctrine of the gospel, instructs us, that those who have authority are not always to refrain from removing instruments of superstition and idolatry, or gross and indecent corruptions, until people be first by the preaching of the true doctrine persuaded willingly to part with them. But if this were to make God's house a place of merchandise for men, there to sell oxen, and sheep, and doves, and keep shops for changing money; what do papists make such houses, by their showing their relics and images to people, thereby to get money for their priests, and for selling pardons, indulgences, &c.? Never were God's houses to that degree made places of merchandise, and dens of thieves, if every one that cheateth for his profit be (as he is) a thief.

John 2:17

Ver. 17. The disciples, as well as the rest of the people there present, could not but be astonished at this so strange a thing, to see a single person, and he in no repute but as a private person, to make a whip, and with authority drive the buyers and sellers out of the temple, and nobody to oppose him; but they remembered the words of David, Ps 69:9. Some think that John here reports what they did after Christ's resurrection; and, indeed, whoso considereth the following part of the gospel history, would think that it were so; for they did not seem so early to have had a persuasion of Christ's Divine nature, nor that he was the Messiah; or if they at this time remembered it, and apprehended that Christ was the Son of David, the impression seems to have worn off. It is a greater question whether Ps 69:1-36 (from whence this quotation is) is to be understood of Christ, properly and literally, or merely as the Antitype to David, of whom that Psalm is literally to be understood? Some of the Lutherans think that Psalm primarily concerned Christ. Mr. Calvin and others think it only concerned Christ as David's Antitype. The former, for their opinion, take notice of the frequent quotation of it in the New Testament, Mt 27:48 Joh 19:28 Ac 1:20 Ro 15:3. The other urge that there are some things in that Psalm which cannot agree to Christ. The matter is not much. Zeal is nothing but a warmth of love and anger. It is good to be zealous, yea, swallowed up with zeal, in a good cause; but men must take heed of the Pharisaiical zeal, not according to knowledge. Christ was zealous, but the cause was good.

John 2:18

Ver. 18. Which of the Jews, whether some of the magistrates, or the priests, (who were more specially concerned for their profit), or the common people, or all together, is not said. They undertake not to justify their fact, nor could they deny it, but they ask him *what sign* he could show them to justify his Divine authority. For this seemeth to have been their principle, that let corruptions and abuses in a church be never so great, yet they were not to be reformed, but either by the ordinary authority of the magistrate, or by all extraordinary authority from God. Such an extraordinary authority they would acknowledge in prophets; but they expected that those who pretended to such an extraordinary Divine

mission, should be able to confirm that mission by some miraculous operations, as Moses did, Ex 4:30. They had had no prophets now for four hundred years amongst them; the Jews required therefore a sign, 1Co 1:22. The papists were at the same point with the first reformers; but they mistook, for they brought no new doctrine, but still cried, *To the law and to the testimony*; and where the true doctrine and sacraments are upheld, there is a true church, which hath power to call and send out preachers.

John 2:19

Ver. 19. Our Saviour refuseth to give them any sign, but that of his resurrection the third day from the dead. This was the sign to which he afterwards refers the Pharisees, Mt 12:39 Lu 11:29. Our Saviour's words must not be understood as commanding or licensing them to destroy him, but as foretelling what they would do. It is in Scripture very ordinary to use the imperative mood for the future tense of the indicative; see Ge 42:18 De 32:50 Isa 8:9,10 54:1 Joh 13:27. *Destroy*, is as much as, I know you will destroy, or, If you do destroy this temple, I will build it up in three days. The resurrection of Christ from the dead is ordinarily in Scripture attributed to the Father; but here Christ saith he would do it; and the Spirit, by whom he is said to have been quickened, equally proceedeth both from the Father and the Son. Nor is this the only text where it is attributed to Christ; see Joh 20:17,18. It was the work of the Trinity, out of itself, and so the work of all the three Persons. These words were three years after this made a great charge against Christ, Mt 26:61; but they reported them thus, *This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days*. He said only, *this temple*, meaning his body.

John 2:20

Ver. 20. The Jews understood his words of that material temple in which they at this time were, which the best interpreters think was the temple built by Ezra and Zerubbabel; but how to make it out that it was forty six years building, they are not well agreed. Some say, Cyrus reigned thirty, Cambyses eight, Darius six; these added together make forty four. Others say that the Magi reigned two years more. Some reckon to Cyrus thirty

one, to his son Cambyses nine, Darius six. Others say that the years wherein the building was hindered during Artaxerxes's time, Ezr 4:21, added to the two years of Darius, Ezr 4:24, in whose sixth year it was finished, are reckoned together. The Jews thought it strange that our Saviour should undertake in three days to rear a building which had cost their forefathers so many years.

John 2:21

Ver. 21. But, alas, our Saviour spoke not of their material temple, but of the temple of his body; which yet was proper speaking: for if the apostle calleth our bodies *the temple of God*, as he doth, 1Co 3:16 6:19 2Co 6:16; it much more may be said so of the body of Christ: for as God dwelt in the temple, and there revealed his will, and would be there worshipped; how properly must the notion of *the temple* agree to Christ, in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily, Col 2:9, who revealeth his Father's nature and will to men, Mt 11:27, and in whom all must worship him? So as the temple at Jerusalem was every way a most illustrious type of Christ, and Christ might well, speaking concerning his body, say, *Destroy this temple*; and thus Christ (would these blind Jews have seen it) drew off the Jews from glorying in their temple, Jer 7:4; and from the temple, which was but a type, (as the tabernacle was before, Ac 7:44 Heb 9:23,24), to himself, prefigured by those houses, Heb 9:11. Nor doth he think fit at this time to speak more plainly; for as he knew that the perverse Jews, in seeing would not see, nor bear any such doctrine; so he also knew, that his better disciples were as yet weak in faith; and none putteth new wine into old bottles.

John 2:22

Ver. 22. Even Christ's own disciples at the first rather admired than perfectly understood their Lord. It is said of Christ, Lu 24:45, a little before his ascension into heaven, *Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scripture*. The disciples did not distinctly understand many things till after Christ's resurrection from the dead, when they saw the things accomplished, and when Christ further opened their eyes; which was also further done when the Holy Ghost came upon them

in the days of Pentecost. Thus we hear for the time to come; and the seed which lieth a long time under the clods, at last springeth up through the influence of heaven upon it.

And they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had said; the disciples then more clearly and more firmly believed the Scriptures, and were able to make a clearer application and interpretation of them. By *the Scripture* here, are meant the Scriptures of the Old Testament; to which is added, *and the word which Jesus had said*. Christ's words gave them a clearer insight into the Scriptures of the Old Testament; and the harmony of the writings of the Old Testament with Christ's words under the New Testament, confirmed the disciples' faith in both.

John 2:23

Ver. 23. To believe in Christ's name, and to believe in Christ himself, are one and the same thing; as it is the same to call upon God, and to call upon the name of God: so Ac 3:16. The meaning is, that they believed the things which were published concerning his person and office: yet the periphrasis, *Believed in his name*, is not vain; but declareth a mutual relation between God and the word, by the preaching of which he maketh himself known to the world.

True faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. I think it is to no purpose disputed here by some, whether the faith here mentioned was true faith, yea or no. It appeareth by what followeth, that it was not true justifying faith; but it was true in its kind. To make up true justifying, saving faith, which the apostle calls *the faith of God's elect*, three things are required:

1. A knowledge of the proposition of the word revealing Christ: this is acquired by reading, hearing, meditation, &c.
2. The second is assent, which is the act of the understanding, agreeing in the truth of the word revealed, when such an assent is given to a proposition, if merely upon the Divine revelation of it: this is faith, a true faith in its kind.

3. Upon this now (in those who savingly believe) the will closes with Christ as an adequate object; for it receiveth him, accepteth him, relies on him as its Saviour, and moveth by the affections to love, desire, hope, rejoice in him; and commandeth the outward man into an obedience to his law.

Now it is very possible, that, through a common influence of the Holy Spirit of God, men upon the hearing of the word, especially having the advantage of seeing miraculous operations confirming the word, may give a true assent to the proposition of the word, as a proposition of truth, and yet may never receive Christ as their Saviour, close with him, trust in him, desire, love, or obey him; this was the case of these persons, many at least of them. They believed, seeing the miracles which Christ did: they wanted a due knowledge of Christ founded in the word; neither had they any certain, steady, fixed assent, founded in the discerning the truth of the proposition; their assent was sudden, founded only upon the miracles they saw wrought; so as though they might have some confidence in him, as a famous person, and some great prince, from whom they might expect some earthly good, yet this was all, which was far enough from true saving faith.

John 2:24

Ver. 24. Christ did not take all these seeming believers into his bosom, nor call them after him, nor maintain any familiar fellowship and communion with them; but made haste again into Galilee, till his time was come, knowing that in so public a place of danger they were not to be trusted; for being God blessed for ever, he had knowledge of the hearts of all men.

John 2:25

Ver. 25. And needed not any information concerning the principles and humours of all men; for he perfectly knew men, not only from their more external acts and behaviours, (as we know them), but he knew what was in them, searching the hearts, and trying the reins, which is the property of

God alone, 1Ki 8:39 Ps 33:15. Here what we formerly observed is again observable, that oft times in holy writ, for the further confirmation of a proposition, to a universal affirmative is added a contrary negative. Here ariseth a question, agitated between the Lutherans and the Calvinists, Whether Christ as man knew all things, and what is in the heart of man. They affirm it, because of the personal union of the Divine and human natures in Christ. We say, that although there be such a personal union, yet the properties of each nature remain distinct; upon which account Christ denieth that he, as the Son of man, knew the day and hour of the end of the world. Besides, by the same reason that omniscience belongeth to the human nature of Christ, omnipotence, infiniteness, and omnipresence, also must; which last indeed they affirm, seeing that without it they were not able to defend their doctrine of consubstantiation, or the presence of the body and blood of Christ, wherever the sacrament of his supper is administered; but this being a matter polemical, we shall not here discourse it. Those who would be satisfied as to what is said on either side, may find enough in Gerard, Hunnius, and Farnovius, on the Lutherans' side; and in Zanchius and others on the Calvinists' side, Zanchius de Natura and Attributis Dei, lib. 3. cap. 2. qu. 16.

John 3:1

Chapter Summary

<u>Joh 3:1-13</u>	Christ, in a conference with Nicodemus, teacheth him
	the necessity of regeneration,
<u>Joh 3:14,15</u>	the efficacy of faith in his death.
<u>Joh 3:16,17</u>	God's great love to mankind in sending his Son for
	their salvation,
<u>Joh 3:18-21</u>	and the condemnation for unbelief.
<u>Joh 3:22</u>	Jesus baptizeth in Judea,
<u>Joh 3:23,24</u>	as doth John in Aenon.
<u>Joh 3:25-36</u>	John's doctrine concerning Christ.

Ver. 1. The particule *there* being put in only to fit our idiom to the Greek, where is nothing but the verb, signifies nothing to prove that what we read

in this chapter was done at Jerusalem. It is a dispute amongst some interpreters, whether he was there or no. It should seem by Joh 7:50, that Nicodemus's chief residence was there. He was one of the Pharisees, who were a sect (as we have showed before) which had their name either from a Hebrew word, which signifieth to explain, (because they were expounders of the law), or from another word, which signifieth to divide, because they were separate from others: the opinions have both learned patrons. This man's name in Greek signifies, The victory of the people. He was either the head of a family among the Jews, or a ruler of the synagogue, or one of the sanhedrim: it seemeth most probable he is here called *a ruler* upon the last account, if we consider Joh 7:50.

John 3:2

Ver. 2. He came *by night* to Christ, not, as some (too charitably) possibly may think, that he might have the freer and less interrupted communion and discourse with him; but either through fear, or possibly shame, being a master in Israel, to be looked upon as a scholar going to learn of another. He saluteth him by the name they usually gave to their teachers, (as we showed, Joh 1:49), and saith, *we know*, by which he hints to us, that not only he, but others of the Pharisees also, knew that he was a teacher sent from God in a more extraordinary manner; and he giveth the reason of this their knowledge, because of those miraculous operations which he had wrought. God hath his number among all orders and sorts of men; and those that are his shall come unto Christ. There was a weakness in the faith and love of this Nicodemus; (his station amongst the Jews was a great temptation to him); but yet there was a truth of both in him, which further discovered itself, Joh 7:50, and more upon Christ's death, Joh 19:39. But here ariseth a greater question, viz. How Nicodemus could conclude that Christ was a teacher sent from God, by his miracles.

Answer. It is to be observed, that he doth not say, in the general, that no man does signs or wonders of any kind, unless the power and favour of God be with him. But he speaks particularly and eminently of those things which Jesus did; they were so great in their nature, so real and solid in their proof, so Divine in the manner of performing them by the empire of his will; so holy in their end, to confirm a doctrine most becoming the wisdom and other glorious attributes of God, and that were the verification

of the prophecies concerning the Messiah, whose coming it was foretold should be with miraculous healing benefits; that there was the greatest assurance, that none without the omnipotent hand of God could do them; for it is clear by the light of reason and Scripture, that God will not assist by his almighty power the ministers of Satan, to induce those who sincerely search for truth to believe a lie. The magicians indeed performed divers wonders in Egypt, but they were outdone by Moses, to convince the spectators that he was sent from a power infinitely superior to that of evil spirits. Real miracles, that are contrary to the order and exceed the power of nature, can only be produced by creating power, and are wrought to give credit to those who are sent from God. And when God permits false miracles to be done by seducers, that would thereby obtain authority and credit amongst men, the deception is not invincible; for it is foretold expressly to give us warning, that the man of sin shall come with *lying wonders, by the working of Satan*, 2Th 2:9; and the heavenly doctrine of the gospel has been confirmed by real miracles, incomparably greater than all the strange things done to give credit to doctrines opposite to it.

John 3:3

Ver. 3. We observed before, that the term *answered* doth not always in the New Testament signify a reply to a question before propounded; but sometimes no more than a reply, or the beginning of another speech: whether it doth so here or no, some question. Some think Christ here gives a strict answer to a question which Nicodemus had propounded to him, about the way to enter into the kingdom of God; which question the evangelist sets not down, but leaves to the reader to gather from the answer. Others think that our Saviour knew what he would say, and answered the thoughts of his heart. Others, that he only began a discourse to him about what was highly necessary for him, that was a master in Israel, to understand and know. He begins his discourse with *Verily, verily*, the import of which we considered, Joh 1:51. The word translated *again*, is *ανωθεν*, which often signifieth *from above*; so it signifieth, Joh 3:31 Jas 1:17 3:15-17. It also signifieth *again*: Ga 4:9, *How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements?* That it must be so translated here, and Joh 3:7, appeareth from Nicodemus's answer in the next verse. But the expression of the second or new birth by this word, which also signifies *from above*, may possibly reach us, that the new birth must be wrought in

the soul from above by the power of God, which is what was said before, Joh 1:12,13, the necessity of which our Saviour presseth from the impossibility otherwise of his seeing the *kingdom of God*; by which some understand the kingdom of his glory (as the phrase is used, Lu 18:24,25); others understand it of the manifestation of Christ under the gospel state, or the vigour, power, and effect of the gospel, and the grace thereof. By seeing of it, is meant enjoying, and being made partakers of it, as the term is used, Ps 16:10; Joh 16:10 Re 18:7. The Jews promised their whole nation a place in the kingdom of the Messiah, as they were born of Abraham, Mt 3:9; and the Pharisees promised themselves much from their observation of the law, &c. Christ lets them know neither of these would do, but unless they were wholly changed in their hearts and principles (for so much being *born again* signifieth; not some partial change as to some things, and in some parts) they could never have any true share, either in the kingdom of grace in this life, or in the kingdom of glory in that life which is to come. It is usual by the civil laws of countries, that none enters into the possession of an earthly kingdom but by the right of birth; and for the obtaining the kingdom of heaven, there must be a new birth, a heavenly renovation of the whole man, soul, body, and spirit, to give him a title, by the wise and unchangeable constitution of God in the gospel, and to qualify him for the enjoyment of it.

John 3:4

Ver. 4. By the answer of Nicodemus, it should seem that he was an old man; which is also probable, because he was one of the rulers: he puts the case as to himself; I am, saith he, an old man, how should I be born? Can a man *enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born*? How true is that of the apostle, 1Co 2:14, *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God!* What a gross conception doth Nicodemus (though doubtless a learned as well as a great man) discover of regeneration, as if it could not be without a man's mother travailing in birth with him a second time! Nicodemus's question discovers a great deal of ignorance and weakness, but yet a great deal of simplicity and plainness in him; that he did not come, as the Pharisees generally were wont to come to Christ, to catch him by captious questions, but brought *discendi pietatem*, a pious desire to learn from him, and to be instructed by him. The Pharisees had been used to study the traditions of the elders, and spent

their time about unprofitable niceties, as to the meaning of the law; so were not at all versed in the great things which concerned the kingdom of God. The like instance hath been in later ages, the popish divines spending their time generally about nice school questions, showing themselves much ignorant of spiritual things, and the great mysteries of the kingdom of God.

John 3:5

Ver. 5. To excite his spirit and attention, our Saviour again expresses the authority of his person, *I say*; and twice repeats the solemn asseveration, *Verily, verily*, to show the infallible certainty and importance of what he propounds, that it is a truth worthy of his most serious consideration, and to be embraced with a stedfast belief. After this preface, he declares, If any one be not born of water and the Spirit, to rectify the carnal conceit of Nicodemus about regeneration. In Joh 3:3 our Saviour compared the spiritual birth with the natural, and with respect to that a reviewed man is born a second time. But in this verse he expresses the cause and quality of the new birth, that distinguishes it from the natural birth, and resolves the vain, carnal objection of Nicodemus. He speaks not of the terrestrial, animal birth, but of the celestial and Divine; that is suitable to that principle from whence it proceeds, the Holy Spirit of God. There is a great difference among interpreters about the meaning of being *born of water*. The Romanists, and rigid Lutherans, understand the water in a proper sense, for the element of baptism, and from hence infer the absolute necessity of baptism for salvation; but the exposition and conclusion are both evidently contrary to the truth. Indeed the new birth is signified, represented, and sealed by baptism, it is the soul, and substance of that sacred ceremony; and if our Saviour had only said, that whoever is born of water and the Spirit shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, it might have been congruously understood of baptism; because it is an undoubted truth, that all who are truly regenerated in baptism shall be saved. But our Saviour says, He that is not born of water and the Spirit cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven: the exclusion of the unsanctified is peremptory and universal. And our Saviour shows a manifest difference between an affirmative and negative proposition; when having declared, that whoever *believeth and is baptized shall be saved*; and coming to the negative, he only adds, *but he that believeth not shall be damned*, Mr 16:16. The

reason why he does not say, Whoever is not baptized shall be condemned, is evident; for without faith it is impossible to be saved; but without baptism, even as the Romanists themselves grant, many have been saved. For if we consider the time when our Saviour spake these words, they acknowledge that believers were not then, obliged to receive the baptism of Christ for salvation; for our Saviour had this conference with him some years before his death; and they hold, that before the death of Christ baptism was not necessary, neither by virtue of Divine command, nor as a means to obtain salvation; therefore the believers that lived then might enter into heaven without baptism. They also declare, that martyrdom supplies the want of baptism; and that persons instructed in the doctrine of the gospel, and sincerely believing it, if prevented by death without being baptized, their faith and earnest desire is sufficient to qualify them for partaking of the heavenly kingdom. But if by *water* here be meant the elementary water of baptism, the words of our Saviour are directly contrary to what they assert; for neither the blood of martyrs, nor the desire and vow of receiving baptism, are the water of baptism, which they pretend is properly and literally named by our Saviour. And certainly, if as the apostle Peter instructs us, it is not the cleansing of the flesh in the water of baptism that says, 1Pe 3:21, it is not the mere want of it, without contempt and wilful neglect, that condemneth. By *water* then we are to understand the grace of the Holy Spirit in purifying the soul, which is fitly represented by the efficacy of water. And this purifying, refreshing virtue of the Spirit is promised in the prophecies that concern the times of the Messiah, under the mystical expression of *water*. Thus it is twofold by Isaiah, *I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground*, Isa 44:3. And this is immediately explained, *I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed*; and the Divine birth follows, *they shall spring up as among the grass*. In the same manner the effects of the Holy Spirit are expressed by Ezekiel: *I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean*; and presently after, *I will put my Spirit within you*, Eze 36:25,27. Our Saviour instructing a Pharisee, to whom the prophetic writings were known, expressly uses these two words, and in the same order as they are all set down there, first *water*, and then *the Spirit*, that the latter might interpret the former; for water and the Spirit, by a usual figure when two words are employed to signify the same thing, signify spiritual water, that is, his Divine grace in renewing the soul; as when the apostle says, *in demonstration of the Spirit and of power*, to signify the powerful Spirit. Thus John the Baptist foretold of Christ, that he should *baptize with the*

Holy Ghost and fire, that is, with the Spirit, that has the force and efficacy of fire to refine us from our dross and corruptions. Thus our Saviour plainly instructs Nicodemus of the absolute necessity of an inward spiritual change and renovation, thereby showing the inefficacy of all the legal washings and sprinklings, that could not purify and make white one soul, which were of high valuation among the Jews. Entering into the kingdom of God, is of the same import and sense with the seeing the kingdom of God, in Joh 3:3: that is, without regeneration no man can truly be joined with the society of the church of God, nor partake of the celestial privileges and benefits belonging to it, here and hereafter.

John 3:6

Ver. 6. *That which is born of the flesh:* that which is born of natural flesh; for flesh sometimes signifies the man. So the prophet saith, *All flesh is grass*, Isa 40:6. So Ge 6:12, *All flesh*, that is, all men, *had corrupted their way*. Or, that which is born of corruption, from vitiated and corrupted nature; so flesh is oft taken in Scripture, Ro 8:4,5,8, &c.

Is flesh; that is, it bringeth forth effects proportionable to the cause; a man purely natural brings forth natural operations. Man, as man, moveth, and eateth, and drinketh, and sleepeth. Corrupted man brings forth vicious and corrupt fruit, which often are called *the works of the flesh*, Ga 5:19.

Flesh here signifieth the whole man, whether considered abstractly from the adventitious corruption of his nature, or as fallen in Adam, vitiated and debauched through lust.

And that which is born of the Spirit is spirit: but that man or woman who is regenerated by the Spirit of grace is spiritual; he is *after the Spirit*, Ro 8:5; he is one spirit with God, 1Co 6:17; he is made *partaker of the Divine nature*, 2Pe 1:4; he *doth not commit sin*, 1Jo 3:9. Nothing in operation exceedeth the virtue of that cause which influences it; so as no man from a mere natural principle can perform a truly spiritual operation; and from hence it is absolutely necessary that man must be born of the Spirit, that he may be qualified for the kingdom of heaven.

John 3:7

Ver. 7. There is a twofold admiration, that which is joined with infidelity, and that which is the effect of faith. Our Saviour forbids Nicodemus to marvel at the doctrine of regeneration, as strange and incredible, upon an imaginary impossibility supposed by him of the thing itself. But he that believes will judge that supernatural work of the Spirit, whereby a sinful man is made a partaker of the Divine nature, worthy of the highest admiration. And what our Saviour had said in the general before, that a man must be born again, he now particularly applies to Nicodemus, with those of his order, *Ye must be born again*. For Nicodemus would easily consent that the pagans, and possibly the vulgar Jews, had need of regeneration, to partake of the kingdom of God; but that the doctors of the law, (of which number himself was), esteemed the lights of the world, should be under the same necessity, was astonishing to him. Therefore our Saviour, to undeceive and humble him, saith, *Ye must be born again*, for that all are defiled with the corruption that is universal to mankind.

John 3:8

Ver. 8. The word which is translated *wind*, being the same which both here and ordinarily in Scripture is translated spirit, hath given interpreters a great liberty to abound in their several senses. Some thinking that it should be translated, The spirit, that is, the spirit of a man, breatheth where it listeth; and that our Saviour's sense was, Nicodemus, thou needest not to wonder that thou canst not with thy senses perceive the spiritual new birth, for thou canst not understand the natural birth. Others think it should be translated, The Spirit, that is, the Spirit of God, bloweth where it listeth; but that seemeth not probable, because of these words, *so is every one that is born of the Spirit*; which will hardly be sense if we understand the first part of the verse concerning the same Spirit; and our Saviour saith, Joh 3:12, *If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not*: they seem therefore best to understand it, who interpret it of a terrene spirit, particularly the wind, which is of a spiritual nature: and thus, by their translation, it is apparent that our interpreters understood it. So as, though our Saviour speaketh of the motions of the blessed Spirit, yet he speaketh of them by way of comparison, comparing them to the motion of the wind, of which he said, that it *bloweth where it listeth*; not that it is its own

mover, and under no government of the First Cause; for the Psalmist tells us, Ps 148:8, that the stormy winds fulfil God's word; nor is any such thing compatible to any creature; but the original of its motion is to us imperceptible.

But canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: we can speak something philosophically to the cause of it, and can tell whither it bloweth, from the east, west, north, or south; but we cannot tell the particular place, where or from whence it riseth.

So is every one that is born of the Spirit: so every one, who is regenerated from the working of the Holy Spirit of God, is changed and renewed, so as we can give ourselves or others no account of it in all points, as to the inward operation, though in the effects it be discernible.

John 3:9

Ver. 9. Nicodemus had before spoken as if he thought it a thing impossible, understanding our Saviour of a carnal generation, which he knew could not be repeated: perceiving that he spake of a spiritual birth, he is now posed at the mystery of it; it being a thing the doctrine of which he had not been acquainted with. His carnal stupidity hindered his understanding the first lesson of Christianity, though explained by the Sun of righteousness; and his pride hindered him from confessing his ignorance; he rather judges the doctrine to be absurd and impossible. The like darkness is in every unrenewed mind; regeneration being like that new name, which none understand but those that have it.

John 3:10

Ver. 10. Our Saviour doth not so much wonder at as upbraid the ignorance of Nicodemus, and all of his sect, who went for masters, or teachers, and that in Israel; who had the law and the prophets, and yet were ignorant of those things which were necessary to be known to every ordinary person's salvation. Will any say, But where was there any thing spoken in the books of the law and the prophets about regeneration, or a being born again?

Answer. What other things could be meant by the circumcision of the heart, commanded by Moses, De 10:16, promised in De 30:6; by the *new heart*, and the *new spirit*, promised Eze 36:26; by the *clean heart* prayed for by David, Ps 51:10? A teacher in Israel should from hence have understood the necessity of a new and of a *clean heart*; but the whole sect of the Pharisees were so taken up with the trifles of the rites and traditions, and the works of the law, that as to these spiritual things of nearer and much higher concernment to people's souls, they knew and spake little of them.

John 3:11

Ver. 11. Christ speaketh only of himself, though he speaketh in the plural number, for in the next verse he saith only, *If I have told you earthly things*; he lets Nicodemus know that he spake nothing but he was certain of. This he expresses by two words, *know* and *have seen*, which are terms expressive of the greatest certainty of a thing imaginable; for the terms express a certainty of the mind, arising both from the rational deduction and sensible demonstration: and herein our Saviour lets his ministers know what is their duty to teach unto people, viz. what they know and have seen. Those that think that the doctrine of the gospel would have no certainty but for the authority of the church, stand highly concerned to reflect upon this text.

Ye receive not our witness; ye ought to believe what I tell you upon the authority of my revelation; but such is the hardness of your heart, such your stubbornness and unbelief, that you receive not my testimony.

John 3:12

Ver. 12. If I have spoken to you plain things, and in a plain style, humbling my phrase to your apprehensions, and illustrating sublime, spiritual mysteries, which in their own nature are more remote from your apprehensions, by plain and obvious similitudes and parables, and speaking thus, you understand and believe not; what would you do if I should discourse to you sublime and spiritual things, without these advantages for your understandings?

John 3:13

Ver. 13. No man hath so ascended up to heaven, as to know the secret will and counsels of God, for of such an ascending it must be meant; otherwise, Elijah ascended up to heaven before our Saviour ascended. Thus the phrase is supposed to be used, Pr 30:4. None but Christ (who as to his Divine nature came down from heaven) hath ever so ascended thither; *even the Son of man, who was in heaven;* we translate it *is*, but the participle *ων* is of the preter imperfect tense, as well as the present tense: or, *who is in heaven,* by virtue of the personal union of the two natures in the Redeemer; as we read. Ac 20:28, *the church, which he hath purchased with his own blood.* By reason of the personal union of the two natures in Christ, though the properties of each nature remain distinct, yet the properties of each nature are sometimes attributed to the whole person. The Lutherans have another notion, ascribing an omnipresence even to the human nature of Christ, because of its personal union with the Divine nature; and so affirm that Christ's human nature, while it was on earth, was also substantially in heaven; as, on the other side, they are as stiff in maintaining that, although Christ's human nature be now in heaven, yet it is also on earth, really and essentially present wherever the sacrament of the Lord's supper is administered; but this is to ascribe a body unto Christ which is indeed no body, according to any notion we have of a body.

John 3:14

Ver. 14. The history of the lifting up of the serpent in the wilderness we have, Nu 21:8,9. The people being stung with fiery serpents, as a righteous judgment of God for their sins, as a merciful remedy God commanded Moses, Nu 21:8, *Make thee a fiery serpent,* (that is, the image or representation of one of those fiery serpents), *and put it upon a pole; and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.* This brazen serpent in the wilderness was a lively type of Jesus Christ. Our Saviour having before spoken of the new birth as necessary to those who shall be saved, here comes to show it in the causes, and instances first in the meritorious, then in the instrumental, cause. The meritorious cause was his death; he saith, As the serpent was lifted up in

the wilderness, so he, who was the Son of man, must be lifted up; that is, die upon the cross: the phrase is used twice more in this Gospel, Joh 8:28 12:32,34, in allusion, doubtless, to this type. Yet Mr. Calvin thinks the *lifted up* here more properly interpreted of the doctrine of the gospel, and by the preaching of it; and others apply it to Christ's ascension into heaven. And this he tells Nicodemus *must* be, for the fulfilling the Scripture, and the counsels of his Father.

John 3:15

Ver. 15. Here our Lord openeth the instrumental cause of justification and salvation, that is, believing εἰς αὐτόν, *in him*. It is one thing to believe in him as a teacher, another thing to believe in him as a Saviour. The object of the first is a proposition; we believe a person when we assent and give credit to what he saith, because he saith it. The object of the latter is the person and merits of the Mediator. As the looking up to the brazen serpent healed the person, not by any physical operation, but from the goodness of God, as it was an act of obedience to the Divine institution for that end; so neither doth faith in the Mediator justify and obtain pardon for any soul from any meritorious virtue in that act, but from God's gracious ordination, that so it shall be; he hath so ordained, that whosoever shall rest upon Christ, and receive him by faith as his Mediator and Saviour, should not perish, but live for ever. There are other things besides faith necessary to salvation, such are repentance, love, and new obedience; nor is faith only mentioned because they are ingredients into it, but because faith is the root of all those, and that from which they must necessarily flow; for it is as impossible that any should truly hope, and trust in, and rest upon Christ for that life which he hath only promised to those that obey him, as it is impossible that any should indeed trust in and rest upon a man who hath promised a reward upon a condition for that reward, without any care to fulfil that condition. But by this and other places, where faith alone in Christ is mentioned as necessary to salvation. Nicodemus was taught, that no obedience to the works of the law without this faith in the Mediator would bring the soul to eternal life and salvation.

John 3:16

Ver. 16. For God the Father, who is the Lord of all, debtor to none, sufficient to himself, *so loved the world*, that is, Gentiles as well as Jews. There is a great contest about the signification of the term, between those who contend for or against the point of universal redemption; but certain it is, that from this term no more can be solidly concluded, than from the terms *all* and *every*, which in multitudes of places are taken in a restrained sense for many, or all of such a nation or kind. As this term sometimes signifies all persons, so, in 1Jo 2:21, the Gentiles in opposition to the Jews. Nor, admitting that *the world* should signify here every living soul in the place called the world, will any thing follow from it. It is proper enough to say, A man loved such a family to such a degree that he gave his estate to it, though he never intended such a thing to every child or branch of it. So as what is truth in that so vexed a question cannot be determined from any of these universal terms; which must, when all is said that can be said, be expounded by what follows them, and by their reconcilableness to other doctrines of faith.

God so loved the world that he gave his Son to die for a sacrifice for their sins, to die in their stead, and give a satisfaction for them to his justice. And this Son was not any of his sons by adoption, but his *only begotten Son*; not so called (as Socinians would have it) because of his singular generation of the virgin without help of man, but from his eternal generation, in whom the Gentiles should trust, Ps 2:12, which none ought to do, but in God alone, De 6:13 Jer 17:5.

That whosoever, &c.: the term *all* is spoken to above; these words restrain the universal term *world*, and *all*, to let us know that Christ only died for some in the world, viz. such as should believe in him. Some judge, not improbably, that Christ useth the term *world* in this verse in the same sense as in 1Jo 2:2. Our evangelist useth to take down the pride of the Jews, who dreamed that the Messiah came only for the benefit of the seed of Abraham, not for the nations of the world, he only came to destroy them; which notion also very well fitteth what we have in the next verse.

John 3:17

Ver. 17. The word we translate *condemn*, κρινη, signifies to judge, as well as to condemn. The Jews were mistaken in their proud conceit, that

Christ came to judge and destroy all those that were not of their nation; thus, Joh 7:47, he saith, he *came not to judge, but to save the world*. Nor is this contrary to what he saith, Joh 9:39, *For judgment I am come into this world; for that is ex accidenti*, from the corruption of men, shutting their eyes against the light, and hardening their hearts against the offers and tenders of Divine grace. Christ will come in his second coming to condemn the world of unbelievers; but the tendency of his coming was not for condemnation, but to offer the grace of the gospel, and eternal life and salvation, to men in the world.

John 3:18

Ver. 18. Whose firmly and steadily assenting to the propositions of the gospel, revealing Jesus Christ as the only and all sufficient Saviour, commits the care of his soul unto him trusting and hoping in him alone for eternal salvation, which no man can indeed do without doing what in him lieth to fulfil the condition upon which Christ hath promised life and salvation, that is, keeping the commandments of God, is exempted from condemnation by the law of grace. But he that believes not the doctrine of Christ, and does not upon the terms of the gospel receive him for his Saviour, is already condemned for his obstinate infidelity, which is the certain cause of damnation: as we say of one mortally wounded, that he is a dead man, though he breathes for a while; and we speak in the same manner of a malefactor, convicted and attainted of a capital crime, though the sentence be not executed; because their death is inevitable. The not believing in the only Son of God, who is able to save to the utmost all that regularly trust in him, is such a contempt of the merciful, all sufficient, and sole means of salvation, that it is absolutely necessary, and most just, that all those who refuse to be saved by him, should perish by themselves. From this scripture arise two questions: the first concerning the heathens, who never heard of Christ. The second concerning infants, who die before they come to years of knowledge. As to the former, the apostle hath determined, Ro 2:12, *As many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law*. There is the same reason for those who sin without the gospel; they shall not perish for not believing *on him of whom they have not heard*, Ro 10:14, but for not obeying such revelation of the Divine will as they had. The case of infants is excluded from this text (speaking only of adult persons). It is certain, that so many of them as belong to the

election of grace shall he saved, and that by virtue of the blood of Christ; but which way God brings them to heaven is a secret to us. Some from this text have concluded, that unbelief is the only damning sin; which is no further true, than that no sin will damn that soul which shall truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 3:19

Ver. 19. This is the reason, the evidence and great cause of condemnation, *that light is come into the world.* Christ is the Light, foretold by the prophet, Isa 9:2 42:6 49:6. He is styled, in the beginning of this Gospel the true Light, Joh 1:4; that is, he hath in perfection all the excellent qualities of light; the power to enlighten the minds of men in the knowledge of saving truth, to warm the affections with the love of it, to revive the disconsolate, and to make the heavenly seed of the word to flourish and fructify in their lives. This Light is come into the world; that signifies not only his incarnation, but his revealing the merciful counsel of God for our salvation, which the clearest spirits could never have discovered; he has opened the way that leads to eternal life.

But *men loved darkness rather than light;* they preferred, chose, and adhered to their ignorance and errors, before the light of life, the saving knowledge of the gospel. Their ignorance is affected and voluntary, and no colour of excuse can be alleged for it; nay, it is very culpable and guilty, by neglecting to receive instruction from the Son of God.

Because their deeds were evil; the vices and lusts of men are the works of darkness, the fruits of their ignorance and errors; and they are so pleasant to the carnal corrupt nature, that to enjoy them securely, they obstinately reject the light of the gospel; this aggravates their sin and sentence.

John 3:20

Ver. 20. He that makes a trade of sin, and doth evil presumptuously, loving and delighting in it, doth not love the light, nor, if he can avoid it, will come near it; for the light is that which makes things visible, and discovereth them. As it is of the nature of natural light to show things to

others as they are; and therefore thieves, and adulterers, and drunkards, care not for the light, but choose the darkness for their deeds of darkness, and come as little abroad in the light as they can when they do them: so it is of the nature of Christ and his gospel to discover men's errors, both as to the obtaining of justification and eternal salvation, and the errors also of men's lives; and therefore men and women possessed of errors in their judgments, or delighting in a filthy conversation, hate Christ and his gospel; because that a discovering the right ways of God discovereth the crookedness of their ways, opposite to the truths and ways of God.

John 3:21

Ver. 21. *Truth* here is put for true things. He who purposeth, designeth, and acteth nothing but what is just, and holy, and good, and what is consonant to the will of God; he is not afraid to bring his notions and actions to the test of the Divine rule, published by him who is the true Light. For he desires that what he doth *may be made manifest*, both to himself and others, *that they are wrought in*, with, or according to, by, or through *God* (for the particle εἰ, here used, is used in all these senses, 1Co 7:39 Re 14:13). Those works are said to be wrought in, with, by, or through God, which tend to the honour and glory of God as their end, and flow from him as their cause, which are done with his strength and assistance, and for his honour and glory.

John 3:22

Ver. 22. Soon after our Saviour had had the forementioned conference with Nicodemus, which it is believed he had at Jerusalem, not (as some think) in Galilee, for then Nicodemus would hardly have come to him by night, he *came into the land of Judea*. He had before been in the province of Judea, and in the metropolis, or great city, of Judea, which was Jerusalem; but now he goeth into the country of Judea. Judah and Jerusalem are often mentioned distinctly. The chief city of a country is oft distinguished from the country, though within the same province and tribe; see Jos 8:1, *the king of Ai, his city, and his land*; and in particular as to Jerusalem, 2Ch 11:14 20:17 2Ch 36:23 Ezr 2:1 Lu 5:17 6:17, Christ and his disciples went into the country part of Judea; *and there he tarried with*

them, and baptized, by his disciples, for himself personally baptized none; but as in our common speech, so in the language of Scripture, there is nothing more ordinary than for persons to be said themselves to do what they do by others, 1Sa 26:11,12 2Ki 22:16 2Ch 34:24 Ac 7:52.

John 3:23

Ver. 23. *Aenon* is here said to be *near Salim*: it was the name of a city, as some think; others say, a river or brook near that city: neither the river nor the city are elsewhere mentioned in Scripture; but topographers place it on the eastern part of the lot of Manasseh, not far from Bethshan or Scythopolis. There John was baptizing; because this *Aenon* was a brook or river that had much water, which in Judea was rare. There is no water more holy than the other. John baptized in Jordan, and in Bethabara, and in *Aenon*. The ordinance sanctified the water, but did not require consecrated water for the due administration of it. It is from this apparent that both Christ and John baptized by dipping the body in the water, else they need not have sought places where had been a great plenty of water; yet it is probable that they did not constantly dip, from what we read of the apostles baptizing in houses, Ac 9:17,18 10:47,48. The people came to John and were baptized, that is, great numbers of them did so.

John 3:24

Ver. 24. For John was yet in the exercise of his public ministry, not cast into prison, as he was soon after.

John 3:25

Ver. 25. The Jews had so many purifyings, some legal, instituted by God, ordained by Moses as God's minister; some traditional, brought in by the Pharisees, as their washings before meat, Mt 15:1-20 Mr 7:1-23; that seemeth a hard thing to determine what the question was between John's disciples and the Jews, about what purifying; and the boldest determiners in this case are no better than guessers. Some would have baptism to be meant here by *purifying*. It would much conduce to the resolution of the

question if we knew what these Jews were with whom John's disciples argued. If they were of the Pharisees, it is probable the question was about John's baptism, considering the frequent washings and purifyings that they had in use amongst them. If they were other Jews, the question might be about the virtue and efficacy of the ceremonial washings, ordained by the law of God, whether they were mere types, and now to cease? Whether in themselves they conduced any thing to the washing and cleansing of a soul? If these Jews were (as some think, but I know not how it can be proved) disciples of Christ, the question might be about John's and Christ's baptism. This notion seemeth to be favoured by what went before; where the evangelist had been speaking of baptism, as administered by Christ's disciples, and by John; as also from what followeth, viz. John's disciples coming to him and complaining, that Christ by his disciples baptized more than their master. But there seemeth to be this great prejudice against the notion of those learned men that have embraced that notion, viz. That the question is said to have risen between *John's disciples and the Jews*; now we want an instance in Scripture, where the disciples of John are put in opposition to the disciples of Christ, and under notion of the Jews; the term *Jews* generally signifying that part of the people who adhered to the Judaical rites and religion; especially where (as here) it is used in opposition either to the disciples of John or of Christ. It is most probable therefore the question was, either about the washings ordained by the law of Moses, or about the traditional washings observed by the Pharisees.

John 3:26

Ver. 26. The disciples of John coming unto him, give him the usual title, under which in that age they were wont to speak to those whom they owned as their teachers, which was *Rabbi*. Their business was to complain, that Christ, whom they do not think fit to name, nor to give him any title, but mention him as one much inferior to their master, one that came to him to Bethabara, and to whom he there gave testimony, Joh 1:7,34, as if Christ had from him derived all his credit and reputation. Their master did not go to Christ, but he came to their master; he was not baptized of Christ, but Christ was baptized of him; he did not give testimony to their master, but their master gave testimony to him: now, say they, he baptizeth by his disciples, and multitudes, many of all sorts of people, (for the universal

particle *all men* can here signify no more), come to him. Love is jealous; they were afraid that their master's reputation would by this means flag and be diminished. Such a passage we find, Nu 11:28. And thus John, our Saviour's disciple, was jealous for Christ his Master, Lu 9:49. They all sinned, as appears by the answer given by Moses to Joshua, Nu 11:29, and Christ's answer to John, Lu 9:50, and by the following reply of John to these disciples, envying for his sake.

John 3:27

Ver. 27. The ministry, and the success of the ministry, must both be given a man from heaven: doth he baptize? It is a sign he is sent of God. Do all men come to him? That also is from God. An excellent corrective of ambition, envy, and jealousy: no man hath in the church of God authority, but he to whom it is given from heaven; no authority over his Son.

John 3:28

Ver. 28. I appeal to you that are my disciples, Did not I always plainly tell yea that I was not the Christ? It belongeth unto Christ alone, who is the Head of the church, to send out such as shall labour in it, and to restrain those that labour in it; would you have me silence or suspend him? I told you, that I was but one of his ministers, *sent before him* to prepare his way, Joh 1:20,23.

John 3:29

Ver. 29. Christ, whose the church is by a right of redemption, and by its having given up itself to him, 2Co 8:5, he is the Bridegroom of it, Mt 22:2 2Co 11:2 Eph 5:23,25,29; as his Father was the Husband of the Jewish church; it belongeth to him to give laws to it, and to order matters and affairs in it. I am but as one who is *the friend of the bridegroom*, one of *the children of the bride chamber*, Mt 9:15, and have by my preaching prepared the people of the Jews for him; and instead of being troubled to hear that he is come, I rejoice greatly to hear his voice. So far am I from repining to hear that multitudes go to him, that *my joy is fulfilled*; that is, I

have no greater satisfaction than to hear it.

John 3:30

Ver. 30. *He must increase*, in honour, and dignity, and reputation in the world; he is the rising sun, (to give you notice of which I was but as the morning star), he must shine every day more and more.

But I must decrease; God hath indeed used me as a prophet, yea, more than a prophet, not to foretell Christ alone, but to point him to you. I have had my time, and finished my course, and God hath given me a reputation proportioned to the work he gave me to do, and to the time in which I was to work; but I must every day decay, and grow less and less, as Christ increaseth and groweth more and more.

John 3:31

Ver. 31. He that cometh from heaven, (for it appeareth by the latter part of the verse, that is the sense of *from above*), as Christ did, not only in respect of his Divine nature, but being (as to his whole person) clothed with majesty and authority from above, infinitely excelleth any one who is a mere creature: he that is of an earthly original, *speaketh of the earth*. Such as is a man's original, such is his nature, such is his discourse. Though I be sent of God, as Joh 16:27, and my baptism be from heaven, (so our Saviour himself testifieth, Mt 21:25), yet my original is of the earth, and my relations and expressions are suitable to a mere man: but he that is from heaven excels all, as in the dignity of his person, so in the sublimity of his knowledge.

John 3:32

Ver. 32. Another great difference which the Baptist teacheth his disciples to put between his testimony and Christ's, is, that he, and so all other ministers of the gospel, testify by revelation; Christ testifieth not by revelation, but from his own personal knowledge, what himself *hath seen and heard* from his Father. See Joh 3:11, where our Saviour had spoken to

Nicodemus much the same. So Joh 1:18 Joh 8:26 15:15. By these two terms is signified the most certain and infallible knowledge of those things which he testified, which made them worthy of all acceptance: but yet very few received his testimony, so as to believe in it: see Joh 1:11 3:11.

John 3:33

Ver. 33. He who hath so believed the testimony of Christ, as to accept him, and to believe in him as his Saviour, hath, by that his believing, set to his seal that God, in all his promises of the Messiah under the Old Testament, is true; that a word hath not failed of whatsoever God hath there spoken of that nature. According to this is that 1Jo 5:10, *He that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son*. This saying doth notably commend faith, and defame unbelief. Faith in Christ as the only true Mediator and Saviour, giveth testimony to the truth of God, and sealet it. Unbelief defames God, and doth in effect say that God is a liar.

John 3:34

Ver. 34. *He whom God hath sent out of heaven, out of his bosom, not merely authorizing him as a minister, as the prophets and as John were sent, speaketh nothing but the words of God*. The prophets and the apostles were sent of God in a sense, but not as Christ was sent; they sometimes spake the words of God, when the Spirit of God came upon them; but they sometimes spake their own words, as Nathan did to David, when he encouraged his thoughts to build a house to the Lord; and Paul, when he said, *To the rest speak I, not the Lord*; but whatsoever Christ spake was the words of God: for God did not give out the Spirit to him sparingly, (as out of a measure), as he doth to his ministers or saints, who have but their proportion of revelations and graces, as was requisite for their offices to which they were called, and the several periods of time that were gradually illuminated. But in him the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily; he was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows; he had the spring of all in himself, not the streams only.

John 3:35

Ver. 35. The eternal Father loved the world, Joh 3:16, but he loved the Son with a more singular and peculiar love; so that all things were by the Father delivered to him, Mt 11:27, *all power in heaven and earth*, Mt 28:18; to give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him, Joh 17:2; *the keys of hell and of death*, Re 1:18. So as every man hath reason to receive and embrace Christ and his testimony, and to believe in him.

John 3:36

Ver. 36. He that, hearing the proposition of the gospel, so agreeth to it, as with his heart he receiveth him as his Saviour, and trusteth and hopeth in him, *hath everlasting life*; that is, a certain and just title to it, nay, in the first fruits; being actually delivered from condemnation, Ro 8:1, to which, without faith, he is exposed: he already liveth a spiritual life, Ga 2:20; and having Christ in him, hath the hope of glory, into the possession of which he shall most certainly come. But he that receiveth not the gospel published by him who is the Son of God, and doth not embrace him as his Saviour, and yield obedience to him, shall not be saved. The word here translated *believeth not*, is *απειθων*, which often signifieth, one that is not obedient. But this is the command of God, That men should believe on his Son, 1Jo 3:23. The commandment doth not only respect love, but faith in the first place; for *faith worketh by love*; so as there is an *απειθεια*, a disobedience in the understanding, as well as in the conversation; and he that so believeth not, as to obey, shall never come into heaven, which felicity is here expressed by seeing life; as not seeing death is not dying, so not seeing life is dying. And as he was by nature a child of wrath, Eph 2:3, subject and exposed to the wrath of God, so that *wrath abideth on him*: being justified by faith, he hath peace with God, Ro 5:1.

John 4:1

Chapter Summary

Joh 4:1-26 Christ talketh with a woman of Samaria, and revealeth himself unto her.

Joh 4:27-30 His disciples marvel; the woman calleth the men of

her city to see him.

Joh 4:31-38 Christ showeth his own zeal to do God's work, and the

blessedness of his disciples, who were to reap the

fruit of his labours.

Joh 4:39-42 Many Samaritans believe on him.

Joh 4:43-54 He goeth into Galilee, and healeth a nobleman's son

who lay sick at Capernaum.

Ver. 1. Our Saviour knew as God, from that omniscience which is inseparable from the Divine nature, or as man, by the relation of others, that the Pharisees, (who had the greatest stroke in the sanhedrim), and the government of the church of the Jews, had received an information concerning him, that he had, by his doctrine which he preached, and confirmed by miraculous operations, *made and* (by his disciples) *baptized more disciples than John*, thereby initiating them into a new church.

John 4:2

Ver. 2. For he himself did not personally baptize any, but left it to his disciples, himself attending to the greater work of preaching the gospel, by which men and women were made fit for the ordinance of baptism.

John 4:3

Ver. 3. He left the province of Judea, which was near to Jerusalem, where the Pharisees had their chief residence and greatest power; and went the second time into Galilee, whither he went once before, Joh 1:43, where he found Philip and Nathanael. Galilee was a province under the jurisdiction of Herod, Lu 3:1. This motion of our Saviour's into Galilee, is reported by Matthew in Mt 4:12, and also by Mark in Mr 1:14 and Luke in Lu 4:14. The two former give another reason of his motion, viz. his hearing that John was cast into prison; of which, and the cause of it, see Mt 14:3-6; so as after that he publicly preached no more, which might possibly augment

the number of Christ's disciples; John's disciples following him. Both these causes probably concurred, to cause this motion. John, who by preaching and baptizing had laid the foundation of a gospel church in Galilee, was imprisoned; and our Saviour knew that, the number of his disciples increasing upon John's confinement, an information had been carried against him to the Pharisees; this made him, knowing that his time was not yet come, withdraw himself out of the province of Judea into that of Galilee, as well to supply the want there (John being in prison) as to provide for his own security.

John 4:4

Ver. 4. Josephus tells us that Samaria is seated between Judea and Galilee, and begins at a town called Ginea: see Lu 9:51,52 17:11. There were two passages from Judea into Galilee; the one was through the midst of Samaria, Lu 9:51; the other through the eastern parts, by the royal valley, by Jordan, in which it is said that Sichem was. By *Samaria* must not be understood the city of Samaria, built by Omri, but the whole country so called, and possessed by the Assyrians, with a mixture of Jews amongst them. Some think that the evangelist addeth this, to excuse our Saviour for going amongst the Gentiles.

John 4:5

Ver. 5. The most valuable interpreters agree, that this *Sychar* is the city called Shechem; it was originally a parcel of a field bought by Jacob of Hamor, the father of Shechem, Ge 33:19. Jeroboam built the city there, called Shechem, 1Ki 12:25. It was in the lot of Mount Ephraim. Joseph's bones were there buried, Jos 24:32. Jacob gave it to his son Joseph, as a parcel above his brethren, Ge 48:22; a parcel of ground near unto which was this city called Sychar, anciently Shechem.

John 4:6

Ver. 6. It was called Jacob's, either because he digged it, (as we read of Abraham's digging a well), Ge 21:30, and Isaac, (Ge 26:18), or because he

and his family used it, as Joh 4:12. Our Lord used no horse or chariot ordinarily in his travels, but went on foot; we never read of him in a coach or chariot, but once upon the back of a beast (that was when he rode into Jerusalem upon an ass); he ordinarily travelled on foot; and the evangelist taketh notice of his weariness, to let us know that he was truly man, and subjected to weariness, and other human infirmities. And he rested himself upon the sides of the well, and it was about now time; for that was, according to their computation, *the sixth hour*. Joh 4:8 tells us his disciples were gone to the city to buy meat, so as he was alone.

John 4:7

Ver. 7. It is uncertain whether this woman was a citizen of Samaria, which city is said to be at two miles distance from this place, or one of that country, which went by that name (for Samaria was the name of that region, as well as of a city). She came not out of any design to meet with Christ there, but came to draw water; they having not pumps and wells so common as we have, were forced to travel for water for their necessary uses. Thus it often happeneth that we meet with Divine mercy when we think not of it. God is found of those who seek him not, nor inquire after him, Isa 65:1; which lets us see how all our motions and actions are at the Divine disposal and government. Rachel went not to the well to meet with the tidings of a husband, but to water her father's flock; but yet there she met with Jacob, Ge 29:9; as it had happened to Rebekah before, Ge 24:15. This woman (as appeareth by what followeth) was no better than a harlot; to her Christ (fleeing from the Pharisees, the great doctors of the Jews) bringeth the glad tidings of the gospel, and she receives them. So admirable are the dispensations of Divine Providence. He prevents this woman, saying unto her, *Give me to drink*.

John 4:8

Ver. 8. This is added, lest any should say, How came our Saviour in this discourse with the woman of Samaria? They were travelling upon the road, and came near to Sichem. Our Lord's disciples were gone to the city to buy some food for them; in the mean time, our Saviour coming to the well, called Jacob's well, sets him down, and this Samaritan woman cometh to

that well to draw water; our Saviour, being thirsty, asks of her some water to drink; this giveth occasion to the following discourse.

John 4:9

Ver. 9. There was a great estrangement of the Jews from the Samaritans, the Samaritans having a peculiar temple built upon Mount Gerizim, in opposition to that at Jerusalem. It is said that the Jews did buy of and sell to the Samaritans, but were restrained by an order of the sanhedrim from using any familiarity with them, or borrowing or receiving any thing as a gift from them; which was the cause of this reply of the woman of Samaria, knowing our Saviour, either by his habit or by his dialect, to be a Jew: this is thought to be the sense of συγχρῶνται in this text, though it hath a larger significance, extending to all kinds of commerce.

John 4:10

Ver. 10. Many by *the gift of God* here understand Christ, whom God gave to the world, Joh 3:16; and who is the greatest gift that God ever gave to the world; so as the latter words, who it is, &c., expound the former.

Thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee, either a true knowledge of the doctrine or the grace tendered in the gospel; or the Holy Spirit, called *water*, because it washes and cleanses the soul; and *living water*, because it is always running and flowing.

John 4:11

Ver. 11 What our Saviour spake metaphorically, comparing his grace, or his Spirit, or the doctrine of his gospel, to living water, this poor woman understandeth literally; and knowing that the well was very deep, (some say forty cubits), and seeing him, as a traveller, not provided with any thing to draw with, or into, she asks him whence he had that living water? A question much like that of Nicodemus, Joh 3:4. So ignorant are persons of spiritual things, till they are enlightened by the Holy Spirit of God.

John 4:12

Ver. 12. She asks him if he judged himself wiser than Jacob, whom she calleth their *father*? It is often observed, that the Samaritans would ordinarily claim kindred with the Jews when the Jews were in prosperity; but in their adversity constantly disowned any relation to them. There were some Jews, (Ephraimites especially), mixed with a far greater number of Assyrians, which made up this body of people called the Samaritans. Now, saith the woman, Jacob, who was the father of Joseph, from whom we claim, was a wise man, and he could find no better water hereabouts for himself and family than that of this well; art thou wiser than he?

John 4:13

Ver. 13. Our Saviour in his reply justifieth the excellency of that living water, which he had before declared to be in his power to give, and his readiness to have given to this woman, if she had asked it of him, from the perishing virtue of the water of this well, and the continuing virtue of his grace, which he compared to this living water: no man so assuaged his thirst by drinking of the water of Jacob's well, but he was subject to thirst again.

John 4:14

Ver. 14. But he who receiveth the Holy Spirit, and the grace thereof, though he will be daily saying, Give, give, and be continually desiring further supplies of grace, yet he shall never wholly want, never want any good thing that shall be necessary for him; the seed of God shall abide in him, and this water shall be in him a spring of water, supplying him until he come to heaven. But this text was excellently expounded by our Saviour, Joh 7:38,39, *He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.* From which it is plain, that our Saviour here by the living water he speaketh of understood the Holy Spirit.

John 4:15

Ver. 15. I am not of their mind, who think that this woman understood our Saviour speaking about spiritual water, only she had a mind to talk; and indeed it is hard to conceive how a woman of her education, and way of life, should understand any such thing; but it is plain that she did not understand him in what he was discoursing about, but doth, as it were, deride him, believing that he had no such thing to bestow. She taketh no notice of the water which our Saviour had spoken of, springing up to eternal life; but regarding only the present life, and her ease in that, desires favour of Christ only to supply her wants in this life, and that she might live more at ease: so true is that of the apostle, Ro 8:5, *They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh.*

John 4:16

Ver. 16. Not that Christ did not know, what she afterward confessed, that she lived in whoredom, and had no legitimate husband; but he said this probably to check her petulancy, and mocking at what he spake about the living water, and to bring her to a sense of her sin, that she might be more fit to receive the glad tidings of a Saviour, which he was about to publish to her; and this seems rather to be our Saviour's design in bidding her go call her husband, than (as some of the ancients thought) that he might better instruct her, or avoid any scandal to himself, by a longer private discourse with a woman alone, who was of no better reputation.

John 4:17

Ver. 17. *I have no husband;* that is, none who is my lawful husband she denieth not that she had one whom she used and lived with as a husband, but that she had any legal husband, to whom she clave, and to no other: still she goeth on, thinking to deceive Christ, and to put tricks upon him. Christ tells her, she in this did speak truth; he knew she had no legal husband.

John 4:18

Ver. 18. He tells her, that she had *had five husbands*; whether successively, the former being dead, and she marrying another, or five from whom she had been divorced for adultery, is not agreed; the best modern interpreters judge, that she had had five men to whom she had been in marriage, but so behaved herself toward them, that either for her adultery, or some other froward behaviour towards them, they had given her a bill of divorce; and though she now used and lived with one as her husband, yet in this she said truly, because, her former husbands yet living, he was not her husband. This seemeth more properly the sense, than that after five legal husbands' death, she lived in whoredom with a sixth person. By this discovery, our Saviour both bringeth her to the sense of her sin, and also to an acknowledgment of him as the Messiah.

John 4:19

Ver. 19. Whose office is to reveal the will of God, and to whom God revealeth secret things; one to whom the Lord maketh known himself in a vision, and speaketh in a dream, Nu 12:6. The woman's reply seemeth to signify both. Her acknowledgment of Christ as a prophet, upon his telling her secret things, justifieth her looking upon him as one to whom God revealed things not known ordinarily to men; and this report of her meaning appeareth by what she said Joh 4:29, to her fellow citizens, *Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did*; but the following verse, in which she entereth into a discourse with our Saviour about the controversy betwixt the Jews and the Samaritans about worship, lets us know that she looked upon him as a prophet in the more ordinary sense as prophet signifies one influenced by God to reveal his mind and will unto men; and indeed there was no prophet in the former sense, but was also in the latter; though there were many prophets in the latter sense, sent of God, and enabled to reveal the will of God unto men, who were not influenced so far as to foretell things to come. The difference betwixt a hypocrite and one truly brought to a sense of sin, is very conspicuous in the example of this woman; she doth not deny her sin, as Cain, Gehazi, and Ananias and Sapphira; neither doth she discover any anger upon the discovery of it, as the scribes and Pharisees, the wicked princes of Israel and Judah, and Herod did; neither doth she go about to excuse or mitigate

her sin; but she applies herself to Christ as a prophet, to teach her what to do. The example also of this woman informs us what use we ought to make of prophets, to guide us into the right way, and faithfully to acquaint us with the will of God.

John 4:20

Ver. 20. *Our fathers worshipped in this mountain;* the mount Gerizim, which was an exceeding high mountain, and near unto Sichem. Jacob made an altar thereabouts, which he called El-elohe-Israel, Ge 33:20. Some say that it was upon this, mountain that Abraham should have offered up Isaac, Ge 22:1-18, but that had another name. Certain it is, that from that mountain Moses pronounced the blessings, De 27:12. But it is very probable that the woman had respect to none of these, but to the common usage of the Samaritans, to worship in a temple built upon this mountain, in opposition to that at Jerusalem: the story of which will be very proper here to relate, for the full understanding of this text. Sanballat was governor of Samaria, constituted by Darius; of this Sanballat we read in Nehemiah, who tells us that *one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was son-in-law to this Sanballat the Horonite; therefore I chased him from me,* Ne 13:28. This son-in-law's name (as Josephus tells us) was Manasses. He was driven out of Jerusalem upon the account of the covenant made, Ezr 10:3, that those who had married strange wives would turn them away. The sacred story here leaving us, we must supply it out of Josephus, who (Antiq.

1. 11. cap. 8.) tells us, that he being thus driven from the sacrifice, applied himself to Sanballat, and would have put his wife away, who was Sanballat's daughter; but Sanballat promised him, that if he would keep his daughter as his wife, he would not only continue him in the priesthood, but make him a high priest, and build him a temple like that at Jerusalem, upon Mount Gerizim, with the leave of Darius; upon this Manasses staid with Sanballat, and there also resorted many to him whom Nehemiah had turned out of the priesthood at Jerusalem for marrying strange wives. Sanballat was very near losing his opportunity through the favour of Darius, by the conquest of Darius by Alexander the Great. But it was regained by his brother Jaddus's stubbornness, who was high priest in Jerusalem, and refused to own the new conqueror; which advantage Sanballat took, and offered Alexander the surrender of all places in his

trust to him; and being by that means ingratiated with Alexander the Great, he thereby obtained leave of him to build a temple in Mount Gerizim, where his son-in-law Manasses should be the high priest, promising Alexander that by this means the force of the Jews would be broken, so as there would be no danger of their conspiring. Accordingly he presently built this temple, and soon after died, leaving his son-in-law Manasses, brother to Jaddus the high priest in Jerusalem, high priest in this new temple, which afterwards proved an asylum or sanctuary for any who were accused amongst the Jews at Jerusalem. Thus these two temples stood for about two hundred and twenty years; then Hircanus, a high priest of the Jews at Jerusalem, destroyed it; but still they looked upon the ground as holy, and came thither to perform their devotions. With reference to this superstitious practice, the woman of Samaria saith, *Our fathers worshipped* (that is, have used time out of mind to worship) *in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship;* and the Jews hold, that none might worship God by sacrifice any where but at Jerusalem, according to the law, De 12:14,26.

John 4:21

Ver. 21. Woman, thou ownest me as a prophet, whose office it is to reveal the will of God unto men; it is therefore thy duty to give credit to what I shall reveal to thee about the true and right way of worshipping God. The time is coming, yea, at hand, when you shall neither in this Mount Gerizim, (where your fathers have long worshipped God superstitiously without any direction from him), nor yet at Jerusalem, (which is the place which the Lord made choice of for his worship), worship my Father, or your Father. God is putting an end to both these places, and to all that worship which I shall not institute under the gospel.

John 4:22

Ver. 22. You have no certain rule for your worship, but only do things which your fathers did, without any revelation of the Divine will, by which you may be assured that what you do is acceptable to God. We know that God hath revealed his will, that his people should worship him at Jerusalem by such rites and performances as he himself hath instituted in

his word, so as we are certain that what we do is acceptable to God: for unto the Jews (of old) were committed the oracles of God, the ordinary means of salvation; *Out of Zion went forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, Isa 2:3*.

John 4:23

Ver. 23. Under the gospel, and the kingdom of the Messiah, which is yet further coming, and is already began in the world, the true worshippers of God shall not worship him, as you Samaritans, who worship you know not what, without any rule or prescript of the word; nor yet as the hypocritical Jews, who rest upon their sacrifices and ritual performances, as if they should purge away their sins, Ps 50:8 Isa 1:11 66:3 Mic 6:7; no, nor yet as the more sincere Jews, who indeed do truly and with their hearts worship God; but, *while the first tabernacle was yet standing, which was a figure for the time then present, by sacrifices that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience, —by meats and drinks, and divers ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation, Heb 9:8-10*. That time of reformation is now come, when the true worshippers of God shall offer up to him a more spiritual worship, not that carnal worship; and a more true, and real, and solid worship: for God my Father *seeketh such to worship him*, as shall not worship him with a mere bodily labour and homage, but with their hearts and spirits; nor with those ceremonial performances now in use by God's prescript at Jerusalem, but without them, I being come, whom all those services did but prefigure and point unto.

John 4:24

Ver. 24. God is not a corporeal being, made up of blood, and flesh, and bones, having senses as bodies have, to be pleased with sensible things; but he is a spiritual Being, the Father of spirits, and requireth a spiritual service proportioned to his being; and therefore those that pay a religious homage to him, must do it with their spirits, and according to the rule that he hath prescribed, in truth and reality. This is now the will of God; and though he required of his people under the law a more ritual, figurative service, yet that is now to cease; and therefore the woman of Samaria need

not trouble herself which was the truest worship, that at Mount Gerizim, or at Mount Zion, for both of them were very suddenly to determine, and a new and more substantial spiritual worship was to succeed, to the learning of the way and method of which she was more to attend, and not to spend her thoughts about these things which were of no significance, and tended only to minister questions of no use.

John 4:25

Ver. 25. The woman by this reply, though a woman of Samaria, showeth herself to be a Jew, for she was one of them who lived in an expectation of one whom the Jews called the Messiah, prophesied of by Daniel under this notion, Da 9:25,26, and by the psalmist, Ps 2:2; which term *Messiah* signifieth *Christ* (that is, *anointed*) in the Greek. She had a further notion, that this Messiah should be a great Prophet, De 18:15; yea, she appears to have had a further notion of the Messiah, viz. that when he came he should reveal to them the whole will of God as to the salvation of man, and the worship of God: this lets us know, that she was none of the Assyrian part of the inhabitants of Samaria. If any ask, how she, being a Samaritan, should know any thing of the Messiah, the Samaritans receiving only the five books of Moses? It is easily answered, That even the five books of Moses make mention of the Messiah, under the notion of *the seed of the woman*, Ge 3:15, *the seed of Abraham*, Ge 12:3, *Shiloh*, Ge 49:10, *the Prophet* like to Moses, De 18:15. And for the name Messiah, she might easily learn it from other Jews, that the Person called *Shiloh*, and the *Prophet*, was called by Daniel the *Messiah*.

John 4:26

Ver. 26. The same Messiah, of whom thou declarest thyself to have some expectation, and from whom thou expectest to hear all things necessary to salvation. Some here inquire, why our Saviour maketh to this woman such a plain discovery of himself, whereas we find in the Gospel so cautious, and so often charging his disciples not to make him known. Some think our Saviour thus gratified the honesty and simplicity which he discerned in this woman, not coming to catch him, but to be instructed from him; but possibly, if we wistfully consider those texts wherein he charged his

disciples not to make him known, we shall find that the thing which he cautioned them against, was their publishing of him as the Son of God, which our Saviour desired should be concealed, till he should be so declared with power by his resurrection from the dead, Ro 1:4; that his enemies, by a charge of blasphemy against him, might not cut him off before his hour was come. Now we shall observe that the Jews, though they expected a Messiah, yet had no such notion of him.

John 4:27

Ver. 27. The disciples, as we heard before, were gone into the city Sichem to buy food, and were kept there by the providence of God till our Saviour had finished this discourse with the woman of Samaria, but came after the discourse was done. They *marvelled*, possibly at his talking with a woman in the road, (a thing forbidden by their traditions), especially a woman of Samaria, with whom the Jews had no commerce. But yet they had so much reverence and respect for their Master, that they inquired not curiously into the matter or reason of his discourse.

John 4:28

Ver. 28. She had no sooner tasted of the living water spoken of by Christ, but she left her water pot: thus Peter tells our Saviour, that they had left all and followed him. She goeth into the city Sichem (no doubt) or Sychar, mentioned Joh 4:5; and doth not herself enter into a long discourse with the citizens, only invites the citizens to come and see Christ, that they might judge from the hearing of their own ears, and the sight of their own eyes.

John 4:29

Ver. 29. She invites them to him under the notion of a man, who had told her all things that she ever did. Christ doubtless had told her, and spoken to her, much more than John hath left us upon sacred record; yet not all things she ever did, but *all things* (as often) signifies many things, and those such things as she might know that he who could tell those things

could have told her all things, if they had been so proper for him to have repeated to her as those things which he did tell her. This induced her to believe that he was the Messiah; she offereth it to their opinion and judgment.

John 4:30

Ver. 30. Sitting still at the well, they (many of them at least) did not contemn the news as the relation of a woman, but went (possibly but out of curiosity) to see and to hear this man.

John 4:31

Ver. 31. While the woman was fetching her citizens to come and see and hear Christ, his disciples, knowing that he must be weary and hungry with his journey, and having brought him some food out of the city, where they had been to fetch it, put him upon refreshing himself with the food they had brought.

John 4:32

Ver. 32. But our blessed Lord was more intent upon gospelizing the Samaritans, than satisfying his hunger: what this meat was, he opens himself, (see Joh 4:34).

John 4:33

Ver. 33. His disciples, being yet carnal, did not understand him, but thought that he had spoken of bodily nourishment. See the like instances, Mt 16:7 11:13. They were wondering how he came by meat, and who should bring it him: so hard are we to conceive of spiritual things, till God openeth our eyes.

John 4:34

Ver. 34. Our Lord, without any reproof of them for their dulness in understanding, and having compassion on their infirmity and ignorance, tells them what he meant by his former words; telling them, that the doing of his Father's will, and the finishing of his work, was that which he more hungered after, and look more delight in, than in eating and drinking: this is what he sought, Joh 5:30, that which he came down from heaven for, Joh 6:38. As the law of God was sweeter to David than the honey or the honey comb, so the publishing of the gospel was to Jesus Christ, the calling sinners to repentance, and publishing the glad tidings of the Messiah; that was his work, which he tells his Father he had finished, Joh 17:4. Hereby teaching ministers, and people also, to prefer spiritual things before temporal; and the ministers of the gospel especially, to prefer the publishing of the gospel (which is their work) to any other employment whatsoever.

John 4:35

Ver. 35. There was in those countries but four months' space betwixt seed time and harvest; yet they fed themselves (as soon as they had sown) with the expectation of it. My harvest, saith our Saviour, is the gaining of souls for my Father: look yonder what a troop of the citizens of Sichem are coming to me, upon my revelation of myself to the woman of Samaria; I have but just sown my seed, and the fields are white to this spiritual harvest, Mt 9:37. In the judgement of the, best interpreters, our Saviour in this verse useth a comparison, and passeth from his similitude used in the former part of the verse, fetched from a worldly harvest, to discourse of that spiritual harvest, which he by and by reaped of the citizens of Sichem coming to him; it is of that he saith, that the fields were already white, by which (as will appear from the following verses) he quickeneth his disciples to put in their sickles. Some critical authors, understanding both the former and latter part of the text of a worldly harvest, have used their wits to determine how the fields should be *white to harvest* four months before it came; but the most and best interpreters interpret the latter part of a spiritual harvest, and that will be also justified by what followeth.

John 4:36

Ver. 36. You that are the Lord's instruments, to reap what the prophets of old, and John Baptist lately, have sown, shall not lose your labour, you shall receive wages; and your wages shall not be small, it shall be no less than eternal life: *They that turn man, to righteousness, shall shine as the stars for ever and ever,* Da 12:3. Thus the prophets, and John the Baptist, who sowed the seed of the gospel, and you that succeed them, and reap the fruit of what they did sow, shall have the same reward in glory and *rejoice together. The ploughman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed,* as Amos speaks, Am 9:13. This text is of great use to those godly ministers who faithfully sow the seed of the word, but do not in their lifetime see any great effects of it; it may be it comes up when they are in their graves. The reward of a faithful preacher doth not depend upon his success in his labours, but upon his faithful discharge of his work; though one soweth and another reapeth, yet both he that soweth and he that reapeth shall rejoice together.

John 4:37

Ver. 37. It was a proverbial expression, most commonly used with reference to those who unjustly invaded the rights and possessions of other men; but as applicable unto those who, by the disposing providence of God, rightly inherit the fruit of other men's labours, as the Jews inherited the land of Canaan; *A land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not,* Jos 24:13. This saying (saith our Saviour) is fulfilled in you.

John 4:38

Ver. 38. I have sent you to reap that which you did not first labour for; the prophets, and John the Baptist, and myself, have sown the seed, and by their doctrine prepared for the Lord a people; you enter upon their labours, gathering them into a gospel church.

John 4:39

Ver. 39. *That city* was Sichem, or Sychar, but it was within the province of Samaria, from whence it is that they had the name of Samaritans as well as Sichemites. *Many* of them, upon the testimony of the woman; That he had told her such secret passages of her life, as he could not have told her if he had not been able, if he had pleased, as well to have told her all things, *believed on him*; that is, they owned him as a prophet, and agreed to what the woman said in that particular, and were by it excited to come to see and further discourse with Christ. This justifieth what our Saviour said, that there was then a people prepared for the Lord, the fields were white unto the harvest; that they were thus far wrought upon by the discourse of a woman, and she one not of the highest reputation, and only telling them that he had told her all things she had done. Small means have great effects when God's time of working is come.

John 4:40

Ver. 40. The Sichemites being come to Christ, had some discourse with him, as appeareth from Joh 4:41,42. What the subject matter of their discourse was we are not told; we may know that it was spiritual, and something proper to excite faith in them, for believing was the effect of it. They desire that he would abide with them: thus their faith wrought by love. Our Saviour, that he might not discourage the beginning of their faith, did stay with them two days: for although, when he sent out his disciples, he commanded them not to go into the way of the Samaritans, yet himself was not obliged by that law, and did sometimes, by preaching to heathens, and converting of them, give an earnest of the calling of the Gentiles, whose fuller calling was reserved to after times; yet, probably, the reason why he would not stay longer with them than two days, was because the time was not yet come for the fuller calling of the Gentiles, and he was not willing by a longer abode with them to give offence to the Jews, between whom and the Samaritans was a rooted hatred upon the account of their differing religion.

John 4:41

Ver. 41. Believing seemeth here to be taken in a different sense from what it was taken in Joh 4:39, from what followeth, Joh 4:42. There it seemeth

only to signify a lower degree of assent, that he was a prophet, upon the woman's saying that he had told her all she had done; here it signifieth a giving credit to him as the Christ, the Saviour of the world, of which they were convinced by what they heard from himself. Thus that of the apostle, Ro 10:17, is justified, that *faith cometh by hearing*; and the influence of Christ upon the souls of believers is also justified. We read of no miracles our Saviour wrought here; they believed not because of any signs they saw, but because of his word; wherein also they further showed themselves the first fruit of the Gentiles, the generality of which were afterward converted to the faith of the gospel, after that miracles were ceased, by hearing the gospel preached.

John 4:42

Ver. 42. Several things may be the occasion of faith, which are neither the principal efficient causes, nor the proper instrumental cause of it. The principal efficient cause of the faith of these Samaritans was, undoubtedly, the finger of God upon their souls, enlightening their minds with the saving knowledge of the gospel, and bowing their wills to the obedience of it. The proper instrumental cause was their hearing the words of Christ; but the occasion of this was what the woman had told them: so as, though they in a sense believed because of what she had said, because that occasioned their coming out to see and hear Christ; yet the proper instrumental cause was their hearing Christ, God upon their hearing him working in their hearts an ability and a willingness to receive and to close with Christ. Thus the church gives us the first occasion of receiving the Scriptures, and believing them to be the word of God: we, having them put into our hands by the church, read them, and find such impresses and stamps of Divinity in them, that we conclude, from our reason very probably, that they are more than human writings; but never firmly and fixedly receive them as such, until persuaded of it by the Holy Spirit. These Samaritans do not only own Christ as a prophet, nor do they only suspect that he must be the Messias, but they profess to *know* that he was *the Christ, the Saviour of the world*.

John 4:43

Ver. 43. Christ (as we heard before, Joh 4:3) was upon his journey into Galilee, only he stopped two days at Sichem to gratify the desires of the Samaritans of that city; which two days being now spent, he keepeth on in his journey. But here ariseth a question, viz. Whether he first went to Nazareth, or to Cana? For the opinion of those who think he first went to Nazareth, is quoted Mt 4:12. Besides, it is said that Nazareth was in his road to Cana, and, Lu 4:24, he is said to have uttered these words there. Chemnitius thinks he went first to Cana, according to what John relates in the following verses. And, Lu 4:16, he is said to have gone out of Galilee to Nazareth: and besides, the next mentioned miracle is (Joh 4:54) said to have been Christ's second miracle, which it could not have been had he first gone to Nazareth, for, Lu 4:23, those of Nazareth mention some miracles which he had wrought at Capernaum.

John 4:44

Ver. 44. Christ spake those words more than once, Mt 13:57 Mr 6:4 Lu 4:24. But the question is, what force of reason this hath why he went into Galilee, whereas Nazareth, which was in Galilee, was his own country; for though he was born in Bethlehem, yet he was educated at Nazareth; upon which account, Lu 4:23, it is called his own country? The best resolution of this difficulty is, that by Galilee here is to be understood, the country part of Galilee, exclusive to Nazareth; and this is not given as a reason why our Saviour went into Galilee, but why he did not go to Nazareth, but into the country part of Galilee, because Nazareth was his own country, and a *prophet is not without honour, except in his own country.*

John 4:45

Ver. 45. When he came not to Nazareth, but to some parts of Galilee, the Galilaeans entertained him hospitably; and this they did because of those miracles they had seen wrought by him at the passover feast, where Christ was, Joh 2:1-25. For these Galilaeans, though they lived at a great distance from Jerusalem, yet were observant of the law which commanded all the males of the Jews to be present at that solemnity. The Samaritans saw no miracle, but believed Christ upon his word. The Galilaeans also received Christ, but their seeing of his miracles at the feast is given as the cause of

their receiving him; their faith was not so noble as that of the Samaritans. *Blessed* (saith our Saviour) *are they who have not seen, and yet have believed.*

John 4:46

Ver. 46. Our Saviour, coming into Galilee, made choice of Cana, the place where, being at a marriage feast, he turned water into wine, Joh 2:1-25, first to fix in: the reason is not expressed, and therefore vainly guessed at by interpreters. There he worketh a second miracle, not upon the person of any one of Cana, but upon the son of one who was at Capernaum, which was a city in the tribe of Naphtali, upon the shore of the famous river Jordan. This person is described to be one that was βασιλικος, a *nobleman*; whether of the blood of Herod, that was tetrarch of Galilee, or some courtier or principal servant of his, it is not said.

John 4:47

Ver. 47. Christ had been in Galilee before, and in this town, and wrought a miracle, and if this courtier were a disciple of John, (as some think, but it is hard to prove), it is probable he had been at the passover, and seen the miracles he wrought there, or at least might have heard of them from some who were there. Though it was a good way from Capernaum thither, yet his love to his son carried him, and humbled him to beseech Christ that he would come down and heal his son; by which he showed a great weakness of faith, as if he thought that Christ could not put forth his healing virtue at a distance, but his personal presence was necessary; as Naaman the Syrian thought that Elisha must come down and lay his hand upon him. His son, it seems, was in human appearance dying.

John 4:48

Ver. 48. It may seem strange to such as do not well weigh all circumstances, that our Saviour, who at other times went without asking, showed himself so hard to be entreated by this courtier, and answereth him so roughly; but we must not take ourselves to be able to give a certain

account of all Christ's actions, and different dealings with persons, whose hearts he well enough knew. Thus much is certain, that our Saviour always preferred that faith which was given to his bare word, before that which waited for a miracle confirmative of that word, Joh 20:29. Our Saviour saw that this courtier came to him purely upon a natural account, for the recovery of his dying son, without a desire to be instructed in his heavenly doctrine; therefore (as it may be presumed) he checks this courtier; and not him alone, but the generality of the Jews, who were only struck with admiration of his works, and drawn from curiosity, or some temporal benefit, to follow him, without a due regard of his person, or the heavenly, saving truths preached by him.

John 4:49

Ver. 49. The courtier, though probably of spirit enough to have shown some discontent at our Saviour's no kinder answer to him before, yet was so intent upon his son's life, that he takes no notice of it, but renews his request, still discovering the weakness of his faith, as thinking that Christ's personal presence was necessary to the life of his son.

John 4:50

Ver. 50. Our Saviour would neither discourage the weak faith of this nobleman, nor yet encourage his weakness: he healeth his son for the encouragement of his faith; he doth it by his word, without going down to him, that he might not gratify his weakness, thinking his personal presence was necessary; he bids him go, for his son was recovered (that is here meant by *liveth*). Upon this his faith groweth, and he who before only believed Christ to be a prophet, probably upon others' hearsay, now believeth his word, that is, was persuaded that his son was indeed recovered.

John 4:51

Ver. 51. The servants that met him to bring the acceptable news of his son's recovery, knew nothing of the passages that had been betwixt Christ

and their master, but merely came to tell their master what they knew would be acceptable to him.

John 4:52

Ver. 52. He inquires the precise time; they tell him it was about *the seventh hour*. The miracle appeared in the suddenness of the recovery, and also that it was without the application of means, at least any that could have produced so sudden an effect.

John 4:53

Ver. 53. The circumstance of the time when his son recovered agreeing with the very hour when Christ had said unto him, *Thy son liveth*, was a mighty confirmation to him, that he was beholden to Christ for his cure, and consequently that Christ was no ordinary man, more than a prophet, even the Son of God. This works upon his faith to a higher degree: he first believed the report of him, then he gave credit to the word that he spake, now he believeth savingly, and not he alone, but his whole family became Christians. Such instances we have concerning Lydia, Ac 16:14,15, the jailer, Ac 4:34, and Crispus, Ac 18:8.

John 4:54

Ver. 54. His turning water into wine (Joh 2:1-25) was the first, this was the second, and so in order of time before any of those miracles which he wrought in Galilee, of which we read, Mt 4:23.

John 5:1

Chapter Summary

Joh 5:1-9 Christ cures an impotent man at the pool of Bethesda

on the sabbath day.

Joh 5:10-16 The Jews cavil, and persecute him for it.

Joh 5:17,18 He justifieth himself by the example of God his Father,
Joh 5:19-30 and asserts the power and judgment committed unto him
by the Father,
Joh 5:31-35 he appeals to the testimony of John,
Joh 5:36-38 of the Father,
Joh 5:39,40 and of the Scriptures.
Joh 5:41-44 He showeth that his humility caused their rejection of him,
Joh 5:45-47 but that in disbelieving him they disbelieved Moses also.

Ver. 1. Though there are some that think the feast mentioned here was that of Pentecost, and others that it was the feast of tabernacles, yet the most and best interpreters judge it was the feast of the passover that is here mentioned; and that this was the second passover which happened after our Saviour had entered upon his public ministry. We read of the first, Joh 2:13; and from that verse of that chapter to this chapter the evangelist (as they think) hath been relating so much of our Saviour's actions, until the second passover, as it was the will of God we should have upon public authentic record, and had not been recorded by the other evangelists, who give a further account of his actions done this year, Mt 4:1-25 8:1-34 9:1-38 Mr 1:1-45 2:1-28 Lu 4:1-44 5:1-39. In the time of our Saviour's public ministry (which was three years and a half) there were four passovers. The other evangelists take notice but of one of them, and that the last. John is thought to have mentioned all the four; the first, Joh 2:13, the second in this place, the third, Joh 6:4, the fourth, Joh 8:1. Another reason they give why the feast of the passover should be here intended is, because from about that time to the harvest were four months, according to what our Saviour had said, Joh 4:35.

Jesus went up to the passover, to Jerusalem, to show his obedience to his Father's law, De 16:16.

John 5:2

Ver. 2. We read in Scripture of *the sheep gate* in Jerusalem, Ne 3:1. There was also a market for sheep and other cattle, De 14:26. Some therefore add

market, others add *gate*, to the word in the Greek signifying *sheep*. Near to this gate or market there was a *pool*, κολυμβηθρα: some translate it, a fish pool; others, (more properly), a place to wash or to swim in (the word derives from a verb that signifies, to swim). They say there were two such pools within the compass of the mount on which the temple stood; the one eastward, called *the upper pool*, 2Ki 18:17; the other westward, near to the sheep gate. The one was called *Bethesda*; the other, *the pool of Siloah, by the king's garden*, Ne 3:15, mentioned also by our evangelist, Joh 9:7. They say the waters of these pools were supplied from a fountain called Siloam, which was not always full of water, but the water bubbled up in it at certain times with a great noise, coming (as was thought) through hollow places of the earth, and quarries of hard stones. These *waters of Shiloah* are mentioned, Isa 8:6, and said to *go softly*; from which place these waters are concluded a type of the kingdom of David and of Christ. This being admitted, it is not to be wondered that they had that healing virtue given unto them (as some judge) just about the coming of Christ; for it should appear by Joh 9:7, that the pool of Siloam, as well as that of Bethesda, had so; for in former times it is thought to have been of use chiefly to wash garments in, and sacrifices when they were slain. Some will have them to have derived their healing virtue from thence; but that is vain, their healing virtue was doubtless derived from the Lord that healeth us. This pool *in the Hebrew* was called *Bethesda*, which some interpret, The house of pouring out, because, as some fancy, the blood of the sacrifices was there poured out; (but that is a great mistake, for that was to be poured out at the altar); or because rain water (as some think) was poured into it; or (which is more probable) because waters were poured into it out of the conduit mentioned 2Ki 20:20. But others interpret it, The house of grace, mercy, &c., because of God's great goodness showed the people, in giving this healing virtue to these waters. The *five porches* belonging to this pool seem to have been five apartments for impotent men to walk in, or rest themselves in, when they came to wash themselves in the pool.

John 5:3

Ver. 3. In these apartments (called here porches) there were a great number of sick persons, some labouring under one infirmity, some under another, some blind, some lame, waiting for the time the water should be troubled.

John 5:4

Ver. 4. This water had not always in it this healing virtue, but only when it was *troubled*, and this was *at a certain season*, how often the Scripture hath not determined; some will have it to be only at their great feasts, of the passover, and Pentecost, &c., but the Scripture saith no such thing. None must think that the angel appeared in any visible shape, but the rolling or troubling of the waters was a certain sign, that that was the time when alone they were medicinal; nor were many healed at one time, but only one person, that could first get into this water, he was healed, let his disease be what it would. The waters not being constantly medicinal, but, first, at a certain time, when they were troubled; and then, secondly, not for all, but only to him who could first get in; and, thirdly, for any disease, of what sort or kind soever his disease was; sufficiently confutes the opinion of those who fancy that the waters derived this healing virtue from the entrails of the beasts offered in sacrifice being washed there; for besides that this is denied by some, who say those entrails were washed in a room on purpose for that use within the temple; if they had derived their healing virtue from thence in a natural, rational way, they would have exerted their virtue upon more than him who first stepped in, and not at the time only when they were troubled, nor would their virtue have extended to all kinds of diseases. Of whatever use this pool therefore was before, certain it is at this time God made use of the water in it to heal, and so as men might see that it healed not by any natural, but a miraculous operation. The Scriptures of the Old Testament make no mention of it. And it is observed by those who are versed in the Jewish Rabbins, that neither do they make the least mention of it. Which makes it very probable, that they had this virtue, not from the time of the building of the sheep gate by Shallum, Ne 3:15; nor from the time when the Asmonean family was extinct; or the rebuilding or further building and adoring the temple by Herod; but a little before the birth of Christ, as a figure of him being now coming, who, Zec 13:1, was *a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem*; and from whom is both our cleansing and our healing, as these waters, which before had a cleansing, and now received also a healing virtue.

John 5:5

Ver. 5. What this man's name was, or what his circumstances in the world, or what his particular disease, we are not told; nor is it said that he had lain there thirty-eight years, but that he had so long laboured under his weakness: which, whether it was the palsy or no, is uncertain: probably it was a disease hardly curable by human art and ordinary means; for it cannot be thought but in that time he had used all rational means, which he finding of no value as to his case, he came and lay at this fountain, waiting for a cure in this way of miraculous operation.

John 5:6

Ver. 6. Christ, as God, knew the particular time when this infirmity seized him, which was eight years or upward before our Saviour's birth, and about the time when the temple was re-edified, or rather enlarged and further adorned, by Herod. As man, he pitieth his case; he asketh him if he was willing to be made whole. Not that he doubted of his willingness; for what sick man was ever unwilling to be healed? Besides that, he knew that the poor man lay there for that very purpose; but that he might make him declare his miserable, helpless state and condition, and draw out his faith and hope in himself; and from his answer take an occasion to heal him, and make the spectators more attentive to his miracle.

John 5:7

Ver. 7. What his particular impotency was the Scripture doth not tell us. Some have (not improbably) judged it the palsy, which deprives the person of motion, by the stoppage of the animal spirits, so that without help he cannot move from one place to another, which it is manifest this poor man could not; for he complains for want of help, that he could not get into the pool.

John 5:8

Ver. 8. Our Lord will let this poor man know, that the waters and the angel

derived their power from him; and that he with a word could do as much for him, as the waters troubled by the angel could effect: he therefore bids him arise, and take up his bed and walk, that others might see and be assured that he was perfectly cured.

John 5:9

Ver. 9. The man's strength returneth immediately; he is able immediately to arise, take up his bed, and to walk. All this was done on the sabbath day; on which day it was unlawful to carry any burdens, Jer 17:21,24; and by the Jewish canons it was punishable by death, or scourging. But our Saviour had a mind to let the Jews know that he was Lord of the sabbath, and what had been unlawful without his special command, became lawful by it. Neither was this against the sense of the law, though against the letter of it; the law only prohibited civil labour, and carrying burdens for their own profit, and in the way of their trade; it forbade the doing of nothing which was to be done as a public testimony of the goodness and mercy of God showed to persons: and by this our Saviour opens a way for his correction of their erroneous opinions about the true sanctification of the sabbath. We shall observe, that our Saviour used the like phrase to him that had the palsy, Mt 9:6; and to the centurion's daughter, Mr 5:41, *Damsel, arise*; and to Lazarus, Joh 11:43, *Lazarus, come forth*; which our Saviour did for the testification of the miracle to all that should see them. It is further observed by Heinsius, that our Saviour did many miracles on the sabbath day, because that day was the usual time when the Jews were wont to consult the prophets for help, as may be learned from 2Ki 4:23.

John 5:10

Ver. 10. That is, according to the letter of the law: they understood not that Christ was the Lord of the sabbath; their cavil argued their want both of faith in Christ, and charity also toward their neighbour.

John 5:11

Ver. 11. He makes them as good an answer as could well be imagined; the

sum of which was, he believed that he that had thus healed him was a prophet, and so did what he did by a Divine authority, which it was lawful for him to obey, contrary to their traditions: though who this particular person was, or what his name was, were things as yet not known to him, (as we shall by and by read), yet he seemeth sensible that he was healed by a power more than human.

John 5:12

Ver. 12. The impotent man that was healed seemed to oppose the authority of God (by virtue of which he believed himself healed) to the authority of man, which made it unlawful for him on the sabbath day to take up his bed and walk. The Jews, taking no notice of Christ's being God, or so much as a prophet sent from God, do not ask, Who was he? But, *What man is that which said, &c.?* opposing the command of God to the command of man. It is as much as if they had said; The law of God hath commanded that no burdens should be carried on the sabbath day; now, what is that *man* that dare teach thee or any one to do what is contrary to the law of God?

John 5:13

Ver. 13. Christ came as a stranger to the pool, and only wrought this miracle, so as the impotent man that was healed had no time to inquire who he was: and there being there a crowd of people, Christ had through the people conveyed himself away; so as the man could not find him, to show them the man who had so said unto him.

John 5:14

Ver. 14. *Jesus findeth him in the temple;* walking in the outward court of the temple, or some part of it, where people ordinarily walked. He charges him to *sin no more, lest a worse thing* betided him; hereby letting him and us know that sin is the usual cause of diseases, and a holy walking the best preservative of health; and that God hath further revelations of his wrath against sin and sinners, than what do or can befall them in this life.

John 5:15

Ver. 15. It were very uncharitable to judge that this poor man went to the Jewish magistrates to inform against Christ, who had been so kind to him; and much more probable that he went in the simplicity of his heart, desirous both to publish what Christ had done to his honour, and also to do good to others, who might also stand in need of his help.

John 5:16

Ver. 16. But the Jews made another use of it, seeking from hence an advantage against him, because he had violated the sabbath, which they often made a capital crime.

John 5:17

Ver. 17. We read of no objection they made to Christ, as to what he had done, only that they persecuted him, which they might do without speaking to him: but it should seem by what we read in this verse, that some of the Jews had objected to him his violation of the sabbath (as they thought); yet, as we before noted, *answered* (in the dialect of the gospel) doth often signify no more than the beginning of a discourse upon some proper occasion offered. Our Saviour defends himself from the example of his Father, in the remembrance of whose resting from his work of creation on the seventh day from the beginning of the creation, the Jews kept their sabbath; who, though he rested from his work of creation, yet hitherto *worketh*, as well on the sabbath day as any other day, by his preservation of created beings: so (saith he) *I*, who am the Son of this Father, also *work*; *upholding all things by the word of my power*, Heb 1:3. So that works of Divine Providence are lawful on the sabbath day; such was this. I work no other way than my Father still worketh, though he rested on the seventh day from the creation.

John 5:18

Ver. 18. This yet enraged the Jews more: they had before against him a charge of breaking the sabbath, or, at least, teaching another to break it (in their opinion); but now he had (as they judged) spoken blasphemy, calling God *Father*; not in the sense the Jews so called him, and all good Christians are licensed to call him; but *πατερα ιδιον*, his proper Father, or his own Father; by which (as they truly said) he made himself *equal with God*. Nor did he by that alone make himself equal with God, but he ascribed also to himself a cooperation with God, in works proper to God alone: nor did he think this any *robbery*, Php 2:6. This was their charge; we shall now hear how our Saviour defends himself against it.

John 5:19

Ver. 19. Consider Christ as God, so he can do nothing but what the Father doth, that is, nothing that respected created beings: for it is a known rule, That the works of the Trinity out of itself are not divided; whatsoever one person doth, the others do; though, to denote the order of the Trinity's working, some works are most ordinarily ascribed to the Father, such are the works of creation and providence; some to the Son, as redemption; some to the Holy Spirit, as sanctification; yet they are not so ascribed to any Person, but that other Scriptures justify the cooperation of all three Persons. Consider the Son as the Messiah; so also it is true, that *the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do*. Nor is this any diminution to the glory of Christ, nor doth it speak any impotency in him, from whence the Arians and Socinians would conclude his inferiority to his Father; but rather his perfection, that he did only what pleased the Father: so that phrase, *what he seeth the Father do*, is to be interpreted; and that term, *can do nothing*, signifies no more than, he doth or will do nothing. See such a usage of the phrase, Ge 19:22 Lu 16:2 Joh 12:39. From this he leaveth them easily to conclude, that what he had done, in curing this impotent man upon the sabbath day, was the Father's work, though by him; for whatsoever the Father doth, or willeth, the same doth the Son likewise. From hence will appear an easy solution to the difficulty arising upon the first view of the words, viz. How these words can prove Christ equal with the Father, when they rather prove the contrary, because he can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do? Some seek a solution in the words *can do nothing*; he that cannot do those things which God cannot do, is equal with God. Some seek it in the word *seeth*;

which they say signifieth here an identity of nature and will. Some seek the solution in the word *do*, which they say signifieth to will and consent to. The best solution is to be taken from those words, *of himself*; the Son hath done many things which he did not see the Father do, but he did them not of himself. Our Saviour's meaning is plainly this: The Son neither willeth nor can do any thing, but what the Father willeth and doth in him; therefore he is one in essence with the Father, and equal to him.

For what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise: the Son doth those things which the Father doth; and, as the Messias, he doth those things which the Father willeth to be done.

John 5:20

Ver. 20. *For the Father loveth the Son;* both as his Son by eternal generation, Mt 3:17, and also as the Messias sent by him into the world, to finish the work the Father had given him to do: and look, as a father will make his son acquainted with all that he doth; and not only so, but communicates all his power and skill to his son, so far as he can: so the Father communicates all his power to the Son, working all things in him, and by him; and he will in and by him work greater things than this, healing this poor man; he will by him raise the dead, &c. *That ye may marvel:* Christ knew that they would not believe, and all the effect that his miracles had upon the generality of the Jews, was but causing in them a stupefaction, amazement, and admiration, as Joh 11:47; whereas it was their duty, not only to marvel, but to have believed also, without which their admiration did but cause that they had no cloak for their sin.

John 5:21

Ver. 21. He seemeth not to speak of what God will do in the general resurrection, but of those whom the Lord raised up from the dead in the Old Testament, by Elijah and Elisha. The giving of and restoring unto life, are things proper unto God, De 32:39 1Sa 2:6. *So the Son quickeneth whom he will:* God hath given unto me a power to raise from the dead whom I will; as he did raise up Jairus's daughter, Mt 9:25, and the widow's son, Lu 7:14, and Lazarus. Joh 11:43. This was one of those

greater works, of which our Saviour spake in the former verse.

John 5:22

Ver. 22. Alone he judgeth no man, he judgeth no man but by the Son, no man without the Son; but committed all judgment in the administration of the mediatory kingdom in the church to his Son, and by his Son will judge the world at the last day.

John 5:23

Ver. 23. That his Son might be honoured by all men, Ps 2:11,12 Php 2:10, with the same honour which is given to the Father; for the Son is sent by the Father, not as one inferior to him, as a servant is sent by his master, but as an equal is sent by his friend, Joh 4:34 6:38 7:28. And look, as a great prince, when he sendeth his ambassador, expects that those of whom he is sent should give him honour, and the same honour as to himself; so doth the Father: so that *he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him*. It is a text which reflects dreadfully upon such as honour not Christ, especially, the Jews and Socinians, who professedly do not honour him with the same honour with which they yet pretend to honour the Father, and are concluded by this text not in truth to honour the Father.

John 5:24

Ver. 24. He that so heareth my words, that they are not a mere sound in his ears, nor affect his heart with some mere sudden and vanishing passion, but so that he gives an assent to them upon my authority; and that firmly and steadily believeth him that sent me, (the particle *on* seemeth not well put in by our translators; in the Greek it is τῷ πεμψαντι με, giveth credit to the words of my Father that sent me), believing that I am his only begotten Son, whom he hath sent into the world, and receiving me as such, hearing me, according to the command of the voice from heaven. Mt 17:5; he hath a certain title to everlasting life, and hath received the first fruits of that harvest, Ro 8:23, the incorruptible seed of the word, 1Pe 1:23; and

already sitteth *in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*. Eph 2:6, and hath the kingdom of God within him. Lu 17:21, and shall not come into that judgment which shall issue in eternal condemnation; but is passed out of a state of spiritual death into a state of spiritual life; and shall be at last eternally saved, and pass into the actual fruition and enjoyment of life eternal.

John 5:25

Ver. 25. *The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God:* some understand this concerning the special resurrection of such bodies as Christ raised while he was upon the earth from death to life, of which number was Lazarus and the daughter of Jairus, &c. Others understand it of the general resurrection, spoken of Joh 5:28,29. That which favoureth this sense is, because here is no mention of believing, but only hearing a voice. But the most and best interpreters rather understand these words of those who are dead in trespasses and sins, and the quickening and life mentioned Eph 2:1, which is called *the first resurrection*, Re 20:5, because of what was said immediately before, that such a one *is passed from death to life*; and what was said before, *He that heareth my word*, agreeth with what is said here of hearing the voice of Christ; and what followeth seemeth better to agree with this sense. And Joh 5:28,29 speak plainly of the second and general resurrection of the body.

They that hear shall live; those who so hear the voice of Christ in the gospel, as to give a firm and steady assent to it, and, upon the credit of it, shall receive Christ as their Mediator and Saviour, shall live eternally; they do live the life of grace, and shall live the life of glory.

John 5:26

Ver. 26. How the eternal Father *hath life in himself*, is obvious to every capacity; for he is the First Mover, and therefore must have his life in and from himself, and not from any other; and he is the First Cause, and therefore that life which floweth from him to all created beings, must first be in him, as in its fountain. But in what sense it is said, that he hath *given to the Son to have life in himself* whether as God, by his eternal generation,

or as the Messiah and Mediator between God and man, and so the fountain of spiritual life to believers, is more questioned. Those who understand it as to the Divine nature, say, that this phrase, *hath life in himself*, is expressive of the name Jehovah; and that Christ is proved to be the true Jehovah by what is here said, that he *hath life in himself*. But they distinguish betwixt having life from or by himself, and having life in himself; the text saith, it is *given to Christ to have life in himself*. But there are other interpreters, who seem better to understand it of Christ as Mediator, to whom it is given to have life in himself, to communicate to his creatures; and think it is well interpreted by Joh 1:4, *In him was life, and the life was the light of men*.

John 5:27

Ver. 27. *To execute judgment also;* to have the power of life and death, the keys of both; to rule and govern the world, and to judge it at the last day.

*Because he is the Son of man: Ac 17:31, He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, &c. So Php 2:8, Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even, the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, &c. Some think that the sense is, because he was that Son of man, who was the Seed of the woman, promised Ge 3:15; the Son of man prophesied of by Daniel, Da 7:13,14. And that the term, *Son of man*, here, signifieth his office as Mediator.*

John 5:28

Ver. 28. Do not marvel at this power which I tell you the Father hath given me, to execute in the world justice and judgment; to raise some particular persons from a natural death, and whom he pleaseth from the spiritual death of sin: for the hour is coming, when all those who are in the graves, shall, by an archangel, Mt 24:31 1Th 4:16, hear my voice, commanding them to arise; and they shall obey my command.

John 5:29

Ver. 29. *And come forth;* not all to be made partakers of eternal life and glory; there shall be a resurrection unto life, which only they shall obtain *who have done good*, walking in the commandments of God; not because they have done good, as if their goodness had merited any such thing, for eternal life is *the gift of God*, Ro 6:23. But others, who have, wrought iniquity, and died without repentance and faith in me, shall arise, that the justice of God may by me, the Judge of the quick and the dead, be exceeded upon them unto eternal condemnation. This Daniel, Da 12:2, calleth *shame, and everlasting contempt*. Our Saviour, Mt 25:46, calls it *everlasting punishment*.

John 5:30

Ver. 30. *I can of mine own self do nothing;* neither considered as God, nor as Mediator. As God, the Father and Christ were one, and what one Person in the Holy Trinity doth, all do; so that has did nothing in that capacity separately from his Father. As Mediator, he did nothing of himself; he finished the work which his Father gave him to do.

As I hear, I judge; and my judgement is just; as the Father revealed his will to him, for the administration of his mediatory kingdom in the world, so he judged; and therefore his judgment must necessarily be just and true.

Because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me; for his will was not a will proper to himself, so as it was not also common to his Father, but diverse from the will of his Father; but as his essence, so his will, was the same with his Father; and he being by the Father sent into the world to do his will, accordingly did nothing as Mediator but what was his Father's will as well as his own, in nothing diverse from his Father's.

John 5:31

Ver. 31. This seemeth to contradict what he saith, Joh 8:14, *Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true:* but our Saviour here speaketh

according to the common opinion of the Jews, or indeed of men, who are ready to suspect any one's testimony who testifieth of himself. He tells them, he could grant them this, though his record of himself was true, yet he could allow them their common received opinion and saying, Joh 8:13, that the testimony of one testifying of himself is suspicious; for it is certain that a man may testify truth of himself, only such a testimony is suspicious: he tells them, he did not only testify of himself, his reputation did not stand upon his own single word.

John 5:32

Ver. 32. The Father by a voice from heaven testified of Christ, that he was his well beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased, Mt 3:17. Some understand it of John the Baptist, of whom he speaketh, Joh 5:33. But he naming John in the next verse, it seems most proper to understand this of the Father testifying of Christ, both at his baptism, and also at his transfiguration; and to interpret the next verse, as speaking of another testimony distinct from that of John.

And (saith our Saviour) *I know*, that is, I am fully assured, that his testimony of me is true; for God is that God who cannot lie, but is truth itself. So that I do not barely testify of myself; for my Father, whom you all own to be a God of truth, and who cannot lie, and whom know to be such, he testifieth of me, and none can contradict his testimony.

John 5:33

Ver. 33. Ye sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to John, Joh 1:29; he was a man of reputation among you, for all the people judged him a prophet; and he had an interest in Herod's court: *he bare witness* (he doth not say to me, but) *to the truth*.

John 5:34

Ver. 34. *I receive not testimony from man*, that is, not for my own sake; for otherwise he did receive testimony from man, Joh 15:27 Ac 1:8. That

must be truth, to which any one can give a true testimony. John by his testimony added nothing to me. I was what I am before John testified concerning me. I only spake of John's testimony for your sake, that you might believe, and be saved.

John 5:35

Ver. 35. I do not speak this to lessen John in any of your thoughts; he was a famous light, burning in the knowledge and love of the truth; shining both in his doctrine, in publishing the truth, and also in holiness of life and conversation.

He was not that light, Joh 1:8, but he was a light, not το φως το αληθινον, but λυχνος, Mt 5:14 Lu 8:16. And you for a small time pretended a great affection for John, and came with great zeal to hear him, Mt 3:5 21:26 Mr 1:5, hoping that he was the Messiah, or at least Elias, or that prophet in him revived again. But when they saw that John did only bear record to Christ, they grew cold in their affection, not liking either his doctrine, or the strictness of his life, or the tidings that he brought; looking for a far more splendid and glorious Messiah than Christ appeared to them to be.

John 5:36

Ver. 36. *But I have greater witness than that of John;* not than that of my Father, mentioned Joh 5:31,32, but *than that of John*, last mentioned; nor doth he say a truer, but a *greater witness. The works which the Father hath given me to finish;* the works which his Father sent him to do, his fulfilling of the law, his publication of the gospel, the miracles which he wrought, were all of them works which his Father had given him to finish. Christ often appeals to the works which he had done, as sufficiently testifying of him, Joh 10:25,37,38 14:10,11 15:24. And it is plain, that the people looked upon them as a great testimony, Joh 3:2 9:32,33. The Jews avoided the force of this testimony impudently, some of them saying that he did them by the help of the devil, Mt 12:24; others pretending (more lately) that the Messiah was to work no miracles; but that is expressly contrary to what we have, Joh 7:31, and is doubtless a device of later

years. But it is a greater question, how the miracles of Christ *bear witness* of him; and whether they were only a probable, or a certain and infallible, testimony of his Deity. Those that think them an infallible testimony, say:

1. That he did works which none else did, Joh 15:24.
2. That he did them by his own power; *There went virtue out of him, and healed them all*, Lu 6:19.
3. That they were done in confirmation of the doctrine to that purpose which he preached, which God would not have confirmed by miracles, had not he been sent of God to work such things.

Those that think they were not a certain and infallible testimony, say,

1. That the prophets and apostles also wrought miracles.
2. That our Saviour tells his apostles, they should do greater works than he had done.
3. That the doing of them from his own power, was a thing could not be known to others; so could be no testimony to them.

But our Saviour did not only himself raise the dead, cast out devils, and work other miracles; but he gave others also a power to do it; which argued an original power in himself; and is more than we read of any prophets or apostles; who, though they wrought such miraculous operations, yet having not that power originally in and from themselves, could not communicate it to others.

John 5:37

Ver. 37. *Hath borne witness of me;* not only in my baptism, and at my transfiguration by an audible voice from heaven, but by the voice of his prophets, by whom he spoke to your fathers.

Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape; you have no knowledge of him, nor any acquaintance with him. It is expounded, Joh

5:38, *Ye have not his word abiding in you:* for though indeed God appeared to the Jews in no shape or similitude; yet they (that is, their forefathers) had heard his voice, De 4:12, *speaking out of the midst of the fire*, Joh 5:33. God, being an incorporeal Being, hath no such organs of speech as we have, by which we declare our minds unto others; but God had formed an audible voice, by which he revealed his will unto the Jews; so as it could only be said of the Jews of that generation and their forefathers, from the time of giving the law, that they had not heard his voice; for, Ex 20:19, they then desired that Moses might speak to them, and that God would speak no more immediately. Accordingly, he did by the prophets speak to them; but they would not believe them, no, not when he spake to them by his Son, who knew his will, Heb 1:1,3.

John 5:38

Ver. 38. Though they had heard the word of the Lord, their forefathers by the prophets, and in that generation by John the Baptist, (the messenger sent before Christ's face), and now by Christ himself, whom the Father had sent; yet the word of the Lord had no place in their hearts, Joh 8:37; it was unto them as a tale told; they received the sound of it, but it was not graven in their hearts. And this appeared, because as of themselves they had no intimacy of communion with God to know his mind; so, when the Son was sent out of the bosom of the Father to reveal God unto them, yet they would not receive him, so as to give any steady, fixed assent to what he revealed, and to yield him any just and true obedience.

John 5:39

Ver. 39. *Search the Scriptures;* the words may be read either imperatively (as our translation readeth them) or indicatively, You do search the Scriptures; that is, of the Old Testament, for the books of the New Testament were not at that time written; but as they had the books of the Old Testament, so they made use of them: Moses was read in the synagogues every sabbath day; and they (the Pharisees especially) were very well versed both in the law and the prophets.

For in them ye think ye have eternal life; they did agree that the way of

salvation and everlasting life was revealed unto them in the Holy Scriptures; nay, they did judge, that eternal life was to be obtained by their observation of the law.

They are they which testify of me: they (saith our Saviour) are my principal testimony; he doth not only say, they testify, but *they are they which testify*. No writings but those testify of me; I principally appeal to them to give you an account of me.

John 5:40

Ver. 40. You will not own, embrace, and receive me as the true Messiah and Saviour of the world, though that be the only means by which you can obtain that eternal life which you pretend to be seeking after, and rightly think that the Scripture alone can show you the way to. These two verses teach us,

1. That the Holy Scriptures are the only writings which show us the way to life eternal.
2. That not only the Scriptures of the New, but also of the Old Testament, are of use in order thereunto, though the Old Testament Scriptures show us it more darkly, and those of the New Testament show it to us more clearly.
3. That both the one and the other point us to Christ, and to the receiving and embracing of him, as our Saviour, if we would have life.
4. That it is not sufficient for us to search the Scriptures, to be versed in and acquainted with them, unless we, in obedience to them, come to Christ.

John 5:41

Ver. 41. I depend not upon the single testimony of men; or, I seek not, nor hunt after, the honour of men, nor regard what they think or say of me.

John 5:42

Ver. 42. You pretend a great deal of religion, and to do many things out of love to God, and a zeal for the glory of God; but though you can cheat others, yet you cannot deceive me: I, that search the heart, and try the reins, and am a witness to your actions, know that, whatsoever you pretend, the true love of God dwelleth not in you; and that is the reason why you do not receive me.

John 5:43

Ver. 43. I am come clothed with an authority from my Father, sent by him for this very purpose, to reveal his will to men for their salvation; I speak, I do nothing but by the authority of my Father which sent me; nor do I aim at my own glory, but the glory of him that sent me: yet you give no credit to my words, nor embrace me, as him whom God hath sent for the Saviour of man.

If another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive; through the corruption of your hearts, and the just judgment of God, giving you up to strong delusions to believe lies, 2Th 2:11. If any seducers come, without any authority from God, never sent of him, nor speaking his words, nor seeking his glory, or your good, you will readily enough receive them.

John 5:44

Ver. 44. It is evident that by receiving *honour from one another*, is here to be understood the seeking and pursuing of honour and applause from men, without regard to the praise of God: so also Joh 12:43. For otherwise it is lawful for parents to receive honour from children, masters from servants, princes and other magistrates from people. But for men to be ambitious of honour and applause from men, in neglect of the honour and praise of God, this is highly sinful; and it cannot be expected that any such persons should so far deny themselves, and renounce their own works of righteousness, as to accept of Christ and his righteousness, and rely upon him alone for life and salvation. It is said, Joh 12:42, that *among the chief*

rulers many believed; yet it is added, Joh 12:43, For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. But those words, Joh 12:43, seem rather to refer to the Pharisees, mentioned in the latter part of Joh 12:42, where a reason is given why, though many great rulers believed, yet they did not confess Christ, because of the Pharisees. Or if those words, Joh 12:43, be to be applied to those of whom it is said, they believed, Joh 12:42, we must distinguish concerning believing, which in Joh 12:42 signifieth no more than an assent given to him as a great prophet, upon the miracles they saw wrought by him; in this place, a true and lively faith, receiving Christ as our Mediator and Saviour.

John 5:45

Ver. 45. There will be no need of my accusing you, you will need no other accuser than that Moses for whom you have so great a reverence, and for whose sake you contemn me. Joh 9:28,29, they said, *We are Moses's disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.* This Moses (saith our Saviour) will accuse you unto the Father.

John 5:46

Ver. 46. Had you given a hearty credit and understanding assent to Moses, that is, to the writings of Moses, for so the term is oft taken, Lu 16:31 24:27, you would have received me: as all the law of Moses pointed to and prefigured me, so he in particular wrote of me, Ge 3:15 De 18:15.

John 5:47

Ver. 47. But if you believe not his writings, who so plainly wrote of me, and whose writings you own, and have so great a veneration for, how can I expect that you should believe the words of one whom you so vilify and condemn? For though my words be in themselves of greater authority, yet I have not so much credit with you as Moses had. But how doth our Saviour affirm, Joh 5:45, that they trusted in Moses, and deny here that they did believe him?

Answer. Some say, they believed with an implicit faith, presuming upon the merits of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob; but not with an explicit faith. Others say, they believed in the general, that whatsoever he wrote was true; but they did not believe them in the true sense of them. Tarnovius thinks, that they trusted in Moses, that they might be saved by their own works done in obedience to his law; but they did not believe him, because they rejected him of whom Moses wrote, and to whom the law of Moses was but a schoolmaster. They refused him who was *the Head of the corner*, Ps 118:22 Mt 21:42.

John 6:1

Chapter Summary

Joh 6:1-14 Christ feedeth five thousand men with five loaves and

two fishes.

Joh 6:15-21 He withdraweth himself from the people, who would

have made him a king, and walketh on the sea.

Joh 6:22-29 The multitude flocking to him, he reproveth their

carnal views, and requireth their faith in him whom

God hath sent.

Joh 6:30-59 They ask a sign like that of the manna in the

wilderness; he declareth himself to be the bread of

life from heaven, and that none can live but by

eating his flesh and drinking his blood.

Joh 6:60-65 Many of his disciples taking offence thereat, he

showeth his meaning to be spiritual.

Joh 6:66-71 Many leaving him, Peter in the name of the twelve

professes stedfast faith in him: Jesus

pronounces

one of them to be a devil.

Ver. 1. Some good time (some think near a year) after the passages in the former chapter Christ went over the lake of Galilee (for the Jews called all great collections of waters seas); it is also called the lake of Tiberias, and the lake of Gennesaret, Lu 5:1. These waters received their name from the whole province whose coast they washed, so they were called *the sea of Galilee*; or the particular shore or cities they washed, so they are sometimes called *the sea of Tiberias*, sometimes *the lake of Gennesaret*. It appeareth by Mr 6:31, that he went upon the apostles coming to give him an account of what they had done and taught.

John 6:2

Ver. 2. Our Saviour (as appeareth by Mr 6:31) only spake to his apostles to withdraw into a desert place, and to rest a while; but, Mr 6:33, though our Saviour went by ship, yet the people *ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him*. That which induced them was their knowledge of the miracles which he had wrought.

John 6:3

Ver. 3,4. That is, the third passover after our Saviour had entered upon his public ministry; by which we may observe, that John omitted many things spoken and done by our Saviour in the year immediately following the second passover, for he giveth us no further account than what we have in the former chapter, and in this. The other evangelists give us a more full account of them. The place whither our Saviour went seemeth to have been toward the end of the lake, so as the people could go on foot, and turn at the point of the lake, and be there before the ship could cross the water.

John 6:5

Ver. 5. This is apparently the same history which we have met with in all

the former three evangelists. Mt 14:15-21 Mr 6:35-44 Lu 9:10-17. See the differing circumstances considered in our annotations on those chapters. The other evangelists observe, that Christ had first been preaching to them, until it was near night; and then bring in the disciples first moving him (because they had eaten nothing) to send them away to provide themselves food. This evangelist begins with some words Christ should speak to Philip.

John 6:6

Ver. 6. Now this he said to try what Philip would say, for he was himself resolved what to do.

John 6:7

Ver. 7. This discourse between our Saviour and Philip is reported by none of the other evangelists, and probably was after that which they report of the other disciples' motion to Christ to dismiss the people, because it was now towards evening. The number (as we shall find afterward) was five thousand, besides women and children; amongst whom five hundred pennyworth of bread was very little to be divided.

John 6:8

Ver. 8-13. The story is the same, in all substantial parts, with the relations of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, in the before mentioned places. See the annotations on those chapters.

John 6:14

Ver. 14. When they had seen the miracle of Christ's multiplying five loaves and two fishes, to the feeding of five thousand persons, besides women and children; a miracle of that nature, that never any such was wrought either by Moses or any prophet, and to the working of which a creating power was necessary; this brought them to a strong persuasion that this was the Messiah; for he is signified by that phrase, *that prophet that should come into the world*, as appeareth from Lu 7:19.

John 6:15

Ver. 15. This motion of Christ into a mountain alone, after he had sent away the multitude, (thus miraculously fed), and after that his disciples had taken ship again, is mentioned by two other of the evangelists; by Mt 14:23 by Mr 6:45,46. But this occasion of it is expressed by neither of them; who both say, that he went thither *to pray*? And indeed John (who rarely mentions any thing set down by the others) is judged to have recorded this history, as for the excellent discourse of our Saviour's following this miracle; so for some particular circumstances in and about the miracle, not mentioned by the other evangelists; of which, as the discourse he had with Philip was one, so this about their going about to make him a king was another. The Jews were a people exceedingly jealous of and zealous for their liberties, the Galilaeans especially, amongst whom our Saviour was at that time; so as they never wanted any thing but a leader for a sedition or rebellion. The Scriptures mention two, Ac 5:36,37, under the conduct of one Theudas, and Judas of Galilee. Ecclesiastical history mentions more. Their error as to the Messiah (whom they dreamed of as a temporal prince) gave them a colour for these insurrections, whenever they could get any to take upon him that pretence. These men seeing these great miracles wrought by Christ, particularly that of the loaves multiplied to feed five thousand, thought Christ had been such a Messiah as they expected; not understanding that the kingdom of the true Messiah was not to be of this world, Joh 18:36, but within men here, and more evident in the day of judgment, Mt 25:34. But our Saviour, who never came into the world to disturb the civil order and government in it, constantly avoided the giving the least occasion for such a suspicion: when he therefore knew, either by his insight into the hearts of men, or by hearing their discourses, that they had such seditious thoughts, he withdrew himself into a mountain. How he withdrew himself, so as they

did not follow him, no, not his disciples, is a matter which hath exercised the thoughts of many. The papists say, that he had a power, by virtue of the personal union of the Divine and human nature in his person, to make his body invisible, and so passed from them, not discerned by them. The Lutherans are not so confident in this, yet seem to incline it might be thus. Indeed both of them are concerned to maintain the possibility of such a thing; for without such a possibility, neither can the papists maintain their doctrine of transubstantiation, where they hold, that the bread in the sacrament of the Lord's supper is turned into the very body of Christ, and the wine into his blood (though no such thing be obvious to our senses); nor the Lutherans their doctrine of consubstantiation, who hold, that the very body and blood of Christ is really present in, with, or under the elements, though the elements be not changed into it. But the Greek words are no more than *ανεχωρησεν παλιν*, which signify no more than that he again changed his place, which he might easily do through a multitude in a disorder, without their notice of him; and if his disciples did see him, it is not probable that they, knowing his aversion to any seditious practices, as also his custom to withdraw to places of privacy for devotion, would take any notice at all of him.

John 6:16

Ver. 16. This piece of history is related much more fully by the other evangelists, Mt 14:23-33 Mr 6:46-52. See Poole on "Mt 14:23", and following verses to Mt 14:33. See Poole on "Mr 6:46", and following verses to Mr 6:52.

John 6:17

Ver. 17-22. By *the sea* is here meant the sea of Galilee, or lake of Tiberias, or of Gennesaret. There our Saviour and his disciples had left the multitude; the disciples having taken a boat, and passing over on the other side, and Christ having followed them, the multitude, probably having gone in the night to rest themselves at their several houses, came again in the morning, expecting to have found Christ, and have seen more miracles; being disappointed, understanding that both Christ and his disciples were gone over.

John 6:23

Ver. 23,24. They also took shipping, made use of some other boats that were come over the water, and went over to seek Jesus; not out of any love to his person or doctrine, (as we shall anon hear), but out of a curiosity to see some further miracles wrought by him. Our Lord disappoints them, but preacheth a most admirable sermon to them.

John 6:25

Ver. 25,26. They asked him, *When camest thou hither?* A curious and impertinent question, to which he doth not think fit to give an apposite answer, but at first letteth them know, that he knew their hearts, and what designs they had in following him; which was not to see the miraculous effects of the Divine power, the credentials of his commission from heaven, and to receive him as the true Messiah, and believe his doctrine; but they came upon so low an account as to be fed by him.

John 6:27

Ver. 27. By the bread *which perisheth*, is not strictly to be understood bread, but whatsoever is necessary or accommodating to us in this life; all things of this nature are perishing, and perish with the using: nor is all labour as to them forbidden us; for we are to the contrary commanded, In the sweat of our face to eat our bread; and the apostle commandeth, that those that will not labour should not eat; and, Pr 31:27, the good woman is commended for not eating *the bread of idleness*: but excessive labour for these things is forbidden. So also is a first and greater labour for and

seeking after them, than after *that meat which endureth to everlasting life*; under which notion also unquestionably cometh whatsoever is necessary by God's revealed will, that we may have in us the hopes of glory here, and may enter into the actual possession of that glory hereafter. Such as are, first, the knowledge of the gospel; then the believing of it, and the acceptance of that Saviour, and way of salvation, which God hath revealed in it for lost sinners; and that holiness of life which God hath made necessary to it. All which (saith he) I, who am the Son of man, (a name he ordinarily giveth to himself), will give unto you freely. Not that you are to do nothing; no, labour for it; though it be a gift, yet it is a gift upon labour, for all your labour will not procure it; there will be a great deal of free grace seen when you have given all diligence. And Christ must give it; for the Father, in whose hand this life is, hath (as men by their seals use to confirm the commissions they give out to any persons to do any thing for them, and in their name) confirmed Christ as his commissioner, to give out this eternal life to whomsoever he pleaseth.

John 6:28

Ver. 28. They easily understood that our Saviour did not speak of any worldly food, by his opposing the labour he mentions, and persuadeth for, to a labour for the world; but still they did not understand what labour he spake of, but dreamed of the works of the law; knowing of no other work which God commanded, but which was prescribed in the law; and they (probably) being some, or many of them, strict observers, especially of the law contained in ordinances, and probably many of them of the moral law also, according to the sense of it given by their teachers; in which sense the young man, Mt 19:20, being bid by our Saviour to keep the law, and naming most of the precepts of the second table, told him, All these things have I kept from my youth: what lack I yet? They wondered what works our Saviour meant; what labour, when he said, *Labour for that bread*, or that *meat which endureth to everlasting life*; thinking that those who kept the law (in the sense before expressed) had no more to do.

John 6:29

Ver. 29. Our Lord calleth them to a work they never thought of, the

owning and acknowledgment of him to be the true Messiah; the embracing and receiving him as such, and trusting him with all the concerns of their souls; which was necessary, notwithstanding all their acts of obedience to the law, though most certainly productive also of that obedience, and inseparable from it. This our Saviour calleth *the work of God*, in answer to what they had said about working the works of God. Yet this will not prove that we are justified by works, because we are justified by faith; for here is no discourse concerning the causation of faith in the justification of a soul, but only concerning what is the will of God, as to all those that shall be saved.

John 6:30

Ver. 30. They thought it reasonable, that he who brought forth a new doctrine into the world (such as faith in him was, they having never heard any such thing from their doctors the Pharisees) should confirm his mission by some miraculous operation. But this was a strange stupidity, considering the sign he had so lately showed them, of feeding five thousand with five loaves and two fishes. So it was manifest they sought for a sign, not to promote or confirm their faith, but merely to feed their curiosity; and what our Saviour said, Mt 12:39, *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign*, was truly applicable to them; and those words, *believe thee*, eminently confirm it; for the aforesaid miracle speaking in him a creative power, and being such as was never wrought by any creature, they were obliged to believe him, without any further sign. God ought to be believed upon his bare word.

John 6:31

Ver. 31. Here they magnify Moses; he did not bring them a law only, but confirmed it by signs from heaven to be the will of God, by obtaining for them bread to be mined from heaven to satisfy their hunger, Ex 16:15 Nu 11:7; which is also confirmed by the psalmist, Ps 78:25. This Moses did for the whole congregation of Israel forty years together. From hence they would seem to conclude, that they had more ground to believe Moses than Christ, who, though he had indeed lately fed five thousand with five loaves, yet had done no such thing. Not considering that Moses, in what he

did, was but an instrument to obtain of God by prayer such a miracle, for supporting his people in the wilderness; and that what he had done, was done by a creating power inherent in himself, by which he multiplied that little proportion of bread which they had, to make it sufficient to feed such a quantity as five thousand, besides women and children; to which effect it bare no proportion.

John 6:32

Ver. 32. You are mistaken in your opinion of that manna, which indeed was bread from heaven, *spiritual meat*, (as the apostle calleth it, 1Co 10:3), but it was not given you by any power or virtue in or from Moses. Moses said otherwise; when it was first rained down, he told them, *This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat*, Ex 16:15. It was the Lord, not Moses, that gave you that bread. Nor was that true spiritual bread; it was only spiritual (as the apostle calleth it) because it was typical, and prefigurative of me.

My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven; it was he that gave your fathers manna, not Moses; and it is he who giveth you me, who am the true bread of which that bread was but typical, a shadow, and a figure.

John 6:33

Ver. 33. Moses gave you spiritual, heavenly bread; but that was only spiritual as it was typical and prefigured me; heavenly, as it came from the lower heavens, was mined down from thence, not made upon the earth by the art of man; and was therefore called *the bread of angels*; but I am the true *bread of God*, signified by that type, who came not down from the lower, but from the highest heavens; and who do not only maintain and uphold life in men, (as that did), but give life to men; and that not a mere natural life, but a spiritual and eternal life; and that not to the Jews only, for whose use alone manna was, but to the world.

John 6:34

Ver. 34. Most interpreters agree that they spake this seriously, that is, that they were willing enough to have such bread (if any such were to be had); but yet not conceiving aright the nature and excellency of the bread our Saviour mentioned; and this occasioned his clear explication of it in the following verse.

John 6:35

Ver. 35. *I am the bread of life;* the bread that giveth spiritual and eternal life, and the bread that upholdeth and maintains spiritual life; the Messiah, whom God hath sent into the world, to quicken those that are *dead in trespasses and sins*, Eph 2:1; and to give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given me. But those that have this life, must come unto me; which he interprets in the next phrase by believing in him. Thus he taketh them off all gross and carnal conceptions of eating and drinking in a carnal manner; and minds them to think of getting and maintaining another kind of life than they dreamed of. By believing in him, we have formerly showed is to be understood a receiving of him as the Mediator and Saviour of men, and closing with him, and committing their souls in all their spiritual concerns unto him; and he that doth so (saith he) shall never hunger nor thirst; that is, shall never want any thing necessary for him for life and eternal happiness. And for things of this life, he shall have food convenient for him; he shall *be fed*, Ps 37:3. See such a promise, Isa 49:10.

John 6:36

Ver. 36. You have seen me in the flesh, you have heard my doctrine, you have seen the miracles which I have wrought, confirming that doctrine, and me to be the true Messiah; for I have done amongst you those works which never any man did: but you are of the generation of those of whom it was prophesied: That in seeing you should not see, nor yet perceive; for though you have seen me with your bodily eyes, and could not but conclude by what works I have done that I am the true Messiah; yet you do not own and acknowledge me as such, nor will by faith close with me, and come unto me for life and happiness.

John 6:37

Ver. 37. Here ariseth a great question amongst interpreters of various persuasions, what giving of the Father is here meant; whether an eternal designation of persons to eternal life, in order to the obtaining of which the persons so predestinated are given to Christ, as he who was to be the Messiah, Saviour, and Redeemer of the world; or the infusing the habits of special, saving grace, by which persons are enabled actually to believe. If the former, the words do not only infer an infallible connexion betwixt faith and eternal life and salvation; but also betwixt the decree of election and the collation of special grace, by which men are enabled to believe, and, believing, are saved. That which seemeth to favour the latter opinion is, that the verb is in the present tense; it is not, all that the Father hath given, but *all that the Father giveth*; which would incline us to think, that though in other texts the Father's giving of souls to Christ may signify his eternal election, yet in this text it rather signifieth the donation or giving the habits of special grace. But there are very learned and pious interpreters of another mind, who think by the Father's giving, is meant the Father's choosing souls in him, Eph 1:4. Certain it is, that there are some chosen to life, and the certain means by which that life is to be obtained, Eph 1:4,5. And as certain it is, that persons so chosen in him, shall neither miss of that life, nor yet of that effectual means by which it shall be obtained. Whether that eternal election, or donation, be here intended or no, is not so momentous to determine. For the Jesuits' argument, that if we understand it of such an eternal gift, our Saviour rather excuses than accuseth them for their unbelief, by telling them they could not believe, because they were not given unto him; it holdeth as strong against special grace as against particular election; so as if that were true, it could be interpreted in neither of those senses: but by their leaves it doth not at all excuse them, unless they did what in them lay to come to Christ: but this question belongs rather to polemical writers than interpreters. Certain it is, that it is such a giving here mentioned, as shall be followed by a coming to Christ; that is, believing in him, and by a true faith receiving of him.

And those that do so, our Lord saith, he *will in no wise cast out*. Out of heaven, say some; others understand it of perseverance; but certainly the phrase denotes no more than the freeness and readiness of Christ to receive every one who truly believeth in him, and to preserve him to eternal life

and salvation. Who they are that are given to Christ, and that will or shall believe in him, is a secret that is known unto God alone: but this may be known to all, that Christ will not throw off any soul that is willing to receive him as its Saviour, and that no such soul shall perish for ever.

John 6:38

Ver. 38. Our Lord confirmeth what he had before said concerning his gracious reception of believers, and preserving them by his grace in their state of grace, so that they shall not be cast out with reprobates in the day of judgment, from this, that he came not to execute any particular will of his own, but what was also the will of his Father, who sent him into the world.

John 6:39

Ver. 39. For this he revealeth to be his Father's will, that of all his Father had given him, he should lose none; where by the Father's giving must be meant, either his eternal act (having chosen some to eternal life) in giving them to his Son, for the work of their redemption; or, which is but the effect and product of that, the working, preserving, and upholding in them those habits and exercises of grace, by which that eternal life is to be obtained. Our Lord declareth it to be the will of his Father, that he should not suffer any of these to miscarry; but though their bodies die and turn into dust, yet Christ at the last day should come to raise the dead, and, in particular, raise them up: not that they only shall rise, (for how then shall all appear before the judgment seat of God, to receive according to what they have done in the flesh?) but they are those alone who shall receive any benefit by the resurrection; and therefore they are called the children of the resurrection; and the resurrection is sometimes spoken of in Scripture as if it were to be peculiar to them, Php 3:2. By this the certainty of the resurrection is established; it being asserted as the effect of the will of God, which none hath resisted at any time.

John 6:40

Ver. 40. Our Lord having asserted the will of God, as to the final issue and happiness of believers, goes on to assert the means by which, in this life using, they must obtain this life: those are, seeing the Son, and believing in him; seeing him, not with the eyes of their bodies, or seeing his miraculous operations, both which these Capernaïtes did, and yet did not believe, (as he told them, Joh 6:36), but a seeing them with the eye of their minds, discerning him as the Messiah, and Saviour of the world; so seeing him, as to believe on him. As to these, he confirmeth it again to be the will of his Father, that they should live eternally, and that they should be raised again at the last day; and that by him, whom God had enabled to be the Judge both of the quick and the dead, Ac 10:42, which agreeth with what he had before said, Joh 5:28.

John 6:41

Ver. 41. The Jews were exceedingly prone to this sin of murmuring, which is a complaining either through indignation, or impatience of what men hear spoken, or see done: the thing which offended, seemeth not to be his calling himself the true bread, and the bread of life; but because he said, that he came down from heaven.

John 6:42

Ver. 42. For Capernaum, where our Saviour now was, was not far from Nazareth, where he had been educated, and lived near thirty years with Joseph his reputed father. Understanding therefore nothing of our Saviour's miraculous conception by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the virgin, they were much offended at his discourse of his coming down from heaven.

John 6:43

Ver. 43. By this our Saviour gives them another proof of his Divine nature, viz. in his knowing of their hearts and thoughts; for though they were inwardly angry, and in a rage, yet we read not of any words spoken by them; but our Saviour needed not their words to tell him what was in the

secret of their hearts. Our Saviour bids them not murmur at this, for he had much more than this to tell them, as followeth.

John 6:44

Ver. 44. That by drawing here is not to be understood any coercion, or force upon the will, is a thing on all hands out of question; but whether by it be only to be understood a rational drawing by arguments, (used in the ministry of the gospel), or a further powerful influence upon the soul, inclining it to be willing and obedient, that is the question. The patrons of a power in man's will to do what is spiritually good and necessary in order to eternal life and salvation, understand it of the former only (of which the compelling, mentioned Lu 14:23, is to be understood, for the ministers of the gospel have no other power to compel); but in regard the drawing here mentioned is the act not of the servants, but of the Master; not of the ministers, but of the Father; it is more reasonably concluded that it here signifies a Divine power put forth upon the soul of man, by which it is made obedient to the heavenly call, and willing to close with the offer of Christ in the gospel; for though no such thing can necessarily be concluded from the word draw, yet it is easily concluded from the nature of the motion, in coming to Christ, which is the soul's motion to a sublime, spiritual object, to which no soul hath any power of itself; such is the darkness of the human mind, the obstinacy of the will, the depravation of the affections, unless it be illuminated and drawn by the Spirit of God. No soul is able of itself to discern spiritual things, so as to see that goodness and excellency that is in them, much less to move towards the participation of them.

John 6:45

Ver. 45. *It is written in the prophets;* either in Isa 54:13, or in the book of the prophets; for though the words be to be found only in Isaiah, yet words of the same import are also to be found in Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Joel, and Micah. All they whom the Lord hath chosen shall be taught of God.

Therefore (saith he) said I to you, *Every man that hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.* Our Saviour proveth the doctrine which he had

delivered to them, from the prophets, not because their authority was greater than his, or in any degree equal with his; but because the prophets and their writings were in greater authority and reputation with them.

John 6:46

Ver. 46. None must dream that the Father should visibly appear in the world to teach men; for the essence of God is invisible, none hath seen it at any time, saving he alone who is the only begotten Son of the Father; he hath seen the essence of the Father, he knoweth his will, and most secret counsels.

John 6:47

Ver. 47,48. See Poole on "Joh 3:18". See Poole on "Joh 3:36". See Poole on "Joh 6:35".

John 6:49

Ver. 49. *Your fathers* by nature, or in respect of unbelief, *did eat manna in the wilderness, and they are naturally dead;* (manna would not always preserve their natural life); and those of them who were unbelievers, are also dead eternally; their eating of manna, which was a type of me, without believing in me, would not save them.

John 6:50

Ver. 50. But I am that bread of life, who came out of the highest heavens, from the bosom of my Father; that bread, which if a man eateth thereof, he shall never die eternally. Eating Christ in this text signifieth no more than believing in him, so often before mentioned under the notion of coming to him, believing in him, &c. And believing is fitly expressed by this notion of eating; because as eating is the application of meat to our stomachs, for the sustenance of our bodily life; so believing is the application of Christ

to the soul, for the beginning and increase of spiritual life, and at last obtaining life eternal.

John 6:51

Ver. 51. *I am the living bread which came down from heaven:* See Poole on "Joh 6:33". See Poole on "Joh 6:35". Our Saviour's so often inculcating this, and what follows, lets us see both how necessary this is to be known, and also how difficult the work of believing is.

Those words, *he shall live for ever*, expound those that went before in the Joh 6:50, *that a man may eat thereof, and not die*. His saying that the bread which he giveth is his flesh, expounds what he said before, viz. how he is the bread of life, viz. by giving his flesh, that is, his life, for the life of the world, that many might be saved; hereby showing us, that the object of our faith is a Christ crucified, 1Co 2:2.

John 6:52

Ver. 52. They will still understand spiritual things in a carnal sense; yet it is hard to conceive how they could imagine that Christ spake of giving them his flesh to eat, as men eat the flesh of oxen or sheep; but which way soever they did understand it indeed, their captious temper inclined them to conceal any other sense they had of it, and to represent what our Saviour said as exceedingly absurd.

John 6:53

Ver. 53. The short and true sense of these words is, that without a true believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, as he who died for our sins, no man hath any thing in him of true spiritual life, nor shall ever come to eternal life. Here are two questions arise from this verse and what follows.

1. Whether the flesh of Christ, that is, his human nature, giveth life, or all our life floweth from the Divine nature? That is a question between the Lutherans and the Calvinists; the former affirming, that there is a

quickenings virtue in the human nature of Christ by virtue of its personal union with the Divine nature. It is a curious question, serving to up great edification; those who have a mind to be satisfied in it, and to read what is said on either side, may read Tarnovius on this text, and Zanchy, in his book De Incarnatione, p. 540.

2. The other is a question between the papists and us, Whether this and the following verses spake any thing about the eating of the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ in the sacrament. All protestants deny it, both Lutherans and Calvinists. The papists most absurdly affirm it, to maintain their most absurd doctrine of transubstantiation.

The vanity of their assertion, as to this text, appears:

1. Because it was a year and upwards after this before the sacrament of the Lord's supper was instituted; and it is very absurd to think that our Saviour should speak of an institution not in being, his doctrine about it being what it was impossible people should understand. Nor:
2. Is the proposition true, of sacramental eating; for many may have never sacramentally eaten the flesh and drank the blood of Christ, and yet be spiritually alive, and be saved eternally. Besides that mere sacramental eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ will not give life; but the eating here spoken of giveth life, eternal life, Joh 6:56,58.
3. Besides, it is plain from Joh 6:29, that the eating here spoken of is believing; but it is plain, that eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ in the sacrament is not believing. By all which, it is apparent, that our Saviour saith nothing in this text of a sacramental eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ.

John 6:54

Ver. 54. *Hath eternal life;* he hath it in a sure and just right title, and he shall have it in a certain actual possession: and in order to it, he shall have a joyful resurrection unto it at the last day. This is no more than what our Saviour had often said, particularly Joh 3:18,36, admitting what was before said, that by eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ, is to

be meant believing in him; only here is a clearer discovery than was there, of the true object of that faith which justifieth, viz. a Christ crucified, for that is signified by the flesh and blood mentioned.

John 6:55

Ver. 55. I, as a Christ crucified, not merely considered as to my Divine nature, but as to both natures united in one person, and particularly with respect to my death and suffering, am indeed the food of souls; not a typical food, as manna was, but a true and real food, which nourisheth them to eternal life, and the most excellent food for them. In which sense Christ is called *the true light*, Joh 1:9, and *the true vine*, Joh 15:1.

John 6:56

Ver. 56. He that acknowledgeth and receiveth me, though he seeth me as a man, consisting of flesh and blood, and that particularly applies himself to me as dying for the sins of the world, and committeth his soul in all its concerns for life and salvation to me, is united to me, and I to him: he is united to me by faith and love, Eph 3:17 1Jo 3:23,24 4:16; and I am united to him by a mutual love, Joh 14:23, and by my Holy Spirit. As our bread and meat, which we are nourished by, doth not dwell in us, and nourish, unless we eat it; so neither doth Christ do good to any soul, unless such a soul as by faith receiveth him, and believeth in him. What is said in this verse maketh it evident that these verses cannot be understood of any sacramental eating, for it is not true that Christ dwelleth in every soul, or that every soul dwelleth and abideth in Christ, who doth sacramentally eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ. All unions are either natural or political unions. The strictest natural union is that of the head and members, the vine and the branches. The strictest political union is that of the husband and wife, Ge 2:24. The union betwixt Christ and a believing soul is set out by all these, Joh 15:1 Eph 5:30,31 Col 1:18. For the nature of this union, see divines who have wrote on this argument.

John 6:57

Ver. 57. God is often in holy writ called *the living God*, not only because he hath life in himself, but because he is the fountain of life to all his creatures. Christ here declareth his Father to be *the living Father* upon the latter account, as he is the author and fountain of all life.

And I live by the Father, saith he. Some translate it *for the Father*; as indeed the preposition $\delta\iota\alpha$, joined with an accusative case, (as it is here), doth most ordinarily signify; but not always, either in profane authors, or in the dialect of Scripture, as Mr 2:4 Mr 12:24 Joh 4:41,42. It seemeth here (as in those texts) to denote not so much the final as the efficient cause; and so better translated *by*, than *for* the Father: for Christ in this text seems to be giving his hearers an account how he came to be living bread; and to be in a capacity of giving life to the world. Saith he, I live by the Father, who by an eternal generation hath communicated to me all that life which is in him; and hath also communicated to me a quickening power, as I am Mediator, and sent by the Father into the world, to give life unto the world. Now look, as I have life in myself from him who is the fountain of life, so, according to the Father's ordination, *he that eateth me*, that is, by a true faith receives and closes with me, as Mediator, *he shall live by me* both spiritually and eternally.

John 6:58

Ver. 58. There is no more said in this verse than Joh 6:49-51: See Poole on "Joh 6:49", and following verses to Joh 6:51. From this whole discourse it is as evident as the light, that the justification of the soul depends upon believing; and the spiritual life of the soul floweth not from love or obedience to the works of the law, but from faith in Jesus Christ: though it be true, that true faith cannot be without works, and no man without obedience in sincerity (though not in perfection) to the will of God, shall ever obtain eternal life and salvation; but this obedience is not faith, nor doth it enter into the justification of the soul, but is the certain and necessary product of that faith which justifieth, which cannot be justified as true and saving without obedience. In all this discourse here is no mention of love, or obedience, as that to which the promises of life everlasting and a joyful resurrection are so often made; but only of eating Christ; eating his flesh and drinking his blood; eating him as the bread which came down from heaven, &c.; which are phrases no way expressive

of obedience to the works of the law, but of believing, Joh 6:47-49. The other texts of Scripture make it plain enough, that there can be no believing without obeying, nor any eternal life and salvation obtained without both.

John 6:59

Ver. 59. Though the state of the Jewish church at this time was corrupt enough, both as to matters of doctrine, worship, and discipline; yet it being constituted by his Father, he did not decline their assemblies either in the temple at Jerusalem, or in the places of the public worship, which were called synagogues, and were both in their cities and villages; for he had a liberty to teach in them, as appeareth both from this and many other texts; which he accordingly used, and usually spent the sabbath, or a great part of it, in those places and assemblies: yet by his presence he no way owned or declared his approbation of their corruptions, but frequently and freely reprov'd them; only because of those superstitious impertinencies (there being at this time no idolatry practised amongst them) he would not disown what was of God his Father among them. The same practice we shall observe amongst the apostles, till the Jews declared themselves hardened, drove them out from their synagogues, and spake evil of the way of the gospel before the multitude, Ac 19:9. Then indeed, and not before, *Paul separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus*. This also is further to be observed in the practice of our Saviour, that although he went to the temple and the synagogues, and there joined with the Jewish worship instituted by his Father, and reprov'd (as he had occasion) the corruptions they had introduced and superadded; yet he did not forbear himself teaching the gospel in other places besides the temple and the synagogues. The evangelist also notes, that the synagogue where he taught these things was in Capernaum, a city of Galilee, which in this was *exalted to heaven*, that it had not only the gospel preached in it, but by Christ himself; but for the contempt of the gospel is since *brought down to hell*, as much debased as it was before exalted, being long since reduced to a poor inconsiderable place, and at this day under the tyranny of the Mahometan prince.

John 6:60

Ver. 60. *His disciples;* his followers, not those that were his disciples indeed, but in name; for many followed him that did not believe in him; and many (in a sense) believed, to whom he did not commit himself, Joh 2:23,24. Now, many of these disciples, having heard these sayings, and being no way able to comprehend so great mysteries, nor having their eyes opened by the Spirit of illumination, said within themselves, These are sayings hard, or impossible, to be understood; who is able to hear or to understand them? or who is able to bear them?

John 6:61

Ver. 61. Christ, though clothed with our flesh, yet being also the eternal Son of God, knew by virtue of his Divine nature, personally united to the human nature, what was in the heart of man; hence is this phrase, *knew in himself;* which is opposed to a knowledge from the hearing of his own ears, as man heareth, whether more immediately from the sound of their words, (for we read of nothing they spake audibly), or from the relation of others, as what they had heard: he knew in himself their thoughts by his Divine prerogative and property of searching the hearts, and trying the reins, and discerning the thoughts of men afar off. Knowing their thoughts, he saith, Doth this give you occasion of stumbling?

John 6:62

Ver. 62. Our Saviour by these words may seem rather to increase than to abate their offence. That which stumbled them was, his calling himself the bread of life; his affirming that he came down from heaven; that he gave life to the world; that the way to obtain this life was eating his flesh and drinking his blood. How doth what he now tells them any way tend to satisfy them? He now speaks of ascending up to heaven, and asserts that he was there before.

Answer. The former assertions were no way to be justified but upon this foundation, that though he appeared now in the form and shape of a man, and was indeed the Son of man, yet he was also God, the eternal Son of

God: he therefore here plainly asserts, that he was in heaven before he appeared as the Son of man upon the earth; and descending from thence, did assume the form of a servant; and for a further proof of this, he refers them to what they were to see or hear (to know) within some few months after this discourse, (for this was after his third passover, which was to be the last year of his life), viz. that he should ascend up to heaven; which it is very probable that some of them did see with their bodily eyes; for he was in Galilee when he ascended, and Capernaum was a city of that province; and when he ascended, the men of Galilee stood gazing up to heaven after him, as appears from [Ac 1:11](#), and had a revelation, that they should see him so come again, and descend from heaven, as they had seen him go up.

John 6:63

Ver. 63. As it is not the bread or flesh that a man eateth for the sustenance of his animal or natural life, that doth the main work, but the soul of a man within him, which putteth forth its virtues and powers in causing the digestion, concoction, and alteration of it, without which it nourisheth not the body; so the flesh of Christ eaten carnally can be of no profit for the nourishment of the soul: nor can the flesh of Christ considered alone, or by any virtue in it, profit; it only profiteth by virtue of the Divine nature, which being personally united to the human nature, addeth all the virtue and merit to the sufferings and actions of the human nature; so as the human nature of Christ hath all its quickening virtue from the Divine nature. It is not therefore the carnal eating of my flesh that I intended, that is a very gross conception of yours; nor can any such thing as that do you good: but the words that I speak to you, they are spiritual, and such by the belief of which you may obtain a spiritual and eternal life; for by believing those words, and obeying them, you shall come to believe in me, which is that eating my flesh and drinking my blood which I intended, not any corporeal or carnal eating.

John 6:64

Ver. 64. I may say what I will to you; the Spirit quickeneth, but it doth not quicken all; it only quickeneth whomsoever it pleaseth. You understand not these things, but have most gross conceptions of sublime spiritual

things; the reason is, because you believe not: though some of them, questionless, did truly believe, yet the most did not; for we read, Joh 6:66, that many of them *went back, and walked no more with him*. And though faith be an inward, secret act of the soul, yet Christ knew, and from the beginning, who were believers, and who were not; nay, he had a particular knowledge of that disciple who was to betray him.

John 6:65

Ver. 65. He said this in Joh 6:44, See Poole on "Joh 6:44".

John 6:66

Ver. 66. His disciples at large, so called because they followed him, partly to hear what he would say, partly to see his miracles, followed him no more. Many professors and seeming disciples of Christ may draw back and fall from their profession, though none that truly receive Christ shall fall away, but be by the power of God preserved through faith unto salvation.

John 6:67

Ver. 67. It is probable that some stayed besides the twelve, for it is said only that many of his disciples turned back. Nor was our Saviour (who knew the hearts of all) ignorant what they would do; but he had a mind both to try them by this question, and also to convince them that there was a false brother amongst them, whose wickedness (though it lay hid from them) would in a short time discover itself.

John 6:68

Ver. 68. Peter, who is observed in the whole history of the gospel to have discovered the hottest and quickest spirit, and to have been first in answering questions propounded to the twelve, as Mt 16:16, &c., replies, *Lord, to whom shall we go?* &c., thereby teaching us under temptations to apostasy, first, to consider what we shall get by it, as the following words

teach us, that an abiding with Christ in a steady adherence to the truths of his gospel, is the best choice that we can make.

John 6:69

Ver. 69. *We believe* (saith Peter) *and are sure*, both from what we have heard from time, and from the miracles which we have seen wrought by thee, *that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God*. The very words by which St. Matthew (Mt 16:16) expresses that noble confession of his, which our Saviour calleth the rock, upon which he would build his church. But notwithstanding this acknowledgment, which speaks the seeds of this faith now sown in the heart of Peter, and the hearts of the rest; yet whoso considereth the passages of the other evangelists after this, will see reason to believe, that their persuasion as to this was but faint, till Christ by his resurrection declared himself the Son of God with power.

John 6:70

Ver. 70. *Chosen*, not to eternal life, but to the great office of an apostle. I chose but twelve amongst you, Mt 10:1-4, and of those twelve one is *δισβολος*, an accuser, or informer; a name by which the devil (who is the grand accuser of the brethren) is ordinarily expressed in holy writ.

John 6:71

Ver. 71. This *he spake of Judas Iscariot*, (so called, as most think, from the name of the city where he lived), and to distinguish him from the other Judas, the brother of James, who wrote the Epistle that goeth by his name, and is a part of holy writ: for he *being one of the twelve*, chosen and sent out with the rest to preach the gospel, and empowered by miraculous operations to confirm the truth of it; yet it was he that was to betray Christ, as we largely read in all the evangelists' relation of the passion: to teach us, that no office to which God calleth us, no gifts (except those of special grace) with which God blesseth any man, can secure him of an eternal happy state; nothing can do that but a true saving faith in Jesus Christ, with the obedience of a holy life becoming the gospel of Christ.

John 7:1

Chapter Summary

Joh 7:1-10 Jesus, exhorted by his unbelieving kinsmen to show

himself at Jerusalem at the feast of tabernacles, refuseth, but afterwards goeth up in secret.

Joh 7:11-13 The Jews seek him, and differ in their sentiments of him.

Joh 7:14-29 He teacheth in the temple.

Joh 7:30-32 Some are ready to lay hands on him, others believe;

the rulers send officers to apprehend him.

Joh 7:33-39 Christ foretells his departure to the Father, and

promises the Holy Spirit to believers.

Joh 7:40-44 Divers opinions concerning him.

Joh 7:45-53 The officers, struck with his discourse, return

without him, and are rebuked by the Pharisees, who

chide with Nicodemus for taking his part.

Ver. 1. After the third passover, which happened after our Saviour had entered upon his public ministry, of which we read, Joh 5:1, and all those things which we read of, Joh 5:1-6:71, done by our Saviour, both at the feast at Jerusalem, Joh 5:1-47 and after he went into Galilee, Joh 6:1, and had made that excellent discourse, of which we had a large account, Joh 6:1-71; Jesus continued still to converse in Galilee, where he was; for he would not go into Judea, nor converse there, *because the Jews*, for the causes mentioned Joh 5:18, *sought to kill him*. They had two things (as appeareth from thence) against him:

1. His violation of the sabbath (as they thought) by healing him that lay at

the pool of Bethesda.

2. His making himself equal with the Father.

John 7:2

Ver. 2. *The feast of tabernacles* was a feast which God ordained the Jews to keep the fifteenth day of the seventh month, (which some make to answer our September, others our October), Le 23:34,39, after they had gathered in the fruits of the land. It was to be kept seven days, the first and last of which days were to be kept as sabbaths; they were all the seven days to dwell in tents, or booths, in remembrance of the forty years they so dwelt in the wilderness, passing from Egypt to Canaan, as we read there, Le 23:43. Now this festival was near at hand; so as we must understand the things following to have happened about the September or October before Christ's suffering, which was at the next passover; that is, the March or April following, as we count the months.

John 7:3

Ver. 3. *His brethren;* his friends and kindred; See Poole on "Mt 12:47". See Poole on "Mt 12:48"; either such as did believe in him, or such as did not believe; for, Joh 7:5, all of them did not believe in him; would have him leave Galilee, which was the far more obscure and ignoble part of the country, and go into Judea, which was the more noble and famous province; that those who in that province followed him, might also see the miracles which he wrought.

John 7:4

Ver. 4. The things which thou doest, thou doest out of a desire by them to be made known, and to spread thy own fame and glory: for this, Galilee is not a proper place, because it is an obscure part in the country. The phrase which we translate *to be known*, is in the Greek εν παρρησια ειναι. The usage of it here seemeth to be something different from the use of it in other places of holy writ. It sometimes signifies confidence and security;

and we translate it boldness, Ac 13:46 26:26 28:31 Php 1:20 Heb 3:6 10:19. But this cannot be the sense of this text; for it were no sense to read it, seeketh to be known boldly, confidently, or securely. Sometimes we translate it *openly*, as in this text, and Joh 11:54 Col 2:15. It sometimes signifieth a freedom of speech, Ac 2:29 4:13 2Co 7:4. Sometimes it signifieth clearness and plainness of speech, Joh 10:24 Joh 11:14. Sometimes it signifieth a speaking in public meetings, as in Mr 8:32 Joh 18:20. Dr. Hammond notes, that it also sometimes signifies to speak with authority, Ac 4:29,31 Eph 6:19. Certainly the word in its primary signification signifieth a freedom and boldness of speech; which freedom and boldness is necessary to him that speaketh openly, and in public meetings; and is advantaged by the authority which any man hath to speak: hence in a secondary sense it may signify both to speak with authority, and also to speak in public assemblies; and this last I take to be here signified. It is (as our Saviour's friends tell him) both against reason, and the ordinary course of the world, for men desirous of opportunities to speak boldly and freely in public assemblies, to keep themselves in obscure places, where are no such public assemblies. They therefore advise him, that if indeed he wrought these miraculous operations, and were able to produce such effects, he would not bury up himself and his reputation in such a hole as Galilee, but show himself to the more noted and famous part of the world, which was, as to that part of the world, Jerusalem, and at the feast now, where multitudes of the people would be to celebrate the feast of tabernacles.

John 7:5

Ver. 5. Not all his own friends and kindred; he came not only among his own countrymen, but among his own relations, and they received him not; or if they had some opinion of him, and some little hopes concerning him, yet they did not believe as they ought to have believed. Certainly there cannot be a greater proof and demonstration that faith is not of ourselves, nor a thing in our own power, no, not with all the external aids of gospel doctrine and arguments, than is in this text. We cannot imagine but our Lord's brethren were willing enough to have believed in Christ as the true Messiah and Saviour of the world; the very honour of their family would have so far inclined them. It is impossible that they, or any others, should have had greater external means, aids, and assistances for their faith, than

Christ's preaching amongst them, and confirming his doctrine by miraculous operations before them; if now they had a power in their own wills, to have looked upon Christ as the true Messiah and Saviour of the world, and accordingly to have received and embraced him, what was the matter they believed not, or as yet at least they believed not in him?

John 7:6

Ver. 6. *My time is not yet come;* the time of my death, say some; of my manifestation to the world, say others: but questionless our Saviour intends no more than his time for going up to this feast, for we shall read that he did go up afterward; but, saith he, as yet I cannot go up.

Your time is alway ready; you may go when you please: and this he further openeth, saying, (See Joh 7:7).

John 7:7

Ver. 7. By *the world,* our Saviour plainly understandeth the men of the world; men not regenerated, renewed, and sanctified. These men, saith he, *cannot* as yet *hate you.* There was a time afterward when this part of the world hated all the disciples of Christ, as Christ foretold, Joh 15:18; but that was after the doctrine of the gospel was more preached, and made known to the world by the preaching of the apostles: and therefore Christ saith (in that place) that it hated him before it hated them. Christ first published the doctrine of the gospel, and so became the first object of the world's hatred on that account. These his brethren were not concerned (that we read of) at this time in the publication of it, nor had any occasion to make themselves known and odious to the world upon that account; therefore he saith, *The world* (the wicked Jews, here so called) could not be reasonably imagined to have any spite or malignity to them.

But, saith he, *me it hateth:* that is apparent from what we met with Joh 5:18. But this was not for any fault in Christ, but only for his preaching the doctrine of the gospel, and free reproving them for the evil of their works, the corruption of their doctrine, and the errors of their life and conversation.

John 7:8

Ver. 8. *Go ye up unto this feast;* let not my forbearance to go up hinder your going up according to the law.

I go not up yet unto this feast; I have some particular reasons why as yet I will not go to be there at the beginning of it.

For my time is not yet full come; I know my time to go, when it will be most safe and proper for me. I shall be there some time during the feast, but my time is not yet come; I shall not be there at the beginning of it. It appeareth that he came not into the temple till about the middle of it, Joh 7:14, which was three or four days after it was began, for it held seven days, Le 23:34. Or his time was not come, because he designed to go very privately without any notice taken of his coming; which must have been, if he had at that time gone up with his kindred and acquaintance.

John 7:9

Ver. 9. He let them take their journey to Jerusalem to the feast without him, and himself still abode in Galilee.

John 7:10

Ver. 10. He went up to show his obedience to his Father's commands, Ex 23:17. The feast of tabernacles was the same with the feast of ingathering in the end of the year, when they had gathered their labours out of the field, mentioned Ex 23:16; and that was one of those three times (as appears from that chapter) when all the males in Israel were to appear before the Lord, Joh 7:17. Christ being born under the law, showeth a punctual obedience to it; and therefore, in obedience to it, he would go up: but his wisdom dwelt with prudence; and therefore he did not go up openly, not in any crowd of company, so as a public notice could be taken of him; but secretly, to teach us that we are not so strictly tied up to ritual precepts, which concern only rites and circumstances of worship, that we

may not abate them sometimes for the performance of moral duties. It was a moral duty incumbent upon our Saviour to preserve himself, with what wisdom and prudence he could, from the rage of his enemies, till his time should fully come to yield up himself to their rage; which was the reason why he, who went up now singly, without any company, when he went up to the last passover, where he was to suffer, went up with all imaginable boldness and alacrity, leading the way, to their amazement, Mr 10:32.

John 7:11

Ver. 11. Our Saviour's constant going up to the Jewish feasts, made the rulers of the Jews, who sought to slay him at the feast of the passover, Joh 5:18, (which was but six months before this), because he had violated the sabbath, (as they interpreted his healing the impotent man on that day, and bidding him take up his bed and walk), and because he had made himself equal with God his Father; seek him the first days of the feast, speaking of him with great contempt and slight.

John 7:12

Ver. 12. Our Saviour's constant attendance at these public festivals, did not only create an expectation of his being there amongst his enemies, who therefore sought him there, that they might destroy him; but amongst the generality of the people, who had very different opinions about him. Some having heard his doctrine, and hearing nothing from him but what was good and spiritual, tending to show them the way of holiness, and the true path way to eternal life and happiness, concluded that he was a good man; others said he was a mere impostor, one that deceived and cheated the more ignorant common people.

John 7:13

Ver. 13. Though many, both of the Galilaeans, among whom he had conversed, and of the common people of Judea, had a very good opinion of Christ, yet the rulers of the Jews were in such a rage against him, that his friends durst not freely discourse their thoughts concerning him.

John 7:14

Ver. 14. About the third or fourth day of the feast (which continued seven days) our Lord, being (as was said before) come up privately and by stealth, as it were, to Jerusalem, first appears in the temple preaching. What our Saviour at this time discoursed about the evangelist doth not tell us; but doubtless it was the things of the kingdom of God, which were the usual themes or arguments of his discourse, as we may also understand by the latter part of it. Our Lord probably deferred his preaching to the middle of the feast, partly, because the Pharisees' heat in hunting after him was now a little over; and that there might be a fuller concourse of people to hear him.

John 7:15

Ver. 15. Having never sat as a constant disciple at the feet of any of the Jewish doctors, nor been educated in their schools of the prophets, they wonder how he should come by such knowledge of the law of God, as he discovered in his discourses; wherein he made it appear, that he did not only know the letter of the law, but the more mysterious sense of it, the great mysteries of the kingdom of God.

John 7:16

Ver. 16. *My doctrine is not mine,* considering me as the Son of man; not taught, or to be taught, me by men; not learned out of books, or by the precepts of men; not invented by me; but it is mine as it is the doctrine of the Father that sent me, and I and my Father both are one, and agree in one, 1Jo 5:7,8; and being so, there was no such need that Christ should be learned, in their sense, viz. at the feet of their doctors, and in their schools. But enthusiasts vainly argue from hence, that there is no need of human learning for him who is to be a preacher of the gospel; for Christ was not mere man, but one in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily. No such thing will follow from the prophesying of Amos, who was a herdsman, or the apostles, who were fishermen; much less from the

preaching of Christ. We must distinguish betwixt an extraordinary and an ordinary calling. And though it be truth, that the ministers of the gospel preach doctrine which is not theirs, but his that sent them; yet it doth not follow, that they must come by the knowledge of this doctrine in the same manner that Christ did, who was in the bosom of the Father, and knew his will, and came from him to communicate it to the world; nor yet in the same manner that the prophets and the apostles came to the knowledge of it, as by Christ's vocal instruction. So also by the influence of the Holy Spirit upon them in the days of Pentecost, which abode upon them.

John 7:17

Ver. 17. Here our Saviour seemeth to obviate an objection which the Jews would make, viz. How they should know that the doctrine which he preached was the doctrine of God? He indeed said so, but how should they have any evidence of it? How could he make it appear to them to be of God?

If any man (saith our Saviour) *will do his will, &c.;* that is, If any man hath a heart truly disposed to know and embrace whatsoever shall be revealed to him to be the will of God, how contrary soever it be to the interest of his own lusts, and ready to do it in all things, and live according to the prescript and revelation of it, having a serious purpose of heart to obey God in every thing; if he seeketh for truth seriously, and in the fear of the Lord, laying aside all wrath, malice, hatred, and any corrupt passions or affections; God will reveal the truth to him, so as he shall know the doctrine that is of God; and that I do not speak of or from myself, but by authority from my Father. Now, from hence indeed followeth, that corrupt affections, passions, and prejudices, and an ill life, may prejudice, yea, and will prejudice, men from receiving of the free grace of God, spiritual illuminations, and the gift of faith; so as men that give way to such prejudices, or nourish such passions, or live such lives, shall be left of God to their native blindness, and to strong delusions, and not discern the truth in the light that openly shineth in their faces. But from hence it will not follow, that a moral life, and a study of and seeking after truth, are the cause of faith, or effective of it, with the working of our own will.

John 7:18

Ver. 18. Here our Saviour giveth them another note, by which they might know that his doctrine was of God, because he spake not of himself, nor sought his own glory in what he delivered. No man doth an action of and from himself, but he maketh himself the end of his action; for to what purpose should a man devise and broach new notions, but for some selfish advantage, that he may get some profit, or some honour and applause from men? But if a man acts as servant to another, and seeketh only the honour and applause of another, he is true, and cannot be presumed to have spoken of and from himself, but of and from him whose honour and glory he seeketh to advance; and in reason ought to be judged sincere and faithful in the execution of the trust committed to him, and to be without fraud and deceit, having no unrighteousness in him; there being no just cause to be presumed which should move him to speak any thing that is false. Hence also may be learned a good rule or direction, which divines ordinarily make use of to help us to judge of the truth of doctrines. Those doctrines which most tend to the advancing the honour and glory of God, and least to the advancement of the creature, those are most likely to be of God. And this also much tendeth to confirm the reputation of holy writ, and the penmen of it; for it is manifest that the penmen of it sought not their own glory in their writings, but the honour and glory of God, taking all shame to themselves.

John 7:19

Ver. 19. Moses was God's instrument in delivering his law to the people, Ex 24:3 De 33:4; a law which none of them exactly kept, but daily broke. Why do you (saith our Saviour) make it such a capital crime (suppose you were not in an error, but I had in this one point of the sabbath violated the law) in me to break the law, that you for it would have my blood? How cometh it to be a more heinous offence in me to break the law in one thing, than it is in you, who violate it in so many things? Or, do not you think it a capital crime maliciously to go about to destroy an innocent person? Is not that a greater breach, think you, of the sixth commandment, than what I have done is of the fourth? Supposing that had been any breach of the law at all, which indeed it was not.

John 7:20

Ver. 20. The Jews had an opinion, that whosoever was beside himself, and talked distractedly, was influenced with an evil spirit; so as, *Thou hast a devil*, is no more than, Thou art mad; unless we will take the phrase as a mere term of reproach, such as we ordinarily hear at this day from some men in their passions, when they hear any speak what is false, and hath no congruity with truth, according to their apprehensions, saying, The devil is in you: the former is the milder interpretation, though in that was sin enough, considering who it is that spake.

Who goeth about to kill thee? It is very probable that the common people (to whom our Saviour was now speaking) knew nothing of the design of their rulers, mentioned Joh 5:18, so spake this innocently, (though in their passion), having no such design in their hearts; but they ought not so peremptorily to have denied what our Saviour positively affirmed, who knew the designs and counsels of all men's hearts, though they knew them not.

John 7:21

Ver. 21. By the one miracle it is plain, by what followeth, that he meaneth healing the man who lay at the pool of Bethesda; at this, he saith, they marvelled, by which is to be understood offended, for so it is expounded by $\chiολατε$, Joh 7:23; and to this sense is our Saviour's subsequent discourse.

John 7:22

Ver. 22. The particule *therefore*, or, for this, $\delta\iota\alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron$, maketh in this verse a great difficulty, what the meaning of it should be. The most probable account of it is, that it belongeth to the former verse, which should end thus, *and ye all marvel for this*. This indeed maketh all plain; otherwise it is very hard to give an account what force it can have, if we consider it as a note of a cause.

Moses gave you circumcision, that is, a law about circumcision; yet that law had not its rise from Moses: the law was given to your father Abraham, Ge 17:10, long before Moses's time. In obedience to that law, you circumcise a male child, or a proselyte, that is, a man grown, on the sabbath day.

John 7:23

Ver. 23. The strength of this whole argument seemeth to be this: If a ritual law (such was that for observation of the sabbath, given in Mount Sinai, Ex 20:1-17) may give place to another ritual law which is more ancient, (such was that of circumcision, given to Abraham long before), much more ought it to give place to a law of nature written in every man's heart, viz. that it is our duty to help those that are in great degrees of misery and affliction; which is what I paid obedience to in curing the impotent man that lay at the pool of Bethesda. Do you yield this in your daily practice, that a man may be circumcised, yea, and ought to be circumcised, on the eighth day, though it happeneth to be the sabbath day; and not to do it were a violation of the law of Moses about circumcision, which was a law given you by Moses, though, before him, to Abraham also? What reason then have you to be angry with me, who on the sabbath day have only healed a man, and made him *every whit whole*? That is, (as some think), I have not only cured him as to his body, but as to his soul; but that hardly seemeth probable; for if it were so, the Jews could have no evidence of the spiritual cure. Others therefore think that the term ολον ανθρωπον , signifieth no more than perfectly, or completely whole, as to his body.

John 7:24

Ver. 24. Do not judge persons, and condemn me for what I have done, merely out of your hatred, prejudice, and malice against me. Or, do not judge according to the first appearance of this fact. It looketh to you as a violation of the sabbath; it is not indeed so, but the performance of a duty greater than that of sanctifying the sabbath is. Judge righteously, and do not condemn in me what you yourselves do in other causes, because of your hatred to and prejudice against me; nor condemn an action which is in itself a righteous action, and not deserving condemnation.

John 7:25

Ver. 25. Those who here speak are said to be of Jerusalem, (probably citizens), who knew more of the designs and counsels of the chief priests and elders, than those who said before, Joh 7:20, *Thou hast a devil: who seeketh to kill thee?*

John 7:26

Ver. 26. The first search being over, it is probable that the rulers had not heard that Christ was come up to the feast; this made the people think that they had some knowledge that he was the Messiah, otherwise they would have taken some course to have restrained his so free and open discoursing: but we shall in the latter part of this chapter find that they were mistaken; for as soon as they heard where he was, and what he was doing, they used all means they could to apprehend him.

John 7:27

Ver. 27. *We know this man whence he is;* we know he is of Nazareth, and that Joseph is his reputed father. They also knew whence the Messiah was to come, that he was to be of the family of David, of the tribe of Judah, of the town of Bethlehem: the chief priests and scribes answered Herod to that purpose, without the least hesitation, Mt 2:5,6, but they had no revelation to guide them to know of what particular family he should be: thus this verse is easily reconciled to Joh 7:42. Others think that they speak of the second manifestation of Christ. They had a tradition, which was bottomed on holy writ, That he was to come out of Bethlehem: but then they had another tradition, that he should be taken away from thence, and hidden for some years, and then again appear as a person unknown whence he came. Which opinion, say some, was bottomed on the revelations of the Old Testament concerning a double regeneration of Christ, Isa 53:8, *Who shall declare his generation?* and Mic 5:2; the one of which is to be understood of his eternal generation, which none can declare; the other, as to the generation of his human nature. But the Jews not understanding that

the Messiah was to be God man, understood both of his human nature; which made them fancy, that though he was to be born at Bethlehem, according to Mic 5:2, yet he was to be carried away for some years some where; so as when he came to appear to the world, none should know whence he came, but he should appear as a man dropped down from heaven. Now Christ having been offered in the temple at his mother's purification, went back again with his parents, Lu 2:39, came to Nazareth, and ordinarily went up to Jerusalem; there he was found disputing with the doctors, Joh 7:46; and at last we find him resting with his parents at Nazareth, and being subject to them; after which we read no more of him, till he came to John to be baptized: so as the Jews had known and observed the whole course of Christ's life.

John 7:28

Ver. 28. *Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am;* you might have known me by the doctrine which I have taught, and the miracles which I have wrought among you; and you had known me, if you had not shut your eyes against the light, which shone in your face: or, you say and think that you know me. Others think that it is an irony, or as a question, Do you know me so well? If you did, you would know that I came not of myself, but was sent by my Father; and he that sent me is truth itself: but you know not the Father, and therefore cannot know me as indeed I am.

John 7:29

Ver. 29. *I know him,* so as no man else knoweth him, Mt 11:27; I know his essence, his will, his counsels, his laws; *for I am from him* by an eternal generation, his only begotten Son; and I am sent by him, as the Mediator and Saviour of the world, to declare and to execute his will and pleasure, as to man's salvation.

John 7:30

Ver. 30. By this time the news was come to the sanhedrim, the great court of the Jews, to whom belonged the cognizance of church affairs, false

prophets, blasphemy, violation of the sabbath, &c.: they took counsel, and used endeavours to apprehend him; or it may be, some of the ruder sort of people that were his enemies used some such endeavours, but not with any effect; for by the mighty providence of God, who had set the time when Christ should suffer, till that hour was come, mentioned also Joh 8:20 12:23, there was such a restraint upon the rage of the rabble, yea, (as we shall hereafter hear), upon the spirits of the officers, who were sent from the sanhedrim to apprehend him, that they had no power to lay hold upon him. Men shall do us no hurt, till God's time comes. A sparrow falls not to the ground without the will of our Father.

John 7:31

Ver. 31. *And many of the people believed on him;* not as the true Messias; for the next words let us know, they did not believe him to be the Christ, but looked for him to come; but they gave credit to him as a great prophet sent from God; and doubted whether the miracles which he wrought were not as many and as great as ever the Messiah would do when he came. For though John reports but a few miracles wrought by Christ, yet they were such as required a Divine power to produce; such as turning the water into wine, multiplying the loaves, raising Lazarus from the dead, &c. And John tells us, Joh 20:30 Joh 21:25, that he did many more works than he hath recorded in this book; and many more are recorded by the other three evangelists. From hence may be observed the falsehood of the later Jews, who deny that the Messiah is to work any miracles; for it is apparent from hence, that they had in our Saviour's time a general expectation that great miracles should be done by the Messiah; and their expectation was truly founded upon Isa 35:5,6, as appeareth by Mt 11:5.

John 7:32

Ver. 32. *Murmured* here is taken in a different sense from what it was before, and signifieth as much as whispered, or talked privately among themselves. The chief priests, who were afraid that their honour would abate amongst the people; and the Pharisees, who were afraid the credit of their traditions would be lost, if they suffered him to go on; and being more especially troubled for the miracles which he daily wrought, as Joh

11:47; they send messengers from their great court (kept at Jerusalem) to apprehend him.

John 7:33

Ver. 33. Whether Christ spake these words to the officers sent to apprehend him, or to the people in the temple, is not much material to be known: he by them plainly declareth, that all their endeavours against him were vain and foolish; for he should yet live with them six months, (this was in September or October, he died at the next passover, which was about six months after this), and then he should go and willingly lay down his life for the sins of the world, rise again from the dead, and ascend unto his Father who sent him into the world.

John 7:34

Ver. 34. Some think the meaning is, *Ye shall seek me* to execute your malice upon me, but to no purpose, for you *shall not find me*. Or, You shall seek me to destroy me in my church, and to root out my name; but to no purpose. But the most probable sense is this: You wicked Jews, that now contemn the means of grace by me offered to you, shall one day be in distress and calamity enough; and when you are so, then you will wish I were again amongst you; but I shall be ascended to my Father, and as deaf to your prayers as above the reach of your malice. There is much the same thing said in Mt 23:39. That he here speaketh of his ascension is plain from Joh 13:33. He speaketh of heaven as a place where he was at that time, for so he was as to his Divine nature. It is $\upsilon\pi\alpha\gamma\omega$, whither I go, which makes some think it should not here be $\epsilon\iota\mu\iota$, but $\epsilon\iota\mu\iota$, *vado*. But others reject it, because it is a poetical word, hardly used in the New Testament.

John 7:35

Ver. 35. The Jews, not at all believing the Divine nature of Christ, notwithstanding all that Christ had said, and all the miracles he had wrought, are at a mighty loss to conclude what our Saviour spake of, and

whither he would go; they thought he could go no where in the land of Jewry, but they should hear of him, and be able to come where he was; they conclude therefore that he would go into some pagan country. In the Greek it is, Will he go into the dispersion of the Grecians? There were two most famous dispersions, of which we read in history. The first was of the Jews, of which we read in sacred history, in the captivities of Assyria, whither the ten tribes were carried, 2Ki 17:6; and Babylon, whither the two tribes were carried, 2Ki 24:14. And that of the Grecians by the Macedonians; when also many of the Jews were dispersed by Alexander the Great, and his successors. Peter directeth his Epistle *to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia*, 1Pe 1:1. And James directs his Epistle *to the twelve tribes scattered abroad*. They fancy that our Saviour would go into some of these places, and preach; by which means the Gentiles would be taught the mysteries of the Jewish religion, which was what above all things they were impatient of hearing; and yet had reason from the prophecies of the Old Testament to fear, viz. their own rejection, and the receiving in of the Gentiles, which afterward came to pass, Ro 11:15.

John 7:36

Ver. 36. This saying stuck in their stomachs, and they knew not what sense to put upon it; owning nothing of the Divine nature of Christ.

John 7:37

Ver. 37. Our Saviour thinketh not fit to take any notice of their guess, whither he would go, nor replies any thing to it. The feast of tabernacles was to hold seven days, Le 23:34, in which they were to offer up burnt offerings, Le 23:36. The eighth day was to be kept as a sabbath; there was in it to be a holy convocation, no servile labour was to be done. Christ on that day discoursed again to the people, crying aloud, and publicly, *If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink*; that is, If any man stand in need of any spiritual good, righteousness, strength, comfort, &c., it is to be found in me; let him come to me, by faith acknowledging, receiving, and embracing me, as the Mediator and Saviour of the world, and he shall have from me whatsoever spiritual influence of grace he stand in need of. Those

who remember what our Saviour told the woman of Samaria, Joh 4:10,14, where he compared himself to *living water*, will easily understand this the sense of these words. The condition on our parts is expressed under the notion of thirsting; which we know is the natural appetite, craving some liquid thing to refresh the man under his drought; and it is expressive of an exceeding great passion, and so made use of both in the Old Testament and the New to signify a soul's passionate desire of spiritual things, Isa 55:1 Mt 5:6.

John 7:38

Ver. 38. We have had frequent occasion to open the term of believing on Christ. It may be doubted, whether those words, *as the Scripture hath said*, be to be referred to the first or latter part of the text. If to the former, they are words expressive of that faith to which the following promise is made, which is not any assent, or slighty credit given to the word; but such a faith as the Scripture hath spoken of, as that faith which is justifying and saving.

Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water; the general sense of the promises, that his soul shall abound with all saving and comfortable influences of saving grace.

The *belly* signifieth the heart, that part of man which is called the heart being in the belly. So Job 15:35 Ps 40:8.

The flowing of *rivers of water*, signifieth the plenty of spiritual influences with which believers shall be supplied; whether joy, knowledge, spiritual gifts, or graces. If any ask, where the Scripture speaketh this? I answer, in all those promises we meet with in the Old Testament, about pouring out the Spirit.

John 7:39

Ver. 39. For the evangelist tells us, that this referred to the Spirit, which believers were to receive after that Christ should be ascended into heaven. Those scriptures, Isa 49:10 58:11 Zec 14:8, seem, among others, to be referred to in this promise of our Saviour.

John 7:40

Ver. 40. *The Prophet* mentioned De 18:15. Some think that the Jews expected an eminent prophet, besides Elias, to come before the Messiah; and Joh 1:21 would incline us to think so. But others say, it cannot be proved from their writers, that they had any expectations of any but Elias and the Messiah. But the words may be read as well, this is a prophet, as this is the prophet; and I think that is the true sense of them. A prophet had now for more than four hundred years been a great rarity amongst them, they having had none but John the Baptist who had such a repute.

John 7:41

Ver. 41. The people were divided in their opinions about Christ. Some of them were very well inclined to believe that he was the promised Messiah; but they stumbled at the country where alone they took notice of him. For though he came not out of Galilee, but was born in Bethlehem, Lu 2:4, according to the prophecy of him, Mic 5:2, suitable to which was their tradition, Mt 2:5; yet they had seen nothing of this, though possibly they had heard some relation of it, it being two and thirty years since his birth: but he was ordinarily called Jesus of Nazareth, and of Galilee, there he had lived and been educated; so as they knew no better, probably, than that he came out of Galilee, which was contrary to the prophecy, Mic 5:2.

John 7:42

Ver. 42. The Scriptures of the Old Testament had both described the family from whence the Messiah was to arise, viz. the family of David, Ps 132:11, and the town, which was Bethlehem, Mic 5:2; which was David's father's town, where he lived also, till God called him out to the kingdom, 1Sa 17:15 20:6.

John 7:43

Ver. 43. A division as to their opinions about him, as was before expressed.

John 7:44

Ver. 44. There were some that had an ill opinion of Christ, and put on the officers that came for the purpose to apprehend him; but there was none so hardy as to do it.

John 7:45

Ver. 45. Probably the officers, Christ being amongst a multitude of the people that had a high opinion of him, durst not adventure to apprehend him. Some of them, as appeareth from what follows, were astonished at his doctrine; all of them agreed to return to their masters without him; at which they are angry, and ask them how it came to pass that they did not execute their commands, in bringing Christ before them as a malefactor, to answer what they should lay to his charge.

John 7:46

Ver. 46. With so much authority, evidence of truth, &c. Yet they did not cordially believe in Christ; being under the power of carnal and worldly affection, which only supernatural special grace could subdue. These were some of those, in whom the prophecy of Christ, Isa 11:4, was to be fulfilled—*He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.* The word of the Lord doth often restrain, astonish, and amaze those on whom it hath no powerful effect to eternal life and salvation. So it was with these poor officers.

John 7:47

Ver. 47. You, who have us not only for your masters, whose commands you ought not to dispute, but to execute; but for your teachers also, from whom you might have learned better doctrine; are you seduced? For so

wicked men count all who embrace not their notions, and follow not their ways.

John 7:48

Ver. 48. You ought to be ruled by us, and guided by us, who are your rulers, and your teachers: so early did the doctrine of implicit faith and obedience creep into the world; which is indeed to suppose an infallibility in teachers and rulers; to whom indeed we owe all imaginable reverence, but we must live by our own faith. And though the Jews were bound to do according to the sentence that the priests and Levites in Jerusalem should show them, De 17:10,11; yet it must be *the sentence of the law*, and it was in civil matters, as appeareth by Joh 7:8, controversies *between blood and blood, plea and plea, stroke and stroke*.

John 7:49

Ver. 49. Out of the great pride of their hearts they vilify the people, as not learned in the law, and so were cursed, contemptible, and not to be regarded, as to their judgment and sentiments.

John 7:50

Ver. 50. Of Nicodemus we read, and of his coming by night to Jesus, Joh 3:1,2. He now, being one of this great court, stands up to speak for Christ, yet faintly, or at least very prudently and warily. He saith no more for him than he ought to have spoken for the greatest malefactor, viz.

John 7:51

Ver. 51. That no law of God or nature condemneth any man before they had heard him speak, or had what he did deposed by witnesses before them, that they might know what he did.

John 7:52

Ver. 52. *Art thou also of Galilee;* not that they thought Nicodemus was a Galilean; they knew him well enough; but they take up this as a term of reproach against him, for that he would offer to speak one word (though never so just) on the behalf of one against whom they had such a perfect hatred.

Search (say they) the Scriptures, *and look* if ever there came a prophet out of Galilee. Suppose this had been truth; yet,

1. What did this concern our Saviour? Who was not born in Galilee, but in Judea, in Bethlehem, the city of David, Lu 2:4.
2. Could not God when he pleased influence one of Galilee with the Spirit of prophecy? But,
3. Neither was it true; for Nahum and Jonah were both Galilaeans, 2Ki 14:25, compared with Jos 19:13, (for the tribe of Zebulun had their lot in Galilee), Isa 9:1.

John 7:53

Ver. 53. As little as Nicodemus said for Christ, it put a stop to their further proceedings against Christ at present. Some think that the party of the Sadducees in the council, who valued not the Pharisees' rites and traditions, took part with Nicodemus; so as by the overruling hand of God Christ at this time escaped their wicked counsels against him. So much is certain; but what parties in the council concurred in it, is uncertain.

John 8:1

Chapter Summary

Joh 8:1-11 Christ letteth go uncondemned the woman taken in adultery.

Joh 8:12-30 He declareth himself to be the light of the world,

and justifieth his doctrine against the Pharisees.

Joh 8:31-32 He promises freedom through knowledge of the truth

to those Jews who believed on him,
Joh 8:33-47 confutes their vain boast of being Abraham's seed,

and the children of God,
Joh 8:48-58 answereth their reviling by showing his authority and

dignity,
Joh 8:59 and by miracle rescueth himself from their attempts

to stone him.

Ver. 1. A mountain within less than two miles of Jerusalem, whether our Saviour, when he was at Jerusalem, was wont often to withdraw, for privacy and devotion, Mt 24:3 26:30 Lu 21:37 22:39.

John 8:2

Ver. 2. So at our Lord's last passover Luke notes, Lu 21:38, that *all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, to hear him*. Our Saviour's early going into the temple to teach, and the people's diligence in coming so early to him to hear, ought to check our slothfulness in sacred business. Multitudes of people came to him; for so the universal particle *all* must be expounded in a multitude of Scriptures.

He, after the manner of the Jewish teachers, *sat down, and taught them*. Of this custom of theirs, for their doctors, while they taught, to sit down, we have had occasion to speak before.

John 8:3

Ver. 3. There were (as they say) three sorts of scribes amongst the Jews. The first were secretaries to princes and great men; so Sheva was scribe to David, 2Sa 20:25. A second sort were such as we call scribes, or public notaries, who made instruments for people, and were employed in their

more private bargains and contracts. Neither of these seem to have been of authority enough to have done this act; and besides, the Pharisees being joined with them makes it evident, that these scribes were those who expounded the law in the temple and in the synagogues, and are therefore called lawyers. They are often joined with the Pharisees in our Saviour's discourses, Mt 23:13-15, &c. And we find them often joining with them in their discourses and actions, tending to entrap our Saviour: such was their design at this time.

John 8:4

Ver. 4. They bring to our Saviour a woman taken in the act of adultery, and set her before him.

John 8:5

Ver. 5. Moses in the law, Le 20:10, commanded that such malefactors should be put to death; but we read of no law commanding this kind of death. And their rule was, that when the law had set no kind of death for an offence, there the mildest kind of death was to be their punishment, which they counted strangling to be. But they ordinarily entitled Moses to their traditional additions to the law; and death being commanded by the law, as the punishment of such offenders, they took themselves to be at liberty to determine the kind of death, as prudence and reason of state ruled them; so as, probably, they, seeing that that sin grew very frequent amongst them, appointed stoning to be the kind of death such malefactors should be put to. The manner of which we are told was this: The guilty person was to be carried up to some high place, and thrown down from thence headlong by such as witnessed against him; then they threw stones at him till they had killed him, if not killed by the fall; or covered him, if he were dead. This they tell our Saviour Moses commanded, because he had commanded in the general, that such a person should die, and their sanhedrim had determined this particular death to such malefactors. But they would know what our Saviour said to this.

John 8:6

Ver. 6. Their design was from his answer to take some colourable pretence to accuse, and either to discredit him with the people, or to expose him to the displeasure of the superior powers. If he had directed to send her to be punished by the Roman governors, who administered justice in capital causes, the people would be fired with indignation; for they looked upon them as invaders of the rights of government that belonged to the Israelites. If he had advised them to put her to death by their own power, they would have accused him of sedition, as an enemy of the Roman authority. If he had dismissed her as not worthy of death, they would have accused him to the sanhedrim, as an infringer of the law of Moses, as a favourer of dissoluteness, an enemy to civil society, and worthy of universal hatred. This malicious design, so craftily concerted, our Saviour easily discovered and defeated; whereas they thought it would require his most attentive consideration to extricate himself from the snare. He seemed not at all to attend to what they said, but, stooping down, wrote on the ground: what he wrote, or how he could write upon the floor of the temple, (which was of stone), are very idle questions; the first not possible to be resolved, the second impertinent; for it is not said, that he made any impression upon the ground, though it be said, he wrote upon it. It appeareth plainly to have been but a divertive action, by which our Saviour signified that he gave no ear to them.

John 8:7

Ver. 7. They will not let our Saviour alone, but importune him for an answer. He saith, *He that is without sin, let him first cast a stone at her.* The law of God was, De 17:7, that in the execution of malefactors, *The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death.* In reason those who are zealous for the punishment of others, should neither be guilty of the same, nor of greater crimes, themselves. By this saying of our Saviour, we must not understand it the will of God, that those who are magistrates, and employed in executing the Lord's vengeance on malefactors, should themselves be free from all guilt, for then no justice should be done. The vengeance is God's, not theirs; it is the law of God which they execute. He only by this minds them of that compassion which ought to be found in persons prosecuting others justly, that they may

execute judgment with compassion and tenderness, and such moderation as the law will allow them, considering that they are not free from guilt, but as obnoxious to the justice of God for other sins, as those poor creatures whom God hath suffered to fall into sins punishable by human judges.

John 8:8

Ver. 8. When our Saviour had said this, he returneth to his former posture and action, (it being not a thing wherein he was concerned, who was not sent into the world to be a secular judge), as not at all regarding them.

John 8:9

Ver. 9. This was an age of very great corruption as to men's lives and manners, as well as to doctrine, and corruption of worship; and as other enormities of life were very common and ordinary amongst them, so it is very probable were adulteries, and that their rulers and teachers were not without great guilt. Now, see the power of conscience, when set on work by God; these accusers' consciences were to them as a thousand witnesses; they were reprov'd and convicted by them, and not able to stand under the reflections of them, or to say any thing in answer to what our Saviour had said: they went away one after another; and possibly it is particularly noted that they began *at the eldest*, because the consciences of the eldest of them charged them more deeply for more and greater sins. Jesus was left not wholly alone, for the next words tell us, that the woman was still left standing in the midst; and no doubt but his apostles were there, for they constantly attended him; and no doubt divers others were also there: but the meaning is, that he was by this means quit of the scribes' and Pharisees' company, who were gone out of shame, being thus convicted by their own consciences, which told them, that whatsoever this woman was, they were no fit accusers.

John 8:10

Ver. 10. The close of the former verse told us, that though the scribes and

Pharisees were gone, yet the woman was left in the midst, expecting Christ's sentence. Christ knew well enough that the scribes and Pharisees, this poor woman's accusers, were gone; but yet he acts warily, and calls for her accusers, and asks if no man had condemned her? Thereby intimating, that the law against adultery was a just law; and if the crime were proved against her, she deserved to die; but she must first be convicted, and condemned. He asks her, If she were condemned? For then he had nothing to say.

John 8:11

Ver. 11. She tells him, None had. He replies, Neither did he. He did not acquit her, for he was not to make void the law of God; nor did he condemn her: he was neither a witness in the case, nor yet a secular judge, to whom such judgments did belong; he was only to speak to her, as the Mediator and Saviour of man.

Go, I discharge thee, as being *coram non iudice*, before one who in my present capacity am no judge to hear this cause, and to give sentence in it.

Sin no more; whatever becometh of thee as to man's judgment, thou hast reason to fear the greater judgment of God, if thou goest on in a course of sin. Nor doth he say, Commit adultery no more; but, *sin no more.* No partial repentance or sorrow for any particular sin will suffice a penitent that hopes for any mercy from God; but a leaving off all sin, of what kind soever it be.

John 8:12

Ver. 12. *I am the light of the world;* this is what John the Baptist had said of Christ before, Joh 1:4,5, and what Christ saith of himself afterward, Joh 9:5. It was prophesied of him, that he should be *a light to the Gentiles*, and God's *salvation to the ends of the earth*, Isa 46:6. And old Simeon saith of him, Lu 2:32, that he was to be *a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel*. Light is a thing glorious in itself, and communicative of itself unto others to guide them. So as Christ is most aptly compared to light, and spoken of under that notion; as for his own

innate glory, so for the communicativeness of himself to creatures; which latter appeareth to be chiefly here intended: for he saith, that he who followed him, believing his doctrine, and obeying his precepts, living according to his direction and his example, should not be at a loss how to guide himself, nor remain in the darkness of sin, ignorance, and spiritual death; but should have that light which bringeth life along with it, and is sufficient to guide a man in all the works of a spiritual life, and at last bring him to life eternal.

John 8:13

Ver. 13. It was a known rule of law, that none ought to be believed upon a testimony given to himself: this is that they object to our Saviour, that though he spake great things of himself, yet he was not to be believed in his own cause.

John 8:14

Ver. 14. There is a seeming difficulty to reconcile the words of our Saviour, Joh 5:31, *If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true*, and his assertion here, *Though I bear record of myself, my record is true*: but the resolution of it is clear by considering that he speaks in the former chapter of his own single testimony with respect to them, as not of sufficient validity to authorize his Divine vocation, according to the rule of their law, that required a double testimony for confirmation of things; but here he speaks of the verity of it in itself.

For I know whence I came, and whither I go; that is, I know from whom I have received my commission, (though secret to the world), even from the Father: and yet, after the accomplishing of my embassy for his honour, I shall return to heaven, and be glorified with the glory I had with him before the world was, Joh 17:5. The reason alleged implies his being the Son of God; and his Father's entire approbation of his office, and fidelity in the discharge of it; and the concurrent testimony of the Father with him: therefore his record was authentic and true. But they did not believe his mission from heaven, nor that he was to ascend thither, and accordingly did not value his testimony.

John 8:15

Ver. 15. According to my outward appearance to you, so you judge of me; or, according to your own passions, and corrupt affections. I judge no man in that manner; or, I judge no man alone, as it followeth in the next verse.

John 8:16

Ver. 16. My testimony is not to be looked upon as a single testimony for myself; though I do judge, yet my judgment is true; for no act of mine is a single act: I and my Father are one; and what I do, my Father also doth, that sent me into the world as his ambassador. So as if the judgment of God be true, which you all own, grant, and acknowledge; then my judgment is true, because it is not mine only, but the judgment also of that God, whom you own, acknowledge, and worship, and who sent me into the world.

John 8:17

Ver. 17. It is written, De 17:6 19:15. God so ordered it by his Divine law, that every thing should be established by the testimony of two witnesses.

John 8:18

Ver. 18. I (saith our Saviour) have two witnesses; I am one, I bear witness of myself; my Father is another, for he beareth witness of me. Our Saviour's argumentation seemeth weak, unless we look upon him as exempt from the condition of ordinary men, and no mere man, by reason of the personal union of the Divine and human nature in his person. Nor must our Saviour be understood here to distinguish himself from his Father, in respect of his Divine being, for so he and his Father are one; but in respect of his office, as he was sent, and his Father was he who sent him. And indeed in the whole he seemeth to accommodate himself to the people's apprehensions of him.

John 8:19

Ver. 19. Thou talkest much of thy Father, where is he? We know no father which thou hast but the carpenter, Joseph; we do not look upon him as so credible a witness in the case, as to take his testimony in such a matter as this is. Christ tells them, that the reason why they did not know the Father, was because they did not know and acknowledge, receive and believe him; for if they had received and believed him, they would not then have been at such a loss to have known where his Father was, or who he was. The eternal Father is not to be known but in, and by, and through the Son.

John 8:20

Ver. 20. *The treasury* was a public place in the temple; concerning which, See Poole on "Mt 27:6", See Poole on "Mr 12:41", See Poole on "Mr 12:43" and See Poole on "Lu 21:1". Christ taught sometimes in one part of the temple, sometimes in another: but that no man should lay hold on him, considering the search made for him in the beginning of the feast, and their sending messengers to take him, as we read Joh 7:32, and the affront he had given to the scribes and Pharisees, of which we read in the beginning of this chapter, was very miraculous; nor can any account be given of it besides what is here given, viz. that his *hour was not yet come*; which was the reason we heard given before in the same case, Joh 7:30. Men shall be able to do nothing against Christ, or any that belong unto him, till the time cometh that God hath set in his wise and eternal thoughts.

John 8:21

Ver. 21. The greatest part of what is said here, was said by our Saviour before, Joh 7:34; (see the explication of it there); only here, instead of *ye shall not find me*, is, *ye shall die in your sins*; a phrase we shall find in Eze 3:18,19, which doubtless signifieth, in the guilt of your sins, not removed from you; and is a threatening of eternal death, as well as temporal in the destruction of Jerusalem: and those who do so, cannot come into heaven, where Christ is.

John 8:22

Ver. 22. Before they guessed that he would go to the dispersed amongst the Gentiles, Joh 7:35. Now they fancy that he would kill himself; or else speak this in mockery.

John 8:23

Ver. 23. Ye are not only of an earthly extraction, creatures of the earth, not descended from heaven, as I am; but also of earthly spirits and principles; you savour nothing that is sublime and spiritual, and therefore you do not understand me. I tell you, *I am not of this world;* my original is not from it, nor am I to determine my being in it. I shall die, but I shall rise again from the dead, and ascend into heaven, where you cannot come. Still our Saviour asserts his Divine nature; and the stress of all, he saith, lieth there; their unbelief of which was the cause of all their disputings and errors. He had given them the greatest evidence of it imaginable in the works which he had done in their sight, which were not only above the power of nature, but such as God had never authorized, or enabled any creature to do; yet they, being destitute of supernatural grace, did not believe in him. And they were inexcusable, because that grace was denied them for their wilful corruption and wickedness, which they might have avoided by the use of that common grace which was not denied them.

John 8:24

Ver. 24. In the Greek it is only, *if ye believe not that I am*. Some refer this to Christ's Divine nature; (*I am*, is the name of God, Ex 3:14); but others rather think that Christ here speaketh of himself as the Messiah and Mediator, and so the object of people's faith; and he out of whom there is no salvation: the latter indeed includes the former; for *cursed is he that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm*, Jer 17:5. The text plainly holds forth an impossibility of salvation for those who, under the revelations of the gospel, receive not and believe not in Christ as Mediator.

John 8:25

Ver. 25. What good Christian will not learn to contemn the slights and reproaches of sinful men, when he readeth of a company of miscreants thus using their Lord and Master, saying to him, *Who art thou?* It is no wonder if the world, which knew him not, doth not know us. The latter part of the verse, as it lies in the Greek, is exceedingly difficult; word for word it is, The beginning, because also I speak unto you. Some think that our Saviour calleth himself *The beginning*. Others think the noun is in this place put for an adverb: of which we have many instances in Scripture, though none as to this noun. But I shall leave those who desire satisfaction as to what is said by critics about this verse, to what Mr. Pool hath collected in his *Synopsis Criticorum*, and only consider it as our interpreters understood it; in which form it seemeth to be a mere slighting of them, as much as if he had said, I have often enough, even from the beginning, told you who I am; I can say no more to you upon that head than I have said. I am the same, and no other, than I at first told you I was.

John 8:26

Ver. 26. Judging is not put here for judicial condemnation; but for reproving and accusing, which is one part of judging. You accuse and reprove me; I have many things of which I could also accuse and convince you; but let me say what I will, you will not believe me. But you will not escape the judgment of my Father, who is true, he will judge you. I speak unto men nothing but what it is his will that I should declare to them.

John 8:27

Ver. 27. The Jews (as we are told) used to call God *The Father*, in a way of eminency: they understood that he spake to them of his Father; but they would not understand when he spake to them of his Father, or the Father, he meant God the Father of all; their minds were blinded, that they could not see, and their hearts hardened, that they could not understand.

John 8:28

Ver. 28. It is your unhappiness, that while I am alive, and preaching the gospel to you, inviting you to repentance, and faith in me, as the true Messiah, you will not believe me to be indeed what I am; but you shall lift me up upon the cross, (for that is meant by lifting up, as Joh 3:14 12:32), and when that time cometh, you shall know that I am *the light of the world*, as Joh 8:12; for after that, the gospel began to be preached to all nations: or, that I am the true Messiah, he whom the Father hath sent into the world. Some of you shall then know it by those signs and wonders that shall attend my death and resurrection, and to your shame and confusion: others of you shall know it to your eternal joy and salvation; believing on me then, whom you will not now acknowledge; and that what I have done, I have only done by commission from my Father, not of myself; and that what I have taught, I have had in commission from my Father to teach.

John 8:29

Ver. 29. I have the presence of God with me, as I am Mediator; the Father hath not sent me into the world to do his will, and left me alone without his presence; for I do his will; I drive no separate design from my Father, but always do those things which please him. From whence all faithful ministers and Christians may learn how to conclude of God's presence with them, which they can no longer promise to themselves, than they speak and do those things that please him.

John 8:30

Ver. 30. Believing on him is not here to be understood strictly of saving faith; but rather, of some preparations toward it: they began to believe that he was the true Messias, and to have more honourable thoughts than they had of him: that this was all, will appear from what we find in the following verses; and believing often signifieth no more in the New Testament than a light assent given to some propositions of the gospel relating to Christ.

John 8:31

Ver. 31. *Believed on him*, in the sense before expressed. Our Saviour well enough saw their hearts, and in what manner they believed, and what sort of disciples they were, viz. only nominal: they have the name of disciples who come after Christ to hear him; but they are his disciples indeed, who make his doctrine the rule of their lives. He therefore tells them, That not a mere saying to him Lord, Lord, and yielding some light assent to some propositions of truth in the gospel, would make them his disciples in truth and reality, without an abiding and continuance in the words which he taught them.

John 8:32

Ver. 32. *And ye shall know the truth;* that is, you shall more fully and clearly know the truth; by which may be either understood Christ, who styles himself, *The way, the truth, and the life;* or those propositions of truth which Christ hath revealed. There must be some knowledge of truth in a soul before it can believe; for *how shall they believe* (saith the apostle) *in him of whom they have not heard?* but a fuller and clearer knowledge of the truth is got by degrees, by those who studiously seek after it, and walk close with God.

And the truth shall make you free: it appears by Joh 8:36, that by *the truth* he means himself; there he saith, *If the Son make you free:* and indeed, though the knowledge of the proposition of truth gives men some liberty from the bondage of ignorance and some lusts, yet it is only the saving knowledge of Christ which brings men into a perfect liberty from the law, the rigour, curse, and terror of it, and from the dominion of sin and corruption.

John 8:33

Ver. 33. How carnally doth a carnal heart understand spiritual mysteries! Thus Nicodemus, hearing of being *born again*, grossly dreamed of entering into his mother's womb, and being born again. The woman of Samaria, hearing of *living water*, dreamed of water that should so satisfy

her thirst, as that she should never come again to the well to draw. The Jews here hearing of being made free, dream of a freedom from human bondage and slavery. To what our Saviour had said, that if they knew the truth, the truth should make them free; they reply, *We are Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any.* Admitting that they were Abraham's seed, that is, Jews, were not the Jews in bondage, first to Pharaoh, king of Egypt; then to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon? They were now in bondage to the Romans. They must either understand it of their own persons, though they were tributaries they were no slaves; or else concerning their right, they had a right to liberty though they were under an extrinsic servitude to their conquerors. This made them angry, that Christ should speak of their being *made free*; for those that are free are not in a capacity to be made free. The Jews were a people very tenacious of their liberty, and gloried much in the right they had to it.

John 8:34

Ver. 34. Our Saviour here correcteth their mistake, letting them know, that he was not speaking about any corporal, but spiritual servitude; not of the freedom of men's bodies from the power of enemies, but of the freedom of men's souls from the slavery and dominion of lusts and corruptions. He that doth sin (saith he) is the servant of sin. The committing or doing of sin here intended, is not to be understood of single acts of sin, for in that sense who lives and sinneth not? (the righteous man sinning seven times in a day); so as all men would be concluded the servants of sin; but of living indulgently and habitually in a course of sin, and in the practice of gross sins; in which sense workers of iniquity is to be taken, Mt 7:23; and this very phrase, 1Jo 3:4. And indeed, the very heathen could see, that there was no such slavery as a servitude to lusts and passions: men are *the servants of corruption*, 2Pe 2:19; under the dominion of sin, Ro 6:20.

John 8:35

Ver. 35. The servant of sin abideth not in the church (which is the house of God) for ever. Look as it is with slaves, and servants; they are no fixed members of families; they may be turned out, they may be sold over to others; they abide in families according as in them they behave

themselves: so you, who, as you are Abraham's seed, as you boast and glory, are now servants in the church of God; yet if you continue to be servants of sin, you shall not for ever abide in God's house; if you be not cast out of the church militant, you shall certainly be cast out of the church triumphant; that is, you shall never come there.

But the Son; some think he speaks of himself who was the eternal Son of God, he *abideth ever*; but I rather think he speaks of him that is a son by adoption, Joh 1:12 Ro 8:15,16. So as this text showeth us the remarkable difference betwixt a nominal professor, and one who is a true believer: the one is but as a servant in God's house, to whom belongeth no inheritance; though while he is in the family, he enjoys some common privileges which a mere stranger hath no right to: the other is a son, and hath a right to the inheritance, and so shall never be cast out of the family, but abideth in it for ever.

John 8:36

Ver. 36. If that term *the Son* in this verse be the same with *the Son* mentioned in the former verse, they must both be understood of Christ: for it is most certain, that here *the Son* can signify no more than Christ, to whom alone it belongeth to make souls free from the slavery of the law, sin, death, hell, &c. Now, saith our Saviour, this is the true freedom. Alas! What is the freedom you boast of and glory in? It is not the freedom of your inward man, if you were in the fullest actual possession of it; many a one in that sense free, hath a base, servile, slavish mind, and is a servant to corruption and lusts. It is only the freedom which I give unto souls, that is a true and perfect liberty, and is alone worthy the name of it.

John 8:37

Ver. 37. According to the flesh you are descended from Abraham, that I know; but of what advantage is or can this be to you, while in the mean time you are implacable enemies to me, and seek to murder me, who am not only an innocent person, but am the Lord of life, and came to save the world? And the root of this is your unbelief: did you receive and believe the word that I have spoken to you, you would do otherwise; but although

the sound of my word pierceth your ears, and then you receive a little of it, yet it passeth not into your hearts, it hath no place within you; you do not believe it, you are not affected with it, it doth not dwell in you as it ought to do, so that you are not turned into the likeness and obedience of it. Men may be professors and members of the church of God, in whom yet the word of God hath no rooting, and findeth no true place; so as that their condition may be sad enough.

John 8:38

Ver. 38. My Father is God; I declare unto you his mind and will; no uncertain things, but what I have seen with him, that is, what I certainly know to be his will. You declare by your actions who is your father; and as I do my Father's will, and what he teacheth me to do, so you do the works which the devil, who is your father, Joh 8:44, prompts you to do.

John 8:39

Ver. 39. *Abraham is our Father*; this was their continual boast, as may be learned from Mt 3:9; glorying in their birth privilege, Abraham being the father of the whole Jewish nation; and in their church privilege, Abraham being the head of the Jewish church, and he to whom the promises were made. But Christ taketh them off this glorying, by reminding them, that the blood of Abraham running in their veins would be of little significance to them, so long as they did not walk in Abraham's steps. Men are truly to be accounted the children of those, not from whom they are naturally descended, but whose steps they walk in, and whom they imitate in their conversations.

John 8:40

Ver. 40. You declare by your actions that you are very far from the spirit and temper of Abraham: I am one who, being sent of God, whom you own as your Father, have faithfully revealed the will of God to you, and have never told you any thing but the truth; and this is all my crime, for which you seek to murder me: this was none of your father Abraham's practice;

so as though you have something of Abraham's blood, yet you have nothing of Abraham's spirit in you.

John 8:41

Ver. 41. *Ye do the deeds of your father;* you imitate him who is indeed your father; by whom our Saviour (as we shall hear more afterwards) meaneth the devil. This they fume at, and tell him they were not *born of fornication*, which is, in our English dialect, as much as, We are no bastards; but it hath another sense in this place, as appeareth by the next words.

We have one Father, even God; that is, we own and worship one God, who is our Father; which makes very good interpreters think, that their meaning in those words, *We are not born of fornication*, is, We are no idolaters; idolatry in holy writ being very ordinarily compared to whoredom and fornication.

John 8:42

Ver. 42. This agreeth with what we have 1Jo 5:1, *Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.* But here our Saviour rather seemeth to speak of his proceeding forth and coming from God, as sent into the world to fulfil the will of God as to the redemption of man, than of his proceeding from his Father by eternal generation. It is true, that he who loves the father will also love the child, so far forth as he resembles his father, and acts like unto him; and it is as true, that he who loveth him that sends a messenger will also love the messenger, executing the commission of him that sent him.

John 8:43

Ver. 43. It is manifest all along this discourse, that Christ spake riddles to the Jews, and that they understood not the import and sense of his discourse: Now (saith our Saviour) the reason is, *because ye cannot hear*, that is, believe, *my word*: they could and did hear it with their ears; they

heard the sound of it, but they could not discern the spiritual sense and meaning of it: it was not given to them to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, Mt 13:11. And the reason was, because they suffered themselves to be blinded by prejudice, and by their own lusts and corrupt affections, till God gave them up to a judicial blindness, that hearing they heard, and did not understand; and seeing they saw, and did not perceive.

John 8:44

Ver. 44. Our Saviour now plainly tells them what he meant by their *father*, mentioned Joh 8:38; viz. the devil, whose children though they were not by natural traduction, yet they were by imitation, wilfully doing the things which the devil would have them do. He instances in two of these lusts: 1. Murder. He saith, The devil from the beginning of the world had a mind and design against the sons of men; and he ever since (as the apostle tells us, 1Pe 5:9) hath gone about like *a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour*. And in this they were his true children, using all arts imaginable to destroy him whom God had sent into the world for man's salvation. In another thing also they were the true and genuine children of the devil; the devil had *no truth in him*, nor did he abide in the truth. God indeed created the angels (who afterward fell) in a state of rectitude, without unrighteousness; but they did not keep their first station. So, neither did they love the truth, nor abide in it, but were wholly false and liars, and could not abide the truth.

John 8:45

Ver. 45. Such is your hatred to the truth, that you hate me for no other reason but because I reveal my Father's will (which is the truth) to you; than which nothing can evidence a greater hatred to truth, nor conformity and likeness to the devil. There cannot be a greater evidence of any one's hatred of the truth, than the hatred of those who tell them the truth, and for this very reason, because they do so.

John 8:46

Ver. 46. If any of you can prove that I have spoken to you any thing that is false, and not consonant to the will of my Father, do it; but which of you is able to charge me with any such thing? If there be no such thing, but I have told you what is the very truth, and the will of my Father, as to what you are to believe and do, why do you not believe me? For every reasonable soul is a debtor to truth.

John 8:47

Ver. 47. *He that is of God;* to be of God, here, is opposed to a being not of God, and so may be understood to comprehend election, as well as regeneration.

Heareth God's words; he heareth, acknowledgeth, believeth, and patiently submits to the will of God revealed in his word.

The reason why you, though with your ears ye hear the word of God, yet do not in heart receive, and embrace, and believe it, nor can submit to it, is *because ye are not of God,* not chosen of him, not savingly enlightened and regenerated by him. So as this text affords us an excellent note, by which we may know whether we be regenerated, and of God, yea or no. That is, our believing and yielding obedience to the will of God revealed in his word. By this saying of our Saviour, he seemeth to acquiesce in the will of God, concerning these refractory and unbelieving Jews, notwithstanding all the pains he had taken with them to enlighten and bring them to the saving knowledge of the truth. It pleased not his Father to open their eyes that they might see, or their hearts that they might understand. This ought in like manner to satisfy all the true and faithful ministers of the gospel, when they see they have laboured in vain, and spent their strength for nothing and in vain. When they have done all they can, they will find this of our Saviour true, That the work must be God's, and not theirs; and no more hearts will be changed, than theirs who are of God.

John 8:48

Ver. 48. A *Samaritan* signified to the Jews as much as an impostor, or

seducer; for the Jews looked upon the Samaritans as a detestable sort of men, who had corrupted the worship of God with their horrible superstitions in Mount Gerizim.

And hast a devil; that is, art mad: See Poole on "Joh 7:20".

John 8:49

Ver. 49. *I have not a devil;* that is, I am not possessed with an evil spirit, as you blaspheme; or, (as others think), I am not mad, I speak the words of truth and soberness, (for it is said, that the Jews held an opinion, That all who were distracted were influenced by all evil spirit, and had a devil). It is true in both senses, Christ had no devil. He did nothing that he did, but for the honour of his Father; this was but a term of scandal and reproach they cast upon Christ. In the mean time it must be observed, with how much meekness the Lamb of God received these most unworthy reproaches cast upon him; that we may learn to behave ourselves in like manner under such temptations.

John 8:50

Ver. 50. Christ very often reminds them of this, that in what he spake and did, he sought not his own honour and reputation; which both obviated an objection they might make against him, and also convinced them of his truth and sincerity in what he did. But, saith he, though I seek not my own honour, yet there is one who cometh himself in my honour and glory; and you must expect that he should judge and condemn you for all your hard speeches which you have spoken against me.

John 8:51

Ver. 51. To *see death*, in this text, signifieth to die, but in an apparently differing sense from what it is taken in Lu 2:26, where it is to be understood of a natural death; of which it cannot be understood here, for the holiest men shall die: *the body is dead* (that is, in dying) *because of sin;* or, shall die because of sin, Ro 8:10. It must therefore be understood

of death eternal; and in that sense the proposition is certainly true, That a holy man that keepeth the sayings of Christ shall not see death, that is, shall have eternal life; which is no more than what we have often before met with, viz. the promise of life eternal to faith and holiness.

John 8:52

Ver. 52. *Thou hast a devil:* this is the third time we have met with this blasphemous imputation from these wretched men, Joh 7:20, in this chapter, Joh 8:48, and here. What we have here, may strongly incline us to believe, that by the phrase they did not intend that he was possessed with the devil; for they here declare themselves confirmed in what they said, from his speaking that which was contrary to sense and demonstration. Abraham was dead, (though the father of the faithful), and the prophets were dead; and therefore to speak of any mortal man's not seeing death, was contrary to every day's experience, and to the experience of the holiest men who ever lived. To them therefore who understood him speaking of a natural dissolution of the soul and body, this looked like the language of one beside himself; which probably was all they meant, when they said he had a devil, unless they used it as a term of reproach and passion; of all which none can give any just account.

John 8:53

Ver. 53. If thou canst so effect it, that those who keep thy sayings shall not die, thou canst also make thyself immortal: neither Abraham nor the prophets could save themselves from death, they are all dead: what art thou? What dost thou make thyself? And by the way, this was another charge upon our Saviour, the Jews having no patience with any that should prefer himself before their father Abraham or Moses.

John 8:54

Ver. 54. *If I honour myself, my honour is nothing;* this is much the same with what our Saviour said, Joh 5:31, which he seemed to contradict, Joh 5:14; (see the notes on both those places); the meaning is, If I seek mine

own honour and glory; or, If I arrogate to myself what indeed doth not belong to me; or, If I alone honour myself, which (by the next words) seemeth to be the true sense of the phrase here. My Father is he who honoureth me, by witnessing from heaven that I am his beloved Son; by sending me into the world to accomplish his work; by many signs and wonders: and you say, that this my Father is your God. If therefore you will not give credit to me and my testimony, yet you ought to give credit to him, whom you own as your God.

John 8:55

Ver. 55. Knowing here signifies more than a notional knowledge, or comprehending in our understanding so much of God as may by natural powers be comprehended; it signifies affections, and a conversation suitable to such a knowledge. But I (saith our Saviour) fully and perfectly know him, both as to his essence, counsels, and will, and am fully obedient to him.

John 8:56

Ver. 56. You glory much in this, that you have Abraham to your father. This father of yours foresaw my coming into the world, and my dying upon the cross. He saw it by the eye of faith, in the promise which was made to him, That in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. He saw it in the type of Isaac's being offered, then receiving him in a figure, Heb 11:19. He saw it in the light of Divine revelation. He saw my coming in the flesh; my dying upon the cross for sinners; the publication of my gospel to the whole world, by which means all the nations of the earth became blessed in his seed. And he *was glad*, with the joy of faith, which gives the soul a union with an absent object by faith made certain to it, Heb 11:1.

John 8:57

Ver. 57. Christ was at this time but three and thirty years old, and upward: they dream of Abraham's seeing him, and his seeing Abraham, with bodily

eyes, of which Christ said nothing; that indeed had been a thing impossible, for Abraham was dead many hundred years before Christ appeared in the flesh to the world: neither doth our Saviour say, that he had seen Abraham, or that Abraham had seen him; but that he had seen his day, his coming in the flesh, his death, which Abraham had seen, not with bodily eyes, but with the eye of faith.

John 8:58

Ver. 58. Some will have the meaning to be, that Christ was before Abraham's time constituted Mediator; as he is said to be *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*, Re 13:8: so 1Pe 1:20. But thus it might have been said of any of the elect, that they were chosen before Abraham was. It is therefore undoubtedly to be understood of Christ's eternal existence, as to his Divine nature; and this will appear, as from other arguments, so from the whole scope of our Saviour's former discourse in this chapter, which was to assert his Divine nature and equality with the Father.

John 8:59

Ver. 59. *Then took they up stones to cast at him;* as they also did, Joh 5:31. It is vain to inquire where they had stones in the temple; they might be repairing some part of it, or some parts of it paved with stones might be loose, &c.; it is enough that we are assured that some they found. He did not go *through the midst of them* that were in this uproar, but first thrust himself into the more innocent crowd, then passed through the midst of them. Some make a question here, how he could pass through the midst of them? Whether he made his body invisible? (so the Lutherans think); or whether he struck his enemies with blindness, or thickened the air before their eyes? But what needs that dispute? Admit some few of the rabble to be in a rage, the greatest part innocent, it is no hard thing for us to conceive how a person, discerning the disorder, may thrust himself into the more innocent crowd, and pass by, escaping the rage of his enemies.

John 9:1

Chapter Summary

Joh 9:1-7 A man that was born blind receiveth sight.

Joh 9:8-12 He relates to his neighbours the means of his cure.

Joh 9:13-33 He is brought to the Pharisees, who examine strictly

his into the fact, and are offended with his

acknowledgment of the Divine mission of the author.

Joh 9:34 They excommunicate him.

Joh 9:35-38 He is received of Jesus, and confesseth him.

Joh 9:39-41 Christ taxes the Pharisees with spiritual blindness.

Ver. 1. The evangelist doth not tell us where our Saviour was passing by, but the word seemeth to import a passing by the highway side, when he saw this poor man, who was born blind; which is particularly noted, because such blindness is judged incurable as to the art of man.

John 9:2

Ver. 2. The disciples question supposed two things for truth:

1. That all bodily punishments and afflictions come upon men for sin.
2. That as some come upon them for personal sins, so others come upon them for the sins of their parents.

The latter is unquestionably true: so is the former, but not universally: as there are afflictions which are punishments of sin, so there are some that are trials.

John 9:3

Ver. 3. Our Saviour must not be understood here, as either asserting the blind man or his parents free from sin, and a degree of sin deserving such a punishment; but as speaking to his disciples question strictly, and answering, that this affliction came not upon him, either for any personal sin of his own, (for he could not be guilty of any actual sin before he was born), nor yet for any sin that his parents had committed: but that the works of God might be made glorious in him; both his work of power in afflicting, and his work of mercy in healing him.

John 9:4

Ver. 4. The Father, who sent Christ into the world, gave him work to do: his general work was, to glorify God upon the earth, Joh 17:4, as by working out the redemption of man, so by revealing his will to the sons of men, and working miracles for the glorifying the name of God. Saith Christ, I have a set time to work in; that is, that which he here calleth *day*, the time wherein Christ was to live upon the earth.

The night cometh, when no man can work; I am not to be here always, there will come a time when I must be absent from the earth, then none of this work can be done. A good argument to persuade every Christian to work while the time of his life lasts, for the night of death will come, when no man can any longer work out his salvation; but as the tree falleth, so it must lie, Ec 9:10.

John 9:5

Ver. 5. Those words, *As long as I am in the world*, let us know what our Saviour meant by the *day*, mentioned Joh 9:4, viz. the time he should be in the world. Saith he, So long as I am in the world, it is a part of my work to show light to the world. Christ indeed, though he hath left the world, is yet the light of the world; but he was the light of the world, that part of the world especially where he was, in a more eminent sense, so long as the world enjoyed his bodily presence in it.

John 9:6

Ver. 6. Several mysterious allegories are found out by men of luxuriant fancies, with reference to the manner of our Saviour's curing this blind man; as if our Saviour had made choice of clay, to show, that as he at first made man of the dust of the earth, so he could again cure him with dust; and that his spittle denoted the efficacy of Christ's humanity, being now personally united to the Divine nature. Others think, he made use of spittle, because the Jews had a great opinion of the medicinal virtue of spittle; and, they say, forbade the medicinal use of it on the sabbath day, on which day this miracle was wrought. But all these things are great uncertainties, for which we want any guidance from holy writ. It is most probable, that our Saviour made use of the spittle in working this miracle because he had no water at hand, for water was a very scarce thing in those hot countries. That which we are chiefly to attend in this great miraculous operation is, Christ's demonstration of his Divine nature, for the confirmation of the truth of which he doubtless wrought this great work, as well as to show his charity to this poor creature. To this purpose,

1. He maketh choice, not of a blind man only, but one who was born so, and so incurable according to all judgment of human art.
2. He maketh use of no means that had any appearance of a natural virtue in it; nay, which was more likely to put out the eyes of one that saw, than to give sight to one that was blind.

John 9:7

Ver. 7. He doth not only anoint his eyes, but sendeth him also to *wash in the pool of Siloam*. We read of this pool, Ne 3:15; and we are told, that it was a fountain which sprang out from Mount Zion. It should seem, that there was a brook of that name, which supplied part of the city with water, Isa 8:6. Some think they have also found a mystery in this name, because it signifieth *sent*; and think that it hath an allusion to Shiloh, which was the Messiah, mentioned Ge 49:10. The name is plainly an old name, as appears from the place I noted out of Nehemiah; probably given to it anciently, in acknowledgment of the mercy of God given them, in sending them such a

brook, or rivulet, from those mountains, so commodious for that great city: or, because (as some think) the water did not run always, but at certain times, as it were sent of God. We read of nothing medicinal in this water, only, as a probation of the blind man's faith and obedience, it pleased our Lord to send the blind man to wash himself there; as of old Naaman the Syrian was sent to wash in Jordan. He went, and the evangelist, to let us see that true faith joined with sincere obedience never faileth the expectation of them that exercise it, lets us know that he returned seeing.

John 9:8

Ver. 8. The evangelist now reports the consequence of this miracle. He, being cured, returneth to his friends: those who lived about that place, had taken notice of his ordinary sitting there, and begging; now, seeing him perfectly recovered, they ask one another, if this were not the blind beggar that used to sit there.

John 9:9

Ver. 9. Some conclude it was he, others doubted, but did think he was like him: he puts it out of doubt, and saith that he was the man.

John 9:10

Ver. 10. According as is the nature of most men upon the sight of any new and strange accident, they are curious to know how it came to pass, who did it, and where he was. The blind man tells them, that he was cured.

John 9:11

Ver. 11. By one that was *called Jesus*; probably he had heard some of the people mention him by that name; and he describeth to them the manner how he did it.

John 9:12

Ver. 12. They would know where he was; this he knows not.

John 9:13

Ver. 13. Whether the neighbours, or his near relations, is not said. Nor is the place mentioned where this convention of Pharisees was, whether in the temple, or in some synagogue, or in the great court which they called the sanhedrim; nor is it material for us to inquire into.

John 9:14

Ver. 14. It was observed before, that Christ made choice of the sabbath day, as the day wherein he did many of his mighty works. It was on the sabbath day that he cured the impotent man who lay at the pool of Bethesda, Joh 5:10; and upon the sabbath day that he cured him who had the withered hand, Mt 12:10; and now again upon the sabbath day that he cured him who was born blind. Possibly he chose that day, because that was a day wherein he ordinarily preached that heavenly doctrine, which he confirmed by these miraculous works; or, perhaps, that he might take occasion from thence to instruct the Jews, if they would have received instruction, in the true doctrine of the sabbath, that they might not superstitiously think that it was not lawful to do acts of mercy on the sabbath day: certain it is, that himself maketh that improvement of it, Mt 12:1-8. Or to show them, that he was the Lord of the sabbath; and that, as his Father by his works of providence worketh on the sabbath day, so did he, being equal with his Father: by which argument he before defended himself for the cure of the impotent man on the sabbath day, Joh 5:17.

John 9:15

Ver. 15. *The Pharisees asked him how he had received his sight;* they had before heard it from others, but they now desire to hear it from himself; not (as appears) out of any good design, that they might be convinced of the truth of the thing, or that he who had wrought this miracle was the Son

of God; but that they might have something to object against Christ, and to quarrel with him for, upon their traditions, with reference to the observation of the sabbath; of which we are told this was one. That it was unlawful for any to anoint their eyes with spittle on the sabbath day; they having a conceit that it was a medicinal application. The blind man is not ashamed to own the goodness of God to him to the Pharisees, but relates the same story which he before had related to the people.

John 9:16

Ver. 16. They are so far from owning Christ as God, the eternal Son of God, and equal with his Father, that they will not allow him to have any relation to God, as one sent of him. It is true, the sanctification of the sabbath is so great a piece of religion, (the whole of which is sometimes expressed by it, Isa 56:4,6), that whoso maketh no conscience of it, may reasonably be concluded to have little or nothing of God in him: but we must rightly understand what the will of God is as to that sanctification, and not think that it lieth in a performance of some ritual services, while in the mean time we neglect moral duties. Christ had kept the sabbath, though not in that superstitious sense they thought it was to be observed, keeping to all their traditions about it. Others of the Pharisees had a something better opinion of Christ by reason of the miracles he had wrought; concluding, that if he had been so bad a man, as some of their brethren would have him taken to be. God would not have assisted him to the doing of such miraculous works as he had done. Thus the wise God made a division amongst the counsels of Christ's enemies, his work being not yet finished, nor the time come when he was to die for the redemption of man.

John 9:17

Ver. 17. *What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? What opinion hast thou of this man, who hath opened thine eyes? To make the question perfect, interpreters think, there ought to be this supplement, on the sabbath day. What dost thou think of such a man as this, who would make clay, and apply it to thy cure upon the sabbath day? How can such a act be defended?*

The blind man answered, *He is a prophet*. It was taken for granted by the Jews, according to their traditions, that at the command of a prophet it was lawful to violate the sabbath; which indeed is no more than, that God hath not, in giving us a law, bound up himself, but he may dispense with his own law. Their prophets had an extraordinary mission from God, and immediately revealed the will of God; so as they looked upon what they said as spoken by God himself. The blind man declareth, that he believed that Christ was a prophet; and being so, his words and actions had an extraordinary warrant, and therefore were not to be judged by ordinary rules.

John 9:18

Ver. 18. That is, the rulers of the Jews did not, or the multitude or rabble of the Jews did not; for we before heard that many of the common Jews did: they had seen him for a long time sit begging; (begging being allowed in that their corrupt and miserable state, they being tributary to the Romans; though in their settled, prosperous state, there was such a liberal provision made for their poor, that there was no beggar in Israel); besides, they had it from his own mouth, Joh 9:9: but the rulers had no mind to believe it; and many others of the Jews (possibly) had been no eyewitnesses of his begging, but had only heard the relation from others: the rulers therefore send for the parents of the blind man.

John 9:19

Ver. 19. The parents of this man that was blind, in their answer show a great deal of discretion and prudence. Three things the Pharisees ask:

1. Whether this was their son?
2. Whether (as they said) he was indeed born blind?
3. How he came now to see?

The manner of the propounding their question, *who ye say*, lets us know what answer they would have had, and that they did not send for the

parents of this blind man out of a desire to know the naked truth of the thing, but hoping to fright them into a speaking doubtfully (at least) whether it was their son, yea or no; or whether he was stark blind when he was born, yea or no. But, alas! The providence of God ordering his condition to be so poor, that he was glad to beg for his livelihood, made this design vain, would his parents have gratified the Pharisees by any shuffling and indirect answer.

John 9:20

Ver. 20,21. But besides this, the parents of this man proved more honest and stouter than, it may be, the Pharisees did expect. They affirm, that they knew that he was their son, and that he was born blind. But for the third question, How he now saw? They avoid an answer to that, being possibly no eyewitnesses of Christ when he wrought the miracle. For this they refer them to their son, who was no babe, but a man grown, one of age, able to speak for himself; of whom they might inquire, and he was best able, as to this thing, to give them satisfaction.

John 9:22

Ver. 22. The reason why his parents answered so very warily, and avoided saying any thing to the Pharisees third question, which probably they could not go of their particular personal knowledge, was, that they were afraid of the rulers of the Jews. Solomon saith, *The fear of man bringeth a snare*, Pr 29:25; it is often a temptation to men to deny the truth, or, at least, not to own and confess it when God calls to them for a public owning and confession of it: but nothing of that nature appeareth in this case; for it doth not appear that his parents were present when Christ wrought this great miracle; which if they were not, they were not obliged to tell the Pharisees what themselves had only received by rumour and hearsay: so that their answer seems but a prudential answer, to avoid an eminent danger. For they were not ignorant of a decree made by the Jewish sanhedrim. That if any did publicly say, or declare, that Jesus was Christ, he should be excommunicated; for that is meant by being *put out of the synagogue*.

John 9:23

Ver. 23,24. They were not able to obtain their design from the parents of this poor man; now they again call him, and advise him to give glory to God. Thus far they spake well, if they had been hearty and serious in what they said; for the man indeed had great reason to give God the glory, by whose power alone, exerted by his Son Christ Jesus, he had received his sight: but moral actions are made good or bad by their ends; and if we consider the end of these wretched men in this action of theirs, wherein they persuaded the poor man to his duty, the words will appear to have been spoken from hearts minding nothing less than the glory of God, and out of a design to vilify and depreciate his Son; whereas God hath set up his rest in his Son, and cannot be glorified but with, in, and through him; whom in the next words they maliciously defame, not only speaking of him contemptuously, calling him *this man*, but affirm him *αμαρτωλος*, not a *sinner* only, but a notorious, scandalous *sinner*, as that word imports.

John 9:25

Ver. 25. This poor man being of no higher quality than a beggar, can be presumed to have had no great education; yet his answer is as good as could be expected from one of the greatest breeding, both for security to himself, and his stout asserting what was truth. As to their charge upon our Saviour of his being a great sinner, he avoids it, telling them, as to that he knew nothing, nor was it his concern to inquire; but this he knew, that he had wrought a great work on him, for whereas he had been blind from his mother's womb, he now had his sight by his means: so as all their frowns could not tempt him to deny the miracle wrought upon him, nor yet to speak the least in abatement of it.

John 9:26

Ver. 26. They cannot frown him into a denial of the miracle wrought; he

stood stoutly to affirm, that he was born blind, and that he was cured by Christ: now they put him to tell the story over again, either hoping they should entrap him, contradicting himself in his story; or, at least, find something, upon his repeating the story, for them to take advantage from, to persuade the people that it was but a cheat, and indeed there was no such miracle wrought upon him.

John 9:27

Ver. 27. It is wonderful to see how the boldness and confidence of the poor man increased; God giving him that wisdom and courage which they were not able to resist. He refuseth to repeat the story to them, telling them he had once already told it them, but they would not give credit to him; and to what purpose was it for him to say it over again, unless they were inclined to be his disciples? Some think the form of speech implies a hearty wishing and desiring that they would be so: but others think he speaks ironically, as if he had said, I know my repeating again the story will not induce you to be his disciples, you are resolved against that, and therefore why do you put me upon a needless trouble? And this seemeth to have been his sense by what followeth in the Pharisees reply, full of indignation.

John 9:28

Ver. 28. If this were all their reviling, for them to tell this poor man that he was Christ's disciple, it was a very tolerable imputation, and what the blind man had reason to glory in: their guilt in reviling is to be judged not so much from what they spake, for there was nothing of greater honour, as from what heart and spirit they spake it. A *disciple* signifies, one that followeth another, and learns of him. To be a disciple of Christ indeed, was the greatest thing that any could glory in; yet the imputation of it to this blind man is here called a reviling: whence we may observe, that the guilt of reviling is to be judged not so much from the words which a man speaketh, as from the frame of his spirit, and design of that in the speaking of them. If a man speaketh that of another which is good and true, yet if he doth it out of a design to expose him, to do him mischief, and make him odious unto others, God doth account this reviling, because it proceedeth from the hatred of our brother in our heart, and a design to do him harm.

Again, though indeed it was no reproach to be called Christ's disciple, yet they affixed this term upon this poor man out of a design to reproach him, and to expose him to the hatred of others. We are in the government of our tongues not only obliged to take heed what we say, but with what heart, and out of what design we speak it. A malicious design turns terms of the greatest honour into terms of reviling. Besides, they here oppose Christ and Moses: whereas, Moses was but the type, Christ the antitype; Moses prophesied of Christ, Christ was that Prophet which God had promised to raise up like unto him; Moses but the school master, who led them unto Christ.

John 9:29

Ver. 29. Concerning Moses indeed they speak honourably, and say, they knew God spake to him; yet did they know it no otherwise than by tradition, and the revelation of the will of God in the law and the prophets. For Christ, they call him *τουτου*, *this fellow*; and say, they know not whence he was; that is, they know of no Divine authority that he had. They were blinded through malice and prejudice. Indeed they did know whence he was as to his human nature, for they often made that the cause of their stumbling at him; that he was of Galilee, that his father was a carpenter, and his mother called Mary: but they knew of no Divine mission or authority that he had: this they might have known also, for he did those things which no man ever did, nor could be effected by any thing less than a Divine power; but their eyes were blinded, and their hearts were judicially hardened; they studied to shut out the light by which they should have seen, and would not know whence he was.

John 9:30

Ver. 30. The opening of the eyes of the blind without the application of means rationally probable for the producing such an effect, nay, by the application of means which to all human reason seemed of a quite contrary tendency; and this cure wrought upon one who was not blind by some accidental cause, but by some defect in nature, who had been so from his mother's womb, was so manifest an effect of the Divine power, as this poor man was astonished at it, that they should not understand that it was

done by such a power, either immediately or mediately; especially considering the prophecy concerning the Messiah, Isa 35:5,6, to which Christ refers John and his disciples for an evidence of it, Mt 11:5.

John 9:31

Ver. 31. This poor man proveth that Christ was from heaven, because he had opened his eyes; not as yet apprehending that Christ did it by putting out an immediate Divine power for his healing; but as a great prophet, obtaining such a power from God for the confirmation of the things which he delivered.

Now (saith he) we know that God heareth not sinners. But the question is, what truth there is in this axiom, or proposition. Doth not God hear sinners? Then he can hear none; for who liveth, and sinneth not against God? How did he hear Ahab, and others who were notorious sinners?

Answer.

1. By *sinners* here must be understood notorious and presumptuous sinners, that live and go on in courses of sin with hardened hearts: the word here used signifieth bold, presumptuous sinners; not such as sin merely through ignorance, weakness, or human infirmity.
2. God is under no covenant obligation to hear sinners; they can challenge no such favour upon the account of any promise: but God, out of the aboundings of his goodness, may hear them, as he heard Ahab and others; he may hear them as his creatures crying in their misery, though he hears them not as children, or upon the account of any covenant.
3. As to the sense of this maxim in this place, it seemeth to be particular and special; and the words seem to be restrained to that particular degree of favour here spoken of; God useth not to honour notorious and flagitious sinners, by giving them a power to work miracles, by which they should confirm any thing which they say.

This poor man bringeth this as an argument, why Christ should not be such a notorious sinner as they spake him, because it was not God's way to

honour such persons with his presence and assistance to the doing of those things which none could do but by a Divine power committed to him. Two things this man assumes, or taketh for granted:

1. That no man can work miracles, without a power obtained of by prayer, as we saw it was in the case of Elisha, 2Ki 4:33.
2. That what Christ did, he did as a man.

The first is true, the second was false. He was not yet convinced of Christ's Divine nature, nor looked upon him higher than as a prophet, one sent of God to reveal the will of God, and to work great works in the world by prayer; as to which he affirms, that if he were such a sinner as they clamoured, God would not hear him. So as the question, How far God may hear sinners, in giving them any thing they ask of him, seemeth not at all proper to this place; though it be enough clear from other scriptures, such as Ps 66:18 Isa 1:5, that none that live in a course of sin can expect that God should hear or give answer to their prayers; and though God may give to such sinners such things as they ask him for, which are of a mere external concern, yet it is not with respect to any promise which he hath made to them, but out of the aboundings of his own goodness. But if a man feareth God, and worketh righteousness, him the Lord heareth, accepteth, and answereth. *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him*, Ps 25:14 Pr 3:32.

John 9:32

Ver. 32. He proveth Christ to be sent from God, (though it appears by Joh 9:33 that he looked as yet upon him in no higher notion than a man), from the nature of the miracle that was wrought; which was not the recovery of a blind man's sight only, but giving sight to one who was born blind. Now, saith this poor man, this is such a work as was never done by Moses, or by any of the prophets who have been since the creation of the world. Some who have been blind from some accidental cause, and something which hath befallen them, films and cataracts, &c., have been cured; and possibly God by his almighty power may have given sight to one born blind; but we never heard of any such thing done by Moses, whom we magnify; nor by the prophets, for whom we have the greatest veneration.

John 9:33

Ver. 33. If therefore this man (for still he apprehended him no more) had not some special authority from God, and there were not some special presence of God with him, he could do nothing that is of this nature. It is a work beyond the power of man, and beyond that power first we read God did ever trust any man with.

John 9:34

Ver. 34. The Pharisees seeing that they could by no arts bring this poor blind man to their lure, either to deny, or speak any thing in abatement of the miracle which Christ had wrought upon him; nor yet to agree with them, that Christ was a great sinner; fall at last to a downright railing; they tell him, he was *altogether born in sins*. So were all of them. David had taught them, that there was none righteous, no not one; and confessed concerning himself, Ps 51:5, that he was conceived in iniquity, and that in sin his mother had brought him forth. They had learned from Job, that none can bring a clean thing out of that which is unclean; nothing can be clean that is born of a woman, Job 14:4. Their meaning therefore in this phrase must be something more; and possibly the adjective ολος, which signifieth whole, (we translate it as if it were ολως, *altogether*) doth import thus much. They do not only tell this man that he was born in sin, but that he was whole or altogether born in sin, that is, under the guilt of sin: nor do they mean only the common corruption and contagion of human nature, derived from the loss of God's image in man upon the fall of Adam, but some notorious sin. If any say, How could they think that he was guilty of any such thing before he was born?

Answer. It was the opinion of Pythagoras, one of the heathen philosophers, that when men and women died their souls went into other bodies that were then born, and in those bodies often suffered punishment for those enormous acts which they had been guilty of in former bodies. It is apparent that the Jews were some of them tainted with this notion, from Herod's saying, Mt 14:2 Mr 6:14, when, after the beheading of John the Baptist, he heard what great works Christ did, that John the Baptist was

risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works did show forth themselves in him; by which the best interpreters think, that Herod meant no more than that John the Baptist's soul was gone into another body, according to their notion borrowed from the heathens; for it had been easy for Herod by search to have found whether John the Baptist's body was risen from the dead.

So it is thought that the Pharisees here saying, *Thou wast altogether born in sins,* meant that his soul was a sordid, filthy soul, which in another body had committed vile and abominable things; and for those sins God set a mark upon him, even in his birth, and he was born blind. Or perhaps this phrase signified no more than a term of reviling; of which no great account can be given, as passionate men in the madness of their passions oft throw out words of reproach, of which neither themselves nor others can give any just and reasonable account.

And dost thou teach us? Thou that art such a marked villain from thy mother's womb, or that art such an ignorant idiot, dost thou think thyself fit to instruct us about true and false prophets, who are of God, and who are not? Surely we are to be thy teachers, and not thou ours.

And they cast him out: some think that casting out here signifieth no more than a turning him out of the place where they were; as the word signifieth, Ac 7:58 13:50. Others think its here to be understood of a judicial excommunication, or casting him out of communion with the Jewish church; which latter seemeth more probable, because of the notice or it brought to our Saviour, and the notice which he took of this poor man, upon this occasion. If it had been only a turning him out of the place where they were met, it is not probable that it would have made such a noise.

John 9:35

Ver. 35. *Jesus heard that they had cast him out,* as was said in the former verse, probably by excommunication.

When he had found him, (whether casually, or upon an industrious search for him, the Scripture doth not say), he said unto him, *Dost thou believe on the Son of God?* Art thou one who art ready truly and seriously to embrace

the Messiah and Saviour of the world, who must not be only the Son of man, but also the Son of God? Art thou willing to accept, receive, and close with him, and to give up thyself to his obedience?

John 9:36

Ver. 36. It is as much as if he had said, Lord! How should I believe on him, of whom I have not heard? (So the disciples answered Paul, asking them whether they had received the Holy Ghost, *We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost*, Ac 19:2). But, saith he, Lord, I am ready to believe on him, may I but know who he is. Our Lord had prepared this poor man's heart for the receiving of him; there wanted now nothing but the due revelation of the Messiah unto him. This our Saviour giveth him.

John 9:37

Ver. 37. This is as much as, I am he. Thou hast not only seen him with the eyes of thy body, but thou hast had experience of his Divine virtue and power, in giving thee sight who wert born blind: thus seeing also signifieth, Joh 14:9. It is very observable here, that miracles do not work faith, but confirm it. The blind man had experienced here a miracle wrought upon himself, but yet he is an unbeliever, until the Lord cometh to give him the revelation of his word: *faith cometh by hearing*: but together with this word we must also conceive a mighty power to have flowed from Christ, inwardly enlightening him, and enabling him to discern the truth of what he told him, and making him yet further willing to receive him, and close with him.

John 9:38

Ver. 38. Now is the work of faith with power wrought in his soul: he saith, Lord, I do acknowledge and receive thee as the Son of God; I am fully persuaded that thou art more than what thou art in thy external form and appearance, more than a mere man, and I give up myself to thee, to be ruled and guided by thee. And as a testimony of this, he performed some

act of external adoration to him. The word signifies prostration; he kneeled down to him, or he fell upon his face before him: we are not able to determine what particular act or posture of adoration he used; but there is nothing plainer, than that it is to be understood of such a Divine adoration and homage as is due unto God alone, for it was such as testified his faith in him as the Son of God, whom he had professed that he believed him to be, in the words immediately preceding: although therefore the word in the Greek be a word used sometimes to signify that civil respect which men show to their superiors, yet it cannot be so interpreted in this place, considering what went before.

John 9:39

Ver. 39. There is a great variety in interpreters notions about the *judgment* here mentioned. Some think that by it is meant the Divine counsel and decree: I am come into the world, to execute the just will, and counsel, and pleasure of my Father: and the event of it is this, that some who saw not, see; and some who see, in a sense are made blind. Others understand it of condemnation; I am come to execute the judgment of condemnation: but thus it is hardly reconcilable to Joh 3:17, where it is said, that *God sent not his Son to condemn the world*. The best notion of it is theirs who interpret it of the spiritual government of the world, committed to Christ, and managed by him with perfect rectitude and equity. One eminent part of this was his publishing the gospel, the law of faith. The event of which is, that many spiritually blind, and utterly unable to see the way that leads to eternal life, might (as this person that was born blind is now clear sighted) be enlightened with the saving knowledge of the truth; and many that think they see, should by their obstinate infidelity be more blind than they were from their birth. Not that I cast any such ill influence upon them; but this happeneth through their own sore eyes. I am *the light of the world*; and as it is of the nature of light to make other things visible to men; and it hath its effect, and doth so, where men's eyes are not ill affected with humours and the like; so the light of my gospel, by which I shine in the world, makes the way of salvation by me, ordained by my Father, Ac 3:18, evident and clear to many souls who are in darkness and the shadow of death: but it so happeneth, through the prejudices that others are prepossessed with against me, and the doctrine of my gospel by which I shine in the world, so full of ignorance, malice, and hatred against me and

the doctrine which I bring; that through their own perverseness, and the righteous judgment of God, at last giving men over to their own delusions, they are made more blind. In this sense this scripture agreeth with what was prophesied by Isa 8:14, *And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem;* and the words of Simeon in Lu 2:34, *Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel;* as also with that of Paul, Ro 9:33.

John 9:40

Ver. 40. The Pharisees attended our Saviour almost in all places where he went, to catch something from him whereof they might accuse him: they could not but understand, that the import of our Saviour's last words was, that this poor blind man, now not only receiving bodily sight, (though born blind), but a spiritual illumination, by which he discerned that Christ was the Son of God, the true Messiah and Saviour of the world, was an instance of those mentioned, who, not seeing before, upon Christ's coming saw; and that themselves and their masters were an instance of those whom he intended by such as saw, and by his coming were made blind; for our Saviour had often called them blind, and so represented them to the people to whom he preached, Mt 15:14 Lu 6:39. They therefore grew very angry, being very proud, and not patient to be thought or called blind, looking upon themselves as the greatest lights of the Jewish church.

John 9:41

Ver. 41. *If ye were blind;* if your ignorance were simple, and not affected, and you were sensible that your blindness were not incurable, and your sin might be pardoned. This appeareth to be the sense from the opposition of it, *now ye say, We see,* in the latter part of the verse. They were indeed blind, as to any true and saving sight of Christ, and of the true way of salvation by believing in him; seeing (as they apprehended) a way of salvation without Christ, by the works of the law, and wilfully shutting their eyes against the glorious light of the gospel shining on them.

Ye should have no sin; you should not have so much sin, so much guilt

upon your souls, as you now have: though your ignorance had been sin, yet it had not been so great a sin as a wilful shutting your eyes against the light.

But now ye say, We see; now that you have an opinion that you see, and boast in your knowledge of the law, as if you were the only men that saw; and upon this presumption reject the doctrine of salvation; *therefore your sin remaineth,* by it you not only conclude yourselves under the guilt of sin, but your sin remaineth upon you, not pardoned to you: which teacheth us, that without a true and saving sight of sin, and such a one as carrieth the soul out of itself to Christ for pardon and remedy, there is no hope of pardon and forgiveness from all the mercy that is in God.

John 10:1

Chapter Summary

Joh 10:1-18 Christ declareth himself to be the Door, and the good Shepherd.

Joh 10:19-21 Divers opinions concerning him.

Joh 10:22-30 He proveth to the Jews by his works that he is the

Christ, and asserts his unity with the Father.

Joh 10:31-38 The Jews go about to stone him: he justifieth his doctrine,

Joh 10:39-42 and escaping from them, goeth beyond Jordan, where

many believe on him.

Ver. 1. In this famous parable, which reacheth to Joh 10:30, our Saviour seemeth to drive two great designs:

1. To prove himself the true Shepherd.
2. To prove the Pharisees and teachers of those times thieves and robbers.

It should seem, that the sheepfolds in those countries were houses, which

had doors by which the entry was into them: there is no doubt but by *the sheepfold* is meant here the church of God, in which the people of God are gathered together in one.

By *the door* he apparently meaneth himself, as he himself speaketh, Joh 10:9. Or rather, more generally, that way which God hath appointed for any that are to take charge of his church to enter. He is both the Shepherd (the true Shepherd) and the Door: the Shepherd, as the care, conduct, and government of the church belongeth to him, and is upon his shoulders: the Door, as he is he whom the Father hath ordained to be the chief Shepherd, from whom all who pretend to any right to teach or govern in the church must derive both their authority and abilities. Now saith our Saviour, Whosoever they be, that thrust themselves into the care, conduct, and government of the church, without any call or warrant from my Father or me, who am the true Door, through which whosoever entereth into the church must enter; and the chief Shepherd, from whom he must derive, or be *a thief and a robber*; his very entrance makes it appear, that his end is not to feed the flock, but to feed himself; and that he drives only private designs of advantage to himself.

John 10:2

Ver. 2. As it is amongst men, the true shepherd goes into the sheepfold by the door; so it is in the church of God. He that taketh not the honour of governing the church to himself, but being called of God, as Aaron was, he is the shepherd of the sheep. This very argument the apostle useth to prove Christ to be the true High Priest, Heb 5:4,5, because he *glorified not himself to be made a High Priest*, but was made one by him who said unto him, Ps 110:4, (quoted there also, Joh 10:6), *Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec*. God (whose the church is, called his *heritage*, his *peculiar people*, &c.) was the Door, by which Christ, the chief Shepherd, entered into the flock; he made him the *Head of the church*. Eph 5:23. For this he is said to be sent; and often makes himself known to us under the notion of him whom the Father hath sent. And the under shepherds must also derive from Christ: as the Father's will in sending Christ was his door, so the will of Christ in sending others is their door; that is, their only true way of entering upon the charge of the flock of Christ. *As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you*, Joh 20:21. There is

a double sending; the one is extraordinary, of which mission Christ speaketh to his apostles in that place; thus the apostles and first ministers of the gospel were sent; Christ breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost, Joh 20:22: and there was yet a fuller sending of these first shepherds, in the days of Pentecost, Ac 2:17. And there is a more ordinary sending, as to which God revealed his will, 2Ti 2:2, *The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others*. Thus the apostles, Ac 14:23, did themselves *ordain elders in every church*. And Paul for this purpose left Titus in Crete, to *set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city*, Tit 1:5. Whosoever entereth into any place in the church, for the feeding and governing of it, that way which God hath directed in his word, he entereth in by the door, he is the true shepherd. Concerning Christ's title, and his way of entrance, and the first preachers of the gospel, immediately sent by Christ, and declared to be sent by the effusion of the Spirit in the days of Pentecost, there can be no question made by any who believeth the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. This text declares, that whosoever cometh into the church with right, and as a true shepherd to it, must come in at the door, by a call from God, (as Christ was sent), or from Christ; either by an extraordinary mission, or in such a method and order as Christ hath in his word directed, either from his own mouth, or by the mouths of his apostles, whom he, ascending up into heaven, left in the first charge of his church. This is that which every one ought in the first place to look after. We shall observe in God's whole course with his church, that in the corruption of the state of the church, when it was eminently deviated from the rule he had set, he sent some by an extraordinary mission. Such were the prophets, whose writings make up a part of Scripture. Such were the apostles, and first ministers of the gospel. Such, we say, were our first reformers in Germany, and other parts: nor is it any prejudice to it, that they were able to work no miracles; we read of no miracles wrought by the prophets of old, unless by two or three of them. Their faithful declaring the will of God, and calling men back to the plain law of God in a time when the generality were obviously departed from it; together with their spirit of courage and boldness in their work, was evidence enough that God had sent them. But this text only declareth this general truth, That every true shepherd coming into the church, must come in the right way, by the door. So the great Shepherd of the sheep did, being sent by his Father, whose the church is, to take care of it: so must all inferior shepherds do, by him whom God the Father hath

made the door; according to whose directions all the affairs of the church must be ordered.

John 10:3

Ver. 3. By *the porter* is understood God; or more particularly, (to show the order of the Holy Trinity in working), the Holy Spirit, who openeth the hearts of men to receive and embrace Jesus Christ, who is the chief Shepherd; and the sheep are able to distinguish his voice from the voice of thieves and robbers. Probably they had in those countries particular words and phrases, which, their shepherds having used them to, the sheep understood, and moved according to the direction of them. Some think they had also names for their sheep, (as we have for our dogs and horses), which they understood. Otherwise, it only signifieth that particular knowledge which Christ hath of all those that are truly his: as the former phrase signified, that judgment of discerning spirits and doctrines, which was in an eminent degree in the first ministers of the gospel, and is yet in a measure in believers; by which, though they cannot perfectly and infallibly judge concerning truth, and the will of God, in all things, yet they can in a great measure do it; and are not ordinarily led aside into pernicious and damnable errors, to the ruin of their souls. And, saith our Saviour, the true shepherd leadeth the sheep out; that is, into their pastures and true feeding places. This is eminently true concerning Christ the chief Shepherd: when he came into the world, God opened to him the door of his church; so as though he was rejected by many, (the builders and rulers of the Jewish church in particular), yet he was by many received; multitudes followed him; many truly believed on him, and truly heard his voice; he had a particular knowledge of them who truly were his sheep; he knew Nathanael while he was yet under the fig tree; he led them out into their true pastures, preaching the gospel of the kingdom to them, and showing them the way of life and salvation. It is in its measure true of every inferior shepherd, that truly derives from Christ; God giveth unto such favour in the eyes of his people. The true sheep of Christ hear them, receive and embrace the truth delivered by them. They take a particular charge of them, and they lead them to Christ, and to the embracing of his gospel; as by the holy and true doctrine which they preach to them, so by their holy lives and conversations before them.

John 10:4

Ver. 4. In our country at this day, shepherds generally follow their sheep, which go before them. In other countries, as France, &c., it is otherwise at this day; the shepherds go before their flocks, and their flocks follow them, upon some sounds they make. In Palestine (which was the Jews country) it should seem that the shepherds sometimes went before their sheep, and sometimes followed them. David followed his father's sheep, 2Sa 7:8 Ps 78:71. On the other side, God is spoken of, Ps 80:1, under the notion of the *Shepherd of Israel*, who leadeth Joseph like a flock. And the psalmist, Ps 23:1, speaking of God as his Shepherd, saith, Ps 23:2, *he leadeth me beside the still waters*. Christ here speaketh of himself under the notion of a shepherd that went before his sheep, and whom the sheep followed; and thereby lets us know the duty of all faithful pastors in the church, so to live, that their flocks may follow them with safety; which cannot be, unless they follow Christ, 1Co 11:1. For, saith our Saviour, those that are my true sheep, they know my voice; thereby signifying that power of discerning between truth and damnable errors, which the Lord gives unto all true believers, 1Jo 2:27.

John 10:5

Ver. 5. This he further enlargeth upon, telling them, that his sheep would not follow those that did not lead them into his truth, and in his ways, for they understood not such voices. Here ariseth a question, Whether the elect of God, or such as, being truly called, and believe in Christ, are the sheep of Christ in the most strict and proper sense, may not be seduced into errors, and led away by strangers?

Answer. First, We must distinguish between single persons and the generality of believers. As in a flock the generality keep together, following the voice of the true shepherd, though some particular sheep may wander; so the generality of believers will be found keeping close to the truth and doctrine of Christ, though amongst them some particular persons may be seduced, and be led away by seducers. Secondly, We must distinguish between errors and damnable errors; a pertinacious adherence to which will divide the soul from Christ, and end in the ruin of souls.

Christ's sheep may follow strangers, dissembling the spiritual voice of the true Shepherd, a little way, but they will not follow them into such errors as will plunge their souls in eternal ruin and destruction. Thirdly, They may hear even this voice of strangers speaking to them perverse and damnable things; but it will be but for a short time; God will reduce and bring them back again; *they shall never perish*, Joh 10:28.

John 10:6

Ver. 6. Our Saviour was wont to instruct them in the mysteries of the kingdom of God by parables, that is, similitudes taken from reasonable actions of men, which might be, and were, proper to express spiritual things by. Wherefore he used this method in teaching, we are told, Mt 13:10-13. They well enough understood the words in which those parables were delivered; but the inward sense, the spiritual mysteries shadowed out in those similitudes, these they understood not; neither the common sort of his disciples understood them, nor did the better sort of his disciples understand them without a further explication of them. Our Lord therefore, in the following verses, comes to give them a large explication of the parable.

John 10:7

Ver. 7. Our Saviour had before been speaking of *the door* in another notion; there he spake of the door of the shepherd; here, of the door of the sheep: there, of the door, that is, the true and regular way of entrance into the care, conduct, and government of the church; here, of the true way of entrance, not into the church militant only, but into the church triumphant. It may be also understood of the door, or way of entrance and admission, into the church visible here upon the earth. Circumcision, baptism, external profession, are the doors into the visible Church; but none, unless by Christ, that is, by a true and lively faith wrought by the Spirit of Christ in the soul, can be a true member of Christ's invisible church here upon the earth, much less a member of his glorious church in heaven.

John 10:8

Ver. 8. This must not be understood of the prophets, but of such only as came before Christ, not being sent by him: all those that taught people another way of life and salvation, than by believing in the Messiah, who was to be revealed for the salvation of the world; all such did but seek themselves, not the good of the people's souls; and destroyed souls instead of profiting or doing them any good. But those that were mine by an eternal election, or by my special grace bestowed upon them, did not embrace them.

John 10:9

Ver. 9. Our Saviour here lets us know, that he meant by *the door*, in the former verse, the door of salvation; the way by which every man must enter into life that findeth life; not the door only by which every true pastor must enter into the church, but by which every soul that shall be saved must enter into heaven; which is the doctrine which he before taught, Joh 3:16,18,36. And he, who so believeth in me, shall be so guided, and governed, and taught, that he shall be secure, and want nothing for the management of his whole conversation in the world. Under the notion of pasture here, are signified all good things that the soul can stand in need of: it is much the same promise with that Joh 6:35, *He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst;* and with that Ps 84:11; as also with the Ps 23:1-6; to which Psalm our Saviour is thought in this parable to have a special reference.

John 10:10

Ver. 10. Look as it is with the true shepherd, that owneth the sheep, and whose the flock is; he cometh regularly into the care and conduct of it; he cometh into the sheepfold, to take care of the life and welfare of his sheep; but a thief and a robber, that climbeth into the window, and so gets into the sheepfold, he comes not there out of any good will to the sheep, but merely, by destroying the sheep to provide for himself. So it is with them that, without any call or derivation of authority from me, thrust themselves into the care and conduct of the church of God; they do it with no good

design to the souls of people, not out of any care or respect unto their good, but merely that they may serve themselves in the ruin of my people's souls. But that is not my end in coming into the world: I am not come to destroy them, but to save them; I am come, that they might have a spiritual life, and at last eternal life; that they might live the life of grace here, and not fail of the life of glory hereafter; and not only that they may barely live, but that their life may abound, through the upholdings, strengthenings, quickenings, and comfortings of my holy and gracious Spirit; that my beloved may not only drink, but drink abundantly; not only live, but live abundantly furnished with all the affluences and accommodations of a spiritual life.

John 10:11

Ver. 11. That good Shepherd prophesied of, Isa 40:11. I cannot agree with those who think that Christ here speaketh not of himself as *the good Shepherd*, with reference to his office, as he was the Messiah, but only in opposition to the hirelings after mentioned. I can allow that he thus calleth himself, both in the one respect and the other; but I cannot allow the latter sense exclusively to the former; for what followeth is peculiar to the Messiah, of whom it was prophesied, Da 9:26, that he should be *cut off, but not for himself*: and though it be true, that the true shepherd will hazard his life for his sheep, as David did, when he encountered the lion and the bear, 1Sa 17:34,35; yet it cannot be said to be the duty of the best shepherd to lay down his life for the sheep, for the life of a man is much more valuable than the life of any beast. Our Saviour therefore, doubtless, in this place showeth wherein he was the most excellent Shepherd, far excelling the best shepherds in the world, because he was come, not only to expose, hazard, and adventure his life, but actually, willingly, and freely to lay it down.

John 10:12

Ver. 12. Those that deal in sheep, either keep them themselves, or by their near relations, as Jacob's sons, and David, and Laban's daughters did; or else they hired persons to keep them for them. There is a great deal of difference between the care of an owner, and the care of a hired servant in

any thing; the owner taketh a more natural, diligent care, because the whole profit of the sheep, thriving and doing well, returneth unto himself. The hired servant may be careful in his measure and degree; but no such servant will take the care that an owner will take, nor run the hazards that he will run, because he knoweth that, let the flock thrive never so well, he shall have no more than the wages he is hired for: therefore what our Saviour saith is true concerning the generality of such hired servants, they will take some care of the flocks of sheep in their trust so long as there appeareth no danger, but if any danger appeareth, they leave the sheep, and flee, and the wolf cometh, and scattereth the sheep.

John 10:13

Ver. 13. The reason why he that is a mere hired servant, and hath no property in the sheep, fleeth, is, because he is a hireling, and doth what he doth merely for his wages; and when a danger ariseth, which his wages will not balance, he will never encounter it; he hath no property in the sheep, nor any love to them, nor care for them.

John 10:14

Ver. 14. I am no hireling; the sheep are mine own; I have a true love and affection for them, which obliges me to a just and true care of them; I know them by name, (as was said before), by a particular distinct knowledge; or I love them, and have tender bowels for them. And as I know them, so I am mutually known, and owned, and acknowledged by them; they have heard my voice, and discerned between my voice and the voice of such as are strangers, refusing to follow them, but following me, going before them. Thus our Saviour in the same parable giveth us both notes to know a true and good shepherd, and particularly to know that himself was the true, good, and most excellent Shepherd; and also notes by which we might know who they are that are the true sheep of Christ.

John 10:15

Ver. 15. By these words our Saviour openeth how he knew his sheep, and

should be again known of them, even as the Father knoweth him, and he knows his Father: this mutual knowledge between the Father and Christ was joined with perfect love and delight. Thus our Saviour knoweth those that are his sheep, not only fully and distinctly, so as to call them all by their names; but so as to love them, delight in them; so as to be ready to lay down his life for their good, and eternal salvation. Christ, to show not only the sincerity, but the degrees, of his love to his people, doth often compare it to the love wherewith his Father loved him, Joh 15:9 17:23,26. So that if we can believe that God the Father loved Christ his only begotten Son, we may also believe that both the Father and Christ love those that are truly the sheep of Christ. The love that Christ hath to his people is as true and as certain as the Father's love to Christ, or Christ's love to his Father; and this could be showed by no higher act than that of laying down his life, Joh 15:13. Now, saith he, *I lay down*, that is, I am ready to lay down, or I shall shortly lay down, *my life for the sheep*: whether *sheep* can signify all and every person born into the world, is their concern more strictly to inquire, who are so tenacious of that point. That Christ died equally for all and every man: as also, whether upon that principle that absurdity must not follow. That Christ loved those who shall yet perish eternally, with such a love as the Father loved him, and he loved the Father.

John 10:16

Ver. 16. *And other sheep I have which are not of this fold;* our Saviour meaneth the Gentiles, who belonged not to the Jewish state and church, so were not under the same laws and government; for, 1Jo 2:2, he was not only *a propitiation* for the sins of the Jews, *but for the sins of the whole world*: he calleth those sheep, because the Lord knew who were his from eternity; and they were sheep in the counsels of God, and they were suddenly to be made his sheep by calling, the gospel being soon to be preached to all nations.

Then also (saith he) *I must bring in;* it is so written in God's book, the promises and prophecies to that purpose must be fulfilled. They shall not only hear the voice and sound of my gospel, though going out of Zion, yet not terminated in Zion; but they shall embrace, receive, and believe that joyful sound.

And there shall be one fold, and one shepherd; and there shall be but one church; as I am one Shepherd, so there shall be but one flock of sheep; one body, one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, as there is one God and Father of all, as the apostle speaketh, Eph 4:4-6.

John 10:17

Ver. 17. Christ here asserts two things.

1. That he was about to lay down his life, and should now very shortly lay it down; but yet so as he should take it again; that is, rise again from the dead; death should not have dominion over him: by which he comforteth his disciples concerning his death, declaring,
 - a) That he was a freewill offering, as he further openeth it in the next verse.
 - b) That he should not perish in the grave, but rise again from the dead.
2. That therefore the Father loved him; for:
 - a) By this means he declared himself with power to be the Son of God, and the Father could not but love his Son. And:
 - b) By this means also *he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, Php 2:8.*

So as that the Father had many reasons to love the Son; and amongst others, this obedience of his to death, even the accursed death upon the cross, to fulfil his Father's will, for the redemption and salvation of the sons of men, was not the least: and by this also he commendeth his Father's love to those that are his sheep, in that his Father loveth him with the more exceeding love, for laying down his life, to purchase their redemption and salvation.

John 10:18

Ver. 18. *No man taketh it from me by force, without my willing it and consenting to it; the Jews and Pilate will take it from me, but not without my free and voluntary surrender of it: and this is that which we read, Ac 4:27,28, For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Plate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.* By which he asserts his Divine power, and so comforteth his disciples against the disturbances they were like to have from the sight of his passion, at this time not many months off. And this, saith he, is the will of my Father, that which my Father hath given me commission to do, and for which he hath sent me into the world: and thus he declareth his death to be a fulfilling of his Father's purpose, and an act of obedience to his Father's will; and indeed, in his obedience in the thing lay much of the virtue of his death.

John 10:19

Ver. 19. Christ by his words often caused a division amongst the Jews, so as they could not agree in their sentiments and censures about him; which was either caused through the mixture amongst them of such as truly believed with those who believed not; or else from the mixture of a more considering part amongst them with others who were more brutish, irrational, and full of passion. We met with much the same, Joh 7:43, and again, Joh 9:16. It is one method of God's providence for the deliverance of his servants from unreasonable men, to cause divisions among them, so as they cannot agree among themselves.

John 10:20

Ver. 20. Some of the people said, *He hath a devil, and is mad;* for (as was said before) this was the opinion of the Jews concerning all that were mad and distracted, that it was by the influence of the devil, and they were infested with an evil spirit.

John 10:21

Ver. 21. But others, that were less passionate and brutish in their expressions, and more thinking and considerate in passing their judgments, said, *These are not the words* (so we translate it; the word in the Greek is ρηματα, which signifies things, and matters, as well as words; and by what follows, one would think that were the more proper translation of it here) *of him that hath a devil*. They instance in no words, but in a matter of fact; asking if a devil could open the eyes of the blind? That is, of one that was born blind; for they certainly speak with reference to that miracle which he had so lately wrought upon such a person.

John 10:22

Ver. 22. This verse affords two questions, which have not a little troubled interpreters.

1. What feast of dedication this was?
2. Whether dedications of places to the worship of God be warrantable or no, in that manner as they are dedicated amongst the papists at this day?

As to the first of these, that which we have about it in Scripture is this: Ex 40:1-15, we have God's command and direction for the hallowing, or dedication, of the sanctuary, or the tabernacle, which was the first house we read of in Scripture set apart for the public worship of God. We have a particular account of Moses's punctual obedience to that command, Le 8:1-36. When the temple was built by Solomon, we read of Solomon's dedication of it; but nothing of ceremony used at it, only a multitude of sacrifices offered, (which was God's ordinary worship in the Jewish church), and a feast kept fourteen days: we read of no law that he made for the annual keeping of it; no obligation upon all the males in Israel to be present at it. As concerning the other solemn feasts which God appointed, Le 23:1-44, Solomon's feast of dedication in this differed from them, that it held double the time, for seven or eight days was the longest time that any of those feasts were kept. This temple was destroyed by the Chaldeans and Babylonians, and rebuilt by Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, as we read in the books known by those names. In analogy to the practice of

Solomon, when they had finished the building of the temple, there was another feast of dedication kept; of which we read, Ezr 6:16-18; but we read of nothing done in that dedication but the offering of one hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, and twelve he-goats; and setting the priests and Levites in order for the service of God. This temple was defaced by Antiochus, but not wholly ruined; and was repaired and purified by Judas Maccabeus, of which we read, Apc 2Mac 2:23 10:6-8 Apc 1Mac 4:52,58; which books of Maccabees, though they be no canonical Scripture, yet are as good a piece of ecclesiastical history as any: and Josephus also giveth us an account of it, (Antiq. 1. 12.

c. 11.). We do not read of any thing they did, saving offering sacrifices, and setting things in order, according to the law of Moses, and feasting; Josephus tells us they used all lawful pleasures. We do not read, that either God appointed an annual feast of dedication for the sanctuary; nor Solomon, nor Ezra, for either of the temples; but we read twice in the book of Maccabees, and Josephus (writing the Jewish history) tells us, that Judas Maccabeus made it a law, That the feast should be kept yearly for eight days, in memory of that mercy which God had showed them. This was without doubt the feast of dedication here mentioned: for this feast began upon the twenty-fifth day of the month Chisleu, which answereth our months of November and December, and took in part of each; so it agreeth with the text, which saith that *it was winter*; whereas Solomon's dedication was in autumn; Ezra's in the spring. Some make a question, Whether Judas Maccabeus did well in appointing this annual feast, neither Solomon nor Ezra having, that we read of, before done any such thing: and that our Saviour was not at this feast in any honour to the feast, but only to take advantage of the multitude of people that met, to preach the gospel. For my own part, as I will not defend, so I durst not condemn him: I see no more that he did in this, than was done, Es 9:27,28, as to the days of Purim. Magistrates certainly have a power to appoint public days, yea, annual days of thanksgivings, for mercies never to be forgotten. Indeed they cannot make a day holy, so as it shall be a sin against God to labour in it, or to use any pleasures (as in the case of the sabbath); but they may command the public worship of God to be performed on particular days, and men ought to attend it when with convenience they can; only they ought to take care that such days be not spent in luxury and profaneness, and that they be for signal providences, and not so multiplied, and frequently renewing, as that the service of them degenerate into mere matter of form. Whether Christ went up in order to the feast, or because of

the great concourse of people he knew would be there at that time, cannot be determined.

For the second question, it is not so much a question, whether it be lawful in a solemn and decent manner to consecrate a house to the public worship of God, by such acts of worship as God hath appointed under the gospel, such as prayer and praise, reading, preaching, and hearing the word; as whether it may be done by such rites and ceremonies as the papists do it with, for the which there is no institution. For the former, though it may be some will not agree it necessary; yet, certainly, no sober person can deny, but if a place be made for people ordinarily to meet in to worship God, there they may as well meet at the first to praise God for his mercy, and to beg his presence when they shall there meet together to worship God, and to hear his word, as they may meet there afterwards for prayer, praise, preaching, or hearing. But this satisfieth not the papists. They first do it by many superstitious ceremonies. Secondly, they plead for the holiness of the place when so consecrated. As for the ceremonies of their consecrations, or dedications, Bellarmine reckoneth up eight.

1. The painting twelve crosses in the several parts of the house to be consecrated, and lighting up twelve lamps, one at every cross; to signify the twelve apostle, who carried the banner of the cross throughout the world.
2. The bishop's knocking at the door with a pastoral staff, commanding the devil to give place and invoking of God, the angels, and the saints, to grant their presence in that place; which they make to signify the opening of people's hearts by the preaching of the gospel.
3. The scattering of ashes upon the floor of the place, upon which the bishop writes letters of the Latin and Greek alphabet, in the figure of the cross.
4. The sprinkling of the place with holy water, and lighting up wax candles.
5. The anointing of the crosses before mentioned, and painted on the walls.
6. The sprinkling of the place with a mixture of water, wine, salt, and

ashes.

7. The anointing of the temple and the alter.
8. The keeping of a festival upon it. And for all these they have devised several significances, too vain and fanciful to repeat.

For none of which we know the least warrant in holy writ; nor can we conceive how any consecration can imprint any character of holiness upon a place, or make prayers offered up in or toward it more acceptable; though we know it did so as to the temple, both because it was an eminent type of Christ, and also because of the particular promises made to it, 1Ki 9:1-28; which were not applicable to the synagogues, which were the Jews' ordinary meeting places for public worship; but only to the temple, upon the account before mentioned. Though we say that all places for that use ought to be used with all imaginable decency, and we ought during the public worship of God to carry ourselves in them with all reverence, because of the angels, and because of the special presence of God, promised to the assemblies of his people in his name, and for his public worship.

John 10:23

Ver. 23. Of this *Solomon's porch* we read, 1Ki 6:3, that Solomon *built the porch before the temple of the house, twenty cubits long, and ten cubits broad*. This was the place where they walked in winter. Though this was destroyed when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians; yet it seemeth that there was one built that was like it, and kept that name. It should seem that it was a place better defended from the weather, than those other parts of the temple where in summer time they used to walk.

John 10:24

Ver. 24. Our Saviour was at this time within three months of his crucifying: he had often before told them that he was the Light of the world, the true Shepherd; he had preached doctrine to them, from whence they might easily have concluded what he was; he had wrought works

among them which none could do but by a Divine power; but he had been very wary of telling them in plain terms that he was the Messiah, the Christ; when at any time he had so declared himself to his disciples, or they had owned him as such, he still laid a charge upon them to tell no man of it, Mt 16:20, &c. They therefore come to him, demanding a plain resolution in the case, as some of their minds were in some suspense about it. It was but a captious question; for had he denied it, besides that it had been the denial of a truth which he came to bear a testimony unto, they had had a great advantage to have lessened his reputation amongst those who had believed on him as such. Had he affirmed it, he had brought himself in danger of the Roman governor; for the Jews indeed expected a Messiah, a Christ, but to be a temporal prince, to deliver them from their enemies; and for him to have declared himself such a Christ as they expected, had been fatal to him. He therefore answers with his usual prudence and wariness to this question.

John 10:25

Ver. 25. I have in effect told it you more than once; I have told you that I am sent of the Father, &c., I have said enough for you to conclude it; but you will not understand, you will not receive it, you will not believe what I say. What need you any further witness of it, than those works which I do by Divine power; by virtue of my oneness with my Father, and of that power and authority which he hath committed to me, that by them I might confirm the doctrine which I have taught you?

John 10:26

Ver. 26. *As many as were ordained to eternal life believed,* Ac 13:48. Here our Saviour giveth this as one reason of the Jews' unbelief, that they were not of his sheep. Were they not Israelites? Yes, but all are not Israel that are descended of Israel. It seems a very hard interpretation that some would put, upon these words, Ye believe not, because you are not teachable, and fit to be made my sheep; the words are ου γαρ ετε εκ των προβατων των εμων. Nor can such interpretation be paralleled from any other scripture. That by *sheep*, here, cannot be meant members of the church, is plain; for they were of the church of Israel, whom the Lord led

as a flock, as the psalmist speaks, Ps 80:1. That believers, and such as are truly called and sanctified, are not meant, is as plain; for then the sense would be: You believe not because you believe not; besides, our Saviour had before said, he had other sheep that were not of that fold, (by which he meant the Gentiles), such for whom he prayed, Joh 17:20, being such as should believe on him. By *sheep* therefore he meaneth, certainly, such as were *ordained to life*, as Ac 13:48. Nor will it therefore follow, that God's not ordaining of them to life, was the near and immediate cause of their not believing; but their own stubborn and perverse wills in not repenting, that they might believe; as our Saviour tells them, Mt 21:32: that is, not turning from their gross and sinful ways, which they might have done by virtue of that common grace of God which was afforded them in the gospel, by the preaching of John the Baptist, and of Christ himself.

John 10:27

Ver. 27. This is the same which he said: See Poole on "Joh 10:4".

John 10:28

Ver. 28. I do give them, and I will give them, eternal life; as soon as they shall come to hear, and believe my voice, and to follow me, they shall have a sure right and title to it; and when my Father by his providence shall remove them out of the world, and in the great day, they shall be taken up into the actual possession of it. For *they shall never perish*, but though they may fall, they shall rise again by repentance. They are in my hand, and my hand shall preserve them, none shall ever pluck them out of it; they shall be preserved through faith, by the power of God, to eternal life and salvation.

John 10:29

Ver. 29. All that are my sheep became so by my Father's donation and gift, so as my Father is equally with myself concerned in the preservation of them to that happy end, to which he hath ordained and designed them. Those that would pluck them out of my hand, and deprive them of that

eternal life which I will give them, must be too strong, not for me alone, but for my Father also; which none is, for who can be too strong for omnipotence?

John 10:30

Ver. 30. My Father and I are one, not only in counsel and will, (as Joh 17:11,22, and believers are said to be *of one heart*, Ac 4:32), but in nature, power, and essence; for it is plain that our Saviour here ascribes the preservation of his sheep, not to the will, but to the power of his Father: *None is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand*. And it is plain by what follows, that the Jews thus understood our Saviour. Some eminent protestant interpreters expound this of a oneness in consent and will, doing the same things, and driving the same design, both agreeing to preserve the sheep unto eternal life; but (with all respect unto them) I think the context implies more, though this be not excluded.

John 10:31

Ver. 31. Tumultuously, as we read they did once before, Joh 8:59. From whence we may learn with what design they came to Christ, Joh 10:24, plainly to tell them whether he were the Christ. By the law of God the false prophet was to be stoned; but he was first to be judicially tried and judged. This was but a tumultuous action of an enraged multitude.

John 10:32

Ver. 32. The word translated *good* is of a very large signification; signifying excellent, useful, profitable, beauteous, &c., whatsoever in common speech cometh under the notion of good. I (saith our Saviour) never did harm to any of you, but I have been the instrument of a great deal of good to you. I have given sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, healed many that were sick of grievous diseases, cast out many devils out of those which were infested with or possessed by them. Do any of these deserve any such usage at your hands? What maketh you in such a rage against me?

John 10:33

Ver. 33. *The Jews answered him,* These are not the things we are incensed against thee for; we grant that thou hast done many good works amongst us; these we gratefully acknowledge. But this is that which we are not able to bear, that whereas thou art but a mere man, by thy discourses thou makest thyself equal with God, and so art guilty of *blasphemy*; which is committed as well by arrogating to ourselves what is proper to God, as by imputing to God the natural or moral imperfections of the creature; and the blasphemer deserveth to be stoned, according to the law of God. By this it is manifest, that the Jews understood our Saviour, affirming that he and his Father were one, as asserting himself one in essence with his Father, not in will only.

John 10:34

Ver. 34. This was written, Ps 82:6. The whole Scripture of the Old Testament, being wrote by holy men, inspired of God, and directive of men's conversation before men, and towards God, is sometimes called *the law*, Ps 19:7. It was spoken concerning magistrates, and the governors of God's people, who, being God's deputies and vicegerents, intrusted to execute the judgments and vengeance of God, are dignified with the name of gods.

John 10:35

Ver. 35. If God dignified those men (and many of them were also vile and sinful men) with the title of gods, because they had a commission to govern people according to the law of God; and none must contradict what God hath said in his word; there can be no falsehood in the revelation of any part of the Divine will.

John 10:36

Ver. 36. Suppose I were no more than a mere man, yet being *sanctified*, that is, set apart of God for the special work of man's redemption, and sent of God into the world with commission both to reveal and to do his will, yet dare you say that I blaspheme, *because I said, I am the Son of God?* In the place (viz. Ps 82:6) where God said of magistrates, *Ye are gods*, he also added, *all of you are children of the Most High*; you have therefore no reason to rage at me, though I did say I was the Son of God; being one whom the Father hath in his eternal counsels set apart for this great and special work, and actually by his providence sent into the world for the finishing and despatching of it. But we must take heed that we do not understand our Saviour here, as if he in another sense assumed to him the title of the Son of God; it was enough for him at present to assert, that the title well enough belonged to him, if he indeed had been no more than the Son of man, as they said.

John 10:37

Ver. 37. Our Saviour doth often appeal to his works to testify concerning his Divine mission and power; these works he here calleth the *works of his Father*; by which he doth not only mean works that are pleasing and acceptable to God, as acts of obedience to the will of God performed by men may be called, and are, Joh 6:28,29; nor (as I conceive) only those works which he did by commission and authority from his Father, which, Joh 17:4, he calleth the work which his Father had given him to do; but those works which none but God could do; such were the multiplication of the loaves, Joh 6:1-14, the curing of him who was born blind, Joh 9:1-41, &c. If (saith our Saviour) I do not do those works which no mere man ever did, give me no credit; but if I do those works which can be done by no human art or power, you have reason to believe me.

John 10:38

Ver. 38. If I do such works as can be done by no less than a Divine power, being beyond the power and ability of all creatures; then, though you will not give credit to any bare affirmations of myself, because I say I am the Son of God, yet believe the things for the testimony that my works give unto it. Proper effects give testimony to the proper cause; he who doth

those things which none but God can do, must needs be God, or empowered by God to do them. This is the way for you to know, be persuaded, and believe, that the Father is in me by his mighty, Divine, working power: Joh 14:10, *The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works*; and I work in and together with him. This phrase, *The Father is in me, and I in him*, teacheth us three things concerning Christ:

1. His oneness in nature and essence with the Father.
2. His personal distinction from his Father: here are two mentioned, *the Father*, and *me*: none can properly be said to be in himself.
3. The most perfect and intimate indwelling of one of the Persons in the Holy Trinity in the other.

John 10:39

Ver. 39. *Therefore they sought again to take him*; because he said, that the Father was in him, and he in the Father; by which they well enough understood, that he asserted a union with the Father. They did not again go about to stone him, as they did before; he had sufficiently stopped their mouths as to their imputation of blasphemy; but they seek to apprehend him, with a design (no doubt) to carry him before the sanhedrim, their great court, which had cognizance of those things. But as he had once and again before, so he now again escapeth out of their hands; whether by darkening the air before their eyes, or (as some would have it) making his body invisible, by his Divine power, or what other way, the Scripture tells us not, and it is great rashness to determine.

John 10:40

Ver. 40. Christ's time was not yet come when he should be betrayed and crucified; it was yet three months and more to it; he saw the Jews at Jerusalem were in such a rage and fury, that there was no staying in that place: he goes beyond Jordan to Bethabara, where he found John at first baptizing, Joh 1:28, before he baptized in Aenon near Salim, Joh 3:23. See Poole on "Joh 1:28". Possibly he chose that place as being a place where

John had been preparing a way for him, by turning men's hearts in some measure for receiving the gospel, and pointing out Christ to his disciples, as the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world.

And there he abode: how long he abode there we cannot tell; probably till he took his last journey from Galilee to Jerusalem; of which the other evangelists speak, Mt 20:17 Mr 10:32 Lu 18:31. What he did in Galilee during these three months John reports not, only saith ... (see Joh 10:41).

John 10:41

Ver. 41. God so ordered it in the wisdom of his providence, that though Elijah and Elisha under the law wrought miracles, by which they confirmed their Divine mission; yet John, coming immediately before Christ, as his messenger and forerunner, wrought none; that so the glory of Christ in working miracles when he came might be more clear and evident. This made the people, that came to Christ while he was in Galilee, say thus amongst themselves, We paid a great veneration to John the Baptist, yet he never did those things which Christ hath done: and whatsoever John told us of this person hath proved true; he hath done, and doth, greater things than ever John did, and is in the judgment of sense to be preferred before him, should we not now believe in him? John told us he was *the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world;* and told us much more concerning him, which our eyes see is true.

John 10:42

Ver. 42. Some believed on him as such whom John Baptist had spoken him to be; others possibly believed on him in the sense mentioned Joh 2:23; not to the saving of their souls, but as one sent of God, a great Prophet, no ordinary man. The rage of men shall not hinder the progress of the gospel.

John 11:1

Chapter Summary

Joh 11:1-46 The sickness and death of Lazarus: Jesus raiseth him to life after he had been dead four days: many Jews believe.

Joh 11:47-54 The Pharisees hold a council against Christ: Caiaphas prophesieth: Jesus retires from places of public resort.

Joh 11:55-57 At the approach of the passover the Jews inquire about him: the rulers give orders to apprehend him.

Ver. 1 *Bethany* (as appears by Joh 11:18) was *nigh unto Jerusalem*, not wholly at two miles distance from it: but our Saviour was not at this time in Judea, for, Joh 11:7, he saith to his disciples, *Let us go into Judea again*. He was at this time in Galilee, or in Peraea; and we shall find, Joh 11:17, that Lazarus had been in his grave four days before our Saviour got thither: so as we must allow at least six or seven days between the time when Christ heard of Lazarus's sickness, and the time when he came to Bethany. This Bethany is here only described to us as the place where Martha and Mary lived, or at least where they were born. Some think that Bethany was only a part of the Mount Olivet; but others, more probably, think that it was some little town or city, standing within that part of the Mount Olivet; for it is here called a town, and, Lu 10:38,39, the place where these two sisters lived is called a village.

John 11:2

Ver. 2. We read of a woman, Lu 7:37,38, that came behind our Saviour while he was at dinner, in the house of Simon the Pharisee, brought an alabaster box of ointment, stood at his feet behind him weeping, washing his feet with her tears, and wiping them with her hair; but it appears by the story, she had been before a notorious sinner. We read of another woman, Mt 26:6,7 Mr 14:3, that poured a box of ointment on our Saviour's head as

he was at dinner in the house of Simon the leper: but we, in those two evangelists, read nothing of her washing his feet with her tears, or wiping them with her hair; but in the next chapter of this Gospel, Joh 12:3, we have a story which (whether it be the same with the other or no, I cannot tell) is that doubtless to which this verse refers: the names and circumstances much agree. There were other Mary's, (for Mary was a very ordinary name among them), but this was that Mary which is mentioned Joh 12:3, that anointed the Lord with ointment, &c. It was her brother was sick.

John 11:3

Ver. 3. Christ (as was said before) seems to have been very familiar at the house of these two sisters, and often to have made them his hostesses; and it should appear by this verse that in those visits he had showed particular kindnesses to this their brother Lazarus, who was now sick; this makes them style their brother, *he whom thou lovest*. They plead no merits either of their own or his, but only plead with him for his own goodness and love. Nor do they express in particular what they desired for their brother, though it is easily understood by their representation of his state and condition.

John 11:4

Ver. 4. God hath not sent this sickness upon Lazarus to determine his being upon the earth; or such a separation of the soul of Lazarus from his body, as there shall be no reunion of it before the general resurrection (which is our ordinary notion of death); God hath not sent this sickness for that purpose, but that he might be glorified by his Son raising him from the dead. God is glorified when his Son is glorified; and Christ is glorified when his Divine power is manifested, so as men acknowledge him to be what indeed he is.

John 11:5

Ver. 5. He doubtless loved them with a special, distinguishing love, as

persons chosen in him to eternal life before the foundation of the world, given unto him by an eternal donation, called by him with an effectual calling, to own and receive him as their Saviour; but this text seemeth to speak of him as loving this family with a human love, which inclineth man to a complacency in an object beloved: he had a kindness for the whole family; they had showed them kindness in his state of humiliation, and he loved those that so loved him, Pr 8:17.

John 11:6

Ver. 6. Though he loved him and his sisters with a tender love, yet he did not presently go to them, to comfort Mary and Martha in their sorrow; nor yet to cure Lazarus, and prevent his death; but stayed still two days in the place where he was. He loved Mary, and Martha, and Lazarus, but he more loved the honour and glory of his Father, which was to be manifested in his raising of Lazarus from the dead. We must not judge of Christ's love to us by his mere external dispensations of providence; nor judge that he doth not love us because he doth not presently come in to our help, at our times, and in such ways and methods as we would think reasonable.

John 11:7

Ver. 7. This lets us know, that Christ was not in Judea when he received the tidings of Lazarus's sickness, but in Peraea, or Galilee; but he presently upon it takes up thoughts of returning again into that province, and indeed he was now preparing for his last journey thither: however, the sickness of Lazarus, and his raising from the dead, was one occasion of his so soon going up; from which his disciples would have discouraged him, as followeth ... (see Joh 11:8).

John 11:8

Ver. 8. See Poole on "Joh 10:31". There were not three months elapsed since the Jews had so sought to have stoned him, and there was no reason for him to think that their fury was in any whit abated. We read in the other evangelists of other words they used (Peter especially, Mt 16:22), to

dissuade our Saviour from this journey to Jerusalem. They were afraid for their Master, and they were afraid also for themselves.

John 11:9

Ver. 9. Look as in the day there are twelve hours, in which the sun shineth, and by giving its light directs men in their courses; so as they know how to guide their feet, and do not stumble, because they have the light of the sun, which God hath ordained, to direct men that walk up and down in the world.

John 11:10

Ver. 10. And there is a night also, wherein if men walk they will be very prone to stumble, because they are in darkness, and have no light to guide their feet. So there is a set time for all the issues of men; a time for their peace and liberty, and a time for their troubles and sufferings. God rules and governs the world. While men are in their callings and places, faithfully discharging their trust, and finishing the work which God hath given them to do, and their time is not come for their glorifying of God by suffering, they shall not stumble, nor be given up to the rage of their eagerest enemies; they are in their callings and places, and God will be light unto them: but when their working time is over, and the time of their night is come, then they will stumble; because then God withdraweth his light from them; they are not then under such a special protection of God, who hath done his work by and with them. This is as much as he had said before, Joh 8:20, *No man laid hands on him, for his hour was not yet come*; the twelve hours of his day were not all spent. This duty digested, is of infinite use to quiet the spirits of God's people in the worst of times; every man hath his twelve hours, his day and set time, to honour God upon the stage of the world: he shall not stumble, he shall not miscarry, while those hours are spent; he shall not die, he shall not be disabled for duty, so long as God hath aught for him to do. But every man hath his night too, when he must not expect to converse in the world without stumbling.

John 11:11

Ver. 11. There is such an analogy between death and sleep, that there is nothing more ordinary than to express death by sleep in Scripture, De 31:16 2Sa 7:12 1Ki 1:21 2Ki 20:21 Job 7:21 14:12 Da 12:2, and in a multitude of other texts, both in the Old Testament and in the New; so as it was evident our Saviour meant he was dead, which he knew as he was God, though as yet he had received no relation of it from the friends of the deceased.

But I go (saith our Saviour) to raise him up again from the dead, which he calls awaking him; pursuing the former metaphor, where he had compared death to a sleep.

John 11:12

Ver. 12. Sleeping moderately is a good sign, we know, in most diseases; this makes the disciples say, that if Lazarus slept he should do well.

John 11:13

Ver. 13. But that the disciples should not understand our Saviour not speaking of ordinary sleep, but of death, is wonderful, considering that there is nothing more ordinary in holy writ than to read of death expressed under this notion; but possibly by our Saviour's making such haste to him, they conceived that he was not dead, but only in an ordinary sleep, upon the abatement of his disease.

John 11:14

Ver. 14. You will mistake me; my meaning was, not that Lazarus was fallen to rest upon the abatement of his distemper, but his soul is parted from his body.

John 11:15

Ver. 15. Had I been upon the place, my kindness to his sisters, and pity, would have prevailed far with me to have prevented his death; but it is better, for your sakes at least, and I am glad. I was not there. For by this means I shalt have an advantage, by putting forth my Divine power in raising him from the dead, to confirm your faith in me as the Son of God, and the true Messias; therefore, though he be dead, *let us go unto him.*

John 11:16

Ver. 16. *Thomas* and *Didymus* were names of the same signification, only *Thomas* was the Hebrew, and *Didymus* the Greek name. This is that *Thomas* who to the last showed a greater difficulty in believing than many others of the disciples did, Joh 20:25. His words here signified great rashness and unbelief: *Let us also go, that we may die with him;* with Christ (say some). Seeing that our Lord will not be persuaded from going into Judea, where his life will be in apparent danger, for they will put him to death, let us also go and die with him. But it is more probable that *Thomas* meant with *Lazarus*, who, as our Saviour told them but now, was dead; and in that sense it was not only an expression of great passion, but great unbelief also. We ought not to be so affected with the death of our friends, as to wish or desire ourselves out of the world, where God hath set us in stations which we ought to keep, until God be pleased to remove us. Besides, *Thomas* ought to have believed our Saviour, who had told them, that though *Lazarus* slept the sleep of death, yet he went to awake him; which could have no other sense, than to raise him out of that sleep of death, of which he had spoken. Ah! To what errors do our passions betray us!

John 11:17

Ver. 17. Christ *came* to Bethany where *Lazarus* died; *he found he had lain in the grave four days;* so as probably Christ came not to Bethany till four days or more after the death of *Lazarus*, or near upon. But possibly it is better judged by others, that Christ was not yet come into Bethany, but only to the place where he met *Martha*; because it is said after this, Joh

11:30, that *Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him*; which it is probable was at Lazarus's sepulchre, out of the town, but near it, as all the Jewish burying places were; where he heard from the relation of Martha how long Lazarus had been buried. Our Saviour could have come sooner had he pleased, for though Bethabara was on the other side of Jordan, (so out of the confines of Judea), yet, if we may give any credit to those who have laboured in the study of places, it was not above four miles off Jerusalem, so as it could not be six miles from Bethany, which our Saviour could have travelled in a less time than four or five days. Some think Lazarus died the same day news came to Christ of his sickness; after which we read, Joh 11:6, that he stirred not of two days; after which it was, Joh 11:7, that he took up thoughts of going into Judea. After this, possibly, he lingered one or two days; Joh 11:14, he tells them Lazarus was dead. Our Saviour was willing to protract the time, that the miracle might be more conspicuous and remarkable.

John 11:18

Ver. 18. That, as we count, wants of two miles half a quarter.

John 11:19

Ver. 19. Not to pray with them for the soul of their brother departed. That departed souls are in a capacity to be advantaged by the prayers of their friends, or any such thing, are corruptions of latter times; but they had a civil usage of mourning for their friends, the time for which was anciently thirty days. They mourned for Jacob forty days, Ge 50:3; for Aaron thirty days, Nu 20:29; so for Moses, De 34:8. It is probable the days were fewer for persons of an inferior quality, but they had some days for all; during which days their neighbours and friends came to visit them, and relieve them in their sorrow, with such arguments as they had.

John 11:20

Ver. 20. It should seem by the story, Lu 10:41, that Martha had the care of the house keeping upon her, (Mary was more retired), so that the news of

Christ's coming might come to her first. She in great joy ran out to meet him; how far she went we are not told, but it appeareth from Joh 11:30 that she went out of the town.

John 11:21

Ver. 21. Mary saith the same, Joh 11:32. They were both in an error, for Lazarus's death was appointed and determined by an eternal counsel; and he was both sick and died for a wise end, that God might be glorified and his Son glorified in raising him from the dead; as we were before told, Joh 11:4. But it lets us see the vanity of our natures, who in the loss of our friends are ready to think, if such or such means had been used, we had not lost our friends; never considering our days are appointed, and we cannot pass the number of them. If any rational, probable means for continuing their lives be omitted, that also is not without the counsel of God, who having determined the issue, concealeth diseases, or the true and proper means for their cure, from physicians, or such as are about the sick persons. Nor did Martha and Mary fail in this only, but in that they made the Lord's presence necessary to the preserving of the life of their brother, who, had he pleased, could, though absent, have kept him from death.

John 11:22

Ver. 22. She showed some unbelief in her former words, but here again she showeth her faith, but not without some weakness mixed with her faith; for by these words she seemeth not to be satisfied, that the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in Christ, and that he was equal with the Father, and able by his own power to raise the dead; her faith extendeth no further than a belief, that he was in so much favour with God, that if he would please to intercede with God, he would restore her brother to life: this she meaneth; though the raising of persons from the dead was a thing so rare and unusual, that she dares not to mention that particular thing, though uppermost in her thoughts.

John 11:23

Ver. 23. Christ takes no notice of Martha's failings before mentioned, (he can have compassion upon his people's infirmities), but applies himself to the relief of her under her affliction. He doth not tell her that her brother should be raised to life presently, nor that he would do it; but only saith he *shall rise again*: to let us know, that a belief of the general resurrection is enough, and ought to be improved by us, to curb our immoderate mourning and passions for those of our friends who are dead in the Lord.

John 11:24

Ver. 24. From hence we learn, that the general resurrection of the dead is no novel doctrine. Job believed it, Job 19:26,27. Daniel published it, Da 12:2. The Pharisees owned it, though the Sadducees denied it; and possibly the Pharisees had but a confused notion of it. Martha here makes it an article of her faith.

John 11:25

Ver. 25. Martha by her speech seemed not to have a true notion of Christ; she believed that there should be a general resurrection from the dead in the last day, by the mighty power of God, but she did not truly understand what influence Christ had upon this resurrection, that the raising of the dead should be the peculiar work of Christ, not without the Father, but as he was ordained by the Father to be the Judge of the quick and of the dead. Christ doth therefore here further instruct her, and tell her, he was *the resurrection*; where (as is usual in Scripture) the effect is put for the cause: *I am the resurrection*, is no more than, I am, and shall be, the principal cause of the resurrection: the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, Joh 5:28. He also adds, *and the life*; that is, the cause of life; both that life which the dead shall in the resurrection recover, and also that eternal life which shall follow. And whosoever looketh upon me in that notion, and committeth himself unto me, though he doth die, yet he shall rise again, and live eternally; and this power being in me, I am not tied to the last day, but have a power when I please to raise the dead. Our Saviour indeed hath more in his answer than respected the present case; but there was nothing more usual with him, than in his discourses to raise up the hearts of his people to higher things, as he doth in this place raise Martha

beyond the thoughts of a resurrection of her brother's body to a natural life, to the thoughts of a spiritual and eternal life.

John 11:26

Ver. 26. He had before proved himself to be the *resurrection*, now he proveth himself to be *the life*. He saith, he that liveth, that liveth a natural life, if he be one who receiveth and embraces me as the true Messiah and Saviour of the world, and committeth himself and all the concerns of his soul to me, shall never die. Though his body shall die because of sin, yet his spirit shall live because of righteousness; and God shall in the great day quicken again his mortal body, through the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in him, and is united to him, Ro 8:10,11. He asketh Martha if she believed this. We shall observe, that our Saviour, not here only, but Mt 9:22,28, before he wrought his miraculous operations, required people's faith as a prerequisite. And, Mt 13:58, he could not do many mighty works in his own country, because of their unbelief. And, Mt 17:20, he tells his disciples, that the reason why they could not cure the man possessed with the devil, was because of their unbelief: so great an honour hath God given to the exercise of faith.

John 11:27

Ver. 27. This is the nearest to the confession of Peter, Mt 16:16, which our Saviour calleth, the rock upon which he would build his church, of any that we have in Scripture; yea, and more full than that, for those words, *which should come into the world*, are not in Peter's confession. The sum of this is, Martha doth here profess a full assent to our Saviour as the Messias, the Son of God; he who was prefigured, prophesied of, promised, as he who should come into the world.

John 11:28

Ver. 28. Mary was left at home, while Martha went out of the town to meet Christ. It seemeth by this verse, Christ had asked for her, though that be not mentioned before. Martha goeth secretly to her, and tells her that the

Master was come. (It was a name they usually called their most famous teachers by).

John 11:29

Ver. 29. Mary's love and readiness to attend upon Christ, appeareth by a former story concerning her and her sister Martha, recorded Lu 10:38-40. But the present sorrow she was in for her dead brother, together with the hopes she conceived of having him restored to life by Christ's coming, added wings to her motion; therefore the evangelist saith, *she arose quickly, and came to him.*

John 11:30

Ver. 30-32. Coming, she falls down at his feet, which was a posture (as we have heard before) very usual in those countries, by which they testified both their civil respects to princes and great persons, and also which they used in the worship of God, Mt 2:11. Whether Mary did it upon the one account or the other, depends upon what we cannot know; viz. whether she at this time was fully persuaded of his Divine nature; of which the best of the disciples, till Christ's resurrection, had but a faint and uncertain persuasion. The words which she useth to him are the same which Martha used, See Poole on "Joh 11:21".

John 11:33

Ver. 33. The apostle speaks of Christ, Heb 4:15, *as an High priest that can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities*, and one that *can have compassion*, Heb 5:2. Martha's and Mary's passion for their dead brother was their infirmity; Christ is touched with the feeling of it: he, to show himself truly man, *groaned* in himself; it being natural to us to be affected with the afflictions of others, and to weep with those who weep. But here ariseth a question, whether Christ was troubled from a natural necessity, as we sometimes cannot forbear weeping to see others weep bitterly, or out of

choice? Some of the ancients think it was out of choice. Mr. Calvin and others think that it was out of a natural necessity; not that he could not govern his passions (as we sometimes cannot) by reason, but that he could not, as man, forbear his passion.

I shall translate what Mr. Calvin speaks, most judiciously, in the case, determining neither way, but leaving it to the reader's judgment. "But how", saith he, "do gnawing and trouble of spirit agree to that Person who was the Son of God? Because to some it looketh very absurd to say, that Christ, as one of us, is subject to human passions; they think Christ no otherwise at any time either grieved or rejoiced, than as he, so often as he thought fit, voluntarily assumed to himself those passions by a secret dispensation. Augustine thought that Christ in this sense is said to have groaned, and to have been troubled; whereas other men's passions transport them, and exercise a tyranny over them, to the disturbance of their minds: he therefore thinks the meaning is, that Christ, being otherwise sedate, and free from passions, sometimes voluntarily took these passions. But in my judgment, it is a much plainer and simpler sense of this scripture, if we say, that the Son of God, taking upon him our nature, did also freely with it put on our affections (which are our natural infirmities); so as he in nothing differed from us, but in this, that he had no sin. Nothing by this is derogated from the glory of Christ; for he voluntarily submitted to take our nature upon him, by which he became like to us in our human affections. And we must not think, that after he had voluntarily submitted to take our perfect nature upon him, that he was free from the passions and affections of it: in this he proved himself to be our Brother, that we might know that he is a Mediator for us, who can easily pardon our infirmities, and is ready to help us as to those infirmities, which he hath experienced in his own person. If any one object, That seeing our passions are sinful, it doth not agree to the nature of him who was the Son of God to share with us in them; I answer, There is a great deal of difference (as to these passions) between us and Christ; for our affections are therefore faulty, because they are intemperate, and inordinate, and keep no bounds; but in Christ, though they be, yet they are composed, and moderate, and in obedience to God. The passions of men are faulty upon two accounts:

1. As they are turbulent, and not governed by the rule of moderation.

2. As they often rise without any due ground or foundation, or are not directed to a right end.

They are in us a disease, because we neither grieve nor rejoice in measure, and to that degree alone which God permits and allows; many rather give the reins to their passions. And such is the vanity of our minds, that we are grieved and troubled for little or no causes, being too much addicted and cleaving to the world. There was no such thing in Christ, no passion in him ever exceeded its just bounds, or was exercised but upon a just and reasonable cause. To make this yet clearer, we must distinguish between man in his creation, and the degenerate nature of man, as it is corrupted through sin. When God at first created man, he created him with natural affections, but such as were under the command of reason: that our passions are now inordinate, and rebellious, is accidental to our nature. Christ indeed took our affections upon him, but without that disorder which fell into them by the fall, which causeth us that we cannot obey them and God. He was greatly troubled, but not so as by his trouble to become disobedient to his Father. In short, if we compare our affections with his, there will appear as great a difference, as between pure water and that which is dirty and filthy. And the single example of Christ is enough to make us reject the stoical apathy (or want of passion); for from whom, if not from him, should we fetch the highest rule of perfection? Let us therefore rather study to correct and tame that disorder in which our passions are entangled, and follow Christ as our guide, that we may bring them into order. Thus Paul, 1Th 4:13, doth not require of us a stony stupidity, but commands us to govern our grief, that we may not mourn as men without hope. For Christ therefore took our affections upon him, that we by his grace may be enabled to subdue whatsoever is vicious in them."

John 11:34

Ver. 34,35. Weeping is not of itself a sinful, but a natural passion, which (as was said before) doth very well agree with Christ, having voluntarily taken upon him our nature, and natural infirmities.

John 11:36

Ver. 36. Love showeth itself, as in a complacence in the object beloved, while we enjoy it; so in a grief for it when we are deprived of it: the Jews therefore rightly concluded Christ's kindness to Lazarus, from his human affection expressed at his death.

John 11:37

Ver. 37. Some only concluded Christ's love to the deceased from his affection showed at his grave; but others made a worse conclusion, in derogation to Christ's reputation, from the miracle he had wrought, Joh 9:1-34, in restoring him that was born blind; for their speech soundeth in this sense, If he had indeed cured one that was born blind, certainly he could as well have kept this man, to whom (dead) he expresses so great affection, clear from death. A learned interpreter therefore calleth this, a devilish sarcasm; they go about to weaken the reputation of our Saviour, from the miracle which he had wrought, apparently showing his Divine power, because he did not keep his friend from dying. It is much like the scoff with which they afterward scoffed him, while he flung upon the cross, Mt 27:42, *He saved others; himself he cannot save*. Or the words may have been spoken, if not with an irony, yet with admiration, that having cured the blind man, a stranger to him, he did not heal his sick friend; or as if they were uncertain whether his power of working miracles were not limited to some times, that he could not perform all things when he pleased. But how weak must this their argumentation be, which could stand upon no other foundation than this, That if Christ were the Son of God, he would at all times, and in all cases, have put forth his Divine power. As if God acted necessarily, not freely, governing his actions by his own wisdom, as he saw most conducing to the wise ends of his glory.

John 11:38

Ver. 38. *Groaning in himself* as before, Joh 11:33, so showing himself yet further to be truly man, and not without human affections. He cometh to the place where Lazarus's dead body was laid, which, the evangelist telleth us, was *a cave*, or a hollow place in the earth, or some rock. And they

were wont to roll some great stones to the mouth of those graves, as we see in the burial of our Saviour, Mt 27:66.

John 11:39

Ver. 39. Our Lord commandeth the removal of the stone, which was at the mouth of the sepulchre, that the miracle might be evident; for Lazarus to have come forth, the door of the cave being shut, and a great stone making it fast, would have looked more like an apparition than a resurrection. It is very probable that Martha thought that our Saviour commanded the removal of the stone, not in order to a commanding him to life again, but out of a curiosity to view his dead body; and therefore she objects the putrefaction of his body, from which the soul was now departed four days, as that which our Saviour would not be able to endure the savour of.

John 11:40

Ver. 40. Christ now begins to open to Martha and Mary, and the rest, his resolution to raise Lazarus from the dead by and by Christ saith that to us in his word, which he saith by a just consequence, though he doth not speak it in so many words: we do not read in this history, that Christ had spoken this in so many words and syllables, but he had spoken it in effect; he had told her, Joh 11:25, that he was *the resurrection and the life*, that he had power to raise dead bodies from a natural death to life; and that for those who believed in him, though they were dead, they should live. This could not be without a great manifestation of the glory of God: the power of God is his glory. *God hath spoken once*, (saith the psalmist), *yea, twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God*, Ps 62:11. Thou shouldest see God by me manifesting the glory of his Almighty power; God glorifying himself, and glorifying his Son. Believing brings us in experiences of God; whereas unbelief, as it were, limiteth God, and ties up his hands.

John 11:41

Ver. 41. The servants, or friends, about the grave, removeth the stone from

the mouth of the cave, within which the dead corpse of Lazarus lay. Christ, before his thanksgiving to his Father, is said to have *lifted up his eyes*; a posture often used in men's addresses to God, Ps 121:1, and Ps 123:1, as an indication of their belief that heaven is God's throne: though he filleth heaven and earth, yet heaven is his court, where he most gloriously showeth himself, the earth but his footstool. We read here of nothing that Christ had said before, yet he giveth thanks here to his Father that he had heard him. The meaning is, thou hast willed, or pleased to grant, those things which I desired. It is very hard to determine, whether Christ had used some audible words before this, upon this occasion, in prayer to his Father, which the evangelist could not or did not set down; or whether he only groaned in his spirit, as was said before, by those groans not only expressing his sorrow for Lazarus's death, or rather sympathy with the afflictions of Mary and Martha, but also his desires to his Father, that he might be again restored to life; and his second groaning, Joh 11:38, was of that nature: which groanings in the saints God understandeth, knowing the *mind of the Spirit*, making *intercession for the saints according to the will of God* (as the apostle teacheth us, Ro 8:27); much more did the Father, who was one in nature, essence, and will with the Son, understand them in him. Nothing in these cases can be determined, much less can any conclude from hence, that there is no need of our using any words in our prayers; for although there be no simple, absolute necessity that we should use them in order to God's knowledge of what we need, and would have; for he that searcheth the heart, knows what we need, and what we desire, Mt 6:8; yet there is a necessity for our words, in order to our obeying God's command, Ho 14:2 Lu 11:2. There is a great deal of difference between God's hearing of Christ, and hearing us: Christ and his Father have one essence, one nature, and will.

John 11:42

Ver. 42. I know that thou always willest those things which I will; and I will nothing but what thou willest, and hast sent me to do in the world; so as in these things it is impossible but that thou shouldest always be ready to grant what I ask of thee; nay, there is no need of my asking. I only give thee thanks for the people's sake, who here stand by; who believe thee to be the true God, and to have an Almighty power; but will not as yet believe that I am thy Son, by thee sent into the world, and that I do the

works which I do in thee and from thee. We read of many miracles wrought by Christ without any prayer first put up to his Father, Mt 8:3 9:6 Mr 5:41 9:25 Lu 7:14, using only an authoritative word; nor need he have used any here, but only for the further conviction of the people that he was sent of God, that God whom they owned as their God: he prayeth and giveth thanks to God before them all.

John 11:43

Ver. 43. When he had groaned in his spirit, and audibly given thanks to his Father for hearing of him, and testified that he did this, not because he ever had any doubt of his Father's willing what he willed, but that the people might take notice of his favour and power with God, and that he was sent of him; *he cried with a loud voice*; not whispering, nor, like wizards, peeping and muttering, Isa 8:19, but speaking aloud, so as all might hear, and understand, that what was done was done by his powerful word. He calls him by his name, he bids him come forth; they were not the words that raised Lazarus, but the mighty, quickening power of Christ, which attended these words.

John 11:44

Ver. 44. The fashion of their dressing up the dead differeth, according to the fashion of several countries; among the Jews, we understand by this text, they tied a napkin about their head, and some clothes about their hands and feet. They wound the whole body in linen clothes with spices, Joh 19:40; this was (as is there said) their manner to bury. So, Ac 5:6, the young men are said to have wound Ananias, and carried him out, and buried him. And this is that which certainly is meant here by these words, *bound hand and foot*: and here is a second miracle, that one so wrapped and bound up should be able to move and come forth. Christ bids, *Loose him, and let him go*, to evidence him truly recovered to life again, and that the miracle was perfectly wrought. About this miracle there are two curious questions started:

1. Whether the raising of Lazarus to life was done by the mere Divine power of Christ, or by the person of Christ; so as the human nature,

being personally united to the Divine nature, had also a share in it; the Divine nature communicating its property of quickening the dead to the human nature? That it was the person of Christ that raised Lazarus, and he who did it was truly man and truly God, is out of doubt. But that there was any such communication of the properties of the Divine nature to the human nature, that it also had a share in this effect, is justly denied, and doubted by many great divines: but it is a question tending to no great profit for us to know.

2. Where Lazarus's soul was these four days wherein it was separated from the body? The Scripture hath not told us this, and it speaks too great curiosity to inquire too strictly. Though we are taught from the parable of Dives and Lazarus, that the souls of departed saints do ordinarily and immediately pass into heaven, or Abraham's bosom; yet what should hinder, but that in these cases, where it appears to have been the Divine will that the souls of persons departed should again be returned into their bodies in a short time, they might by a Divine power be kept under the custody of angels, until the time of such restoration of them.

John 11:45

Ver. 45. That is, which came to visit Martha and Mary in their mourning; and, coming to Mary, did go along with her to the sepulchre to meet Christ, and there meeting him, saw all the passages relating to this miracle, truly *believed on him* as the true Messiah, Joh 12:11,18. Or it may be, it is to be understood more largely of such a faith as is but preparatory to true and saving faith; for there was a double use of miracles.

1. To prepare men for faith, disposing them to give an ear to him, to whom God hath given so great a power; so as after the sight of them they were more fitted to hear, and inclinable to believe.
2. To confirm faith in those that believed, so as they believed the more firmly, seeing the doctrine they heard confirmed by such miraculous operations.

John 11:46

Ver. 46. These Jews had the same means for believing the others had; they had heard the same words from Christ, they had seen the same miracle wrought by Christ. Whence is it that any of the other Jews believed? These, instead of believing, run to the Pharisees to accuse him. Can any account be given of this, unless from the freedom of Divine grace, showing mercy where God will show mercy? Though possibly the former wickedness, of these Jews was the cause of God's not giving that grace to them which he gave to others.

John 11:47

Ver. 47. The chief priests and Pharisees were a great part of that great council amongst the Jews, which went under the name of the sanhedrim; and this (probably) was the council they gathered; for, Joh 11:49, we read, that Caiaphas, the high priest, the standing president of that court, was amongst them. The miracles wrought by Christ were the things that disturbed them, and they reflect upon themselves for conniving so long at him: what they should have improved (viz. the miracles which he wrought) to have begot or increased faith in them, they mention and misimprove to their destruction.

John 11:48

Ver. 48. They are afraid, that if they should any longer suffer Christ to go on working miracles, he would have a great many followers, who upon the credit of his miracles would own him as the Messiah, and the effect and consequence of this would be, they should by the Romans (to whom they were already in subjection) be utterly deprived of that little liberty they indulged them. They say, the Romans would come (that is with an army) and destroy their temple, which they call their *place*, their most famous place, where they met to worship God, and in which, as a token of God's presence amongst them, they so much alerted; yea, and their *nation*; that is, miserably destroy their nation, and bring it to utter ruin. Whether they really thought so or no, or only spake this as an argument to hasten the death of Christ, is not much material for us to know. There was this colour

for it, the Jews were a people very prone upon all occasions to rebel, and rise up in the defence of their liberties, whenever they could get any head, to give them any countenance and conduct. They also lived in a general expectation of the Messiah, when the sceptre should be departed from Judah, (as it now was), and when Daniel's seventy weeks, mentioned Joh 9:24, should be determined, which were now fulfilled; so as there was about this time a general expectation of the Messiah; of whom also it is apparent they had a false notion, and generally expected under the notion of the Messiah, not the Son of God taking human nature, and to die for their redemption, and then rise again from the dead, and ascend into heaven; but a temporal prince, who, conquering all their enemies, should deliver them from all captivities and servitudes, and restore them to their ancient liberties. This their expectation was known well enough to the Roman governors, (as appeareth by Herod's question to the wise men in Mt 2:4), and they were very jealous of the Jews on this account, which caused Herod's bloody act in killing the children in and about Bethlehem. So as the rulers of the Jews (according to the notion they had of the Messiah) might reasonably think, that if Jesus were taken to be the Messiah, and he went on confirming the opinion of himself by these miracles, so as people generally ran after him, the Romans would reasonably suppose they had a design to rebel, and therefore would come upon them, destroy their temple, and utterly ruin their nation. But how will they avoid this? That which they agreed upon we shall meet with Joh 11:53, they took counsel to put him to death. How they were led on to that fatal counsel we shall hear.

John 11:49

Ver. 49. The high priest by the Divine law was to be but one, and he the eldest son of Aaron's house; nor was he to be for a year, but for his life, as appeareth by a multitude of texts in the books of Moses: but all things were now out of order in the Jewish church; they were under the power of the Romans; all places, especially that of the high priest, were bought and sold amongst them: some say they had two high priests, others say but one, only he had an assistant, called by that name, that had a partnership in the honour. After Herod's time there was no regard to the family of Aaron, or the Asmoneans, but the Romans made what high priest they pleased; so as Josephus tells us, that the Jews, who had but thirteen high priests from

Aaron's to Solomon's time, which was six hundred and twelve years; nor more than eighteen in four hundred and sixty years after, to the captivity of Babylon; nor more than fifteen from thence to the time of Antiochus, which was four hundred and fourteen years; had twenty eight between the time that Herod began to reign and Jerusalem was destroyed; of which this Caiaphas was one, and certainly the chief, (if there were two at this time), and consequently the president of their great court, whom all attended to, and his words went a great way with the rest. He charges the rest of the council with folly, as not considering what was fit to be done.

John 11:50

Ver. 50. Never was any thing spoken more diabolically: he regards not what was their duty, nor what was lawful for them to do; whether they might upon any pretence shed innocent blood, much more the blood of one whose life was spent in nothing but a going up and down in doing good; only, like a wretched politician, who was concerned for nothing but the people's safety, he saith not, it is lawful, but, *it is expedient for us that one man, be he never so good, never so innocent and just, should die for the people,* that is, to save the whole nation from destruction.

John 11:51

Ver. 51. So far as this was a prophecy, *he spake not of himself*: take the words of Caiaphas in the sense that he spake them, they were such as might well enough come out of such a wretched mouth, speaking out of the abundance of a vile and wretched heart; *Melius pereat unus quam unitas,* That it was better that one man should die, let him be never so good, just, and innocent, than that for his sake mischief should come upon a nation. This was now suitable enough to the religion of such a high priest. But that in this (the words being capable of a double sense) Caiaphas should deliver a great truth, That this year *one should die for the people;* that is, The Messiah should *be cut off, but not for himself,* as we read, Da 9:26; this was no more from himself, than the words which Balaam's ass spake were from itself. The Spirit of prophecy sometimes fell upon wicked men; God revealed to Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar (both of whom were pagans) the things which he intended to do. There was a time

also when Saul (though a man rejected of God) did also prophesy; and the worst of the princes of Judah had a use of the Urim and Thummim. So also here, Caiaphas, though a vile and wicked man, was here influenced by God to prophesy, and speak an oracle. Nor are those words, *being high priest that year*, superfluously put in; for it being consistent with the holiness of God, sometimes to make use of the tongues of the worst of men to declare his will, it seems agreeable to the wisdom of God in doing it, to make use of principal men, they being persons whose words are most likely to be regarded, and so make impression upon people. The papists would from hence infer the infallibility of the pope, because he is the high priest: but they ought to prove:

1. That the office of the pope hath any foundation in the word of God.
2. That this was a gift given to particular priests, and at particular times; for the Jewish high priests were fallible enough ordinarily; witness Aaron's making the golden calf, and Urijah the altar after the pattern of Damascus, 2Ki 16:10,11.

The words, *being high priest*, are not given as a reason why Caiaphas prophesied, though they are a good reason why God was pleased to choose his tongue, and overrule it beyond his own thoughts and intentions, to serve his design in this revelation. He did not prophesy intentionally, as designing such a thing, only materially: the matter of his words were indeed a Divine revelation, though his intention and scope was fit for none but a base, carnal politician. God made him a prophet in what he said, though he meant not so.

John 11:52

Ver. 52. *Not for that nation only*; not for the Jews only. The words used in Caiaphas's speech were $\lambda\alpha\omicron\varsigma$ and $\epsilon\theta\nu\omicron\varsigma$, words not significant of the Jews only, but of other people also: for Christ was to gather into one body all the elect of God, (who are here called *the children of God*, because they were to be so after their being begotten by the immortal seed of the word, and born again of water and the Spirit), those that at present were *scattered abroad* over the face of the whole earth: Christ was to *gather together in one all things in heaven and earth*, Eph 1:10. The evangelist extendeth the

sense of Caiaphas's prophecy to Gentiles as well as Jews, according to the extent of the death of Christ, declared 1Jo 2:2.

John 11:53

Ver. 53. They had taken such counsel before; but now they were more intent than before, having found a more just pretence, viz. to prevent a sedition and rebellion; and learned of their high priest, that it was more convenient that one should die, than that a whole nation should be destroyed. The high priest had satisfied their consciences; now they make all the haste they can to put their malicious designs in execution.

John 11:54

Ver. 54. *Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews;* for he being the true paschal Lamb, was to be slain at that feast, and put an end to that type, and would therefore reserve himself for that time, which was now at hand. *A city called Ephraim:* what this Ephren or Ephraim was, interpreters vainly busy themselves in inquiring; it was some obscure city, and near the wilderness; some think it was in the lot of Benjamin, others think it was in the lot of Ephraim, and obtained its name from the tribe in whose lot it was. The Scripture no where mentions it; and it cannot be expected, but that in so many changes of government as had befallen the Jews, the names of places should be so altered, that we should be at loss for many of them: wherever it was, it is said that Christ and his disciples continued there in some privacy.

John 11:55

Ver. 55. Christ's last passover, which was the fourth after he had entered upon his public ministry, was nigh. He doth not say all, but *many went up to purify themselves*. There was no general legal purification required before men did eat the passover; but there were several legal uncleannesses, and purifications necessary to cleanse men from them; now those who had any special purification to pass, went before others, that they might have time to do what the law required of them.

John 11:56

Ver. 56. I find good interpreters expounding this verse of the friends of Christ, who having used to meet Christ at these feasts, and see some miracles wrought by him, did out of a good design seek for him, and inquire of each other whether they knew if he intended to be at the feast: yet it may also be understood of his enemies, though it seemeth something too early, being six or seven days before.

John 11:57

Ver. 57. For their great court had issued out orders for the discovery and apprehending of our Saviour, if they could any way learn where he was. This was in pursuance of that wicked counsel of which we read before, Joh 11:53: there they decreed; now they cannot rest until they bring their bloody devices to pass, for which we shall soon find God giving them an opportunity.

John 12:1

Chapter Summary

Joh 12:1-8 Mary anoints the feet of Jesus: Judas murmurs at the cost.

Joh 12:9-11 The people flock to see Lazarus: the chief priests

consult to kill him.

Joh 12:12-19 Jesus rideth into Jerusalem in triumph.

Joh 12:20-22 Certain Greeks desired to see him.

Joh 12:23-36 He showeth the benefit of his death to believers;

a voice from heaven; prayeth to his Father; is answered by

death; and signifies the manner of his

exhorteth to make good use of the present light.

Joh 12:37-41 The generality of the Jews believe not, Joh 12:42,43 yet many chief rulers believe, but dare not confess him.

Joh 12:44-50 He urges faith in his Divine mission.

Ver. 1 From the *country near to the wilderness*, where Jesus *continued with his disciples*, Joh 11:54, he came to Bethany, within less than two miles of Jerusalem, upon the sabbath day, or possibly the night before, *six days before the passover*: it was the place where (as we read in the former chapter) Lazarus died, and was by Christ *raised from the dead*.

John 12:2

Ver. 2. That this supper was made in Bethany is no question; but at whose house there it is questioned. Some think that it was at the house of Simon the leper. We read indeed of a supper made for our Saviour at his house, both Mt 26:6,7, and Mr 14:3, and that Simon is said to have been of Bethany: only the supper here mentioned is said to have been six days before the passover, and that mentioned by Matthew and Mark seems to have been but two days before, Mt 26:2 Mr 14:1. That which is probably said to solve that difficulty is, the circumstances of the supper, and history about it, seem the very same, both in Matthew, Mark, and John; but it seems in Matthew and Mark to be a little put out of order; they do not say that this supper was two days before the passover, (that indeed had been a contradiction to what John doth here relate), but both Matthew and Mark first tell us, that Christ told his disciples that the passover was to be within two days, and of the counsel taken by the chief priests and elders against Christ, and then relates the story of this supper: John first gives us an account of this supper, which was six days before the passover; so John seems to have related it in its proper time and order.

John 12:3

Ver. 3-8. Both Matthew and Mark relate this story with some different circumstances: see the notes upon those two places, where all the differing circumstances are considered and explained, and the parts of this history are more largely explained.

John 12:9

Ver. 9. Bethany was so near to Jerusalem, that many of the Jews came thither, as well to see Lazarus, raised from the dead, as to see Christ: nor was this without the special providence of God, that the name of Christ might be made more famous just before his suffering.

John 12:10

Ver. 10. Never was there a more unreasonable madness and rage, to justify the apostle's calling of the enemies of the gospel *unreasonable men*, 2Th 3:2. Suppose that Christ had broken the sabbath, or had spoken blasphemy, yet what had Lazarus done?

John 12:11

Ver. 11. Being raised from death to life, he possibly spake of it to the honour and glory of God; for this they consult to put him to death also; and their only reason was, *because that many of the Jews believed on Jesus* for his sake.

John 12:12

Ver. 12-15. This whole history is much more largely reported by the other evangelists; See Poole on "Mt 21:1", and following verses to Mt 21:16. See Poole on "Mr 11:1", and following verses to Mr 11:10. See Poole on "Lu 19:29", and following verses to Lu 19:40.

John 12:16

Ver. 16. The evangelist, amongst others, confesseth his own ignorance also. The disciples saw the thing done, Christ riding into the city upon the foal of an ass, the people strewing of boughs, and throwing their clothes in the way; but to what purpose these things were done, or what fulfilling of prophecies was in this thing, that they understood not, so long as Christ was alive: their eyes were upon the Messiah a temporal prince, that should come in great state and majesty, so as they were wholly blinded from seeing any thing of the truth and faithfulness of God fulfilled in this little triumph of their Lord's. But after that Christ had died, and was risen again from the dead, and ascended up to heaven, so declaring himself with power to be the Son of God; then they began to remember these things, so as to confirm their faith in him as the true Messiah, whom God had sent into the world. The word of the Lord which we hear, and the works of God which we see, though oft times they do not profit us, nor are improved by us at the present, yet afterward become of use and profit to us: it is therefore good to hear, and see, and observe God's words and works, and to lay them up in our hearts, as it is said Mary pondered the sayings of the angel; expecting fruit afterwards of what at present we see no fruit and effect.

John 12:17

Ver. 17-19. These three verses let us know the external cause of the people's coming to see Christ, which was the fame of the miracle wrought by our Saviour on Lazarus; this increased the number of those who came to see his entrance into Jerusalem; but the unseen cause was, doubtless, the influence of God upon their hearts, directing them to it, for the further glorifying of his Son before his passion. But this enraged the Pharisees, to see that their decree that those who owned Christ should be turned out of the synagogue should have no better effect: but the multitude rather more owned him, and ran after him. Here again we find the term *world* signifying many, though those many made up but a very small part of the world.

John 12:20

Ver. 20. It is not easy to be determined what these *Greeks* were; whether Jews, who, being scattered in the Grecian country upon the conquests which the Grecians had made upon the Jews under Alexander the Great, and those who succeeded him, still remained in those countries, but kept so much of the religion of their country, as to come up to the passover; or Gentiles, which are ordinarily called Greeks in contradistinction to the Jews, Ac 14:1 16:1 18:17 Ro 1:16 1Co 1:23,24 Ga 3:28. But it is most probable that they were Gentiles; for though some say that the Jews would never have suffered the Gentiles to have come into the temple to worship, yet the contrary is plain from the instance of the eunuch, Ac 8:27; who was a heathen, and came to Jerusalem to worship. And, Ac 17:4, we read of *a great multitude of devout Greeks*; in the Greek the word is *σεβομενων*, worshipping Greeks. And it is plain that from the beginning there was a liberty for strangers, not of Israel, but such as came out of a far country, for the Lord's name's sake; and Solomon prayeth at the dedication of the temple, that the Lord would hear them, 1Ki 8:41-43: and there was belonging to the temple a court of the Gentiles for that purpose; it is called *the court without the temple*, Re 11:2. What worship they there performed is a greater question: some think they only prayed; others think they offered sacrifices in that court, from Apc 2Ma 3:35; but certain it is, that there were divers of the Gentiles devoutly disposed, that, hearing of the Jewish temple, and the solemn worship performed there at their solemn feasts, came, some as spectators at those great conventions, others with a true design to worship the God of the Jews.

John 12:21

Ver. 21. If these Grecians (as is probable) were Syrophenicians, their country was so near to Bethsaida of Galilee, which was Philip's town, that it is probable they might have some knowledge of him, and that might bring them to him to be spokesman; but it should seem they came only to satisfy their curiosity, for they ask for no more than that they might *see*

Jesus.

John 12:22

Ver. 22. The news of their coming, and their errand, is brought to Christ by Philip and Andrew, who possibly might stumble at it, because they were Gentiles, and Christ had forbidden them to go into the way of the Gentiles; they therefore first acquaint him with the desire of those Greeks, before they bring them to Christ.

John 12:23

Ver. 23. Christ replies, that the time was now come when he (who was the Son of God) *should be glorified*; that is, by the Gentiles receiving of the gospel, according to the many prophecies of it in the Old Testament; but he goeth on telling them that he must first die.

John 12:24

Ver. 24. Look as you see in your ordinary husbandry, the grains of wheat are first buried in the earth, and lose their form, before they spring and shoot up again, and bring forth fruit; so it must be with me; I must be first lifted up, before I shall draw men after me; I must first be crucified, before my gospel shall be preached to all nations, and the fulness of the Gentiles shall come: but if I have once died, and risen again from the dead, then you shall see this abundant fruit.

John 12:25

Ver. 25. We had much the same in the other evangelists, Mt 10:39 Lu 14:26. Some think that our Saviour repeateth it here, to show, that as Christ first suffered, and then entered into his glory; so his disciples must also lay the foundation of their glory in their sufferings and *through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God*, Ac 14:22. Or what if we should say, that our blessed Lord doth here prophesy what sufferings would attend

the first preaching of the gospel, and encourage his disciples to what he knew they must meet with and undergo, by letting them know that the ready way to lose their share in life eternal, was to be so fond of this life, and the comforts of it, as not to be ready to lay them down for him; but if any person hated, that is, less loved his life, and all that in this world is dear to him, than Christ and his service, he should, if not be preserved from enemies' rage, yet most certainly be recompensed with eternal life?

John 12:26

Ver. 26. *If any man serve me, let him follow me:* this is much the same with that, Mt 16:24, unless following here be more restrained to suffering, *let him follow me* to my cross; for otherwise it seemeth the same with serving; we must be ready not only to do, but also to die for Christ, to follow him to the cross, if he calleth us to it. And if any man so serveth me, he shall be in heaven where I am; *If we suffer with him, we shall also be glorified together*, Ro 8:17. For my Father, with whom I am one in nature and essence, will honour those that are my servants; so great a thing it is to be a servant to the Son of God. The Father will honour those that are so, and especially those who are so in suffering, with eternal life and felicity.

John 12:27

Ver. 27. *Now is my soul troubled;* by *soul* is not here to be understood only the sensitive part of the soul, but his whole human soul. So Joh 13:21, *He was troubled in spirit*. Our inward troubles arise from our passions; and there are passions of grief and fear, which give us most of our inward trouble; fear respecteth some evil at a distance from us; grief is caused by evil fallen upon us, or so near that we seem to be already in the power of it. The word here used is *ταρακται*, which signifieth no mean, but a great and more than ordinary, degree of trouble. Christ was greatly troubled, though not so as we sometimes are, when our trouble leadeth us to despair: Christ was capable of no sinful trouble. Hence two questions arise:

1. For what the soul of Christ was troubled?

2. How such a degree of trouble could agree to the Lord Jesus Christ?

He tells us, Mt 26:38, that he was *exceedingly sorrowful*, so as sorrow was one part of his trouble; and we may learn from what he afterward saith in this verse, *Father, save me from this hour*, that fear made up the other part of it. He was grieved, and he was afraid; some say it was at the apprehension of that miserable death he was to die; others say, at the sense of the Divine wrath which he was to undergo, death being not yet overcome, and his conflict with his Father's wrath for the sins of men being yet to be endured. Though Christ at this time was in the most perfect obedience to his Father's will, offering up a most acceptable and well pleasing sacrifice unto God; yet he, sustaining our persons, had a conflict to endure even with his Father's wrath upon that account, though not upon his own personal account; for so he was at this time doing that which was most acceptable and well pleasing in his sight. As to the second question, nothing could more agree to Christ than this, both with respect to his human nature, which had the same natural (though not sinful) infirmities which other men have; and with respect to his design and end, to help and relieve his people under their troubles of spirit; and, as the apostle saith, Heb 2:15, *to deliver them who through fear of death are all their lifetime subject to bondage*. So as this trouble of spirit agreed to him both as man and as Mediator. But there must be a vast difference observed between this trouble of spirit in Christ, and that which is in us. Our troubles are upon reflections for our own sin, and the wrath of God due to us therefore; his trouble was for the wrath of God due to us for our sins. Our troubles are because we have personally grieved God; his was because those given to him (not he himself) had offended God. We are afraid of our eternal condemnation; he was only afraid by a natural fear of death, which naturally riseth higher according to the kind of death we die. Our troubles have mixtures of despair, distrust, sinful horrors; there was no such thing in his trouble. Our troubles in their natural tendencies are killing and destroying; only by accident, and the wise ordering of Divine providence, prove advantageous, by leading us to him, as the only remedy for troubled souls: his trouble was, in the very nature of it, not only pure and clean, but also sanative and healing. But that he was truly troubled, and that in his whole soul, and that such a trouble did very well agree, as to the human nature he had assumed, so to his office as our Mediator and Saviour, and the foundation of a great deal of peace, quiet, and satisfaction to us, is out

of question. The chastisement of our peace in this particular lay upon him; and they were some of those stripes of his, by which we are healed.

And (saith he) what shall I say? It is the natural language of a spirit troubled.

Father, save me from this hour; this hour of my passion; it is the same with that in our Saviour's last prayer, Let this cup pass from me; and must be understood with the same qualifications there expressed, if it be thy will, if it be possible, &c. By his blessed example he hath taught us, under the distresses of our spirits, whither to flee, what to do.

For my love (saith David to his enemies, Ps 109:4) they are mine adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer; I give up myself to prayer. God hath bidden us, Ps 50:15, call upon him in the day of trouble; and St. James saith, Jas 5:3, Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Herein Christ hath himself set us an example, that we should follow his steps. But how doth our Saviour pray to be saved from that hour, when for this cause he came into the world? Here was in Christ a conflict between the flesh and the Spirit; not like ours, which is between corrupt flesh and the Spirit, but between his natural flesh, and the natural affections of it, and his spirit; that was fully conformed to the will of God, and gets a present conquest.

But for this cause (saith he) came I to this hour: he checks himself, correcteth the language of his natural flesh, acquiesceth, rejoiceth in the will of God. I was not (saith he) forced, I came of my own good will to this hour; and I came on purpose to die for my people.

John 12:28

Ver. 28. *Father, glorify thy name;* that is, make thy name glorious, make it to be known and famous over all the earth. A general petition, but such a one as all our particular requests must be reduced to, if they be according to the will of God. It is as much as, Father, do thine own will: for God is then glorified when his will is done. But it here signifies more: Not my will, but thy will be done. My flesh indeed saith save me from this hour; but, Father, do thy own will, let that be done concerning me which will most tend to make thy name renowned. Such a prayer never goes without

an answer.

Then came there a voice from heaven, &c.; the Lord caused a voice as from heaven to be heard. *I have glorified it;* I have by thee caused my glory to be published and proclaimed in the world, by thy preaching, by thy miracles; and I will perfect that which I have begun, *I will glorify it again;* thou shalt further glorify me by thy death, by thy resurrection from the dead, by the preaching of the gospel, and carrying it to the ends of the earth.

John 12:29

Ver. 29. *The people said that it thundered;* nor, it may be, were they mistaken, saving only in this, that they thought it was nothing else but thunder (being possibly at such a distance, as they could not distinctly hear the voice); for it was God's way, when he spake unto his people by a voice, to have that voice, for the greater declaration of the Divine majesty, attended with thunderings and lightnings: thus it was at the giving of the law upon Mount Sinai; thus we read in John's visions, Re 4:5 8:5, of lightnings, and thunderings, and voices, which proceeded from God's throne.

Others said, An angel spake to him: it was the general opinion of the Jews, that God always, when by voice he revealed his mind to his people, made use of an angel to do it by; hence, probably, as those who were at such a distance that they heard no voice, thought it was nothing but thunder; so those who are so nigh as, besides the thunder, to hear a voice, said, It was an angel that spake with him.

John 12:30

Ver. 30. This voice came not to instruct me, I very well knew, before it came, that my Father had glorified his own name, and would do it again; it came not principally nor solely for me, but chiefly to confirm you in this great truth, that I am the Son of God, and he whom he hath sent into the world, by and in whom he designs to glorify his own great name.

John 12:31

Ver. 31. The terms *judgment* and *world* are taken so variously in the New Testament, and particularly in this very Gospel, that they have given interpreters a great liberty to vary in their senses of this passage. It seemeth reasonable to agree that our Saviour doth expound in this verse what the voice from heaven uttered; that the Father had already glorified his name, and would yet further glorify it. How? *Now* (saith he) *is the judgment of this world*; that is, (say some), the condemnation of the wicked men in it: and certain it is, that the term *world* doth sometimes so signify, Joh 15:19 Joh 17:6,9 1Co 6:2 1Co 11:32. But this sense seemeth not to agree with Joh 3:17, where Christ tells us, that this his first coming was not to condemn the world. Others do therefore here by *judgment* better understand, the dispensation of Divine providence, by which a great change or catastrophe was to be made in the world by the reformation of it; the beginning of the time of the *restitution of all things*, Ac 3:21. But it seems best to be understood of the deliverance and vindication of mankind from the power of the devil, who had a long time held mankind in an unjust possession. The devil had got a dominion over mankind by the fall of Adam, and had exceedingly tyrannized over them, keeping the far greatest part of the world in slavery by idolatry, and keeping many others, who were no open idolaters, yet captives to his will. Now, saith our Saviour, the time is come when this shall be altered; Satan shall be bound up; I will deliver a great part of the world from the yoke of idolatry; another part of them from the power and dominion of sin. The devil, who is not by any right *the prince of this world*, but boasteth himself to be so, Mt 4:9, and acts in it like a prince, powerfully working *in the children of disobedience*, Eph 2:2, and as *the god of this world* blinding men's eyes, 2Co 4:4, taking the world as his house, and keeping it as a strong man, Mt 12:29, shall be cast out of my redeemed ones; so as though he will still be going about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, and molesting the best of men by his temptations, yet he shall not prevail over them, God will bruise him under their feet; he that had the power of death shall (as to his dominion) be destroyed, and those who are in bondage through the fear of it, shall be delivered, Heb 2:14,15; the tempted shall be succoured, Heb 2:18, and God with the temptation shall give a blessed issue. And the devil's kingdom kept up by idolatry, shall also in a great measure be destroyed in the world; many nations now under that slavery

shall embrace the gospel, and throw away their idols.

John 12:32

Ver. 32,33. However this term of lifting up Christ is taken in some other scriptures, it is by the evangelist himself in this text expounded concerning his death, so as there is no room for any other interpretation of it in this text. The word that is used, is hardly to be found in any place (except where in Scripture it relates to Christ) signifying to die, or put to death; but is very proper, both to express the kind of his death, which was a lifting up upon the cross, from the earth into the air; and to let us know that his death was a lifting up of his name: as it was the lowest degree of his humiliation, so it was nearest to his exaltation. It was his highest act of obedience to the will of his Father, that for which his Father *highly exalted him*, giving him *a name which is above every name*, Php 2:9; and also that which made his name famous over all the world, by the preaching of the gospel; for as the apostles, so all the ministers of the gospel since their times, preach a Christ crucified. Saith our Saviour, If, or although, I be put to death by the hands of the Jews, lifted up upon the cross between heaven and earth, yet this shall not hinder my Father's glorifying of himself in and by me; for instead of obscuring or hindering my Father's glory, by this I shall further promote it. For by the preaching of my cross, and publication of my gospel to all nations, and by the efficacious concurrence of my Holy Spirit, together with the preaching of the gospel, I shall draw (though not all, and every man, yet) multitudes of men and women after me, so as they shall embrace and believe in me, having died and risen up again from the dead, and being by my apostles, and other ministers of the gospel, held forth as the object of people's faith, to be by them laid hold upon in order to their eternal life and salvation. He used the term of lifting up, (saith the evangelist), to signify the particular death he should die, by being crucified; in which death the bodies of the crucified abode not upon the earth, as when they were at any time stoned, or strangled, or beheaded, &c., but were lifted up from the earth to be nailed to the cross, and hung in the air until they died.

John 12:34

Ver. 34. Here again *the law* is taken in a larger sense than in some places, where it is only significant of the books of Moses, in opposition to the prophets and other holy writings, as we had it before, Joh 10:34; for the places of Scripture which the people seem to refer to, seem to be Ps 110:4, where Christ is called a *priest for ever*; or else Da 7:14, where the kingdom of the Messiah is said to be *an everlasting dominion*, which should *not pass away*, a kingdom that should *not be destroyed*: so also, Da 2:44 Mic 4:7. These old prophecies of the Messiah the people could not reconcile to what our Saviour here told them of his death; the reason was, their not understanding the true notion of the Messiah, and of his kingdom, which they fancied not to be a spiritual and eternal kingdom, but a temporal kingdom here on earth. This made them ask, how, (that is, with what consistency to those prophecies), if he indeed were the Messias, he said, The Son of man should die; for that they understood by the term *lifted up*, which maketh it very plain, that it was a phrase they used to express that kind of death by. They ask who he meant by the Son of man.

John 12:35

Ver. 35. Our Saviour thinketh not fit further to open himself as to that point concerning the Messiah, and his Divine nature; into a direct assertion of which he must have entered, had he given a direct answer to their questions; otherwise what they had objected might easily have been answered by our Saviour, by distinguishing between the two natures in his own person: according to his Divine nature he was not to die, though he died according to his human nature; and after his suffering and resurrection, his whole person, in which both the Divine and human nature were united, were to endure for ever: but he thinks not fit to discourse this point, but returns to what John had told them, Joh 1:9, and what he himself had said, Joh 9:5, that he was *the light of the world*, though possibly by *light* he here understandeth those beams of gospel doctrine which issued out from him as the fountain of light. Yet a little while, I, who am the great Light, and the true Light of the world, am with you: or, Yet a little while, the gospel, which is light, and directs you in the way to heaven, is with you, for within a few years (under forty) after this, their city was destroyed, and their nation ruined; and before that time the apostles were turned away from the generality of that nation to the Gentiles, Ac 13:46 19:9. He in the next verse expounds himself as to what he meant by

walking, viz. believing: Make use of the light, both to guide your understandings and judgments, and also to direct your feet: for look on men in the world, while they have the guidance of the light of the sun, they know how to order their steps, and to direct their feet; but if once it be dark, they know not how to direct their feet in their way, but err, and stumble, and fall. So it will be with you, when I shall be gone, who am the great Light of the world while I am in the world (as he spake [Joh 9:5](#)); and not only I gone, but the gospel, which is that light which I shall leave behind me, be gone, by my apostles turning to the Gentiles, through your perverse refusal of the salvation of it, as [Ac 13:46 19:9](#): when you shall be utterly ruined, (as it will be at the destruction of your city), then you will walk in darkness, having no means of salvation left you.

John 12:36

Ver. 36. He either expounds what he meant before, by his calling to them to walk in the light, viz. believing in him who is the true and great Light of the world; or else he declares faith in him to be their duty, as well as obedience to him, which is a point our Saviour had often before pressed. While I am amongst you, and when I shall be gone from you and the light of the gospel yet stayeth behind amongst you, embrace me, and receive me as your Saviour, and yield all obedience to the prescriptions of my gospel, *that ye may be the children of light*: this the apostle expounds and enlargeth upon, [Eph 5:8-11](#). After Christ had spoken these things in Jerusalem, he departed to Bethany, where he obscured himself from his enemies.

John 12:37

Ver. 37. The miracles of Christ did not work faith in any, yet they had a tendency both to prepare souls for an assent to the proposition of the gospel, and also for receiving Christ as the true Messiah and Saviour of the world, as they evidenced a Divine power in him by which he wrought those mighty works; but yet they had not this effect upon the generality of the Jews.

John 12:38

Ver. 38. So as that which Isaiah prophesied, Isa 53:1, appeared to be fulfilled in them; for the term $\tau\upsilon\alpha$, which we translate *that*, doth not in Scripture always denote the final cause, with respect to the counsel and intention of God, but oft times the event. So Joh 5:20 Ro 5:20 2Co 1:17. *The arm of the Lord* may either signify the gospel, which is called *the power of God to salvation*. Ro 1:16 1Co 1:18; or else the Messiah, who is thought to be mentioned under this notion by Isaiah, Isa 51:5 Isa 52:10 59:16 63:12, because the Father worketh by him, as a man worketh by his arm, Isa 1:3,14.

John 12:39

Ver. 39. Some will have, *they could not believe*, to be the same with, they did not; as, Mr 6:5, it is said Christ could not do mighty works at Nazareth; or the same with, they would not, as Ge 19:22; but this seemeth a hard interpretation of ουκ ηδυναντο . It is most certain, that in all there is a natural impotency and disability to believe; but this text seemeth to speak of a further degree of impossibility than that, occasioned through their wilful obstinacy, and God's judicial hardening of them. *Because Esaias said*, is no more than, for Esaias said; the particle doth not denote the cause influencing them, but the effect of the prophecy: God's word (saith the evangelist) must be made good, and Isaiah had prophesied of what now came to pass.

John 12:40

Ver. 40. We have this text (than which there is not one more terrible in the whole book of God) no less than six times quoted in the New Testament, and in all places quoted and given as a reason for the Jews unbelief in the Lord Jesus Christ, Mt 13:14,15 Mr 4:12; Lu 8:10 Ac 28:26,27 Ro 11:8. It is not quoted alike in all places, but for substance the same. The original from whence these quotations are, is Isa 6:9,10. By comparing the texts we shall find several authors, instruments, or causes of these dreadful effects. In the original, the prophet Isaiah is made the instrumental cause: *Go*, (saith God), *and make the heart of this people fat*, &c. Matthew, and Luke

in Ac 28:27, mention themselves as the cause. Matthew saith, *For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed.* And the Acts it is, *For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed.* All the other texts speak of it as God's act. The thing is easily thus reconciled: God sent to the Jews his prophets, and gave them the means of salvation; it is true, without the inward efficacy of his Spirit they could not savingly believe, but they did not do what was in their power to have done, nay, they did do what was in their power to have avoided, they slighted and contemned the Lord's prophets, and killed them, and stoned such as were sent unto them. Thus they first shut their own eyes, and hardened their own hearts; and as their forefathers had done in their generation, so the Jews in our Saviour Christ's time did also in their generation, shutting their eyes against the revelation of the gospel by Christ himself. They thus behaving themselves, God judicially gave them up to their own lusts, permitting their hearts to harden, and suffering them to close their own eyes, so as they could not repent, believe, or return, and be saved; not that God infused any malice into their hearts, but withdrew his grace from them after such provocations on their parts: so that as the prophets in their age laboured with them in vain, and all the event of their ministry was but the generality of that people's growing worse and more obdurate; so all the event of Christ's ministry and miracles, which he personally wrought amongst them in his age, did accidentally but increase their sin and their judgment, and ripen them for their ruin, through their wilful abuse of those sacred means of life and salvation. The judgment itself was but one, viz. a judicial hardening of them; but it is set out by a great variety of expressions, both by the prophets, and the writers of the New Testament: in Isaiah, by making their hearts fat, their ears heavy, shutting their eyes: in Matthew, making their hearts gross, their ears dull of hearing, shutting their eyes: in this text, by blinding their eyes, and hardening their hearts: in the Acts, by the same phrases as in Matthew: in Ro 11:8 is added, *God hath given them the spirit of slumber.* All the phrases are expressive of the same dreadful judgment of God; yet it may be expressed in this variety of phrase, to signify the distinct, particular plagues (comprehended in this one plague) which fall upon the several powers and faculties of those souls upon whom this dreadful judgment falls; blindness in the mind, stubbornness in the will, &c., vileness in the affections, reprobacy in the mind, &c.

John 12:41

Ver. 41. The evangelist saith, that these things *Esaias said, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.* Isaiah's sight of God's glory is described, Isa 6:1, *I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, &c.* The evangelist expounds this of Christ, which is an evident proof of the Deity of Christ, that he is Jehovah; for it was Jehovah whom the prophet there saw: and that the revelation of that dreadful wrath of God, did not only concern that particular age in which Isaiah lived, but the successive generation of the Jews, whom the prophet saw by the eye of prophecy would tread in the same steps, and use Christ (the Heir) as their forefathers had used him, and the prophets of that age.

John 12:42

Ver. 42. Though the Pharisees made up a great part of the sanhedrim, yet there were divers others also mixed with them, amongst which there were many of a better temper; and it may be ἀρχοντων here may not signify members of that court, but principal men in the magistracy. We must not understand by *believed*, that they believed with a saving faith; what follows will evidence the contrary; but they had some convictions upon them as to the truth of what he said, and his being the true Messiah; but they durst not openly declare what themselves thought, nor publicly own and aver Christ to be what he indeed was, and they were inclinable to think he was, lest the Pharisees, who were Christ's most implacable enemies, should have put the decree they had made (of which we read, Joh 9:22) in execution upon them.

John 12:43

Ver. 43. For they were not willing to part with their great places in the magistracy, which brought them respect, honour, and applause from men; they valued this more than God's honouring and praising them. How hard it is for great men to enter into the kingdom of God!

John 12:44

Ver. 44. The words, at first view, seem to contain a contradiction, and denying the same act as to the same person; as if any man could believe, and yet not believe on Christ; but there is nothing less in them. By the same figurative way of speaking God tells the prophet Samuel, 1Sa 8:7, the people had not rejected Samuel, (that is, not Samuel alone), but they had rejected him. So Mr 9:37, *Whosoever receiveth me, receiveth not me*, (that is, not me alone), *but him that sent me*. So 1Th 4:8. Or else thus, He that believeth on me, doth not believe on a mere man, as I appear at present to the world, but he also believeth on God that sent me. The Jews owned one God the Father, and acknowledged him the object of their faith, Joh 14:1, *Ye believe in God*; but they were blinded as to Christ, appearing only in the form of a man. So that our Saviour again by these words asserts his Divine nature, his oneness and equality with his Father; so as he was also the object of their faith, as well as his Father.

John 12:45

Ver. 45. No man hath seen God at any time; but he that by the eyes of his mind knows, and understands, and believeth in me, seeth him that sent me: or, he that seeth me in my works which I do, seeth also him that sent me, by whom I do these mighty works. Thus, afterward, Joh 14:9, he saith to Philip, *He that hath seen me hath seen the Father*; he that hath seen me, hath not indeed seen the Divine nature and essence, but hath seen that Person who is one with the Father; *the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person*, as the apostle speaks, Heb 1:3.

John 12:46

Ver. 46. *I am come a light into the world*; this is no more than what our Saviour hath often said, Joh 3:19, and Joh 9:5; and it was according to the prophecy of him, Isa 42:6. *That whosoever believeth on me shall not abide in darkness*; that he who receiveth and embraces me, as his Priest and Prophet, though he may be in darkness naturally, Eph 5:8, yet should not abide in a state of ignorance, and sin, and guilt, Joh 3:36 8:31. Men and women, before they believe in Christ are in darkness; but upon believing,

they are translated out of their state of darkness into a state of marvellous light; they do not abide in darkness.

John 12:47

Ver. 47. *I judge him not*; I alone judge him not, or rather, it is not my present business to pronounce sentence of condemnation against him; I am now doing the work of a Redeemer and Saviour, not of a Judge: he *is condemned already*, Joh 3:18, and he hath another that accuseth and condemneth him; as the Jews had Moses, Joh 5:45, so he hath my Father as his Judge, and will have my word as his accuser (as in the next verse): I shall one day condemn him; but that is not my present business, that was not my errand in coming into the world. I came to offer the world the means, and to show them the way to salvation; if they do perish, their blood will be upon their own heads: it is not my business to condemn them.

John 12:48

Ver. 48. These words, *and receiveth not my words*, expound the former: not to receive in heart, to believe, and embrace the words of Christ in the gospel, is to reject Christ. So Lu 10:16, *He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me*. And he that doth so, *hath one that judgeth him*, that is, my Father who hath sent me, and will vindicate mine honour. Nay, *the word that I have spoken* shall rise up in judgment against him at the last day, and prove that he hath judged himself unworthy of everlasting life.

John 12:49

Ver. 49. I do not speak what I say to you as mere man, or any thing but what is my Father's will, and mine only as one with him, and as sent by him; I have said nothing but what my Father hath willed me to reveal to the world as his will.

John 12:50

Ver. 50. I am assured that the way to life everlasting is to obey his commandments; and that makes me speak, and deliver all that, and nothing but that, which I have in charge from my Father: *as the Father said unto me, so I speak.* Therefore look you to it, in rejecting me, you reject my Father, whom you own and acknowledge for your God; and in disobeying me, you disobey my Father, and him whom you own as your Father also.

John 13:1

Chapter Summary

Joh 13:1-17 Jesus washes his disciples feet; and exhorteth

them to follow his example of humility and charity.

Joh 13:18-30 He foretells the treachery of Judas, and points

him out to John by a token.

Joh 13:31-35 He speaketh of his glorification as near at hand,

and commandeth his disciples to love one another.

Joh 13:36-38 He forewarns Peter that he shall thrice deny him.

Ver. 1. That this was the fourth passover after that he entered upon his public ministry is out of doubt, and the last he ever celebrated. We have taken notice of this evangelist's mention of the other three: but how long what follows was before the passover, which is here expressed by *before the feast*, is a great question: some will have it the day, others immediately before, as $\pi\rho\omicron$ (the very same particle) is used. Lu 11:38, *before dinner*, and Lu 22:15, *before I suffer*. The resolution of it much depends upon another question as difficult, viz. What supper it is which is mentioned? Joh 13:2. Those who would be satisfied in these cases, may find a collection of what is said by most valuable interpreters in Mr. Pool's Synopsis Criticorum, upon Mt 26:1-75. It is our happiness, that though some such knots occur in holy writ, yet they are about things in which our

salvation is not concerned; so as without danger to our souls we may be ignorant of what is the truth about them. When Christ knew that the hour (which he had once or twice before said was not come) was now come, that he must die, rise again, and in a short time ascend to his Father; he having loved his disciples, not with a mutable, but with an unchangeable love; he resolves upon the washing of their feet, as a demonstration of that love.

John 13:2

Ver. 2. *And supper being ended;* possibly it were better translated, while they were at supper, or in supper time, Greek, δειπνου γενομενου, but the great question is, What supper is here intended? Our most learned Lightfoot is very confident this was not the paschal supper. The most interpreters, ancient and modern, seem to be of another mind. Or it may be rather a common supper, which they ate before the passover: for whereas some think this supper was that in the house of Simon the leper, mentioned Mt 26:6, it seemeth no way probable, no circumstance inclining us to believe any such thing; and the evangelist having told us that it was after that supper that Christ rode into Jerusalem and again went from thence, and hid himself, Joh 12:36, and then reporting this as a thing subsequent to it in this chapter; it seemeth very clear to me, that it could not be the supper in the house of Simon the leper. Concerning the influence of the devil upon Judas, to put it into his heart to betray his Master, see Lu 22:3,4.

John 13:3

Ver. 3. Our translating the Greek participle ειδως, *knowing*, (which properly signifies having known), createth a difficulty, viz. How Christ's knowledge of this, that the Father had given all things into his hand, should be assigned as a reason of, or motive to, his subsequent action of washing the feet of his disciples? The sense therefore must certainly be, though he knew; and so it doth not import a reason of his following action, but only signifieth Christ's great humiliation and condescension. Though he well enough knew, that *all power was given him in heaven and earth*, as in Mt 28:18; that he was his disciples' Lord, that he came from God,

and was now going to God again; yet to show how much he loved his disciples, and to set them a pattern of humility, and teach them brotherly love, and that he *came not* in the estate wherein he yet was *to be ministered unto, but to minister*, Mt 20:28.

John 13:4

Ver. 4. *He riseth from supper.* What supper? Is the question. We are told, that the Jews had two suppers upon the paschal night, which was the 14th day of the month Nisan. The first was the passover supper, which was a religious rite in obedience to the law. The second, a common supper (as on other nights); to which our Saviour added a third, which was the Lord's supper. To me it seemeth rather that their common supper was first, then the passover supper; and that Christ arose from this common supper to do this act. Augustine understood it of the common supper; so doth Beza, Heinsius, Tarnovius, and others; which seemeth to me most probable, though others understand it of the passover supper. Whatever supper the evangelist meaneth, Christ rose up from it before it was done. Calvin, Pareus, Beza, Petargus, Tossanus, and divers others amongst the protestant interpreters; Tolet, Maldonate, and Jansenius, amongst the papists; do agree a common supper this night, besides the paschal supper, and the Lord's supper: from which it is most probable that Christ, as is here said, rose up, and laid aside his garment; that is, his outward loose garment, (for such they used), which servants were wont to gird up when they waited at table, Lu 17:8: Christ laid one aside, and girdling up the other, takes a towel.

John 13:5

Ver. 5. Poureth water into a bason; begins first to wash his disciples feet, then to wipe them with the linen cloth he had taken. All this was done in the form of a servant; so they used to do, as to guests that came to dine or sup with their lords or masters.

John 13:6

Ver. 6. Christ in the performance of this ceremony cometh to Simon Peter; whether first, or last, it is not said; and therefore the papists argue ill from hence, to prove the primacy of Peter over the rest of the apostles. Peter looks upon it with a modest, but sinful and superstitious, indignation. Samuel of old determined, that obedience to God is better than sacrifice; it is then certainly better than a compliment. Peter in this case ought not to have contradicted his Master out of a compliment to him, but to have suffered him to go on in this act of ministration. There may be a voluntary humility, and pretended reverence to Christ, which is indeed but superstition, and can be no other, if contrary to any revelation of the Divine will.

John 13:7

Ver. 7. Our Lord, seeing Peter's general design good, though he mistook as to this particular act, tells him, that at present he did not understand his counsel and design in this action, but it should be more intelligible unto him afterwards; as indeed he made it by his discourse upon this his act of humiliation, Joh 13:13-16.

John 13:8

Ver. 8. Peter rashly replies, *Thou shalt never wash my feet.* Here was a seeming reverence for his Master, but (like the Jewish zeal mentioned by Paul, Ro 10:2) *not according to knowledge.* Christ tells him, that except he washed him, he had no part with him; that is, he should never be saved. But will some say, Was not this too severe, for our Saviour to threaten Peter with an exclusion from a co-inheritance with him in heaven, for modestly refusing to suffer him to wash his feet?

Answer.

1. The least disobedience not repented of, is enough to exclude a soul from the kingdom of heaven.
2. But Christ seems to take an advantage here, from this ceremony of his washing their feet, to discourse to him the necessity of his washing his

soul with his blood, from the filth of sin and corruption; and of this washing it undoubtedly is that Christ here speaketh, the necessity of which is very often inculcated in holy writ.

John 13:9

Ver. 9. Peter now understandeth what washing it is which our Saviour last spake of, and wholly submits to the will of his Lord and Master; acknowledging himself to be wholly defiled, and to stand in need of a washing all over: *Lord*, saith he, *not my feet only, but also my hands and my head*; that is, my whole man.

John 13:10

Ver. 10. Look as it is with persons that have been washing themselves in a bath, when they are washed, yet walking abroad barefoot, or with thin sandals or coverings for their feet, will be again subject to pollute and dirty their feet, so as they will have frequent need to wash them again; but they need not soon again wash their whole bodies: so it is as to souls that are washed with my blood; washed, and sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God, (as the apostle speaketh, 1Co 6:11), their state is not to be renewed; they need not be justified a second time; but they will have need to have their feet washed, in regard of their remainder of sin and lust that is in them, and will be so while they are in the world, and the temptations which every where he in the world, as snares for their feet; they will have need of a daily washing by repentance, and fresh applications of their souls to my blood, by the repeated exercises of faith, according to their renewed and repeated acts of sin.

Ye are clean; you, who are my apostles, are clean; you are washed, you are justified, I have forgiven your sins, accepted your persons.

But not all; the most of you are so, but not all.

John 13:11

Ver. 11. By these words the evangelist expounds only what our Saviour meant in the former verse, when he had told them they were not all clean; for though the disciples did not yet know that they had a traitor amongst them, Satan had before this put the design into the heart of Judas, Joh 13:2; and Christ, who knew all hearts, knew what was in the heart of Judas, and he soon after (as we shall hereafter in this chapter read) revealed it; yet at this time he had not revealed it to his disciples: now he begins to discover it, telling them, that though the most of them were clean, justified and sanctified, yet all of them were not so.

John 13:12

Ver. 12. After that our Saviour had finished this ceremony, and washed his disciples' feet, (some question whether all or no, but I see no reason to doubt it), he returned again to the supper, which probably now was near finished, which certainly was the common supper which the Jews had besides the passover supper, and probably before it, though some think after it. He asketh them if they knew the meaning of this which he had done unto them; lest they should not fully understand it, he openeth it to them in the following discourse.

John 13:13

Ver. 13. The disciples in their ordinary discourses called Christ *Master and Lord*; nor was it a name improper for him, for he was their Master to instruct them, their Lord to rule, guide, and govern them: now, saith our Saviour, disciples ought to obey their master, servants ought to obey their lord, and disciples also ought to imitate their master.

John 13:14

Ver. 14. I have by this my action taught you to love, and to be ready also to serve, one another, and not to think much to serve them even in the lowest and meanest offices by which you can do them good; for we must not think that these words lay a literal obligation upon Christians to wash the feet of others; washing the feet is mentioned but as *species pro genere*,

a single act of service, put for all other acts by which we can be serviceable unto others: so it is also used, 1Sa 25:41 1Ti 5:10. Some of the ancients seem to have judged this washing of feet to have been instituted as a sacrament, (though in an improper sense), and from hence, though Bellarmine, Maldonate, and others deny it to be a sacrament as well as we, yet probably is the practice in use amongst the papists, to wash certain persons' feet every Thursday before Easter; a theatrical ceremony, rather than any thing of solid and profitable use. Our Saviour certainly intends no more by *ye ought to wash one another's feet*, than, ye ought to serve one another in all offices of love, and not to think yourselves too good, or too great, to do the meanest services to those who are my disciples: and this is that as to which he tells them he had set them an example that they should do as he had done, in other acts of the same kind, though not as to this specific act.

John 13:15

Ver. 15,16. The apostles were to take up a very high station in the gospel church, and our hearts are very prone to swell in a high opinion of ourselves, for which the nature of man taketh advantage from every thing in which we either really do excel, or can conceit that we do excel, our neighbours. Our Lord therefore, though speaking to the apostles, (some of the best of men), yet knowing they were (like Elijah) men subject to like passions with other men, addeth this to arm them against, any temptation to pride: they owned themselves as servants to Christ who was their great Lord; they had seen what he had done; he therefore applies a proverbial expression to them, which he also made use of in other cases, as Mt 10:24 Joh 15:20; in both which places he maketh use of it to arm them against persecutions; here, to persuade them to humility, condescension, and brotherly love.

John 13:17

Ver. 17. He tells them, that it is not the bare comprehension of these things in their notion that would do them any good, unless they brought their knowledge into practice; for *to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it*

not, it is sin, Jas 4:17. Faith without works is dead, and the knowledge of our Master's will, if we do it not, doth but expose us to many stripes.

John 13:18

Ver. 18. I am about to tell you what will make your ears tingle; but be of good comfort, what I shall now tell you doth not concern all of you, it concerneth but one man amongst you.

I know whom I have chosen to the work of the apostleship; so some interpret it, as Joh 6:70, *Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?* But the generality of the best interpreters understand the choosing here mentioned, of a choosing to eternal life, and perseverance in the way of God as a means in order to it, as Eph 1:4; and so understood, here is a greater argument in this text to prove the Godhead of Christ, as the Author of eternal election: Though one of you be a devil, a traitor, yet I have chosen the rest of you to eternal life: and this is no more than was prophesied of me, and fulfilled in David as a type of me: the Scripture must have its accomplishment; that Scripture is now fulfilled in me.

John 13:19

Ver. 19. What I now tell you should be so far from prejudicing your faith in me, that it ought rather to confirm and increase your faith in me as the true Messiah; when (the thing coming to pass) you shall understand that I know the hearts, counsels, and secret thoughts of men: and when you shall see the Scriptures have their accomplishment, and those things which were long ago prophesied concerning the Messiah have their just accomplishment, and fulfilling in me as the person intended in those ancient revelations.

John 13:20

Ver. 20. See Poole on "Mt 10:24", the words of which place are but here repeated; either to commend to them brotherly love, and offices of love, which he had before recommended to them under the notion of washing

one another's feet; or else to comfort his disciples, who might think that this treacherous villany of Judas would make them odious to the whole world: No, saith our Saviour, you are my messengers, persons sent by me; I will provide for you, there shall be those who will receive you. And I declare to all the world to encourage them, that I shall take their receiving of you as kindly as if they received me, and it shall turn to the same account, and that is all one as if they had received my Father himself, for he sent me. Some think that by these words Christ aggravates the sin of Judas, as being committed against the Father as well as against Christ; and a most treacherous failure as to the duty of an apostle, or one dignified so much as to be sent out by Christ.

John 13:21

Ver. 21. How, and in what sense, trouble of spirit could agree to Christ, was noted before, Joh 12:27: see the notes on that text. This seemeth to have been rather a trouble of grief, that one of his apostles, one whom he had chosen, should commit so great a villany, than arising from fear of death; for his next words are a further discovery of the person that should betray him: he had said before, that he should be betrayed, and that it should be by one that used to eat bread with him; but now he cometh closer, and tells them that it should be by one of them, that is, one of the twelve; this was a closer discovery than he had as yet made.

John 13:22

Ver. 22. It seemeth they had no suspicion of Judas, but our Saviour telling them that it was one of them, they begin to look about one upon another, rather suspecting themselves than Judas. There may be a great deal of villany, and the greatest villany, in the hearts of professors, in whose conversation appeareth nothing that may give a just suspicion to others; and the true disciples of Christ will have so much candour and brotherly love, that they will not rashly judge and censure their brethren.

John 13:23

Ver. 23. This *leaning on Jesus' bosom*, and the *laying on Jesus' breast*, mentioned Joh 13:25, cannot be understood without the understanding of the usual posture the Jews used at their meals, and particularly at the paschal supper; of which we have spoken largely; See Poole on "Mt 26:20": see the annotations there. Their posture seemeth to have been kneeling, and resting their bodies back upon their legs, with a leaning upon their left elbow; and this seemeth not to have been so close, but that he that so sat might use his other hand to take his meat; hence he who sat before any, sat with his back towards him, but leaning towards the bosom of the other, which is here called a leaning on (that is, towards) his bosom, and laying on his breast; for it cannot be understood of such a sitting, or leaning, as to touch the other's breast or bosom, for that would have hindered him upon whom the person so leaned from any use of his right hand to take his meat or drink. It is apparent from hence, first, that at this supper there was none but Christ and his disciples. Secondly, that they sat in this posture of leaning. These two things make it very probable, if not certain, that the supper here mentioned was either the paschal supper, or a common supper, which immediately went before, or followed after, the passover supper. For,

1. We have no record of any other supper, at which were only Christ and the twelve disciples; and:
2. If we may believe the Jewish writers, though their ordinary posture at their common meals was discumbency, that is a kneeling on their knees, with a resting their bodies backward upon their legs; yet this posture of leaning was constantly added only upon the passover night, as a further testimony of their liberty, that they were not now servants, as in the land of Egypt. The person who sat next to our Saviour, with his back next our Saviour's bosom, was John, often in Scripture dignified with the title of the beloved disciple, and him *whom Jesus loved*, Joh 19:26 Joh 20:2 21:7,20.

John 13:24

Ver. 24. Peter, knowing the particular affection that Christ had for John, maketh a sign to him, to ask of Christ which of them he meant, when he said, *One of you shall betray me*.

John 13:25

Ver. 25. John accordingly, doth propound the question to Christ.

John 13:26

Ver. 26. *Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it;* we have the same, though not mentioned as spoken in particular to John, Mt 26:23 Lu 22:21; though neither of them mention Christ's own dipping the sop, but Matthew saith, he dipped his hand with him in the dish; and Luke saith, his hand was with him on the table. Without question all the evangelists speak of the same time; for it is not reasonable to think that this discovery should be made, and Judas gone out, and that afterward he should return again to eat the passover. This maketh me very inclinable to think, that though the washing of the feet might be during the time of a common supper, preceding the passover, yet the supper they were now at was the passover supper: where,

1. Were none but he and the twelve disciples.
2. It is plain they were in that leaning posture, not used at common meals, but on the passover nights (as Dr. Lightfoot tells us from their writings).
3. The discourse passed at the table is the very same (though not in words, yet in sense) with that mentioned by Matthew and Luke, at the passover supper.
4. It is not reasonable to think that after such a discovery as Christ now made of the traitor, he should come again to be pointed at and exposed.

Concerning the sop, what it was, hath been some question; and a learned writer of our own (but in this point I think much too critical) hath increased the difficulty, by affirming the word here used, ψωμιον, signifies a piece of bread, or the lower part or chippings of the bread; for which he quotes Hesychius, who indeed doth say so of ψωθιον, but not ψωμιον. The learned annotator thinks ψωθιον is a false print for ψωμιον,

but it cannot be: for,

1. There are in Hesychius several words in alphabetical order, between ψωθιον, and this word.
2. Though ψωμιον be not in Hesychius, yet ψωμη is, and expounded by him τα μερη, parts; now all know that this ψωμιον, which is but a diminutive derived from ψωμος or ψωμη, can signify no more than a little part, let it be of what it will; for it is manifest out of Homer, that, joined with an adjective, it signifies a mouthful of man's flesh, which came out of the Cyclops' mouth.

So as the sense of these words is, He it is to whom I shall give a little part or portion of meat, when I have dipped it. And having dipped it, *he gave it to Judas the son of Simon*: not the Judas who wrote the Epistle, and who is mentioned, Joh 14:22, but he that was the son of Simon, called from his place which he lived in, Kiroth, *Iscariot*: by which he did as perfectly describe the traitor as if he had named him.

John 13:27

Ver. 13. That the devil did ever so enter into Judas as to possess him, as we read of many who were possessed, and violently acted by the devil, is more than we read and, where in holy writ: the entrance into him, signifies Judas's free and willing giving up of himself to the devil's suggestions and conduct; and in this sense the devil also before this time was entered into Judas, Lu 22:3. But as holy men are said to be filled with the Spirit of God, who had before received the Spirit, because the Holy Spirit came after upon them with fuller and stronger impulses and motions; so though the devil had formerly been moving Judas to this vile act, and had had his consent to it, yet after he had taken this mouthful, the devil plied him with stronger motions, impulses, and suggestions: and now he had mastered his conscience, and hardened his heart, so as he was more prepared for the villany about which he had some thoughts before. He had now, with an unbelieving and unthankful heart, been eating the passover, which was a type of Christ; and had so mastered his conscience, as to come and do this, with a vile heart, reeking before with treacherous and bloody designs against his Lord and Master. See what is the effect. His heart is more vile,

more treacherous, and bloody; he is twice more the servant of the devil than he was before. The sop given him by Christ was but an accidental occasion of it; as the devil took more advantage from his now hardened and further emboldened heart, and he is twice more the child of the devil than he was before. Christ, knowing this, doth not command, advise, or exhort him; but, in a detestation, bids him go and do what he was resolved to do, and which he knew would be quickly; letting him know both that he knew what was in his heart, and that he was now ready to receive the effects of his malice.

John 13:28

Ver. 28,29. How innocent are honest hearts! *Charity thinketh no evil*, saith the apostle. Although our Saviour had plainly enough deciphered him as the traitor, by telling John that he to whom he should give the sop was he, and then by giving it to Judas; yet whether they all did not hear what our Saviour said to John, or did not think of so sudden a tragedy, they do not suspect that the hour was at hand when Judas should perfect his intended villany: though they heard our Saviour bid him get him out, and do quickly what he had to do; yet Judas being he who carried that little stock of money which Christ had, Joh 12:6, they thought that that which our Saviour bid him do, as a work he had undertaken to do, was laying out some money, either to buy some things which were necessary for them, for the seven days of the feast of unleavened bread; either for food for them to eat, or for sacrifices for them to offer; or that it was our Saviour's mind, that he should out of this little stock distribute something to the poor: they little thought that our Saviour's words argued a giving him over to perfect the treacherous designs which he had conceived in his heart.

John 13:30

Ver. 30. From hence appeareth:

1. That it is impossible to prove that Judas was with our Saviour when he instituted and celebrated the supper; though if he were, it proveth nothing of a liberty for ignorant and scandalous persons to be there, (for

Judas was not such a one), nor yet of a lawfulness for ministers of the gospel, knowing any to be such, to give the Lord's supper to them. For although Christ knew Judas's heart, yet he acted not according to his omniscience, but as the first and prime minister of the gospel, setting us an example, not to judge of secret things, but of things open only.

2. It also appeareth from hence, that it is not probable that this was any other supper than the passover supper; for if it were not, the passover supper must be after this, and this same supper preceding it. Our famous Dr. Lightfoot thinks it was a supper in Bethany, at two miles distance (or near so much) from Jerusalem. But then it must follow:
 - a) That John speaks nothing of the paschal supper, or the Lord's supper; and:
 - b) It doth by no means appear probable to me, that Judas, after such a discovery of him, should come again to eat the passover with Christ and his disciples.

These things, together with what I noted before, that here is no mention made of more guests than the twelve; that the posture used (especially as to leaning) was peculiar to the paschal supper; that the discourse mentioned by this evangelist as had at this supper about the discovery of the traitor, is the same in substance (though not in terms) with what Matthew and Luke report, as passed at the passover: all these things confirm me, that it is the paschal supper that John speaketh of. Whether Judas was at the Lord's supper, which we know followed the passover immediately, depends upon the sense of the particle εὐθεὺς, which we translate immediately; but doth not signify necessarily such a present departure, but the action of the Lord's supper might be first over; though in reason it seemeth to me more probable, because of those words, *having received the sop, he immediately went out*, that it should be here interpreted strictly, and that shame and horror should not suffer him to stay so long, as till the action of the supper was over: though whether he were at the Lord's supper (as I said before) signifieth nothing at all to the questions about mixed communion, either as to the part of the minister administering, or the people communicating.

John 13:31

Ver. 31. He speaketh of that which was presently to be, as if it were already done; the meaning is, Now the time cometh when the Son of man shall immediately be glorified, by finishing the work which God hath given him to do; by rising again from the dead, and declaring himself to be the Son of God with power; by ascending up into heaven, to be glorified with the same glory which he had with the Father before the world began: and God will appear to be glorified in him, by his finishing the work which God hath given him to do, manifesting his name to the sons of men; and by the many signs and wonders which God will yet further show at the time of his death and resurrection, and by the coming down of the Holy Ghost.

John 13:32

Ver. 32. God was glorified in Christ by his death upon the cross in obedience to his Father's will; (thus Peter, Joh 21:19, is said by his death to *glorify God*); and as he was declared to be the Son of God; and as by him the world was brought to the knowledge of God, as by his spiritual and heavenly doctrine, so by the miracles he wrought. From hence our Lord concludes, that God should glorify Christ *in himself*; so as the glory of the Father and the Son are the same, they are mutually glorified each in other: if the Son be glorified, the Father is also glorified; and if the Father be glorified, the Son is also glorified; the Father and the Son are mutually glorified each in other. And the Father (saith our Saviour) in a short time will further glorify him, by taking him up into heaven, and making the whole person of the Mediator glorious in heaven.

John 13:33

Ver. 33. Our Saviour's time of death being very nigh, (for it was the next day), he begins to speak of it to his disciples more freely and plainly, and to let them know that he, though now dying, bare a fatherly tender affection to them: he calls them *little children*. Parents have a natural affection to their children; a more tender affection to their children when little, because in their tender age they are more ignorant, and unable to provide for themselves. We find this compellation used by Christ's

apostles, Ga 4:19 1Jo 2:1,28. And he tells them, that he had but now a little time to be with them before his death, and not long after his resurrection; in which, too, his converse was not such with them as it hitherto had been.

Whither I go, ye cannot come; he told this to the Jews in Joh 7:31, and now he tells them the same, that they would miss him when he was gone, and should seek him; but even the disciples at present could not follow him to heaven, whither he was going. The unbelieving Jews should never follow him thither, but even those who were his disciples, who were born again, and whom he loved as little children are beloved by their parents, should not yet follow him; his work in the world was done, but they had yet a great deal of work in it to do.

John 13:34

Ver. 34. The commandment of loving one another is strictly no new commandment, we find it in the law of Moses, Le 19:18; often pressed in the New Testament, Joh 15:17 Eph 5:2 1Jo 4:21. 1Joh 2:7 saith, it is *no new commandment*, ; see also 2Jo 1:6. It is therefore called *a new commandment*, either because of the excellency of it, as *new* seemeth to be taken, Ps 33:3 Isa 65:17 Mt 26:29; or because it is expounded in the gospel in a new manner, pressed more plainly and in new arguments, and urged by a new example of their Lord and Master.

John 13:35

Ver. 35. A disciple hath his name, either from learning from his master, or from following his master and treading in his steps: take it in either sense, loving one another is a certain note of being Christ's disciples; for as Christ continually pressed this by his precepts, so he set them his own example, by showing the greatest love to them he could show.

John 13:36

Ver. 36. Peter yet understood not his Lord and Master, and therefore asked him whither he went? Our Saviour spake of his ascension into heaven,

after his suffering death upon the cross; whither he tells Peter he could not at present follow him, but afterwards should. Believers shall be ever with the Lord, but they must wait the Lord's time, and first finish the work which he hath given them to do upon the earth.

John 13:37

Ver. 37. Still Peter doth not understand our Saviour, but fancies some earthly motion from the place where he was; but it should seem by what followeth, that he thought our Saviour spake of some motion which might be very dangerous to him; and therefore he adds, according to his usual courage and mettle, expressed on all occasions, *I will lay down my life for thy sake*: we had such a resolution of his, Mt 26:33,35.

John 13:38

Ver. 38. Mark saith, *before the cock crow twice*. So the other three evangelists must be expounded, who say no more than *before the cock crow*, not mentioning how often; but the history makes it good, that our Saviour meant twice, for it was not before the second crowing of the cock that Peter *went out, and wept bitterly*.

John 14:1

Chapter Summary

Joh 14:1-4 Christ comforteth his disciples with the promise of

a heavenly mansion.

Joh 14:5-7 He professes himself the way, the truth, and the life,

Joh 14:8-11 and that he is one with the Father.

Joh 14:12-14 He promises them power to do greater works than his own,

and the grant of all that they should ask in his name.

Joh 14:15-26 He requireth their obedience as a proof of their love,

and giveth them a promise of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost.
Joh 14:27-31 He leaveth his peace with them.

Chapter Introduction

The three ensuing chapters contain either one or more consolatory discourses of our Saviour to his disciples, (as appeareth from Joh 14:1), made, as is probable, to them in the guest chamber (at least that part of them which we have in this chapter); for we read of no motion of our Saviour's till we come to the last verse of this chapter. That which troubled them was, what he had told them in the close of the former chapter, that he was going from them. By our Saviour's discourse in this and the two following chapters, it should seem that there were three things that troubled them.

1. The sense of their loss as to his bodily presence.
2. The fear, that with the loss of that they should also lose those spiritual influences which they had received from him, and upon which their souls had lived.
3. The prospect of those storms of troubles and persecutions, which were likely to follow his departure from them; for if we wisely consider what our Saviour saith in these three following chapters, it all tends to comfort them as to troubles that might arise in their spirits, upon one or other of these accounts: the general proposition is laid down in Joh 14:1.

Ver. 1. *Let not your heart be troubled*, through grief, or fear, which are the two passions which ordinarily most disturb our minds. Our Saviour himself was troubled, but not sinfully; his trouble neither arose from unbelief, nor yet was in an undue measure; it was (as one well expresses it) like the mere agitation of clear water, where was no mud at the bottom: but our trouble is like the stirring of water that hath a great deal of mud at the bottom, which upon the roiling, riseth up, and maketh it the whole body of the water in the vessel impure, roiled and muddy. It is this sinful trouble, caused from these two passions, and rising up to an immoderate degree, and mixed with a great deal of unbelief and distrust in God, against which

our Saviour here cautions his disciples; and the remedy he prescribes against those afflicting passions, is a believing in God, and a believing on him. The two latter passages in the verse are so penned in the Greek, that they may be read four ways; for the verb *believe*, twice repeated, may be read either indicatively or imperatively, or the one may be read indicatively and the other imperatively; so as they may be translated, You believe in God, you believe also in me. And so they teach us, that there is no such remedy for inward troubles, as a believing in God, and a believing in Jesus Christ; and those that do so, have no just reason for any excessive heart troubles. Or else they may be read, Believe in God, believe in me: or else as we read them, *Ye believe in God, believe also in me:* or, Believe in God, ye believe in me. But the disciples' faith in Christ as Mediator, and God man, being yet weak, and their weakness being what our Saviour hath ordinarily blamed, not magnified, or commended, the best interpreters judge the sense which our translators give to be the best sense; and judge that our Saviour doth inculcate to them his Divine nature, and again offer himself to them as the proper object of their faith. You (saith he) own it for your duty to trust in God, as your Creator, and he that provideth for you: *believe also in me,* as God equal with my Father; and in me, as the Messiah, your Mediator and Redeemer: so as you have one to take care of all your concerns, both those of your bodies, and those of your souls also, so as you have nothing to be immoderately and excessively, or distrustfully, troubled for; therefore *let not your hearts be troubled;* only, without care or distrust, commit yourselves to me.

John 14:2

Ver. 2. Our Lord's first argument brought to comfort them, from the place whither he was going, and the end of his going thither. The place whither he was going was his *Father's house*, so as they needed not to be troubled for him, he was but going home; nor was God his Father only, but theirs also, as he afterwards saith, *I go to my Father, and your Father.* And here he tells them, that in his Father's house there was not only a mansion, that is, an abiding place for him, but for many others also.

Our days on the earth (saith David, 1Ch 29:15) *are as a shadow, and there is no abiding;* but in heaven there are $\mu\omicron\nu\alpha\iota$, abiding places. *We shall* (saith the apostle, 1Th 4:17) *be ever with the Lord.* And the mansions there

are many; there is room enough for all believers. I would not have deceived you; if there had been no place in heaven but for me, I would have told you of it; but there are many mansions there.

I go to prepare a place for you: the place was prepared of old; those who shall be saved, were of old ordained unto life. That *kingdom was prepared for them before the foundation of the world;* that is, in the counsels and immutable purpose of God. These mansions for believers in heaven were to be *sprinkled with blood:* the sprinkling of *the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry,* were typical of it; *but the heaven things themselves with better sacrifices than these,* saith the apostle, Heb 9:21,23. By his resurrection from the dead, and becoming the first fruits of those that sleep; by his ascension into heaven, as our *forerunner,* Heb 6:20; by his sitting at the right hand of God, and making intercession for us; he prepares for us a place in heaven. And thus he comforteth his disciples, (as to the want of his bodily presence), as from the consideration of the place whither he went, so from the end of his going thither, which was, to do those acts which were necessary in order to His disciples' inheriting those blessed mansions which were prepared for them from before the foundation of the world.

John 14:3

Ver. 3. The particle *if* in this place denotes no uncertainty of the thing whereof he had before assured them; but in this place hath either the force of although, or after that: When, or after that, I have died, ascended, and by all these acts, as also by my intercession, shall have made places in Heaven fully ready for you, I will in the last day return again, as Judge of the quick and the dead, and take you up into heaven, 1Th 4:16,17; that you may be made partakers of my glory, Joh 17:22. This is called, Ro 8:17, a being *glorified together* with him; and elsewhere, a reigning with him. So as this is a third argument by which our Lord comforteth his disciples as to their trouble conceived for the want of His bodily presence with them, from the certainty of his return to them, and the end and consequent of his return: the end was to receive them to himself; the consequent, their eternal abiding with Christ where he was.

John 14:4

Ver. 4. Christ, Joh 13:33 of the former chapter, had dignified his disciples with the familiar, loving title of *little children*. It is pleasant to consider how he continueth his discourse to them in such a dialect as a mother would speak to a little child crying after her, seeing her preparing herself to go abroad. The child cries: the mother bids it be still, she is but going to such a friend's house. It still cries: she tells it, she is but going to prepare a place for it there where it shall be much happier than it is at home. It is not yet satisfied: she tells it again, that though she goes, she will come again, and then it shall go along with her, and she will part no more from it. The child is yet impatient: she again endeavours to still it, telling it that it knoweth whither she goeth, and it knows the way, by which, if need be, it may come to her.

John 14:5

Ver. 5. Reason tells every one, that he who knoweth not the term whither a person is going, must needs be ignorant of the way. It is plain, that Thomas, and so (probably) divers others of the apostles, notwithstanding what our Saviour had so plainly told them, Joh 14:2, yet dreamed of some earthly motion our Saviour was making, which makes Thomas to speak thus: so dull are we, and hard to conceive of spiritual things. But will some say, Doth not Thomas here contradict his Master, who had told them, Joh 14:4, that they both knew whither he went, and the way also?

Answer. Some think that our Saviour meant no more than they ought to have known, both whither he went, and the way also; active verbs in Scripture phrase, often signifying no more than duty, or ability. But possibly others answer better, They had some knowledge, but it was more confused and general; not distinct, particular, or certain.

John 14:6

Ver. 6. Christ was his own way to his Father; *By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place*, Heb 9:12. See Lu 24:26 Php 2:8. But both the former words, where the apostle spake of the way they should go, and the

following words, hint to us, that Christ is here speaking of their way, not his own.

As to them, he saith, *I am the way*; that is, the way by which those must get to heaven who will ever come there. Christ is our way to heaven by the doctrine which he taught; by his death, by which he purchased this heavenly inheritance for us; by his holy life and conversation, setting us an example that we should follow his steps; by the influence of his Spirit, guiding us to, and assisting us in, those holy actions by which we must come unto glory.

He is *the truth*; that is, say some, the true way to life eternal: but he is *the truth* as to His doctrine, the gospel being *the word of truth*, Eph 1:13: and as truth signifies reality and accomplishment, in opposition to the prophecies and promises, all being but words till they were in him fulfilled; in which sense we read of the *true tabernacle*, and the *true holy places*, Heb 8:2 Heb 9:24: or as truth is opposed to falsehood, as *truth* is taken Joh 8:44 Ro 3:7.

And he is *the life*, the Author and Giver of eternal life, Joh 11:25 1Jo 5:11; and the purchaser of it by his death; he who by his doctrine showeth the way to it, and by his Holy Spirit begins it, and carrieth it on to perfection. The Jews thought the way to it was by the law of Moses; but our Saviour beateth his disciples out of that opinion: for if the law could have given life, Christ had died in vain, as the apostle argues. Therefore (saith he) there is no coming to the Father *but by me*; no way for you or any other, to come to heaven, but by receiving, and embracing, and believing in me.

John 14:7

Ver. 7. If ye had known me as you ought to have known me, as I am indeed the eternal Son of God, sent by my Father into the world, you should have known my Father, with whom I am equal, and one and the same God, so as in knowing one of us, you must have known both: but you stick in my outward form and appearance, while I appear to you in the form of a man; and you stick in your prejudices sucked in from the notion you have of the Messiah, expecting I know not what temporal prince: these things blind you as to my Divine nature, (personally united to my human

nature), that you see nothing of my Godhead, which if you had clearly known and believed, you would not have been at a loss to know the Father, the brightness of whose glory, and the express image of whose person, I am, though my glory be veiled by my human nature. And if you will yet believe what I say, from henceforth you do know the Father, and you have seen the Father so oft as you have seen me.

John 14:8

Ver. 8. Still Philip understandeth not our Saviour, and further discovereth a very gross conception of the Divine Being, as if it could be seen with mortal eyes; whereas God had told Moses, Ex 33:20, *Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me, and live.* It is a hard thing to determine what degrees of ignorance are consistent or inconsistent with saving grace in souls; the resolution of which doth much depend upon those degrees of revelation and means of knowledge which men have.

John 14:9

Ver. 9. Our Saviour still insists upon the oneness of himself with his Father, and the personal union of the Divine and human nature in him; for otherwise the apostles might have been with Christ a long time, and known him, and yet not have seen nor known the Father. But that supposed, none that had seen Christ, but must have seen the Father also, there being but one God.

John 14:10

Ver. 10. *I am in the Father, and the Father in me.* It is the opinion of Mr. Calvin, that these words are not here spoken so much to express his Divine nature and being, (for so Christ is no more known to us than his Father), as to express his manner of revealing it. Yet is the Divine nature of Christ fully proved from hence. Others judge, that these words do clearly signify both the distinction of persons, for nothing is in itself, and also the union of the persons in the Divine Being. He proveth his union with the Father, because he spake not those words which he spake of himself; that is, not of

himself solely; he revealed but his Father's will, and declared his Father's mind; and because the works which he did, he did not by his own sole power, without the concurrence of his Father's power in those operations.

John 14:11

Ver. 11. Believe my words (for that is your duty); but yet if you will not believe my words, declaring to you my union with my Father, yet when you see me doing such works as none but God can do, believe me for their sake. It is true, that both the prophets and the apostles spake God's words, not their own, to the people, and also did many great and mighty works; but still their doctrine led unto another, that was Christ; and their miracles were not wrought in their own names, but in the name of Christ. Elijah raised the Shunammite's dead child to life by prayer to God that he would do it; and the apostles bid the lame man arise and walk, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ's doctrine terminated in himself; he called men to believe in him, and he wrought miracles by his own power, and by a virtue proceeding out of and from himself, though by the power of his Father also, because he and his Father were one in essence.

John 14:12

Ver. 12. *He that believeth on me;* not every individual soul that believeth on me; but some of those, particularly you that are my apostles, and shall be filled with the Holy Ghost in the days of Pentecost; you shall preach the gospel, and work miracles for the confirmation of the truth of the doctrine of it. Yea, and you shall do *greater works* than I have done: not more or greater miracles: the truth of that may be justly questioned; for what miracle was ever done by the apostles greater than that of raising Lazarus? Much less do I think that it is to be understood of speaking with divers tongues. It is rather to be understood of their success carrying the gospel to the Gentiles, by which the whole world, almost, was brought to the obedience of the faith of Christ. We never read that of Christ which we read of Peter, viz. his converting three thousand at one sermon.

Because I go unto my Father, he afterwards expounds, telling us, that if he did not go away, the Comforter would not come. The pouring out of the

Spirit in the days of Pentecost, was the proximate cause of those great works. Now Christ's going to the Father had an influence upon that mission of the Holy Spirit.

John 14:13

Ver. 13. The *whatsoever*, in this text, must be limited by what the will of God hath revealed in other texts, as to the matter of our prayers; viz. they must be things that are for our good; such things as we stand in need of, and as God hath given us a liberty to ask: and indeed no other things can be asked in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ; for to ask in Christ's name, signifieth not only the making use of his sacred name in our prayers, (though the constant practice of the church in prayer, hath evidenced it the general opinion of divines, that this is a part of the sense), but also in asking for his merits, and such things as shall be conformable to his will, and for his glory. Whatsoever (saith he) you shall ask of this nature, I will do. He doth not say, my Father will do, but I will do it; to testify his Divine power, and oneness in power with his Father.

That the Father may be glorified in the Son: God hath set up his rest in Christ, and will be glorified in and through him; and hath therefore given him all power in heaven and earth.

John 14:14

Ver. 14. The words are doubled for the further confirmation of them, that we might not doubt when we put up our petitions to God in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, according to the will of God.

John 14:15

Ver. 15. Do not show your love to me in mourning, and being troubled for my going from you; but show it by your obedience to what I have commanded you. True love must not evaporate in compliment, but discover itself in a strict observance of the commandments of God.

John 14:16

Ver. 16. This verse containeth a new argument by which our Saviour relieveth his disciples under their affliction for the want of his bodily presence; that is, the mission of the Holy Spirit, *another Comforter*, as our translation reads it. For this he saith that he *will pray the Father*; not that himself had no concern in the mission of the blessed Spirit; for himself telleth us, Joh 16:7, that he would send him; only for the attestation,

1. Of his human nature;
2. Of himself, as our Mediator; and:
3. Of his Father's concern, as well as his own, in sending the Holy Spirit; he here saith, *I will pray the Father, and he shall send you another Comforter.*

That term *another*, signifieth the personal distinction of the Third from the First and Second Person in the blessed Trinity. And the name here given to the blessed Spirit, Παρακλητον, (which we too narrowly translate *comforter*), is a term exceedingly proper to signify all the operations of the blessed Spirit in and upon the souls of his people. The same word, 1Jo 2:1, where it is applied to Christ, (as here it is to the Spirit), is there much better translated *Advocate*; and it is most probable that our translators here translate it *Comforter*, because he is here promised to the disciples troubled, as fitted to their present distress. The verb from whence the word derives, signifies not to comfort only, but to exhort, and to be an advocate for another. Now it belongs to the office of an advocate to suggest to his client what may be for his advantage; which is also the office of the blessed Spirit: if he seeth his client in an error, to reprove and to convince him; which is also the work of the Spirit, Joh 16:8: if he seeth him weak and discouraged, to uphold, strengthen, and encourage him; this is also the Spirit's work, Eph 3:16: if he seeth him running into an error, to restrain him; if he findeth him dull and heavy, to quicken him; if he seeth him ready to be run down, to defend him; if he hath any thing to do in the court, to prepare and dram it up for him, and, as occasion serveth, to speak for him. All these things (as might be largely showed) fall within the office of an advocate, and under the

comprehensive term here used. And (saith our Saviour) he shall *abide with you for ever*: I shall be with you but for a while, but he shall abide with you to eternity (as some observe this word is constantly used by this evangelist). So that the promise of the Spirit is not to be restrained only to the apostles and their successors in the ministry, or to be understood only of those extraordinary gifts bestowed on the apostles and first ministers of the gospel; but to be extended further, both with reference to persons and influences: and without doubt the influences of the Spirit, both as to gifts and graces, both upon ministers and more private Christians, are much more plentiful since the sending of the Holy Ghost, after Christ's ascension, in the days of Pentecost, than ever they were before: not as to particular persons; a David, a Solomon, or some particular persons, might have greater measures than any or the most have since had; but as to the generality of ministers and Christians. Doubtless, since the pouring out of the Spirit in the days of Pentecost, there have been greater measures of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit given out, and will be to the end of the world, than ever was in any age before Christ's ascension; which is no more than what was prophesied, Isa 44:3 Joe 2:28, applied to the days of Pentecost, Ac 2:17, but not to be limited to that time or age, either for gifts or gracious habits: for as the extraordinary gifts and powers held in some degree after the apostles' age, (if we may give any credit to ecclesiastical history), so both in those ages, and ever since, as to the generality both of ministers and Christians, (that is, such as are mentioned Joh 14:15, that love Christ, and keep his commandments), there have been fuller measures of gifts, of more constant, standing use for the church, such as those of knowledge and utterance, &c., and also of inward graces, than ever before was.

John 14:17

Ver. 17. He here explains himself, and tells them, that by that other Comforter, mentioned Joh 14:16, he meant the Spirit; whom he here calls *the Spirit of truth*, either because he is a Spirit that declareth and revealeth the truth, as in 1Jo 5:6, or because he teacheth us truth, 1Jo 2:27, he guides us into all truth, Joh 16:13; or in opposition to the lying spirit of the devil, 1Ki 22:22. Most probably the Holy Spirit is here called *the Spirit of truth*, because of the efficiency he hath as to it. It is he who hath revealed all the truth contained in the Scriptures to the world. Holy men wrote as they

were inspired by him, Ac 1:16 2Pe 1:21. It is he that more particularly and specially revealeth truth to the particular soul, 1Co 2:12; hence persons enlightened, are said to be *made partakers of the Holy Ghost*, Heb 6:4. He leadeth his people into truth, Joh 16:13; he sealet and confirmeth truth to the soul: hence we read of the *demonstration of the Spirit*, 1Co 2:4. This Spirit of truth, *the world*, that is, men of carnal hearts, that are of the world, and in whom worldly lusts predominate, 1Jo 2:16 Joh 17:9; this world, through natural impotency, 1Co 2:14, through wisdom, 1Co 1:21, through lusts and passions, *cannot receive*, that is, be made partakers of; because it neither seeth him, who is not to be seen with mortal eyes, nor knoweth him affectionately and experimentally; he being not to be known by men whose hearts are carnal and full of lusts: *but ye know him* believably, experimentally, affectionately, savingly; for he dwelleth in you by a mystical union, Ro 8:11 1Co 6:17; and he shall abide with you, by his dwelling in you, and influences upon you.

John 14:18

Ver. 18. *Comfortless*; the word in the Greek is, orphans, persons without father and mother, who for the most part are the most comfortless persons; therefore it is translated *comfortless*: Christ hath a care, not only of the people's salvation and life, but also of their comforts while they are here; he will not leave his people without proportionable comfort for their distresses.

I will come to you; in the Greek it is, I do come to you, to denote the certainty and the suddenness of his coming; which is either to be understood of his resurrection, which was (as we know) after the absence of three days; or, which is more probable, (for after his resurrection he stayed with them but a few days), in and by his blessed Spirit, (for the Spirit is called the Spirit of Christ), who was to come, and to abide with them for ever. Though it may also have a reference to his coming again to judge both the quick and the dead, to receive them to himself, that (as he said before) they might always be where he was; but the two former senses are understood as more specially relating to their present distresses, upon account of his bodily absence from them.

John 14:19

Ver. 19. The world seeth me now only with fleshly eyes; it will be but a little while, and the men of the world shall be able to see me no more; I shall be crucified, and laid in the grave; and though I shall rise again, yet I shall not be seen of them: (we read of no appearances of him after his resurrection, but to his disciples): *but ye see me,* or shall see me; so they did often after his resurrection with their bodily eyes; or it may be understood of a spiritual sight by the eye of faith, or of a sight of experience; as seeing often in Scripture signifieth enjoying.

Because I live, that is, I shall live by my resurrection from the dead, and by my glorious ascension into heaven, *you also shall live* the life of grace here; and though your bodies must die, because of sin, yet your souls shall upon the death of your bodies live; and in the resurrection, both your souls and bodies shall live, and together be glorified with the: all this grace and mercy shall flow out to you from me as Mediator, and because I live.

John 14:20

Ver. 20. Some understand our Saviour here speaking of the day of his resurrection; others interpret it of the days of Pentecost, when there should be such an effusion of the blessed Spirit: but the following words discover, that it is best interpreted of the day of judgment, and the general resurrection: for they speak of two great mysteries, which the disciples should understand in that day which is here spoken of; to wit, the personal union of Christ with his Father, and the mystical union of believers with Christ: as to both which, though the apostles and believers knew much more after Christ's resurrection, and the pouring forth of the Spirit in the days of Pentecost, than they knew before those times; yet it is a very imperfect knowledge they ever had, or yet have, of those mysterious unions; but in the resurrection we shall understand these things clearly.

John 14:21

Ver. 21. *He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me:* our Lord here doth repeat what he had before said, Joh 14:15,

declaring that there is no infallible indication of our love to Christ, but obedience, which is here expressed under two notions.

1. Having Christ's commandments and keeping them: they must both concur to make a true indication of our love to Christ. It is possible that men may have Christ's commandments in their ears, in their notion, in their mouths, and yet not keep them; they may hear them, they may know and remember them, they may talk of them, yet they may not keep them; for keeping them denotes universal, diligent and industrious, steady and constant obedience to them; and this alone will speak our love to Christ.
2. And if any man thus declareth his love to Christ, Christ declareth, that both he and his Father will take a pleasure and delight in him to do him good; and he shall not live only under the real benefits of his love to him, but under the sensible manifestations of it. Here is no mention of the Spirit's coming with the Father and the Son, because the Son dwelleth in us by the Spirit.

John 14:22

Ver. 22. Jude the brother of James, Jude 1:1, the son of Alphaeus; not Judas the son of Simon, who, from the city whence he was, was called Iscariot, and was the traitor; asks our Saviour, how it was, or wherefore it was, that he would manifest himself to them, and not to the world? This question either proceeded out of ignorance, not aright understanding of what manifestation of himself Christ here spake; or out of a pious desire that all might be made partakers of the same grace with them; or out of the apostle's modest opinion of himself and his brethren; as if he had said, Lord, what are we that thou shouldest speak of any more special manifestation of thy love to us, than to the rest of the world? Or out of a deep admiration of God's unsearchable judgments in leaving some of the world, while he made choice of others to dignify with such special distinguishing favours, hiding those things from the wise and prudent which he revealed to babes.

John 14:23

Ver. 23. If any man love Christ, he will keep Christ's words; that is, he will study and endeavour to keep the commandments of Christ; for if nothing evidenced a true love to Christ but a perfect obedience to his will, none could comfort himself from his obedience, or conclude his love to Christ from it; but he that loveth Christ, will make it his business to be obedient to him in those things first he hath commanded, and are within his power.

And my Father will love him; and my Father will manifest his love to him in further dispensations of his grace; for it cannot be understood of God's eternal love, nor yet of his love in justification and regeneration; for till the man or woman be justified and regenerated, he will never study and endeavour obedience to the will of God. This love of God is the cause, not the effect of our obedience; but *love* in this verse must be expounded by manifesting in the former verse; and this is certain, that the *manifestations* of Divine love to our souls depend upon our walking with God. This is also meant by God the Father and Christ's coming to those that love him, and keep his commandments; viz. a coming in the sweet influences of Divine grace, suited to the soul's various necessities: nay, our Lord promises, not only his and his Father's coming to, but their making an abode with such as love him, and keep his commandments. Here the abiding of the First and Second Person in the Trinity with believers; the abiding of the Third Person with them is also promised, Joh 14:16; which all make that presence of God with them, so often promised to them in holy writ. Thus our Saviour answereth one part of what Judas said, *How is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us?* Because, saith our Saviour, you love me, and keep my words: for though no love, no works of ours, foreseen or seen, be the cause of eternal love, or the first grace; yet it is so much a cause of further grace, especially in the sensible manifestations of it, that no soul must expect it that doth not love Christ, and keep his words. He also further gives them a reason, as to the second thing he asked, why he did not manifest himself to the world?

John 14:24

Ver. 24. Because they did not love him, nor keep his sayings, their sin was

aggravated; because the words which he spake were not his will only, but the will of his Father who had sent him into the world, to reveal his will to the sons of men.

John 14:25

Ver. 25. That is, as to his bodily presence: For more than three years I have been fulfilling a ministry amongst you, and have spoken many things to you.

John 14:26

Ver. 26. The word is the same which was so translated before; (see the import of it, Joh 14:16,17;) he is there called the *Comforter*, and *the Spirit of truth*; here, *the Holy Spirit*. The Father here is said to send in the name, that is, with the authority and upon the mediation, of the Lord Jesus Christ: and two pieces of the Spirit's work, besides comforting, are here expressed.

He shall teach you all things; he shall more fully explain to you all things. Three of the apostles themselves had already in this chapter discovered great degrees of ignorance as to the doctrine of the Trinity, Christ's union or oneness with his Father, &c. You shall not be left (saith our Saviour) in this ignorance; for when the Holy Spirit shall come, he shall more fully and perfectly instruct you in all things, in which I have already instructed you, and which are necessary for you to know in order to your eternal happiness.

And bring all things to your remembrance; whatsoever I have said unto you; and shall bring to your remembrance the things I have taught you, so as you shall more fully and clearly understand them; and though you may have forgotten them, yet they shall by the Holy Spirit be revived in your memories; so as they shall not be like water spilt on the ground, which cannot again be gathered up, but like seed sown in the earth; which, though it may at present rot, and die under the clods, or at least not spring up, yet it shall spring up, and bring forth desired fruit. It is one great work of the Holy Spirit, to bring the revelations of holy writ to our

remembrance, and withal to clear to us the sense of them, and confirm our faith in them, and chiefly quicken us to practise what is our duty: but it is to be observed, that the Spirit doth not make revelations of new notions; it only brings to our remembrance what Christ hath said, and further revealeth what was before in the word revealed, though possibly particular persons were ignorant of such revelations of the word: so things may be new, and newly revealed to us, which in themselves are not so. There are no new truths, but particular persons may have new discoveries of old truth, which they had before misapprehensions of.

John 14:27

Ver. 27. Peace be with you, or to you, was the Jewish common salutation, 1Sa 25:6; under that general name they comprehended all manner of good: with this good wish they both saluted their friends when they met them, and took their farewell of them when they left them. Christ, being now about to take his leave for a time of his disciples, wishes them *peace*; nay, he doth not only wish it to them, but he *leaves* it to them; he giveth it them as a legacy; and that in another kind of peace, and in another manner, than was common. He therefore calls it his peace revealed in the gospel, Eph 6:15; purchased with his blood, Ro 5:1; brought to the soul by his Spirit, by which we are sealed to the day of redemption. Christ's peace is either union or reconciliation with God, or the copy of it, which is a quiet of conscience, and assurance of his love; or a union with men by brotherly love, so often commended and pressed by Christ. Nor doth Christ give this peace as the men of the world give peace; who often wish peace earnestly, never considering what it is they say; often falsely, formally wishing peace, when they are about to strike those to whom they wish it under the fifth rib; and when they are most serious, wish it, but cannot give it. Christ leaves it to his disciples for a legacy, giveth it to them as a gift; if they want it, it is their own fault: therefore, as in the first verse, so here again he saith, *Let not your heart be troubled*; and adds, *neither let it be afraid*. Fear is one of those passions which most usually and potently doth disturb the hearts and minds of men; but there was no reason it should have this ill influence on Christ's disciples, because he had left them peace for his legacy, and the gifts of God are without repentance; and, *if God be for us, (saith the apostle, Ro 8:31), who, or what, can be against us?*

John 14:28

Ver. 28. *Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you;* they had heard our Saviour saying so, Joh 14:3. It is of the nature of true love, to rejoice in the good of the object beloved, as much as in its own, nay, before its own.

Saith our Saviour, *if ye loved me*, that is, as ye ought to love me, (for our Lord had before owned that they did love him, giving it as a reason why he rather revealed himself and manifested himself to them, than to the world, Joh 14:23), you would not have been so unreasonably disturbed at my telling you that I shall leave you; because I not only told you that I would come again to you, but because I told you that I was going to my Father, Joh 14:2; from whom though I was never separated, as I am God over all blessed for ever, yet my human nature was yet never glorified with him; so that I shall be there much happier than here; being highly exalted, and having a name given me *above every name*, Php 2:9.

For my Father is greater than I; not greater in essence, (as the Arians and Socinians would have it), he had many times before asserted the contrary; but greater,

1. Either as to the order amongst the Divine Persons; because the Father begat, the Son is begotten; the Father is he from whom the Son proceeded by eternal generation: in which sense, divers of the ancients, amongst whom Athanasius, Cyril, and Augustine, and some modern interpreters, understand it. Or:
2. As Mediator sent from the Father, so he is greater than I. Or:
3. In respect of my present state, while I am here in the form of a servant; and in my state of humiliation:

which seemeth to be the best interpretation, if we consider the words before, *ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father;* for the true reason of that joy must have been, because Christ in his glorious state of exaltation would be much more happy than he had been in his state of humiliation, while he was exposed to the scoffs, reproaches, and injuries of

men, the temptations of Satan, &c.

John 14:29

Ver. 29. Evils that surprise us are always the most heavy, and load our spirits. Saith our Saviour, Before these things come to pass, I have given you notice of them, that, when you see them come to pass, you might not be overwhelmed with sorrow and trouble, to the hinderance of your faith in me; but understanding that I have told you the truth before the thing come to pass, you may be assured that I am not mere man, but truly God; and receive and embrace me, and rest upon me as your Saviour.

John 14:30

Ver. 30. I shall not have much time hereafter to reveal my mind to you, my suffering is very near; the devil, who is *the prince of this world*, See Poole on "Joh 12:31", See Poole on "Joh 16:11" and See Poole on "Eph 6:12" he *cometh* by the evil angels, or rather by vile and wicked men, as his instruments, Judas and the soldiers. He doth not say wherefore he came, but it is easily understood. And he *hath nothing in me* that he can justly fault, and take advantage against me, for he findeth no guilt in me to give him any advantage against me; I shall die as an innocent person, and be cut off, but not for myself, (as it was prophesied of the Messiah, Da 9:26), but (as it is there, Joh 14:24), *to finish transgression, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness.*

John 14:31

Ver. 31. I die not for my own sin; but *being found in fashion as a man, I humbled myself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*, (as Php 2:8), to let the world know, that I love the Father, and am obedient to him, doing even so as he hath commanded me.

Arise, let us go hence; arise from supper, (after which they were wont sometimes to lengthen out discourse), the supper in Bethany, as some think; but to me it seems more probable (as I said before) to be the

passover supper, and the Lord's supper which immediately followed that; and *let us go hence*, out of the guest chamber, where the passover was to be administered. So as it is most probable, that the discourses in the two next chapters were as they went along in the way to Mount Olivet. In this discourse our Saviour hath most applied himself to relieve his disciples upon their disturbance for their want of our Saviour's bodily presence.

John 15:1

Chapter Summary

Joh 15:1-11 Under the parable of a vine Christ sets forth God's government of his church, and exhorts his disciples to abide in his faith and doctrine.

Joh 15:12-17 He commands them to love one another, according to the great love he had showed for them,

Joh 15:18-25 forewarns them of the hatred and persecution of the world,

Joh 15:26,27 and telleth them of the testimony which the Holy Ghost, and they also, should bear to him.

Chapter Introduction

As our Saviour in the former chapter had chiefly spent his discourse for the relief of his disciples under their trouble for the want of his bodily presence, so he seemeth in this chiefly to bend his discourse for the comfort of them under their disturbance, for fear they should, together with the want of the comfort they had in his bodily presence, want also his spiritual influences; to prevent which, he compares himself to a vine, then to the branches; and showeth by that similitude the near union they had with him, and the influence he would and must have upon them, so long as they did abide with him. From Joh 15:18-27, he comforts them by a variety of arguments against that black storm of persecution, which he had

so often told them would arise after his departure from them, from the hatred of the world, of wicked men, both Jews and Gentiles, that were enemies to the cross of Christ; as to which he comforts them by a variety of arguments to the end of the chapter, and counteth his discourse of that nature also in the following chapter.

Ver. 1. Christ had but newly come from his last supper, wherein he had sanctified the fruit of the vine, by setting it apart as one of the elements in that holy sacrament, and told them, that he would no more drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God should come, Lu 22:18. This (as some suppose) gave occasion to this parable, or discourse about the vine. Others think, that in this passage from the guest chamber to the Mount Olivet he saw a vine, which gave occasion to this discourse, it being with him very ordinary to graft spiritual discourses upon sensible objects occasionally occurring; as, Joh 4:1-39, he raised a discourse of living water upon the sight of the water at Jacob's well, and the woman's discourse about it; and, Joh 6:1-14, he founded another discourse concerning the bread of life, upon the loaves that were multiplied. Whatever the occasion was, (of which we can affirm nothing certainly), certain it is, that the notion of a vine, with respect to the root and body of it, (for he calls his disciples the branches) excellently agreeth to Christ, whether in respect of his present low condition, and mean appearance to the world, (as a vine hath less beauty than most plants), or in respect of its exceeding fruitfulness; or as it is the basis and foundation of the branches, in which they are, and thrive, and are fruitful; which seemeth here to be chiefly intended; as all the branches are united to the vine, in it they live, bud, bear fruit. There are three principal things which our Saviour teacheth us by this similitude:

1. That we have no ability to do good but from Christ.
2. That believers have a trite and real union with the Lord Jesus, which while they uphold by faith and holiness, they shall not want his influence upon them, nor his Father's care over them, in purging them, that they may bring forth much fruit.
3. That if any professing him prove unfruitful, God will take them away; they shall wither, be cast into the fire, and burned.

He calls himself *the true vine*, to show them that their fruit was not in themselves, but must be found in him; or that their fruit could not proceed from Moses, the observance of the ritual or moral law given them by him; but it must flow from their spiritual union with him and that influence of grace which should flow from that union. Or else *true* (as sometimes it doth in Scripture) may signify excellent. As he compares himself to *the true vine*, by which he signifieth to us that he is the true root and support of our spiritual life and fruit; so he compares his Father to *the husbandman*, to let us know, that his people are not only under his, but under his Father's care; which he afterwards more particularly openeth. He also, Joh 15:2, compares believers, or members of the church, to branches in a vine.

John 15:2

Ver. 2. And concerning his Father's care, he tells us, that as the good vine dresser cutteth off those branches in the vine which bring forth no fruit, so his Father will take away such branches in him as bring forth no fruit. But here ariseth a question, viz. Whether, or how, any can be branches in Christ, and yet bring forth no fruit?

Answer.

1. Some say, there is no need of translating the words so, which may as well be translated, Every branch not bringing forth fruit in me. Indeed no true fruit can be brought forth but in Christ; but yet much that looks like fruit, much that men may call fruit, may be brought forth without any true spiritual union with Christ. All acts of moral discipline, or any acts of formal profession in religion, may be brought forth without any true root and foundation in Christ; and God will in the end discover and cut off those who bring forth no other fruit. But:
2. Men may be said to be branches in him, by a sacramental implantation, being baptized into him, Ro 6:3; and are hereby members of the visible church, and make a visible profession of adhering to him, with respect to their own good opinion and persuasions of themselves, though they be not so in respect of any true, spiritual, and real implantation. But those who in the last sense are not in him, bring forth no fruit unto

perfection, and God will cut them off, either by withdrawing his restraining grace, and giving them up to strong delusions to believe lies; or to a reprobate mind, and vile lusts and affections; or by taking away their gifts; or some way or other, so as they shall never have an eternal communion with God in glory. But if any man bringeth forth true spiritual fruit in Christ, him God the Father will purge, by the sprinkling of Christ's blood yet further upon his conscience, Heb 10:22; and by his Holy Spirit working on him like fire, to purge away his dross, and like water, to purge away his filth; and by his word, 1Pe 1:22, by faith, Ac 15:9, by crosses and trials. Isa 1:25 Isa 27:9; that he may be more fruitful in works of holiness and righteousness.

John 15:3

Ver. 3. Now that the traitor is gone out from you, ye are all clean; not by any works which you do, much less upon the account of any legal and ceremonial rites and purifyings; but through my word, your believing and obeying, Eph 5:26 1Pe 1:22. Our cleansing is in holy writ attributed sometimes to the blood of Christ, sometimes to the Spirit, sometimes to the word. By the blood of Christ we are made clean as to justification, washed; but yet we had need wash our feet, contracting soil every day in a sinful world, from which we are cleansed by the purifying virtue of the Holy Spirit, working by and together with the word, which purgeth us of our dross, and maketh us obedient to the will of God.

John 15:4

Ver. 4. This our abiding in Christ is expounded, by an abiding in his words, Joh 15:7, by abiding in his love, Joh 15:10, an abiding in his Spirit, 1Jo 2:27, a walking as Christ walked, 1Jo 2:6, an abiding in the light, Joh 15:10, not sinning, 1Jo 3:6. The exhortation is, without doubt, to a holiness of life and conversation, by which our union and communion with Christ is upheld and maintained, and which is in itself an abiding in the love of Christ: nor is there a want of sufficient reason for this exhortation, though our union with Christ cannot be dissolved, nor our communion with him wholly interrupted; because,

1. It must be upheld and maintained on our part by the exercises of faith and holiness.
2. The sense of it in our souls may be eclipsed, and wholly fail, Ps 22:1.
3. We may fall away foully, though neither totally, (as Lutherans say), because the seed of God abideth in the believer; nor yet finally (as papists say).

We had need therefore of all exhortations and arguments imaginable, to persuade us to do what in us lieth that we may abide in him. We have a great encouragement to the use of all possible endeavours to abide in the love of God, from the promise annexed, *and I in you*; that is, I will abide in you; do you strive, and I will help you to perfect; do you fight, and I will help you to overcome; I will continue to you such gradual influences of grace, as shall be sufficient for you; grace wherein and whereby you shall stand, Ro 5:2. You shall be *kept by the power of God through faith to salvation*, 1Pe 1:5. But look as it is with the branch, it cannot bear fruit of itself; but if it be once separated from the influences of the stock, it dies and withers; so it will be with you, you can bring forth no fruit unless you abide in me.

John 15:5

Ver. 5. *I am the vine, ye are the branches*; that is, I am as the vine, you are as the branches: without the continual influence of the vine upon the branches, they bring forth no fruit; but that influence continuing, no plant is more fruitful than a vine is: so without the continual influence of my Spirit of grace upon you, you will be altogether barren and unfruitful; but if you have that influence, you will not be fruitful only, but very fruitful: for without my continuing such influence, you will not only be able to do little, but you will be able to do nothing that is truly and spiritually good and acceptable in the sight of God.

John 15:6

Ver. 6. Our Lord yet pursueth the metaphor of the vine, the branches, and

the husbandman: Look (saith he) its it is with a vine, when the time of pruning the vine cometh, the vine dresser cutteth off the fruitless, luxuriant branches, and throws them by; which being done, their greenness presently abates, and they wither, and after a time some come and gather them up, and cast them into some fire, where they are burned: so it will be with you; if you do not bring forth fruit, God will take from you his common influences, which have for a while made you to look speciously; and your profession, or your parts and gifts, will wither and decay; and in the day of judgment the angels shall gather you up, and God shall cast you into hell, Mt 13:40,41, where you shall perish as miserably, nay, infinitely more miserably, than if you were burned with fire.

John 15:7

Ver. 7. Here our Lord expounds what he meaneth by that abiding in him which he before mentioned by another phrase, *and my words abide in you*, my precepts and promises; so its you by faith embrace the promises, and by obedience live up to the precepts which I have given you: for without these, though the words of Christ may come unto men in the preaching of the gospel, their ears may receive the sound of them, yet the word doth not dwell and abide in the soul: but if the word abides in the souls of men and women, then they may in prayer ask of God what they will, keeping to the conditions and limitations elsewhere required in holy writ, according to God's will, 1Jo 5:14, believing, Mt 21:22, in the name of Christ, Joh 14:13,14, for the honour and glory of God, (to which end all our actions must be directed), and they shall be granted to them.

John 15:8

Ver. 8. Here are two arguments to press his disciples' abiding in him, that so they might bring forth much fruit.

Herein (saith our Saviour) *is my Father glorified*. The glorifying of God is the great end of our lives, 1Co 10:31. God is glorified by men and women's bringing forth much fruit, Mt 5:16, the *fruit unto holiness*, Ro 6:22: fruit is the product of the plant, from the natural moisture that is in it, nourished and augmented by the fatness of the earth in which it stands, and

by the warmth of the sun drawn out to the producing of such effects, according to the nature of the plant. According to the different nature of plants they bring forth various fruits, Mt 7:16-18. Hence we read of the fruit of sin unto death, and the fruit of righteousness unto life. The first is every man's natural fruit, until he be ingrafted into Christ: being ingrafted into him, the soul having a new nature given to it, being regenerated and renewed by the Holy Ghost, it no longer bringeth forth fruit from its old principle, and according to its old nature, but from its new principle, and according to its new nature. As the cultivated earth, that is ploughed and harrowed, doth not bring forth weeds and ordinary grass, according to its nature, but bringeth forth fruit according to the seed that is cast into it, yet not without the influence of heaven, both with respect to the dew of it, and the warmth which it hath from the sun; so the soul, being regenerated, the fallow ground of it being ploughed up, and the seed of righteousness being sown in it, no more brings forth the weeds of lusts and corruptions, or only ordinary acts of human nature, but it brings forth fruits according to its new nature, and the new seed of the word now sown in it, and dwelling in it. And look, as it tendeth to the honour of the husbandman, when the ground by him ploughed and manured brings forth much fruit; so it tendeth to the honour and glory of God, when the souls renewed, manured, and influenced by him, bring forth much of the fruit of righteousness and holiness. And though men must be Christ's disciples before they bring forth any fruit, yet their bringing forth much fruit is that which alone can evidence and make them appear to be the disciples of Christ. And often in Scripture being signifieth appearing, as Joh 8:31; Ro 3:4.

John 15:9

Ver. 9. What our Saviour before called an abiding in him, and his words abiding in us, and a bearing and bringing forth much fruit, he here calleth a continuing in his love; though indeed this phrase also may be interpreted by a continuance in the favour of God and Christ, in that state of love into which God hath put the souls of those who are his true disciples: but I had rather interpret it of that love wherewith they loved Christ, than that wherewith Christ loved them. So the former words are an argument to persuade perseverance, or a continuance in those acts of holiness by which men alone can show their true love to Jesus Christ, from Christ's love to them, which he there expresses, *As the father hath loved me, so have I*

loved you; where the particle *as* is only a note of comparison, but doth not denote an equality; only signifieth truth and greatness; as truly and sincerely as the Father loveth me: or, I have loved you with a great love, bearing some proportion to the love wherewith my Father loveth me. The Father's love to Christ is eternal immutable, constant, full and perfect, wise and just, free: in all these respects Christ loveth his people as the Father loveth him: this ought: to engage them again to love him, and so to walk as they may continue in that state of favour into which his goodness hath advanced them.

John 15:10

Ver. 10. Abiding in Christ's love, in this verse, may be interpreted as before; either actively, you shall continue your love to me, according to what we had, Joh 14:15; obedience to the commandments of Christ being the only way to show and declare the truth of our love to Christ. Or else passively, you shall keep yourselves in my favour, I will love you. Thus I abide in my Father's love; I do not show love to my Father by my words and expressions only, nor by performance of some ceremonial ritual services, which he hath required; but by fulfilling his whole will and counsel, by yielding an obedience to him in all things. I love you as my Father loveth me; and you must abide in my love by the same ways and means that I abide in my Father's love. The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.

John 15:11

Ver. 11. The end of my pressing so much the duty of holiness upon you, under the notions of abiding in me, abiding in my love in my words, bringing forth much fruit, &c. is, that I might have a continual cause to rejoice in you. Joy is nothing else but the satisfaction of the reasonable soul in its union with an object which it loved and desired. Christ, willing and desiring the perfection of his disciples, according to the rational workings of human nature, is properly said to rejoice in the satisfaction of his will; in which sense joy and rejoicing are often in Scripture attributed to God. Nor doth Christ press them to this, that he might rejoice in them, but also that their joy might be full; that joy and peace which attends and

follows believing, Ro 15:13; called *the peace of God*, Col 3:15; a peace which passeth all understanding, Php 4:7. No man maketh Christ to rejoice over him, but he thereby also procures unspeakable joy and peace to himself; as no man grieves his Spirit, but also purchases grief and sadness to himself in the latter end.

John 15:12

Ver. 12. This is that which our Lord called the *new commandment*. Joh 13:34; See Poole on "Joh 13:34". He had before pressed the keeping of his words, continuing and abiding in his words, keeping his commandments, &c. Here he tells them what was his commandment: not his only commandment, but that which he laid a very great stress upon; a commandment most necessary to be pressed, because so necessary to keep up and uphold his church in the world, (love being the very ligament of that society), and because there was a greater failure in obedience to this than in some others, as may be learned from our Saviour's correction of the Pharisees' interpretation of that law, Mt 5:1-48. This he presseth to a higher degree, as he had loved them; not that it is possible that our love to our brethren can rise up in any proportion to that love wherewith Christ hath loved us; but to mind us to eye him, to press forward toward this mark. As here again doth not signify equality, but a comparison; as truly and sincerely as I have loved you, and pressing after the highest degree of love.

John 15:13

Ver. 13. The reason of this is because life is the greatest earthly good to men under ordinary circumstances: *Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life*, Job 2:4. Now it is impossible that a man should show a greater love to another, than by parting with the greatest good he is in possession of for his sake. Hence our Saviour proves, that he loved them with the greatest love, because he for their sake was about to part with what in the common judgment of men is the greatest good. The greatness of the love of Christ to us is from hence often commended to us in Scripture; and our mutual love to our brethren is pressed upon this argument, Eph 5:2 1Jo 3:16. But how did Christ lay down his life for his

friends, when the Scripture tells us, that *the just died for the unjust*, 1Pe 3:18, and that *while we were enemies, we were reconciled unto God by the death of his Son*, Ro 5:10?

Answer. Friends must not here be taken as a name of relation, but only as it signifieth the objects of love; persons we have set our love upon, whether they mutually love us or not; as the world was the object of that love in God, which moved him to send his only begotten Son, Joh 3:16. Though they for whom Christ died were enemies by their wicked works, yet by his death they were reconciled. But possibly the first answer is best; for by Christ's death they were only meritoriously reconciled, and after this enemies to God, till they received the word of reconciliation, and believed in Christ.

John 15:14

Ver. 14. Our Lord presseth obedience to his commandments as a means, and indeed the only means, by which we can declare our love to Christ; and also useth a new argument to press their obedience, from his assuming them into the state and dignity of his friends.

John 15:15

Ver. 15. By his saying, *I call you not servants*, he doth not discharge them of that duty and service which they owed to him; for in pressing them to obey his commandments, he declares that duty they owed to him; he only showeth that they were no ordinary servants, but taken into a state of dignity, favour, and familiarity, beyond that of servants, and that he had not treated them like servants, but like intimate, familiar friends. For look as ordinary masters in the world communicate their counsels and whole heart to their friends, especially in things which are of any concern, or may be of any advantage for them to know and understand; whereas they keep themselves at a distance from servants, and they only know so much of their minds as is by them to be done in their masters' service: so he had not only revealed to them their duty, what was to be by them done in his service, but had been more free, giving to them *to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven*, as he told them, Mt 13:11; as well telling them his

Father's counsels on the behalf of them, and whatsoever he might communicate to them, as his Father's will, what he would have them to do in obedience to his commandments.

John 15:16

Ver. 16. *Ye have not chosen me to be your Lord, Master, Saviour, but I have chosen and ordained you;* so we have it in our translation; but the Greek is, εθηκα, I have set you, or placed you in a station. What choosing Christ here speaks of is doubted amongst various divines. Some think that our Saviour here speaks of his choice of them to the apostleship, as Lu 6:13 Joh 6:70: those who thus understand it, understand by going and bringing forth fruit, the apostles' going out, preaching, and baptizing all nations, bringing forth fruit amongst the Gentiles. But others understand it of election to eternal life, and the means necessary to it; for our Saviour brings this as an argument of his greatest love: Judas was in the first sense chosen, yet not beloved with any such love: and this seemeth to be favoured by Joh 13:18, *I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen:* and certain it is, Augustine and others of the ancients from hence proved the freedom of election and special grace. Both senses may be united, for the eleven (to whom Christ was now speaking) were chosen in both senses; they were chosen for this end, *to bring forth fruit* amongst the Gentiles, turning many to righteousness, and that they might bring forth the fruit of holiness, in obedience to the gospel of Christ. Yea, not only to bring forth fruit, but that they might persevere in bringing forth fruit; and that thus doing, they might have a freedom of access to the throne of grace, and obtain whatsoever they should ask of the Father, in the name, for the merits, and through the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ. See Poole on "Joh 14:13". See Poole on "Joh 14:14".

John 15:17

Ver. 17. This is but the repetition of the same precept we before had; unless we will understand it as a more special charge upon them, considered as ministers of the gospel; the mutual love of ministers being highly necessary for the good and peace of the church of God, over which God hath set them.

John 15:18

Ver. 18. In the latter part of this chapter our Lord cometh to comfort those who were his true disciples, against that third trouble, from the prospect they had of that hatred which the world would pour out and execute upon them, as soon as he should be withdrawn from them. Hatred is rooted and originated in the heart, and is properly a displeasure that the mind taketh at a person, which, fermenting and boiling in the mind, breeds an abhorrence of that person, anger, and malice, and a desire to do him mischief, and root him out; and then breaks out at the lips, by lying, slanders, calumnies, cursings, wishing of evil, &c.; and is executed by the hands, doing to such persons all the harm and mischief within the power of him that hateth: all this is to be understood under the general term *hate*. By *the world* here must be meant wicked men, in opposition to good men, who are often in Scripture called *the world*, because they are of the earth, earthly; they relish and savour nothing but worldly things, and pursue nothing but worldly designs. Against this our Saviour comforts them; first by telling them, that this part of the world hated him before it hated them, which must needs be so, because they hated them as his disciples, and for that very reason.

John 15:19

Ver. 19. Men and women may be in the world, yet not of the world. *Of the world* here signifies carnal men, such as are like to the men of the world in their studies, designs, counsels, affections; as *of the devil*, and *of God*, signifies, Joh 8:44,47. If you had affections, lusts, and dispositions like them, and drove no other designs than they drive, you might expect, that as it is of the nature of all men to love such as are like to them in manners and studies; so they would love you, take a delight in you, be kind to you, and do you all offices of love: but because you are not of such tempers, dispositions, and inclinations; but that I, having chosen you out of the world, have given you new hearts, new frames and dispositions, quite contrary to theirs; therefore the world, disliking you, and seeing that your principles are quite opposite to theirs, abhor and hate you, and will be ready to do you all that evil and mischief, which is the product of a rooted

hatred and malice in the heart. This is a second argument by which our Lord comforts them. It is drawn from the cause and root of that hatred which they would meet with: it was not for their faults or sins, but because they were the objects of Christ's love, which being also shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, produced again in them holy affections and dispositions, making them wholly unlike to men in the world.

John 15:20

Ver. 20. *The word that I said unto you, Joh 13:16, to press you to humility, and a mutual serving of one another in love; and which I spake to you, Mt 10:24, when I first sent you out; and I spake it then to you upon the very same account that I now speak it. You that are my servants cannot look to fare better with the world than I that am your Master; you know they have hated me, you must expect they should persecute you: if there be any of them whose hearts God shall incline to keep my sayings, they will also keep your words, which are but my sayings explained to them, and further pressed upon them.*

John 15:21

Ver. 21. *For my name's sake here signifies no more than for my sake, as Mt 10:22; for your preaching, owning, and professing me and my gospel. And this they would not do, if they had any true knowledge of faith in or love for him that sent me: for knowing, (as hath been often said), in holy writ, and particularly in this Gospel, signifieth not the bare comprehension of the object by our understanding, but such a comprehension of it as is operative and efficacious to the bringing forth of all such effects as are proper to such a knowledge and comprehension. So as this text containeth two arguments more to arm them against the hatred of the world: the first, from the honourableness of the cause, for Christ's name's sake; the second, from the ignorance and blindness of the persons.*

John 15:22

Ver. 22. They had not had this particular sin, of not knowing him that sent

me; or they had not had such degrees of sin as they now have; or they had had more to say in excuse, or for a cover for their sin. Ignorance of the will of God will not excuse sinners wholly, but it will excuse them in part. And this last seemeth to be the sense of the words by the latter part of the verse, because it is opposed to a having no cloak nor excuse for their sin. If Christ had not come in his incarnation, in his preaching the gospel, &c, they could not have been guilty of that hatred and malice which they showed against him, which was their greatest guilt; and they would have had this to say, Lord, we knew not what Christ was, as Mt 25:44: but now, saith our Saviour, they have no cloak, no colour, no pretence; I am come, I have revealed my Father's mind and will to them, yet they will not receive me; no, though I have done those works before them which no man ever did, nor could do but by a Divine power.

John 15:23

Ver. 23. This agreeth with what we had, Joh 5:23. It is a common error of the world, that many in it would pretend to love God, while yet they are manifest haters of Christ and his gospel. Now, saith our Saviour, this is impossible; whosoever hateth him who is sent, hateth also him that sent him. God the Father and Christ are one, and no man can hate Christ, or be an enemy to Christ, but he must be an enemy to his Father: and as this is an aggravation of their sin, so it is a great argument of consolation to the disciples of Christ, that those who should be their enemies were such as were in reality God's enemies.

John 15:24

Ver. 24. Our Saviour often appeals to his works, both to own his mission from God, and also to prove the Jews inexcusable in their not receiving and embracing him; for which latter purpose he mentions them here, and saith, that he had done such works as no man did, and by his own power and virtue. Christ did some works such as we do not read that ever man did; as the multiplying of the loaves, the giving sight to those that were born blind, the healing of so many desperate diseases: and for such as he did which God had also given men a power to do, he did them in a quite different manner from that in which men did them. Elisha raised the

Shunammite's child to life; but it was by prayer. Peter cured the lame man, Ac 3:6; but it was *in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth*. We read indeed of Christ's praying at the raising of Lazarus; but his ordinary way was by his word of command, which was a quite different way than that used by those men by whom miracles had been wrought. Besides, it is manifest that the generality of the Jews did not look upon Christ as one sent from God, though many of them did: and admit that there had been nothing in the miracles wrought by Christ, more than Elijah, or Elisha, or the prophets had done; yet it had been sufficient for to have convinced them, that he acted by a Divine power, and must be sent and authorized by and from God to do what he did. Now saith our Saviour, If I had not done before their faces such works as no man could do but by a power derived from God, and some such as God never authorized men to do, their sin had been nothing to what now it is: but now they have understood that I am sent from my Father; and knowing this, yet going on in their most malicious designs against me, they both declare a hatred and malice against my Father who sent me, and me as sent by him.

John 15:25

Ver. 25. The particle *that* here again denotes not the final cause, but only the consequent; and the *law* here signifieth not strictly the law of Moses, but the whole Scripture, in which sense we have once and again met with the term. Saith our Saviour, This is no more than was prophesied of me by the prophet David; or no more than was fulfilled in me, being first done to David as my type: which also hath the force of another argument to uphold and encourage his disciples under their sufferings, that they were but the fulfilling of prophecies, no more than was foretold in holy writ.

John 15:26

Ver. 26. Concerning the Holy Ghost as a Comforter we have spoken largely, Joh 14:16,26; as also his mission from the Father and the Son, and in what sense he is called *the Spirit of truth*: See Poole on "Joh 14:16". See Poole on "Joh 14:26". What proceeding from the Father is here meant, is questioned amongst divines: some understand it only of his coming out from the Father, and being poured out upon the disciples in the days of

Pentecost: others understand it of the Holy Spirit's eternal proceeding. Those that interpret it of the first, urge the use of the Greek word, here used to signify God's manifestation of himself by some external sign, as they say the Septuagint useth the same word. They also urge the same use of a parallel word, Joh 8:42 16:28. But the generality of the best interpreters think it is best understood of the eternal procession of the Holy Spirit:

1. Because Christ here distinguishes the Spirit's proceeding from the Father from his sending.
2. Having himself promised to send the Spirit, he seemeth further to describe him as proceeding from the Father.
3. The word here used is not any where used in the New Testament to signify a temporal mission.

Some will say: But doth not the Spirit proceed from the Son?

Answer. The Greek Church in latter ages hath denied this, and this is the principal text they rest on; but those churches that are more orthodox have constantly affirmed it:

1. Because he here saith he would send it.
2. Because he is often called *the Spirit of Christ*, Ro 8:9 Ga 4:6.
3. Because otherwise there were no personal relation between Christ and the Spirit.

Our Saviour here having first said he would send him, here only nameth his proceeding from the Father; that they might not suspect his testimony, or think that he spake arrogantly.

He shall testify of me; the Spirit, he saith, should testify of him, both by those gifts with which he was to fill the apostles, and to the hearts of God's people.

John 15:27

Ver. 27. He adds also, they should testify, &c.: the apostles, and their successors, by the preaching of the gospel; but particularly the apostles, Ac 10:39 1Jo 1:2,3, being chosen witnesses, Ac 10:41. And they were competent witnesses, because they had been with Christ from the beginning of his public ministry. We shall find the testimony of his apostles and of the Holy Ghost both joined together, Ac 5:32.

John 16:1

Chapter Summary

Joh 16:1-4 Christ warns his disciples of their sufferings for his sake.

Joh 16:5-15 He comforteth them by a promise of the Holy Ghost.

Joh 16:16-28 He intimates his death, resurrection, and ascension, telling them that their sorrow should soon be succeeded by joy, and that their prayers in his name would be accepted of the Father.

Joh 16:29-33 His disciples confess their faith in him; he foretells their desertion of him, and promises them peace in him amidst their tribulation in the world.

Ver. 1. That is, that when you see these storms of persecution arise, and fall heavily upon you, they may not give you any occasion, or be any temptation to you, to desist from your duty, and be afraid or ashamed to own me, and the profession of my gospel. Evils unthought of we are not ordinarily prepared for, so as, being surprised by them, they the more sink us.

Offended here therefore may signify, either immoderate trouble and

affliction, or being tempted to any apostasy, or remission of duty.

John 16:2

Ver. 2. The term *synagogue*, as it is used often in Scripture to signify those places of public worship which they had in country towns and cities, is proper to the Jews; but as it signifieth an assembly of people met together in any place, it as well agreeth to other people as to them. Our Lord here, in pursuit of the argument which he hath been upon from Joh 15:18, forewarns his disciples, that when he should be taken from them, the Jews first should excommunicate them as heretics, or schismatics: and I know not why what our Saviour here saith may not also be extended as a prophecy of what hath since been done, and is yet doing, under the tyranny of the pope. As also the latter clause, which, though at first applicable to the Jews, who stoned Stephen upon a charge of blasphemy, in which it is apparent that they thought they did God good service, and doubtless slew many others; yet certainly it also referred to others, even as many as shall do the same thing to the end of the world.

John 16:3

Ver. 3. This is but what our Lord said as to his Father, Joh 16:21 of the former chapter, (See Poole on "Joh 16:21"), and teacheth us, that all persecutions of good men speak in persecutors an ignorance both of God the Father and of Christ; and whoever they are that continue in such ignorance under the light of the gospel, though they be baptized, and make never so great a profession of religion, yet will be under daily temptations to turn persecutors; for ignorance is here made the cause of persecution. And it is some alleviation of trouble to God's suffering people, to consider that the persons that are the cause of their sufferings neither know God the Father, nor Jesus Christ; and it is no wonder, if they know not God, that they will not know, love, nor approve of them.

John 16:4

Ver. 4. Whatsoever I have discovered to you formerly, of my going to my

Father, the coming of the Holy Ghost, your sufferings from the world, I have told you of before; you will see that they will most certainly come to pass: then you will remember what I have said unto you; and I have told you them on purpose that you may remember them, and thereby know, that although I am in the form of a man, yet I also am God blessed for ever, and did know things that should afterward come to pass, and could tell you the truth about them. And having been with you, I have not from the first of your converse with me told you these things; that is, those which relate to the world's dealing with you (which he had told them, Mt 10:16, &c, but that was after some good while's converse with them); nor yet had he spoken to them at first about his death, resurrection, and ascension, because he was with them, and to stay with them some time, during which time he bare the brunt of all; the whole hatred of the Jews was poured out upon him: and for those other things relating to his death, and ascension, and the sending of the Spirit, he, who taught his disciples as they were able to bear them, Mr 4:33, had concealed these things till by his other doctrine he had prepared them to receive this revelation, and there was a necessity of his relieving them against his bodily absence, by the promise of that other Comforter the Holy Ghost.

John 16:5

Ver. 5. Though I did not tell you this from the beginning, for many wise reasons; yet I now tell you, that I must die, but shall rise again from the dead, and go to my Father who sent me into the world to finish that work which I now have done, and so am returning from whence I came. And though indeed some of you have cursorily asked me whither I go, (as Peter Joh 13:36), yet none of you seems to understand, or so seriously as you ought to inquire, whither I go, or so much to be busied in the thoughts of that.

John 16:6

Ver. 6. But all your thoughts are taken up about yourselves, what you shall do for want of my bodily presence; and sorrow for that hath so overwhelmed your hearts, that you cannot enough deliberate with yourselves, as to consider either mine or your own advantages, from my

death, resurrection, and ascension.

John 16:7

Ver. 7. He doth not say it was expedient for him, though this was truth; for his human nature was not till his ascension glorified, as afterward, Joh 17:5; but he saith it was expedient for them. The saints may desire a dissolution, but it is for their own advantage, Php 1:23. Christ desires it for their advantage; because the Holy Spirit could not come upon them (as in the days of Pentecost) until he by his death had made reconciliation for iniquity; and God had so ordered the counsels of eternity, that Christ should first die, rise again, and ascend into heaven, and then he would pour out his Spirit upon all flesh, as one eminent fruit of Christ's meritorious death and passion, Ac 2:32,33 Eph 4:11. We are not able to give certain reasons of the counsels of God; but the reasonableness of them in this very particular may easily be concluded: that the sending of the Spirit might appear to be the fruit of Christ's death: that the Messiah's influence upon the sending of him jointly with the Father, might appear; for he was to be sent from Christ glorified, Joh 7:39: that the Spirit might glorify Christ, as we have it, Joh 16:14; for (saith that verse) *He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you*: and that the world might better understand the mystery of the Trinity. The Father was by all owned to be in heaven. The Son ascended up to heaven in the presence of many witnesses. The Spirit descended from heaven with great majesty and glory, as may be read. Ac 2:2,3.

John 16:8

Ver. 8. When the Holy Spirit is come in the days of Pentecost, he, by his inward operation in men's hearts, and by his gifts bestowed upon you that are his apostles, *will reprove the world*.

By *the world* here, may be meant all men and women, as it is used in some texts; neither is the operation of the Spirit here mentioned to be restrained to carnal and wicked men.

The word translated *reprove*:

1. Lets us know, that the Holy Ghost is here mentioned, not in the notion mentioned Joh 14:16, as a *Comforter*, but in the larger notion, (there mentioned), as an Advocate; which possibly had been a better translation of it, Joh 16:7, than *Comforter*, as we translate it; for it is not the proper work of the Spirit considered as a Comforter to reprove, but it is proper enough to the notion of an Advocate to do it.
2. The word here translated *reprove* doth often so signify, and is so translated, Lu 3:19 Joh 3:20 Eph 5:11,13. It signifieth real rebukes, Heb 12:5 Re 3:19. But it also signifieth to convince, Joh 8:9,46 1Co 14:24 2Ti 4:2 Tit 1:9; and in several other texts. Yet it is one thing to convince the understanding and judgment; another thing to prevail upon the will, by reason of the total corruption of our souls; so that we will not embrace what we confess is truth, nor do what we know is best; but, through the stubbornness of our will, we resist the light and conviction of our understandings.

The Holy Spirit is here promised, not only (as before) to lead men into truth, by a work of illumination, but to bow the hearts and wills of some in the world, to the embracing of it, and living up to it, while others yet remain without excuse. The things of which the Spirit is promised to convince the world, are *sin, righteousness, and judgment*, which are further opened in the following verses.

John 16:9

Ver. 9. Here may arise some doubt, whether these words import that the Holy Ghost should convince the world of sin in general, or of that particular sin of not believing on the Lord Jesus Christ: the first seemeth best to agree with Joh 16:8, where convincing of sin is mentioned, without the addition which we have here; and it also best agreeth with the effect of the Spirit, for the Holy Spirit doth not convince the world of one sin only. The second seemeth to be favoured by the addition of those words, *because they believe not on me*; which yet may be understood only as a particular great instance of sin, of which the Spirit convinceth the world. It was the great sin of that age, that, though Christ was come into the world, and had given such manifest evidence that he was sent of his Father, yet

the generality of the men and women in that part of the world into which he was come, would not receive and embrace him as the true Messiah. Now, saith our Saviour, when I am gone to my Father, I will send the Spirit, and he, by his gifts given to my apostles, saith so convince a great part of the world, that they shall have nothing to say, but be wholly inexcusable in their not receiving me as the true Messiah and Saviour of the world. Others he shall, by his inward influence upon their hearts, so convince of sin in not believing on me, that they shall believe on me, and be saved.

John 16:10

Ver. 10. A second thing of which the Spirit is promised to convince the world, is *righteousness*, by which all interpreters agree is meant the righteousness of Christ. Only some would have it to be understood of Christ's personal righteousness, which is inherent in him; upon which account he is called *the just One*, *the righteous One*, &c. Then the sense is this:

The Jews now say I have a devil, and cast out devils by Beelzebub; they accuse me as an impostor and seducer, call me a friend of publicans and sinners; but when the Holy Spirit which I will send shall come, he shall convince the world that I was a just and righteous person, and not such a one as they have vilely represented me: which was fulfilled in a great measure, Ac 2:1-3:26, when so many were converted and joined to the church.

But the best interpreters understand it of that righteousness of Christ which is communicated to men in justification, of which so much is spoken in holy writ, Isa 53:11 56:1 Jer 23:6 Da 9:24; and in many other texts: so as the Spirit is here promised as instructing the world in that true righteousness by which a soul can be justified; and therein both correcting the errors of the pagan world, who thought the light of nature enough to show them the way to heaven; and also of the Jewish world, who thought the righteousness of the law sufficient; by showing them, that no righteousness would do it but the righteousness of Christ, reckoned unto them for righteousness, and apprehended by faith. Christ's going to his Father, did both evidence him to be a just and righteous person, however

wicked men in the world had represented and traduced him, for his Father would not have received him if he had not been such a person; and also evidence that, as was prophesied of the Messias, Da 9:24, he had finished *the transgression*, *made an end of sin*, *made reconciliation for iniquity*, and brought in *everlasting righteousness*: for it could not be imagined, that he should have an access to his Father before he had finished the work which his Father had given him to do, Joh 17:4.

And (saith our Saviour) *ye see me no more*; that is, after my ascension you shall see me no more; or after my death you shall see me no more, to have any such ordinary converse with me as hitherto you have had: for I shall not ascend to return again to you; but to sit at the right hand of my Father, till I return again to the last judgement.

John 16:11

Ver. 11. The third thing to convince the world of which the Spirit is promised, is *judgment*. There is a great variety amongst interpreters in their senses, what is to be understood by judgment in this text. Mr. Calvin thinks that by it is to be understood a right order of things: the devil, who is the prince of the world, had made a great disorder and confusion in the world; Christ, having judged him, brought in a reformation, and restored things into order again. Others understand the term, of that judicial power which Christ obtained after his ascension into heaven, when the Lord said unto him, *Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool*, Ps 110:1 Ac 2:34,35. Others understand it of that government which Christ exerciseth over and upon the souls of his people, once delivered out of the power of Satan by the obedience of Christ's death. Others understand it of that *all power* given to Christ *in heaven and earth*, mentioned Mt 28:18 Php 2:9,10. Others understand it of that perverse and corrupt judgment which the world exercised upon Christ and his apostles. Others understand it of the judgment of condemnation: the world should by the Spirit be convinced, that they lay in wickedness, and exposed to eternal condemnation, when they should see their father the devil, who arrogates to himself the title of the prince of the world, and exerciseth a tyranny over them, cast out, and overcome.

John 16:12

Ver. 12. Not any new articles of doctrine or faith, for, Joh 15:15, he had told them that he had made known unto them all things which he had heard of the Father of that nature; but some things (probably) which concerned them with reference to their office as apostles, the constitution, state, and government of the church: *but*, saith he, *ye cannot bear them now*; in regard of their passion, or rather of their more imperfect state.

John 16:13

Ver. 13. The word which we here translate *guide*, *οδηγησει*, is a word of great emphasis; it strictly signifieth to be a guide of the way, not only to discover truth as the object of the understanding, but the bowing of the will to the obedience of it. It is said, that the Spirit should *guide* the apostles *into all truth*; that is, all necessary truth, whatsoever Christ had revealed to them, because in their present state they were not able to bear it; whatsoever should be fit for them to know, in order to their planting, ordering, and governing the church of God, which Christ had not, while he was with them acquainted them with; and people were to expect from the apostles, upon whom the Spirit should come in the days of Pentecost, and so influence them, that in those things they should not be at a loss to understand the will of God, which they should communicate unto others. And they ought to look upon what the apostles so revealed, as the mind of Christ; for the Holy Spirit should *not speak merely of himself*, but as from Christ, with whom he was essentially one; as also from the Father: whatsoever the Father and the Son willed he should communicate, that he should reveal to the apostles: and he shall reveal to you *things* that are *to come*, being in you the Spirit of prophecy. The apostles in their Epistles, and in the book of Revelation, showed not indeed all things, but many things which were and are to come to pass.

John 16:14

Ver. 14. That is, he shall make me famous in the world; as by the extraordinary gifts which he shall dispense and give out, so particularly by showing you things to come: for he shall guide and lead you into no other

truth, but that which I have revealed, or which it is my will he should make known and reveal.

John 16:15

Ver. 15. All the Divine essence, wisdom, power, which is in the Father, are mine; I am, in all things that concern the Deity, one and equal with the Father; and that was the reason that I said that he should *take of mine, and show it to you;* which is the same as if I had said, he shall take of my Father's, and shall show it to you; for all that the Father hath is mine; I and my Father are one in essence, wisdom, power, &c.

John 16:16

Ver. 16. I must die, and so for two or three days you shall not see me; but after that you shall see me again, when I shall be risen from the dead: but because of the last words, *because I go to the Father,* which seem to give a reason of the first clause; possibly by the *little while* first mentioned, our Saviour means the whole time from the speaking of those words to his ascension into heaven, for all that time was not more than six weeks; and by the *little while* mentioned in the latter part of the verse, our Saviour intends the whole time from his ascension until his coming to judgment: and so the reason is proper which is added, *because I go unto the Father;* for being so ascended, and sat down at the right hand of God, we are told that there he must sit, till God hath made all his enemies his footstool; and by the apostle, that the last enemy to be destroyed is death; and, Ac 3:21, *Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*

John 16:17

Ver. 17. Christ had used much the same expression to the Jews, Joh 7:33, *Yet a little while I am with you;* he had spoken the same to his disciples, Joh 13:33; yet it is plain from this verse, that his disciples did not understand him. What need the best of us have of the illuminations of the

blessed Spirit, rightly to conceive of and understand spiritual things! These doctrines of his death resurrection, and ascension, and coming to judgment, our Lord had inculcated to his disciples, not only in the two texts aforementioned, but also Joh 8:21 12:33,36 14:2,4,12,28; and in this chapter, Joh 16:5,7.

John 16:18

Ver. 18. Still they do not understand what he meant. Who shall hereafter arrogate to man's reason or understanding a power to comprehend spiritual mysteries? Had not the disciples reasonable souls? Will any say they had no mind to understand them? Certainly none can say so. Some lay the fault of the disciples not understanding these things upon the obscurity of our Saviour's phrase, and his parabolical expression of them, others, in their ignorance of our Saviour's resurrection from the dead; others, in their not understanding the circumstance of time: but certainly it is best imputed to the disciples inability to conceive of these things, and the prejudices of their national error concerning the temporal kingdom of the Messiah. Let it lie where it will, the weakness of the disciples may be reasonably conceived not to be greater than is incident to the best of men; and if they were so dull of hearing and understanding, we may reasonably conceive that we are not free from the like impotency and infirmity.

John 16:19

Ver. 19. In the terms of this verse there is nothing difficult, but in the matter of it there is much instructive. We learn from hence:

1. That though good men may as to some points be ignorant as to the mind and will of God, yet they will be desirous of further instruction in it. To be willingly and contentedly ignorant, is not consistent with a root of saving grace.
2. Christ knows the desires of our hearts, before they are made known to him by the words of our lips; but yet it will not follow, that we may satisfy ourselves with inward, secret desires, without making them known by our lips; for God requireth the calves of our lips, as well as

the desires and groans of our inward man.

3. Christ is very ready to teach those whose hearts he seeth desirous to learn; therefore he saith, *Do ye inquire among yourselves?* &c. Are you inquisitive? I am ready to teach and to instruct you.

John 16:20

Ver. 20. Our Saviour's reply is no literal answer to their question, or exposition of the term which appeared so difficult to them to understand; but yet it is a substantial answer, by which he lets them know, that he should be absent from them for some time, which time would be to them a time of mourning and sadness, as he had before told them; that when the Bridegroom should be taken from them, then they should mourn; that that time would be to the wicked part of the world a time of mirth and jollity: but their sorrow should be turned into joy when they should see him again, both upon his resurrection, and in the general resurrection. The time of this life is the worldling's hour, and for the most part *the power of darkness* to such as love and fear God; but as the worldling's joy shall at last be turned into sorrow, (they *compass themselves about with sparks*, but they shall at last *lie down in sorrow*, Isa 50:11), so the godly man's sorrow shall be turned into joy: Christ will say to the good servant, *Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord*, Mt 25:23.

John 16:21

Ver. 21. Our Lord compares the state of the church in this life, and more especially in those first and most furious times, to the state of a woman that is big with child, and in her travail; when, he saith, she hath sorrow, that is, great pain, because God, when he cursed the woman for her transgression, made this her portion, Ge 3:16, *I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children;* and when her weeks are fulfilled, her hour is come to feel the effect of this curse, the fruit of the first woman's transgression: but no sooner is she delivered of a child, but she forgetteth all her throes and pains, for joy of a child born into the world. Such (saith our Saviour to his disciples) is your state; you are as a woman in travail; so will all those that believe in me be,

to the end of the world.

John 16:22

Ver. 22. The whole church, Re 12:1,2, is compared to a woman with child, crying, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. During this time of your travail you must have sorrow. *All those that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution*, 2Ti 3:12. *It is appointed for all men once to die*, Heb 9:27. It is appointed for God's people (especially under some periods of time) to be dying daily, *killed all the day long*, as the apostle expresses the state of Christians in his time, Ro 8:36, quoting Ps 44:22, which showeth the state of the church in the Old Testament to have been the same. But (saith our Saviour) it is but as the hour of the woman's travail; it will be sharp, very sharp, but it shall be short; for *I will see you again, and then your heart shall rejoice*; which cannot be understood of Christ's seeing them again after his resurrection; for before that time we read of few or no sufferings of the apostles or other disciples. It must therefore be understood, either of the visitation of his Spirit, filling their hearts with joy and peace, or the visitation of his providence: or rather, of Christ's coming to the last judgment, when all that have believed in Christ shall see him with joy unspeakable; and then all tears shall be wiped away from their eyes, and they shall enter into the joy of their Lord, and sigh and sorrow no more, nor shall it be in the power of all their enemies to deprive them of their joy.

John 16:23

Ver. 23. That the day here spoken of is that before mentioned, Joh 16:22, when Christ promised to see them again, and that their hearts should rejoice, is without question; but what that day is (as we before showed) is not so well agreed: some understand it of the general resurrection, when Christ shall come to judgment, when all asking for satisfaction as to any thing of which we doubt shall cease; and this seemeth at first the plainest sense: You shall then be made perfect; as you shall want nothing, so you shall ask nothing, But because of the following words, which plainly refer to the time of this life, others distinguish concerning asking, and by asking here understand, asking by way of question, for further information, not by

way of prayer for supply: and indeed the Greek word enforces that sense; for it is not αἰτησετε, which signifieth to ask or beg, as in prayer; but ερωτησετε, which signifieth to ask for a resolution in case of doubting. Now though it be true, that in the day of judgment, when we shall see Christ as he is, and know God as we are known, we shall have no occasion to ask any questions; yet because the following words speak of an asking in prayer, which is proper to this life, it should seem that the day here mentioned is some time before the last judgment: what that should be, is the question. It is certainly best understood of the time after the effusion or pouring out of the Spirit in the days of Pentecost; of which time it was prophesied by Joel, Joel 2:28, that God would *pour out his Spirit on all flesh; their sons and their daughters should prophesy, their old men should dream dreams, and their young men should see visions, Ac 2:17; and to which time Isaiah had a respect in his prophecy, Isa 11:9, *that the earth should befall of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea*. So as these words, *ye shall ask me nothing in that day*, signify the great light that should, upon the coming down of the Holy Spirit, shine in upon their souls, so that they should no longer have any such doubts as they now had; and sound much the same thing that we have, 1Jo 2:27, *But the anointing (by which is meant the Holy Spirit) which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things*. We must not too rigidly interpret our Saviour's words here, as if they were a promise of such a state in this life, when either the present or succeeding disciples of Christ should be so filled with knowledge, as they should have no further doubts, or need not to ask any thing of Christ, that is, to be resolved in any thing. Our Saviour here speaketh only comparatively, to signify the great difference there would be as to knowledge, between them in their present state, and what should be after the pouring out of the Holy Spirit: they should then fully understand what Christ meant by his saying, *A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father*: and should not need ask him questions about that, or many other things which they were now at a loss about: as Jer 31:34, where the prophet saith, *They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least to the greatest*. It must not be interpreted (as some have done) to signify a needlessness of ministerial teaching; so neither must this text be interpreted to signify a needlessness of an inquiry of Christ for further satisfaction; but only as signifying the vast difference*

in the degrees of knowledge, after the Holy Spirit should be poured forth, from what was even in the best men before that time. In the latter part of the text another word is used, it is not ερωτησετε, but αιτησετε. Our Saviour there plainly speaketh of their asking in prayer; and the promise is, that to supply the defects of their knowledge, and the want of his personal instruction, they should obtain by prayer from the Father all that was necessary for their discharge of the prophetic office, Mt 7:7 15:7 16:24. See Poole on "Mt 7:7". See Poole on "Mt 15:7". See Poole on "Mt 16:24".

John 16:24

Ver. 24. All the prayers of believers under the Old Testament were accepted upon the account of the Mediator, who was typified by the temple, and the ark, where their solemn worship was performed by Divine appointment; but the explicit naming of him was not usual in their requests. Indeed the prophet Daniel enforced his requests for the Lord's sake, which may peculiarly respect the Messiah, the promised Mediator. Our Saviour, in the form of prayer dictated to his disciples, gave no direction of addressing themselves to God in his name. But now he was ready to accomplish the will of his Father, by offering himself as an expiatory sacrifice for sin, and thereby reconciling God to them; and the prevalence of his intercession depending upon his meritorious, all sufficient sufferings, he directs and encourages them to pray with a humble confidence in his name for all the blessings they stand in need of. And it is matter of exceeding joy, that notwithstanding their unworthiness of the least favours, yet they are assured of obtaining their petitions offered up in his name; for the Father was so pleased with his voluntary obedience to the death of the cross, that no blessing is so good or great, but he most willingly bestows for his sake to all humble supplicants.

John 16:25

Ver. 25. That by *proverbs* is meant any dark sayings, is plain from the opposition in the text of that term *plainly*. Christ had spoken, though not all things, yet many things to them in dark phrases, and under many figurative expressions; *but* (saith he) *the time cometh, when I shall show you plainly of the Father*: that time is either Christ's second coming, or

after the pouring out of the Spirit, which latter is most probably what our Saviour doth here intend, because of those great measures of knowledge which at and after that time were given out. He had before given to his disciples *to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven*, far beyond others, Mt 13:11; but yet it appears by Joh 14:1-6, and many other texts, that they had a very confused and imperfect knowledge of the Trinity, and Christ's oneness with the Father, and their mutual personal relation one to another.

John 16:26

Ver. 26. When the Spirit shall come, then you shall fully and clearly understand how to put up your prayers to the Father in my name: hitherto have you done it imperfectly, not fully understanding what you did; but when I shall have poured out my Spirit, then you shall fully understand what it is to pray in my name, and you shall accordingly do it. He doth not deny that he would ask the Father; for the Scripture elsewhere plainly expresses it, Ro 8:34 Heb 7:25; but he only tells them, that he said not so to them; the reason of which he tells us in the next words.

John 16:27

Ver. 27. I need not tell you (to beget in you a confidence that your prayers should be heard) that I will pray to the Father for you; for my Father himself hath such a love for you, that you may from thence alone conclude that he will hear you. And though my Father's love to you be an everlasting love, which hath no cause in the creature; yet as to the manifestations of my Father's love, they are further drawn forth by the love which he seeth you bear to me, and by your receiving me, who am the Messiah, and came forth from God, to perform the work of man's redemption.

John 16:28

Ver. 28. Though I be in the world, yet my original is not from the world; I am one with my Father, equal with him, God blessed forever. I came forth

from him, as one sent in the fulness of time, to discharge the office of the Messiah; the world, the place so called, was neither my original, nor yet is my home. I am presently leaving the world again, and going to my Father.

John 16:29

Ver. 29. Our Saviour having now plainly told them that he was leaving the world, put an end to their inquiries whither he was going, and satisfied them that in his former expressions of going away, not for a while to be seen, he meant no earthly motion: this they confess had no obscurity at all in it; These words are so intelligible, that there is no reason for any of us to ask thee any thing about the sense of them.

John 16:30

Ver. 30. This confirmeth us in that faith, or persuasion, which we before had, though it was in us but weak, that indeed thou art come forth from God.

John 16:31

Ver. 31. Some read the words, (not as a question), You do now believe. It is well you believe at last, you had reason enough to have believed before this time.

John 16:32

Ver. 32. Though you profess that now you do believe, you had need look to your faith; there is yet a trying time coming upon you, when your faith will waver, and you, who have been so long my followers, will leave me to shift for myself, and every one of you shift for yourselves: this came to pass presently after, Mt 26:56. Those who think they stand, had need take heed lest they fall; those who think their faith strongest, ought to be thinking with themselves, what they shall do, how they shall be able to stand, in a day of sharp trial. Many in a calm time appear to be professors

and believers, who, when affliction and persecution ariseth for the gospel's sake, will fall away, and leave Christ alone.

Yet (saith our Saviour) I am not alone, because the Father is with me. No man is alone who hath the presence of God with him. Christ knew that in all his sufferings he should have the presence and assistance of his heavenly Father.

John 16:33

Ver. 33. By *peace* here is not so much to be understood peace with God; which yet we have from Christ, and through Christ, according to Ro 5:1, *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ;* nor yet peace of conscience, which is the copy of our peace with God; as a peace of mind, a quiet, serene, calm temper, which indeed is the effect of the other, as the cause: that you might not to troubled and disturbed, neither for my sake, nor yet for your own. Though in the world ye meet with troubles, which you will certainly do, because the world hateth you, *be of good cheer,* (saith he), *I have overcome the world;* where by *world* is to be understood, all temptations from it, whether from the flatteries or from the frowns and troubles of it. We are said to overcome the world, but we overcome it as soldiers, fighting under Christ, who is the Captain of our salvation, and his victory is our victory, 1Jo 4:4 5:4,5. Christ overcame the prince of the world, and cast him out, as we heard before; and he hath overcome sin, and we in him, in the midst of all tribulations, *are more than conquerors through him that loved us,* Ro 8:37. This was our Saviour's last sermon which we have upon sacred record in holy writ.

John 17:1

Chapter Summary

Joh 17:1-5 Christ prayeth to his Father to glorify him,
Joh 17:6-14 and to preserve his apostles in unity of faith,
Joh 17:15,16 and from all evil,

Joh 17:17-19 and to sanctify them with the word of truth,
Joh 17:20-26 and for the perfect union of all believers, and
their admission to a share of his glory in heaven.

Ver. 1. When our Lord had finished his discourses, of which we have had a large account in Joh 14:1-16:33, he goes to prayer. As he taught us when we pray to direct our petitions to the Father, so in this he setteth us an example; and before he speaketh it is said he *lifted up his eyes to heaven*, as his Father's mansion house who, though he filleth heaven and earth, yet doth in heaven most manifest his glory: and therefore, teaching us to pray, he commandeth us to say, *Our Father which art in heaven*; not exclusively, as if God were not on earth also; but eminently, as heaven is the place where he most gloriously manifests himself. Lifting up the eyes was a usual gesture in prayer, and but an indication of the soul's being lifted up, Ps 121:1 123:1; yet no necessary gesture, for we shall at another time find our Saviour falling upon his face when he prayed, Mt 26:39 Mr 14:35. The lifting up of the soul to God, wherein the main and spiritual part of prayer lies, doth not necessarily require the lifting up of the eyes. The publican cast down his eyes upon the earth, in the sense of his unworthiness. Our Lord lifted up his eyes, and said, *Father, the hour is come*; that is, the hour of my passion, the time wherein thou hast determined that I should die; now make thy Son glorious, by raising me from the dead, by taking me up to heaven, or by giving me assistance from thee to do the work which I have to do, to drink this bitter cup: that so I, being risen again from the dead, and ascending up to heaven, may make thy name famous by publishing thy justice, goodness, and truth, upon the preaching of the gospel to all nations.

John 17:2

Ver. 2. I see no reason for any to contend here, that by *all flesh* the elect only, who shall be eternally saved, are to be understood; Christ's power undoubtedly extendeth further than to the elect, though to them only for salvation; he hath a power over reprobates and unbelievers to condemn them, as well as over his elect, to bring them to eternal life and salvation.

The former part of the text speaketh of the more general power and authority, by which the Father had already made Christ glorious; putting all things under his feet, and causing all knees to bow down unto him; which are other phrases by which the same things are expressed, 1Co 15:27 Php 2:10. This general power our Saviour executeth according to the counsels of God, with respect to their faith or unbelief. As to those given to Christ, that he should die in their stead, and with the price of his blood purchase eternal life for them; Christ executeth his power in giving them eternal life: under which notion (as appeareth from many other scriptures) is comprehended, not the end only, which is eternal life and happiness, but all the necessary means in order to that end; from whence we are to observe, that eternal life is a free gift, that the Son gives only to such as the Father hath given him by his eternal counsels; so that all shall not be saved; for the term *as many as*, &c., is plainly restrictive, and limits the gift to a certain number. And to examine our right to it, we need not ascend up into heaven, to search the rolls of the eternal counsels; for all whom the Father hath given him shall come unto him, and not only receive him as their High Priest, but give up themselves to be ruled and guided by him, by the efficacious working of the Spirit of his grace. By such a receiving of Christ, and giving up of ourselves to his conduct and government, we shall know whether we be of the number of those that are given to Christ; and till we find this, we have no reason to conclude it, but to fear and suspect the contrary.

John 17:3

Ver. 3. Those who deny the Divine nature of Christ, think they have a mighty argument from, this text, where Christ, (as they say), speaking to his Father, calleth him *the only true God*. But divines answer, that the term *only*, or alone, is not to be applied to *thee*, but to the term *God*; and the sense this: To know thee to be that God which is the only true God: and this appeareth from 1Jo 5:20, where Christ is said to be the true God, which he could not be if the Father were the only true God, considered as another from the Son. The term *only*, or alone, is not exclusive of the other two Persons in the Trinity, but only of idols, the gods of the heathen, which are no gods; so 1Ti 6:15,16, and many other Scriptures: so Mt 11:27, where it is said, that *none knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any the Father, save the Son*; where the negative doth not

exclude the Holy Spirit. Besides, the term alone is in Scripture observed not always to exclude all others, as Mr 6:47. Our Saviour saith, it is life eternal to know him who is the only true God, that is, it is the way to eternal life, which is an ordinary figure used in holy writ. He adds, *and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent*; by which he lets us know, that the Father cannot be savingly known, but in and by the Son. Knowing, in this verse, signifies not the mere comprehending of God and of Christ in men's notions; but the receiving Christ, believing in him, loving and obeying him, &c.

John 17:4

Ver. 4. *I have glorified thee on the earth*; by preaching the gospel, by living up to the rule of thy law, by the miracles which I have wrought. God could not be glorified by Christ, by the addition of any thing to his essential glory; only by manifesting to the world his Father's goodness, justice, mercy, truth, wisdom, and other of his attributes. One way by which he had glorified his Father, is expressed, viz. by finishing the work which he had given him in commission. But how could Christ say this, who had not yet died for the sins of men, which was the principal piece of his work?

Answer. It was so nigh, that he speaks of it as already done: so, Joh 17:11, he saith, *I am no more in the world*, because he was to be so little a time in the world. Again, he speaks of what he was fully resolved to do, as if it were already done.

John 17:5

Ver. 5. Let the glory which, as to my Divine nature, I had with thee before the foundation of the world, be communicated also to my human nature, that my whole person may be made glorious. From hence is easily concluded, against those who deny the Godhead of Christ, that Christ was glorified with his Father before the world was, which he could not have been if he had not been eternal God. He here begs of his Father, that that glory might shine upon his person as Mediator.

John 17:6

Ver. 6. Here he openeth this former phrase, *I have glorified thee on the earth*: it was done by manifesting the Lord's name, proclaiming his goodness and mercy, publishing his will, making famous all whereby God can be made known: this Christ did both by his words and by his works. This he had done (as he saith) to all those whom the Father had given him; whom the Father had given him by an act of his eternal counsel, and by inclining their hearts to own and receive him when he came into the world. He tells his Father, that his they were, his chosen ones; and he had given them unto Christ, that he should redeem them with his blood, and take the care of their salvation: and he saith, When I came and revealed thy will unto them, they have not stubbornly and obstinately, as the generality of the Jews, shut their eyes against the light, and rebelled against thy will revealed; but they have heard, received, embraced, and obeyed thy word.

John 17:7

Ver. 7. They have thus far made proficiency in the doctrine which I have taught them; that though the Pharisees say, that *I cast out devils by Beelzebub the prince of devils*, yet they believe, and are persuaded, that the doctrine which I have taught them is from thee, and that it is by a Divine power that I have wrought those miracles which I have wrought; and so I have manifested thy name unto them, and they have received the manifestation and revelation of thy name unto them.

John 17:8

Ver. 8. Our Lord here doth both justify himself, and commend those whom in this former part of his prayer he is commending to his Father. He justifieth himself that he had not delivered any thing to them but what he had from his Father; thereby teaching all those who claim the name of his ministers what is their duty, viz. to give to their hearers no word but what God hath given them. If Christ confined his discourses to words which his Father had given him, certainly we ought to do so also. We are not to speak what we list, nor what men would have us we are tied up to God's

word. He commendeth these his disciples, that they had *received them*; not only the sound of them in their ears, not only the notion of them in their understandings, but they had embraced and believed them; and had, from the force and, authority of them, given credit to him as the true Messias, who *came out* and was sent from God. Though they were not yet come up to a perfect faith in him as the eternal Son of God, yet they believed him one that came from God, and was sent of God as the promised Messias; which seemeth to have been that degree of faith which Christ most insisted upon as to his disciples, until by his resurrection from the dead he declared himself to be the Son of God with power; though all along this Gospel, his discourses, and the miracles which he wrought, had a particular tendency to prove himself one with the Father, and the eternal Son of God; and the disciples had some weak persuasion of this also.

John 17:9

Ver. 9. *The world* seemeth here to signify all mankind, for whom Christ in this place doth not pray; though some interpret it of reprobates, others of unbelievers. Christ afterward prays for the world, Joh 17:20; that is, for such who, though they at present were unbelievers, yet should be brought to believe by the apostles' ministry. But to teach us to distinguish in our prayer, our Saviour here distinguishes, and prays for some things for his chosen ones, which he doth not pray for on the behalf of others: these he describes to be such as his Father (whose they were) had given him, either by an eternal donation, or by working faith in them.

John 17:10

Ver. 10. In the Greek the adjectives are of the neuter gender, so as the sense is not, All my friends, or all my disciples, are thine also; but, All my things are thine, and all thy things are mine; which is no more than he hath before often said. Christ and his Father have all things common, neither of them have any thing that is not the other's: they are one, and they agree in one; they have the same essence, the same will, the same attributes, the same friends.

And I am (saith our Saviour) *glorified*, or made glorious, *in them*, by their

owning, receiving, and embracing me, and accepting me as their Saviour. So as this verse containeth two arguments more, enforcing his petition on the behalf of his elect:

1. His Father's propriety in them, as well as his.
2. Their love to him, and the glory which redounded to him from their faith and holiness.

John 17:11

Ver. 11. The term *world* in this verse signifies not the men of the world, nor any particular party of them, (as it often signifies), but the habitable part of the earth. Our Saviour saith he is *no more in the world*, because he was to continue on the earth but a very small time; *but* (saith he) *these* any disciples *are* like to abide *in the world* when I have left it; they will stand in need of this help, to be armed against all the temptations they will meet with from the world. I am coming to thee, therefore I commend them to thee, beseeching thee, that thou through thy power wouldst keep those, who, in giving themselves up to me, have also given themselves up to thee; let their owning thy name (which is as a strong tower, Pr 18:10) keep them from all the temptations and dangers to which they will be exposed in the world, wherein they are to live and converse; *that they may be one*, one body, and in one Spirit: that they may own one Lord, one faith, one baptism, &c.; that they may be one in love and affection, *as we are*; in some proportion to that union which is between thee and me, though not in an equality. This prayer of our Saviour's doth both oblige all those who in any sincerity own Christ, to study union both in opinion and affection; and also give us ground of hopes, that there is a time coming, when there shall be greater measure of it than we have seen in those miserably divided times wherein we have lived, and do yet live.

John 17:12

Ver. 12. Christ speaks here of himself as one who had already died, was risen, and ascended, though none of all these things were past, because they were so suddenly to come to pass. I have, (saith our Saviour), for all

the time that I have abode in the world, and conversed with them, *kept them in thy name*, i.e. in the steady owning and profession of thy truth; or (if we read it, through thy name) it signifieth through thy power, and the influence of thy grace. I have not so kept all that came to hear me, but all *those* whom thou gavest me by the act of thy eternal counsel; or *whom thou gavest me* to be my apostles: and none of them is proved an apostate, but *the son of perdition*: none of them is lost whom thou gavest me by thy eternal gift, none of them whom thou gavest me to be my apostles, but one who, though he was my apostle, and in that sense given to me, yet was never given me by thy eternal gift, as one to be by me redeemed, and brought to eternal life and salvation; for he was a *son of perdition*: we have this term applied to antichrist, 2Th 2:3. As *the son of death*, 2Sa 12:5, signifies one appointed to die, or that deserveth to die; and *the child of hell*, Mt 23:15, signifieth one who deserveth hell; so *the son of perdition* may either signify one destined to perdition, or one that walketh in the high and right road to perdition, or rather both; one who being passed over in God's eternal counsels, as to such as shall be saved, hath by his own wilful apostasy brought himself to eternal perdition, or into such a guilt as I know thou wilt destroy him. And by this the Holy Scripture is fulfilled, Ps 109:8, for that is the portion of Scripture here intended, as is apparent from Ac 1:20, where the apostle applies that text to Judas, who is here spoken of. Other scriptures also were thus fulfilled, as Ps 41:9, compared with Joh 13:18.

John 17:13

Ver. 13. He speaketh still in the present tense. These words were not fulfilled six weeks after this, for he conversed with his disciples forty days after his resurrection, Ac 1:3; but Christ was now shortly coming, therefore he saith, I come. And, saith he, while I am in the world, *I speak these things*; I put up this prayer, that the joy of my people may not be diminished by my going from them, but that when they can no longer (as hitherto) rejoice in my bodily presence with them, they may yet rejoice that I am ascended to my Father, that they stand commended to the care of thee, my Father, by this my last prayer.

John 17:14

Ver. 14. I take more to be understood here, by Christ's giving his word unto his disciples, than his preaching the gospel in their ears: otherwise Christ had no more given these his disciples his word, than he had given it to many thousands of others who were yet in the world, and whom the world hated not. The sense therefore is, I have not only preached thy word in their ears, but I have opened their hearts to receive and believe it and bowed their wills to a compliance with it; so as the word dwelleth in their hearts, is ingrafted in them, and they are turned into the likeness of it. And here it is observable, that when any soul is given to Christ by his Father, Christ will most certainly, first or last, give unto that soul his word in that sense; that is, so as it shall receive, believe it, and be turned into the likeness of it. And for this *the world hath hated them*, for thy word hath made them to be of another spirit from carnal, loose, and worldly men; they have other affections, other inclinations, other designs and studies; *they are not of the world* in that respect *as I am not of the world*: though in other respects not so; for Christ, as to his original, was not of the world, which they were, *of the earth, earthy*.

John 17:15

Ver. 15. Christ doth not pray that his Father would take up his saints out of this sinful and troublesome world into heaven, because he knew that they were to be of use to him for a time in the world; but he prays that the Lord would keep them from the evil one, (so some would have it translated), or from the evil thing; by which we must not understand what is penally and afflictively evil, but only what is sinfully evil: and by his example he hath directed us how we ought to pray; not for death, nor absolutely for a deliverance from the evils and miseries of this life; but that we may be delivered from those temptations to sin, to which a multitude of sharp trials and afflictions will expose even the best of men.

John 17:16

Ver. 16. This is the same thing which he had said before, Joh 17:14, which he again repeateth, either to fix it in their memories, that they, calling it to

their minds, might direct their lives accordingly, or be thereby fortified against the hatred and malice of the world; for which purpose he told them so before, Joh 15:19, and again in this chapter, Joh 17:14: See Poole on "Joh 17:14".

John 17:17

Ver. 17. It is doubted amongst interpreters, whether sanctifying in this place signifieth the consecrating, deputing, or setting the apostles apart, and preparing them for the work of the ministry in which they were to be employed, as the word signifies, Jer 1:5; or the strengthening and confirming their habits of grace, so as they might be able to encounter the temptations they should meet with from the hatred or opposition of the world; or the perfecting of them in holiness. Mr. Calvin saith our Saviour here prayeth that God would appropriate them unto himself. And he showeth how this is done, *through*, or in, *thy truth*; that is, some say, through thy truth engraven and imprinted upon their hearts by thy Holy Spirit, which was promised to lead and to guide them into all truth, Joh 16:13: say others, through thy Spirit, which indeed is the Sanctifier; and we have met with twice, called, *the Spirit of truth*, Joh 14:17. Some say, *Sanctify them through thy truth*, is no more than, Sanctify them truly, in opposition to that legal sanctification of priests, &c., of which we read in the books of Exodus and Leviticus. Others would have it, to thy truth, that is, to the preaching of thy gospel. But our translation seems to come nearest the meaning; *through thy truth*, that is, through the knowledge of thy truth; as the Gentiles are said to have had their hearts purified by faith, Ac 15:9. He opens what he meant by *truth*, adding, *thy word is truth*; that is, thy word and gospel, which I have preached to them, is truth (the abstract, as some think, for the concrete); that is, it is most true: it is not like the doctrine of false prophets, nor like the doctrine of the Pharisees, which is partly true, partly false; but it is truth itself: and though indeed it is the blood of Christ which cleanseth and purifieth the heart, yet this is applied to the conscience by the Spirit, which is the Sanctifier, in and through the word of God preached and applied to the soul.

John 17:18

Ver. 18. That is: My Father, they have not thrust themselves into their employment, they have not run without sending; for as I am thine apostle, as I was sent by thee, so I have sent them. The apostles indeed were not sent for the same end in all things that Christ was sent; who was sent to purchase salvation for men, as well as to preach the gospel: but they were sent in part for the same work for which Christ was sent, and they were sent by him who had authority to send them; and as it is but reasonable for princes to protect those whom themselves send upon their embassies, so it was but reasonable that God should defend and protect those whom his Son had sent out as his ambassadors.

John 17:19

Ver. 19. *I sanctify myself,* here, is no more than, I set myself apart, as a sacrifice acceptable and well pleasing in the sight of God: and indeed sanctifying, in the ancient notion of it under the law, did ordinarily signify the setting of persons and things apart to the special service of God; which was done legally by certain ritual performances and ceremonies, and is still done inwardly and spiritually by regeneration, and renewing of the hearts of men and women by the efficacious working of the Holy Ghost. Christ saith, that for his disciples sake he sanctified himself, being both the Priest and the sacrifice.

Christ set apart himself as a sacrifice for his people, *that they might be sanctified:* not only our eternal life and happiness, but all the means to it, fell within the counsel of God; hence we are said to be chosen of Christ, *that we should be holy and without blame before him in love,* Eph 1:4; and within the purchase of Christ: hence the apostle saith, Eph 5:25,26, that he *gave himself for his church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water:* and our Saviour here saith, that he set apart himself for a sacrifice for our sins, that his *people might be sanctified through the truth;* that is, by receiving the truth, not in their ears only, but in their hearts, in the love of it, and bringing forth the fruits of it in all holiness of life and conversation.

John 17:20

Ver. 20. Three things are evident from this verse.

1. That Christ did not pray for any reprobates, not for any that were and should die unbelievers: he prayed before for those who actually did believe; he prays here for them that should believe; but we never read that he prayed for any others. Now whether he laid down his life for those for whom he would not pray, lies upon them to consider, who are so confident that he died for all and every man.
2. That by persons given to Christ, cannot be understood believers as such; for Christ here prays for those that were not actual believers, but should believe.
3. That faith cometh by hearing; Christ here prays for those that should believe *through their word*, that is, the apostles preaching the gospel.

John 17:21

Ver. 21. Our Saviour here prays on the behalf of such as should believe on him, that they might be one in faith, and one in brotherly love. Whoso considereth this as a piece of Christ's prayer for believers, and that St. Paul hardly wrote one epistle to the primitive apostolical churches in which he did not press this by most potent argument, cannot but nourish some hopes, (how improbable soever it appears at present), that all the sincere disciples of Christ shall one day arrive at the keeping of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and likewise look upon themselves in point of duty obliged to endeavour it. To which pitch of perfection possibly Christians might soon arrive, if superiors would, after the example of the apostle, Ac 15:28, lay upon their inferiors no more than *necessary things*; and equals would learn to contend for truth in love, and to walk with their brethren so far as they have attained; and as to other things, to forbear one another in love; and wherein any of their brethren are otherwise minded, then they are to wait till God shall reveal it to them, Php 3:15. But this is not all the union which Christ prays for; he also prays that they might be one in the Father and the Son; that is, that they might believe; for faith is that grace by which we are united to, and made one with, God and Christ; though others interpret it of obedience, or such things wherein God the Father and Christ are one, &c. For although so many as are ordained to life

shall believe, yet that they might believe is matter of prayer: this our Saviour prays for, for the further glory of God, which is that which he meaneth by the world's believing that God had sent him; there being no greater evidence that Christ is the true Messiah, than the general acceptance of the doctrine of the gospel, which he brought throughout the world; for who can imagine, that a new doctrine brought into the world by one of no greater reputation than Christ had in the world, and propagated by persons of no greater quality than the apostles were, should obtain in the greatest part of the world, if he that first introduced it had not been first sent by God into the world, and the apostles had not been extraordinarily influenced and assisted by God as to the propagation of it, after Christ was ascended into heaven?

John 17:22

Ver. 22. By *glory* here some understand the heavenly glory; but then they must understand the oneness mentioned in the latter part of the verse, of the union which the saints shall have with Christ and his Father in glory, in another world. Others understand the Divine nature, of which the apostle in, 2Pe 1:4, saith, believers are made partakers: this seemeth to come nearer, for the more men and women are made partakers of that, the more they will study the unity of the Spirit. Others understand the power of working miracles, by which Christ is said to have *manifested his glory*, Joh 2:11; and the effect of this power is called *the glory of God*, Joh 11:40. Others understand the preaching of the gospel, in which *the ministration of the Spirit is glorious*, 2Co 3:8; and the faithful ministers of the gospel are called *the glory of Christ*, 2Co 8:23. *That they may be one, even as we are one*; our Saviour either again repeats his prayer, that they might be one; or else declareth that he had communicated his power, his glory to them, that they might be one, as he and his Father are one.

John 17:23

Ver. 23. *I in them*; not only as my Divine nature is united to their flesh, but as I have made them partakers of my Spirit, and of the Divine nature; as I have loved them with a special and peculiar love, and am the head, they the members; I the vine, they the branches.

And thou in me, the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in me bodily; I being the brightness of thy glory, the express image of thy person; thou also doing whatsoever I do, and accepting and approving of it, as Joh 14:10.

That they may be made perfect in one; the Greek is, εἰς ἓν, into one; in one body, whereof Christ is the Head; which body is the church, keeping a unity of faith; all believing the same things in matter of faith, and those things no other than what thou hast revealed, and I have revealed as from thee. This, O Father, will be a great evidence, both that thou hast sent me, when the world shall see thee bowing men's hearts to the obedience of the truth of thy gospel; and that thou hast loved them with a tender and everlasting love, as thou hast loved me.

John 17:24

Ver. 24. Here our Saviour wills his disciples eternal life; or rather prays to his Father, that he would preserve his disciples unto, and at last bestow upon them, eternal life and salvation; so as the phrase, *whom thou hast given me*, is not to be restrained to the apostles, but to be extended to all those who, belonging to the election of grace, shall hereafter be made heirs of glory, and have everlasting life and happiness. This he expresses under the notion of being with him where he is, as Joh 14:3; which is called a being *ever with the Lord*, 1Th 4:17; and certainly this is the highest happiness, to be where the Son of God is.

That they may behold my glory, is the same thing with, that they may be made partakers of my glory: as to see death, is, in Scripture phrase, to die; and to see life, is to live; so, to behold the glory of God, is to be glorified.

For, saith our Saviour, *thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world*, both as thy only begotten Son, and as the person in whom thou hast chosen all them, and whom thou hast set apart to be the Mediator between God and man; and therefore I know that thou wilt glorify me, and that thou wilt in this thing hear my prayers, and glorify them also, whom thou hast given to me to be redeemed by my blood.

John 17:25

Ver. 25. It is observed, that the servants of God, in holy writ, have used in their prayers to give unto God such compellations as have been suitable to the things which they have begged of God in their prayers, and proper to express their faith in God, for the hearing of such their prayers: Christ here calls his Father by the name of *righteous*, with relation to the argument which he here useth, which is from his disciples knowledge of him; under which term (as very often before) is comprehended their acceptance of him, believing in him, love to him, &c. Father, saith he, thou art righteous; it is a piece of thy righteousness to *render to every man according to his work*, Job 34:11 Ps 62:12 Pr 24:12.

The world hath not known thee; the men of the world hate thee, are ignorant of thee, rebellious against thee;

but I have known thee; I have known thee, and have made thee known, and I have been obedient to thy will; and these my disciples have known me, and known, that is, received, embraced me, as one sent by thee, as the Messiah.

John 17:26

Ver. 26. By the *name* of God, is to be understood God himself, and whatsoever God hath made himself known by his word and gospel, his attributes and perfections. And after my resurrection, I will yet further declare it to them, who are yet in a great measure ignorant and imperfect in their notions of thee; that thy love wherewith thou hast loved me may be further communicated to them, and be derived to them, and abide in and upon them for ever; because I am in them (so some would have it read, though the word be *καγω*, which properly is, *and I*, as we translate it). The words are but a repetition of what our Lord hath often said, and illustrated in, Joh 15:9, by the parable of the vine and the branches; and teach us this lesson, that Christ must be in those souls who can pretend to any share in that love of God wherewith he hath loved Christ: *Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?* 2Co 13:5.

John 18:1

Chapter Summary

Joh 18:1-9 Judas betrayeth Jesus: the officers and soldiers at

Christ's word fall to the ground.

Joh 18:10,11 Peter cutteth off Malchus's ear.

Joh 18:12-14 Jesus is led bound to Annas and Caiaphas.

Joh 18:15-18 Peter denieth him.

Joh 18:19-24 Jesus is examined by the high priest, and struck by

one of the officers.

Joh 18:25-27 Peter denieth him the second and third time.

Joh 18:28-40 Jesus, brought before Pilate, and examined,

confesses his kingdom not to be of this world;

Pilate, testifying his innocence, and offering to

release him, the Jews prefer Barabbas.

Chapter Introduction

Having so largely discoursed the history of our Saviour's passion, See Poole on "Mt 26:1", and following verses to Mt 26:71, See Poole on "Mt 27:1", and following verses to Mt 27:66, where (to make the history entire) we compared what the other evangelists also have about it; I shall refer the reader to the notes upon those two chapters, and be the shorter in the notes upon this and the following chapters.

Ver. 1. Matthew hath nothing of those discourses, and prayer, which we have had in the four last chapters; no more have any of the other evangelists, who yet all mention his going into the mount of Olives, after his celebration of his last supper, Mt 26:30 Mr 14:26 Lu 22:39. Our evangelist saith, he went over the brook Cedron into a garden. The others say nothing of a garden, but mention his coming to a place called

Gethsemane. It is probable that this village was at the foot of Mount Olivet; and the garden mentioned was a garden near that village, and belonging to it (for they had not their gardens within their towns, but without): now the way to this was over the brook Cedron; of which brook we read, 2Sa 15:23; David passed over it when he fled from Absalom; and 1Ki 2:37, where it is mentioned as Shimei's limit, which he might not pass. This brook was in the way towards the mount of Olives; which being passed, he with his disciples went into a garden belonging to the town Gethsemane.

John 18:2

Ver. 2. We read that Christ, when he was at Jerusalem, was wont at night for privacy to retire to the mount of Olives, Lu 21:37 22:39 and it should seem that he was wont ordinarily to go to this garden, which made Judas know the particular place where he might find him.

John 18:3

Ver. 3. The evangelist here passeth over all mentioned by the other evangelists about Judas's going to the high priests, and contracting with them, and cometh to relate his coming to apprehend him with a band of men that he had obtained from the chief priests and Pharisees for that purpose. By *band* we must not understand a Roman cohort, as the word signifies, but such a convenient number out of that band (probably) which at the time of the passover guarded the temple, as was sufficient to take him: they came with *lanterns and torches*, (though it were the time of full moon), to make the strictest search; and with *weapons*, fearing where no fear was; for Judas (their leader) could have told them that he was not wont to go with any great company to the mount of Olives.

John 18:4

Ver. 4. This evangelist saith nothing of what the other evangelists mention, of the sign that Judas had given them, by which they should know him; nor of Judas's kissing of him, or our Saviour's reply to him. (John, all along

his Gospel, mentions very little of what is recorded by the other evangelists). It must be supposed, that after Judas had kissed our Saviour, our Saviour himself came forth and asked him whom they looked for; hereby showing that he laid down his life, and no man took it from him: he could easily have delivered himself out of their hands, (though I think they are too charitable to Judas, who think that it was that which made Judas discover him; not that he designed his death), he had once and again before so escaped them; but now his hour was come, he freely offers himself unto his enemies, and asketh whom they looked for.

John 18:5

Ver. 5. They tell him, *Jesus of Nazareth*. Christ was born in *Bethlehem of Judea*, Mt 2:1; but his father and mother lived at Nazareth, a city of Galilee, Lu 2:4,39, where he lived with them, Lu 2:51; hence he was called *Jesus of Nazareth*, from the place where he lived, and most ordinarily conversed. Mt 21:11 Mt 26:71 Mr 1:24 10:47 14:67 16:6. Christ replies that he was the man; and it is particularly noted, that Judas was with this armed company.

John 18:6

Ver. 6. For a further evidence to the world that Christ was the Son of the Everlasting Father, it pleased God in all the periods of his life to show forth by him some acts of the Divine power. What had Christ said or done here to prostrate his armed adversaries? He had only asked them whom they looked for; and hearing that it was for him, told them he was the man: they are struck with a terror, and instead of apprehending him, start from him, and fall down to the ground. If there were so much majesty in and such an effect of the voice of Christ in one of the lowest acts of his humiliation, what will the voice of a glorified Christ be to sinners, when he shall return as a Judge to condemn the world! And what will the effect of that be upon his enemies! How easily might our Saviour have escaped, now that his enemies were fallen to the ground! But he suffered them to rise up again, to take him, and to carry him away, to show that he had laid down his life freely.

John 18:7

Ver. 7,8. Our Saviour's question, and their answer, are the same as before. They fell down, but they rose up again, and go on in their wicked purpose. This is the genius of all sinners; they may be under some convictions and terrors, but they get out of them, if God doth not concur by his Spirit, and sanctify them as means to make a thorough change in their hearts. Though those words, *let these go their way*, might be interpreted of the armed men that came with the officers, of whom there seemed no such need to carry away an unarmed man; yet the next words make it evident that they are to be understood of his disciples, being persons against whom they had no warrant. Our Lord hath a care of his disciples, that they might not suffer with him.

John 18:9

Ver. 9. But were those words of our Saviour, *Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none*, to be understood as to a temporary losing, or of an eternal destruction? Some of the ancients were of opinion, that they were to be understood of a losing with reference to a spiritual and eternal state; but that they were applicable also to a losing as to this life. I think that they are applicable to both, and that in this text they are primarily to be understood of a losing as to a temporal death and destruction. It was Christ's purpose, that eleven of his twelve apostles should outlive him, receive the promise of the Father in the pouring out of the Spirit, and be his instruments to carry the gospel over a great part of the world: this they could not have done had they been put to death at this time; he therefore resolved not to lose them in this sense, but to uphold and preserve their lives, for these ends to which he had designed them; and therefore he said to these officers, *You have the person whom ye seek for; for these my disciples, you have nothing against them, let them go away: and by his power upon their hearts he effected it, so that they had a liberty to forsake him, and to flee and to shift for themselves.*

John 18:10

Ver. 10. It is thought that this action of Peter's was before the apprehension of our Saviour, though after the discovery of it, as our evangelist reports it; because upon the apprehension of our Saviour, both Mt 26:56, and Mr 14:50, agree, that the disciples fled; and it can hardly be thought that if Peter had seen his Master apprehended he would have adventured upon so daring and provocative an action; nor could Christ, had he been first bound, have stretched out his hand, to have touched his ear, and healed it. Lest any should wonder how Peter came by a sword, we may read, Lu 22:38, that the disciples had *two swords* amongst them, probably brought out of Galilee for the defence of themselves and their Master against assaults from robbers in that long journey.

John 18:11

Ver. 11. The other evangelists report this part of the history with many more circumstances; particularly our Saviour's miraculous healing Malchus again; See Poole on "Mt 26:51", and following verses to Mt 26:54. See Poole on "Mr 14:47", and following verses to Mr 14:49. See Poole on "Lu 22:50". See Poole on "Lu 22:51". With what pretence some, both of the ancient and modern writers, think that Peter did not sin in this action, I do not understand, when our Saviour did not only (as John saith) command him to put up his sword again into its sheath, but also (as Matthew tells us, Mt 26:52) told him, that *all they that take the sword*, that is, without commission from God, *shall perish with the sword*. He used that argument, according to the other evangelists. This evangelist tells us of another, *The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* That is, shall I not freely and cheerfully submit to the will of God in suffering what he willeth me to suffer? The term *cup* is often in Scripture used to signify people's measure and proportion of affliction and suffering, which God allots them; (possibly the metaphor is taken from the custom of some nations, to put some kinds of malefactors to death by giving them a cup of poison); See Poole on "Mt 20:22", See Poole on "Mt 26:39". It is a good argument to quiet our spirits roiled by any afflictive providences: they are but a cup, and the cup our Father hath given us.

John 18:12

Ver. 12. As is usual for officers to do with ordinary malefactors which are great criminals; they put no difference between Christ and the most villanous thieves and murderers. There are many conjectures why Christ was first led to Annas, whereas Caiaphas was the high priest that year, not Annas (as the next words tell us); but it is uncertain whether it was because his house was very near, and in the way to Caiaphas's house, or that he lived in the same house with his son in law; or out of an honour and respect to him, being the high priest's father, or to please the old man's peevish eyes with such a sight, or by this means to draw Annas to the trial of Christ, or because he had had a more than ordinary hand about the apprehending him, or to take direction from him what to do: we cannot give a certain account why they used this method; we are only certain they did it, and that they did not carry him before him as high priest; for the next words tell us ...(see Joh 18:13).

John 18:13

Ver. 13. That his son in law Caiaphas was the high priest that year; which we had also before, Joh 11:51, where we discoursed more largely about the disorder of the Jews, in that most corrupt time, when that place was bestowed without regard to the family of Aaron, and bought and sold, or conferred at the will of their conquerors. See Poole on "Joh 11:51".

John 18:14

Ver. 14. Of his giving that counsel, and the wickedness of it, (though it proved an oracle beyond his intention), we discoursed before: See Poole on "Joh 11:51". The meaning of the high priest was, that right or wrong, whether they had any just accusation against Christ or no, yet they might for expediency put him to death, because his death might prevent mutinies and seditions amongst the people.

John 18:15

Ver. 15. When Christ was apprehended, the other evangelists tell us, *all the disciples forsook him and fled;* but it should seem that Peter, who all along the gospel history hath appeared more forward, and bold, and daring than any of the rest, came back; but who that other disciple was that went in with him, and in favour of whom Peter was admitted, we are not told. It is but a conjecture of those who think that it was John, for John was a Galilean as well as Peter, and would have been as much to be questioned upon that account as Peter was. They judge more probably who think it was the master of the house where Christ had ate the passover, and celebrated his supper; or some person of note in Jerusalem, who by reason of his reputation might have more free access to the chief magistrate than one of the apostles, who were but mean persons in the account of the Jews. This disciple, whoever he was, was one that had some familiarity and acquaintance with Caiaphas, which it is no way probable that either John or any of the apostles had.

John 18:16

Ver. 16. This further confirmeth the conjecture of those, who think that other disciple was none of the apostles, but a favourer of Christ, that lived in Jerusalem, and was of some repute either for estate or place; so as he had not only an acquaintance with the high priest, but also with his family; and could gain admittance into his palace, not only for himself but also for his friend.

John 18:17

Ver. 17. This is Peter's first denial of his Master; between which and his second denial (of which John saith nothing till he comes to Joh 18:26) the evangelist interposes many things not mentioned by the other evangelists.

John 18:18

Ver. 18. Here is nothing in this verse which needeth any explication, unless any should ask how it could be cold weather at that time of the year, (about April 14), especially in a country where it now was the time of

harvest? Which may easily be resolved. It was now about three of the clock in the morning, and we know that in summer (the spring especially) nights are cold; besides that in those countries that are more equinoctial, the nights are longer, and consequently colder towards the morning, as the air hath had more time to cool.

John 18:19

Ver. 19. Questions about sedition or rebellion belonged not to the judge of this court, but fell under the cognizance of the Roman governor, they being now a conquered people, and tributary to the Romans; who, though themselves heathens, granted the Jews their liberty as to religion, and courts in order there unto; as also a liberty of courts for civil causes: the high priest therefore saith nothing to Christ about his being a King, but only inquires of him about his doctrine. What particular questions he propounded to him we do not read; only in general he inquired about the doctrine he had preached, and the disciples he had sent out, which was one and the same cause, to see if he could bring him under the guilt of a false prophet; for that, and blasphemy, and idolatry, were three principal causes that fell under the cognizance of this court, as appeareth from De 13.

John 18:20

Ver. 20. *I spake openly to the world;* to all sorts of men, my enemies as well as my friends.

I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; the Jews for instruction do use to resort to the temple, which was in Jerusalem, and whither three times in the year all the males were wont to come from all parts of the country: and in the public assemblies of the Jews, and in the places where they use to meet.

And in secret have I said nothing; I have said nothing in secret contrary to the doctrine which I have publicly taught; though I have preached in other places, yet it hath been the same thing which I have said in public.

John 18:21

Ver. 21. We are told by those that have written about the Jewish order in their courts of judgment, that their capital causes always began with the defensive part; and that it was lawful for any to speak for the defendants for a whole day together; (though they did not observe this in the cause of Christ); and their method was not to put the defendants to accuse themselves, but to examine witnesses against them. Our Saviour therefore appeals to their own order, and says, *Why askest thou me?* It was, saith he, no secret action; I spake publicly, ask them that heard me speak; they know what doctrine I preached, and can accuse me if I delivered any false doctrine.

John 18:22

Ver. 22. This lets us see in what indecent disorder the Jewish government was at this time, that an inferior officer dared to strike a supposed criminal, standing before the judgment seat, and defending himself by their own known rules and methods; for what had our Saviour said or done, more than making use of the liberty their own law allowed; not confessing any thing against himself, but putting them upon the proof of what they laid to his charge? Yet we read of no notice taken of this disorder.

John 18:23

Ver. 23. Our Saviour could easily have revenged himself upon this officer; but, to teach us our duty, he only gently reproves him, and lets him know that he did not behave himself as one ought to do in the face of a court of justice, where he had both a liberty and a present opportunity to have accused him, if he had spoken ill; and if he had spoken well, there was no reason for his striking him.

John 18:24

Ver. 24. These words are only to let us know, that these things were not done before Annas, but before Caiaphas the high priest, to whom (as to his

proper judge) Annas had sent him bound, as he was at first brought to him.

John 18:25

Ver. 25-27. This history of Peter's denial of his Master the second time we have before met with, Mt 26:71,72 Mr 14:69,70; Lu 22:58,59, with several circumstances not mentioned by John. See Poole on "Mt 26:69".

John 18:28

Ver. 28. The chief priests having in their sanhedrim done with our Saviour's case, and judged him worthy of death, as we read, Mt 26:66 Mr 14:64; which two evangelists, with Luke, relate this history of Christ's trial before the sanhedrim, with many more circumstances than John doth; they now lead him from the ecclesiastical court to the court of the civil magistrate; either kept in Pilate's house, who was then present civil governor under the Romans, or some where at least where he sat as judge, which was therefore called *the hall of judgment*. *And it was early*; how early it was we cannot tell, but probably about five or six of the clock. The Jews would not go into the judgment hall, that they might not be defiled, for they accounted it a legal pollution and uncleanness to come into a heathen's house, or to touch any thing which a heathen had touched: now the reason is assigned why they were afraid of contracting any legal pollution, viz. that they might the passover.

Object. But had they not eaten the passover the night before? That was the time prescribed by the law, to the letter of which there is no doubt but that our Saviour strictly kept himself.

Answer. Some say that they had not, because the day wherein they should have eaten it this year falling the day before their sabbath, the passover was put off to be kept on the sabbath, that two great festivals might not be kept two days successively; so as, though our Saviour kept it at the time appointed by the law, yet the Jews did not. But this is denied by other very learned then, who tell us the Jews never altered their day for keeping their

passover, neither for the succeeding sabbath, nor any other reason. They say therefore, that by *the passover* which is mentioned in this verse is to be understood the feast, mentioned Nu 28:17, which was to be kept *the fifteenth day*, which day was a day of great solemnity with them from the morning to the evening; all the seven days they also offered various sacrifices, which all went under the name of the passover, because they followed in the days of the paschal feast. Thus the term *passover* is taken, De 16:2, *Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto the Lord thy God, of the flock and the herd*. According to this notion, the meaning of those words, *that they might eat the passover*, is, that they might proceed in their paschal solemnity, keeping the feast according to the law. Be it as it will, these hypocrites in it notoriously discovered their hypocrisy, scrupling what caused a legal uncleanness, and not at all scrupling either immediately before their eating the passover, or presently after it, in their great festival to defile themselves with the guilt of innocent blood; nay, had Christ been such a malefactor as they pretended, yet the bringing him into judgment, their prosecuting, and accusing, and condemning him, and assisting in his crucifying, were not works fit for the day before such a solemnity, or the day after it, which was so great a festival: but there is nothing more ordinary, than for persons over zealous as to rituals, to be as remiss with reference to moral duties.

John 18:29

Ver. 29. The Roman governor humours them in their superstition (the Romans having granted them the liberty of their religion): they scruple to go into the ordinary place of judgment; he goes out to them, and calls for their *accusation* of Christ, according to the ordinary and regular course of judgments.

John 18:30

Ver. 30. They had in their sanhedrim before judged him guilty of blasphemy, Mt 26:65, but this they durst not mention, lest Pilate should have rejected them, as being not concerned in questions of their law; they therefore only exclaimed against him in the general as a great malefactor, but of what kind they do not say. It should seem they would have had

Pilate have added his civil authority to confirm and execute their ecclesiastical censure, without so much as hearing any thing of the cause (as at this day frequent in popish countries); but they met with a more equal judge.

John 18:31

Ver. 31. *Take ye him, and judge him according to your law;* I will judge no man before myself first hear and judge of his crime; you have a law amongst yourselves, and a liberty to question and judge men upon it, proceed against him according to your law. They reply, *It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.* We are assured by such as are exercised in the Jewish writings, that the power of putting any to death was taken away from the Jews forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem. Some say it was not taken away by the Romans, but by their own court. They thought it so horrid a thing to put an Israelite to death, that wickedness of all sorts grew to such a height amongst them, through the impunity, or too light punishment, of criminals, that their courts durst not execute their just authority. And at last their great court determined against the putting any to death; nor (as they say) was any put to death by the Jews, but in some popular tumult, after their court had prejudiced the person by pronouncing him guilty of blasphemy, or some capital crime; which seemeth the case of Stephen, Ac 7:1-60.

John 18:32

Ver. 32. Christ had before this time told his disciples that he should die, and that by the death of the cross, as we read, Mt 20:19. God by his providence ordereth things accordingly, to let us know that the Scripture might be fulfilled to every tittle. Crucifying was no Jewish but a Roman death; had the Jews put him to death, they would have stoned him; but he must remove the curse from us, by being made *a curse for us*, being *hanged on a tree*, which was looked upon as an accursed death, Ga 3:13. The Jews therefore knowing nothing of this counsel of God, yet execute it by refusing themselves to put him to death, and putting it off to Pilate, though possibly their design was but to avoid the odium of it. Thus God maketh the wrath of men to praise him.

John 18:33

Ver. 33. *Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again,* the ordinary place of judicature, from whence we read before he went out, in civility to the Jews, whose superstition (as we before heard) kept them from going there during the festival. He called Jesus to him privately, and asks him, if he owned himself to be the *King of the Jews*? The confessing of which (for without doubt they had suggested some such thing to Pilate, and could not prove it) had brought Christ under Pilate's power, he being governor for the Romans, and so concerned to inquire upon any that pretended to any regal power over that conquered people.

John 18:34

Ver. 34. Our Saviour neither affirms nor denies: though we are bound, whenever we speak, to speak the truth, yet we are not bound at all times to speak the whole truth. Our Saviour desireth to be satisfied from Pilate, whether he asked him as a private person for his own satisfaction, or as a judge, having received any such accusation against him? For if he asked him as a judge, he was bound to call them to the proof of what they had charged him with.

John 18:35

Ver. 35. The sum of this is no more than that he did not devise this captious question, for he was no Jew, not concerned in nor regarding what they had in their books of the law and the prophets; but he was accused to him by those of his own nation, and he was desirous to find out the truth, and to know what he had done.

John 18:36

Ver. 36. *My kingdom is not of this world;* that is, I cannot deny but that I am the King of the Jews, but not in the sense they take it, not such a king

as they look for in their Messiah; my kingdom is spiritual, over the hearts and minds of men, not earthly and worldly. And of this thou thyself mayest be convinced; for was there ever an earthly prince apprehended and bound for whom none of his subjects would take up arms? There is none of my disciples that takes up arms, or offereth to fight for me; which is a plain evidence, that I pretend to no kingly power in disturbance of the Roman government.

John 18:37

Ver. 37. *Art thou a king then?* Pilate seems to have spoken this rather in derision and mockery, than out of any desire to catch him in his words. Christ neither owneth himself to be a king, nor yet denieth it, but tells Pilate that he said so; and to this end he was born, and for this cause he came into the world, to bear testimony to the truth: i.e. I cannot deny but that I have a spiritual kingdom, that is truth, and I must attest the truth; it was a part of my errand into the world; and every one who is by Divine grace disposed to believe and love the truth, will hear and obey my doctrine.

John 18:38

Ver. 38. Pilate (as profane persons use to do) thought that our Saviour, speaking of truth, and a spiritual kingdom, did but cant, and therefore asking him what he meant by truth, he never stays for an answer, but goes out again to the Jews, whom he had left without the door of the judgment hall, and tells them he found no fault in him. Whatever the quality of the kingdom was of which our Saviour spake, he judged that his pretensions to it were not prejudicial to the authority of the emperor, nor the tranquillity of the state, and would have demissed him from their unjust prosecution.

John 18:39

Ver. 39. Whence this custom came is uncertain; most probably from the Romans, who in some honour of this great festival of the Jews, and in humour of them, granted them the life of any criminal whom they desired.

Pilate propounds Christ as the prisoner whom he had most mind to release, perceiving that his prosecution was of malice, rather than for any just cause.

John 18:40

Ver. 40. But such was the malice of his adversaries, that though Barabbas was one that had committed murder in an insurrection, yet they choose him rather than Christ. See Poole on "Mt 27:15", and following verses to Mt 27:18.

John 19:1

Chapter Summary

Joh 19:1-4 Jesus is scourged, crowned with thorns, mocked, and buffeted by the soldiers.

Joh 19:5-7 Pilate declareth his innocence: the Jews charge him with assuming the title of the Son of God.

Joh 19:8-16 Pilate upon further examination is more desirous to release him, but, overcome with the clamours of the Jews, delivereth him to be crucified.

Joh 19:17,18 He is led to Golgotha, and crucified between two malefactors.

Joh 19:19-22 Pilate's inscription on his cross.

Joh 19:23,24 The soldiers part his garments.

Joh 19:25-27 He commendeth his mother to John,

Joh 19:28-30 receiveth vinegar to drink, and dieth.

Joh 19:31-37 The legs of the others are broken, and the side of

Jesus pierced.

Joh 19:38-42 Joseph of Arimathea begs his body, and, assisted

by Nicodemus, buries it.

Ver. 1. It was the custom of the Romans, when any one was to be crucified, first to scourge him; but (as it appears) Pilate ordered it, hoping that, though he could not prevail by any other art with them, yet by this he might; and they might possibly be satisfied with this lighter punishment; for it appeareth by Joh 19:4,12, that Pilate had a mind to release him, if he could have satisfied the Jews; though he had not courage enough to oppose the stream, and to do what himself thought was just, in despite of their opposition.

John 19:2

Ver. 2. The other evangelists also mention a reed put into his right hand. The crown, and the purple robe, and a sceptre, are all regal ensigns; they give them to Christ in derision of his pretence to a kingdom, and in the mean time themselves proclaim what he had said, that his kingdom was not of this world; for though earthly kings wear crowns, yet they use to be of gold, not of thorns; and their sceptres use to be gold, not reeds.

John 19:3

Ver. 3. They mocked him when they said, *Hail, King of the Jews!* But yet spake a great truth, though not in their sense. The other evangelists speak of more indignities offered him: See Poole on "Mr 15:19".

John 19:4

Ver. 4. Pilate appeareth convinced in his own conscience that Christ had done nothing worthy either of death or bonds, and a great while resisted that strong temptation which he was under to please the people, and to secure his own station, lest any complaint made to the Roman emperor against him should have prejudiced him.

John 19:5

Ver. 5. He therefore, after Jesus had been scourged, and dressed up in this mock dress, brings him out again to the people to move their pity.

John 19:6

Ver. 6. Our Lord finds more compassion from Pilate, though a heathen, than he found from those of his own nation; yea, those that pretended highest to religion amongst them: Pilate would have saved him; they cry out for his blood. Pilate leaves another testimony behind him, that what he did, at last overcome with a great temptation, he did contrary to the conviction of his own conscience, and as yet declineth the guilt of innocent blood.

John 19:7

Ver. 7. The *law* they mean, is the law for putting false prophets to death, De 18:20. By *the Son of God here*, they mean the eternal Son of God, in all things equal with his Father; otherwise it was a term applicable to themselves, whom God calls his son, his firstborn, &c. Now for any in this sense to arrogate to himself this title who indeed was not so, was blasphemy, and that in the highest degree, and brought him under the notion of a false prophet of the deepest dye: but this was injuriously applied to Christ, who thought it no robbery to be equal with the Father, and who was so declared by God himself at his baptism and transfiguration; and who had made his Divine power appear by such works as no mere man ever did.

John 19:8

Ver. 8. It should seem that the Romans permitted judgments to the Jews according to their own laws, which the Roman governor was to see executed; or else, seeing the rabble in such a heat and disorder, he feared some breaking out.

John 19:9

Ver. 9. Our Lord, who knew the secrets of all men's hearts, very well knew, that though Pilate had for some time withstood his temptations, yet he would at last yield: he also was ready to lay down his life, as he knew was determined for him; having therefore made a reasonable defence, he thinks fit to add no more of that nature.

John 19:10

Ver. 10. Pilate seemeth something displeas'd that Christ would be no more free: men in worldly power are too prone to forget from whom they derive it.

John 19:11

Ver. 11. Our Lord checks Pilate modestly for boasting of his authority as a judge to absolve or condemn him; declaring, that all the power he had was derived from God, who in his eternal counsels had determined this thing, which must therefore come to pass: but withal lets him know, that this neither excused him, nor much less the Jews, who were to execute the Divine purposes. Pilate was to look to God's revealed will, not his secret counsels, of which he could have no knowledge; but he saith, they who had delivered him to him had the greater sin: he did act but as a judge upon their accusations; they procured the false witness, they would not be satisfied without his blood, and they sinned against much more light.

John 19:12

Ver. 12. He *sought* all fair and plausible means *to release him*, being convinced in his own conscience that he was an innocent man: but the Jews double their clamours, and (according to the usual acts of sycophants) quit their charge as to religion, though that was the true and real cause of all their malice, and pursue only the charge which was proper for the cognizance of the Roman governor, of sedition or rebellion; and

tacitly accuse Pilate as a traitor, and being false to his trust, if he should let our Saviour go; for no man could set up himself as a king, but he must proclaim himself a traitor to the Roman emperor.

John 19:13

Ver. 13. *That saying,* that if he let Jesus go he was not Caesar's friend. Pilate was a man that loved the honour that was from men more than the honour and praise which is from God; he was more afraid of losing his place than his soul, and could no longer resist the temptation he was under.

He brought Jesus forth, and sat down in a place called the Pavement, because it was paved with stone, *but in the Hebrew,* (mixed with the Syriac), *Gabbatha,* that is, a high place; for it was their manner to have their judgment seats higher than other parts of the room where they were.

John 19:14

Ver. 14. *The preparation* to any feast signifies the day before it, because on that day they prepared whatsoever according to the law was necessary for the solemnization. Some much doubt whether in this place *the passover* signifies strictly the paschal supper, which it could not do if the Jews strictly this year kept to the law; for the fourteenth day of the month Nisan at evening was the time when most certainly Christ kept it, who ate it the night before. It is therefore more probably thought, that by *the passover* here is meant their great festival, which was upon the fifteenth day. See Poole on "Joh 18:28". John tells us it was *about the sixth hour;* that is, in the latter part of the interval between nine o'clock in the morning and twelve at noon: for the division of the day according to the Jews was in four parts; the first was from the rising of the sun till our nine in the morning, and was called the third hour; the other was from the third hour to the sixth, that is, twelve o'clock at noon; the third division was from their sixth hour to the ninth, that is, three o'clock with us in the afternoon; the fourth division was from the ninth hour to sunset, that is, with us six o'clock in the evening, when the sun is in the equinox. Now, not only the time when any of these hours came was called either the third or sixth hour, but the space of three hours allotted to each division was so called,

when the next division began: so the time of our Saviour's crucifixion is recorded by Mark to be *the third hour*; that is, the whole space from nine o'clock to twelve was not quite gone, though it was near at an end; and by the evangelist here it is said, that it was *about the sixth hour*, that is, near our twelve o'clock. And thus the different relations are clearly reconciled.

John 19:15

Ver. 15. The more Pilate sought to quiet them, the more they rage, contrary to all dictates of reason; when God hath determined a thing, all things shall concur to bring it about. Pilate mocks them when he saith, *Shall I crucify your King?* Yet so fierce was their malice against Christ, that to compel the governor to condemn him, (though there were not a people under heaven more zealous for their liberties, nor more impatient of a foreign yoke), they cry out, *We have no king but Caesar*; that is, the Roman emperor, who had conquered them.

John 19:16

Ver. 16. This must be at or about twelve of the clock, for that must be signified *by the sixth hour*, Joh 19:14. Pilate condemned him, and delivered him to the executioner, who (as the manner is in such cases) *led him away*.

John 19:17

Ver. 17. See Poole on "Mt 27:31", and following verses to Mt 27:33, where whatsoever needs expounding in this verse may be found, and this text is reconciled to that, which telleth us, that one Simon, a man of Cyrene, bore his cross. Their places of execution (as usually with us) were without their cities.

John 19:18

Ver. 18. See Poole on "Mt 27:38".

John 19:19

Ver. 19. See Poole on "Mt 27:37".

John 19:20

Ver. 20. *The place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city;* as all their places of execution were, within two furlongs, or thereabouts.

It was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin; it was written in all three languages, that not the Jews only, but all such strangers as were come up to the feast, might understand it.

John 19:21

Ver. 21. The Jews thought it would be a disgrace to them, that Christ should be reported abroad as their king, therefore they desire an alteration of the writing.

John 19:22

Ver. 22. But Pilate refuseth to gratify them, and lets them know he would not be directed by them what to write, nor alter any thing of it.

John 19:23

Ver. 23. Both Matthew, Mt 27:35, and Mark, Mr 15:24, mention this parting of Christ's garments amongst them, which must be understood of his inward garments; which some tell us might easily be done, because their garments were made up of four parts. But his outward garment, which is called his coat, was all of a piece.

John 19:24

Ver. 24. This made them choose rather to cast lots for that, than to divide it, as they had done his inward garments. But there was something more in it than the soldiers knew; Christ hereby proved a true Antitype to David, who said of himself figuratively, Ps 22:18, *They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture;* by which he meant no more, than that his enemies loaded themselves with his spoils: those words which figuratively were true of David, proved literally true as to Christ. Thus vile and wicked men are fulfilling the Scriptures when they little think of it.

John 19:25

Ver. 25. These words *the wife* are not in the Greek, but supplied by our translators; which leaves it doubtful whether that Mary was the wife, or the mother, or the daughter of Cleophas.

John 19:26

Ver. 26. We have often heard that John was the beloved disciple, and usually expressed under the notion of him whom Jesus loved. Our Lord commendeth his mother to the care of John, whom he had ordered to take care of her, as if he had been her own son: this letteth us know that Joseph was at this time dead, otherwise it is not probable that Christ would have committed his mother to any other guardian.

John 19:27

Ver. 27. He also reciprocally commendeth his mother to John, to be cared for as his own mother. From that time Mary went home, and lived with John.

John 19:28

Ver. 28,29. David said, Ps 69:21, to signify his enemies multiplying

afflictions upon him, *They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink;* which he spake metaphorically. Part of these words were without a figure literally fulfilled in Christ, who was the Son of David; for he crying out upon the cross that he thirsted, there being no other liquor at hand, or this being set on purpose for this end, they dip a sponge in it, and give it to him to drink; whether to stupify his sense, or to prolong his life in those torments, or barely to quench his thirst, is hard to determine. It is probable that it was such a kind of refreshment as they allowed to ordinary malefactors in his circumstances, the particulars of which usage we are not able to determine.

John 19:30

Ver. 30. When Christ had tasted the vinegar, *he said, It is finished;* that is, I have now done and suffered all things which lay upon me in this life to do and suffer. Having said this, *he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.* They are terms expressive of death, and our Saviour's free surrender of his soul unto his Father.

John 19:31

Ver. 31. *It was the preparation;* not to the passover, (for that was celebrated the night before), but to the weekly sabbath; and they judged according to the law, De 21:23, that the land would be defiled if the persons executed were not buried that day, but their bodies should remain on the tree all night, especially on the sabbath, which began immediately after sunset. And this sabbath was a more than ordinary sabbath, for it was not only the weekly sabbath, but also their second day of unleavened bread; which, and the last day, were both very solemn days, as may be seen, Le 23:1-44. This makes them come and beseech Pilate that the bodies might be taken down, and in order to it, *that their legs might be broken,* lest any life remaining in them they should revive and escape.

John 19:32

Ver. 32,33. They brake the two other malefactors' legs, but not Christ's, because they found him dead. It is very possible in a natural course, that of three men dying in the same manner, one may die sooner than another; but it is but rationally presumed, that the cause of our Saviour's quicker death, was not the failure of his spirits sooner, but his own voluntary surrender of his soul.

John 19:34

Ver. 34. *But one of the soldiers, to make sure of him, pierced his side, out of which it is said that there presently came forth blood and water.* That there should come out blood is no wonder, nor yet that there should come forth water. Blood being congealed, it is ordinary to see water on the top of the vessel where it is. And besides, anatomists tell us, that in the hollow part of the breast there are watery as well as bloody humours in the membrane that encompasses the heart, which being pierced, and the water let out, the living creature dieth necessarily. But yet in regard of the next words, *He that saw it bare record, and he knoweth that he saith true, &c.,* most divines think, that there was some mystery in this water and blood which came out of Christ's side pierced. Some would have the two sacraments of the gospel signifies by this water and blood. Christ is said to have come *by water and blood, 1Jo 5:6;* that is, say interpreters, he brought in a true expiation of sins by his blood, and the laver of regeneration, washing the soul from its filthiness: and thus be proved the true Antitype, answering the Jewish types in sacrifices and divers washings.

John 19:35

Ver. 35. Nor was this a fable, for John *saw it, and bare record,* and knew it to be true; and published it, that men might believe that it was him in whom all the legal types and figures had their completion.

John 19:36

Ver. 36. Now was there any thing of this but in fulfilling of the Scripture; for it was God's law about the passover, Ex 12:46 Nu 9:12, concerning the paschal lamb, (which was a type of Christ, Joh 1:29 1Co 5:7), that a bone of it should not be broken. So as by this breaking no bone of Christ's body, they might have understood that he was figured out by the paschal lamb.

John 19:37

Ver. 37. So also by seeing Christ's side pierced, (a thing not very usual), they might have understood, that he was the person mentioned, Zec 12:10.

John 19:38

Ver. 38. See Poole on "Mt 27:57", and following verses to Mt 27:59.

John 19:39

Ver. 39. The history of Nicodemus coming by night to our Saviour, and of their discourse together, we had Joh 3:1-21. We again heard of him standing up for Christ in the sanhedrim, Joh 7:50. We read no more of him till now, where he shows his love to his dead body; bringing a hundred pounds weight of myrrh and aloes, which were both of them drugs used in embalming dead bodies, as also in perfuming other things, Ps 45:8.

John 19:40

Ver. 40. That is, persons of fashion.

John 19:41

Ver. 41. As all their gardens were out of the city, so also their burial places, which usually were vaults, or caves within the earth.

John 19:42

Ver. 42. There they immediately buried Christ, because the time strictly called the *preparation* (for the whole day was so called) was nigh at hand. See a fuller account of the history of our Saviour's passion, death, and burial: See Poole on "Mt 27:1", and following verse to Mt 27:66, where what is said by all the evangelists is compared together, and made one complete history.

John 20:1

Chapter Summary

Joh 20:1-10 Mary Magdalene, seeing the stone taken away from the sepulchre, runneth to tell Peter and John, who go thither, and find not the body.

Joh 20:11-18 Mary seeth two angels sitting in the sepulchre; Jesus himself appeareth to her.

Joh 20:19-23 He appeareth to his disciples.

Joh 20:24,25 The incredulity of Thomas.

Joh 20:26-29 Jesus appeareth again to the disciples, and satisfieth the doubts of Thomas; who confesseth him.

Joh 20:30,31 The sufficiency of what is written for a ground of salvation.

Chapter Introduction

The evangelist St. John giving a fuller account than the other evangelists of Christ's resurrection, and his converse upon the earth forty days, until he ascended up into heaven, we have in our notes on the other evangelists been shorter, reserving ourselves for a fuller account of it till we should come to these two last chapters of this evangelist.

Ver. 1. Matthew saith, *In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week;* he also mentions another Mary in company with Mary Magdalene. Mark tells us that other *Mary was the mother of James and Salome.* Luke saith, *they came,* referring to the *women which came with him from Galilee,* Lu 23:55. For the time, Luke saith it was *upon the first day of the week;* Mark saith it was *when the sabbath was past;* our evangelist saith it was *when it was yet dark;* so that Matthew's $\omega\psi\epsilon \delta\epsilon \sigma\alpha\beta\beta\alpha\tau\omega\nu$, which we translate, *in the end of the sabbath,* must be interpreted by Mark, *when the sabbath was past;* and indeed Matthew plainly expounds himself, adding, *as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week;* which must be seven or eight hours after the Jewish sabbath was ended, for that ended with the setting of the sun the night before. The other evangelists tell us, that the design of their coming was to show their last act of love, in anointing or embalming the body of Jesus; for which purpose they had bought materials the night wherein he was crucified, but rested on the sabbath day, which ending about sunset, probably they slept some hours, and early in the morning, in the twilight, they come with their spices. Hence appears, that there is no contradiction at all between the four evangelists about the time of these women's coming to the sepulchre. Matthew saith it was about the dawning of the first day of the week; Mark saith it was when the sabbath was past; Luke saith it was upon the first day of the week; so saith John: which would make one admire that so many words should have been spent by divines in untying a knot here, where there is indeed none. Though John, in his history of our Saviour's burial, saith nothing of any stone rolled to the mouth of the sepulchre; yet Matthew doth; and of the Jews' sealing of it, and setting a watch, Mt 27:64-66. Mark (Mr 16:3) tells us also, that these women were thoughtful as they came, who should roll the stone away; and Matthew also tells us how it came rolled away, viz. by an angel. John saith nothing but that the stone was rolled away. So then the history runs thus: Early on the first day of the week an angel, in a glorious appearance, (described by Mark), cometh down, rolleth away the stone from the mouth of the sepulchre, and Christ ariseth: soon after, these women came with spices, and were thoughtful as they came who should roll away the stone; but when they came to the sepulchre they found that, as to that, their cares were needless, for the stone was rolled away to their hands.

John 20:2

Ver. 2. *Then she runneth;* that is, Mary Magdalene ran into the city to tell Peter; and that seemeth to be the reason why John mentions only her going to the sepulchre: but yet Luke (Lu 24:10) makes not Mary Magdalene only, but Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, the reporters of the news to the apostles; but possibly she was the most forward and first reporter of it. She came to the eleven, and told all these things to them, Lu 24:9, but possibly her chief discourse was with Simon Peter, and John, the beloved disciple: she complains to them that her Lord was removed out of the sepulchre, whither and by whom she knew not. But how did they know that? Mark saith, they entered into the sepulchre, Mr 16:5. Or if that were after, as it should seem by Joh 20:11 of this chapter; they guessed that the body was gone when they saw the stone rolled away, and the door open.

John 20:3

Ver. 3,4. Luke, Lu 24:12, mentions Peter's going only, upon Mary Magdalene's report; but he must be expounded by this evangelist, who expressly saith, that Peter and John went together, and that John outran Peter, and got first to the sepulchre.

John 20:5

Ver. 5. John stooped down and looked into the sepulchre, and saw the linen clothes lying, but he would not adventure to go in.

John 20:6

Ver. 6,7. But Peter, who all along the Gospel appears to have been the boldest spirit, goeth into the cave, and seeth all the linen clothes lying there, and the napkin that was about his head lying by itself.

John 20:8

Ver. 8. John seeing Peter adventure in, adventures also, and seeth the same things, and believeth that Christ was risen from the dead; or (as some think) that, as the women had said, somebody had taken him away.

John 20:9

Ver. 9. That is, they did not fully understand those scriptures of the Old Testament, Ps 2:2 16:10 110:1-7, and the types of the Old Testament, by which Christ's resurrection was foretold and prefigured.

John 20:10

Ver. 10. Peter and John, when they had been within the sepulchre, and seen that the body was not there, went home; believing verily that what the women at first told them was true, that somebody had removed the body out of the sepulchre; whither, they knew not.

John 20:11

Ver. 11. That the Mary here mentioned was Mary Magdalene appeareth from Joh 20:14, compared with Mr 16:9, which saith, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene.

John 20:12

Ver. 12,13. The other evangelists differing in their accounts of this part of the history, have raised some questions here not easily to be resolved. Matthew reports thus, see Mt 28:2-9. Mark saith, see Mr 16:2-8. Mr 16:2 Where by *the rising of the sun* must not be understood its rising above the horizon; but after midnight, (as the learned Casaubon hath noted), when the sun and stars begin to ascend. Luke reports this part of the history thus, see Lu 24:1-12. Concerning the persons that went to the sepulchre, and the time of their going, here is (as we have showed) little difficulty in

reconciling the evangelists. The greatest difference seemeth to be about the angels that Mary saw; whether she saw two apparitions of angels, or but one, and one angel, or two; and concerning the time when she saw them, whether before or after that Peter and John had been in the sepulchre. Matthew saith, the stone was rolled away, and the angel sat upon the stone; this must be without the sepulchre. Mark saith, *they, entering into the sepulchre, saw* (an angel in the shape of) *a young man sitting, &c.* Luke and John speak of two angels; but seen in the sepulchre, not without it. There is no doubt but the apparition was of two angels; one of which might be seen without first, sitting upon the stone, to let the women know that he had rolled it away: both of them within, sitting one at the head, the other at the feet, of the place where the body of Jesus lay. But the greatest question is, Whether the woman saw the angels before that Peter and John had been at the sepulchre, or after? Some think that it was before, but it is no way probable; for it can hardly be thought but that if they had seen the angel at the first, they would have told the eleven of it, or Peter and John at least; nor would Mary have told Peter and John (as Joh 20:2) they had taken away her Lord, &c., for the angels told them he was risen. So that although by some of the others' relation, who say nothing of Peter and John's coming to the sepulchre, it seems as if the women saw the angel before their coming to satisfy themselves, yet indeed it was after. The women first came, saw the door open, the stone rolled away, &c. In a fright they ran back, and told it the disciples. Peter and John came to see, and being satisfied, return, leaving Mary still standing at the sepulchre weeping; then she stooping down and looking into the sepulchre, both saw the angel sitting on the stone, and also the two angels within the sepulchre, who fully revealed the resurrection to her.

John 20:14

Ver. 14. And presently Christ himself appeareth to her, though at first she did not know him.

John 20:15

Ver. 15. Either these words passed before the angels had told her that he

was risen, Mr 16:6 Lu 24:5,6; or (which is most probable) Mary was hard to believe what the angels had told her so lately; but coming out of the sepulchre, Christ appeareth to her, whom she knew not, but thought him to have been the person that had the charge of that garden where Christ was buried, and that he for his own convenience had removed the dead body; she therefore desires to know where he had disposed of it, having a mind to remove it to some honourable place of burial.

John 20:16

Ver. 16. Christ calleth her by name, making such a sound as he certainly knew she understood. She calleth him *Rabboni*, which is as much as to say: My Master.

John 20:17

Ver. 17. There are in this verse two no mean difficulties: the one about the sense of the prohibition, when our Saviour forbade this woman to touch him; when after his resurrection (Mt 28:9) he suffered the women to hold him by the feet, and himself (Joh 20:27) called Thomas to thrust his hand into the hole of his side. There are many opinions about it: the best seems to be the opinion of those who think that our Saviour saw Mary too fond, and too much in the embraces of her Lord, as if she thought he had been raised up to such a converse with them as he had before his death; and this error is all which he tasks her of, not forbidding her any kind of touching him, so far as to satisfy herself that he was truly risen from the dead, but restraining any such gross conception. The other difficulty, What force of a reason there could be for her not touching him because he had not yet ascended? is much solved by that answer to the former; reminding Mary that he was to ascend to his Father, though he had not yet ascended, and therefore not to be enjoyed by them with so much freedom and familiarity as before. But (saith he) go and tell *my brethren*, that is, my disciples; whom the apostle tells us he is not ashamed to call brethren, Heb 2:11,12; that *I ascend*, that is, I shall shortly ascend, *to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God*: though I shall very suddenly leave them, yet I shall go but to my Father and my God, and to their Father and their God.

John 20:18

Ver. 18. This was that first appearance of our Lord after his resurrection to Mary Magdalene, after that he was risen from the dead, mentioned Mr 16:9,10, which she reported to the disciples; but Mark saith, they believed her not, Joh 20:11. Matthew tells us of another appearance of his, Mt 28:9, to the women as they went from the sepulchre, when they *held him by the feet, and worshipped him*. Luke tells us of a third appearance to the two disciples as they were going to Emmaus; which is also shortly touched by Mark, Mr 16:12,13; but it is there said that they believed them not. John mentions neither of these. These were all the same day that he rose, so was also the next, which is mentioned by our evangelist in the following verses.

John 20:19

Ver. 19. Luke expounds this verse, Lu 24:29, where the two disciples told Christ it was *towards evening, and the day was far spent*; for the Jews called the afternoon evening, as well as the time after sunset; and John tells us expressly, it was yet *the first day of the week*. This appearance is unquestionably the same mentioned in Luke, Lu 24:36. For it is said, the two disciples went immediately to Jerusalem, where they *found the eleven gathered together*, and discoursed of the Lord's appearance to them; and while they spake, Jesus came and *stood in the midst of them, and said unto them, (as here), Peace be unto you*. The disciples had shut the doors of the place where they met, *for fear of the Jews*. Here is a great question between the Lutherans and Calvinists, how Christ came in amongst them when the doors were shut? Whether he went through the doors remaining shut? Which the Lutherans stiffly maintain, as a strong proof of the possibility of the real presence of the body of Christ in, with, or under the elements of the Lord's supper; though we object, that this is to destroy the nature of Christ's body, and to assign him a body which indeed is no body, being not obvious to the sense, nor confined to a place; and which must pierce another body, which is contrary to the nature of a body according to our notion of bodies. The Lutherans object:

1. That here is a plain mention of the doors being shut.

2. No mention of the opening of them.
3. Nor of Christ's entrance upon opening any doors, windows, roof, or by any ordinary way, as men use to enter into houses.
4. Nor, had he so entered, would there have been any occasion for the disciples taking him for a *spirit*, as it is plain they did, Lu 24:37.

The Calvinists on the other side object,

1. That it is not said that he went through the doors.
2. That if he had gone through the doors, he would not presently have called to them to have seen him, and handled him; by which he evidenced that his body had such dimensions as our bodies have, and so could not go through a door shut.

In the Lutherans' reason, the fourth is only considerable, the three first have no force, because all circumstances of actions are not recorded in holy writ. Nor is there much force in the fourth, for the doors by his miraculous power opened and shut, and he showed himself in the midst of them, and used to them the usual salutation amongst the Jews, *Peace be unto you*.

John 20:20

Ver. 20. *He showed unto them his hands and his side;* Luke adds his feet too; those parts of his body where were the most undeniable marks of the death he had suffered upon the cross. Then to disciples, who gave little credit to what Mary Magdalene, and the other woman, and the two disciples going to Emmaus, had reported, believed; seeing the Lord, and being exceeding glad at this confirmation of their faith.

John 20:21

Ver. 21. *Peace be unto you;* the repeating of this salutation speaketh it

more than an ordinary compliment, or form of salutation. It signifieth his reconciliation to them, notwithstanding their error in forsaking him, and fleeing; it prepared their attention for the great things that he was now about to speak to them; it also signified, that he was about to preach the gospel of peace to all nations.

As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you; I have now fulfilled my ministry, and am now going to my Father who sent me: now by the same authority that I am sent, I send you, to gather, instruct, and govern my church; I send, or I will send, you clothed with the same authority with which I am clothed, and for the same ends in part for which I was sent.

John 20:22

Ver. 22. The apostles could not but be apprehensive how great a work their Lord had laid upon them, in sending them as his Father had sent him, to carry the gospel over the world; *Who* (said Paul afterward) *is sufficient for these things?* Our Lord therefore fortifies them with an earnest of that more plentiful effusion of the Spirit, which they afterward received in the days of Pentecost. They before this had received the Spirit as a Spirit of sanctification, and had received a power to work miracles. They did not till after this receive the gift of tongues, &c. But he here assures them of the presence of the Holy Spirit with them, in their more ordinary ministry, in instructing and governing the church. This conferring of the Spirit upon them he confirms to them by breathing, as an exterior sign or symbol. The name, *Spirit*, signifieth a breath; and it is said, that in the creation God *breathed into Adam the breath of life*. Christ breatheth into his apostles the Holy Spirit; thereby showing, that the Holy Spirit proceedeth, as from the Father, so also from him; as the breath of a man proceedeth from him. He also useth words, expounding his action in breathing, and carrying with them an authority, which being once spoken, the thing was done.

John 20:23

Ver. 23. Whether Mt 18:18 be a parallel text to this, I doubt: See Poole on "Mt 18:18". Our Lord here speaks of the sins of persons, *Whose soever sins remit*, &c.; he saith there, *Whatsoever ye shall bind or loose*. This text

hath caused a great deal of contest. All remission of sins is either authoritative; so it is most true, that none can forgive sin but God; and if we had no Scripture to prove it, yet reason will tell us none can discharge the debtor but the creditor, to whom the debt is owing: or else ministerial; thus he who is not the creditor (amongst men) may remit a debt by virtue of a letter of attorney made to him, authorizing him so to do. The question therefore amongst divines is, Whether Christ in this text hath given authority to his ministers actually to discharge men of the guilt of their sins; or only to declare unto them, that if their repentance and faith be true, their sins are really forgiven them? The former is by many contended for; but it doth not seem reasonable,

1. That God should entrust men with such a piece of his prerogative.
2. That God, who knoweth the falsehood of men's hearts, and the inability in the best ministers to judge of the truth of any man's faith or repentance, as also the passions to which they are subject, should give unto any of the sons of men an absolute power under him, and in his name, to discharge any from the guilt of sin; for certain it is, that without true repentance and faith in Christ no man hath his sins forgiven; so as no minister, that knoweth not the hearts of men, can possibly speak with any certainty to any man, saying, his sins are forgiven.

What knowledge the apostles might have by the Spirit of discerning, we cannot say. But certain it is, none hath any such certainty of knowledge now of the truth of any man, declaring his faith and true repentance; from whence it is to me apparent, that no man hath any further power from Christ, than to declare to them, that if indeed they truly believe and repent, their sins are really forgiven. Only the minister, being Christ's interpreter and ambassador, and better able to judge of true faith and repentance than others, (though not certainly and infallibly), such declarations from a faithful, able minister, are of more weight and authority than from others. And this is the most I can conceive should be in this matter; and that if by those words any further power be granted to the apostles, it was by reason of that power of *discerning of spirits*, 1Co 12:10, which ordinary ministers since the apostles' times, or in latter ages, cannot with any modesty pretend unto.

John 20:24

Ver. 24. Whether Thomas had ever, since they all forsook our Saviour in the garden and fled, returned again to a communion with the rest, or was absent through some occasion, is not said; but upon this some have started a question, Whether Thomas, being absent, received the Holy Ghost at this time as the rest did? Some think he did not, because of his unbelief. Some of the ancients think he did; for, Nu 11:26,27, when God gave out the Spirit to the seventy elders, Eldad and Medad, though absent, had their share of it, Nu 11:27. The matter is not much.

John 20:25

Ver. 25. It is not said what disciples, whether any of the apostles, or some others, told Thomas of this appearing of the Lord unto them. But Thomas eminently declareth his unbelief, which argues him as yet much ignorant of the Deity of Christ, and having given too little heed to what Christ had told them of his rising again the third day.

John 20:26

Ver. 26. *After eight days* signifieth here the eighth day from the resurrection, counting the day wherein Christ rose for one; as we call those third day agues which have but one day's intermission, and those quartan agues which have but two days' intermission; so it is said, Mr 8:31, *after three days he shall rise again*, that is, the third day. This appears the most probable sense of the phrase: the disciples beginning from Christ's resurrection to keep the first day of the week for the weekly sabbath, and having met on the resurrection day, met again that day seven night, hoping (probably) for such a presence of Christ with them in their meeting as they had before experienced; nor was their expectation vain. It appears also there, from Ac 20:7, and 1Co 16:2, that the Christians were wont ordinarily to meet together the first day of the week for religious exercises; which from Christ's resurrection, or institution, or both, is thought to be called *the Lord's day*, Re 1:10. Nor indeed do we read in all the Scripture of any congregation of Christians on the Jewish sabbath, but upon this day;

though, indeed, we find that the apostles (and possibly some other Christians) did meet together with the Jews in their synagogues on their sabbath; but we have not so much as one instance after the resurrection of any congregation, where Christians only were assembled upon the Jewish sabbath. Thomas at this time was with them. It is said again that Christ came and stood in the midst of them, *the doors being shut*: concerning which phrase, See Poole on "Joh 20:19".

John 20:27

Ver. 27. We had need take heed what we speak wherever we are. Christ had not after his resurrection so ordinary and frequent a converse with his disciples as before. This is the fifth time that we read of Christ's appearing to them since his resurrection. He knew what words of unbelief Thomas had uttered, and accordingly applies himself to him, in a wonderful condescension to his weakness; he bids him reach his finger, and his hands, and behold his hands, and thrust his hands into his side. So pitiful is our Lord, and compassionate towards the infirmities of his people.

John 20:28

Ver. 28. *My Lord*, to whom I wholly yield and give up my self; *and my God*, in whom I believe. It is observed, that this is the first time that in the Gospel the name of *God* is given to Christ; he was now by his resurrection *declared to be the Son of God with power*, Re 1:4. So as Thomas did not show more weakness and unbelief at the first, than he showed faith at last, being the first that acknowledged Christ as *God over all blessed for ever*, the object of people's faith and confidence, and his Lord, to whom he freely yielded up himself as a servant, to be guided and conducted by him.

John 20:29

Ver. 29. Thou believest that I am risen from the dead upon the testimony of thy senses; thou doest well in that: thou hast seen, thou hast felt me; but it is a more noble faith to believe without any such sensible evidence. Faith is properly an assent given to a proposition upon the testimony of

revelation, which if it be but human it is no more than a human faith; as we give credit to what our neighbours tell us, though we have not seen it with our own eyes, nor heard it with our ears immediately, nor had it made evident to any of our senses. If the revelation to which the assent is given be from God, we call the assent that is given to it a Divine faith; so that to give credit to a thing upon the evidence of sense, is properly no believing, otherwise than as sense confirms what we have before received by a Divine revelation. This is a sure rule, that by how much our faith stands in less need of an external evidence of sense, the stronger it is.

John 20:30

Ver. 30. This passage plainly refers to whatsoever signs we read of in any part of St. John's Gospel; and lets us know, that the evangelist could have added abundance more to the history of the miracles which Christ wrought upon the earth.

John 20:31

Ver. 31. But he had wrote these to induce his readers to believe that Jesus Christ was the Son of God; a thing of so great concernment to them, that their eternal life depended upon it; for through his name alone eternal life is to be obtained, Ac 4:12.

John 21:1

Chapter Summary

<u>Joh 21:1-11</u>	Christ appeareth to his disciples at the sea of
	Tiberias, and maketh himself known by a great draught of fishes.
<u>Joh 21:12-14</u>	He eateth before them.
<u>Joh 21:15-23</u>	He thrice repeateth his charge to Peter to feed his flock; foretells the manner of his

death; and

rebuketh his curiosity concerning

John.

Joh 21:24,25 John asserts the truth of his testimony,
and that

Jesus did many acts besides, too
numerous to be
recorded.

Ver. 1. After three several appearances of Christ to his disciples, which hitherto were all of them in Jerusalem, Christ showed himself again to them in Galilee, whither he had ordered his disciples to go, promising there to meet them, Mt 26:32 Mr 16:7. Here the occasion and circumstances of this his third appearance are related by St. John.

John 21:2

Ver. 2. All the disciples were either there in several places, or going thither, according to Christ's direction before mentioned: but either these seven were there before the rest; or else they lodged together, or near one another; so as these only are here mentioned as being together at this time, and so witnesses of this miracle which followeth.

John 21:3

Ver. 3. Peter and divers others were fishermen, as we have formerly heard, and had boats which they so employed. Though they were called to the work of the ministry, yet, churches not yet being gathered and constituted able to maintain them, they did not judge it unlawful to employ themselves in honest vocations, which might bring in something of a livelihood; no more did Paul afterward. The others resolve to go with Peter. They went, but *that night caught nothing*; the providence of God so ordering it, that Christ's Divine power might be seen in commanding fish into their nets.

John 21:4

Ver. 4. Probably their distance from him was the cause that they did not know him, though they had seen him once and again since his resurrection from the dead: others think, that by the providence of God *their eyes were holden that they should not know him*, as Lu 24:16.

John 21:5

Ver. 5. He asketh them if they had any thing to eat, not because he knew not, but in order to what he intended to do to make them more attentive to the miracle which he by and by intended to work.

John 21:6

Ver. 6. Though they had before laboured in vain, yet their Master's command encourages them to go to work again; then they take a multitude of fishes; a presage, say some, of that great success which the apostles should have in their fishing for men.

John 21:7

Ver. 7. There is a great dispute amongst critical writers what this *fisher's coat* was; whether a loose coat, or the garment next his skin, or a fisherman's slop. It is a point not worth the disputing: it was some garment that might modestly cover him when he came to Jesus, and yet not hinder him in his swimming.

John 21:8

Ver. 8. The other disciples came in a little fishing boat, dragging the net with fishes; probably, because it was too heavy to be lifted up into the boat.

John 21:9

Ver. 9. As to the question whence this fish came, there are three opinions: some think that our Saviour caught it out of the sea without a net, or by his power commanded it to come to his service; others think that the history is transposed, and this verse should in its true order come after the eleventh; but it is most probable that Christ by his Divine power created the fish, as well as the coals and the bread.

John 21:10

Ver. 10,11. In this one miracle there is a complication of miracles.

1. That having fished all night and caught nothing, they should at Christ's command throw out the net on the side of the ship next the shore, and so most unlikely to have plenty of fish, and catch so many.
2. That before their fish could be brought on shore, they should see a fish broiling on coals, and bread lying by.
3. That notwithstanding the multitude of fish, the net should not be broken.

John 21:12

Ver. 12. It was in the morning, and may as well be translated, Come and break your fasts, as *Come and dine*. They now knew it was the Lord, if not by his face and voice, yet by this miracle; therefore they durst not ask him, for fear of a sharp reproof, after he had by such a miraculous operation made himself known to them.

John 21:13

Ver. 13. Those who question whether our Saviour himself did eat, seem not to consider what is written Ac 10:41, where it is expressly said, *he did eat and drink with them after he rose from the dead*; which he doubtless did, to show that he was truly risen from the dead, and his seeming body was not a phantasm, and mere apparition of a body, but the same true body

which was crucified, though now more glorious, and not clothed with those infirmities which it had before his death; from whence it only followeth, that he did not eat to satisfy his hunger, but only to confirm the truth of his resurrection. He did before this eat with some of them, Lu 24:30.

John 21:14

Ver. 14. *The third time;* that is, the third day, for upon his resurrection day he showed himself,

1. To Mary Magdalene, Joh 20:14.
2. To the two disciples going to Emmaus, Lu 24:15,31.
3. To the women going to tell his disciples, Mt 28:9.
4. In the evening to his disciples, met, Joh 20:19.

All these are by John counted for one time, because they were upon one and the same day. That day seven night he appeared to them again, Joh 20:26. After this *at the sea of Tiberias*, mentioned in this chapter.

John 21:15

Ver. 15. *Lovest thou me more than these?* More than the rest of my disciples love me? For so Peter had professed, when he told our Saviour, Mt 26:33, *Though all men should be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended*. Peter now having by his temptation learned more humility and modesty, doth not reply, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee more than these; he only avers the truth and sincerity, not the degree of his love. Christ replies,

Feed my lambs: by which he understands his people, his church; not the pastors of it, (as if Christ by this had made Peter the chief pastor over the rest of the apostles), but the community. The papists from this text argue for Peter's primacy and authority over his fellow apostles, as well as over the members of the church. But Christ said not to Peter only, but to all the rest of the eleven, Mt 28:19 Mr 16:15, Go ye, preach the gospel to all nations; and it was to the rest as well as to Peter that he said, Joh 20:23,

Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted. So as it is apparent, whether feeding only signifies instructing, or feeding by doctrine, or (as most judge) comprehends government, and signifies that universal charge which ministers have over the church, the same power which Peter had was also committed to the other disciples.

John 21:16

Ver. 16,17. Divines here raise a question, why our Saviour propounds this question thrice to Peter. The most of the ancients agree, that it was because Peter had thrice denied him. Some say, it was to show his great love to his church, which he could not commit to Peter but after three inquiries if he truly loved him, who was the Lord of it. Others refer it to the three ways by which good pastors ought to feed the church; prayer, preaching, and a holy life. Others think, that it hath reference to the three flocks that Peter was to feed; the Jews in Judea, the Gentiles, the dispersed amongst the Gentiles.

John 21:18

Ver. 18,19. Joh 21:19 gives us the general scope of Joh 21:15, viz. that it was a prediction of that particular death by which Peter should die, which was (if we may believe what the ancients have generally reported, and we can have no other proof) by crucifying; in which kind of death the hands of the person crucified are stretched out and nailed to the cross. But which way he died we cannot certainly affirm. The evangelist assures us, that our Saviour spake these words with reference to that kind of death by which Peter as a martyr was to glorify God; nor is it any objection against his martyrdom, that our Saviour here saith, that he should be carried whither he would not; for he was not better than his Lord, whose spirit was willing, and flesh weak. Whether our Saviour by his command, *Follow me*, intended the imitation of him, his death, or the particular kind of his death, is uncertain; unless we will allow this text to be interpreted by Joh 13:36 2Pe 1:14.

John 21:20

Ver. 20. That is, he saw John, whom we have often before heard so described.

John 21:21

Ver. 21. *Do* is not in the Greek, nor possibly is so properly added: the sense is, What shall become of this man? What shall be his fate? What shall he suffer?

John 21:22

Ver. 22. Our Lord only checks the curiosity of Peter, and minds him to attend things which himself was concerned in; telling him, he was not concerned what became of John, whether he should die, or abide upon the earth until Christ's second coming: it was Peter's concern, without regarding what others did, or what became of them, himself to execute his Master's command, and follow his example.

John 21:23

Ver. 23. But the disciples, knowing the particular kindness our Saviour had for John, upon these words, not duly attended to, concluded John should abide upon the earth to the second coming of Christ.

John 21:24

Ver. 24. John, who wrote this Gospel, was that disciple whom Jesus loved, who leaned on our Saviour's breast at supper, and inquired who should betray Christ; of whom Peter spake, Joh 21:21, and who testifieth these things, both concerning Peter, and concerning himself, and the church: the ancient church knew his testimony was true.

John 21:25

Ver. 25. But none must imagine that all Christ's sermons, or miracles, are recorded in this book, or in any of the other Gospels; the world would have been too much filled with books, if all spoke or done by our Saviour had been written. There is so much written as it pleased God we should know, or was necessary for us to know for the true ends of such revelation; to beget and increase faith in us, and to promote and direct holiness.