

the behalf of the saints at Thessalonica. It runs in these words, *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly*, or sanctify all of you; that is, all the members of the church. *And I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* 1 Thess. v. 23. It may serve to cast light on our Lord's words, *sanctify them through thy truth*. To open the threefold division of believers, I pray God your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless, or sanctified throughout. By spirit is meant, the frame and temper of mind under all providences. By soul is to be understood all the reasonable faculties, such as the understanding, will, and affections. And by the body, which consists of the several members, and which we need not explain, is to be understood the case, or sheath of the soul. Now to have spirit and soul, and body sanctified, must imply the keeping all these under the influence of reigning efficacious grace, in true and real conformity to God, this is most certainly the very spirit of the apostle. And I think he may hereby serve to open what our Lord's request contains. It is, that through the knowledge and belief of the truth, his apostles might be so divinely influenced as to be at all times, in all places, in all cases, and circumstances, ready for the performance of every good word and work. Our apostle speaking to the saints who composed the church at Thessalonica, says, *But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.*

2 Thess. ii. 13. He knits sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth together. The one cannot be without the other. I hope I have in this point opened our Lord's mind and will unto you. But not to stay and dwell any longer upon this point, I proceed to the next head, or particular, *viz.*

Thirdly, To give an explication, or description of truth. *Thy word is truth. Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth.*

By the term Word, in the sacred scriptures, the eternal and only begotten Son of God, the uncreated Wisdom, the second Person in the incomprehensible essence is understood. The apostle John opens the mystery of this Word, when he tells us, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* John i. 1, 2, 3. Christ Jesus is called *the Word*; 1st, in respect of his person, he being the express image of the Father, as we are told, Hebrews i. 3, as our words are of our thoughts. Christ is called *the Word*, 2ndly, in respect of his office, because the Father made known his will to the church in all ages by him; as we declare our minds one to another by our words. See John iii. 34. Christ is called *the Word*; 3rdly, because the *Messiah* was called *the Word* by the Jews. *The word, i. e.* the term *the word*, is also taken for what is written in the sacred books of the Old and New Testament. *Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.* See Luke xi. 28. *Be ye doers of the word.* This is the inspired and created word. See James

i. 22. The term *the word*, is also given to the divine law, which teaches and commands good things, and forbids evil. *I have refrained my feet from every evil way that I might keep thy word.* See Psalm cxix. 101. It is used to express the promises of God, whether temporal, spiritual, or eternal. *Quicken thou me according to thy word.* Psalm cxix. 25. So also in verses 38, 49. *Establish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear. Remember thy word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.* If it be asked, in what sense are we to understand the term *word*, and *thy word*, and *thy word is truth?* to this I am most willing to reply, the Word here spoken of, is Christ himself. He is the word of God, he is the word of truth, as all truth is in him. He is the treasury, the grand repository of all truth; and seeing his address is to the Father, and his request is that he would sanctify the apostles, so as that they might be always so under the divine unction of the Spirit as to be fit to teach: I would therefore conclude it must be Christ himself who is the truth, by whose dwelling in their hearts by faith they were to be sanctified, so as to be kept continually alive unto him. *Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth.* Christ is the truth emphatically. He is so the life and soul of all divine truth revealed in the scriptures, that they are but so many dead letters without him. We can have no spiritual apprehensions of the love and mercy of God, no understanding of divine truths, although they are fully revealed in the word, and where they are set forth to them that believe, but in the exercise of faith on Christ himself. It

is from his fulness all grace is received. All spiritual life is from him alone. I consider therefore, Christ may be considered here, as speaking of himself; he might with the greatest propriety say to his Father on behalf of his apostles, *sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth.* I myself, who am thy word, am truth itself. I am *thy word of truth.* I am going forth quickly from this place to make my soul an offering for sin. I am going to remove by my one efficacious offering all their sins; I am ready and willing to die for them; I am ready to redeem and sanctify them with my own blood. Let therefore all the virtue and efficacy thereof, be made known to their minds, and in their hearts, as that their consciences may be purged from guilt, and their minds be filled with peace, even such as passeth all understanding. I thy word am truth, and will accomplish all thy will, in saving them in mine own person, by my own righteousness and bloodshedding. Thy word of truth, the doctrine delivered by me, and received by them, is pure and perfect. It will not, it cannot deceive them. It is the only means of holiness and comfort. *Thy word is truth.* I am truth; I am thy truth. *Holy Father,* sanctify their minds by faith which is in me; keep them steadfastly fixed on me, as their everlasting foundation; keep them in an abiding confidence on me, as their Saviour, their propitiation, their righteousness, their all. Then the true knowledge of my person, love, and work abiding in their minds, they will, under the sacred and heavenly influence of it, be kept from the evil of sin, from the influence of their own inherent corruptions, and thus they will go on per-

fecting holiness in the fear of God. I would just add, to give a further explication and description of truth, that Christ is the truth. His gospel is styled *the word of truth; in whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.* See Eph. i. 13. The gospel is *the truth as it is in Jesus.* Eph. iv. 21. It is *the word of the truth of the gospel.* See Col. i. 5. All the promises of it are as true as God is true. *For all the promises of God, are in Christ yea, and in him amen.* I therefore conceive, that our Lord by enlightening the minds of his apostles, with a complete knowledge of himself, here prays in perfect agreement with this to his Father, for their sanctification. That they living on him, and receiving out of his fulness their whole salvation, with every blessing thereof, would hereby be always under the divine influences of it throughout their whole walk and warfare. As it is the knowledge and belief of the truth as it is in Jesus, which sanctifies the mind, so I think our Lord, in the words before us, gives us a clear view of this. We can perform no act of sanctification. We have no more hand in it, than in our justification. It is expressly said by the apostle to the believing Corinthians, *ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* 1 Cor. vi. 11. We are sanctified by God the Father; we are sanctified in Christ Jesus; he is made of God to us sanctification or holiness. We are sanctified by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost; he dwelleth in us; and he produces the fruits of sanctification and holiness in us, and by us, as he keeps

us looking unto, and living on the fulness of Jesus. In our real admission into fellowship with the Father and the Son, through the Spirit, we are brought under the powerful influences of the truths and doctrines of the everlasting gospel. I come therefore to observe,

Lastly, That the whole church and people of God, are completely *sanctified, by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once. Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth.*

He prays thus to his Father; he prays for his apostles. We may say, he here prays for his whole church; for though he does not here express himself, as he afterwards doth, yet as his prayer was the very index of his mind, and he caused it to be written for the benefit of his saints in all ages, places, and throughout all generations. Therefore we may safely conclude, the Lord's church and people, have some share in the blessings which are mentioned in the petitions put up for the apostles. This we are sure of, all of them, *viz.* apostles, and each of the elect are justified in the same way, sanctified by the same Spirit. They all receive their whole salvation from one and the same Lord Jesus. They are all partakers of one and the same common salvation. So that whilst some gifts and blessings were bestowed on the apostles which were peculiar to them, with regard to their office, yet they were not more united to Christ, nor more completely saved in Christ, than the rest of the family and household of faith are. All the elect of God, in their several individual persons, are the body of Christ; the church of Christ. *He gave*

himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Good works are not our sanctification, they are the fruits of it. *Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.* See Eph. v. 25, 26, 27. You have the same truth declared in these words, *And you, that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh through death to present you holy, and unblameable, and unreprouable in his sight.* See Col. i. 21, 22. And the apostle ascribes the complete sanctification of all the elect, to the sacrifice of Christ, and the will of God the Father, in his appointment thereof. I will quote the words: *Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo! I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once.* The words (for all) are a supplement. Heb. x. 5, 6, 7, 10. The interpretation of them is this; the Son of God became incarnate, and offered his body and soul in union to his person to take away sin. All this was done in obedience to the will of the Father. By his will, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, all the elect are

sanctified ; their sins are all done away ; their iniquities are purged ; they are removed from them by this sacrifice, “ as far as the east is from the west : ” so saith the apostle in the twelfth verse of this chapter ; *But this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down at the right hand of God ;* and at the fourteenth verse he says, *For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.* So then the complete sanctification of all the church and people of Christ, is not in them, by the work and operation of the Holy Ghost upon them. But it is without them, in the offering and sacrifice of Jesus Christ on their behalf. And the Father’s will in appointing the offering, in accepting the offering, and placing it to the account of all the elect, is their complete sanctification in the sight of God. This may receive further confirmation, if it be considered, what is said in the word, concerning the blood of Christ. It is spoken of as *ransoming blood ; as justifying blood ; as cleansing blood ; as sanctifying blood.* It is styled *the blood of the everlasting covenant ;* and Christ is said to be brought back from the dead in consequence of it. The word declares, *that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. He hath loved us, says John, and washed us from our sins, in his own blood.* Christ himself is said to be sanctified by the blood of the covenant. *Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace.* See Heb. x. 29. It is also expressly written, *where-*

fore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Under all these testimonies, and considering Christ was just about to offer up himself, when he said to his Father, on the behalf of his apostles, *Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth*, what more genuine interpretation can there be given, than this before us? and that the whole church and people of God, are completely saved, justified, pardoned, and sanctified by the blood, sacrifice, and death of Christ, is most truly scriptural. It is upon this foundation the Father bestows his free and royal pardon on them. It is in consequence of this the Holy Ghost works within them, and produces a new creation in their minds, and carries on the work of faith with power in them, so that this secures and strengthens all which can be said, respecting a communication of grace from Christ the head to all his members. It is declared, it pleased the Father, that in Christ should all fulness dwell. John says, *of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace*. The church of old saith, *all my springs are in thee*. And Paul tells us, that Christ *filleth all in all*. Let us therefore rest on Christ for all. And be well pleased he should be our fountain to supply us. And that our whole salvation is in him. O that we may be led by the Holy Spirit, to look wholly to him for every supply. Then we shall be bringing glory to him, and deriving at the same time from him, all spiritual good. May the Lord the Spirit bless what hath been attempted in setting these words of Christ before you. May the Lord the Spirit so work with the word as to reveal

Christ in you. And may he so testify of Jesus, as to give you to be perfectly well pleased with him, and well satisfied in resting wholly on him. You will then have a comment of Christ's words beyond any thing I can deliver to you. Whilst preaching the gospel is God's ordinance, and the church of God cannot do without it; and whilst in the preaching of the gospel, many of the mysteries of it are opened and unfolded, yet the inward and secret teachings of the Holy Spirit is far beyond all this. As he in a secret and imperceptible manner, is pleased by his own intuitive light and operation on the minds of the regenerate and called ones, to create such ideas of the Lord Jesus, as lifts them out of themselves, and transport them into the very bosom of Jesus. The gospel is the means, but the Holy Ghost is the agent. And he works in us all the good pleasure of his will, we are entirely passive. He reveals Christ unto us, and he reveals Christ in us. He teaches us how to live on Christ as our sanctification. And he teaches us how to live on Christ for all the blessings, fruits and effects of inherent sanctification, which are truly produced in us, and by us, when Christ puts forth his power in our souls, and dwells in our hearts by faith. May the Lord the Spirit exalt Christ in all your minds, as a complete and everlasting Saviour. May he forgive my very great deficiency in setting forth the subject before you. May he explain the whole unto you, and to his name shall be all the praise. Amen.

SERMON XVI.

JOHN XVII. 18, 19.

As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

WE are come to the closing words of our Lord's prayer, as it respects that part of it, which I style the second part of it, and which particularly concerns his apostles who were then, and there present. As the former request contained in the past verse, was on their behalf, for their personal sanctification, and growth in grace, so it contained and gave an account of the instrumental cause of it, the word of truth, with a description of the way whereby it is manifested, which is in, and by the word of truth. In the words of our text which are now to be opened and explained, we have the reasons urged by Christ to enforce it. Let it be remembered, there is, as hath been often observed, a most close and inseparable connection throughout every part and branch of this prayer. As the former petition was for sanctification, or holiness, so the words now before us, are connected with it. They are these, *As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.* As these words be-

long to the apostles, so our Lord very peculiarly suits them to their case and office, as it respected their mission and commission given them by him, and from himself. He, in this his address to the Father, speaks of his sending him into the world. *As thou hast sent me into the world;* this was the Father's act and deed, founded on ancient, covenant and eternal transactions. He then speaks of his own sending these persons into the world. For what end will be declared when we open these words, *As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.* His end in so doing was, that they might preach the gospel. He had authorized them, and he would yet more fully qualify them, by shedding his Holy Spirit on them. Thus he would send them forth as his ambassadors, therefore they must not as yet be taken out of the world. They must be continued in it for a season. They were to be endued with a greater measure of holiness; they were to be assisted with a greater measure of strength than ordinary. *As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.* In these words as into an ocean, all the springs and streams from the sixth verse falls. This seems to be the centre and circumference of them. Therefore if the Lord shall be pleased to open them to our view, so as for us spiritually and rightly to apprehend them, we shall see further into the mysteries of grace contained in this chapter. I would apply myself to the Holy Spirit, and intreat him to open these words to my

mind, and open my mind to receive and apprehend our Lord's mind and will in them. O thou holy and blessed Spirit, who proceedest from the Father and the Son to testify of Jesus, do thou most graciously assist me, whilst I humbly attempt to open and explain my text. Even so, O holy Spirit, for thy name's sake, do thou say, Amen. In my proceeding to explain my text, *As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.* I would aim to set forth the important things contained in them, under the following heads, or particulars.

First, We have here the mission and commission of the apostles, and this as illustrated by the pattern thereof, Christ's own mission. *As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.*

Secondly, We have Christ here speaking, concerning setting himself apart to his mediatory office, to become the sacrifice for sin, on their behalf, and for their benefit. *And for their sakes I sanctify myself.*

Thirdly, We have the end expressed which was to be obtained hereby, *That they might be sanctified.*

Fourthly, By what means they were to be sanctified is mentioned, *through the truth. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.* These are the divisions of my present sermon. In filling them up, I hope to give you the substance of all contained in the

words of my text. And, First, We have here the mission and commission of the apostles, and this as illustrated by the pattern thereof, Christ's own mission from the Father. *As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.*

I will begin this head with the Father's mission of Christ, of which our Lord here speaks. This was the fruit and effect of the eternal acts and transactions which had passed between the Eternal Three before all worlds. The Son of God being before all time predestinated to be God-man, he was secretly anointed and set up as such, and his human nature had a covenant subsistence. In consequence of which, he was the Son of Man in heaven, before he was the Son of Man on earth. He was the Son of Man secretly with God, before he was the Son of Man openly, and manifestatively in our world. He speaks out this truth himself, in these words: *And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man, which is in heaven.* John iii. 13. Christ says, *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world.* John xvi. 28. If, says one most justly, Christ had not been with the Father of Glory, in glory, and that in some capacity of going from that place of heavenly glory into another place, he could not have come into the world from the Father. The same worthy observes, the human nature subsisted in the Son of God by covenant, before it subsisted in the Son of God by creation, or proper formation. *The Son of God and Son of Man, in one Mediator, may be properly sent, and properly come, in respect of the*

human nature, even from one extreme, or place, unto another : or, from heaven where he had been, to the earth whither he came, and pitched his tabernacle in open flesh. The Son of God, in his man-covenant is sent, as he is *manifest in the flesh*, and as the man now subsists by open creation in *the Son of God*, having subsisted, or stood by *secret covenant* in the same *Son of God* from *everlasting*. “It is not *the Son of God* went from place to place when he was sent, but *the Son of Man* that stood in him ; and then, by a communication of properties, it was the whole person was sent, though strictly it was only the *human nature* went from place to place.” I have quoted this from the invaluable Mr. *Hussey*. I conceive from it much light is reflected on the person sent, and that we may clearly discern the acts of the Father in his mission of our most adorable Lord. He delights to speak of his Father’s concern in his mission and commission from him. He does it here, because the whole validity of his mediatory acts, and office, work and salvation, all depended hereon. The mediatorship of Jesus Christ on God’s will, and our Lord’s covenant mediation, as the surety of his people, is all of the Father’s appointment. Christ’s responsibility for the performance of all he engaged for, is founded on his Deity as the Son of God. And the qualification of his person, as Mediator, and the worth and efficacy of his sacrifice, is founded on his covenant with the Father. Therefore he said, before he became incarnate, *Lo! I come, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.* Psalm xl. 7, 8. It is vastly supporting to faith to have scriptural views and

apprehensions of Christ in his mediatorial person, and mediatory office and capacity. If it had not been of eternal consequence, our Lord would not have mentioned it, in this his last prayer. For so we may call it, although he prayed after this in the garden, and on the cross. Indeed the eternal importance of it may be gathered from this very scripture now before us; because Christ hath a most certain respect to the offering he was about to make of himself. And his faith, for the acceptance of his sacrifice, was founded on what had passed in the everlasting covenant. *As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.* The word (AS) expresses a likeness between the Father's sending him, and his sending the apostles. There were some things in which there could be no likeness, there were in other respects an (AS) of likeness. Christ was sent by the Father to open all his heart; to make known his mercy; to work miracles; to preach the gospel; to cast out devils; to heal diseases; to perform all righteousness; to be the one everlastingly efficacious sacrifice for sin; to conquer Satan; to subdue the whole host of hell; to abolish death; to bring life and immortality to light. His acts were peculiar to his office; he saved his people by his life and death. This was his incommunicable work. None were with him in the performance of this work. This therefore must be left out, as having nothing to do with what our Lord is here praying for, and speaking of concerning his apostles, when he here says to his Father, *As thou hast sent me into the world, so have I also sent them into the world.* But it must be considered thus:

The Father had sent Christ to be the apostle of the church. The whole frame of gospel worship had been given to him; with all power in heaven, and in earth, he therefore, as the sent one of God, had authority to send others in his name; to preach his gospel; to be witnesses of his death, resurrection, and ascension; to work miracles, to confirm the doctrine which they delivered; to turn sinners to God; and to proclaim the everlasting gospel, and thereby to make known and spread the fame and renown of Christ far and wide. As the Father had sent him into the world, to save his people from their sins; so he had sent these into the world to preach his finished salvation to poor sinners. And it was his will and pleasure they should be continued for a season in the world, on this very account. He therefore recommends them to his Father's care. He speaks on their behalf. He speaks in their hearing, for their encouragement and consolation. He prays for every thing they could possibly need in the discharge of their office; and uses these words as an argument with his divine Father to be with them, and to be unto them every thing they would need in the exercise of their public ministry. He likens them unto himself, and himself unto them. Hereby expressing his strong affection for them; his inseparable love to them; the real delight he took in them; his pleasure in their services for his name's sake; how the Father could not give him more cause for joy, than by remembering them with everlasting kindness, all the while they were in their wilderness condition, all the while they remained here below, as his witnesses and followers. This

I conceive is the spirit and meaning of our Lord before us ; and which I conceive will receive confirmation if we go back to verse 14: *I have given them thy word: and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sake I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.* The whole is a series of gracious affection, proceeding from the heart of Christ towards them. He expresses it on their behalf in prayer to his Father ; he offers it up to him with divine energy ; he opens the ancient transactions of his Father ; he makes mention of them ; he declares before him, that his mission was from him. And as it was, so he in a way of likeness thereunto had, and would send these his apostles into the world, with the very same gospel which himself received in the settlements of grace from everlasting. He intimates, that like as the Father had kept him, and he had finished the work which was given him to do, so he expected he would faithfully keep from evil, and bless these persons he now prayed for. And thus our Lord leaves them in his hands, and makes a surrender of them to him. Which was fully sufficient to give these his beloved ones to know they could not be more dear and precious to him, even in glory, than they now were. As Christ received his mission from the Father, and in an (*As*)