

the Holy Ghost follow what hath been delivered, so far as agreeable to the word, and so far as agreeable to your soul's good, and make it effectual to you! Do not you be afraid of any doctrine in God's book, neither of election and rejection: learn to receive them from God's own revealed account of them in his word, into your minds; pray the Holy Spirit to state them in your understandings, and to give you to feel the power of them in your hearts; and then to produce the fruits of these important and most momentous and solemn doctrines in your tempers, hearts, and lives. The true knowledge both of election to life, and predestination to death, will be very profitable to you, in your daily walk with God. May the Lord the Spirit prove the truth of this in your daily walk and warfare! I will proceed,

Thirdly, To observe, that Christ had, and still doth communicate saving knowledge to the elect: *O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.* In which words we have the original cause of the illumination of these elect apostles. There is a distinction made between them and the world: the world was in ignorance, these were not; the world knew not the Father, these did. *O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee:* yet I have preached in it; I have indeed preached to the men of it, in their hearing, and so as to come under their observation. I have preached the great things of thy kingdom, in the most plain and simple way and manner: I have illustrated it by very many outward and striking

images in nature, yet they are just what they were ; they are, and ever will remain, strangers to the mysteries of grace ; yet I am in my person, and office, qualified to make sinners wise unto salvation. *I have known thee* : I know thee in all the riches of thy grace ; I know thee in all the love of thine heart ; *I have known thee*, and my knowledge of thee is the original from whence these before thee have been brought to the true knowledge and understanding of thy personality, love, mercy, and truth : *I, righteous Father, have known thee*, and I have communicated the true knowledge of thee to these eleven men before thee, *and these have known that thou hast sent me*. From these words some very important observations naturally arise ; as that the original cause of all true knowledge is in himself, and cometh from him ; he came from his Father's bosom, on purpose to make him known. He saith, *Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me*. He then adds, *Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father*. John vi. 45, 46. He says also, *I am the way, and the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me*. John xiv. 6. If all the true knowledge of God must come from Jesus Christ, then in the true knowledge of Jesus Christ, the true knowledge of God is contained. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the true illuminator of his church ; he is the light of everlasting life ; he is the bright and morning star ; he is the sun of everlasting righteousness ; he is the light of grace, and the light of glory ; he is the day-spring from on high ; he is the

great Prophet over the house of God: none teacheth like him. As he was the original of communicating saving knowledge to the elect, and conveyed the first spiritual light, life, and knowledge that ever was in our world to Adam and Eve, immediately after the Fall; so he it was who communicated saving light, knowledge, and truth, concerning the Father, himself, and Spirit, to these his apostles; and he it is who still communicates saving knowledge to the elect. He speaks thus, from his church of old to us, on whom the ends of the world are come: *Come ye near unto me, hear ye this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I, and now the Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me. Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.* Isaiah xlviii. 16, 17. The Lord Jesus opens the eyes of the renewed mind; he lets in some bright beams of his own heavenly light; he reflects the knowledge of his Father's everlasting love and mercy on our hearts; he communicates the saving knowledge of the Father, of himself, and of the Holy Spirit on us; he hereby makes us acquainted with the deep things of God; he thus gives us to know the Lord; this leads us to make an acknowledgment of the divine persons in the Essence; hereby we are brought to know them in their covenant relation unto us; then we set forward in the way to heaven; we come up out of the wilderness leaning on the beloved; and all this, as being taught the true and saving know-

ledge of the Lord. I have known thee, says our divine Lord to the Father, the world doth not. I was not sent to teach them the saving truths and doctrines of thine everlasting gospel; when they have heard me, it hath been only with the outward ear; they have often stumbled at the word, they have often misinterpreted it; some of my sayings have been to them very obnoxious. The difference between what they know, from all they have heard, and what these my apostles here before thee know, shews the one are carnal, the other spiritual; and as it was then, so it is to the present day. None but the elect are born again; therefore none but the elect so hear, as for their souls to live in consequence of what they hear; none but the elect receive spiritual truth, as spiritual truth, into their understandings; and really and truly to know the gospel spiritually, and to receive Christ by it into the understanding and into the heart, and to have the conscience purified by the blood of Jesus, and the affections fixed on the person and salvation of Jesus, is in my apprehension as great an evidence of eternal election as can be given, even from God himself. If the true knowledge of God was not of vast importance to the mind, our Lord would not so dwell upon it as he here doth; and if it be of eternal consequence even in the eye of Christ, then let us take heed of speaking in a way and manner so as to depreciate it. If this is the one thing which distinguishes the elect from the non-elect, then let us bless the Lord for any true knowledge any of us are favoured with concerning the mysteries of grace. Some general truths concerning

Christ and grace, lay open to all in the visible church of Christ; some special truths are only opened to the elect. There are general truths in the gospel; there are peculiar truths in it, which cannot be rightly conceived of but by the Spirit. Take heed of resting upon a speculative knowledge of Christ; see that such truths as flesh and blood could never reveal nor relish, be such as your minds are taken with. Praise the Lord Jesus Christ for any truth concerning the Father's love, and of his person and finished work, which he hath taught you. Do not so much as strive after any truth in your own natural strength. Seek not to attain any true knowledge of Christ by any human efforts; it will not profit you. Be content to receive your instruction from Christ, he only can teach you to profit; he layeth up sound wisdom for the upright; he is the fountain of wisdom. He, as Head and Mediator, received all from his Father. He opened the mysteries of grace to these apostles; and he still communicates saving knowledge to all his elect; to some more, to others less; to each as much as is needful. He withholdeth no needful knowledge from his saints; but is abundantly gracious to all his people, in giving them all things necessary to life and godliness; so that the apostle saith for himself and others, We have an unction from the Holy One: *Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.* 1 John ii. 20. *O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.* This our Lord speaks in commendation of his apostles; he speaks of them thus respect-

fully to his Father. It was designed to shew his heart is so set on his beloved ones, that he cannot, he will not speak but with respect and favour concerning them, even before his Father. Oh, what a view does this give us of his unutterable grace! It rejoices his whole heart, and soul, to speak well of his people before the throne. He mentions none of their sins, but he commends their graces. He is most truly the antitypical Aaron who can speak well, and who does speak well of us before the throne of Majesty in the heavens. *O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.* It was not in my mission to make thee savingly known unto the world. Thou art righteous in this thy concealment of the knowledge of thyself from them. Even the Jewish world, of whom I came, and to whom I was sent, and among whom I have delivered my heavenly doctrine; these are, for the bulk and generality of them, shut up in unbelief; they have rejected every evidence given of me by the prophets, and in their prophecies. They have had some conviction, under the preaching and miracles I have delivered and wrought among them, that I am more than man, and greater than all before me; yet they have hardened their hearts; they are exactly as they were before described they should be by the prophet Esaias; it is therefore righteous in thee to leave them thus to the hardness of their hearts. Notwithstanding they know thee not, I do; I have known thee in all thy vast designs; I ascribe all righteousness and faithfulness unto thee. I have known thee, and these

for whom I have been praying, and committing to thy care, have known that thou hast sent me; and I will go on to make thee further known unto them. And this brings me to my last particular head of discourse.

Fourthly, that Christ having communicated the saving knowledge of the Father to these eleven apostles now present, they therefore owned and believed him to be the Mediator, and Saviour, though the world rejected him. *O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.*

The knowledge Christ had of the Father, he communicated the same unto these eleven apostles; they, as they were elected from everlasting, so Christ had called them by his grace, and admitted them into his kingdom. They were born again of the Spirit, and had spiritual faculties suited to receive and apprehend the spiritual truths Christ had, and would further deliver unto them. Our Lord speaks these words with holy joy, *I have known thee.* He makes a great matter of it; he puts it by way of opposition to the ignorance of the world concerning the Father. As all Jehovah's dealings and dispensations are in uprightness, hence our Lord addresses the Father with this epithet, *Righteous Father.* He expresses the vehemency of his devotion, by introducing this with a note of admiration, *Oh! righteous Father!* He acknowledges the truth of things; so it is, *the world hath not known thee.* He uses the word *but*, by way of distinction, as it respected himself and his peculiar favourites, *But I have known thee;* this he lays a

weight and emphasis upon. He then speaks of those who were now present, the eleven apostles, and these for whom I have been pouring out my whole soul in prayer for; on whom my heart is fixed, and for whom, and for all the rest of thine elect, I am going to be made sin, and sustain the curse, and for whom I have expressed my uttermost desire, and will to thee in prayer on their behalf. These my apostles *have known that thou hast sent me*; I would therefore express my joy in them; I would acknowledge thy goodness and faithfulness unto them. Thou hast made them acquainted with thy personality, will, counsel, covenant, and pleasure concerning me. I have been the instrument of opening thy secrets unto them. I rejoice in what I have thus done for them; I have to speak on their behalf. These have known me to be *the Son of the living God*; they have known that I was sent by thee into the world, as the only Mediator; they have had, and they have received sufficient proof *that thou didst send me*; and it is by them the knowledge of thy love to the elect, and my work and office on the behalf of thine elect, is to be kept up, to be preached in the world, and kept up and maintained amidst all the opposition of the world, down to the very end of time; for thy blessing will so accompany their ministry that their sound will go out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. It gives me real pleasure, oh righteous Father! to mention them before thee; the frequent repetition of their persons in prayer is very sweet to me. I know the

high valuation of their persons in thy sight; thou lovedst them before all time. When I think of thy love to them, as one with me, and the love thou bearest unto them for my sake, and the love thou wilt express unto them, as they shall bear their testimony for me, in their preaching, writings, lives, sufferings, martyrdoms, and deaths, this will be acceptable in thy sight; I therefore at this time mention it before thee. *O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.* I conceive I have expressed the substance of our Lord's meaning in these words; I think they are, with the following ones with which the chapter closes to the apostles: not so but that, as they are very expressive of our Lord's grace to them, so they may be conceived to belong to the whole church of God in her militant state, so far as they may with propriety be applied unto saints in various circumstances and conditions. It is, most undoubtedly, a good rule in interpreting scripture, to carry it so far as agreeable with its context, and the whole analogy of faith, to the utmost it will bear. Therefore I would not exclude real saints from receiving benefits and blessings from every part of this prayer; yet I would not have the connection of it broken, nor would I wish the persons prayed for to be overlooked. Yet whilst I would for my own part be particularly attentive to this, I would allow, here is a spring of comfort opened in our text for all believers. It is from the doctrine of the holy apostles of the Lord and Saviour, we derive all true

knowledge of Christ, and the Father in him, and this is by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost; he it is who leads into all truth. Our Lord taught his apostles; they received all from him; he kept them whilst he was with them in the truth; he prayed his Father to keep them whilst he would be absent from them, by being received up into glory. The Father, in answer to his prayer, sent down the Holy Ghost upon them on the day of Pentecost; and thus, they being endued with power from on high, and being filled with the Holy Ghost, began their ministry after Christ's ascension into heaven; and the epistles wrote by some of them, and which contain the doctrine of them all, is continued, and will be continued down to the end of time, for the real benefit of the elect church and people of God. Therefore the words in my text may afford us real good; we may look at it thus: Christ in heaven received from his Father all he was to reveal and make known; he came down from the bosom of the Father and made it all known. The apostles were intrusted into the knowledge of all the mysteries of grace; their knowledge made way for their faith in Christ; they were fully satisfied concerning his mission; they received and embraced him as the one only Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus; they believed him to be the sent one of God. All this was by the secret power and influence of the Holy Ghost; for no man could then, any more than they can now, call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Yet Christ does not make express mention of him throughout this whole

prayer ; yet he had made frequent mention of him in his sermon, which went before this prayer, which should be considered ; if it were, it would be sufficient to put a stop to a very great insult which is cast on some real saints ; who, because they do not always expressly make mention of the Holy Spirit in preaching, in prayer, in conversation, are slandered, and that even by other saints, as if they were deniers of his work and operations, of his power and influences in the souls of such as are born again of God ; no, beloved, the charge is not just. To say such, and such, deny the work of the Spirit of God, because in every sentence they do not expressly mention his name, work, and office. Our Lord does not mention him in all this prayer ; yet as man, and as Mediator, as the Head of his body the church, he offered up this prayer to the Father through the influence and energy of the Holy Ghost ; for we must not leave out the Holy Three in their covenant relation to the elect, in any one act of Christ as Mediator ; and surely, this his prayer was no small part of his mediation. If our Lord speaks, as he doth in our text, by way of commendation, we see how well pleased he is with the exercise of faith on him, and on the Father as having sent him. *O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.* As these words stand in connection with our Lord's demand, *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me, for thou lovedst*

me before the foundation of the world. They express wherein the meetness of saints for eternal glory, for the endless fruition, consists; it is in the knowledge of the Father's love, and the Son's mediatorial person, work, and office. He that believes in Christ hath everlasting life.

Oh, that the Holy Ghost may lead you more and more into the meaning of our Lord Jesus Christ, in and throughout this 17th of John! it will then be unto you as the holiest of all. If you converse with Christ in reading this chapter, and taking in his truths uttered by himself into your minds, you will find yourselves in the very portals of heaven. Whilst I can add no more, I do not mean no more can be added; no, far from it: I conceive every part of what I have expressed is very short, as it respects what is contained in the words of Christ. All I can therefore say, it is out of my weakness I have attempted to say any thing.

May God command his blessing on his own truth! Amen.

SERMON XXII.

JOHN XVII. 26.

And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it : that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.

THIS verse, which stands in close connection with the former, ends the chapter. There is a most regular connection runs throughout the whole of it ; this I have endeavoured again and again to observe. As in the second part of this prayer, which began at the sixth and ends with the nineteenth verse, the eleven apostles are particularly prayed for ; so the whole church are the subjects whom our Lord particularly mentions in the third part of this prayer, the introduction to which is at the twentieth verse. Our Lord, as I conceive, offers up his whole soul in prayer for them, in the twenty-first, twenty-second, and twenty-third verses. The twenty-fourth verse is rather a demand, I do not like to call it prayer. It seems to me the whole prayer is finished in these words, *That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou*

in me, that they may be made perfect in me; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me. I look on this as the close of the prayer; most certain it is no petition follows after. These words of the twenty-fourth verse, *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world,* are authoritative. It is a demand; so that I cannot look on them strictly prayer, although they most certainly stand in connection with our Lord's Prayer. Then the words which follow: *O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me,* belong, I conceive, to the apostles; it is our Lord's discriminating between the world and them; it is his speaking to the Father in praise of them, as I may so say. Whilst I cannot but consider these words, and those also now before us, which is the following verse, must particularly belong to the apostles; yet not so, but by way of inference, the church of God may derive instruction and consolation from them also. In unison and connection with the words of verse 25, follow these now to be spoken on verse 26: *And I have declared thy name unto them, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.* In what follows immediately before my text, our Lord speaks of what qualified his eleven disciples for glory. He had in the former verse spoken of glory, and then he immediately upon it, expresses wherein their meetness

for it consisted. He expresses the unfitness and incapacity of the world, or unregenerate persons for it; saying, *O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee.* He speaks of himself, saying, *but I have known thee.* Then he speaks of the origin or originality of these his eleven apostles meetness for glory. These persons were meet for glory, because they knew the Father, and Christ which was sent by him: *I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.* They knew Christ was sent by the Father to be the glorious and all-sufficient Mediator. The world knew neither the Father nor the Son, therefore they could not believe, nor have fellowship with the Father and the Son; these elect persons had the knowledge of the Father and the Son, and in consequence of it, they exercised faith on our Jesus, as *the sent one of God.* All this is most certainly included and contained in these words: *O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.* Then our Lord adds, *And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.* In which words our Lord speaks of the blessings and benefits he had bestowed on these elect persons, and which he would further bestow upon them. *And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.* In which words we have the following particulars, and which, through the good hand of my God upon me, I will endeavour to set before you.

First, What Christ had already done, and what he would further do, *I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it.*

Secondly, His aim and end herein ; it was for the clearer apprehensions of the Father's love to their minds, *That the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them.*

Thirdly, The ultimate end which would be produced hereby, *That the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.*

I have thus given you the division of my text; and we are through the good hand of our God upon us, brought to the closing sermon on this seventeenth chapter of John. May the Lord be with me, and so let in the light of his heavenly truth upon my mind, whilst I am opening these words before us, as may increase his praise, and glory, and our spiritual good ! Even so, O Holy Ghost ! who proceedest from the Father and the Son, and who art in God, co-essential with the Father and the Son in the incomprehensible Godhead ; even so, O Holy Spirit ! Amen.

I am, under my first head of this discourse, to speak of what Christ had already done, and what he would further do : *And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it.*

These words are so united to the former, that it appears to me necessary to express them again : *O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me ; and I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it.* Our divine Lord here repeats what he had uttered to his Father

when he began his prayer on the behalf of his eleven apostles, which was at verse the sixth of this chapter. He then said, *I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world, thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word.* Our Lord there makes election the ground, why he did declare God's name unto them. It had been the motive in the Father's heart, why he had by election given these persons unto Christ, *Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.* The Father having designed by election these persons to Christ, he did ordain that he should manifest his name unto them, as that which had moved him to elect them. So that our Lord in this 26th verse repeats over for substance the same words with which he began his prayer on their behalf; saying, *And I have declared unto them thy name.* Our Jesus had opened all the secrets of the divine will unto them; he had inlaid in their minds all which could be known of the Father's everlasting love to the elect; he had inwardly revealed the vast ends and designs of God towards them; so that nothing was wanting in this respect: when the Holy Spirit should come on them, then their spiritual faculties would be more opened, and they would more fully apprehend what their divine Lord had taught them. Our Lord's address is full of meaning, *I have declared unto them thy name:* it implies he had taken great satisfaction herein. It is altogether wonderful, to consider our Lord came from the bosom of his Father, brought down with him in his own vast mind, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and opened and made

known all the depths of God's counsel and will respecting his church. It was his real delight to be thinking, and speaking out the whole of it, so far as it could be done consistent with the capacities of his regenerated disciples, and he here speaks of it, as yielding great and real pleasure to his great mind, that he had acted thus. I have done it. I will pursue this most delightful work. When I am in heaven, glorified with thee, O Father! even then I will pursue this, as that which will bring in a revenue of praise and glory unto thee. We should learn from hence to know, that every attempt and design to increase the knowledge of the Father's love, is to promote the glory of God; and that in all our intercourses with real saints, this should be our very end and aim. If this was a great part of Christ's work on earth, it should be of ours also. And as Christ bore with his beloved ones, notwithstanding all their weakness, and little knowledge of this so vast, and infinite a subject, so we should bear with real saints, although they take in so little of the subject. *I have declared unto them thy name*; all which thou art in relation and love unto them, I have fully uttered it; I have freely expressed it; I have done it for thine honour, that by the revelation of thine everlasting love to their persons, and the infinite delight thou takest in them, as thou beholdest them in me, their hearts may rejoice, and they may be glad and rejoice in thee. *As I have declared unto them thy name*, that they may have the knowledge of thee, in thy relation unto them; in thy love to their persons; in thy covenant of grace; in thy rich and free grace to-