

rest of the books in the New Testament do but enlarge and illustrate the four Evangelists. Just as, in like manner, all the Prophets, under the Old Testament, were but so many expositors of Moses. Having filled up, as well as I could, my first head of discourse, I proceed,

Secondly, To observe, that our Lord declares on the behalf of his elect apostles, that he had not instructed them in vain. "For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them." And those divine truths I have delivered to them, they have received.

These words are declarative of what good effect Christ's delivering divine truth had within them, and they are declarative of his divine approbation. And as they stand here in connection with the former verses and words, they are spoken by Christ to his Father, by way of commending them. The Lord had given them a spiritual faculty, suited to receive divine truth; he had opened the same to receive his truth; he had shone on it, and on the truth, and thereby opened the minds of his elect apostles to receive the truth into their hearts. And thus the end of Christ's ministry was answered in them. And they being thus instructed, were in due season to teach others also. These words, *and they have received them; i.e.* the words which thou gavest me, and which I, as the minister of the sanctuary, have given them, comprehend the whole which Christ had received from the Father, in commandment to deliver, and also, all that they could receive the true knowledge and idea of, and deliver out to others. This, in an especial manner, consisted in making

known to them the divine personal distinction of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in the one undivided Godhead. The great transactions between the Co-equal Three. The mystery of Christ's person; his mission and commission; the Father's love to him, and to the elect in him; the end and design of his mediation; the necessity of it; the ends and designs of God, in fore-appointing him to be the Lamb slain for sin; how this would make way for the descent of the Spirit; how the church would be multiplied; the gospel run and be glorified; and multitudes of poor sinners be turned to the Lord. These were most certainly the outlines of what our Lord had taught them. In these truths the honour of God was maintained; his immutable law glorified; his justice displayed in all the rights and honours thereof; his eternal hatred against sin, most fully expressed; and he revealed as just, and the justifier of the ungodly, who believe on Jesus. And in these truths are contained all the essentials of the everlasting gospel. If so, then as these truths had been the subject of God's mind from everlasting, and Christ became incarnate on purpose to fulfil these truths, which had been set forth by the Holy Ghost, in all, and throughout the whole of the Old Testament dispensation, then it must constitute all worthy of the style and title of the glorious gospel of the blessed God. So that in opening it by the ministry of the Word, it is wholly and entirely setting forth the love of the Holy Trinity, in the person, life and salvation of the Holy Lamb, who made his soul an offering for sin. If our Lord gave his apostles the words which the Father gave him, we learn thence

he received it, both the doctrine and ordinances of it, from the Father. As he delivered to them the same, he was taught, so it was highly becoming them to receive it into their minds, just as correctly as he gave it out unto them. And so they did. *I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them.* First, into their minds, so as to retain them, just as the Lord himself had given them forth. We may here observe the blessedness of divine teaching. It does not require what we style a good natural capacity, to make men wise unto salvation by faith which is in Christ Jesus. No; even fools, or in other words, people of the weakest intellects, when the Lord is their teacher, are wise and well taught indeed. The apostles were not men of large understandings; they were very dull, very slow of heart to believe: yet they, as having Christ for their teacher, and when they were endowed with power from on high, “went forth preaching every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.” Mark xvi. 20. The truths which Christ taught them entered into their minds. As they did not receive great light all at once, but grew into the knowledge of what Christ taught them by degrees, so they grew but slowly; yet they grew surely. The word abode in them. Christ watered the same with the dews of his heavenly grace; and they in due season made evident their profiting in the school of Christ to all. Our Lord taught them as they were able to bear. Our Lord knew how his word prevailed in their minds. He is here going to commit them to the Father. He therefore most graciously mentions

their election—Thine they were; the Father's love to him and them—and thou gavest them me; then he speaks for them—and they have kept thy word. And here with the same views of the Father's love expressed to their persons, in choosing them in him before the foundation of the world, and of his love to him, in giving him to be their head, and giving them to him to be his members. He speaks of what he had given them. Even the words, or the same gospel, the Father had given him. He indeed was given, that he might realize it in his person and work. The knowledge, and doctrine, and ordinances of it were given them, to teach and preach openly in the world, for the benefit of his church. He speaks to his divine Father with real pleasure and satisfaction concerning them, saying, *And they have kept thy word.* What they knew, understood, saw, and believed, as the fruit and effect of Christ's having delivered unto them the words, or doctrine, or gospel which the Father gave him, is thus expressed by our Lord, *They have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.* As these words contain all the essentials of the gospel, so I shall consider them under the two following heads. And will proceed to my

Third particular, our Lord's declaration concerning the knowledge they had of him, and of the Father. *They have known surely that I came out from thee.*

The knowledge of the distinctive personalities in the Godhead—of the love of the divine Persons to the elect—of their personal union, interest, and indwelling in them—in their acts of grace towards

them—in their transactions and covenant offices on their behalf—and in their relation to them, constitutes what I should style the knowledge of the gospel. It appears to me, the words of Christ now before me, are a full proof of this; because our Lord has been speaking of his giving these persons the very words which the Father gave him. He also says they had received them. And he shews most plainly what it had produced in them. They knew him; that he existed with the Father before his incarnation; that he came out from the Father. Which includes their knowledge of him in his person, in his offices, in his incarnation, in his work, in his salvation, in all which concerned and belonged unto him. What I have just hinted may serve to lead us to observe the various gradations in divine knowledge, by which the Lord is pleased to bring us to the knowledge of these most truly sublime and important points. We are first led to know Christ to be a saviour; then his blood and righteousness is most sweet and precious to us: then we are led to know his love; and that affords us a very heaven: then we are led to apprehend his work of salvation consists in his putting away sin, making peace by the blood of his cross, bringing in everlasting righteousness, conquering death, and him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and this makes him high in our esteem. Then we are led to take in a view of him in his incarnation, and in his incarnate state, and we perceive him to be bone of our bones, and flesh of our flesh, which renders him, in our view, as altogether lovely: then we are led to know him in his offices; and we view him as full of grace and truth: from hence we are led to con-

template him in his person; and then we see him to exceed all before we conceived of him: then we are led to know him as set up before all worlds, as God-man, Head, and Mediator; and this reflects fresh glories on our minds. And from hence we mount higher still, to know the Father as the setter of him up, and the Holy Ghost as the anointer of him who was thus set up; and hereby a way is made for us to know the Three in Jehovah, to our endless comfort. I have thus expressed myself, to give relief to the mind. I know I have spoken the truth. Yet the depths of God's manifold wisdom in these subjects, as they are set before us, and we are brought to the knowledge of them in Christ, and by his Spirit, are too great for us to comprehend and express, otherwise than in a transient way. It was so with our Lord's own dearly beloved, of whom he here speaks. They had been gradually led into the knowledge they now had. Yet the perfection of their knowledge consisted in their knowing the person of the Mediator; where he was before his incarnation; from whom he came. We may from hence observe, that all true saving knowledge begins with Christ; with the knowledge of his Person and Mediatorship. It is the very express meaning of our Lord's words. *For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.* Our Lord lays great emphasis on the knowledge they had of the Father, and himself, from the words which he had given them. We learn from hence, that the word of Christ is the foundation of faith;

that a revelation of truth must precede it; that where truth is revealed to the mind, there cannot but be the greatest confidence in it. *They have known surely that I came out from thee.* This had been confessed by *Peter* twice over. When our Lord proposed the question to all the disciples, Whom say ye that I am? he replied, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* So again, when our Lord said to the Twelve, *Will ye also go away? Peter answered, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.* John vi. 68, 69. Without all doubt, our Lord kept this in remembrance, and had a view of it when he thus spake. *They have known surely, i.e. truly, that I came out from thee.* On this most divine subject he had frequently spoke out to, and before them. He had said just before he began this prayer, *I came out from God, I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.* Upon this his disciples said, *Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.* Which it is very probable is what our Lord most particularly refers to, when he says to the Father, and they have believed that thou didst send me. They have known surely that I came out from thee. The expressions are peculiarly suited to the subject. Thou camest forth from God, as the disciples expressed their faith in the subject, and they have known surely that I came out from thee, implies the state Christ was in

before his incarnation. It asserts he was with the Father before; that he came out from the Father to do his will, to finish the work which he had given him to do. And it does not suggest any idea to the spiritual mind, but what is quite easy and agreeable to this; *viz.* That Christ was set up as Mediator in the everlasting covenant; that he was the head, and surety of his people, before he took flesh; he was the living Redeemer in Job's time; he was the Mediator of his church, all through every period of time; it was owing to a covenant engagement between the Father and himself, that he sustained this office; he was set forth and known, by all the Old Testament saints, as the man of God's right hand, as the Son of Man, whom he had made strong for himself; he had wore the glory, acted as, and executed the office of Mediator from the moment of the fall, to that of his open manifestation in the flesh; and he appeared at the precise time spoken of in prophecy. He was God-man Mediator, who had been seen as God-man Mediator in heaven, before he was seen God-man Mediator on earth. The one went before the other. Had he not been Mediator, he could not have acted as such; he could not have performed the principal part of his mediatory office, unless he became incarnate. He was to be a Mediator of reconciliation; therefore he was engaged by the covenant of mediation, to put away sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness. He came forth from the Father so to do; he descended from heaven to earth, by his mysterious incarnation. The disciples were taught by him the knowledge of who and what he was. They believed and con-

fessed him to be the true and promised Messiah, the Christ of God; the Son of the living God. And it was truly acceptable to the Father, that they should thus express their faith in him. Hence, on Peter's confession, our Lord says, *Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.* And here our Lord speaks to his Father, by way of commendation of all these persons, for their faith, which began with Christ, and then was fixed on the Father also. They have known surely that I came out from thee; that I had existence in and with thee before my open manifestation; yea, that I existed with thee, as co-equal and co-essential with thee, O Father, and the Spirit, in the incomprehensible Essence. They know surely my person, Godhead, headship, mediatorship, offices, and engagements. They know that thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; *that I came forth from thee*; to perform my work and office of mediatorship. They have been taught the truth of all this from me; they most surely believe it. I speak this as that which I know is acceptable unto thee, and most truly agreeable to thy holy will; I speak it on their behalf; I speak it to their commendation; I also speak it now, well knowing their faith is not now in lively act and exercise. That they, and others belonging to the election of grace, may know in succeeding times, I am the same unchangeable Mediator and friend unto them, in their low frames, and when they are very lifeless, as I am when their faith is ever so vigorous. As our Lord speaks thus by way of commendation of them, so in the words he points out

these most truly divine and important things to them, and us. That the doctrine of faith is founded upon a divine revelation, made of it in the written word; that himself, as the sent one of God, the glorious Mediator, is the immediate object of it; and that the Father is the ultimate object on which it terminates; also, that his undertakings in the covenant, is one branch of truth on which faith is exercised. From hence it follows, Christ is not so much commending his apostles for their faith, as for the persons on whom it was exercised. Which was on his Person, as Mediator, and on the Father who sent him. This is very clearly expressed, and therefore it becomes us closely to attend unto it. *For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.* So that here we have the whole revelation of God, set before us in these words. The Father promised Christ; set him forth to the Old Testament saints, in promise, symbols, types, figures, and sacrifices; he set forth his love in the gift of his Son, by the ministry of the prophets; he expressed the covenant acts and transactions, between himself and the Mediator, in their writings; he fulfilled it in the fulness of time, by sending his Son from heaven, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come. These eleven persons had seen God manifest in flesh; they had been instructed by him; he had led them to the scriptures of truth; he had given them spiritual understandings to know him—to believe in him—to rest on him as the Mediator—and to apprehend

and believe in his covenant engagements with the Father, and thus they were led to know the Father, who had sent his Son, according to his holy promise. Thus the person of Christ, the engagements of Christ, the mission of Christ, the mediatorship of Christ, his coming out from God, his being sent by him, were the objects and subjects on which their faith was exercised. And this leads me,

Fourthly, To shew our Lord speaks of their faith in the Father, and himself, saying, *And they have believed that thou didst send me.*

It was a day of wonders, and an acceptable year to the Lord, when our Immanuel was born into our world, and all the while he dwelt in it. Yet it was almost, and altogether hid from the eyes of the most who then lived. It was the expectation of the Jewish people, that a Saviour was to be raised up unto, and also amongst them. Yet they erred concerning who, and what he should be, because they knew not the scriptures, neither the power of God. The Saviour, the Great Saviour, God's Holy One, is born into our world; he lived in our world; he performed wonders in our world, yet he is not known and acknowledged but by few. *He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* John i. 11, 12, 13. To these apostles it was given as a privilege, and prerogative royal, to believe on Christ, to confess Christ. He had opened all his heart unto them. And in this prayer he opens all his heart

before them ; he speaks it out in their hearing ; he is well pleased they should be present, when he pours out his whole soul in prayer. And because they are particularly mentioned, he will on this very account have them to hear all he hath to say ; as hereby they might be fully assured he would, when with his Father in the highest heaven, be just as mindful of them, and as faithful unto them as he was now. Heaven would make no alteration in his heart. He would love them when on his throne with the same everlasting love, which he now expressed in praying for them. He says to his Father, *They have believed that thou didst send me* ; thus he expresses their faith. He shews it was properly fixed on the Father, as the sender of Christ : and this shews their faith was a spiritual and supernatural act of the mind on God and Christ. It was exercised on Christ in his Person ; on his mediation ; on covenant settlements ; on the Father, as the sender of Christ. And hereby it was proved to be the faith of God's elect ; the faith of the operation of God. They had before them the Messiah ; they saw him ; they hear him ; they conversed with him ; they found him full of grace and truth. He had given them a spiritual knowledge of himself, and of the Father in him. And although their faith did not at this time break forth into act and exercise towards him, yet he is pleased to speak of them as real believers on him, and on the Father, saying, "And they have believed that thou didst send me." It would be of great use and service to the people of the most high God, if they would attend to what our Lord here says. So it is, almost all look into

themselves for faith; and also to prove they are believers. Very few at present have any clear scriptural ideas of what believing in Christ is. No; indeed they have not. They conceive, that to believe on a well-grounded persuasion, the Lord hath wrought a new creation within them, and that they can hereby prove they are the Lord's, is to believe. They think this is faith. Yet if it were, even then it must follow, it is not faith *in God*; it is not faith *in Christ*: if it may be called faith, it is faith in a man's self. He believes he is a child of God, he believes Christ died for him, because he hath been so and so wrought upon; because he is so and so in himself. Here is no faith of the operation of God in all this. I do not say such are not the Lord's; but I do say, such at present do not know Christ. For the true knowledge of Christ, leads the mind to the true exercise of faith on Christ. And were the Son is known, the Father is known also. And this by and through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. If we attend unto it, we shall find it true. And it is of vast importance to be set right in the matter of believing. And there never was, since the foundation of the world, any true faith, but what had the word of God for the ground and warrant thereof. Neither was there ever any true faith which had not Christ for the object of it; nor was ever Christ precious to any mind, but it was led to the Father. So that all true faith hath Father, Word, and Holy Ghost, as the objects of faith, and hope, and love. For they are all jointly engaged and concerned in the salvation of the elect. Our Lord Jesus Christ saith, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth*

my words, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. John v. 24. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, hath everlasting life. John vi. 47. And again, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me. John xii. 44, 45. From our Lord's words, as above quoted, we may see our faith hath to do with the Father, and himself. As also in these, which are so precious to all that believe, *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. John vi. 37. They have believed that thou didst send me.* This is what our Lord here says of his apostles. And it implies that hereby they put honour on the Father, as the sender, and him as the sent one, and thus they glorified both the Father and the Son; and this was through the grace of the Holy Ghost, who dwelt in them, although he came more abundantly upon them after our Lord was glorified. It would be a real blessing to such as belong unto the Lord, if they were more simply and spiritually exercised in meditations on the persons in the incomprehensible Godhead—on the love of the Three in Jehovah, towards the persons of the elect—on the transactions of the Eternal Three, in counsel and covenant—on the setting up Christ as God-man Mediator, from everlasting—on his office in the covenant—on his union to, his relation, and interest in, the persons of the elect. These are the subjects in which all our real spiritual life is contained. In the knowledge of these subjects our spiritual life is quickened.

and excited. And as our spiritual faculties are exercised on them, we grow and increase with the increase of God. If our Lord speaks of the faith of his apostles, by suggesting how it was exercised, we should learn this lesson of instruction from it; *viz.* to make more of the object, than of the act of faith. We, in the present age, are very, very faulty in this very particular. Almost all we speak of faith hath no concern with the object, on which it is to be exercised. And it is but seldom we find any that are taken with the object and subject on which the faith of God's elect is exercised. Impressions are not believing; convictions of sin are not believing apprehensions of Jesus Christ; warm frames and feelings are not spiritual views of God's everlasting love. No; it is not. Knowledge is cried down. Something styled experience supplies the place of Christ in the court of conscience. People are pleased with themselves. This is a proof they have not seen the Lord's Christ. If they had, they would everlastingly be out of conceit with themselves. And if they had views of Jesus, they would be to eternity swallowed up in him. It is the office of the Holy Spirit to reveal Christ. He hath done it in the word; he doth it in the mind of such as are born again of God. When he takes of the things of Christ, and shews the same unto them. Hereby he brings about a closure between Christ and them. Then they esteem Christ above all; then they crown him as their complete Saviour; then he is their all; and then they make him their all. May the Lord, the Spirit, bless what I have set before you. May he open the eyes of your minds to receive the know-

ledge of Christ into your minds, and the love of God into your hearts. Then you will sing and shout for joy. I would here address myself to you who are real believers in Christ Jesus. Such I mean as have had a spiritual revelation of Christ made to your minds, from the Word, and by the Spirit. Are these things so, as I have stated? Is faith exercised on the person of Christ, on the suretyship engagements of Christ, on his work and office, and on the Father which sent him? Let us then give glory to the Holy Spirit for this. These are the true views of the subject. Our whole salvation and blessedness is in the subject. May the Lord, the Spirit, be pleased to engage and exercise our minds on this subject. Because so far as it is thus with us, we are living a life of faith on the Son of God. May the Lord add his blessing to his own truth. Even so, O God, the Holy Ghost. Amen.

SERMON IX.

JOHN XVII. 9, 10.

I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

THE three former verses I style the introduction to this most solemn and divine prayer of our Lord's, offered up on the behalf of his eleven beloved

apostles. In it he had mentioned them to the Father, and spoken of them as the elect, and beloved of God. He had spoken concerning his own propriety in them; they had been given by the Father unto him. He expressly makes mention of what he had done for them, as it respected making known to them divine truth. He says they had received it, just as he delivered the same unto them. He expresses what their faith in himself, and the Father was, and that they were at a point in these important articles of their most holy faith. And thus he commends them for it to the Father. This is the substance of the former verses, which I will here recite, that the truth of the same may appear the more clear unto you: *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. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me, ver. 6, 7, 8.* Then our Lord begins his prayer for them: *I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. ver. 9, 10.* As here it is our Lord's prayer properly begins, as the three former verses are but introductory unto it, so the prayer, as it respects the apostles, extends itself to the end of the 19th verse. In this prayer our Lord prays for the following blessings to be bestowed by his Father during their continuance in this

mortal state: for perseverance in grace; that they might be kept from the evil which is in the world; for their complete sanctification; for the increase of their spiritual joy, and for their union unto, and unity with each other. Each of these will come under their distinct heads, and be ranged in their proper order. The words before us express, and are confined to the persons here prayed for. They are described as those the Father gave to Christ. A remarkable emphasis is laid on the Father's propriety in them. And then our Lord speaks of his own interest in them also. *I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.*

In opening the words of my text, I will endeavour to set what is contained in them under the following particulars:

First, I will notice the persons Christ prays for and his restriction in prayer. *I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.*

Secondly, I will take notice of the emphasis Christ lays on the Father's propriety in those persons for whom he prays. *They are thine.*

Thirdly, I will speak of the mutual interest and propriety Christ and the Father had, and hath in these persons. *And all mine are thine, and thine are mine.*

And, Lastly, How Christ was and is glorified in them. *And I am glorified in them.*

May the Lord help me so to explain each of these heads, as to set before you the glorious truths of the everlasting gospel contained in the words now