

and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. An immediate answer was given to this prayer. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost (just as they were on the day of Pentecost), and they spake the word of God with boldness. Acts iv. 18—32. Now here was Christ's presence in an extraordinary manner vouchsafed them. After which, as the effect of all this, it is added, *And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. ver. 33.* We have another instance and proof of Christ's being present with, and filling his apostles with grace and power in such a way, as he does none beside. *Paul and Barnabas, who were both of them apostles, and are so called, Acts xiv. 14, preached at Iconium, and abode there a long time, Speaking boldly in the name of the Lord, which gave testimony to the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands, ver. 3.* And when *Paul* was for the first time at *Corinth*, and had preached and baptized many of the *Corinthians*, the Lord Christ appeared to *Paul* by night in a vision, saying, *Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace, For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee, to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city. Acts xviii. 9, 10.* I mention these things as so many proofs that these persons, styled the apostles of the Lord and Saviour, were peculiarly dear to him. He was eminently present with them. He appeared unto them. He wrought by them. He accompanied their personal witness and testimony concerning

him, in a way he did none other. So that whilst the love and salvation is common, so as for all saints to be equally interested in the same. Yet as to apostolic gifts and grace, it was peculiar to these ambassadors of Christ. He could say of them with a very singular emphasis, they are not of the world even as I am not of the world. The Lord bless what hath been delivered. Amen.

SERMON XV.

JOHN XVII. 17.

Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

AS this most divine prayer was offered up by our Lord, immediately before his passion, and may be considered as his consecration of himself to be the offering to take away the sins of his people, so we may boldly declare it contains the whole of his heart. In it he fully expresses all his desire on the behalf of his church and people. The prayer itself contains an address to the Father, in which our Lord mentions many things concerning his apostles, what he had done for them, how they were given unto him, and he speaks also on their behalf, and in commendation of them. He having used many pleas, proceeds to pray for them. And as introductory to this, he speaks of the mutual interest and propriety he, and the Father had in them. He

considers he is about to leave them in a world of sin and misery, pain and death, and he prays for them accordingly. He offers up his first petition for them in the eleventh verse. He addresses his Father with the title of *Holy Father*, and prays him to keep and preserve these his beloved ones. He enforces this on account of his own absence from them. He being about to be admitted to his Father, to enjoy the glory, and fully possess that which he had before the world was. He goes on to say many things on the behalf of these eleven persons present. He declares he spoke what he did in their hearing, that they might know his heart towards them. And hereby have his joy fulfilled in themselves. He still speaks, and that by way of argument, why the Father should grant his requests which he was now putting up on their behalf, of what he had done for them. How the world had, and would continue to hate them on that account. Then he offers up his second petition for them. Which is that they may be kept from the evil. Our Lord does not pray the Father to take them out of the world, to receive them to glory, but he prays the Father to keep them from the evil. From the evil of their own hearts. From the evil one Satan. And from the evil which is in the world. All of which is thus summed up by John, in the second chapter of his first Epistle, verse 16. *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.* All this Christ prays the Father, to keep his beloved disciples and apostles from. Our Lord urges an argument to enforce

this request. Adding, *They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.* We are come, through the good hand of our God upon us, to the last petition in this prayer, as it respects the apostles. Which is contained in the words of my text. *Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth.* Whilst I have aimed to speak of the particular requests made by our Lord on the behalf of his apostles, and have brought them to three in number, yet the truth of the matter is this, one of them, viz. the first, is a double one. So that to speak correctly, there are four petitions, in this second part of our Lord's prayer, which is more particularly to be appropriated to the apostles. Not to the sole exclusion of the ministers, churches, people, and saints of the most high God. Yet there are some specialities in it, which solely belongs to the apostles. Which concerned the apostolic age. And I account it very profitable to the mind to keep all things in proper order. I would therefore here recite the petitions, as it respects the number of them, and entitle them as four, thus, the first is for holiness and persevering grace, that they might continue in the good ways of God, faithful in the cause of Christ, and the gospel, to the end. The second is for unity to, and amongst each other, in truth and doctrine. This is thus expressed, verse 11. *And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.* The second petition, or rather the third, as the former naturally divides itself into the two parts which hath been

mentioned, so that the second division of it, should always stand as it hath been placed, and then the third request will be found in verse the fifteenth. *I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.* So then it will be found that this is the third petition. And it may be said to be for preservation. It is that *they may be kept from the evil.* Then it will clearly follow, that this in our text is the fourth petition. And this is for sanctification. *Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth.* As every part, branch, petition, and argument of this prayer, is of greater worth and importance than ten thousand worlds, so we both in reading, in speaking, in preaching, and in expounding this prayer, need to be continually looking up to the Holy Spirit, for his light and unction, that we may be led to receive into our minds, true and proper apprehensions of our Lord's mind, and will, contained in it. The deeper the subject the greater need there must be for the spirit's guidance and influence. And all the mysteries of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, being set before the minds of God's beloved and called ones in this prayer, consequently we are more in need of the spirit's teaching when we attempt to preach and speak on this prayer, than is easy for us to conceive. The words now before me, *Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth,* as offered up for the apostles, contain the following important request for them. That they might increase in grace, and be fitted for the great employment of preaching the gospel continually. The mean of

their sanctification is fully expressed. It is through the knowledge of the truth. As they increased in the knowledge of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and knew them in their distinctive personal relations to each other, and knew them in their distinctive personal acts of grace in Christ, towards the elect, and in their relations and offices to them, as revealed in, and made known by the everlasting covenant, they, by becoming thus acquainted with their will, worship, and truth, would be more and more qualified for their work. The word which Christ had already delivered unto them was truth. *Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth.* And this, as I conceive, is setting the whole of Christ's meaning before you in these words, as it respected the apostles, that the Father would increase and enlarge their spiritual faculties, that they might more fully understand and know all the mysteries of grace, contained and revealed in the gospel, which he had already given them, and that they being more and more influenced in their whole hearts and souls with the efficacy thereof, they might hereby be at all times, enabled to preach the same to the glory and praise of the Eternal Three, and to the real profit and increasing edification of God's elect. This I consider to be the substance of this petition, and which is the fourth petition offered up by Christ in this prayer of his, for the apostles. *Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth.* As it respects the use I shall make of these words, as suited to convey instruction unto us, I will aim to set forth the same unto you, by the following particulars.

First, By considering the term *sanctification*. Sanctify them.

Secondly, The means of sanctification, as here spoken of. Sanctify them through thy truth.

Thirdly, An explication, or description of truth. *Thy word is truth*.

And lastly, That the whole church and people of God are completely sanctified, *by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*. In going through, and filling up these heads of my present discourse, I most earnestly intreat the Lord the Spirit, that he may most graciously assist me, and so teach, lead, and guide me, that under every article proposed, what is delivered may be most truly, neither more, nor less, than *the truth as it is in Jesus*. Holy Ghost grant me the desire of my soul in this request, and to thy name shall all the praise be given, for ever and ever amen.

My first proposal is, to consider the term, or expression *sanctification*, or *sanctify*. As Christ here says to his Father, on the behalf of these his apostles, *sanctify them*. This is his request on their behalf.

Sanctify, and sanctification, are terms made use of both in the Old and New Testament. I would therefore apply, and refer to them, for the meaning of them. *Sanctify*, when referred to God, signifies to separate and appoint any thing to an holy use. Thus *God sanctified* the seventh day. See Genesis ii. 3. This is the first place in the Bible in which the word, sanctified is uttered. "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it." Nothing can be more clear, than God's sanctifying the seventh day,

was his setting it apart, and separating it from the other days, to be holy, on which his name and praise was to be recorded and celebrated, for his marvellous acts in creation. God gave a command to sanctify all the first born of the children of Israel. That is, they were set apart, and devoted unto God, and were to be redeemed at a certain price, which was to be given to the priest. Thus *the Lord spake unto Moses, sanctify unto me all the first born.* See Exodus xiii. 1, 2. Thus the tabernacle, the temple, the priests, the altars, both the brazen, and the golden one the sacrifices, &c. were sanctified under the law. So the *Lord* says, *I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar: I will sanctify also, both Aaron and his sons, to minister unto me in the priest's office. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God.* See Exodus xxix. 44, 45. God's manifesting his glory, and vindicating his honour from the blasphemies of the wicked, is styled by himself sanctification. *I will sanctify my great name.* See Ezekiel xxxvi. 23. I will, as one explains it, most justly clear up, and remove the occasion to think meanly, and contemptible of me, but I will shew that I am infinite in greatness and goodness. Thus also in Numbers, chap. xx. ver. 13. we read, *This is the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel strove with the Lord, and he was sanctified in them.* He was, says *Cruden*, sanctified among them by the demonstration of his omnipotence, veracity, and clemency towards the Israelites, and of his impartial holiness and severity against sin, even in his greatest friends and favourites, as Moses was. Thus God is said to

sanctify himself. To sanctify, is also spoken of man, and it signifies to purify, and to be in a proper condition to appear before the Lord, and to partake of holy things. *Sanctify*, or *sanctification*, is one and the same, in the sense we are now treating the subject. *And the Lord said unto Moses, go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day, and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes; and be ready against the third day* (to receive the law). *And let the priests also which come near to the Lord, sanctify themselves, lest the Lord break forth upon them.* See Exodus xix. 10, 11, 12. It signifies to prepare. *Sanctify yourselves against to-morrow, and ye shall eat flesh.* See Numbers xi. 18. So Joshua addresses the people. *Sanctify yourselves, for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you.* See Joshua iii. 5. "That is," says *Cruden*, "prepare yourselves, endeavour to bring your hearts into an holy frame, that with faith, reverence, and admiration, you may behold the great work that God will do for you." To sanctify, as spoken further of, as it refers to us, it is to praise God. To acknowledge his majesty; to worship him; to aim and endeavour to make him known, that he may be adored, praised, and beloved. Thus it is we *sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself.* To this we are exhorted by the apostle Peter, *sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.* 1 Peter iii. 15. And thus our Lord hath taught us to pray, *hallowed be thy name.* Holy, and holiness, are epithets which in a sovereign manner are ascribed unto God, the author of all sanctification and holiness. The seraphims cry to him without ceasing, *holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts.* See Isaiah vi. 3.

He is styled *the Holy One of Israel*. His name is *holy*, or rather *holiness itself*. In the New Testament on this same article of *sanctification*, or *sanctify*, we find it to be precisely what the Old Testament declares it to be. It is to separate, ordain, and appoint, such and such to the Lord. Hence Christ, the Son of God, is, as *Messiah*, said to be sanctified. He says he sanctified himself. He first speaks of being sanctified of the Father, *Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, thou blasphemest: because I said, I am the Son of God?* See John x. 36. Christ, the Son of God, could no other ways be sanctified, than as he was set apart in the council and will of the Father before all worlds, to be *the sent One of God*. And he speaks in the next verse which follows our text of *sanctifying himself*. *And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth*; which can mean no more than his setting himself apart, as the true Messiah, to offer his whole person, as God-man, as an offering to take away the sins of his people, and thereby to remove all their sins, and put them away out of the sight of law and justice by the sacrifice of himself. Under this very idea then, sanctification implies *separation*, and *separation by the Lord*, and *separation to the Lord*. Election itself is expressed by the word *sanctification*. *Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called*. Here, *sanctified by God the Father, is election*. The elect *were sanctified by God the Father*, they were distinguished from all others; he loved them in dis-

tinction from all besides; he loved their persons with an everlasting love; he sanctified, or set them apart, in the decree of election from all besides; he chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world. Thus *he sanctified or separated* them, as the objects and subjects of his immutable love, to enjoy all the blessings of the same in time and eternity. The apostle Paul holds forth the same truth; he addressing his apostolical letter to the Corinthians, addresses them thus: Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, *to them which are sanctified in Christ Jesus.* To be *sanctified in Christ Jesus*, must refer to God the Father, as an act in his mind and will. Christ is spoken of, as he who sanctifieth, and his people are spoken of as they who are sanctified. *He who sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one*, he is the head and they are the members; he is the first-born among many brethren; he is not ashamed to call them brethren. See Heb. ii. 11. It is expressly said, *we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ; and he by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.* That is, those who were separated by the Father, in his eternal decree of election. And the will of God the Father is spoken of as being concerned in our eternal and complete sanctification, in Christ, and by his perfect oblation. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once. From all these scriptures it evidently follows, that the sanctification of the elect consist in the Father's eternal love and choice of them in Christ, before the world began. In Christ's becoming the author of their eternal salvation, and

giving himself for them, and offering up himself for them, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savour. And the Holy Ghost is also the sanctifier of the church of the elect. It is from him they do receive their new, spiritual, and supernatural birth; and with it they also receive eternal life; he it was who reared up the New Testament church. He it was who wrought every grace, and bestowed every gift on it. Of him the apostle writing to the saints at *Rome*, says, *nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in remembrance, because of the grace that is given to me of God, that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.* See Rom. xv. 15, 16. As the Holy Ghost takes of the things of Christ, and gives the enlightened mind the knowledge of them, and hereby reveals Christ, we are sanctified. This being the means, whereby the heart is taken with Christ. It is hereby the affections are drawn forth, and set on Christ. Thus he becomes all, and self is nothing in our esteem and view. As it appears to me, I have fully considered and set before you the term *sanctification*, or *sanctify*, and I hope said enough to lead us from the use of the word, both in the Old and New Testament, to know, that as spoken by the Lord, it respects his own command, will, and appointment of persons, things, and time, to himself, to his own use, service, and for his glory. And that, as it respects his people's sanctification, it includes their eternal, and personal election in

Christ, the complete putting away of all their sins by Christ, and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in all the called ones, who are the temples of the living God, I proceed to my next particular, which is,

Secondly, To speak of the means of sanctification, as here spoken of by Christ. *Sanctify them through thy truth.*

Here is Christ the head of his church, the saviour of his church, the pastor of his church, the apostle and high priest of our profession, praying for his apostles, for his ministers, for his churches, for his saints, for all his members, for all his people, for their complete sanctification. Praying that they might be sanctified throughout in body, soul, and spirit. If he prays thus for his apostles, as he most certainly does, he does not pray as though they were not already sanctified. He had before declared, *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.* John xiv. 16, 17. As the Holy Ghost dwelt in them, he had wrought all he would ever work in them, as it respected their regeneration, and sanctification. He himself could add nothing to this his work in their minds, so neither can he in ours, who are created anew in Christ Jesus. He was to come on them, and he was to put forth his indwelling power and influence, and hereby draw out what he had wrought in them, into spiritual act and exercise. We are to speak of the means whereby this was to

be done. It was to be by the truth, *sanctify them*, these mine apostles, *through thy truth*. They knew the truth; so do many of us; yet at the time Christ spoke thus, it was in a very low manner, and in a very low degree. The Holy Ghost was to come on them afresh; he was to lead them into all truth; he was to testify of Jesus unto them; he was to glorify him; he was to shed abroad the love of the Father in their hearts; hereby they were to be brought more, and further, under the influence of divine truths than they had hitherto been. This would perfume their minds with the grace of Christ; this would raise up their minds to closer communion with Christ; this would lead them in all things to seek to increase his praise, and promote his honour and glory. Their perfect sanctification would consist, in their being completely satisfied with Christ; in being fully, freely, and cheerfully resigned to the whole good pleasure of his will; in their keeping themselves unspotted from the world; in walking before the Lord unto all well-pleasing. All which was to be produced in them, by the truth. The Holy Ghost working effectually with and by it on their spiritual minds. As it was with them, so it must be with us, and all the holy brethren. It was by the truth, the Holy Spirit carried on his work in their hearts. It is by the truth, as it is in Jesus, he is pleased to carry on the work of faith with power in our souls. The spirit is the agent, our minds are wrought upon by the Spirit. He works on us by the truth. As he is pleased to enlighten our understandings, so as for us to receive the truth into our minds, and to convey clear views of Christ there-

by to our intellectual capacities, we are thereby more and more taken with the person and salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the love of our heavenly Father in him, and thus our souls are more and more solemnly impressed with a sense of what is contained in the everlasting truths of the everlasting gospel. And we are more and more hereby led into real communion with Christ, in all the blessings which are contained in his most complete and finished salvation. Hereby we are led into the increasing knowledge of the mysteries of the Father's love. Thus we are more fully admitted into fellowship with the Father and the Son. All which is by the secret influence of the Lord the Spirit. Thus sanctification is promoted and increased in our minds; not that our spiritual minds are more sanctified; but our spiritual minds are more and more influenced, and exercised. And hereby what passes between our Lord Jesus Christ and us, is discovered. Sometimes in the high views and estimation we have of him; sometimes in the blessed account we are enabled to give of him; sometimes in the real attempts we make to speak of his honour and glory; and sometimes in our most hearty and best wishes for the welfare of his beloved people. If our Lord here prays for the complete sanctification of his people, and here mentions the means whereby this is to be effected, saying, *sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth*; then according to what hath been already delivered, the sanctification here prayed for, is not the sanctification of their natures; nor of their persons; but is the sanctification of their minds,

As to their persons, they were chosen in Christ. They were therefore sanctified, ones in the uttermost sense, and degree; for *they were sanctified in Christ Jesus*; he was their Holy One; they were holy in him; the Father had chosen them in him; therefore they had for themselves, and were interested in all contained in the following scripture; *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.* Jesus is made unto his people all this, and they have all this in him; without it, it could not be pronounced concerning them, *and ye are complete in him*, and which is said of believers in Christ Jesus. See Col. ii. 9, 10. *For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.* They are complete in Christ, as he is their head, and it hath pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell. They are complete in Christ, as he represents them to himself, and before his Father, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. They are complete in Christ, he being their complete holiness, and sanctification in the sight of God. And when they are kept *looking unto him, the author and finisher of faith*, then they are indeed growing in grace and in the knowledge of their Lord and Saviour. It is in the knowledge of the truth, and by the belief of the truth, they are sanctified. But here this question will present itself, and demand an answer, What are we to understand by truth here? And when a reply is given, then it will be asked, How are we sanctified by the truth? Yet these questions will serve, by the Lord's

blessing, to lead us further into the subject. I will therefore aim to state the question, and make a reply to it. What are we to understand by truth here? our Lord's petition is, *sanctify them through thy truth*. By the truth I should understand the truths and doctrines of the everlasting gospel, and Christ himself, who is the substance of them. The Alpha and Omega, the truth itself. *I am the way, and the truth, and the life, no man cometh to the Father but by me*. So our Lord himself spake. And he is all this; he is the truth itself; he came to prove the truth of God; to confirm it by his obedience and death; he is the truth, as it respects all which passed in the council and covenant of grace; he has finished the work of eternal redemption; as such, *he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth*. He by his sacrifice hath finished the transgression, made an end of sins, and brought in everlasting righteousness. So that Christ, and his finished work of salvation, may be considered as the truth our Lord is here speaking of. It seems to be what our Lord refers to. As he says, *sanctify them through thy truth*. But the next question is, How are we sanctified by the truth? We are sanctified by the truth, as it is given us from the word, and by the Spirit, to receive Christ and his salvation into our minds. The spiritual mind is opened, and by the Spirit of the Lord, led to know, understand, and receive Christ, as he is revealed in the word, more fully into our minds. Hereby we are more and more enlightened into true, real, and spiritual acquaintance with him. This hath its divine influence on our inward minds. Hereby our con-

sciences are purified by faith in the blood of the Lamb. By this knowledge of Christ we are enabled to rest more simply on him for the whole of our salvation. Thus we are fully persuaded of our heavenly Father's love to us in his beloved Son. Thus we get established in Christ. We hereby grow into him. Thus our Lord's prayer is answered in us, because it is fulfilled in us, *sanctify them through thy truth*. It is not in our power to sanctify ourselves. Our Lord prays to his Father for this most divine blessing. He prays for his beloved ones, that they may inwardly and apprehensively understand, what their sanctification consisted in. That it was by their continuance in the truth; they were to grow and increase with all the increase of God. And we learn from it that truth hath a wonderful influence on the mind. That the belief of gospel truth hath its powerful effect on the heart. And that the Holy Spirit, in all his gracious influences and operations on the mind, works through, and by, and altogether with the revealed word. The work of sanctification, which is in other words the work of faith, is carried on in the regenerated mind, through the truth. That is by the belief of it. So that when believers in Jesus drop the truth, they drop the very means of their personal sanctification. By which I mean, they drop the means, whereby alone it can be carried on with power in their hearts, so as for them to have the fruits and effects thereof realized in their tempers, lives, and conversations. Having, I trust, given an account of the means of sanctification, I would mention Paul's prayer on this subject, offered up by him, on