

LETTERS
ON
SPIRITUAL SUBJECTS,

WRITTEN IN THE CONFIDENCE OF FRIENDSHIP,

BY
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LATE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, LONDON.

FOURTH EDITION, GREATLY ENLARGED.

“ His letters are weighty and powerful.” 2 Cor. x. 10.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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LETTERS

ON SPIRITUAL SUBJECTS.

(Originally published as Vol. 4, continued.)

LETTER XII.

London, Feb. 1, 1812.

BELOVED IN THE LORD,

It is now the first day of February, so that one whole month is past of the new period of time which we are entered upon; it will soon be closed, and perhaps before it is, our countenances may be changed by death, and we may be in the state from whence there is no return. Time is the measure of a creature's duration. Our times are in the Lord's hands. He gave us being, and continues us in being; we are not our own. The apostle says, "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord, whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living." The matter of the greatest importance with each and every one of you, is to know Christ, and to know that you are in him: then it is of no consequence whether you live or die; whether you are in the body or out of it, for if you know Christ, you will live Christ, and in living Christ, you will say individually for yourselves, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Beloved, there is but one end to be answered by living, as it respects you who profess to know the Lord Jesus Christ,

and that is, to promote his praise and glory. I hope it hath been given you to enter on the present new year, looking unto Jesus, and putting yourselves afresh under the protection of his righteousness and blood, and receiving him into your hearts as your salvation. You must not look off for any good, temporal or spiritual. You must look wholly unto him. You must cast your every care upon him; then you will be careful for nothing: and thus exercising your spiritual minds on the Lord, the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ. You will need to stay yourselves wholly on the Lord, and walk circumspectly, for you will find the days to be evil. Everything in church and state, in the nation, and in the visible church of Christ, wears a very gloomy aspect. If we live on Christ, and in communion with him, then we shall be as well off as though things were ever so flourishing. My friends, it is as your souls are alive to God, that you are lifted up on high. It is too commonly the case for us to inquire more about others, than about the state of our own minds. My christian friends, I would particularly recommend Christ Jesus to your consideration; for common and general thoughts of Christ will do you no good. To contemplate Christ, so as to take in the glories of his person into our minds, and his love in our hearts, is the only way whereby we can be inwardly refreshed. We cannot be the better for anything we do not enjoy; and we cannot enjoy what we do not understand. We cannot believe in an unknown Jesus, though we may believe in an unseen Jesus. It is the office of the Holy Ghost to reveal Christ unto us in the word, and therefrom to take of the things of Christ, and reveal his salvation to our minds. It is hereby we receive Christ into our hearts, to dwell in us for ever. Thus we are brought to the knowledge of Christ, and of the Father's love in him, and hereby a way is made for our living on him; for our walking in him; for our rejoicing in him; and for our triumphing before him, as our Saviour and Conqueror. My dear friends, you have, in your time, frequently heard a good deal concerning the most precious and adorable Lord Jesus; that he exceeds and transcends all the worth and glory of this world; and that he outshines heaven itself; that he shines forth in all the riches of his grace and mercy in the everlast-

ing gospel ; and that he shines forth on his throne in heaven, in the view of his saints and angels in his full-orbed glory. Have you taken this into your minds ? If you have, then it hath drawn your hearts after him, and made him glorious in your view and apprehension ; and it must be by such views of him, that you will be kept alive unto him all the while you are here below. It will be your happiness to be taking into your minds some particular gospel views of his most estimable and everlastingly precious blood-shedding. All your peace with God, as it respects the same in your own minds, depends on your having clear and believing conceptions of Christ's having put away sin by the sacrifice of himself ; and that you stand in Christ, before the Father, without all sin. As he looks on you in him, and beholds you in the person, blood, and righteousness of Immanuel ; he sees you holy, righteous, and sinless in him : this you need to be taking into your minds continually, and be clothing your remembrance with. Then you will be preserved from legality and unbelief, and have your minds easy, and your hearts happy, which cannot be the case, but as you are favoured with some spiritual and special apprehensions of Christ. Therefore I would say unto you, if you would be happy in heart, if you would have true peace in your minds, if you would be holy, if you would live out of yourselves, and above yourselves, study Christ. Look at Christ, look into the heart of Christ, look into the bowels of Christ, look at the compassions of Christ, look at the glorious and finished work of Christ, and live on the salvation of Christ. Then you will not be afraid of evil tidings, your hearts will stand fast, trusting in the Lord. Your hearts will then be established ; you will not shrink, come what may, whether life or death ; so far from it, that should desolating calamities break out, you will, each of you, sing to the honour of our Lord Jesus Christ, "Thou art my hiding-place, thou shalt preserve me from trouble, thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance." I most heartily wish you all a very happy new year. May you live this year in real fellowship with Christ ; and pray do no one thing without him, and then it will be well with you. May you live over in your own thoughts what you really apprehend and believe concern-

ing the Father's everlasting love, the Son's complete salvation, and the Holy Spirit's divine testimony of the same. May your minds be every day perfumed afresh with the odour and fragrancy of the most precious name, person, love, righteousness, sacrifice, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and intercession of our Lord Jesus. May he be your Alpha and Omega, your beginning and your ending, in all you say and do. Do nothing either in the world or church, without him. Forget not this standing rule of direction, for it will never cease to be the safest and surest rule to go by: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." May the Lord look upon you, and bless you, and cause his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you, and lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and give you peace. I say Amen to this from my heart, and with all my heart. May the Lord God of our salvation, Father, Son, and Spirit, the Three in the One incomprehensible Jehovah, say so too. Now, Mr. and Mrs. B., together with the beloved persons who compose the church meeting with you, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified; and am your real friend in the Lord Jesus Christ, and for his sake, praying that all grace may abound towards you. May the Lord bless the new sermons to you.

S. E. P.

LETTER XIII.

London, Feb. 15, 1812.

I AM very glad to hear that all is well with you and yours, which makes way for more praise to be given to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is he who has permitted your family to be increased, and that without injury to your beloved wife. The Lord give you both a grateful sense of it. I am now an old

man, and shall never be what I have been, nor again do as I have done. All travelling is of necessity given up. I am confined the remainder of my days to London, Brixton, and Chard. Therefore, my dear friend, I write this to certify you that I can never more see your part of the country.

As it respects our Lord Jesus Christ, he must be your meat, your drink, your clothing. You must bring him into all things, and you must make use of him for all things. You must sanctify him in your heart, you must give him the chiefest place there, then you will be as truly blessed as you can be on this side heaven. My good friend, you must be living on Christ continually; then you will be going on with a high hand heavenward. May the Lord the Spirit bless you and your partner more and more, by teaching you how to renounce self, and live on Christ, and in true, real, and actual communion with him. I can neither wish nor pray for a greater blessing to be bestowed on you; indeed I cannot. When each of us come to examine, we find that we have taken but very little of the knowledge of Christ into our minds; and we must have the real knowledge of him before we can make use of him for our souls' advantage. We are always the subjects of sin, and at all times alike the subjects of it. For being always the subjects who are liable to fall by our personal, constitutional, and besetting sin; therefore we need to be continually taking into our minds such apprehensions of Christ, as suit all this, and as will carry us above and beyond all this: and this requires much spiritual study and meditation. Christ is a spiritual Saviour; the knowledge of him makes us spiritual. His salvation is a spiritual one. It is to remove guilt out of our consciences, to dethrone the love and power of it in our hearts, and the reign and dominion of it in our lives: and so far as the Lord the Spirit gives us the true apprehension of Jesus from the word of inspiration, we see our persons secured in him; our sins removed from us, and out of the sight of God, by him. We enjoy a blessed sense of being clothed with his righteousness; of being pardoned through his most precious blood: thus we are actually made partakers of Christ; then we put on Christ, which having done, we walk with Christ in the full belief that his blood cleanseth us now and evermore from all sin; and in the real belief of this, we fight against sin, the world, and the devil,

saying, Jehovah Jesus is the banner of salvation. Now as every day will bring with it present sins and miseries, and we shall never, to the end of our lives, no, nor in the very article of death, be one whit different in ourselves from what we are this moment, hence there is an absolute necessity for us to be well acquainted with Christ: and the way for us to know more of him, is to cultivate more acquaintance with him, by free and open fellowship. It is good for us to be often in his company; to be conversing freely and frequently with him; to be laying our cases before him; and to be speaking out our hearts to him. It is very good for us to converse with him in deep spiritual meditations. It is a possible case to have many ideas of Christ, which do not sink down into our hearts. A person of immense riches is not one farthing the better for them, any further than he enjoys them. So I would say, you are immensely rich in Christ: but give proof of this by living on Christ; prove the same by enjoying him; by deriving all your supplies from him. This will be the best proof and evidence which can be given that Christ and you are one; that you are real friends, and not strangers to each other. You will, most certainly, be a great gainer to be often in the company of our Lord; you will be greatly ennobled by his special and communicative friendship. His smiles will cheer you; his presence will animate you; and by lifting upon you the light of his countenance, it will cause your face to shine. To have daily intercourse with, and continual access to him, at all times as your matters shall require, this will enrich you to a very great degree; this will be to live happily; to live safely and securely from fear of evil. You will be happy in heart; you will be of a cheerful countenance; you will be holy in all manner of conversation and godliness. You will hereby be a blessing to your family, to the church you belong unto, and to others also; who, by taking knowledge of you that you have been with Jesus, will see and perceive what a reality there is in the spiritual knowledge of Christ, and what an unspeakable blessedness there must be contained in real spiritual fellowship with Christ Jesus. Thus I go on, as though I had nothing else to do but write letters; whereas I am as full of employment as I can be: yet I was willing to give you an answer. May the good Lord bless it to you. My christian regards to your spouse and family. My love in Christ to the

church in your house. The Lord bless them, and knit them in heart and affection to each other in Christ Jesus, and keep them in the truth as it is in Jesus. It is a great blessing to know what is truth. It is a greater blessing to receive the truth into our hearts, by the power of the Holy Ghost. It is the very crowning blessing, to be established in the truth by the grace of the Spirit Jehovah. May the Lord be in your midst. May you all enjoy the Lord's manifestative presence. May the joy of the Lord be your strength. May his salvation set you up on high. May the Lord bless you with increasing communion with the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, in the knowledge of their eternal covenant acts and transactions, and fill your hearts with a real enjoyment of everlasting love, and finished salvation; then you will sing and shout aloud for joy.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirits. Amen. Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I remain, your friend in the Lord,

S. E. P.

LETTER XIV.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I WAS very glad to receive a letter from you. I thank you for the kind invitation. Should I come down, it will be very acceptable; but I cannot be sure of it. It is all settled in the Lord's will, and there I leave it. And truly blessed it is when we leave our all in his hands, and ourselves to be disposed of, after the counsel of his will. I believe you have many times had evidence of the truth of this; and as I understand your letter, you have a recent proof of this in the case of your beloved son. Go on, my good friend, to "cast all your care upon him who careth for you." He declares he will "never leave nor forsake you;" so that you may boldly say: "The Lord is my helper."

Oh, that your eye and heart may ever be towards the Lord. He has been your father, your brother, your friend, your helper, and your all. So he ever will be; you, therefore, need fear no evil. I hope you do not. Well, my good friend, we are going on fast to heaven and glory. Time is ever on the wing. A glorious immortality awaits us; and it is but for death to do its office on the body, and we being absent from it shall be present with the Lord. No words can describe the blessedness of being in Christ: neither can be expressed, the real happiness of living Christ, for it is a great part of Christ's salvation. In living out of ourselves on Jesus we may truly say we are partakers of Christ: yes, indeed. In living Christ we have communion with him; and in communion with Christ, we have the enjoyment of his love, in which we find the very blessedness of life everlasting, so that we cannot but say with the Psalmist, "In thy favour there is life. Thy loving kindness is better than life itself." Oh, what has Jesus done for you, in bringing you to know him, to receive him, and to trust in him for your whole salvation! Why it is beyond conception: it exceeds all expression. Oh, go on to praise him; and when you have done your uttermost, it will fall infinitely short of what is his due; for his name is exalted above all blessing and praise. It is good for you to be employed in thinking over, and in speaking of the Lord's dealings with you, and his goodness, of which you have had such abundant instances and evidences. You can never be too much swallowed up in admiring and adoring thoughts of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose mercy endureth for ever. I had also a marvellous display of it towards me, when I broke my arm, dislocated my wrist-bone, and sprained my hand; our Lord turned all into a blessing. I was brought low, but he helped me. He hath turned my sorrow into joy. I am a monument of his sparing mercy, and a witness for him; and through his good hand upon me, I am going on to the city of habitation. He is my pilot, my guardian, my friend. I live to prove his invariable friendship, to speak of him, and for him. All my desire is before him. It does my soul good to praise him, and to speak of his wonderful person and glorious salvation.

May the precious Jesus keep your eye of faith constantly fixed on him. May your heart be ever going out after him.

May you be so receiving the knowledge of him into your mind that you may be going up and down in the name of the Lord, making mention of his righteousness, even of his only. The Lord keep his eye continually on you, and give you such blessed apprehensions of it, that you may be constantly blessing and praising his holy name.

Your's in the Lord,

S. E. P.

LETTER XV.

Brixton, January 26, 1813.

MY FRIEND,

I HOPE you, and your beloved wife, and friends, are entered on the present year, in the enjoyment of spiritual and temporal health, and in full persuasion and belief that the Lord Jesus Christ will never leave you, nor forsake you. It is a real blessing to know and feel our need of Christ every moment and for everything; and to be living in the continual exercise of faith on him for every spiritual and temporal blessing. It is also a singular blessing to be assisted by the word, and by the Holy Spirit, to take in such distinct and particular views of Christ, as are exactly suited to our own inward cases, feelings, experiences, and knowledge of ourselves. Each of us has his own personal sin and guilt; each of us has his own personal wounds, wants, griefs, and sorrows; and each of us has his own personal and constitutional evils. There is with all of us some besetting sin; some one sin which most easily besets us. We each therefore need a personal and particular knowledge of Christ, most exactly suited to all we are the subjects of. And to attain to such a knowledge of our Lord, as is quite suitable to our own particular cases, and to live on Christ, agreeably to this, and to be coming to Christ continually with all we are the subjects of, to receive him into our minds as a present Saviour, and to receive out of his fulness, whatsoever we need; this is the life of faith. And it is the only

life which can prove us to be one with Christ, and that he is one with us. Now as it is common on the entrance into a new period of time, to wish a happy new year to our friends, so I, in the name of the Holy Three, wish you and your wife, and believing friends, a very blessed new year. By which I mean a prayer on your behalf, that you may have increasing knowledge of God, in all his persons and perfections; in the covenant acts and transactions upon which our eternal life depends. My friend, the Bible was not given us to amuse ourselves with; nor to lead us to speculate upon it. No, it was given us by the Lord, to make us wise unto salvation, by faith, which is in Christ Jesus. It was given us, that we might receive the true knowledge of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, from it. That we might receive Jesus Christ, and his salvation through it, into our minds; that we might be made partakers of Christ thereby; that we might receive therefrom a knowledge of the love wherewith God loved us from everlasting; and that we might from it learn how to be always living on Christ, to his praise and glory, and to our present benefit. And we cannot live on Christ, but in consequence of our real knowledge of him. We cannot live Christ any farther than we have the knowledge of him in our own minds. The knowledge of Christ makes way for faith on Christ. This is founded on the word: it can only be supported, fed, and maintained by it. Christ is the one immediate object of faith. Looking unto Jesus draws out the whole soul after him. This makes way for communion with him. In fellowship with Christ, he imparts his secrets unto us; he causes his goodness and glory to pass before us. This most effectually subdues sin, deadens our affections to all that the world calls great and good: and hereby we grow out of love with all but Christ. It is a most important matter in the school of Christ, to receive him into our hearts. We are sometimes amused and pleased in hearing about him, when we do not at the same time actually receive him. Indeed, the knowledge of Christ, faith in Christ, living on Christ, walking in Christ, triumphing in Christ, is altogether supernatural; so that any of our own thoughts, or words, added to it, spoil the subject; yet the subject itself and the exercise of spiritual thoughts on it, is very simple and very easy. A good thought, conceived in

the renewed mind concerning Jesus Christ, by the influence of the Holy Ghost, produces most blessed effects. When we receive Christ into our minds, it is by his word. He says, "I have loved thee." We receive this into our hearts; we ponder on it; the Holy Ghost works upon us, with it and by it. In it he opens to us the heart of Christ; hereby we have a spiritual apprehension of his love. This leads us to wonder and praise him for loving us; and we are led on to know him in his finished work; how he hath borne our sins in his own body on the tree; how God made him sin for us; how we are made the righteousness of God in him. The Holy Ghost enables us to receive this into our minds; and it becomes the ground of all our confidence in him. Thus we see our salvation finished in his life and death; and we receive the testimony of God concerning it into our minds, that "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from all sin." We receive the atonement into our hearts, we are hereby acquitted in the court of conscience, and then we praise Christ for loving us, and washing us from our sins in his own blood. Now, my dear friend, to know Christ, the virtue and efficacy of his blood and righteousness in our own souls, is that alone which can fit us for life and death. We cannot live Christ without it; neither can we die in the exercise of faith on Christ without it. I therefore most heartily pray, as the substance of all blessedness, that you may be taught by the Holy Ghost, how to live over this truth in your own mind concerning the present and everlasting virtue of the blood of the Lamb. To have guilt and condemnation kept out of the conscience, by faith in the work of Christ, and the Father's testimony concerning it, is heaven upon earth. It is what constitutes a very blessed part of the life of faith on the Son of God. May the Lord himself teach you thus to live: may the Lord of peace give you peace always, and by all means. The Lord be with you all. If you would be at peace amongst yourselves, then you must not have too much to do with each other. There is amongst professors too much familiarity; too much communication; it does no good; it answers no useful end. We must all live Christ ourselves, or we cannot be spiritual. We must all live on Christ for ourselves: it must be our own act. We must all go to Christ for the

supply of all our wants ; for it is he only who can supply them. We never lose anything by being in Christ's company ; we are most truly happy when we enjoy his presence ; in his favour is life. His loving kindness is better than life itself. May you be often engaged in conversing with Christ ; in pouring out your heart before him. May you be continually giving up yourself and all your concerns into his hands ; may his Spirit teach you ; may his word dwell richly in you ; may your meditation on him be sweet ; may all grace abound towards you ; may great grace rest upon you ; may the love of God be shed abroad in your heart ; may the Spirit of God, and of glory rest upon you ; may the blessing of God be upon you, your wife, and all the friends of our Lord with you.

S. E. P.

LETTER XVI.

Bethel House, Brixton, March 30, 1814.

MY FRIEND,

THOUGH the present year is more than begun, as one quarter of it is already past, yet to live Christ is just the same great and important subject that it would have been, had I proposed it to you on the very beginning of this year. There can be no real living *to* the Lord, except we live *upon* the Lord ; nor can we live *upon* the Lord, but as we truly *know* the Lord. No man can know the Lord Jesus Christ truly, but from the word, and by the Spirit ; nor can we be kept alive to God, and live by the faith of the Son of God, but as we increase in the knowledge of the Lord's will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. To know Christ is the first and chiefest point in christianity : our faith begins with him, it is exercised on him, and it goes on increasing by looking unto him. As he is the Alpha and Omega in salvation ; so he is of our faith. We cannot do without him ; we cannot go beyond him ; our all is in him. Our election is in him ; we were chosen in him before the foundation of the

world. Our life is in him ; your life is hid with Christ in God. The promise of it is in Christ Jesus. Our hope of it is in him : "in hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Our salvation is in him : "who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling ; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Our whole redemption from sin, Satan, the world, death, and hell, is in him : "in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Christ contains all that God hath promised us. In giving Christ he gave all to us ; and this is the promise he hath promised us : eternal life. And this is God's record of his Son : that "he hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life." Our faith is in Christ. Our Lord expresseth himself thus, to his chosen and beloved Paul : "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive the forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith which is IN ME." True faith apprehends Christ as he is revealed in the word of the gospel. It receives from hence the true knowledge of Christ into the mind. By it Christ dwells in the heart. He is our hope of glory ; and like as the object is let in upon the eye, so Christ is let in upon the mind. The renewed mind is the eye of the soul. It is by what we see in Christ, the object and subject, we live and are refreshed ; not by what we enjoy, for it is Christ we look at, not faith. It is what we see in him, which carries us off ourselves. It is real spiritual views of him, that save us from sin and self. It is supernatural apprehensions of his great salvation, which leads us individually to confess, and make this declaration concerning him, "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

May you and your wife look every day throughout this present year to Christ, as your head, your Lord, your Saviour, your father, your brother, your shepherd, your friend, your counsellor, your guide, your rock, your shield, your salvation, your all. May the Lord the Spirit teach you how to make him your all in all ; may he lead you into a real

practice of this, then you will be truly blessed, holy, and happy in your own minds, without which you cannot be so. You are not only to look on Christ for salvation, but you are to live on him for every blessing of it; when you do, then you honour all the persons in Jehovah, then you enter into the very spirit of the gospel, then you act like such as are alike from the dead; it is then you give evidence to all around who observe you, "that you have been with Jesus." It will do your souls good to consider that Jesus Christ is in heaven, upon his throne, with all the personal worth and perfection of his righteousness and sacrifice. He is there in the full possession of all grace and glory. He liveth after the power of an endless life: he liveth in the presence of God for you. Think this over in your own minds; dwell on it, study it, live it over continually in your own thoughts. It will be beneficial to you; it will be the best of cordials, for both your souls and bodies, that you can possibly use; it will be a grand general restorative, such as will reanimate, revive, quicken, invigorate, and strengthen the whole spiritual system. You never need to be afraid of thinking too much of Christ, for it is by this means our spiritual life and light are increased. My own private personal motto, for the present year, is in these words: "I said thou art my God." They are a confession of faith. The Three in Jehovah, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, who have revealed themselves, as the Three that bear record in heaven, are, by their own will, council, covenant, word, promise, and oath, the Lord my God. And the Three in the incomprehensible Jehovah are all this to me, and have revealed all this unto me, and given me some real knowledge of it, and some real communion with them in the divine blessings contained herein by the glorious gospel.

My friends, prize the gospel next to Christ himself; it is Christ revealed; the whole of Christ is set before us in it. May the Lord give you free access to him at his throne. Trust in him at all times, and for all things. Never keep at a distance from Christ. Go to him, and make use of him for every thing. The more you trust him, the more you may, it will become the more easy to you; it will be advantageous to body and soul. You will, in so doing, have such evidences of his friendship, as you cannot have without. No, indeed

you cannot. May you live this year in closer friendship with Christ Jesus, than you have ever yet done, since you had the honour and happiness of knowing him. Converse with him in the family, in the shop, behind the counter. It will be no hindrance to any sort or kind of business, as you can converse with the Lord Jesus Christ mentally, without opening your mouth. May you be led every day throughout this year, to consider the present and everlasting virtue, worth, and efficacy of the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ; and being let more and more into the knowledge of Christ's most complete and finished work, may you be receiving the same into your minds, as all your salvation and all your desire. I say Amen to this; may the Lord say Amen unto it also; then you will enjoy the benefit of Christ's propitiation and righteousness. May all that is contained in the following promise be realized in you and your beloved partner: "And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." Whilst I wish you both the fulfilment of it in your own experience, yet it is a personal promise, and it can only be fulfilled personally and individually.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirits.
Amen.

S. E. P.

I must give up all thoughts of coming down. I have been very ill since I saw you. My love in Christ to all the friends in Christ. I must not forget Mr. and Mrs. C., my love to them.

LETTER XVII.

Truro, Aug. 27, 1814.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

I RECEIVED your's last evening, and that you may know I do not love you in word only, but in deed and in truth, I write to you to say, that I am truly pleased the Lord hath opened your mouth to speak for him, and on his behalf, at Reading, in Berkshire. I feel no surprise at the agitation of your mind; it is what you will again and again experience, as the Lord shall be pleased to call you forth, and exercise you in preaching Christ crucified. The word the Lord sent home so instantaneously to your mind, "Certainly I will be with thee," is, in my view, a full proof of his design towards you. The subject you preached from is of more worth than ten thousand worlds. The dignity, worth, virtue, and efficacy of Christ's most precious blood, is a most blessed part of the everlasting gospel. Your preaching Christ, in his person, salvation, and offices, as suited to sinners, and their every wound and case, was the very thing to set before the people. You need not repent of what you have done, nor be concerned about it, leave all with the Lord. Cast the bread of sound doctrine upon the waters, and you will find it after many days. The Lord bless you, and make you truly alive to Christ. May he keep you in the truth. Let no one know what you were the subject of on the late occasion. It will do *you* good to recite it, not *them* to hear it. You are fully persuaded that all was under the immediate providence of God, who says, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." If the Lord please to send you forth to preach his gospel, it is not what your will is, but his will must stand. Everything you experienced is, as I conceive, what every one whom the Lord calls, has more or less the experience of, especially at his commencement. The Lord was found by you all-sufficient. He gave you strength equal to your day; bless his holy name for it. I have to tell you, that the best of all employments is to preach Christ, and set forth his unsearchable riches. One of old said: "I will

“speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works.” Do not say, it is not my wish to be a minister. It is the greatest honour the Lord himself can confer upon you, to send you to preach Christ crucified, and Christ exalted. You must have no wish in it; your business is to be wholly passive. The language which it becomes you to utter, and express yourself by, is: “Not my will, O Lord, but thine be done.” May the Lord open your ears to hear his voice speaking to you by his holy providence, and in his word of grace.

I am pleased that the members of the church at Shoe Lane have put the papers into the hands of both of you deacons. You ask, how are we to act? I should reply, let both of you exercise your gifts amongst them for a season. This will make way for the Lord’s mind and will to be known.

I have been very fully attended since I came here. I seem to have been sent to give the church some instruction how they may celebrate the Lord’s supper amongst themselves. I wish their good; so I do every one of the churches of Christ throughout the whole world. I live for Christ and his people. This is all that detains me in this lower world. If my work was done, I should be taken to my everlasting home. Amongst those who have attended, some, doubtless, have mocked, others have said, “we will hear thee again of this matter;” whilst some have cleaved to me, and believed. We little know how the thoughts of many hearts are revealed, in consequence of holding forth the truth as it is in Jesus. If Christ is preached, it will be a stumbling-stone and rock of offence to some, as it will be life and salvation to others. When I look back, or even now before me, I cannot but marvel at the goodness of the Lord in the midst of so much evil-speaking, slanders, and oppositions from various sorts and kinds of men, that I have been carried on so many years; I now see it was good for me that I had to endure such a fight of affliction. I should never have taken such fast hold of Christ; I should never have gone on to prize and esteem him as my chiefest joy; nor should I have had such communion with him; such contempt of the world; and so little fear of death, had I not passed through what I have done, in this

present evil world ; therefore I have nothing to complain of, but can truly say, " The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of broken heart : and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." This is very good and comfortable ; it is much like what the apostle says to Timothy, when he is giving an account of what befel him as a witness for Christ : " But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra ; what persecutions I endured : but out of them all the Lord delivered me." He adds, " yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Be it so ; yet the Lord says, " I, the Lord thy God, will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, fear not, I will help thee : fear not, thou worm Jacob." It is good to look into the promise ; to receive him by it into the heart ; to make continual use of it, and to live it over in the mind : this is the way to live it over in our walk and conversation. The Lord Jesus Christ says to you, " Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer : be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." You will find in the course of constant preaching many corruptions drawn forth, both in yourself and in the people, even in some you love and most highly esteem ; and Satan will improve upon the same all he can : it must be so, you are in the body, so are they. Never open your mind to any but the Lord Jesus Christ, concerning any discouragements or peculiar cases and experiences which befall you, and which you are the subject of in preaching. I doubt not but you will live to see this is good advice. Never forget the ordinance of the greatest importance in the church. All of Christ is revealed in the gospel. Your aim should be to preach it, exactly agreeable with the revelation. You are not to be so much concerned about the success of your ministry as about the subject of it. The apostle says, " For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of : for necessity is laid upon me ; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel!"

If the Lord please, may he bless what I have laid before you. The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit; grace be with you. Amen.

Your's in the Lord,

S. E. P.

LETTER XVIII.

Chard, Sept. 13, 1814.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

WHILST I love you with my whole heart and soul, yet I am not sorry to hear of your present complaints and anxiety of mind. I should not think the Lord had called you forth to be exercised in speaking his holy truth, if it were not with you exactly as you say it is. Moses was very loth to be so engaged, though immediately called of God to bring Israel out of Egypt. Jeremiah, likewise, who was called of God to preach to Israel, cried out, "Behold! I cannot speak, for I am a child:" yea, when he had been a long season in the ministry, he said: "I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." As surely as the Lord calls you forth to speak, so surely will he be with you; and you will find in the course of your ministry, as you do in living a life of faith on the Son of God, that sometimes you will be enlarged, at other times you will be straitened; sometimes you will be encouraged, at others altogether as much discouraged. Even friends will look shy upon you; Satan will buffet you; yet all these things are working together for your real good. You will find the necessity of living on Christ, as much for your preaching as for your own salvation. Sometimes you will be at a loss for a text and subject, although both are fixed in God's word. At times you will even enter on your office quite confused and bewildered.

How you shall be carried through will be a mystery to you ; nor will you say one word, in your own conception, worth a rush ; yet the Lord will bless the word of his grace more to the people at such a season, than when you are more enlarged. I do not know a better motto I can give you than these words of Christ : “ Be not afraid, only believe.” You must trust entirely in him. You must attend to my advice in my former and last letter to you, if you would avoid a great share of trouble and grief, which will otherwise befall you.

It lately occurred to my mind that all the Lord’s people die equally blessed, for they all die in Christ, and that is true blessedness. It is good to have such an apprehension of the subject, as it serves to view all the Lord’s people, both in life and death, alike blessed, holy, and happy. I do not want any thing in life or death, but to be looking to the blood of Christ for pardon ; to his righteousness for justification ; to his person for everlasting glory. In life and death, I am exactly one and the same in him, therefore, “ to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” I was with an old believer this morning, whose countenance is changing fast, but she is full of holy confidence in our most precious Lord. Were I not acquainted with the person and work of the most adorable Saviour, I could not exercise myself as I do. I expect to be dissolved soon, therefore I want to be looking wholly to Jesus. He is my all, I do not distrust him ; the Lord being my helper, I will trust him, both in life and death. This will be glorious, and it will bring glory to Christ Jesus ; will it not ? You may depend on it, I would aim at this with my whole heart and whole soul.

I remain your’s in the Lord,

S. E. P.

LETTER XIX.

Chard, Oct. 2, 1814.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

YOUR letters have been very acceptable to me ; yet yours of last evening gave me pain. I am very sorry to hear anything should be so uncomfortable ; surely, as you have the Lord's presence with you, nothing can exceed it : nothing can be desired beyond the continuance of it. How is it that the Lord's people are so insensible of their own mercies ? My dear friend, I am concerned to find you in trouble ; do not look too much at, nor think too much about it ; our Lord's hand is in the whole ; and if he cause grief, he will turn again and have compassion according to the greatness of his mercies. When I survey it at this distance, I am led to conclude that the Lord is about to prove you in bringing you out to preach ; therefore be still, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. I know what it is to be as a monster unto many, and for saints, yea, even for some of whom I may say as Paul doth, they owe their all to me, to be very coarse and disagreeable in their behaviour to me. It must and will be so ; it cannot but be so ; yea, I know, and have often known, what it hath been to think and say with Jeremiah, "I will speak no more in his name." Yet it hath only whetted the mind, as it did his, to say, "But his word was in my heart as a burning fire, shut up in my bones ; and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay."

I do feel for you, I pray for you and on your behalf ; what can I do more ? Say but little : think the more. Let no one know all your heart, but conceal your mind as much as possible, for when you least expect it, deliverance will be wrought, and that in a way you do not think of. He is a wonder-working God in every sense : he is great in counsel, and mighty in working. The Lord Jesus is, and will be with you, as your fast and faithful friend ; "he will not leave you, nor forsake you." He says to you, "Fear not, for I am with thee." We have no outward persecution in our days,

but I said it many years ago, and the same reasons for so saying still exist, that the Lord's people did not suffer so much by fire and faggot, and by imprisonment for the Lord's sake, as they have done and do in the present age, by their contentions and oppositions with each other. It is very awful that there is scarce any company of professing saints at peace among themselves; some know too much, others too little. I do not find any great degree of knowledge anywhere. I have for many years past been pleased with the lispings out of truth, and with those who have not opposed it; but I do not, nor did I ever perceive any great insight into the knowledge of the mysteries of grace in our people, (as we may call them by way of distinction) which I have really lamented before the Lord. In my poor way, I have done all I could to make them as wise as myself in the knowledge of Christ, and the Father's love in him, through the revelation of the same in the everlasting gospel, by the Holy Spirit, but I never saw my aim and design obtained. A great deal of carnality may be expected to break out, even from such as we cannot deny to be saints; until the presence and grace of the Holy Ghost be more evidently manifested to the church and people of the most high God. I think I could suffer the loss of a right hand, or a right eye, if it would be of service to the real church and saints of God.

I am glad your spouse is better; you must look on it as a token of our Lord's love to you. Be content with what you have done in the name of the Lord, with a simple view to his honour and glory. Our Lord says, "It is impossible but that offences will come." He also says, "Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me." The devil hates the gospel with an invincible hatred. He hates me perfectly. He hates the people even for going to Shoe-lane Meeting, on account of the truths of Christ held forth there. He hates you for your attachment to Christ and your attempts to preach there. I am as sure of this as that I see the paper on which I write. Let it be so; let him shew his teeth; let him rage; let him, if the Lord permit, have his will; what then; what says Jesus Christ to all this? Has he no word to suit the case? Verily he has: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer; behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribula-

tion ten days; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." I will join with you in saying, that as preaching is begun, it must be carried on; there is a precise time for the whole; the deliverance will come, but it will be in the Lord's time. It was most severe with respect to the Israelites, immediately before their exodus. God's opportunity is when we are in the greatest extremity. I am not afraid of any trouble or misery which may possibly befall me; but I am afraid of myself under it, lest, by looking at it too much, I by this means fall into my own spirit, and speak out what would be better unsaid. "Take heed," saith the Lord, "to your spirit." These are great words of the apostle, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

My dear friend, the good Lord will be with you; be strong, therefore, in the grace which is in Christ Jesus; be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. The Lord's word strengthened Daniel; he was previously cast down and without strength; but when one like the appearance of a man (it was our Christ) said to him, "O man, greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong." He says, "And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, let my Lord speak, for thou hast strengthened me." The Lord says to you, to me, to his church, to all his saints, "I will save you, and ye shall be a blessing: fear not, but let your hands be strong." My beloved friend, I can add no more. The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. May he bless his church, his truth, his ordinances. May great grace rest upon you, and on all his beloved. Amen and Amen.

Your's in him,

S. E. P.

LETTER XX.

Chard, Oct. 18, 1814.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

YOUR letter was very acceptable, and your information also. What cannot our Lord Jesus Christ effect! It is good for us to make trial of him; to put our trust in him; to derive all our expectations from him. I know all this by many years' experience; yet, when fresh faith is called for, as various occasions require, there is the same need for the Holy Ghost to exercise his covenant power and sacred energy as ever. Blessed be the Lord for his appearance on the present occasion. It shews how he reads the heart, how he attends to the cry of his beloved; it fully proves that his people's necessity is his opportunity for doing them good. I hope we shall have his further blessing and presence, as a full proof that he owns and sanctifies all; this will be needed continually.

Your's in the Lord,

S. E. P.

LETTER XXI.

Chard, Oct. 26, 1814.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I MADE a short reply to your last, but conclude it has not fallen into your hands. I was truly glad at the contents of yours, and say, on account of it, "the Lord be praised." I sincerely rejoice in everything which is agreeable to you, and contributes to your happiness. Our Lord will yet shine upon you. The greatest mercies are generally ushered in

with some commotions; so that it is not unusual for the Lord's people to find some of their choicest mercies arise out of their deepest sorrows. The eye and heart of Jesus Christ are upon you for good; he will do you good, and nothing but good. I would be to you what Jonathan was to David, and act as he did—encourage you in the Lord your God; he is almighty! what cannot he effect? He is all-sufficient! what cannot he bestow? He is able to do in you, for you, and by you, exceeding abundantly above all you can ask or think. He can work in you, and by you, and display his royal magnificent grace in awakening sinners, and in comforting saints. You will find it a very heaven upon earth to exalt Christ; it will do your own soul more good than words can express. You will never have cause to be sorry for being called to the work of the ministry; nor for any of the trials accompanying it; for as the Lord the Spirit shall be pleased to sanctify the same to your mind, you will learn such lessons from it as will be of infinite service and advantage to you. When you find no outward opposition, nor external things to try you, then Satan will tease you about your call to the work, and your success in it. He will aim to raise a prejudice in your mind against one or another; and if he can, he will prompt you to make use of such expressions as will afterwards afflict your mind. Well, my good friend, fear nothing the devil can possibly do to torment you; learn to look on it as a real token for good, and as a lesson of instruction, by which you may reap real profit and spiritual advantage. It is by what will befall you in the course of your ministry, that you will be fitted for the exercise of it. Luther used to say, "prayer, temptation and meditation, make a good divine." Now you are in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, as one of his ministering servants, I most heartily wish you much joy. May great grace rest upon you; may you be filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost. May the Lord Jesus be with your spirit. You can never be too much taken with the subject of your ministry, Christ Jesus the Lord; seeing you will never be able fully to enter into it. This must be a constant theme for your glorying, namely, that you have an infinite subject, which can never be exhausted in time; nor will the glory of it cease throughout the ages of eternity. You need not be disturbed on account

of anything which may befall you in preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ; you will lose nothing worth keeping. Aim to exalt Christ alone, by giving him the glory of his mediatorial grace, work, and office. You will bring glory to him by every attempt to set the crown of salvation upon his most blessed head. My good friend, never look too much at any individual; you may expect to find many greatly pleased at one time, who, at other times will be as much displeased; and some who are now opposed to you, will be afterwards so wrought upon, as to be quite attached to you. This must inevitably be the case; therefore, beware of such as may flatter with their lips. Truth is always best; yet it is so rare a jewel in our day, that one seldom meets with it. Now, my friend, I run on as though I had never written to you before; it may be I tire you, but never mind; I hope to see you soon, then we can confer together. I have been so much engaged in writing letters of late that I am quite run aground, yet I must write this very day to Dr. Hawker, having received a very respectful letter from him this morning. Our Lord must again work upon me, and bless me with the fresh anointings of his Spirit, or I am sure it will be a very barren epistle. It is renewed sights of Christ, fresh communion with him, and communications from him, which I need continually; and deprived of these, I must go mourning without the sun, and be dead and barren in my frame, heart, and affections. Blessings on him, he is an infinite fountain of grace and mercy. He is my all, my rock, my portion, my inheritance, my exceeding joy. May the Holy Spirit open what Christ is to my mind, and my mind to receive him, according to the full revelation made of him in the scriptures of truth. The Lord Jesus Christ be with you and bless you. I shall be very glad to see you. May the Lord give us a comfortable meeting.

I remain your's in Christ Jesus,

S. E. P.

LETTER XXII.

Chard, Oct. 29, 1814.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WHILE it is awful that so much temper should prevail, yet it is an immutable truth, that the Lord rewardeth every man according to his works. Too much authority, and dictatorial majesty in ministers, is not the spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ; therefore he doth sooner or later resent it in his beloved ones. All the churches shall know, says Christ, that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts, and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. The Lord's humble and contrite ones are so low that they cannot be lower. It is only the high cedars that can be brought low. We have nothing to do with the Lord's dealings with others, except it be to observe and make a profitable use of them; this we ought to do. We too often look on such things as matters of common providence, whereas nothing takes place in the church of Christ, but by special and particular design and dispensation.

The hint you received by letter should serve for your encouragement. Many such items the Lord will give you in the course of your ministry, when you are more cast down and dispirited. Leave yourself wholly with the Lord to accomplish his holy will and pleasure with you, in you, and by you; and be content to leave your ministry with him also. The more you do this, the more you will glorify God, and the Lord will bless you continually. You are bound up in the bundle of life with Christ. What can you want besides free access to Christ, and abundant communion with him? Nothing. Do not make preaching a labour, but let it be a pleasure. Never look at the performance at any time, but rather look at the subject and motive. Never give place to Satan by dejection; on the contrary, in many cases rejoice most when it is most clear to your own mind that there was nothing in the performance to rejoice

in. Let him know by this, that no part of your salvation, joy, or confidence in the Lord is built upon your ministry. Ever remember that you are neither to rejoice in the success, nor to be cast down at the non-success of your preaching. You are to rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Do not take too much pains to preach. Your sermons are already made for you; they are all plain and clear, and set before you in the written word. The more you see and apprehend this, the more delight you will find in holding forth the word of life to others. You will never be better pleased than when you are exalting the worthy Lamb; and everything, as you improve it, will help you to preach better and better. Your daily necessities, your very business, what befalls you in the family, your trials in life, your own constitution, your corruptions, mortality, and everything you are the subject of, will, by the Lord's blessing, serve to assist you in preaching. In a very special sense, the knowledge you derive from the constant experience of your own inherent corruption and defilement, and your own inward apprehensions of Christ, as suited to all you see, feel, and perceive of yourself, will be a good school-master to bring you forward on a Lord's-day, to speak with all boldness "that which you have seen, and tasted, and handled of the word of life." May the Lord teach you, and help you to preach the Lord Jesus Christ as most exactly suited to everything in sin, and every way an antidote against it. Never suppress anything which may arise in your mind, that is likely to be beneficial to the souls and bodies of men. Do not be too often in company, even with those who may like your ministry best. Tell out your whole heart, and all contained in it, if you can, to the Lord Jesus Christ, but to none beside. You may rely upon having my prayers and best wishes. My friend, I deal with you as a son who serves with me in the gospel. I hope I do not make too free with you; if so, be so good as to excuse it. Our precious Christ is able to make all grace abound towards you. The view of his salvation is all that is necessary to set you up on high; a sight of him in glory will perfect your felicity for ever. "A little while and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry." We shall never have

any sighing or sorrow but in this present state, and we (at least I) shall soon be removed out of it. I shall then be absent from the body and present with the Lord. Then all will be well with me for ever and ever. Even the belief of this is very cheering; what must then the fruition of it be, seeing it is at present unspeakable; and at seasons the mind is filled with joy in the prospect of it? I have been for some time past extremely well for me; now I begin to flag. Last night I was very ill indeed, but I do not like to defer coming to you, as it is already settled. The rheumatism is got into my feet; I have two wounds in my toes, and my legs have been, and still are, greatly swollen. I have not been out of the house for this whole week. Well, you know who hath said, "As thy day is, so shall thy strength be." So do I, and all my dependence is on him. May he most graciously fulfil his promise. May he grant us a happy interview. This has been a most remarkable year to me, having lost many of my old friends in Christ, by death: never so many, at least I have never observed so many drop off before. I have completed reading the whole Bible through since January last. I began it on the first day of the present year, and finished it on the 26th of October. I have read it in that space four times, and not without real profit to myself. I always find in it something new; it being, like its Author, infinite and inexhaustible. As I told you, I am quite tired out with writing, having been very much engaged in it since I came from Truro, so that I am quite at a loss to make up any more, and I believe I am now almost out of debt, which yields me satisfaction. My friend, do pray for me that I may finish my course with joy, and close my eyes as becometh the gospel. I shall need Christ in my dying moments; he hath been graciously pleased to remove the fears of death from me; he hath also familiarized it to me, so that nothing remains but the separating stroke to take place. Yet still I shall need my most gracious Lord to be my guide even unto, over, and beyond death. He will be so, seeing he has engaged for all this; therefore to him I commit the keeping of my soul.

My kind respects to Mrs. P., your wife and daughter. Do not forget to pray the Lord to remove the distress from my toes, if it please him. The Lord Jesus Christ be with your

spirit. Peace be with you, and all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

I remain your's in the Lord,

S. E. P.

LETTER XXIII.

London, Jan. 17, 1815.

MR. AND MRS. B.

I TAKE up my pen to address you on the commencement of the present new year. I hope, through the Lord's good hand upon you, that you are both in the enjoyment of health and peace; and that the light of God's kindness may continually shine upon you. The Lord liveth. The Lord reigneth. The Lord saveth. He that hath been the dwelling-place of his church, saints, and people, throughout all generations; even the Lord Jesus Christ hath saved, doth save, and will save his people with an everlasting salvation. It is well to begin the year looking unto him. We shall do well to receive him into our hearts, in the knowledge of the virtue and efficacy of his blood and righteousness; to commit our all to his care and management; to live more in the immediate exercise of our minds on him; and more in real and personal communion with him. We shall do well to cast aside every weight, and the sin which most easily besets us, and run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus. My friends, you will need Christ, and you will need to be living on him, and to be receiving continually from him, so long as breath is in your bodies. You cannot act spiritually one single moment, nor in one single instance, but as you have Christ in view. You cannot exercise one single act of faith, but as Christ is considered by you, and is the subject of your meditation. You cannot overcome one single temptation, but as you trust all in Christ Jesus. You cannot have any loss made up, but in real communion with the worthy Lamb. As you are the

Lord's, so surely will you experience the truth of this in yourselves, the longer you live in the world. It is true blessedness to know Christ; and (what follows upon this) to know that we are in Christ. We cannot know the former, but we must the latter. To know Christ in his person, love, and salvation, is the only cordial for all the miseries of this present evil world. All true and everlasting blessedness consists in it. To know the finished work of Christ, that "He hath taken away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and brought in everlasting righteousness;" that he is our perfection before the Father; that we are without all sin in him; that we have all blessings in him; that we are saved and accepted in him; that neither life, nor death, things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." I say it is the true knowledge of these invaluable verities, which makes way for us to live a life of faith on the Son of God, in the full persuasion that "he loved us, and gave himself for us." In living this life we live down sin, and self, the world, the devil, and death; and we can only live this life, as we live over the truths of the everlasting gospel. There is no change in them, for they are immutable; nor is there at any time any change or alteration in our faith; it is either exercised on them, or it is not. Our minds may change; we may be looking inward, and not outward; we may be thinking on ourselves, on what we feel, what we experience, or what we enjoy; all this is not Christ. Whilst we are thus engaged, we are not looking unto him; we are not exercising our minds on him. This is not a change in our faith; but the mind is carried off its centre and object. We are taken off him, by our minds being engaged on other objects and subjects. It is a blessing when we apprehend Christ and salvation distinct from all other subjects. It is absolutely requisite to the peace of our own minds, and to our growth into Christ, to have clear views and apprehensions of the truth as it is in Jesus. Our salvation is in Christ. No part of it depends upon us. It consists in discharging us, wholly and everlastingly, from the imputation of all sin; in pronouncing us holy, righteous, and clean from all sin in the sight of God. We are in a state of grace, and can never, as believers in Christ Jesus, be

in a state of condemnation. It is a lesson of great importance to be taught what we are in Christ; what our state is in him before the Lord; how Jehovah beholds us; what he thinks of us in the Beloved; how fully he hath accepted us in him. It is also an important lesson for us to learn in the school of Christ, the nature, freeness, fulness, and perfection of Christ's salvation; how we receive it, in what way we are enlightened into the knowledge of it, what it is to be partakers of Christ, what it is to live Christ. It is necessary to be enlightened into the knowledge of each of these particulars.

I remain your's in the Lord,

S. E. P.

LETTER XXIV.

London, Jan. 11, 1816.

MY FRIENDS,

WE are entered on a new period of time, and hastening on fast with the present generation to the close of it. When we properly consider this world in which we dwell, we must understand it to be the stage on which the incomprehensible Jehovah is pleased to display and exercise his vast decrees and eternal designs towards all Adam's posterity. It is a solemn consideration to reflect on the ages which are past; the multitudes that have been in our world. One generation hath succeeded another; and so it will be until Christ shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation, and put a stop to time, by causing it to be swallowed up in boundless and vast eternity. 'I hope you are entered on the present year filled with wonder, gratitude, and praise to the Lord Jesus Christ, as the God of your life, your health, your strength, your mercies, and your salvation. He hath been the rock, the shelter, and the dwelling-place of his people throughout all generations. It is good to consider what he hath done in our world in all

ages that are past : to reflect how he came into our world, what he did, suffered, and completed in his own person for us, and for our salvation. Blessed be his holy name, ever since the six days' work of creation was finished, he has had a church in the world. He has been the Saviour, the healer, the physician of his people in every age, every case, every place, and every circumstance. He has been to them the bread of life, and the water of life. He has fed, saved, cleansed, clothed, and pardoned them. He has guided, and taken thousands and millions of them to eternal glory. He never gave one single individual of them cause to complain of him. And what he hath done for his beloved saints who have completed their pilgrimage, who have passed the gulph, are entered by death into an unseen state, and are before the throne of God and the Lamb, are so many evidences and standing memorials of what he will be to us, and to all his called and believing people. Indeed, when we view him as coming into our world by his incarnation, that he might shine forth in his incarnate state in all the meridian splendour of his love, we see that which is all-sufficient to fill our souls with perpetual wonder and extacy. Blessings on him ! he expressed all the love of Godhead ; he opened his whole heart ; exercised all the bowels of his mercy ; and proved his compassion to exceed the utmost finite comprehension. He perfectly obeyed the holy law ; bore the sins of all his people in his own body on the tree ; and sustained the whole curse due to sin. The whole of his mystic body, each and every one of his beloved children, brethren, and sisters, he bathed in his own blood, and cleansed them so completely from all spot of sin, that in him they are purity itself, righteousness itself, perfection itself. It is real blessedness to have Christ continually in our view ; to be setting the Lord always before us ; to enter on the new year, and on every day throughout it, looking at Christ's sacrifice and righteousness, and putting our whole trust and confidence in him for our complete salvation. We live not a single moment to any good purpose if we leave out or neglect Christ in any one particular.

There is nothing in the whole creation of God can do us any good if enjoyed out of Christ, or without bringing him into it. May we be led to value and prize the Lord Jesus Christ this year more than ever we have done before. It is good for

us to reflect on what the Lord Jesus Christ hath done in us and for us, by his word and through his Spirit. For my own part I love to view and review my person as one with Christ : as chosen in him, beloved by the Father in him, accepted, blessed, and justified in him ; as pardoned through his most precious blood-shedding ; as saved in him, and as complete in him. I love to have the right and spiritual apprehension of all these eternal and most deeply interesting subjects from the written word. To it I would go for my creed, and receive from it all these most divine realities into my mind, through the divine light and teaching of the Lord the Spirit. So far as it is thus with me or with you, we are right. Then as we receive the knowledge of God in Christ hereby into our minds, and Christ is formed in us, we cannot but be pleased to call to remembrance the Lord's goodness towards us. It is marvellous, indeed, in our eyes, to consider how he brought us out of darkness into his marvellous light : how he hath most graciously enlightened us ; how he hath shined upon us and within us ; and how he hath healed us. Oh, what wounds hath sin given us ! Oh, what miseries it hath brought upon us ! Oh, what griefs have we experienced in consequence of the same ! Oh, what depths of sorrow and lamentation have we again and again been plunged into ! Sometimes we have brought the same on ourselves ; yet what hath Christ done in us and for us ? When we have felt in ourselves nothing but death, he hath been pleased to quicken us, and lift up our minds far above and beyond it. When we have wounded our minds, and been awfully left to give ourselves the most tremendous wounds by sin that we possibly could, how hath our Lord Jesus Christ, again and again, put forth the virtue of his blood and righteousness by giving us such apprehensions of the same, as hath been present, manifestative, and influential salvation to our spirits. Thus, " he that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood," hath become our spiritual physician, and fulfilled over and over again his most gracious declaration, " I am the Lord which healeth thee." So also (thanks to his most holy name, whose mercy endureth for ever) he hath filled us, and supplied our wants out of the exceeding and abundant fulness of his inexhaustible grace.

My friends, what think you ; are you able to set forward in the journey of life better than heretofore ? Have you more

inward strength, and less inherent sin? Have you more holiness in your nature, more to depend upon in yourselves? Can you resist sin? Can you overcome sin, Satan, the world, the flesh, and earth, and hell, by any strength of your own, more than ever? You are to answer these queries. I am just what I ever was in myself, a sinner. I am entered on this new year with the whole body of sin: with all contained in it: with all its lusts, corruptions, and members. Nor shall I ever cease to be what I am in old Adam nature until I cease to breathe. Well then, what have I to look at, to support my faith in God, to preserve me from falling into sin, to keep me going on heavenward, to comfort me under the trials of life, to fortify my mind against the fears of death, and to maintain my expectations of everlasting life in the open vision and sight of Christ in glory? None but Jesus; he is my object. I desire nothing but the salvation of Jesus for my subject: nothing but his interest in me, for an immutable foundation to sustain my mind: nothing but the perpetuity of his love, for my heaven; nothing but his strength, for my support: nothing but his fulness, for my supply. Upon nothing but his word does my present and eternal all depend: and his presence, in the real enjoyment of communion with him, will constitute my present and everlasting joy. If these things are so, what is there for me to do? Why, to this I reply: to renounce self daily, hourly, momentarily. It is extremely easy for me to live Christ, if I know him, and am well pleased with him. And if this be the case, I have but this one monster self to overcome. And the only way whereby I can overcome it, is by looking off it, by leaving it entirely out and having nothing to do with it. Neither you nor I can overcome a single sin, but by faith in the blood of the Lamb. If you are living under the light and inward teachings of God the Spirit, you see, and will continue to see, your constant need of Christ. You cannot make too much of Christ; you cannot be too free with him; you cannot trust in him and be deceived in any one thing. May this be your blessedness, to commit yourselves and family, your business, your present and eternal all, into the hands and care of the Lord Jesus Christ. I wish you a very happy year; this cannot be granted by the Lord himself, but as he keeps your minds in perfect peace, by faith in the everlasting perfection

of Christ's finished salvation. May you be resting wholly on the blood of the Lamb, for everlasting purity from all sin in the sight of the Lord. This will be of immense benefit to your minds; to have your consciences discharged from all guilt, by believing that the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ cleanseth you from all sin, is the one great and grand point in experience. May you every day be exercising your minds thus: then all will be well. I have selected these words as my private motto for the new year: "Now also, O my God, forsake me not when I am old and grey-headed;" so that my white hair will serve to remind me of my text. May the Lord bless you in all things. May you see and say as one of old did, "I have enough;" nothing can be added unto Christ. His riches are unsearchable; his fulness is now and evermore inexhaustible. May he be your all in all; and may you live accordingly.

I remain, your well-wisher,

S. E. P.

LETTER XXV.

London, Feb. 21, 1818.

DEAR SIR,

WITH respect to your ordination, and giving the charge, I can by no means be present on the occasion. It is so much the better. As it respects your knowledge of Christ, faith in him, and communion with him, I would aim to promote the same, by writing these few lines.

To be led by the word and Spirit of the living God, so to apprehend the person, love, work, and salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ, as to trust your everlasting all on him for life and salvation, is the sole work of God. No one can attain this by any human efforts whatsoever; the whole of it being supernatural and divine. There cannot be a greater proof and evidence of our eternal election in Christ, than by the

Holy Spirit's giving us a spiritual apprehension in our minds, of the free, divine, and glorious revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ, contained in the everlasting gospel. We can know nothing of Christ, but from this source; and from hence the Holy Spirit, by his most sacred and divine inspiration, is pleased to create in our renewed minds, such conceptions of Christ, as are the beginning of everlasting life in our souls. And as he enables us to receive the knowledge of Christ into our minds from the word of revelation, Christ is formed in our hearts the hope of glory.

Now, as the minister of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, you are to preach Christ as he is revealed in the written word; as a Saviour in every sense suited to a sinner's case. You are to lay Christ, as the only foundation for a sinner's hope in God; and the word of Christ, as the warrant for a poor sinner's faith. It is not what the sinner is, or feels, but what Christ is, that you are chiefly to be concerned with, and to testify of. Never consult with your own heart when you are called to preach, but consult the scriptures, and look up to the Holy Ghost for his light and teaching. You can never exalt Christ too much. All the love of the Holy Trinity is in him. He is the object and subject of their invariable love and delight; and it is through him, that the Three in Jehovah love and delight in the persons of the elect. It is from their being in Christ, one with Christ, and united to him, that they are the objects of God's everlasting love; therefore it is by tracing up this subject to its origin and fountain-cause, viz. the good pleasure of God's will, that we are led to see from whence all our blessings flow; and how we became interested in Christ from everlasting. And it is in proportion as this is made clear and plain to your spiritual mind, that you can be clear in your spiritual ideas; and it is from your having a right understanding of this great and fundamental point, that you can clearly speak to others, and give them a clear scriptural view how they may know their own personal interest in Christ. This leads on to salvation, and what belongs to it, and is connected therewith; and when these subjects are so comprehended, then the effects attending the same may be dwelt upon, but not before.

You find that what you know of Christ, leads you to him; to rest on him; and to expect every blessing from him. Your

ultimate desire is to be found in him. The knowledge of Christ is an increasing knowledge. As you increase in it, you will find it to be altogether an intellectual, spiritual, and supernatural knowledge; which, the more you are favoured with, the more you will prize Christ; and the more will your faith and confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ be increased; which is evidenced, and made manifest unto you, by your prizing the person of Christ more and more.

I really think there are many persons, who deceive themselves in what they say concerning Christ. They say what comes into their heads about him; and they are taken with what they say concerning him; but, it is nothing but self, to be taken with anything of our own, let it be what it may. Even if we speak of Christ, to gain esteem on account of it, be assured this is as far from what is right as possible. It is very blessed to speak of Christ, from a real knowledge of him, with a sincere desire to glorify him, and with a real intent to exalt him in the esteem of others.

The true apprehension of Christ, is the death of legality and unbelief. When we live Christ, and have communion with him, we want nothing. Christ is then all. Sin, self, and all other objects and subjects will then be absolutely nothing, and less than nothing and vanity. So far as you are led into the real knowledge of Christ, so far your faith will increase; and it will be maintained and kept up, in act and exercise, on the most precious Jesus. It is in real believing views of him, that you will have special and particular communion with him. The Lord the Spirit increase your apprehensions of him, and give you to speak out your whole heart and soul towards him. Keep no secrets, but communicate and tell out your whole mind unto him.

My good sir, if these hints are suitable to you, then act upon them. Do not make so much of church matters, and church ordinances, as of Christ; they are exceedingly good in their place, but they are in no case to supplant the Lord Jesus Christ.

I intend to go into the country in the summer, so that if a sermon on a week-day would be acceptable to you, and your people would like me to visit them for a single day, I am by no means against it; but of this, you shall hear from me before that time, as it will not be till July. Many changes will,

doubtless, take place in the mean while. I may be so changed as not to live in the body. I may be wholly incapacitated for living any where, but in Christ's immediate presence; if so, I shall get to be above preaching, for a sight of Christ, by vision, and an enjoyment of Christ, by sense, will bring me into such a state, that I shall never be able to speak of him as suited unto, and suitable for, sinners; any more than I can now describe the joys, sights, and views, the blessed in glory have of him, who behold him face to face.

I am not able at this time to write in so profitable a way as I could wish; but I have written to express my good will unto you. May the Lord himself be with you. May you, and your people, enjoy much of the Lord's presence, Spirit, and blessing. Don't frighten yourself at the thoughts of being settled. The Lord is all-sufficient for you. His strength is made perfect in weakness. The more simply you enter on all before you, in the name of the Lord, you will, really, find it so much the better. May your heart be happy in Jesus. May your mind be stayed on him. May your understanding be filled with the true knowledge of him; and may you increase in real personal communion with him, until you are taken to behold him in glory. Amen.

S. E. P.

LETTER XXVI.

Lopen, Oct. 3, 1816.

DEAR SIR,

If the Lord please, I shall leave Chard on Monday next for Yeovil and Salisbury, and agreeable to your, and the friends' request, hope to be at Hartley-row to preach on the Thursday evening in the following week. As it respects the journey, I have had many opportunities of sowing the seed of the kingdom; and I make no inquiries about, or concerning the reception of it. Paul plants, and Apollos waters, and God

giveth the increase. There I leave it. I consider that I have nothing further to do with it. My only concern is to preach the truth as it is in Jesus, so far as my knowledge of the same extends, and there to leave it : nor am I further solicitous about it. I do not want a name for preaching, nor to be honoured for it. My desire is that Jesus may be exalted in his person ; that he may have a glorious name ; that his fame may be increased and his renown spread abroad ; and this will be the case in consequence of the preaching of the everlasting gospel, whether by my ministry, or by that of others. Here I am sure my end will be obtained : blessed be the Lord for ever and ever. If Christ is exalted, his salvation set forth, his blood and righteousness preached, as the whole of a sinner's salvation, and the one only foundation of a sinner's hope, it is enough. Let the Lord choose, and make use of what instruments he pleases. A friend of mine once said to me, 'No one can preach a better Christ than I do : they may preach Christ more gloriously, but a better Jesus they cannot preach.' There is a great deal of truth in this. To preach Christ is the grand point. To preach him and his salvation, as most exactly suited to a sinner's case ; and to leave the sinner without the least cause of fear or doubt, arising from anything he is the subject of, is glorious to such as really know their sinfulness and sinnership. It is a great lesson, which the Holy Ghost alone can teach us, to set forth Jesus Christ, as most completely adapted to every part of the disease contained in sin, and as a perfect Saviour for it : by virtue of whose life and death, blood and righteousness, there is everlasting purity, health, and cure, for all sorts of sinful maladies. There is present as well as everlasting life and salvation in Christ crucified. It is a present salvation : and he is a present Saviour. It is but for him to look on the sinner, and the sinner to look to Jesus, and everlasting health and purity are imparted unto the mind. By faith we receive into our minds the real apprehension of the virtue of Christ's blood, and the perfection of his most glorious, complete, and everlastingly efficacious righteousness. And this faith is nothing more, nor less, than a real spiritual perception of Christ, and his finished work. As there is but one way of receiving light from the sun : so there is but one way of receiving Christ into our minds. The one is by the eye, the

other by faith, which is the eye of the mind. When we are receiving light from the sun, through the medium of the eye, we are not thinking about it; so, when we are actually looking unto Jesus, we are not thinking about our faith; but we are wholly swallowed up in contemplating Christ the object of faith. If the minds of God's people were spiritually engaged in thinking of Christ, they would be fully possessed with every evidence of their interest in him, that they could possibly desire. It is because Christ is so little known, and because there is such a neglect of him, and looking off from him, that the minds of professors are so puzzled and perplexed; and they are such strangers unto him and his grace. They look to what is styled a work of grace in the soul, and for inward evidences of this, as though the very salvation of our souls depended on it; so that this is set up in the very room, and place, of Jesus Christ himself. Why, there is no salvation in us! No. Nor is any part of the Spirit's work within us, salvation. Salvation is the fruit of the Father's everlasting love. The Father contrived and proposed it, in the council and covenant of peace, to his Son and Spirit before all worlds. He called, and engaged, his co-equal Son to perform salvation-work, which he hath done and completed. It consisted in "putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and in bringing in everlasting righteousness."

The work and office of the Holy Ghost in the souls of the elect, are to produce in them, a spiritual and supernatural birth, by which they have a spiritual faculty, suited to receive the knowledge of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ. And it is a further part of the Holy Spirit's work to reveal Christ to the renewed mind, to take of the things of Christ, and shew unto them, and to testify concerning Christ and the Father's love to them, from the Scriptures of truth. And when the Holy Ghost leads the sinner to Christ, he gives greater evidence to the mind, of Christ's love to such, and of personal interest in him, in a single moment, than can be obtained by all the legal marks, and signs of inherent grace, throughout the whole course of a person's life; and ten thousand times more satisfactory.

May the Lord lead all his people off from poring on their gifts and graces, to look to Christ alone. May he also lead them into personal communion with Christ, and with the

Father in him. May you never be ashamed of the gospel of Christ, in any part or article of it. May you be "a wise scribe; a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

My Christian regards to Mrs. J. and your sister.

I remain, your's in the Lord,

S. E. P.

LETTER XXVII.

London, Jan. 3, 1817.

MY FRIEND,

I AM, through the infinite goodness of the Lord, entered on the present year, and am as well as an old man in the seventy-first year of his age need be; and, according to custom, I have taken up my pen to salute you, and your's in the Lord, and to inquire if you are in health. Is all well? Are you alive in God? Are you looking to Jesus? Are you trusting wholly on his person, blood, and righteousness, for everlasting life and salvation? If you are, then most assuredly you are the blessed of the Lord, who made heaven and earth, and I would say, "The blessing of the Lord be upon you." If you are receiving into your mind this important truth, "The blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God cleanseth from all sin," you have then, in consequence spiritual health and peace; and your mind being inwardly healed, and acquitted from the guilt of sin, you are in a state of true spiritual soundness of mind: and whilst you are at all times, in all cases, and in every circumstance, making use of this all-sufficient remedy, which is the balsam of life, the sovereign and infallible cure of every kind of spiritual disease; your spiritual constitution will be renewed and invigorated, and all will be well with you in body and soul. It will then be well with you in the shop; and well with you at the

throne: well at your own table, and well at the Lord's table. When you leave out Christ, and cease to make use of him, in the continual exercise of your faith upon him, nothing will go well with you. It is a pity that it should; it being the greatest misery which can possibly befall you, to live a single moment without the exercise of your spiritual mind on Christ; and it is an increase of your own misery to attempt to do anything without him. It is the Apostle's advice, to "do all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks unto God, and the Father, by him." You have now been many years under the profession of Christ. You have again and again, in the course of this time, most solemnly confessed Christ to be your Saviour: that his finished work is the whole of your salvation; and that his blood and righteousness are your everlasting purity, and perfection, in the sight of God. I hope you are growing more and more into a spiritual acquaintance with what is contained in these most important, eternal, and inestimably precious subjects. We must receive them into our minds, and that from the word of God. We must believe them with our hearts, by the power of the Holy Ghost. We must rest solely on Christ as revealed in the written word, look on him as set forth therein, converse with him as he speaks to us therein, and live on him as he is described in the same. To live Christ contains the whole essence of true practical godliness. It consists not in ideal knowledge, nor speculative conjectures concerning Christ. No; it does not. It springs from a real knowledge of Christ, which is produced in the regenerate mind, from the word, and by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. He must also realize the same in the understanding, heart, and conscience, or we cannot live over the same practically and spiritually. You cannot live down sin in your conscience, but by living on Christ, who hath "made an end of sin by the sacrifice of himself, and brought in everlasting righteousness, by his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross." It is Christ's own most complete obedience, to all contained in the holy law of God, that is your one perfect righteousness before the Lord. It is not the notion of it merely, that will do you good; you must have the true knowledge of it. Your living in the real knowledge and belief of it, will carry you out of yourself, to such a fixation on Christ, as will

cause you to triumph in him as the Lord your righteousness, as your representative before God, and as your everlasting perfection in his sight. Your really receiving Christ as your propitiation and atonement, and living over in your mind, the complete putting away of all sin thereby, this will save you from the guilt of sin, the love of sin, and the power of sin.

My friend, it may be you are saying these are no new truths. You know them, you believe them, and you rest and centre in them. If so, it is all the better; it is then the more easy for you to practice them: and it cannot be amiss to remind you of them, it being the whole end to be answered, by our living out of heaven, to live over all these truths more spiritually and more practically. I do not want to know more of Christ; but I want to know him and his truth more fully and practically. I desire to be learning over his truths in the efficacy of them, so as thereby to have growing and increasing fellowship with him, in every article of faith, and in every part and branch of the same. I do not want to rest in my knowledge of the truth; but to rest in, and upon him, who hath said: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father but by me."

As I would wish you and your wife a very blessed and happy new year, so I would pray that you may live out of yourselves wholly, and entirely on the Lord Jesus Christ. I would have you look wholly to him; rest solely on him; glory alone in him; and rejoice evermore in his free, full, complete, and everlastingly glorious and finished salvation. Live on it every day. Make use of Christ continually. Let him be to you what he really is. Look at him in his word. Take him to his word. He says: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, which is, which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Aim to have free access to Christ. Labour to take into your mind, how exceedingly well-suited Christ is to you, as he is set before you in the writings of the Apostles, those blessed witnesses and followers of the Lamb. It will do you more good to take into your minds, from the Scriptures, how Christ is suited to you, and to all you are the subjects of, than to have all the high notions of him in the world. If you are led, and kept by the Spirit of the living God, to this one lesson, namely, that you are sinners,

that the whole contained in sin is inherently in you, that you must not look at it, and that your sole remedy and salvation from it, is in Christ—this is sufficient for you on this side of heaven : and the true knowledge and experience of it in your own souls, will keep you alive in the Lord Jesus Christ, to the last moment of your being in this present state. The greatest thing in Christ is his love. This shines forth throughout the volume of inspiration. Don't ask how shall I, or how shall we, know that he loves us? Believe it. This will be the means of warming your hearts, which will be drawn out after him, in your believing his love to you. Not so in disbelieving. To doubt of his love, is to shut out believing apprehensions of the same; and the devil delights in nothing more than in our legality and unbelief. His very end is answered, if he can get us to be suspicious of Christ. Satan always puts us upon looking into ourselves, to find some cause why Christ should love us : and because we cannot discover anything in ourselves for which Christ should love us, he would have us treat the gospel as a mere fable, and not worthy of our trust and confidence. My friends, let us not give place to him. Let me ask you what there is in those whom God hath loved in Christ, with an everlasting love, but what is in you? Are they not all just as sinful in themselves, and equally unworthy of the divine clemency as you and I are? Undoubtedly so. It is altogether a gracious act : an act of sovereignty. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." The motive for God's loving one in Christ, and not another, is wholly in himself. As it is declared, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoso believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Let this suffice us. Let us rest here. Let us view his love, and meditate on it, until we feel the warmth of it springing up in our minds. The Lord Jesus Christ saith, "I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. These words contain my ground and assurance for everlasting life. This is all I have to shew for my title to Christ and salvation. It is the will of God and of Christ, to

save every one that knows, and believes on Christ. I am brought to know Jesus, and the Father in him; and to believe in Christ for salvation. Here then is Christ's own word for my assurance of everlasting life. I rest wholly on it. I want no more. I am saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. I am perfectly safe every day, hour, and moment. I shall be so in the very article of death, because the blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God cleanseth, now and evermore, from all sin.

May the Lord bless what I have written, and give you a right scriptural apprehension of the same. Time will now be very short with me. I am looking continually for my dismissal. I would have it more and more the experience of my mind, to desire to depart and be with Christ. I hope to glorify and honour him with my last breath. My motto is: "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory." I shall be aiming to live in the full belief of this. May the Lord, in blessing, bless you. Amen.

Your's in him,

S. E. P.

LETTER XXVIII.

London, Jan. 12, 1818.

MR. AND MRS. B.

I AM, through the goodness of the Lord Jesus Christ, permitted to enter on the year 1818, being now in the seventy-second year of my age, and running on fast with time, to the house appointed for all living. This gives me no sort of uneasiness, for the Lord Jesus Christ is immutably the same, in all ages and throughout all generations. "With him there is no variableness, nor shadow of a turning." What his love was from everlasting, that it will be to everlasting. Those persons he loved in eternity, he loves in time, and will con-

tinue to love all through time. He hath shone forth upon them in the full meridian of his love, in the fulness of time. He was made sin and a curse for them. He hath put away their sin by the sacrifice of himself; washed them from their sins by his most precious bloodshedding, and brought them nigh to God by his blood. The Father loved them with an everlasting love in the person of Christ. He loved them in him before the foundation of the world. The Lord Jesus hath raised them above, and beyond all the ruins of the fall, by his undertakings, incarnation, righteousness, and sacrifice. The Holy Ghost hath been pleased to make a most clear, and full revelation of all this. I want to be living continually in true believing apprehensions of the same, that I may be happy in heart, holy in life, circumspect in my walk, and be going on, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord. I hope the truths you profess, concerning the eternity of the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, the everlasting love of the Father to you individually in Christ, most solemnly and spiritually impress you; so that you actually feel, and find your souls drawn forth to admire the love of the Holy Trinity, and are led to praise them for their joint share and concern in your salvation. As I advance nearer and nearer to heaven and heavenly glory, I find myself more and more drawn out to aspire after a realization of divine truth in me. I have known the Lord Jesus Christ more than fifty-two years, and I do not remember that I ever dropt or made any alteration in any one truth of, or concerning him, during the whole course of that time. I have known what it hath been to see more and more of the nature and importance of them; to apprehend more of the sublimity and spirituality of them; and to prize them the more on that account. And thus the promise hath been blessed to me, and realized in my experience, which runs thus, "The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." I cannot look back on any one single year since I first knew Christ, but it hath been thus with me. Nor do I expect any to come, let death be ever so near, when it will be otherwise with me; for the Lord Jesus Christ will never leave, nor forsake his people, and if this be a truth, then he will not forsake the work of his hand. He will water, refresh, and teach me; he will revive, renew, and

heal me; he will guide and protect me; he will fulfil in me all the good pleasure of his will; he will carry on the work of faith with power. I therefore say it again, as I grow into years, I need nothing. No; not even to know Christ more. All I want is that the real knowledge which I have received of him into my understanding, from his word and by his Spirit, may influence and operate on my mind more and more; so that I may be led into immediate and most blessed fellowship with him; and this being more and more increased, it becomes quite as natural in a spiritual sense to think on Christ, as to think about myself. I do not want to receive any knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, but from the word of truth. I need the Spirit of Truth to put forth fresh life and light into the mind, by the same. Under his teaching I would be growing into an increasing knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Yea, under his most gracious influences, I would die in the belief of his testimony concerning the Father's everlasting love, and the Son's finished salvation, and close my dying eyes with, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." You will be ready to exclaim, What is all this to us? Your case and experience are your own. Why trouble us with a detail of them? What occasion for all this? My friends, it is true, all this is personally my own. I can offer no other reason for putting down all this on the present paper, but that it occurred to my mind; and as it may be the last time I shall put pen to paper for you, so I conceived it was neither unsuitable, nor unworthy of your notice and attention. I am, blessed be the Lord, in health and strength beyond what I have ever been. I have all my faculties in full use and exercise. This is matter for abundant thanksgiving. Yet age is age, notwithstanding all this, so that this is to be comprehended in what I say concerning health and strength. I may well adopt the language of one who said, "I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me." Indeed he hath. I have nothing to do but to die; by which I shall be unclothed, and being absent from the body, shall be present with the Lord. And will it admit of any sorrow, that it hath taken place; that the act is passed on the body; that the soul is disengaged from it, and introduced into the presence-chamber of the Lord of glory? To behold him face to face; to see him as he is; to be swal-

lowed up in the fruition and enjoyment of him; to be everlastingly filled with him; to be for ever with the Lord; never to be interrupted one single moment from the enjoyment of communion with him in glory? I feel more and more disposed to deal immediately with the Lord Jesus Christ in every act of worship. To go to him as my friend; to speak out all my case to him; to trust him continually with my all; then I am sure I shall lose nothing, because he is faithful to all who trust in him, and careful and mindful of all committed to him. The times are such, that I think no one can be secure, either in person or property, unless he is interested in the same.

I hope by this time you understand my design in addressing these lines to you. It is to recommend the Lord Jesus Christ to you, and to exhort you to make constant use of him; to do nothing without him; to bring him continually into each and every one of your concerns. Our Lord Jesus Christ is that friend who delights in a free communication, and in holy familiarity with his acquaintance. I know of no other end in life but to live on him, to him, and for him. To be thus engaged, makes a short life seem a long one; it also makes a long life a most truly blessed one. Hence Solomon says, "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." The only true preparation for death is the knowledge of Christ. The best way to be fit at a moment's notice to quit our bodies and present abodes in this world, is living on Christ; for hereby we are saved from being reluctant to meet the stroke of death, because we have nothing to fear. Nor are we strangers to the state and place we are about to enter upon. In living Christ we have our conversation with him in heaven; and we know what we are to expect when we see him in the state of glory. So that our minds having clear scriptural ideas on this subject, every spiritual exercise of mind on him, serves but to increase our real delight in him. Hence he is supremely precious to us now, and he will be supremely glorious to us in heaven. My good friends, study Christ; consider in what sense he is suited to you; in what way you are to receive, and be continually taking him into your minds; how you are to enjoy him in your hearts; in what way you are to go forward in his strength; how it becomes you to cleave unto him

with full purpose of heart. I would advise you to think over what you really know of the person of Christ, the love of Christ, the righteousness of Christ, and the blood of Christ; how far you have received all this into your minds, and what effects it hath produced in your souls. If you are trusting wholly and alone, for your present and eternal discharge from all sin before the Lord, upon the life and death of the God-man Christ, you can never be too confident in him, for your confidence can only be in proportion to the real knowledge you have of him; and this knowledge can only spring from the word, and from the Spirit of the living God. Nor must the teaching of any man come in here, though useful in its place; yet in the true knowledge of Christ, in which life eternal consists, we must receive all from the Lord himself. It is wholly the fruit and effect of supernatural light, teaching, and revelation. No man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. You can never renounce and trample on self too much. It is a spiritual apprehension of the Lord Jesus Christ, which alone can lift you out off yourselves, and off yourselves. The more your minds are fixed on Christ, and engaged in true scriptural meditation on him, the more will your spirituality and heavenly-mindedness appear. It is by your looking unto Jesus that your faith in him will be increased, maintained, and confirmed. You will never want evidence of your being in Christ, so long as you are looking to him and living upon him. This will always afford you holy satiety. You cannot enjoy a greater feast than is to be found in the love of Christ. You can never be favoured with a higher season of grace, than the real presence of the Lord Jesus Christ affords. You can never be more completely encouraged and strengthened in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, than when you are simply looking on Christ in his righteousness and death. You will then break out and exclaim, Surely in the Lord have we righteousness and strength. You will never be righteous in earth or heaven in yourselves. You will never have the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ inherently within you. No, it will be for ever without you; in him whose name is, "The Lord our Righteousness." It is in him we are made the righteousness of God. The Father hath made him to be wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption to us. In him we are com-

plete; this is all-sufficient for us. May the Lord give you understanding in all things; this as well as all other spiritual blessings, cometh from the Lord of Hosts, who is great in counsel, and excellent in working. May the Lord make you truly and perfectly happy in himself. May you have most free and blessed communion with him in prayer, meditation, reading his word, conversing among yourselves and with others concerning him, and in every ordinance in which you acknowledge and worship him. Thus may you be going on and increasing with the increase of God. Now I am come to the close of my letter, and it appears to me you have had sufficient.

My christian respects to the Lord's people with you; may grace be with them, mercy and peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father in truth and love.

Your's in the Lord,

S. E. P.

LETTER XXIX.

Chard, August 5, 1816.

To the Church of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, in Printers' Court, Shoe Lane.

BELOVED IN THE LORD, WISHING YOU ALL SPIRITUAL PROSPERITY,

I SALUTE you in the Lord, hoping and also praying that you are and will be found, when this letter reaches you, in the real enjoyment of the love of God; of the peace which Christ has made by the blood of his cross; and that through the grace of the Holy Spirit, you may have most blessed and spiritual communion with the Father and the Son. This is indeed the greatest of all blessings this side glory; it is the

very essence of all communicable blessings. To have fellowship with the Father and the Son through the indwelling of the Holy Ghost; to say as the apostle doth, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," is true substantial blessedness. It is the very fruit of our union to the person of Christ. He is our head of union to God. The apostle, in his inventory of our benefits and blessings, saith, "All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." It enters deeply into real experience to comprehend what Christ is to us, what he has done for us, how he is related unto us, and what his interest is in us. And as Christ is our head, so God is the head of Christ; we are Christ's, we are his portion, his inheritance, his treasure, his joy, his crown. He delighteth in us, he watcheth over us, he guards and protects us; he is our sun, our shield, our salvation, our righteousness, our purity, our all; and we are his. When we receive all this into our minds, and live over these truths in our hearts, it is then we have communion with the Lord; it is then our joys in the Lord are abundant. We cannot expect to enjoy communion with him, when we are not esteeming him as our chiefest joy. For while all is of grace, yet the grace or free favour of Jehovah is not contrary to the rest of the glorious perfections of his nature; therefore, while he remembereth his people in their low estate, and delighteth in mercy, rejoicing in and over his saints to do them good, yet one great act of his grace towards them is to form them for himself, and he says on the very footing of this, "They shall shew forth my praise." Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, says the same to called saints: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." And a church of Christ, most certainly, cannot glorify Christ, but by their worship of him, their confessions of his truth, their loving it for his name's sake, and him as the truth itself, in whom every truth begins, in whom all truths centre, and in whom they all shine forth in their glory and excellency. To prefer him above their chiefest joy, to make his interest their own, to glory in his holy

name, to triumph in his praise, is the way in which they make the name of Christ glorious, and whereby his name is indeed to them, and amongst them, "as ointment poured forth." And, in a church state, a part of church worship consists in bearing and forbearing with one another in love, and keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. The apostle says, "Look not every man at his own things, but every man also at the things of others." Let the truths of the gospel, the mystery of the faith, be kept in a pure conscience, and all will be well; for it is union with the truths of the everlasting gospel, which is the only cement and bond to keep the holy brotherhood together. I have had the happiness, since I came here, to see some brethren in Christ, whose tempers had been very violent against others of the same church, restored to their brethren, and take their places at the Lord's table, after having abstained therefrom two or three years. Truly I rejoice more in it than I should have done at the admission of a hundred members, they being real saints, although they were peevish ones. I have always been, in the Lord's hand, a blessing to this people, sometimes in one way, sometimes another; when their church divisions and breaches have been such as could not be healed, yet none of them were ever displeased with me. All were of the same mind; I was an healer, but it would not do. And, truly, I have seen things so low here, that there did not seem, from human appearances, any real hopes of union and communion; yet now, the Lord be praised, there is a revival. Many hearers. Some divine drops and dews distilled. Peace and brotherly love, in a measure, restored; and some who are on the enquiry after God. I should be very glad if I could stay all my time with them, but it cannot be so. I am better in body than I have been for years, though I am not younger than when I left you, so that my relief lies much in the free open air, which I greatly enjoy. But I must visit others, as well as these friends here. I will give you an account of what lies before me, if the Lord permit. In the first place I would say, I want for nothing. I have all and abound, so you need give yourselves no concern about me. I would also add, I never had a more comfortable journey, nor was I ever more comfortable here since I knew the place, which was first

in 1778. I am to leave this place on Monday, the 19th of the present month, if the Lord will, for Devonshire and Cornwall, and shall proceed thus:—On my leaving this place I am to be conveyed to Uppottery, the place of my nativity, which is ten miles from Chard. When I have preached there, I am to be conveyed to Honiton, where I was brought up, and hope to preach there; from thence I proceed to Exeter, thence to Newton, Toor, and Mary Church; thence to Plymouth, and from thence to Truro. I expect to be there the first Lord's-day in September, and spend about three Lord's-days with them, when I purpose leaving, and return on my road for Chard. In the course of which I am to stop at Launceston, to spend two or three days with one of the oldest friends I have in Christ, who always acknowledges himself to be brought to the knowledge of Christ by my ministry. Then I return to Chard, where I hope to be on the fourth Lord's-day in September. Some think there are great difficulties in all this. I see or know of none, for I am amply provided for. I have the Lord Jesus Christ's promise for it. The blessed Redeemer says: "Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer. Thou shalt cry, and I will say, here I am." Oh, what grace is here! He hath also, by word of promise, declared himself thus: "The Lord shall guide thee continually." Now what can I want? I am sure I cannot speak of any wants, neither can I think of any; nothing, it may be said, but faith to mix with the promise: I have it; and if I had it not the promise stands good. The Lord who made it, will most assuredly perform it. "His counsel shall stand and he will do all his pleasure." I know and acknowledge the truth of this, and his being all he is to me: and his speaking and fulfilling his promises to me, is a part of his counsel, and the good pleasure of his will. I do prefer being alone with him; it is quite congenial to my frame. To have intercourse with Christ, is all I want in life or in death; and I most assuredly shall have it, for neither life nor death will separate me from him. They cannot. Many things in life, and what must befall me in death, may, and doubtless will, suspend all actings of my mind towards the Lord: so does sleep every night. But what of this? It does not stop the exercise of Christ's mind towards me; nor will anything which I am the subject of, either in life or death, withdraw the eye and the heart of the Lord

Jesus Christ from me, nor cause the cessation of his thoughts respecting me. No. My motto on the completion of my seventieth year, was, "With everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." There is in these words all I shall ever want, either in time or eternity. The Lord himself be with your spirits. May he give one heart and one soul in the truths of the gospel, and bless you in all things: this is my prayer on your behalf.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all, evermore. Amen.

I subscribe myself your's in the Lord,

S. E. P.

LETTER XXX.

Chard, July 28, 1817.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I HOPE through the light and teachings of the Lord the Spirit, that the most glorious and incomparable Jesus, is very high in your esteem; that you are continually receiving him as your whole salvation into your heart, and living upon him for every blessing which he hath obtained for you by his most precious blood. It is a most inestimable blessing to receive Christ's atonement into our minds, and to apprehend from the written word, and by the influence of the Holy Ghost, that we are now this moment, in the blood of Christ, as pure from all sin, as we shall be when we are in heaven. It is not our being there will make us wholly righteous, and sinless; though we shall never be admitted there unless we are such. But if we are in Christ, we are holy, righteous, and pure in him. His holiness, righteousness, and sacrifice, are imputed to us. We stand before the Divine Majesty in the person of Christ, in whom we were beloved, in whom we were accepted, in whom we were chosen, and blessed with all spiritual bless-

ings. To have clear views and spiritual apprehensions of these truths in our minds, to have them stated to us by the Spirit, as they are in the Scriptures of Truth, is an unspeakable blessing. God beheld his church in Christ from everlasting. All his acts of grace towards them were in Christ. The church was beloved in him. What the church was from everlasting, that it will be in Christ to everlasting. There will never be any change here; therefore what the church is in her time-state, by means of her fall, and her old Adam-nature, will never take off the heart of the Eternal Three from loving her with an everlasting love; nor is there any reason why it should; for under the fore-views of her fallen state, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." The non-imputation of sin to the elect, is their complete discharge from it. The imputation of their sins to the person of Christ, and of his righteousness unto them, is their complete salvation in the sight of God. The gospel is the revelation of this. It is the ordinance of God, for life and salvation to us. As we are brought to the right knowledge of it, we are led by the Holy Ghost to receive Christ as he is set forth in it; and in receiving Christ, we become partakers of him; and so know him, and his blood and righteousness, as to rest and centre alone in him for eternal life. Hereby it is made evident unto us, that we are passed from death unto life; and our life of faith consists in the true and spiritual apprehension of the person of Christ. He is God; he is man; he is God-man, whose glory is as the glory of the only-begotten of the Father. His personal glory is incommunicably his own. He cannot impart it, nor communicate it, any more than he can his Godhead. He received it as a gift. He shone forth in it before the foundation of the world. He is the image of the invisible God. He was, from everlasting, in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God. He is the brightness of his glory. He is the MAN, the FELLOW of the Lord of Hosts. He was set up in this glory in the will, counsel, and predestinating purposes of the Trinity, from everlasting. He was appointed to be the Head of the whole election of grace. In him the Father beheld the elect, loved them, accepted them, and appointed them in him to all the blessings of grace and glory. The Father's beholding the elect in the person of Christ God-

man, was one of the highest expressions of his ineffable delight in them. We are too apt to overlook this. The truth is, had not God beheld his own elect in the person of him who is both God and Man in one Christ, he had never loved them with an immutable love; nor had he ever proved the continuance of his love to them in their apostate state, by giving his only begotten Son to be their Lord, their righteousness, and propitiation; nor had the Holy Ghost ever regenerated our minds, if we had not been in Christ before the foundation of the world, and loved by the Father with an everlasting love. For my own part, I should like to take into my mind, and separately consider the different glories of Christ. His essential and personal glory in Godhead, is the foundation of his personal glory as God-man. His glory as God-man is this: He is God manifested in the flesh. His glory of being the Head of the whole election, whilst founded on the former, is distinct from it. His social or relative glory, as the Bridegroom of his church, is also distinct, though resulting from the former. His glory, as the Saviour of his church, is likewise the fruit of the former. So that in the right apprehension of these various glories, our Lord hath many crowns. Whilst it is real blessedness to receive any of these glories of our most precious Lord into our minds, yet what principally concerns us in our present time-state, is his most glorious work of salvation, and the glory which is most justly due unto him for the same. The greatest work the Lord Jesus Christ ever performed, was the putting away of sin by the sacrifice of himself; sustaining in his own person the whole curse due to sin; removing the sins of his people from their persons, as far as the east is from the west; saving them from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for them; bringing in an everlasting righteousness for them, conquering sin and Satan, principalities and powers, death and hell, and obtaining eternal redemption for them. This Christ engaged to do before all time; yet he did not effect it until "the fulness of time. He appeared once in the end of the world, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." He was set apart in the counsels of Godhead from eternity, to be the Lamb slain for sin, and covenanted as Surety for his beloved members, to bear their sins in his own body on the tree; yet he could not carry all this into act and execution in

heaven. He had fully engaged to sustain sin and the curse, as the representative of his people before the world; yet he became incarnate in the fulness of time, and hereby he came into our world. It was in the days of his flesh that he fulfilled all righteousness, bore the sins of many, put them away by the sacrifice of himself, and washed their persons in his own blood, which contains such virtue and efficacy in it, that every elect person is as pure in the blood of Christ, as if sin had never been in him. And when the Holy Ghost is pleased to give us the true knowledge of this, we find in it everlasting life. Our Jesus saith: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life." He is the immediate object of our faith. Our whole salvation is in him. His righteousness and sacrifice are the whole of it, which when we see, we view ourselves made the righteousness of God in him; pure and clean from all sin in him. He hath made us clean from all sin, by washing us from our sins in his own blood. This is altogether a subject for faith. It is freely and fully set forth, revealed, and testified of, in the glorious and everlasting gospel of the blessed God. It is, and only can be, apprehended by the faith of the operation of God, which is the gift of God, and the faith of God's elect. None but these are partakers of it. The thoughts concerning Christ, which the Holy Ghost is pleased to create in your renewed mind, from and by the word, discover what you really know and apprehend of Christ. What you spiritually apprehend of Christ will always lead you to value and esteem him most highly. You will honour him by putting your whole trust and confidence in him for your entire salvation. So far as this is your case, you will have repeated proofs of the truth of that declaration: "Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." You must never look into yourself for anything; you are to look to Christ alone for all things; and so long as you do this, you will have as conclusive evidence of your personal interest in him, as you can possibly desire this side heaven. It does not become you to call in question your personal interest in Christ; but you are to live on him, just as though he were your's, and in so doing you will never want evidence of the truth of this in your own mind. May the Lord the Spirit shew you, and teach you, the reality of this; as it will be an antidote against all practical doubting.

It will be a present heaven, and as true a one as any enjoyed above, when you really take into your mind what you are in Christ; how the Father beholds you in him; how you shine in him; what your blessedness is in him, with the testimony which the Holy Spirit bears concerning all this in the written word. You will never be more completely blessed at any time, than when your whole soul is absorbed in spiritual contemplations on Jesus, and the Father's everlasting love to you in him. You must not expect to be "filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory," because you believe on Jesus; but in your believing on Jesus, you are to be filled thus. It will do you good to make right distinctions, and never swallow up two subjects in one. When you see and feel sin, then is the time for you to consider what you are out of your own self in the person of Christ, and to believe his truth in direct opposition to all your feelings, legality, and unbelief, that "the blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God cleanseth from all sin." Very few under a profession of the gospel have a true apprehension of the person of Christ; of the love of Christ; of the salvation of Christ; of what he is to his people, and what they are in him. It is your business and mine, to be more concerned about knowing Christ, than about knowing ourselves; about knowing what we are in Christ, than what we are in ourselves. Indeed, we can never live Christ, but as we are favoured with a supernatural knowledge of him: and this supernatural knowledge can only be imparted by the divine teaching of the Holy Ghost; who so reveals Christ unto us, that he thereby dwells in our hearts, and holds fellowship with us; and we have the real enjoyment of the same in the very secrets of our minds. Hereby we are quickened, drawn after him, united in heart and affection unto him, and esteem him our portion, our treasure, our inheritance, our all in all. I wish you an enlarged understanding to comprehend more of Christ; a more enlightened judgment into the mysteries of God's everlasting love; a more free, full, and intimate communion with the Father and the Son, through the in-dwellings of the Holy Ghost. May your mind be fixed on Christ! May your heart be continually drawn out after him! May you be wholly swallowed up in him! Every sight you have of Jesus will draw out your heart after him. If you behold the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the light

of the Holy Spirit, you will then see him in his own glory, which transcends that of all others, whether it be in elect angels or saints. "His glory is above the earth and the heavens."

I am not going to set up myself, you may depend upon it, but I should have been glad if I could have written in such a manner, as to have swallowed up, and engaged the whole of your mind on Christ, and on him alone. But my mind is not so fruitful on this best, and most important of all subjects as many conceive; nor have I that personal, and enlarged communion with him in real fellowship, as many of the saints are favoured with. And I am well persuaded it is in communion with him, that the heart is enlarged towards him, and the mouth is filled with his praise. Well, I have done what I could. May the Lord bless the same unto you. May you renounce all but Christ. May you live down all, by living Christ. May it be given you to behold the full glories of Christ. May your mind be so stayed upon him, that you may be kept in perfect peace, looking unto him, the author and finisher of faith. You will excuse the writing, as one of my eyes has been closed all the day. I have eyes which neither death nor age will ever affect. I only want them to be more enlightened, that I may see more clearly. I have heard of some very precious and costly ointment, which hath been prepared on purpose for their benefit. It is to be had for asking. The best friend I ever had, or ever shall have, has advised me to try it, and to make use of it; and as it comes so strongly recommended, I think I shall. I have indeed made some partial use of it; but it retains its virtue at all times, so that those are best off who use it continually. Jesus Christ saith: "I counsel thee to anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see."

I am, Madam,

Your very obedient and obliged

Humble servant in the Lord,

S. E. P.

LETTER XXXI.

Chard, July 28, 1817.

DEAR MISS C.

I HOPE your mind is deeply engaged in thinking and meditating on the truths of the everlasting gospel. You cannot spend your time on any other subjects, which, in point of advantage, will bear the least comparison with them. The Lord Jesus Christ outshines the whole creation, and every creature in it. He is beyond all the joys and comforts it can possibly afford. He is such a Jesus as exceeds the whole of our sin, guilt, and unworthiness. The true knowledge of him, and real communion with him, surpass all the joys of time and sense; and will prove an antidote for every misery which can possibly be felt or experienced by us in a time state. This being a truth, it must follow that there is nothing of greater importance to us who know him, than to cultivate a most free, blessed, and holy acquaintance with him; for it is hereby we draw out his heart, and are led into real views of the love wherewith he hath loved, and doth, and will for ever love us: by which means we are more and more enamoured with him, and we delight in him as our all.

As you are in the prime of life, and have been favoured with some blessed views of Jesus as the bridegroom of your soul, and have given up your hand and heart to his service; I would advise you also to give up your mind to study him. He is beyond the very utmost of your conception: supremely great, and supremely good. One who had seen his beauty, and tasted that he was gracious, cried out with admiration, "Oh, how great is his goodness! How great is his beauty!" His person is infinite. He is God and man in the person of one Christ. His love is the wonder of heaven. His salvation is from generation to generation. His righteousness is everlasting. His sacrifice is of perpetual efficacy. His fulness is inexhaustible. His mercy endureth for ever; and you are one whom he hath saved in himself with an everlasting salvation. You love to think of him; to hear concerning him; to

speak of him; and to have communion with him; this is meat and drink to your mind. And if so, does not this afford substantial evidence that you are one with Christ, and Christ is one with you; and everlasting life is contained herein. He being your Head, your life is in him. You are a member in him; in consequence of which, he hath communicated spiritual life unto you, and he lives within you to maintain the same. He says of a believer, "The water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life." Jesus Christ, the God-man, is the head of union and communion, between God and the whole election of grace. There is such an union between Jesus Christ, and his church, that he, as God-man, is united to their souls and bodies, and their souls and bodies are united to his soul and body; and from this incomprehensible union, which is the fruit of eternal election, flow all the blessings of everlasting love, in the communion they now have with him in a time-state, and which they will continue to have with him in glory for ever. The apostle says, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." All which is the result of that indissoluble union, founded on election, which hath subsisted between Christ and his church from everlasting. It was because Christ was the head of his church, that he became the Saviour of his people. His salvation most exactly suits us, as we are sinners; and we need every day of our lives, clearer apprehensions of his salvation. We are always the subjects of sin, and we are at all times the subjects of his grace. The former originates solely in ourselves; the latter entirely in him. The one we feel; the other we apprehend. The one we have the inward sense and knowledge of; the other we believe on the warrant of God's most holy word. We have sin within us; we have salvation in Christ without us. It is most blessed when we look out and off ourselves to Christ alone; and believe that he was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. It is hereby we are kept from looking at ourselves, as well as in

ourselves, and we are led to look at our persons as considered in the person of Christ. A sight of Christ evangelizes the mind; refreshes our spirits; unbottoms us of every self-righteous hope; lifts up our hearts to the Lord; and helps us to rejoice and triumph in him, and to sing aloud of his righteousness. A living out of ourselves on Christ is the best mode of living whilst we are in this world. It conveys to our minds the best conceptions which we can form of what our life in glory will consist in. For though it will be there all vision and sense, yet the object and subject will be the same. God's everlasting love, the person of the holy and immaculate Lamb, and the glory which he hath acquired, will be the great objects and subjects of our praise and adoration. What can we enjoy in our own souls in this present state, beyond the spiritual apprehension of our most precious Lord Jesus Christ! To know that we are pure in the sight of God in this most precious Jesus! To know that he is our representative in the court of heaven; that we are without all sin in him; that he hath set us as a seal upon his heart; that we are safe in his hands; that we shine in him; that we are complete in him, "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead personally." Whilst the mind is engaged in receiving these subjects, we are, for the season, saved from ourselves; we are swallowed up in the sweetness of God's eternal, infinite, and unchangeable love, which is fixed on our persons, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is very good to be taking into our minds, what is recorded in the word concerning the virtue, worth, efficacy, and purity contained in the blood, sacrifice, and atonement of the Lord Jesus. His blood not only cleanseth from all sin, now, at this moment, and through life; but it continues its virtue to all eternity. It purges the conscience from dead works, and enables such as are brought under its influence to serve the living God. Blessed be the Lord, we have as true and real communion with Christ in the virtue and efficacy of it, whilst we are here, as the saints who are already admitted within the vail. I hope you know what it is to draw nigh to the throne of grace, in the full assurance of faith, that Christ by his one offering hath perfected for ever, the putting away of sin, by the sacrifice of himself; then you are most truly blessed. To live in the belief of this; to walk up and down in the world, and

before the Lord, confiding in this; to close every day trusting in this; to draw our last breath, and to leave our bodies in the full belief of this, is the essence of all real blessedness. May the Lord the Spirit help us to make up our whole religion in the knowledge of Christ, and in communion with the Father in him. May the Spirit draw out your mind, more and more, in desires and aspirations after him. May your heart and affections be supremely fixed on him, so as to rest in him for present salvation, and everlasting happiness. You will spend a most blessed life, if you live continually looking at the Lamb of God, who hath taken away the sin of the world, by the sacrifice of himself; and who now liveth on his throne, as the true Melchisedec to bless us with perpetual blessings.

It is delightful employment for our minds, to have them freely, fully, constantly, and intensely engaged and exercised on the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. All the crowned heads in heaven, are continually engaged in beholding him. Surely there must be that in him, which is sufficient to satisfy their minds to an infinite degree! If so, then most certainly there must be that in him, when we apprehend him, as revealed and set forth in the everlasting gospel, which is all-sufficient for us, whilst in this time state. There is so. Yet our blessedness must arise from knowing and experiencing the truth of this in our own minds; and we do so, when our minds are distinctly, and particularly exercised on him. As the Holy Ghost is pleased to glorify Jesus in our minds, by taking of the things which concern his grace, and glory, and shewing the same unto us; he thereby becomes more glorious in our view, and higher in our hearts and thoughts; and we are admitted into more and more intimate communion with our most adorable Lord. We know Christ *truly*, by the teachings of the word and Spirit, so as to rest alone in his person, righteousness, and blood, for our complete salvation; yet we shall never know Christ *fully* in this world; nor shall we ever know him in the utmost perfection of his person, majesty, worth, and glory. No. Not throughout the ages of eternity. We have now an increasing knowledge of our Lord. Sometimes his person attracts us. At other times his love engages us. So it is. At one season we are altogether swallowed up in the views of his righteousness; and it then affords us a

sufficient heaven to behold him as "The Lord our Righteousness;" to view ourselves in him, and made the righteousness of God in him. At other seasons we are charmed with a sight of the Lord Jesus Christ as our propitiation; to consider that his blood is our everlasting purity, and that we are, in him, without all spot before the throne of God. I have some blessed conceptions and experiences of these most divine truths and realities, in my own mind; if I had not, I should be destitute of spiritual life and communion with the Lord. Our Lord saith, "Except ye eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

My dear Miss C. I must leave what I have written to your consideration. I most heartily wish you an increase of all spiritual blessings. The apostle says, "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; to whom be glory now and for ever. Amen." It is the request of another apostle, for the saints of Ephesus, to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, "of whom the whole family of earth and heaven are named: That he would, out of the riches of his glorious grace, strengthen them with all might by his Spirit in the inner man: That Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith." I know of nothing beyond this to supplicate on your behalf. May you be a partaker of all the blessings contained in these requests; then you will be completely holy, blessed, spiritual, and happy. May great grace rest upon you. May the word of God dwell richly in you. May your heart be fully possessed with the love of Christ. May your mind be wholly swallowed up in him. You will excuse my freedom in thus addressing you. It is in a measure owing to your friend Mr. I. C. H. I hope to write to him soon. If what I have written suits your spiritual taste, you are to give the whole glory of it to the Lord, as no part of it belongs to me. I subscribe myself your real well-wisher in the Lord, and for his sake, your friend in him.

S. E. P.

LETTER XXXII.

Truro, October 14, 1785.

DEAR MR. AND MRS. C.

I HOPE you are both perfectly happy in your own hearts, in the enjoyment of that love of Christ which passeth knowledge. There is everything in our Lord Jesus Christ to afford us heart-ease and soul-satisfaction; for he is the fountain of everlasting blessings and blessedness; and in him all fulness dwells. And when it is given us by the blessed and eternal Spirit to know Jesus, we then know where true happiness is to be found.

I hope, my dear friends, you are discovering fresh beauties in Jesus every day. His person is glorious, for he is God and man united in one Christ, and all the beauties in heaven and earth meet and centre in him. He is "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person." He is Jehovah, the Rock of Eternity, from whence all our salvation springs; and his name is "Jehovah our Righteousness." This is one of the principal articles of our most holy faith; that our Jesus is the eternal, and everlasting God; for it was the Godhead of Christ which stamped an everlasting efficacy upon his obedience and sufferings. His blood is precious blood. It is precious in regard to the dignity of his person. It is the blood of God, that is, of that person who is true and very God. Acts xx. 28. And it is precious in regard to the virtue and effects of it. By it, reconciliation has been wrought out; the church redeemed, and the sins of God's elect have been expiated and fully done away. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." It cleanseth perfectly; it cleanseth eternally; and it cleanseth in believing. It is by believing that we experience its everlasting virtue and efficacy; and every believer is as perfectly healed by the blood of Christ, as if he had never been wounded. And though the believer feels the plague of his own heart, and groans under a body of sin and death, yet this ought not to hinder him from believing, but should rather be an argument to encou-

rage him in believing. For the very feeling we have of sin, should teach us how much we stand in need of that open fountain of Christ's most precious blood, and to it we should be constantly resorting. Give me leave to present you with the following quotation from Mather, on the Types:— 'There is a far greater power in the blood of Christ to cleanse and save, than in sin to defile and destroy. The law became weak to do good, but it hath power to condemn. "The strength of sin is the law." The law gives strength to sin, because by virtue of the curse of the law, sin reigns and defiles the souls of men through that righteous curse, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." But the blood of Jesus Christ hath greater power to save than sin, together with the law, hath to condemn; for the blood of Christ takes away and abolishes it utterly. Where this blood is applied and brought home, sin itself cannot ruin that soul. The soul is poisoned and corrupted by sin, but the blood of Christ takes away that poison, and makes the soul as pure and holy, as if it had never sinned. Therefore, as to those discouragements, I shall never get power against these sins, against these corruptions; they will be my ruin. These are deep reflections on Jesus Christ, as if sin were stronger than he; as if thy sin were more powerful to damn thee, than Christ is to save thee; and what is washing in the blood of Christ, but believing and exercising faith on that blood? We should not be afraid of believing, but of *not* believing. We should not be afraid of receiving the atonement, but of *not* receiving it.'

I find, my dear friends, that nothing does me any good, but looking unto and beholding the Lamb of God, who hath "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;" and I find no real communion with the Lord in ordinances, but as I have to do with him as a reconciled God and Father. And when we do come before the Lord, looking unto our great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God, who has entered within the vail to appear as our intercessor and advocate before the Father, then we have boldness at the throne, and are encouraged to approach the Lord with holy confidence. Nothing can give us equal encouragement in prayer, to a sight of the Lamb of God upon his mediatorial throne. Oh! that you may find free access at all times within the vail, to a reconciled God

and Father, trusting upon Christ's most powerful intercession for the acceptation of your prayers and praises. The more you are led by the Holy Spirit in the knowledge of Jesus, the more happiness you will enjoy. To know him as a Saviour whose name is Wonderful, whose bowels are mercy, whose heart is love, whose very office is salvation; this is knowing him to our great and endless comfort. There is not an office nor title which our Jesus bears, but what serves to endear him to his people. What divine consolation does his office of priesthood hold forth unto the souls of his people! He has put away sin by the sacrifice of himself upon earth, and he is entered into the holiest of all, to present his sacrifice on the behalf of all that come unto God by him. And the apostle lays a mighty stress upon the intercession of Christ in heaven, "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." His intercession in heaven is founded upon his death. It is his blood shed upon the cross, which he pleads before his divine Father within the vail, and he ever liveth to make intercession for all that come unto God by him. And I would beg you to observe what a beautiful definition of faith is here given us by the apostle. It is "a coming" to be saved. Such as "go out" of themselves, and rest in nothing "in" themselves, "do come" unto God through Christ, for salvation, though with trembling. It is a coming "unto God," for he is the ultimate object of our faith; and the person with whom we have to do in believing; and from whom we are to receive salvation, if ever we obtain it at all. It is a coming unto God "by Christ." He is the great and true High Priest. 'Dost thou not know,' said one now with God, 'how to appear before God, or to come to him? Come first to Christ, and he will take thee by the hand, and go along with thee, and lead thee to his Father.' It is a coming unto Christ "for salvation;" so that whosoever sees and feels his want of salvation, may be encouraged herefrom to apply to Christ for it, since he is a Saviour able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. His offices of prophet and of king in Zion, teaching and making wise the simple, and ruling his people with the sceptre of his grace, render him truly lovely to his redeemed; and the more Christ is known, the more we cannot but prize him. The love of

Christ is exhibited and set forth in the sacred scriptures in all its transcendent charms and excellencies, and it is discovered by them to be infinite, boundless, and inexhaustible. And the more our hearts are taken with the love of Christ, the more holy we become in our lives and conversations; and there is every thing in Christ to fill us with holy joy. We never lose ground more in spirituals, than by looking off from Christ. A believer's life is a life of faith upon the Son of God: and while we are employed in viewing and beholding the person, blood, and righteousness of the Lord Jesus, our hearts are warmed with his love, our minds and consciences kept in perfect peace, and we go on rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. I hope this is your happy case, that you are looking wholly to Christ for full, free, perfect, and everlasting salvation, and that Christ is your all and in all; your garment of salvation, your peace, your life, and your glory.

I desire, most affectionately, to thank you for all favours, and the only return I can make you, is to remember you at the throne of grace; and I would beg the same favour of you. May the Lord bless you abundantly, by enlarging your hearts, and giving you more precious discoveries of the Lord Jesus than ever. Oh, that you may be made more sensible, every future day of your life, of the inexpressible worth of Christ; and that you may be led to rest upon the eternal worth and worthiness of the God-man. Never forget that this is our grand and everlasting foundation, that Jesus is Jehovah, perfect God, and perfect Man; and every way qualified to keep his people to the end, to preserve them from falling, and to present them before his Father's presence with exceeding joy. And it is in Christ that you are complete; completely accepted in the person of the Lord Jesus, his beloved Son; completely justified in the everlasting righteousness of Jesus, before Jehovah; completely pardoned and forgiven all trespasses through the most precious blood-shedding of Jesus Christ; and God is at everlasting peace with you, through the blood of the everlasting covenant. Your High Priest, Jesus the Son of God, is entered into heaven as your surety, fore-runner, and representative; and he wears the names of all his people upon the breast-plate of his heart. Your eternal state depends upon the finished salvation of Jesus.

Praying that the Holy Spirit may give you to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, I subscribe myself,

Your real friend in our dear Jesus,

S. E. P.

LETTER XXXIII.

Truro, May 22, 1786.

MY VERY DEAR AND WORTHY FRIENDS,

I FEAR you think I am either forgetful or neglectful of you, from my having been so long silent. Believe me, I love you in the bowels of Jesus Christ, and would most gladly embrace your very kind invitation to come and see you, but at present, circumstances will not permit.

I feel, my dear friends, a secret decay of bodily strength, and am often reminded of my dissolution. I find nothing can be an antidote against the fears of death, but faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, who, by his death, hath destroyed death; and by his rising to life again, hath restored unto his people everlasting life. All will be well with you and with me in life, in death, and throughout eternity; for God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood is our ransom, and whose death is the foundation of our victory and triumph over sin, death, and hell. "For who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." So that nothing shall ever be able to "separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Our heavenly Father's love is fixed upon our persons, as we are considered by him as one with our Lord Jesus Christ. God's love towards us the members, is the same

as his love to the Head, and until his love to Christ change, it will not change towards us. We are continually changing, but Jehovah changeth not. His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting, and you are embraced and encompassed with it as with a shield; and in the beautiful robe of your Redeemer's righteousness, you shine brighter before the Lord than the meridian sun ever did in your view. You are in Christ all fair, for your sins are all taken away for ever, and removed from you as far as the east is from the west, by the sacrifice of Jesus. In him, your living, your everlasting Head, the rock of your salvation, you are complete; for he has all the fulness of grace, and in him ye are chosen and blessed. Ye are complete and perfect in him, as to sanctification; he having all fulness of grace and glory for you, you have it in him. And as to justification, Christ has perfectly fulfilled the law for you; he has made full atonement for sin, and obtained eternal redemption. He has brought in a complete and perfect righteousness, by which you are justified from all things, are freed from the imputation of sin, and made perfectly comely, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. Blessed be the Lord, you can say, "The Lord is my portion, therefore will I hope in him." The Lord Jesus is an inexhaustible, a soul-enriching, a soul-satisfying, and an eternal portion. He is an inexhaustible portion; his mercies can never be drawn dry. His love passeth knowledge. The grace of Christ is boundless and endless. His heart is fixed upon his people: all his delight is in them. They are his joy and crown: the purchase of his blood; the travail of his soul; for whom he travailed in the greatness of his strength to bring redemption, and salvation; and he has set them as a seal upon his heart, and engraved them upon the palms of his hands; and he says, "I will never turn away from them, from doing them good." Christ's glory and his people's good are inseparably connected. Christ is a soul-enriching portion; all spiritual blessings are in him; all blessedness comes from him. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be made rich." His riches are durable and unsearchable, whereby the souls of his people, who are in themselves poor, miserable, hell-deserving sinners, are made rich in time and to all eternity. For his love

is *ours* to bless and comfort us; his mercy *ours* to pardon us; his blood *ours* to cleanse us; his righteousness *ours* to clothe us; his grace *ours* to supply us; his Spirit *ours* to quicken and sanctify us. His Father is *our* Father, and his God *our* God. Oh! what unspeakable grace, to be enabled by the Holy Ghost to say, My beloved Jesus is mine and I am his. Christ is a soul-satisfying portion: he that hath Christ hath all things. The love of Christ satisfieth the soul. The transcendent beauties and excellencies of Christ draw the hearts and affections of the Lord's people. All of Christ brings comfort with it. To know him as God and Man, Jehovah the Saviour, "The Lord our Righteousness," as having made peace by the blood of his cross, and as loving us, and living for us in heaven to plead our cause: this brings peace to the conscience, and content to the heart, and lifts up the hands that hang down, and confirms the feeble knees. There is every thing in the person of Christ, in the love of Christ, in the work of Christ, in the word of Christ, and in the many exceeding, great, and precious promises of Christ, to yield divine content, comfort and consolation to the people of God. There is not a want we feel, nor a sin we commit, but should send us to Christ; and the way to holy and everlasting contentment is, to put honour upon the blood of Christ, by believing its everlasting dignity, worth, value, and efficacy.

All the spiritual distress which God's redeemed people groan under, arises from sin; from the sight and sense they have of it; and from the remaining guilt they feel concerning it in their own consciences. Now there is no way appointed by the Lord to heal the soul of its wounds, to remove the smart and anguish of a wounded conscience, but the blood of the Lamb, and faith exercised upon it; and the Scriptures set forth Christ as a propitiation, that is, an atonement for sin. He died for our sins, and he was made sin for us, and by his stripes we are healed. Christ's blood is styled the blood of the everlasting covenant, and it is said to cleanse from all sin. It is a fountain set open for our daily cleansing; and as we believe its everlasting virtue and efficacy to cleanse from every spot and stain of sin before the Lord, we then cast our souls upon it for our cleansing; and as far as the Holy Ghost enables us to apprehend by faith, what the scrip-

tures reveal concerning its efficacious power, so far we experience it in our own souls. Oh! let us look for cleansing from sin nowhere, but in the blood of Christ; and let us honour him, by being fully persuaded that his blood is more effectual to cleanse, than sin is to defile and damn us.

Please to give my best respects to Mrs. L. when you write to her. My kind respects to all who love our precious Jesus. Accept of my wife's best respects, together with my own, to dear Mrs. L. N. and yourself.

I am, my beloved friends,

Your's in Christ Jesus,

S. E. P.

LETTER XXXIV.

Chard, July 29, 1817.

MY VERY DEAR AND HIGHLY ESTEEMED SIR,

THE whole system of grace, in my apprehension, consists in the revelation of the doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity, in the unity of the incomprehensible Essence; the person of Christ, God-Man; and the everlasting love of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost towards the elect offspring of Adam's posterity. They were beloved in Christ, and chosen in him, before the world was framed; and what forms a very distinguishing part of this system, is the covenant which obtained between the Three in Jehovah on their behalf; in which the Eternal Three were pleased to express their mutual loves towards them by their covenant relations and offices of grace unto them. The love of God is from everlasting to everlasting, one consummate act. It is immutably fixed on the persons of the elect. It can neither be increased nor diminished. It is the fountain and spring from whence Christ and every spiritual blessing flow. Christ as the Head of his church, and the blessings derived from his headship, and relationship

to his church, are fruits of election grace. These are not obtained for us by Christ, or by virtue of his union with his church; but they are all and each of them bestowed upon us, and upon Christ himself, out of the fulness of God's sovereign favour. The choice of Christ God-man, and the choice of the elect in him; the gift of Christ to the church to be her Head, and the gift of the church to him as his members; the union of Christ to the church, and the church's union to him; the bestowing all spiritual blessings on the church in Christ; the acceptation of the persons of the elect in his person who is the Beloved; all this must be traced to a higher source than as belonging to the elect, merely from their being the redeemed of the Lord, and as raised up from the ruins of the fall, by the person, blood, and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. The election of both Christ and the church, and their union and relation to each other, are eternal acts in the mind and will of God. These were all formed in Christ, and founded on Christ God-man, yet they were not dependent on any act Christ had performed, or was to perform. He himself owes all he is, as God-man, to the grace of the Three in Jehovah. That he, as God-man, should have life in himself, and live a life of independent blessedness, and have a personal glory which is wholly incommunicable, and be free of the society of Trinity, in a way that is not to be communicated to any but himself, and be admitted into all the secrets of Jehovah; this is wholly of grace.

My good Sir, if you look into the second volume of Dr. Goodwin's works, and read his discourse concerning the knowledge of God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, you will there find this subject handled in a very scriptural and glorious manner. I have enjoyed a heaven upon earth in reading it. You will there have the distinct glories of Christ explained. His personal glory, which is the Godhead dwelling personally in the Man Christ Jesus; his relative glory, which consists in his being the eternal, ever-living head, and husband of his church; his mediatorial glory, which is the glory he acquired by his humiliation and obedience unto death; and that glory which he now shines forth in, at the right hand of the majesty on high, are individually pointed out and considered. You will have also in the same treatise, a very glorious account of the two-fold relation which Christ

stands in to his church; the one as the Head of his church, and the other as the Saviour of his mystic body. I think you procured the Doctor's folio volumes when in London. I would most gladly recommend your reading and studying them. They are invaluable. He is the man for opening the mysteries of grace; for searching into the boundless ocean of free grace; for ascribing the full glories of it to the good pleasure of God's will. It is well for us rightly to apprehend the grace of God; the salvation of God; the operation of the Spirit of God within, and upon the souls of the elect. It becomes us to give all diligence to attain right scriptural apprehensions of every part and branch of divine truth. There is a most glorious order and connexion observed throughout the scriptures; not one thing is out of its proper place. Every truth therein respecting God's love to Christ, his vast and eternal designs in him towards all things visible and invisible, is expressed precisely the same as it exists in the mind of God. Thus the church in Christ; her original glory; the view God had of her in Christ before all time; the vast designs of the divine majesty towards her in Christ; the various states through which she should pass, are all recorded in the word, exactly as they were conceived in the divine mind from everlasting. It is our wisdom to abide by this record, and to be content with the same. God's everlasting love to us is in Christ. It is in him we have every blessing of it. In him we have complete salvation for soul and body; and eternal redemption from every sin and from every evil. It is true blessedness to apprehend Christ; to receive him into our minds; to enjoy him in our hearts; to have real spiritual communion with him; this cannot be without the Spirit, whose office it is to reveal Jesus to us, to testify of him unto us, and to glorify Jesus in us. He cannot do this, before he hath created us anew in Christ Jesus. We must receive a spiritual birth from Christ, or we cannot be new creatures in him, which new birth, or spiritual faculty, is produced in our souls by the Holy Spirit. It is solely his own act, and it is once for all. It is an instantaneous act. By it we have that spiritual faculty imparted to us, which we never had before. The Holy Spirit is pleased to dwell in us, and by this means he sustains the new creation wrought in us. He enlightens

every faculty of it. He reveals Christ's person and salvation to our spiritual minds. It is in them he forms scriptural, and spiritual conceptions of the things of God. It is hereby we actually see and taste that the Lord is gracious. We are now and evermore entirely saved by the Lord Jesus Christ. "He hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." We are now and evermore righteous in his righteousness. It is in him, and in his everlastingly complete and finished salvation, that we are for ever complete. The Father beholds us in Christ; he sees us to be what our head and representative is, holy in his holiness, righteous in his righteousness, pure, and without all sin, in his most perfect sacrifice. The Holy Spirit is pleased to reveal the truth of all this to our regenerated minds. He enlightens the eyes of our understandings to discover the reality of it, in the glorious person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ. If we had not spiritual eyes, we could not see Christ. If we had not spiritual ears, we could not hear the voice of Christ. If we had not spiritual faculties, we could not exercise them immediately and distinctly, on our most precious Lord. When the Lord God had determined to create the first man, and to bring him into being and existence, what did he do? He first created an habitable globe, and furnished it with every good. Then he formed man, and supplied him with members, senses, and faculties adapted for the enjoyment of every desirable object which was to be found in the world. So God hath provided Christ, and filled him with all spiritual good; and in his world all good is to be enjoyed in him. We are born again, and at our spiritual birth, we are furnished with every spiritual sense and faculty requisite for the enjoyment of Christ; so as to have an inward knowledge of him; and true and spiritual communion with him. We are brought into his kingdom with these spiritual faculties, that we may enjoy and have fellowship with him. The apostle, writing to the saints at Colosse, gives thanks unto God the Father for this. His words are, "Giving thanks unto the Father who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." See Coloss. i. 12, 13. It is in this kingdom, (which is the same

with the state of grace) that we know Christ, enjoy Christ, live Christ, have fellowship with Christ, and are manifested to be his portion, and his peculiar treasure. Of this kingdom the apostle declares, that the blessings of it do not consist in "meats and drinks, but in righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." As being ourselves admitted into it, we may say with truth, we were once "darkness," but "now are we light in the Lord." We have Christ for our light. We have him for our life. He is to us the "Bread of Life," and the "Water of Life." He is our present, and he will be our everlasting all; we have our all in him; we receive our all from him. He hath brought us nigh unto God by his blood, for which we desire to give him unceasing praise; to ascribe to him the glory due unto his most holy name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise; and to triumph in him alone, as the everlasting conqueror of the world, sin, Satan, death and hell and the All-mighty and All-sufficient Saviour of his church and people. We feel the absolute necessity of being more acquainted with him, than we are with ourselves, and of knowing more of him, than we do of our own inward sinfulness; for as we are led into an increasing knowledge of him, we renounce sin and self, and die to all below him, and live to him alone. It is the language of our very hearts, none but Christ, none but Christ. It is him alone we esteem. Our whole trust is in "the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth." The Holy Ghost being our teacher, he will not permit us to glory in ourselves; we detest the very idea of it. He says, (and we rejoice at it) "Glory ye in his holy name, let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his face evermore."

My dear Sir, as you would have me write, I could only write of the things which "I have heard and seen, and tasted, and handled, of the word of life." Nor can I do anything better for you, or express my spiritual regard for you more, than by commending "you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." May all contained in these words of the apostle, (with which he took his farewell of the Ephesian elders, under a firm persuasion that he should never see them more) be enjoyed by you, and

made good unto you. I have almost written my eyes blind; so you need not marvel if you meet with nothing but imperfections in the writing throughout the whole letter. Let not this detract from the truths contained in it. My eyes want rest. Age is age, and will not be tampered with; yet I was willing to fulfil my engagements; so far, therefore, I am satisfied. May you be favoured with great and increasing intimacy with the Lord Jesus Christ. May he be increasingly precious to you. May you most highly prize him. May you live wholly on him. This will be a means of increasing your real happiness, and rejoicing in the Lord, so as to make your continual boast in him. May the Lord direct your heart into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Jesus Christ. May you have many blessed anticipations of the glory which is to be revealed in you, "when Christ your life shall appear, and you shall be like him, by seeing him as he is." It is a sure evidence that Christ is our exceeding joy, when we really long to be with him, and see him "face to face," which cannot be actually realized until we drop our mortality, and are translated in our souls where he is, "to be for ever the Lord."

I subscribe myself, very dear and honoured Sir,

Your's most respectfully,

S. E. P.

LETTER XXXV.

Brixton, Nov. 10, 1817.

MY DEAR SIR,

It gratifies me much, to be informed by your letter, that you have got into such good company, and also that you are so well pleased with the same. I am fully assured, that the longer your acquaintance with Dr. Goodwin continues, the more you will be pleased with him. In his works truth

appears in its originality; in its profundity; in its excellence; in its sublimity; in its spirituality; in its essence. The more you read him the more will all other authors sink in your estimation; but you cannot out-read him. In his writings you will not have the doctrine of the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity denied; nor the divine Persons swallowed up in the Essence; nor the eternal Son-ship of the Son of God rejected; nor the Person of Christ distorted; nor the Person of the Holy Ghost rejected; nor Christ swallowed up in the church; nor the church swallowed up in Christ; nor the new birth denied. Now I must desire you carefully to notice this. You will observe how he explains the new birth. He shews what it is; what it consists in. He will nowhere assert throughout any of his works, that he was born again when Christ was born. No. You find every subject contained in the whole volume of inspiration, treated of distinctly, clearly, and particularly; so that I look on his writings as next to the scriptures themselves. I do not say *equal* with them. No! God forbid! but I do say, they cast the best and greatest light by way of exposition, that can be found in any man's writings besides. My dear Sir, it is impossible for you to be conversant with them, and not receive increasing light. You discover nothing in them in favour of the pre-existence of Christ's human soul; but, on the contrary, you have a most glorious account of the second Person as set up from everlasting to be God-man; and his being "the Son of the living God," is declared to be the foundation of this. You have the glories of his person as God-man declared, set forth, and expressed in such a manner as is suitable to the subject, in the second volume of his works. I have found it like heaven opened, to read the titles affixed to the chapters on this most sublime subject. I the rather mention this, because I would have you to judge for yourself, how far his sentiments, and the Scriptures too, contradict many things which are now abroad; so that it is like leaving the snow of Lebanon, for the water that cometh from another place, to forsake our great and good Dr. Goodwin's account of truth, and take up with the new-fangled doctrines of any of the moderns. I conceive, my dear Sir, as I have got you into the Doctor's company, you cannot do better than keep close to him, for I really think you will relish the com-

pany of our Lord Jesus Christ the more. You will have such vast and glorious considerations of Christ, who he is, what he is, and how he stands related to you, and engaged for you, as will swallow up your whole mind in him. You see, my good Sir, I am very free with you. The very reason why great truth does not prevail in the mind, is the want of a spiritual capacity. There are but few who have an enlarged understanding; and it may be owing to this, that we have such low and insignificant preaching. Even some we think well of, are ready to imagine when Christ, salvation, and grace, are enlarged upon, and the whole freely, fully, and distinctly explained, opened up, and properly stated, that this is legal; so that when they hear the whole jumbled together with a good dose of real poison, which they take no notice of, they think this is Christ, and the only way of preaching him, whilst a real thinking mind perceives that there is no preaching of Christ in the whole of it. There hath been a pronouncing the name of Christ, and this so very incoherently, as hath been calculated in its nature, rather to offend, than to please spiritual minds, much less to improve them. My dear Sir, the right way of preaching the Lord Jesus Christ, the true knowledge of Christ, the real reception of him into the mind, and the real communion which is enjoyed in the heart by faith, are things but little known in our world at present. I do not mean that you are not acquainted with these grand and important subjects. I am speaking of many who are professors and even preachers of the gospel; yet all they say, and all they wish to say, only serves to shew, what utter strangers they are to our most adorable and everlastingly-precious Lord Jesus Christ. The gospel is a mystery. It is "the mystery." It contains the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ. It is an opening and an unfolding the riches of Christ. Now it is certainly not preaching Christ to set forth the salvation of Christ, and how he suits me, and my state and case, as a most miserable sinner. I will acknowledge the gospel itself contains this. It cannot be preached but all this must be declared. Yet even this is not the salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ; whilst, most undoubtedly, these are the fruits of his salvation; for our Lord's work of salvation consists in the substitution of his person in the room and stead of his people, in having their sins transferred

from their persons to him, in his bearing them in his own body on the tree, in his sustaining in his own body and soul the whole curse of God due to all the sins of the whole election of grace; thus making an end of sins, putting them all away by the sacrifice of himself, and bringing in everlasting righteousness. This is salvation, and this cannot be rightly preached, but we must refer unto, and lay open the original cause of the same. It was all founded on the transactions of the Eternal Three in a covenant way, which constitute what the Scriptures style, and we from them, an everlasting covenant, which hath been ratified and carried into execution in the person, and by the incarnation, life, and sacrifice of the Son of God, whose responsibility for the performance of the whole counsel of God was such, that in the person of the Father, Jehovah says, "I have laid help upon one that is mighty." It is by the will of the Father that we are sanctified, or made perfectly free from all sin, by the offering of the body of Christ once: "Who by his one offering hath perfected for ever" the putting away of sin; so that now and evermore the blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God, cleanseth us from all sin. Our Lord is said to have been brought back from the dead, "through the blood of the everlasting covenant." I had rather be amongst the number of those who assert the covenant was engaged in by the divine Persons in the incomprehensible Essence, than with those who are full of their positive assertions in the denial of this, and who maintain that this covenant was with the human nature of Christ. But if so, then our whole salvation must rest upon the human soul and body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and I conceive that it would entirely fall to the ground. However, this is not the account Dr. Goodwin gives of it. Nor is it what the Scriptures say of it. He who was set up from everlasting, was the Son of God prior to his being set up from everlasting to be God-man. His being God-man, could not, cannot add any thing to the second person in the Essence. It is he, the essential Son of God, taking the Man Jesus, (to use the Doctor's expression) which is the foundation of all the glory of that individual humanity which was taken into personal union. Our Lord hath an essential glory. He hath a personal glory. He hath a glory which belongs to him as the Mediator of union and communion between God and the

whole election of grace. He hath the glory of being the Head of his church, and that of being the Mediator of reconciliation ; and no one enters more clearly and blessedly into each, and every one of these, than he does. Well ! But perhaps you will say, ‘ You seem to take up my time just about nothing at all, unless you want to suggest that I cannot understand the Doctor without your gloss upon him.’ Indeed, my good Sir, I do not ; but I thought I must fill up my paper ; and to tell you the truth, I have written so many letters already this week, that I am on short commons. Not for want of a subject, but for a want of a comprehension and capacity to set forth the same most transcendently glorious Lord Jesus Christ, with increasing lustre in your view. It is but a glimpse I take in of him at any time, and retain so very small an impression of it in my mind, that I am constrained to confess as one before me hath done, on this truly exalted subject, “ Surely, I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man.” I would aim at such a personal knowledge of Christ, and communion with him, as might always carry this evidence with it, in all I think, speak, write, or preach of him and his love, righteousness, blood, and salvation ; that I have been with him, that “ mine eyes have seen his salvation,” that I am a partaker of Christ, that he “ is in me of a truth,” that I have heard his voice, beheld his glory, and have had real intercourse with him. Yet I fall very far short of attaining this ; so as at all times, and in all places, to be walking humbly with him as the Lord my God. Well ! I learn from hence that all my sufficiency is of God, that all my spiritual strength and vigour must flow into my soul from the Spirit ; so that without Christ I can do nothing. Nor do I want to be able to do any one thing upon earth without him. The Lord forbid I ever should. He is my Head ; and my life is in him. He is the beloved, and I am the beloved and accepted in the person of God’s beloved, the God-man Christ Jesus as truly as he is Beloved and accepted of the Father. He is my complete salvation. I am saved in him, the Lamb of God, who sitteth upon the throne, as the crowned and everlasting conqueror over all the enemies of his church and people. His righteousness is my everlasting perfection and garment of salvation. It is a heaven below when we enjoy the King’s

presence ; when we see his face ; when we have an apprehension of his glory ; when we are favoured with sights of his righteousness, and the blood of his sacrifice ; we then enjoy the blessedness of having “redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace.” It is blessedness itself to have communion with Christ, as he now appears, and lives, and represents his whole church before the throne of the majesty in the heavens : “A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man.”

I am well persuaded that union to the person of Christ, is the foundation of all the communion between Christ and his saints, from everlasting, all through time, and through that eternity which is to come ; yet I do love to dwell upon the actual communion which Christ and his saints hold together ; which is mutual on both sides, though not equal ; for that is impossible. The reality of it is maintained in the spiritual mind by the Holy Ghost. I consider him as the sole agent in the whole of our actual communion between the Father and the Son ; which is carried on by his taking of the things of Christ, and shewing the same unto us, and thereby glorifying him in our hearts. The blessed intercourse, the Lord Jesus admits us unto, in free accesses of heart and affections towards him, and in pouring out our hearts before him, is all of grace. I do love to be thus favoured ; for I look upon the same, as some of the most precious evidences of what my Lord’s heart is towards me ; now that he, “the Prince of Life,” is within the vail. It is blessed employment to be entering in the faith of his blood, within the vail ; to present ourselves before the Lord, as members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

My good Sir, you need not trouble yourself about the letter, you may keep it if you please. I saw the Doctor, and he was very well. He is truly a blessed man. I preached in Devonshire twelve times successively. I never did so before at any period of my life. I travelled also a hundred and twenty miles in the same week ; so you see I must be unaccountably recovered. I only mention this to the Lord’s praise. It is the Lord’s doings, and it is marvellous in my eyes. I can truly say so. I hope shortly to give up myself to sermonize the First Epistle of John ; and I shall be glad,

if the Lord please, to live to finish it. But I must leave this with the Lord. My times are with him, and in his hands. I was glad to hear that Mr. W. was so kindly received. May the Lord be with him, and bless him, and lift up the light of his countenance upon him. He wanted me to write to him at Gloucester, on these five points: regeneration, conversion, growth in grace, communion with the Lord, and personal holiness. I did so. If you ever should have an opportunity of learning how it was received, I should not be unwilling to know.

Now, my dear Sir, I have just reached the end of my paper. You will say, I am glad of it. I must own I am not sorry. I ought perhaps to beg pardon for filling up the sheet; but I understand Miss H. will put it in a cover: so then you will have plenty of it, such as it is. My good Sir, I wish you a rich enjoyment of every gospel truth and fellowship with the holy Trinity in the belief of the same.

And I remain, dear and honoured Sir,

Your's very truly and respectfully,

S. E. P.

LETTER XXXVI.

Oct. 1783.

MY VERY DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your's with great, very great pleasure, but I have been hindered both from writing, and from coming to you.

I hope the Lord Jesus is every day more and more precious unto your soul. Blessed be his name! His love is a spring which yields everlasting comfort. The love of Christ towards you is a boundless, a bottomless, an infinite, and an inexhaustible love. When the sacred Spirit leads us to me-

ditate upon the love of Jesus, it is a blessed means of kindling in our souls a love to him, who is love itself.

The way for us to be happy, is to be looking wholly to, and living entirely upon the Lord Jesus Christ. When the Holy Ghost is pleased to keep us looking at him, then our hearts are warmed, and our souls are inflamed. It is Christ that must draw us by the cords of his love, and then we shall run after him; and it is as we are led by the Holy Spirit to take a view of Jesus, that we run with alacrity in the way of his commandments. The spouse in the Canticles calls upon the daughters of Zion, "to go forth, and behold king Solomon, with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him, in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart." This is the glorious person whose beauties are enticing, and whose love is drawing. He is King of kings, Solomon's antitype. Solomon signifies peace; and Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace. He made peace by the blood of his cross. He lives in heaven, and is a priest, a prince, and a Saviour, seated upon his throne to bestow everlasting peace upon his people, and to continue and increase this peace in their hearts and consciences. He is also a crowned Saviour. John tells us, "on his head were many crowns." He has the crown of crowns upon his head; as God essentially, he is over all, God blessed for evermore. Amen. He has a crown as God-man Mediator. "I have set," saith God the Father, "my king upon my holy hill of Zion." He set a crown of pure gold upon his head, in honour of his mediatorial work and office. He has a crown, as God-man. He has a crown in consequence of his divine offices. He has a crown as the everlasting conqueror of sin, death and hell. And he has a crown for subduing poor sinners unto himself, by his victorious grace. The daughters of Zion are invited to go forth by faith, and view him riding in his chariot, made of the wood of Lebanon; the pillars of which are composed of silver, which may denote the beauty, comeliness, and usefulness of the divine truths, and the promises of the gospel. Its bottom was made of gold, which points out the durableness, excellency, and everlasting nature of divine truth. For as gold is a precious metal, so is every truth belonging to Jesus Christ; and as gold is a durable metal, so the truths of the gospel are durable. It is called

“the everlasting gospel.” God himself, who is everlasting, being the author of it. It treats of an everlasting righteousness, and an eternal redemption. It reveals an everlasting love in the heart of Christ towards his people, and sets him forth as an everlasting foundation for them to build upon. The covering of it was of purple, denoting his bloodshedding and sacrifice; under which purple covering we are eternally safe. The midst of it was paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem, which shews how the heart of Christ is affected to his people; it burns with love towards them. The King of kings, Christ Jesus, rides in this chariot, and wears a crown upon his head; and to view him as he rides forth in his glory, and beauty, and excellent majesty, is a heart-warming, and soul-refreshing sight. Gazing on him will warm our hearts, animate our souls, and make us happy and holy. And in order to behold him, we must go forth out of ourselves; we must not be looking into ourselves, nor poring upon ourselves, but we must be looking unto Jesus. The church is Christ’s mother, which bears him in her heart, and brings forth children, brethren, and sisters unto him; and when sinners are converted, it is the day of Christ’s espousals, and a day of gladness to him.

May the Lord Jesus be every day more and more precious unto you.

Your’s in him,

S. E. P.

LETTER XXXVII.

Truro, Dec. 24, 1783.

MY DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your very kind letter, and am glad to find that it is your desire to trust in nothing, and glory in nothing, but the glorious finished work of the God-man; and I hope

the Lord will keep you continually looking unto him. In the Bible, God sets forth his Christ in his glorious greatness and majesty, and reveals him there, as the great God, and our Saviour; as one who saves his people from all their sins, and from all their miseries; who makes them happy on earth, and will make them happy in heaven. The person of Christ is a most blessed foundation for faith to rest upon, who is truly God, and truly Man, God-man in one person. Christ being God, is able to save us with an everlasting salvation; and being Man, made and born of a woman, yet without sin, he thereby became capable of obeying the law, bearing our sins, and suffering the curse due unto them; and being God he has rendered his obedience and sufferings of everlasting efficacy; so that in his obedience many are made righteous, and by his precious bloodshedding, he has washed away our sins; and in him we appear without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. And when the blessed Spirit has been pleased to give a soul a view of Jesus Christ, it eclipses all other glories and excellencies, and causes the believer to count all things besides Christ, as merely dross and dung. The love of Christ is wonderful. The apostle says, that "Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

Let us now observe the description which is given of Christ. He is said to be "the great God and our Saviour," or (as it might be read) the great God, even our Saviour. Our Saviour is the great God; the true God; the only wise God; and God over all, blessed for ever. He is Jehovah, the FIRST and the LAST; and "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," or substantially. Our Jesus gave himself for us, in the everlasting covenant; gave himself to become the Surety and Saviour of his people. He loved his people, and came from the bosom of the Father, with all the love of his heart, and took hold of our nature, and was manifested in the flesh. Yes, this blessed God-man gave himself for us, and by this gift of himself for us and to us, he does enrich and make us happy to eternal ages. Who can conceive what is contained in Christ's giving himself for us? Here is love indeed! We may well stand amazed at it, until our hearts are warmed with it, and our souls burn with love to him, who first loved us and gave himself for us. And, indeed, the only

way to increase our love and affection to the dear Lord Jesus, is to be meditating continually upon the greatness, the boundlessness of his wonderful love. Christ gave himself for us, not because we were sinless and pure, but foreseeing us sinful and defiled, he gave himself for this end, "that he might purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." He gave himself for us, who were, and still are, *in* ourselves, poor, wretched, sinful, and hell-deserving sinners, to redeem us from all iniquity. Christ is our Redeemer, and there is redemption in his blood, "the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." His blood was shed as the price of our redemption. It has everlasting virtue in it to cleanse us from all sin. It purges the conscience, (by believing its efficacy) from dead works, and also from the guilt of sin. It sanctifies and gives us boldness at God's throne of grace. As a fruit of it, flows the pardon of sin; and Christ has redeemed his church and people from all iniquity. By his power, he delivers them out of the hands of all their enemies, from sin and Satan, death and hell; and purifies their souls, by obeying the truth through the Spirit. They are formed a peculiar people unto the Lord, set apart by him for his own glory. He accounts them his jewels, his treasure, his diadem, and his glory. His heart has been fixed upon them from eternity, and he continues to love them with an unalterable love; they are set as a seal upon the heart of Christ, and nothing can remove them from it. They are the Lord's peculiar treasure; and Christ makes his people zealous of good works. For there never is any good work performed till the soul is brought to believe in the life and death of Jesus for pardon and salvation.

I am, dear Sir,

Your sincere friend, and servant in Christ Jesus,

S. E. P.

LETTER XXXVIII.

VERY DEAR MR. L.

I RECEIVED yours, and being in London had some thoughts of coming to see you. I do not forget you before the throne, and I shall always rejoice to hear of your soul's prospering in the knowledge of Jesus, and in the enjoyment of his love. I would wish you not to be too much troubled about any thing; Jesus Christ has the government of the church upon his shoulders, and he will order all things well. Let me remind you of the words of Christ, "Remember how ye have received, and heard, and hold fast." Don't give up the truth, nor a single atom of it. I do most earnestly entreat you, to read over and over again, those excellent sermons I wrote out for you, and also 'The Drop of Honey,' and Romaine's 'Walk of Faith.' Study them attentively, and pray over them. I fear you have embraced some strange doctrine since I saw you last. Jesus Christ in his person, work, word, offices, and promises, is a store-house of comfort; but the rant of some is quite opposed to the blessed gospel of the grace of God. Oh! what a pity it is, that Jesus Christ should lose any of his glory. Let me just observe to you the following truths, viz. that God's love is the grand source whence all our salvation proceeds; God's love to his people is eternal; it reaches from everlasting to everlasting, and draws after it all the blessings of time and eternity. Let us take a survey of the riches of free, sovereign grace; and begin where God began, which was in electing his people, and choosing their persons in the person of his co-equal and co-eternal Son. All was vast eternity, when God elected his people, and presented them to Christ his Son, that they might become his bride and spouse. Jesus, from eternity, delighted in the persons of his people, and he loved them, and gave himself for them, gave himself to become man, to stand in their room and stead, to bear their sins, and endure the curse of a broken law. The Holy Spirit, out of love to the elect from eternity, undertook the gracious work and office of bringing them all to the knowledge of Jesus, and to the enjoy-

ment of the Father's love in him; so that from the first link to the last in the golden chain of man's salvation, all is of grace. Election is entirely of grace. Adoption is to the praise of the glory of Jehovah's grace. Redemption is according to the riches of grace. Calling is likewise not of works, but of grace; for thus saith the apostle: "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Justification, pardon, final perseverance, and eternal glory, are all of grace; and it is the determinate will of God, that no flesh should glory in his presence.

I long for you to have a clear view of the riches of the grace of God, to the end you may be led to glorify him for all the love he bore towards you before time commenced, and for all the mercy he has already manifested to you. To give the Father his due, the Son his due, and the Holy Spirit his due, is what I alone aim at in all I write. And I do long after you in the bowels of Jesus Christ, that you may be established in the glorious truths of the everlasting gospel, and not be moved from them on any account. Observe! God the Father chooses us; election being always attributed to the Father; God the Son redeems us; and God the Holy Spirit sanctifies us. I shall add some excellent sentences from Dr. Goodwin. 'Jesus Christ, from all eternity, undertaking to be the representative of the elect, God did reckon him as such; and indeed it was necessary that our Mediator should be God, that he might be present at, and privy to, all God's decrees. He knew the whole bottom of his Father's mind and will. By means of this, our virtual or representative subsisting, or being looked at, as in Christ and one with him, in and from God's first choosing us; by means of this, God could then from everlasting, make a covenant of grace, and also make that covenant sure unto us. A covenant we know is an agreement between two parties upon terms. Now, we not then existing in our own single persons, though God might have taken up a purpose to do this or that for us, and in us, yet it could not be called a covenant unless we were some way existent before him; and the covenant of grace should otherwise not have been a covenant until we did believe. To help this, therefore, God chose us in Christ, and *he* represented *us*, standing before God in our stead, and offering to perform and work in us the terms that God

should require on our part; and so a covenant was as truly struck between God and us, through Christ's representing us, as the covenant of works was between God and us, as considered in Adam. Hence Christ is called "our covenant." Isaiah xlix. 8. Hence it comes to pass, that God might upon this covenant, then give and bestow upon *us* all spiritual blessings. Had God chosen us (the elect) in ourselves, and apart, then indeed he might have "purposed" them all unto us, but could not, as then, be said to "give" them unto us. But, whereas, through Christ's actually undertaking this relation to us, viz. as Head and common person, we were considered *in* him virtually and representatively. And God the Father did bless us *in* him, with all spiritual blessings. Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ added nothing to God, by all that he did and suffered. 'Tis true he sets forth the glory of God, but he added nothing unto God. You see, God predestinated us for the praise of his grace. God's glory, therefore, is more interested in our salvation, than our own good; for our benefit comes not in, in the mention of what moved God, but his glory, the glory of his grace only. You think it so difficult a thing to work God up to save you. Why! He hath that within him, which moveth him now, and did move him from everlasting to do it, even the glory of his own grace. Observe! Jesus Christ is God's beloved Son in an eminent manner. Look, as God put all light into the sun, and that diffuseth and communicateth light into the stars; so Jesus Christ hath contracted all the love of God to himself, and through him it is diffused unto us. Is Christ God's Beloved, with and in whom he is well pleased? and is he not thy Beloved? Why is the matter? Is thy narrow soul more curious about an object of love than God himself? Oh! let him be to each of us our Beloved! If he be God's Beloved, he may well be thine! Is he able to satisfy God's vast thoughts; and is he not able to satisfy thee, poor creature? God himself is satisfied, and at rest in him; and wouldest thou be happier than God is? Is he God's beloved Son in whom he is ever well pleased, and wilt thou be pleased in any thing else save Christ? If thou beest in Christ, fear not; fear not sin, for God, from everlasting, saw all thy sins, and yet for all that, he continued to accept thee

in the Beloved, it altered not his mind a whit. He was so much pleased with his Beloved, that though in his own prescience he foresaw what we would be, yet having chosen us in his own Son, he accepteth us in him; and so, now that we actually exist, and actually sin against him, he, notwithstanding, finds so much contentment in his Son, that he can patiently bear with us, and please himself with Christ; and so, though he sees thee sinful at present, and foresaw thee sinful from everlasting, yet he still accepts thee in the Beloved. The reason is, because Jesus Christ is more beloved of him, than sin is, or can be, hated by him. If ever sin should come to have more interest in the heart of God than Christ hath for love, thou mightest well fear. But he hath accepted thee in the Beloved, therefore be not thou afraid. Master Bridge says, 'Jesus Christ is the great Lord-keeper of his Father's wardrobe. Cast your eyes where you will,' says he, 'you shall hardly look upon anything, but Christ Jesus hath taken the name of it upon himself. If you cast your eyes up to heaven in the day, and behold the sun, he is called the "Sun of Righteousness." If you cast your eyes in the night upon the stars, or in the morning, upon the morning star, he is called "the Bright and Morning Star." If you behold your own body, he is called "the Head," and the church, "his body." If you look upon your own clothes; he is called your own raiment; "put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." If you behold your meat, Christ is called bread, "the Bread of Life." If you look upon your houses, he is called "a Door." If you look abroad into the fields, and behold the cattle of the fields; he is called "the Good Shepherd, the Lamb, the Fatted Calf." If you look upon the waters, he is called "a Fountain." The blood of Christ is a fountain. If you look on the stones, he is called "a Corner Stone." If you look upon trees, he is called "the Tree of Life;" and in all these he has the pre-eminence.'

Oh, let us look to Jesus! Depend on his perfect righteousness, eye his glorious sacrifice, and live under clear views of his boundless and bottomless love towards us.

May the Holy Ghost lead you, dear Sir, more and more out of yourself, to live wholly upon Christ's fulness; and may you and your dear wife, and all our dear friends with you, be brought by the teaching of the Holy Ghost, to know the love

of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God.

I am, Sir, your's, &c.

S. E. P.

LETTER XXXIX.

St. Columbe, Feb. 2, 1780.

VERY DEAR MR. AND MRS. L.

I HOPE you do not think I have forgotten you: God forbid that I should, and I assure you my soul cleaves unto you for the sake of the infinitely precious, precious, precious Jesus.

I was happy, Sir, to find by your dear letters, that you were holding forth the form of sound words, which has been delivered unto you; and that you were looking unto the sacrifice, and eyeing the obedience and blood of God's co-equal Son, as your only hope for present and eternal salvation. I trust that the Holy Ghost does, day by day, glorify the Lord Jesus Christ in your hearts, and is leading you into deeper discoveries of the riches, freeness, fulness, and sovereignty of divine grace. I hope you are diving deep into the love which God has borne towards you from everlasting, and will continue unto you to everlasting. God loved the identical persons of the elect before all worlds: he chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world; he set up his co-equal and co-eternal Son, as the head and representative of his chosen people from everlasting; gave the persons of the elect into his hands; blessed them in him with all spiritual blessings, and gave them grace and life in him before the world began. God the Father formed the covenant of grace, and engaged his eternal Son as the Surety for his people; who, blessings on him! loving his elect as his members, his brethren, his body, his bride and spouse, gave himself for them; became their Surety and Bondsman; and

covenanted to take hold of the nature of his people, to become true and very man, by the assumption of human nature into union with his divine person, and by becoming God and man in the person of one Christ. He engaged to fulfil the law, and make it everlastingly honourable; to bear the sins of his people in his own body on the tree; to be numbered with the transgressors; to make his soul an offering for sin; to endure the whole curse due to the sins of the redeemed, and thereby to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. Thus was the covenant of peace contrived in the council of God from all eternity; and as soon as sin had entered into the world, Jesus was set forth as the Lamb pre-engaged and pre-ordained in the Father's eternal purposes to take away sin; and he was revealed in the first promise, which declared that "the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head." Herein Christ, as God-man, was promised to the church, who, by his blood and death, was to conquer, sin, death, and hell; and by his resurrection to obtain victory over the grave, and wrest the keys of death and hell out of the hands of the devil. The immaculate Lamb of God was represented as a lamb slain in the first sacrifice, and his blood was set before the eyes of our first parents, as the only propitiation for sin, and as a bath wherein guilty, filthy, unclean, and ungodly sinners might be purged from guilt, cleansed from their filth, and made pure and clean from all their sins before the Lord. The garments of skin with which the Lord God clothed our fallen parents, typified the robe of the Redeemer's righteousness. It is said, the Lord God made coats of skin. The righteousness of Jesus, his obedience wrought out for his people, was what he performed in his own person, by his fulfilment of the whole law of God. The Lord God not only "made" coats of skin, but he likewise "clothed" the guilty pair with them. Thus God the Father has not only sent his co-equal Son to work out and bring in everlasting righteousness, but he clothes his people therewith. This royal robe covers them completely, so that God looking upon us, clothed with Christ the Sun of Righteousness, beholds us all fair, all excellent and glorious, and we are said to be "the righteousness of God in him," viz. in Jesus. What astonishing grace! The Son of God loved his people with a love stronger than death, more cruel than the grave, which many waters could

not quench, nor all the sins, all the guilt, all the unworthiness there was in us could ever stay, or dry up the current of: "but when we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Oh, the love of Christ! It surpasseth all understanding. It puzzles the very angels in heaven to know what to think or say of his love. The saints around the throne cannot conceive, nor fathom the immensity of Christ's love to them, though they are perfectly happy in the enjoyment of it. They view with wonder the Lamb slain sitting on the throne, they are happy in the shining glories of Jesus, and have the full blaze of eternal glory, and their triumphant cry is, "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood."

May the Lord the Spirit make you happy by eyeing and looking unto Jesus. Consider yourselves as one with him, as members of his body, his flesh, and his bones; and may you always view yourselves as shining in the sight of God in the glorious and splendid robe of Christ's righteousness, as being washed by his blood from all your sins, and being complete before God in the person of Jesus Christ. You are complete in that adorable person who has all the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him bodily; and all his fulness as God-man, and as the Head of his body the church, is for the use of his dear people. Oh! that your hearts may be always taken up with the thoughts of his great love towards you, and of the perfect delight and complacency which he takes in you. May you eye his blood as soul-cleansing, sin-pardoning, God-pacifying, and conscience-satisfying blood. May the Holy Ghost lead you every moment to fresh discoveries of the inestimable worth of Christ's blood-shedding and sacrifice; and may he make known unto you more of the glories of Christ's obedience, that you may daily go forth in the strength of the Lord God, making mention of his righteousness, even of his only. Remember that in Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and in him all fulness dwells. Our life, light, holiness, and grace, are in Christ, and he communicates them to us. We are empty vessels for the Lord Jesus to fill and replenish. Glory be to him for his love, grace, and full, free, and complete salvation. May we be led, O Jesus! by thy Holy Spirit, to look more to thee, and to look off from ourselves entirely. May we build

our all out of ourselves upon thee alone. May we come to thee for every blessing, and look to thyself for every supply of grace, strength, and consolation. Holy and blessed Lamb of God! grant that thy Spirit may lead us into all truth, and glorify thee in the eye of our faith, by taking of the things of thine, and shewing them to us. Send him to glorify thee in our hearts, by enabling us to depend more steadfastly upon thy person, blood, and obedience; and may he glorify thee in our lives, by enabling us to live out of ourselves wholly upon thy fulness; even so Lord Jesus. Amen. Wishing you greater views of Jesus, sweeter tastes of his love, and higher communion, and more close fellowship with him,

I remain your very humble servant for Jesus' sake,

S. E. P.

LETTER XL.

Oathall, April 7, 1779.

DEAR MR. AND MRS. L.

HAVING this opportunity of putting you in remembrance of the grace of God, I gladly embrace it. What an inexhaustible subject is the free sovereign grace of God! It is the cause of all our salvation, with all its divine effects and fruits, from first to last.

It was grace, sovereign, rich grace, which was displayed by the eternal Father in the choice and election of the persons of the elect in Christ Jesus; and in treasuring up grace and holiness, life and faith, and all spiritual blessings for us in him. These are three distinguishing acts in God's love towards us: the first is, his eternal choice of, and love to, our persons from eternity. The love of God which he had from everlasting towards his elect, was so great and boundless, that all the subsequent acts of God's love exercised towards them, are but, as it were, telling his elect how well he does love them, and did love them from eternity. Now God in the first

act of his love, did conceive so vast a love for his chosen, that all the acts of his love which he will retail out to them for evermore, will be barely sufficient to express the greatness of his love towards them. In the first act of his love, he chose his people and blessed them in Christ their Head, with all spiritual blessings. The second act of his love towards his elect, was his giving his eternal and only begotten Son to be the Saviour of his body the church. What an unspeakable gift was this! So great, that the thoughts of God's elect will be taken up therewith to all eternity. The eternal Father called forth his Son to the great work and office of Mediator; prepared a body for his eternal Son to inhabit; furnished the human nature of Christ with every needful qualification; anointed him with all the unction of the Holy Ghost; proclaimed him to the world, as him in whom he (that is, the Father) was well pleased; laid upon him all the sins, iniquities, and transgressions of his people, and poured out upon him all the curse of a violated law. When Jesus had satisfied the Father's justice, and cried out, to the comfort of all the elect, "It is finished!" he was raised from the grave by the power of the Father, as the resurrection and the life, and exalted unto glory as the justifying righteousness of all his believing people. The third act of God's love towards his people, is the giving the Holy Spirit unto them; to quicken them from a death of sin unto a life of righteousness. Thus the love of God which ran from his heart towards his people from everlasting, and burst forth from the heart of Jesus Christ when he hung upon the cross, flows into our souls by the gracious influences and communications of the Spirit of God in regeneration; and then all Jehovah's purposes of grace towards us take place in our hearts. What a vast treasury is contained in and communicated to us from the love of God. Christ, and our relation to his adorable person; Christ, and all the blessings of his divine and perfect redemption; Christ, and his matchless righteousness; his blood, with its eternal merit and all his unsearchable riches; the Holy Ghost with all his gifts and grace; eternal glory and fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are all the blessed fruits and effects of God's love. All the gifts of rich, free, and sovereign grace, flow from God and the Lamb. Glory for ever be rendered to

God in the highest, that all our sins, all our unworthiness cannot dry up the fountain of our mercies. Consider, Sir, the unspeakable gifts of grace, and the great and ineffable blessings which flow to us from the cross of Jesus. In the crucified Lamb, the very bowels of God, and the springs of eternal mercy toward the elect are discovered. Here Jesus appears in the greatness of his strength, conflicting with, and finally subduing sin, Satan, death, and hell. Upon the cross, Christ, with all his garments dyed in blood, treads the winepress of the wrath of the Lord God Almighty; and here all the divine perfections, all the glorious attributes of the eternal Godhead are glorified. The holiness, vengeance, and justice of God against sin, are more discovered in the sufferings of Christ, than in the damnation of sinners who die out of Christ. Would we see God's holiness in its perfection? Behold it in his withdrawing himself from his well-beloved Son, on account of that Son being clothed with our transgressions! Would we behold the inflexibility of divine justice? Witness it in the sufferings of Jesus! Would we see the love of God in its perfection? Here it is displayed, in making Christ a curse for us, that we might obtain a blessing! Surely the love, grace, and mercy of God the Father are manifested to the very uttermost, in the death of Jesus. The precious and inestimable blessings of the cross are these: our discharge from sin, from all its guilt and punishment (for, glory be to our almighty Jesus, he has borne all our sins away into a land of forgetfulness, so that when they are sought for, they shall not be found); our deliverance from the curse of the law; peace with God, and peace in our consciences. May God the Spirit be graciously pleased to glorify Jesus Christ more and more in your hearts and consciences, to enlighten your understandings, and to lead you into all truth.

May the eternal Spirit direct your hearts into the love of God, and into a patient waiting for Christ. Study the nature, freeness, and fulness of salvation more and more. The Lord help you to drink deep into the gospel of Jesus. May you be discerning more of the glories of Christ's person, the greatness of his undertakings, the completeness of his obedience, and the everlasting efficacy of his sacrifice to take away sin. Seek, my honoured and much-esteemed friends, for establishment in the divine truths of the everlasting gospel; and the Lord give

you to abound in knowledge, faith, judgment, and in all utterance. Our Jesus is able to do for you above all that we can ask or think. May he fill you with all the fulness of God, and cause you to increase with all the increase of God. Lord Jesus, do thou say, Amen.

My most cordial love to the society. May Christ the Sun of Righteousness arise evermore upon it, and you, with healing under his wings, warming, comforting, animating, and enlivening all your souls, with his most benign and heavenly influences; that you may all appear to be the planting of the Lord's right hand, in whom for ever he may be glorified.

I am, dear Mr. and Mrs. L.

Your Servant in Christ Jesus,

S. E. P.

LETTER XLI.

Kingsbridge, May 17, 1796.

MY VERY DEAR SIR,

My prayer for you and desire is, that this may find you happy in heart from a sense of the love of Christ, and looking wholly out of yourself, to the worthy Lamb, feeding by faith on him as your sacrifice, and living on him as the Lord your righteousness and strength. Blessings on him! he is love itself, beauty itself, life itself, salvation itself. His love is heaven. To know him fully, to enjoy him fully, to see him as he is, and to be filled by him with all the fulness of God, is the heaven of heaven of heavens. You have had a glimpse, in the light of the word and Spirit, of the glorious majesty of the Lord our God, Jehovah-Jesus; and it hath drawn your mind after him, your soul is enamoured with him, so that you can address him, saying, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." You have been taught by the eternal

Spirit to value the blood and righteousness of Christ, and to rest thereon for complete redemption from all your sins and all your miseries. I trust you are still in ardent pursuit after a greater knowledge of, and more free and intimate communion with, the most precious Lord Jesus: that your soul is breathing after higher views, visits, and communion with your beloved Saviour; and that you are trampling upon all beside Christ, of whom you say: "How great is his goodness," and "How great is his beauty."

When we contemplate the eternal dignity, the everlasting efficacy, the consummate perfection, the infinite value of the one all-sufficient sacrifice of Jesus, by which our sins are removed from our persons, abolished out of the sight of law and justice, and so completely blotted out, that we are in him, without all spot and stain; this makes Jesus inestimably precious unto us. When we feed by faith on the atonement he hath made, and receive this truth into our hearts, that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin;" then we can triumph, and approach our Jesus with boldness and great delight; for then his love in its immensity begins to open to the view of our faith; that love, which was fixed upon us from everlasting, which was manifested in his engaging for us with his divine Father, and undertaking to save us out of the hands of all our spiritual enemies; which shone forth in its full meridian, and in its utmost splendour, when he gave himself for our sins, was made sin and a curse for us, and bore our sins in his own body on the tree. Here was love manifested in such a way, and to such a degree, as will fill saints and angels in heaven with inexpressible wonder and admiration for ever and ever! It is most blessed indeed, when we consider the apostle and high priest of our profession Christ Jesus, as our Head, Surety, and representative; as having substituted himself in our law-place, room, and stead, and on whom the Lord laid our iniquities; then to behold our Jesus as made sin, weltering in the flames of divine wrath, sweating great drops of blood to purge away our guilt, pollution and stains; to view his soul made heavy unto death, his head crowned with thorns, his body made black and blue with stripes, his arms stretched on the cross, his hands and feet bored with pins of iron, and inwardly sustaining soul-travail, to save us from the wrath to come. Under these views our Jesus appears altogether divine.

Oh! for a heart-warming sense of the love wherewith he hath loved us. He loved us on the cross with so great a love, as heaven and eternal glory can never adequately express. He loves us now he is on the throne, with the same incomprehensible love. His heart is towards us; his eye is upon us; and he beholds us all fair in his righteousness and bloodshedding, wrought out and finished for us. Happy it is for us to have our whole hope of salvation fixed on him alone, and to centre in him for life and salvation. This I trust is your real experience. Oh! look not off Christ for anything. If you want pardon, peace, holiness, grace, victory over sin, death and hell, look for all to Jesus. Live by faith on him, and you will, you cannot fail to reap advantage by it. Trust your all with Christ; you cannot do him greater honour, than by trusting him simply with all the concerns of your soul and body, for life, for death, for time and eternity. How many groan under an accusing conscience, because they do not believe that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. Many think they have no foundation to hope in God, whereas the righteousness of Christ lays an everlasting foundation for hope, which will never make ashamed. Some talk of the greatness of their sins. Why! there is no comparison to be made between all the sins of the elect, and the efficacy and worth of the blood of the Lamb. Others feel so much weakness that they are afraid. Why! it is because we are perfect weakness that we should rely on Christ. Hence the prophet Isaiah saith, "Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." Some complain that they are full of wants and miseries. Let us carry them all to Christ. He can turn our hell into heaven; our sorrow into joy; our darkness into light. He can heal all our wounds; pardon all our sins; purge us from all our stains; purify and make us white in his own blood; clothe us with the robe of his righteousness; and supply us from his inexhaustible fulness.

I know Christ, so as to trust wholly in his finished salvation for everlasting health and purity. If I die to-day, this is my only ground of hope; and this is the whole of my faith. I believe the everlasting efficacy of Christ's blood and righteousness to abolish all sin, and make perfectly righteous before God every one that believeth. I trust in God, and trust before him for everlasting healing, cleansing, purity, and redemp-

tion, in the blood and righteousness of Christ alone. I am sure this is the faith of the gospel, the faith of God's elect. I want to have this as clearly stated in my head and heart, as it is by the Holy Ghost in the written word; then I should alway triumph in Christ. I am pressing after more free communion with Jesus, in the exercise of faith. Blessed be his name! he sometimes draws very near to me in real communion, opens his heart, shines upon my mind with his own light, and shews me his glory. This is heaven; 'tis everlasting life; 'tis the breaking forth of eternal glory; hence he gives me to conceive, that the bliss of seeing him face to face, of being for ever with him, is ineffable, and incomprehensible.

I wish you may take in what my faith is, and what it is supported by; because many think I am a great believer, whilst I am sure I am not; but I am a very simple believer. My faith solely consists in believing the everlasting perfection of the righteousness and sacrifice of Jesus; and that God the Father is everlastingly well-pleased with Christ and his finished work, and with every one that believeth in him, and in the perfection of his work. My faith is supported by the testimony and record which God hath given of Christ in the written word, which I receive and embrace through the grace of the eternal Spirit. I find it the height of my experience to know that I am exactly fit for Christ, and that Christ is exactly fit for me. My sins, wounds, wants, misery, all fit me for Jesus; and he is most divinely suited for me, who have all contained in sin in my fallen nature. I want to live on Christ and make use of him exactly according to my feelings of sin, guilt, filth, wants, and miseries. In him I am saved; in him I am complete. As one with him, I shall not be more pure, righteous, holy, and beloved in heaven to eternity, than I am this moment; because his Father is my Father, who sees me in him, accepts me in him, loves me in him, and blesses me in him; the knowledge of which I receive from the word, as enlightened by the eternal Spirit.

I fear I have tired your patience; perhaps you may find it a dull letter; but let your love for me induce you to forgive it.

I remain, your's in the Lord,

S. E. P.

LETTER XLII.

DEAR SIR,

I HOPE the Lord Jesus is growingly precious in your esteem, and that you are resting upon his obedience and sacrifice, as all your salvation from the sentence of condemnation due to you for your sins, and as that which entitles you to heaven and eternal felicity. Oh! that the glories of Christ's person, the greatness of his love, and the perfection of his work, may be more and more the matter of your joy, your boast, and your song in the house of your pilgrimage. Give me leave to introduce the following quotation from Mr. Romaine :— 'Reader, is thy heart in tune to praise thy God? Is he thy Father who is in heaven, and dost thou love him for the unspeakable gift of his Son? Until he be known to thee in this dear relation, thou canst not be happy in him, either on earth, or in heaven. If thou art thinking he has mercy in store for thee, how wast thou brought to believe it? Was it in God's appointed way, and in his means? Didst thou hear his word declaring what thy state was, and didst thou yield to its testimony, persuaded thou wast under guilt, and in great danger? Wast thou convinced of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, how abominably filthy it made thee in the sight of an holy God, how guilty in the sight of a just God, and how utterly helpless it has left thee in thyself? Wast thou made deeply and thoroughly sensible that thou canst do nothing for thyself, but hasten on thy ruin? Such is thy captivity to sin, all the powers and faculties of thy soul and body are in such bondage to it, that thou canst do nothing but serve it; yea, thou art such a willing slave that if God leave thee to thyself, thou wilt go on sinning through time, and sinning through eternity. Didst thou never see thyself in this state? The Scripture declares that thou art by nature a child of wrath; and dost not thou believe the word of God? Are its threatenings an idle tale? What! art thou still asleep in the arms of sin? in the midst of the thunder of the vengeance of God? still dreaming of happiness in the ways of sin, which God assures thee in his word will lead thee to destruction? Oh, desperate delusion! May God deliver thee from it. May the eternal Spirit accom-

pany his own message, and send it to thy heart. "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee life." If thou hast been made sensible of thy danger, what thinkest thou of Christ? If thou hast seen thyself a lost sinner, who is to save thee? To whom, or to what, dost thou look for salvation or help? To man or to God? To thy works or to his? Is Christ become thine only object? Examine with care, for there is but one right way to the city of habitation. "I am the way," says Jesus. Be assured there is salvation for thee in no other. Nothing can wash thee clean but the atoning blood of Jesus. Nothing can justify thee but his righteousness. His all-sufficient grace alone can keep thee in the way to heaven. He alone can present thee spotless there before the throne. Every other hope will one day fail and disappoint thee, but hope in Jesus. One day all the rest will fail thee, and prove refuges of lies. If thou buildest on them now, with confidence, they will fail thee at the bar of God. Thou wilt then find that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." If thou art enabled to build upon this rock, happy art thou! Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee! He has encouraged thee to place the whole weight of thy salvation upon the work of Jesus who is Immanuel, the creator and supporter of all worlds, visible and invisible. Trust in him and be not afraid; for he is almighty to save, and he has given thee his infallible promises to satisfy thee; that in him thou art safe from all thy sins, and from all thine enemies.

Oh, how establishing are his own words! Thus he speaketh to thee, "Whosoever cometh unto me and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like. He is like a man who built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock, and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded upon a rock." How happy is thy state! thou art come to him at his bidding; thou hast heard his sayings, and art doing them in faith. Survey thy safety and bless the Lord. Thou art the wise man who builds on a foundation contrived by infinite wisdom, and upheld by almighty power. "Behold," says the Father, "I lay in Sion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation."

The Father chose his co-equal Son on whom he would build his whole church. He is therefore called "an elect foundation, and sure," as sure as God can make it. His will and word, his arm and love secure the foundation, and everything built upon it. Try it again and again, and thou wilt find how sure it is. This is another of its divine excellencies. It is a tried foundation. None ever built upon it and were confounded. Believers have made trial of it in every age, and it always answered their expectations and their hopes. Indeed how could it fail them; for the divine architect has so strengthened every part of his structure, that the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. How precious then is this foundation! "To them that believe he is precious." All the beauties and glories in heaven and earth, are to be found in his fulness, and in the creature only as a drop out of the ocean. Unsearchable riches are his! So are eternal glories! Blessed is the man who is living upon this fulness, while he is receiving out of it grace for grace. Oh! how precious is Jesus to him, especially while he is hoping to receive out of the same fulness the glory that is to be revealed; for he shall not be disappointed of his hope, because the righteous hath an everlasting foundation; he is built upon the rock of ages, and is kept there by the power of God. Oh, happy, thrice happy believer! Again survey thy mercies, see how many, how great they are, to thy body, to thy soul, family, church; national mercies, sure and covenant mercies. Who is like unto thee, saved by the Lord? The Father is thine, with all his love. The Son is thine, with all his salvation. The Holy Spirit is thine, in all his offices to comfort, to strengthen, to sanctify thee, and to lead thee safe by his counsel till he bring thee to eternal glory; and this is also thine with its richest blessings; eternal life is the free gift of God to thee through Jesus Christ thy Lord. Oh, what has God done for thee? Saved thee from deserved destruction, and saved thee with such a salvation, so wrought out for thee, so secured to thee, and for ever. What could God do more? Oh! for a real understanding of what is contained in this.

Your's, &c.

S. E. P.

LETTERS

ON SPIRITUAL SUBJECTS.

(First published in the Third Edition.)

LETTER I.

Frome, Aug. 8, 1778.

DEAR MRS. B.

I HOPE these lines will find you rejoicing in God our Saviour. Blessed be his name, you have the witness in yourself that he is your Saviour, and therefore this cannot but excite praise in your heart to him who deals so bountifully with you. To be interested in Jesus, to be made one spirit with the Lord, to be bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh; to be united to Christ in the bond of an everlasting covenant, and for him to be engaged never to turn away from doing us good, is a mercy so great, that it calls for our highest praise. May the Lord the Spirit inspire our hearts therewith. My very dear friend, I hope you have not lost sight of those glorious leading truths of the gospel, such as our Jesus being our justification, righteousness, and our divine atonement; our great head of influence and grace, and our glorious advocate and representative before the throne, to plead our cause against all the accusations of sin and Satan, and to present us complete in his adorable self. The Lord fasten and imprint upon your hearts the belief of these truths more and more. Take a view of your glorious Immanuel, view his flaming heart, see how the love of Jesus flows towards his people; behold, the rise of it was from eternity. See what it puts him upon, even to engage with his Father to become our Surety, to bear our griefs, to carry our sorrows, to pay our boundless debt, to bear our boundless curse, to satisfy

divine justice, and to put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself.

Surely, if we reflect upon the eternity of Christ's love, and upon all that, that love put him upon, viz. to bear and endure the contradiction of sinners against himself, to sweat great drops of blood, and to suffer for awhile what was equal to the bitter pains of eternal death, it will be the means of inflaming our souls with love to him who loved us, and gave himself for us. Oh, what a Jesus is our Jesus! he is the perfection of beauty, all the glories of heaven and earth meet and centre in him. What a large and bountiful heart hath he got, which makes him willing to part with himself, with his riches and fulness, in order to recreate, satisfy, and refresh our souls. Out of him we may draw light, life, grace, pardon, justification, sanctification, holiness, strength, and happiness. He is a fountain of living water, and streams from Lebanon: the water of eternal life, all the divine influence of the Spirit's grace, comes from the bowels of Jesus' mercy. Blessed be his generous heart, he will give grace, and give it in abundance, to his people: how divinely safe and secure are the people of God; they are as safe as Omnipotency can make them. They are locked up in the very heart of God the Father, and of God the Son; they have all the attributes of God engaged for them; they have exceeding great and precious promises made over to them, and the faithfulness of God engaged to fulfil them all.

Look over, dear friends, your vast inheritance, and count your mercies, spiritual and eternal, if you can. What are they? Why Christ's love, mercy, grace, person, obedience, atonement, offices, and fulness,—all this is your's. Nay, more than this; all the Father's love, all the Son's salvation, all the Spirit's gracious influence, all the heavenly inheritance is your's, and more—things present, life and death, and things to come. Astonishing grace! Ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. Lift up your head under whatever circumstances you may possibly be in here below; the Lord will make outward trials and inward conflicts to work together for your good; and is it not enough to break our very spirits, to think we are so highly favoured of God as to be adopted into his family, and to have the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ our Father in him, and by him to be blessed with all spiritual

blessings, and to be called to partake of his love by faith, and to be ordained to obtain the same—the very same glory, of our Lord Jesus. The Lord grants you a real heaven upon earth, by enabling you to live upon, to look up and feed by faith on a precious Jesus. May the Holy Spirit more and more glorify Christ in your heart. May our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, who hath loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your heart, and strengthen you in every good word and work. Amen. Amen. Amen.

I am, dear Mrs. B.,

Your's, in all christian services, in the bowels of the
incarnate God,

S. E. P.

LETTER II.

Chichester, Jan. 1779.

MY VERY DEARLY BELOVED FRIEND,

It was with very great pleasure of heart to know the cause of your long silence, not doubting but you and the rest of my honoured friends with you had received my packet. I am sorry to hear of Mrs. J.'s indisposition, I hope the Lord will sanctify it to her. I rejoice in the Lord for his kind protection of you. May his name for the same be magnified. I am truly thankful to hear from you that the disciples of my precious Jesus at A—— are walking in the truth: Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life, and having been quickened by him, and having received him into your hearts as your life and light, as the atonement and righteousness of your souls, we are exhorted by the apostle to walk in him: and what a transcendent privilege is it to walk with God as

his adopted children, as those who are brought nigh by the blood of the cross, as those that are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb; and are hereby pardoned, justified, purged, and sanctified, freely and fully, eternally and everlastingly forgiven, and perfectly accepted in the Beloved. What hath God done and wrought for his people? He doth great things for us which we cannot comprehend; how astonishing, that the people who have the Lord for their God, should be in his eye and upon his heart from eternity; that they should be written in the Lamb's book of life, be ordained to share in all the richest grace, favour, and love of God; and that God might set forth and commend his love to the uttermost, would redeem us from the curse of the law and the damnation of hell, which we deserved, by giving his Son to suffer all that shame, death, and hell, which we should have suffered to all eternity. Oh, 'Blessings for ever on the Lamb, who bore the curse for wretched man.' Our walk with God is by faith, we are called to walk with him in his appointed way, to walk with him as our reconciled Father, who loves us in Jesus with an everlasting love, who embraceth us with the same fatherly affection, and takes the same delight in us, as he views us in the Beloved, as he doth in Christ himself. We, as sinners, have need to be praying constantly to the Lord the Spirit, to enable us to deal constantly in the fountain of Christ's blood, that our conscience may be kept free from sin and unbelief. Of all the mysteries in God's book, none is more dear to me, and that I long for nearer proficiency in; thou knowest how to hold fast the mysteries of the faith in a pure conscience. Oh, what a sovereign balm and restorative is the blood of Christ which cleanseth from all sin, and what a mercy to maintain faith therein, to the silencing of unbelief, overcoming the world, flesh, and devil. This, saith John, is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Blessed be God, who hath called us into the fellowship of the gospel. How excellently Paul describes the blessed Jesus, in the first chapter of the Colossians, where he tells us that he is the image of the invisible God; that, touching his divine nature, he is God of God, equal in self-existence, and in all the perfections and attributes of the Godhead, with the Father. For is the Father eternal? so is the Son. Micah v. 2; Psalm xlv. 6. Is the Father immortal? so is the Son, "who only hath

immortality." 1 Tim. vi. 16. He is almighty. See Rev. i. Lord God. This adorable person is equal and co-eternal with the Father. And the Spirit proves himself to be God by his works. It is God's prerogative alone to create: this Scripture ascribes to Christ; he made the heavens and all their host by the word of his power; he upholds it by the power of the same word by which it was first created; and will, ere long, fold the heavens and the earth up as a worn out garment. As Christ is the Creator of the world, therefore the apostle describes him to be the first-born, or Lord, Master, and proprietor of every creature, whether in heaven or earth, as thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, and by him all things consist.

And lest the cunning Arian should have a colour for robbing Jesus of his Godhead, the apostle adds, "and he is before all things:" what a proof of his eternity is this! He that was before all time and things, could be none other than God the Lord. Our apostle always lays down the strongest proof of Christ's eternal Godhead, when he describes the efficacy of his death: there he points out Jesus as the great Head of his church, and as him who, as the God-man, made peace for them by the blood of his cross, and hath reconciled them to God by his blood. And as the works of God are perfect, so is this great work of putting away of sin by the sacrifice of Christ, and in bringing in an everlasting righteousness. This is the glorious bottom which the Lord hath brought us, through grace, to build on. I trust we both renounce everything for the pardon of our sins but the atonement of Jesus, and every thing for acceptance with God, but the righteousness of Jesus. We are complete in him in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and, blessings for ever on the Lamb, we have his infinite fulness to repair unto for the supply of all our wants. Oh, what a portion is Christ; he is a soul-enriching and a soul-satisfying portion. May the Holy Ghost bless my highly valued friend with clear, still clearer, views of the glories of Christ's person, work, and grace, that you may say of Jesus, there is none like him; and with the dying martyr, 'None but Christ, none but Christ.' Christ is precious to his chosen ones in his glorious undertakings, covenant fulfilments, divine offices, characters, and titles. To the redeemed, Jesus' name is as

ointment poured out. May you, my dear Sir, be led into all truth by the Holy Spirit; may you be filled with all the fulness of God; may you drink deeper and deeper into the Spirit of Christ; may the Lord of Hosts be to you for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty; may you dwell on high, out of the reach of every enemy, in the cliffs of the rock of ages, in the wounds of Jesus. I earnestly recommend you and your dear wife, and little ones, to the tender mercies of our incarnate God, wishing you may be, as I doubt not but you are, mutual helpers of each other's joy in the Lord.

I have lately been and am still in a very tried situation, my friends, perhaps because there is, in our land, but very little unadulterated gospel, which is one reason why the people do not understand it when delivered. All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution. I was never so much honoured with bearing shame and contempt, for my Lord's sake, as I have been in this city. Professors have been my cruel enemies. No wonder the devil hates nothing worse than a Christ, and a clear, free, and full gospel ministry. I hope the Lord hath enabled you to profit by his dealings, and may he hereby purge off more of my dross. As to A——, let us never say any more about it till we see more likelihood. Perhaps, because I love you and Sion's children there, to a very great degree, we may thereby be led to wish for that which God doth not will.

Please to give my duty and most cordial love to Mrs. T., and ten thousand thanks for all past favours. I shall esteem it a great favour, when it is convenient to her, to receive a few lines from her. My most cordial love to Mrs. B., her daughter, sister, and to Mr. and Mrs. E., Mr. and Mrs. A., T. P. and his wife, Mrs. M. and Mrs. P., and your dear wife, and to all that love Christ in sincerity. I hope you will write to me with all speed, as I sincerely long to receive an answer to every one of my letters, which I hope you have now received. Remember me, my dear friend, in your prayers. Pray for a double portion of the Spirit upon me, and that the Lord would open my mouth boldly to make known the mysteries of the gospel, that I may, through the teachings of the Holy

Ghost, be enabled to feed God's people with knowledge and understanding.

I am, dear, dear friend,

Your very faithful friend and servant for Christ's sake,

S. E. P.

P. S. I trust I have some small part of the travails of the Redeemer's soul here. The Lord be with you.

LETTER III.

DEAR MRS. P.

I HOPE this will find you, and my friend, who I look on as my seal, rejoicing in God. Blessed be Jesus, he is altogether lovely, precious, and delightful. He is beauty without a spot. All the excellencies of heaven and earth centre in him. He is the brightest object in the heaven of heavens. Where shall we begin when we talk of him? His beauty is ravishing. God the Father falls in love with him. God the Spirit delights to glorify him; the angels celebrate his praises, and the whole host of heaven fall down before him and do him homage. Saints on earth, from but a glimpse of him, are fired with his love, and cry, "Draw me and we will run after thee," and the more they taste that the Lord is gracious, the more they thirst after God.

I hope you, my dear friends, are on the full stretch for God; are not such desires as these yours? Oh, for more faith to believe all that my Lord hath spoken. Oh, for more love to Jesus, the Wonderful Lover. Oh, for a heart more alive to him, more enlarged towards him. Oh, for a soul more burning with love to him who loved us, and gave himself for us. Well, blessed be God, he will fulfil all the desires of his own Spirit in us. "Be of good courage." Take comfort. Jesus has

treasures of grace, pardon, righteousness, comfort, light, life, strength, and refreshment to impart. Draw, my dear friends, by faith and prayer from Jesus, whatsoever your wants call for, or necessities require, and let me tell you the deeper you dive into the heart of Christ the happier. Jesus has a large heart; a bountiful, a loving, a burning heart, towards his people. Love brought him down from heaven, love nailed him to the cross, love kept him there till he could cry out "It is finished;" and love flames in his heart even now that he is in glory. Blessed be his divine majesty, he cannot forget us, because he sees us engraven on the palms of his hands. Oh! what a portion is Christ; all the treasures of heaven and earth are not comparable to beloved Jesus. May your understanding be more and more enlightened into the knowledge of his person, love, work, and salvation, wrought out by him and freely communicated from him to all his dear people by the influence of the Holy Ghost. From hence must flow peace to your consciences and love in your hearts to him. You can no further love him, than you believe his love to your souls. The more, therefore, you see of his love to you, the more will you find your souls drawn out after him. May the Lord the Spirit help you daily to live in believing views of the greatness of Christ's love to sinners. Eye the atoning blood of the Lamb of God. Behold it as the infallible remedy of God's own providing to cleanse from guilt, to purify the soul, and never to forget that it cleanseth from all sin. View, by faith, daily the obedience of "the Lord our righteousness," and forget not to make use of it as your own by faith. Bind it on as a frontlet between your eyes, that ye are complete in the great Head of the church. May the Lord lead you and teach you to make use of Christ in everything, and for everything; view again and again your high calling in Christ Jesus, and pray for grace to live up to your privileges.

I return you, my dear friends, my sincerest thanks for all past favours received from you, and do not forget you at the throne, there I often mention you, begging that your souls may be kept alive to Jesus, breathing after him; loving him more and more; and enjoying his love, grace, spirit, and presence, daily, hourly, momentarily; that you may be able, without wavering, to say, "Hereby we know that we are in him, and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit." May the

grace of the dear Lord Jesus Christ be with you to comfort, strengthen, quicken and enliven, and sanctify your souls. May you be daily cleaving to the Lord with full purpose of heart, walking in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, and may great grace rest upon you. If I knew what to wish you better, I would wish it for you; but there is nothing beyond it. To live in the enjoyment of Christ, to have his peace ruling in our consciences, his fear possessing our hearts, and his Spirit guiding us continually, is indeed heaven begun. May the Lord give us a growing and an increasing experience of these things. My love to our friend the baker, may the Lord teach, direct, counsel, enlighten, convince, and convert, and bring her savingly acquainted with Jesus, who is the way, the truth, and the life.

I shall be glad to hear from you, but intend to write to you once more before I receive a letter from you, as I can't at present give you directions where you shall write to me.

I am, dear friends, your's in Christ Jesus,

S. E. P.

LETTER IV.

Oathall, 1779.

DEAR MRS. P.

I HOPE, through the riches of free, sovereign, rich grace, you and our dear friend, the person who used to be at your house, are rejoicing in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and building up each other on your most holy faith. To have the mines of free grace more and more discovered to us by the Lord the Spirit, the unsearchable treasures of everlasting love, pardoning mercy, justifying and sanctifying grace, made more and more known to our souls, cannot but be our desire as partakers of grace, and the one thing that alone can make our hearts happy. The apostle, when he would express his love for the Ephesians to the uttermost, prays that Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith, and that they might be

rooted and grounded in the knowledge of God's love to their souls, to the end that they might be filled with all the fulness of God. As to the love of God towards us, it is the cause of all our blessedness, so our knowledge, and believing views of it, draw out our hearts, and inflame our affections with love to God, in return for his great love to us. Let us, therefore, survey this love, and trace it up to its fountain and author. It is God himself is the author and fountain of this love, and therefore it is great, and it is called God's great love wherewith he loved us. As God is the fountain of this love which he manifests to his children, so it is as eternal, immutable, unchangeable, and everlasting, as God is himself. It is great love, so great that the Holy Ghost is fain to express this love towards us by the fruits and effects of this love, rather than to describe how great it is in the fountain. "God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son;" what a gift was this, and yet so boundless, so inconceivable, so unfathomable, was the love of God, towards his people, that he gives his dearly beloved Son to become man, gave him to bear the curse of the law; "to be made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Blessed for ever be the Lord there never was a time when God began to love his people, for he loved them from eternity, nor will there ever be a time when he will cease to love them. God set his heart's love from everlasting upon his people, pitched upon the Son of his love to be their great head and husband, and gave them grace and life by promise in Christ before the world begun. "Yea," says Moses, "he loved the people." And the first act of his love towards them, in choosing them in Christ and blessing them with all spiritual blessings, and the great love he then took up towards the elect, is but barely expressed by all the after acts of his love. His love is such as giving the dear Son of his love to live and die for us, and the Holy Spirit to form Christ in us, and eternal glory in heaven, and all that felicity which we shall enjoy in the new Jerusalem, is but telling how greatly he loved us, and did love us from, before all worlds. The love of the eternal Father appears in choosing the elect in Christ, in giving them a being in him, in blessing them with all spiritual blessings in him, and in giving them into the hands of Jesus, as the sheep he was to be the shepherd of, at whose hands they were all to be required,

and by him they were all, every individual of them, to be presented, faultless, before the throne of God. And the love of God the Father appears in entering into covenant with his co-equal Son, concerning the salvation of his people from death and hell, in providing a body in the everlasting covenant for the eternal Word to inhabit, and in giving his only begotten Son out of his bosom to die for rebels, in order to reconcile his people to himself, who were enemies to him by wicked works.

And the love of the eternal Son of God towards us appears in espousing our persons to himself from everlasting, in undertaking with his Father to become our substitute, in his rejoicing and delighting in us, and in the prospect of what he was to do for us; in his leaving his Father's bosom, taking hold of our nature, putting himself in our law place, room, and stead, working out an everlasting righteousness to justify us in the court of heaven; in putting away our sins by his everlasting efficacious sacrifice; in dying, rising, ascending, entering the holiest of all as our representative, and pleading his blood and obedience before the Father in our behalf; requesting for the supply of all our needs, and for the bestowment of all covenant blessings upon us, in consequence of his most precious bloodshedding; and he bears all the names of his people upon the breast-plate of his heart, so that God the Father, till he turns away his face from his anointed, from his beloved Son, can never turn away his face from his people; and till such time as the Son of God ceases to be beloved by his Father, we shall not cease to be beloved likewise, and as long as the righteousness, blood, intercession, and advocacy of Jesus has any efficacy, we are safe. "Our life is hid with Christ in God."

The love of the eternal Spirit appears, in awakening, convincing, revealing, and applying the Lord Jesus Christ, with all the eternal worth of his redemption, to our hearts; in shedding abroad in our hearts the love of God; in bringing us to enjoy the love of the Father, by faith, in the finished salvation of his Son; in glorifying Christ in our hearts by taking of the things of Jesus, and shewing them to us; discovering the riches, the fulness, the freeness and sufficiency of Christ's love, grace, and complete salvation; and by drawing our hearts after Jesus, by enabling us in some

measure to comprehend the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and by unhinging us from every legal confidence and false hope, and enabling us to venture out of ourselves to rely wholly and only upon Christ. To rely upon his righteousness for justification before God, to rely upon his blood alone for pardon and cleansing, to rest upon the intercession of the great High Priest over the house of God, for the acceptance of our prayers and praises; and to depend upon his arm to keep us in the hour of temptation, and upon him to support us in our dying moments, and for him to present us faultless, without spot or wrinkle, unblameable and unreprouvable, before the Father's presence. That you and our dear friend may, by the divine Spirit of all grace, be led more and more out of yourselves for everything to Christ; that your knowledge of Jesus, and of your interest in him, may be daily increased; that your faith and dependence upon God our Saviour may be daily strengthened; and that you may grow and increase with all the increase of God, and be strengthened with all might by Christ's Spirit in the inner-man, is the earnest prayer of your friend and servant in the dear Lord Jesus,

S. E. P.

P. S. Pray for me. I wish you a rich supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Grace, mercy, and peace be with you. Amen.

LETTER V.

Frome, 1778.

DEAR MR. H.

I NEVER had the pleasure of hearing from you since I left Newport, which did not a little surprise me; I should have returned for a little while among you had you but written to me; however, it is undoubtedly best as it is; I must confess I have a great desire to hear from you. I hope the Son of

God rides forth among you from conquering unto conquer. Oh, that he may shine upon all your souls with the divine, cheering, warming, and influential beams of his heavenly light, love, and grace.

Nothing ought so much to be desired by us as living near the divine influence of the Sun of Righteousness, May the Holy Spirit strengthen your souls daily with his divine might, and help you to grow strong, and enable you to overcome the wicked one. Oh, what an infinitely precious, glorious, matchless, and almighty Saviour is our Immanuel. His hearts and bowels roll within him towards his people, and what a mercy is it God's people are graven upon his heart, and he bears their names engraven on his breastplate before the Father's presence. The Lord give you, and his dear people with you, to act and exercise you more and more upon the God-man Christ Jesus; upon his wonderful covenant undertaking, and his faithful performing of his undertaking, that your faith being exercised thereon, your souls may more and more grow in love to a precious Jesus, and your hearts be more and more comforted. View, by faith, the Lord Jesus as the Head of his body the church; consider that all spiritual light, life, sense, joy, and every spiritual blessing are laid up in him, in order that he may supply all his members. What a great and glorious Head has the church got. One who is acquainted with all our wants, knows how to comfort us under all our sorrows, how to relieve us in all our distresses, and to make us strong in himself against all our spiritual enemies. In Christ is all fulness, yea, "all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in him." In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; in him lies hid all that love, grace, mercy, and peace, which God the Father had in his heart towards his people from eternity. And this Christ is to his people all and all, because their souls' want is found only and alone in him. In him we have a perfect spotless righteousness which hides all our deformity from view, and presents us complete, perfectly complete, before God. In him we have a divine fountain opened to wash away all our sins, and containing in it all the efficacy of eternal Godhead, and eternally cleansing the souls on whom it is sprinkled from all sin, the merit of which will last to eternity; in him we have

divine strength, which he is pleased to put forth in us in order to subdue iniquities in us ; and, glory be rendered to our Immanuel, in him is found whatsoever is necessary to sanctify our nature, and render us fit for the inheritance of the saints in light.

May the eternal Spirit help you daily to clothe your soul, conscience, and mind, by faith with Christ Jesus. May the Lord the Spirit help you all to make great use of the blood of sprinkling ; and may the Holy Spirit glorify Jesus in all your hearts. The Lord multiply his blessings on all your dear souls, and give you to feed on him as the bread of life, and to make use of him as the water of salvation, that your souls may daily grow into that knowledge of Jesus which is eternal life. I desire my most cordial and christian love to dear Mr. S. and all the dear people of God amongst you, and to your dear wife. I long to hear how that precious servant of Jesus Christ does that was so assaulted with Satan's fiery darts ; the God of peace will shortly crush the devil under our feet ; I often remember that dear creature in my prayers. Here is a woman in this town who is, if possible, a thousand times worse, so it is a comfort to consider that God has not suffered the devil to have all the power over her ; I should be glad to hear of her relief ; the Lord forbid she should give place to the devil or unbelief. Christ's blood hath more merit to cleanse, than all her sins has, aggravate them as much as the devil may, to damn. Oh, that the Lord the Spirit may magnify the infinite merit of the all-sufficient righteousness and perfect atonement of the Lord our Saviour unto her, that she may be able to rejoice in the living God. I shall be very glad to hear from you.

I am your's in a precious Jesus,

S. E. P.

LETTER VI.

Oathall, May 1, 1779.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD,

It has long laid upon my mind to take an opportunity to write to you, in order to stir up your minds by way of remembrance, and I hope you will excuse the freedom, and accept it as a token of my love towards you. Permit me, dearly beloved, to exhort you, in the apostle's words, to examine yourselves whether you are in the faith, holding fast and standing fast in the glorious doctrines of faith, and maintaining confidence in them. If you ask what are those doctrines of faith which, as a church built upon Christ the corner-stone, you are to hold, to contend for, and grow experimentally acquainted with, I answer the doctrine of the eternal Trinity in unity—that there are three co-equal and co-eternal persons in the Godhead, who exist in the divine Jehovah, are distinct in their personality, and one in regard of the divine essence. If you ask for a proof of this doctrine, consult chap. v. of John's first epistle, verse 7. Another fundamental truth which, as a church of the living God, you are to contend for, is the everlasting, eternal, unchangeable, and immutable love of God in Christ Jesus towards his elect people. Another eternal and precious doctrine of faith is, the council of peace held in eternity between the Father and the Son, in which the eternal Son, out of love to his dear people, covenanted to become incarnate, to work out an everlasting righteousness and to bear the sins, iniquities, transgressions, guilt, and filth of his people, and to bear their curse, shame, death, and hell, in his body and soul upon the tree. And he hath thereby made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in an everlasting righteousness; and is risen from the dead as the justification of his chosen, and is set down at the right hand of God, as the great representative and glorious intercessor and advocate of all his people.

My dear friends, we have great reason to fear that God

will cover Zion with a cloud in his fierce anger; and indeed it is heart-breaking to find, upon search, so few souls, amidst so much preaching as we have had of late years, brought out of themselves to the Lord Jesus Christ. Those very great and fundamental doctrines which distinguish the church of Christ from all other religions, seem to be, in a great measure, lost in our churches, which is a sad token of God's anger, and seems to be an indication that the Lord is leaving us, and withdrawing from us.

Eternal election in Christ before all worlds, acceptance in the Beloved, redemption by Christ, regeneration and sanctification by the Holy Spirit, and his gracious influences and testimony in the hearts of God's people, concerning Jesus and his finished salvation, and his shedding abroad the Father's love in our hearts by faith in the obedience and sacrifice of the slaughtered Lamb, are so much neglected, that we have grieved the Holy Spirit, and he has suspended his gracious influences in a great measure from the churches of the saints. It is nothing but preaching and teaching the Lord Jesus Christ, in the glories of his person, the greatness of his love, the excellencies of his obedience, the everlasting efficacy of his blood, the prevalency of his intercession, the blessings of his advocateship, and the almighty power of his arm to deliver his people, that can keep our hearts alive that are preachers; and nothing can keep your hearts alive that are hearers, but viewing Jesus as the justifying righteousness, and the sin-atonement sacrifice, who has removed all your transgressions out of the sight of God the Father. Give all diligence to those great leading truths of the everlasting gospel, that the Son of God has wrought out, by his conformity to the law, an everlasting righteousness, and that you, in this righteousness imputed to you, shine as glorious in the sight of God as Christ himself. In this righteousness you are made the righteousness of God, stand discharged from all your sins, and God, viewing you in Jesus, is as truly well-pleased with you as he is with Christ himself, loves you with the same love, blesses you with the same blessings; and you are as perfectly justified in Christ's righteousness in time as you will be in eternity. Justification admits of no degrees, the babe in Christ is as completely justified as the father in Christ, and may the Lord the Spirit give you

from the scriptures of truth to see, that through Christ's atonement made upon the cross, all the sins of God's elect are as much put away out of the sight of God, as though they had never been; every believer stands before God as perfectly and completely discharged from all their sins, and from all the guilt and filth of their sins, upon the account of what Christ has done, as Christ himself. To clear this to you, consider what the Holy Ghost says, "that Christ bore our sins in his own body on the tree." If Christ bare them, then they were laid upon him; and the Lord says, Isaiah liii. "He hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all." If they were laid upon Christ, then they do not lay upon us. Again, it is said concerning Christ, "that he hath put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Now that which is put away cannot appear. "He hath washed us from our sins." This respects the filth of our sin; it is done. Our faith does not give us an interest in Christ, neither does it unite us to Christ, neither does it justify us, but is the effect of our union to Jesus, and our evidence of being in Jesus. Ye are all the children of God (that is manifestatively) by faith in Christ Jesus; and faith deals entirely with Christ Jesus, with his blood and obedience. It comes to Jesus for everything, eyeing the fulness which is treasured up in Christ. Let it be remembered that the Son of God is the Head of the church, and as the Head he has everything which is needful for the members. He has life and light, grace and happiness, and every blessing of God's love; it is all treasured up in Jesus, who freely communicates it to his people, and is to them as a fountain of living waters, and streams from Lebanon. You are to be going, moment by moment, to Christ for a fresh supply of all your wants. Don't look into yourselves for anything, but, under darkness and desolation, when under the hidings of the Lord's countenance, or when you have ever so high a sight of your corruption, be sure, in the strength of divine grace, to look to Christ. You will not be able to overcome any beloved lust or corruption but by looking unto Jesus; and when, through frailty, you fall into sin, go immediately to the fountain of Christ's blood for cleansing. Take heed of resting in anything wrought in you by the Spirit, or performed by you through his gracious assistance, but beg the Holy

Spirit to enable you to make Christ your hope, and to help you to build all your hope for present and eternal salvation upon the person of the Son of God, upon his meritorious life, expiatory death, resurrection, ascension, intercession, and advocateship with the Father for us. Don't be afraid to deal with the Lord Jesus. Go to him for everything. Look to him at all times. Don't ever look off him, nor ever look into yourselves for any title to his love, but beg the Holy Spirit to help you to live a life of faith upon the Son of God.

My dear friends, don't be afraid or disturbed about what the devil may say to terrify you. Jesus is more mighty to save than sin is to damn. Jesus is able to save to the very uttermost; if a soul has committed every sin which can be committed, that is no bar to keep us from Christ. Your sins cannot be heard in heaven, for the blood of Christ pleads so loud in the court of heaven on your behalf, that God cannot hear what Satan has to say against you. Besides, my dear friend, the mercies of God are far beyond all expression, and beyond all our transgressions, for they reach beyond the heavens, yea, they reach the heaven of heavens. Christ's blood is carried for your sake within the vail, and is presented before God the Father; and do you think God the Father will cease to hear the cry of his Son's blood to listen to the devil? No, that he never will. May you never more be permitted to set up sin higher in the conscience than the blood of Jesus, for that cleanseth from all sins.

My dear friends, I commend you all to God and the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified. May Christ dwell in your hearts by faith, and great grace rest upon you all; and may you daily grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

I am, your friend and servant, for Christ's sake,

S. E. P.

My most cordial love to that blessed servant of the Most High God, Mr. S., and his brother.

LETTER VII.

November, 1778.

DEAR MR. AND MRS. P.

I RECEIVED your kind letter, dated July 23rd, with great pleasure. I rejoice in the Lord touching you and the society at A——, that Jesus is more known, understood, and lived upon by you. Glory, eternal glory, be rendered unto God, that there is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God; a river which had its rise from the eternal purpose of God, and in the very heart of God; for it is from the good pleasure of his will that your salvation is derived, from thence doth it proceed. Oh! what a blessed foundation for faith to build upon is this, that the great eternal, unchangeable Jehovah wills, nay, it is the good pleasure of his will, that all his people should be saved from all the guilt of their sins, from all their enemies, from all their miseries, and from everlasting damnation. This river is so boundless, so bottomless that the understanding of men and angels may well be lost in surveying it. In itself it is boundless and bottomless, high as heaven, deep as hell, longer than the earth, and broader than the sea; the streams thereof make glad the hearts of elect sinners; undoubtedly, this river designs either the glorious free grace of Christ's exalting gospel, which, for its spreading, refreshing, quickening nature, may well be compared to a river; or the Holy Spirit and his divine grace, whose standing emblem in scripture is water, to denote the purity and efficacy of his divine influence on the hearts of his people; or else the Lord himself, who, by the evangelical prophet, is compared to a broad river and streams. The head of the river is the heart of God, from whence it springs. The channel through which it runs, is Jesus Christ. It is through Jesus, as the sanctified Lamb, that God's love, mercy, grace, pardon, and peace flow to the soul. What a channel is this, it has nothing to stop its course, but will be flowing unto eternity, even when mortality shall be swallowed up of life. But what are the streams which flow from the heart of God to his people? They are as follows, and ran through Jesus as the

channel ; first, eternal election ; this is the first in order. A blessing indeed which no tongue can express. The election of our persons in Christ, as our common, glorious head. The choosing us to be members, the brethren of the eternal Son of God ; add this to that great fundamental blessing of choosing Christ Jesus as our husband, and choosing us to be the spouse of Christ, to be members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones ; from this flows the covenant of grace, in which the eternal Son assumes the office of being our substitute, engaged to stand up in our law place, to bear our curse, and to pay our boundless debt. The covenant of grace is ordered in all things and sure, herein Christ becomes bound to answer for us. Glory, eternal glory, be rendered unto our Jesus. From eternity he engaged with his Father to do for us what he has done. He, who is Jehovah's fellow, hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself ; so that every believer is as perfectly discharged by God the Father from all the guilt of his sins, as though he had never sinned ; and God the Father loves the sinner whom the Holy Ghost enables to believe in Jesus, with the same love that he doth Christ himself ; nay, beloved, because I desire it may be, by the Holy Ghost, fastened on your minds, I therefore add, that the Father can no more lay sin to the believing sinner's charge, than he can to Christ himself. And, blessed be God, great and unspeakable and boundless are the blessings of the covenant of grace ; it is an everlasting covenant. The great God is engaged in this covenant to our souls, to bless us with all his heart's love. There is no blessing in heaven or in earth left out ; and to strengthen our faith, God hath pawned all the glory of his Godhead, to assure us that every tittle of it shall be fulfilled to us ; the sun, moon, and stars, those ordinances of heaven, are given as tokens to us of the Lord having respect to the everlasting covenant made with us in Christ Jesus.

The Lord help you daily to study this covenant of grace, made with us in Christ, who is the covenanter. He hath finished the transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and hath brought in an everlasting righteousness. He hath conquered sin, death, hell, and the devil, and all our enemies, and is sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high, having all our enemies under his feet, and

being in the actual enjoyment of all the Father's love, of all the Spirit's grace, that, out of his infinite fulness, all our wants may be supplied. In this covenant, Jesus bears and sustains the offices of Prophet, Priest, King, Head, Intercessor, Advocate, and Mediator; each of which promises are made to him as the Head of the body the church, they have been fulfilled, and are in him yea, and amen. And they shall each and every one of them be fulfilled in and unto us. God, to confirm our faith and hope, hath sworn that in blessing he will bless us.

Another stream from this river is the sending Christ Jesus into the world in the likeness of sinful flesh. Redemption by him, justification, pardon, adoption, regeneration, perseverance to eternal life; these are blessed streams indeed.

Oh! my beloved in the Lord, look up again and again to the Holy Spirit in faith and prayer, that you may see more of those great and eternal blessings which you, through the riches of divine grace, are interested in. I beseech you, in the bowels of the dear Lamb of God, to be calling daily to mind the great love of the Lord towards you from eternity. The great things he hath done for you in giving Christ Jesus to live and die in your stead, and in sending the Holy Ghost into your hearts to reveal this Jesus in you the hope of glory.

The Lord grant that you may grow more and more rooted and grounded and established in the truths of the everlasting gospel. May you, with Paul, be daily pressing after a greater knowledge of Jesus, after more communion with him, and more conformity to him; so that Christ may be magnified, whether by life or death.

I am, dearly beloved,

Your's, in all soul-services, in the bowels of the
incarnate Jesus,

S. E. P.

P.S. My love to all the society, none excepted. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

LETTER VIII.

Frome, Aug. 2, 1778.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I SINCERELY love you for the truth's sake which dwelleth in you, and I take this present opportunity of writing, begging you and your dear spouse that you will, with purpose of heart, cleave to the Lord. I hope the Lord daily enlightens your understanding into the knowledge of a precious Christ; and I doubt not but you see more of the glorious truths of the everlasting gospel, and that you see there is a greater glory in the scriptures than we in general conceive.

The mysteries of God's love and grace towards his people, are what I love to dwell by meditation on, and dive into by faith; and I trust that you, and many besides at A——n, have found it to be not only instructive to have the great truths of God declared, but also have experienced that Christ's truths; when the Holy Ghost sets his seal to them, are spirit and life. I hope Jesus is more glorious, more delightful, and more desirable unto you than ever. May the Lord enrich your souls abundantly with his grace. Oh, that Jesus may dwell powerfully in your hearts by a living faith. What divine communion may we not expect to enjoy by precious faith with our dear Immanuel Christ, and all his blessings and benefits are all our own. And Christ is such a soul-satisfying portion, that souls who enjoy his love and grace, have all their heart can desire. For to know and enjoy the Father's love, to feed by faith on the Lord Jesus, to have fellowship with him in all the parts of his salvation, and to drink, daily, deeper into the mind, comfort, grace, and influence of the Holy Spirit, is to taste of heaven below, and is the means of being meetened for eternal glory. I pray that you and your dear yoke-fellow may be the mutual helpers of each other's joy in the Lord; and that Jesus, in all his glory, may daily pass before you, that to live may be Christ, and to die may be gain.

Please to give my duty to Mr. F. and my most affectionate love to our Lord's dear followers. I long after my dear A—— friends in the bowels of Jesus Christ. I trust you find the truth of my sermons in your Bibles. May your souls daily flourish in the divine life, and may you grow more and more into the knowledge of Christ which is life eternal, that our Lord in you and by you may be glorified.

I am, dear friends, your's in the well-beloved Jesus,

S. E. P.

LETTER IX.

Frome, August 7, 1778.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

THE night after I had written you from Bath, on my return to Frome, I found your kind letter, which was as marrow to my bones. Blessed be the Lord for the grace he hath bestowed on you; I am bound to thank my God on your behalf for the grace of God which is given you by Christ Jesus, may you be enriched by him in all wisdom and knowledge, and come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus. It is a great mercy when the Lord the Spirit is pleased to open our understandings to understand the scriptures, and Christ in them revealed. I glory in you for your glorying in the glorious truths of the everlasting gospel; I hope God will shew you greater than those.

Should I tell you I love you as my own soul, I should not exceed the bounds of truth; but I forbear, seeing my love is capable of increasing, in proportion as the image of Jesus is more and more reflected by you in your whole tempers, dispositions, and walk. Your dear spouse, I hope, is filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost, and may the grace of Jesus be daily communicated to you both. My dear friend, you must not expect me in this letter to enlarge on the blessed truths of the gospel, seeing that your's contained such an excellent

account of your knowledge of and faith in them, that all that I could add, would only be my earnest prayer to the Spirit of all grace for an abiding sense and growing experience of the power of them; and may the Lord confirm you to the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God be thanked that you and your spouse are called into fellowship with Jesus Christ our Lord: may he dwell powerfully in your hearts by faith. I have this day been more than ordinary in begging the Lord that he would be pleased, wherever he sends me, to furnish me with divine light, life, wisdom, knowledge, and spiritual understanding to make me an able minister of the New Testament, that the mysteries of free grace may be discovered in the contrivement of salvation and the love of the Father, Son, and Spirit, together with their joint offices, held forth; and the divine, internal, and powerful efficacy of divine grace upon the hearts of his people be experimentally described, together with man's fallen state, and Satan's devices; that, by the blessing of God thereon, Christ may be exalted, Satan dethroned, and the Lord's power, grace, and presence manifested to all our souls.

The Lord hears and answers prayers, and when he inclines for particular blessings, it is a general sign that he is about to bestow them on us.

I am, dearly beloved, your sincere friend in the bowels of the crucified Son of God, in whom you and I are locked up as in a garrison.

S. E. P.

LETTER X.

Petworth, 1778.

DEAR T. T.

I TRUST from what I hear that you are brought to see your want of the Lord Jesus Christ. Is it so? What, will

nothing comfort your heart? Will nothing speak peace to your conscience? Do you feel that nothing will cleanse your defiled conscience from the guilt and filth of sin, but the precious blood of the dear Lord Jesus, applied by the eternal Spirit to your heart? If this be the case of your state, you have reason to bless God from the ground of your heart. Well, my friend, Jesus Christ, glory be to his name, came into the world to save sinners, and his blood cleanseth from all sin, from every sort and kind of sin, let it be of whatsoever nature it will; however aggravated, yet the blood of the Lamb can cleanse from all the filth, from all the guilt of it, and cleanse eternally too. May the Holy Ghost, therefore, help you by faith to look to Jesus. Don't endeavour to put away your sins by repentance and amendment, but come just as you are, with all your guilt, with all your filth, with all your sins, and lay them on the Lamb of God. What? say you, may such a wretch as I am come to Jesus, and may I come now? What! just as I am? Surely I ought to be something better first? Blessed be the Lord, you may not only come, but you are invited; nay, you are commanded to come, and there is nothing on the part of God to hinder you. Jesus Christ hath borne in his own body and soul, the sins and sufferings, the curse and wrath, due to his people; he hath made a perfect atonement for sin; he hath made peace by the blood of his cross; he hath brought in an everlasting righteousness. The eternal Father declares himself well-pleased with the person and work of the eternal Son, and declares that all them that believe are justified from all things.

You, my dear friend, may here discover the amazing love of God towards poor sinners; here the Father holds forth Jesus, as the Lamb of his own providing, of his own ordaining, of his own appointing, as the Lamb which taketh away the sins of the world. How does he take away sin? by bearing himself the sins of his people, and this he did when he hung upon Mount Calvary; the Lord Jesus opened a fountain of grace, a fountain of mercy, of love, of pardon, and of consolation, to poor penitent sinners, and, glory be to our Christ, it is still open, it is still running, it is still as efficacious as ever.

Do you thirst for Christ, for pardon, for grace? Jesus cries, "Whosoever thirsts let him come unto me and drink." Is sin the burden of your soul? Behold, Jesus himself has borne the whole weight and burden of sin, for his people. Do you long to hear the voice of pardoning mercy? Hear the Lord himself declaring, "I will freely pardon all your sins and all your transgressions, whereby you have sinned, and whereby you have transgressed against me." Doth sin stare you in the face? Look to Jesus who was made sin for us. Doth conscience accuse? Remember "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Doth the devil assault you? Send him to Jesus who is the advocate for sinners. Are you confounded at a sight of your own filthiness? Consider the precious blood of Christ applied, makes you, in the sight of God, as pure as an angel. Doth the want of a perfect righteousness trouble you? Consider that the righteousness of Jesus, imputed by God to the soul, hides all our transgressions from view. Where can you have such a sight of Christ's love as beholding him dying for love, covered with blood, his whole body made black and blue with stripes, and all in order to save sinners from death? The death of Christ is the believer's life, from the sufferings of Jesus flows our consolation; his stripes prove our healing; his blood is our medicine. The blood of Jesus is pacifying blood; it is justice-satisfying blood; it hath satisfied the justice of God, eternally satisfied it; it is conscience-satisfying; it speaks peace in the conscience. By faith in this blood we can overcome the accuser of the brethren: this blood speaks pardon to the guilty, proclaims reconciliation; through it we may draw nigh to God with boldness, and enter the holiest of all, trusting upon it; it is the blood of sprinkling, so called because it must be sprinkled upon us in order that we may receive benefit from it.

Look up, my dear friend, to the Lord the Spirit in faith, and pray him to make an application of it to your soul; give the Lord no rest till you have a sight of Jesus, and of your interest in him. Blessed be God, one glimpse of Jesus will revive the heart, one sight of Jesus will effectually convert the soul, and don't look into yourself,

but look out of yourself to Jesus; don't look upon your sins, but meditate upon the great God and Saviour; and whenever the Lord the Spirit enables you to believe in Christ Jesus, then you will find that peace of God which passeth all understanding. To the tender mercies of Jesus I commend you.

And am your servant for Jesus' sake,

S. E. P.

LETTER XI.

Frome, Aug. 8, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE taken my pen in hand in order to fulfil my promise to you. I hope Mr. and Mrs. H. are enjoying a great share of spiritual and temporal health. It is a great mercy when we are brought to experience the great grace expressed in that promise, "The Lord will guide thee continually, and make fat thy bones, and thou shalt be as a spring of water, and as a watered garden, and as a spring whose waters fail not."

What an unspeakable blessing it is to be taught of God; to have the eyes of our understanding enlightened into the knowledge of our fallen state; to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the curse due to us on that account; and to be taught by the Holy Spirit the saving knowledge of Christ Jesus; and to experience, by the Spirit's gracious testimony, that we are interested in the Lord Christ. Such the Lord will guide continually into greater discoveries of the mysteries, of the excellencies of the bleeding Lamb, and into more heartfelt experiences of his boundless and bottomless grace, of his everlasting love, and of his complete and perfect salvation. A knowledge which is worthy the study of angels themselves, and which they are happy in prying into. A

knowledge which hath a superexcellency in it, and dive as deep as we may, we can never come to the bottom of it, neither will it ever cloy us. A knowledge which none can teach savingly, but the Holy Spirit, that grand Secretary of Heaven, who knows all the heart of Jesus Christ, and how it stands affected towards his people.

May the Spirit of wisdom and revelation be more and more bestowed upon you, that you may know the things that are freely given to you of God, and among the many gifts, what a gift is Jesus Christ! He is all in all; all eye to behold our misery; all ear to hear our complaints; all fulness to supply our wants; all strength to support us in difficulties under temptations, trials, desertions. And when the enemy cometh in like a flood, he is light to our darkness, life to quicken our deadness, righteousness to justify us, and a blessed fountain for us to bathe in, in order that we may be cleansed from all our sins, spots, and stains. Who can set forth all Immanuel's excellencies? Surely none in heaven or earth.

Oh! my dear Sir, look again and again to that great, glorious, and princely Saviour. Behold him as a place of broad rivers and streams, where you may bathe and swim for delight and recreation.

May the beloved Jesus cause all his goodness to pass before you, and may you be daily coming up out of this world, your heart and affections daily ascending heavenward like pillars of smoke inflamed with Jesus' love, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, and all the powders of the heavenly merchant. The Lord help you to drive a great trade with Christ, the richest merchant in heaven or earth, and he hath the valuablest merchandize to dispose of, riches which are durable, upon which you may live comfortably all your lifetime, and, be as profuse as you may, can never expend; and they are of such a nature that they will make you rich, glorious, and happy to eternal ages. If you ask for a sample, I will endeavour to give you one. Christ has the riches of pardoning, cleansing, restoring, regenerating, adoring, and sanctifying grace, love, and mercy. If you ask where you may find them, I answer in the gospel. There these amazing riches, those treasures of heaven, are exposed, and the ministers of Jesus are divinely employed

to proclaim the sale of them. The terms of purchase are without money, and without price. Take a view of them, dear Sir, surely these riches are suitable to you. I used to think, when I was at A——, that you, my dear friend, had a broken heart. My master sells the best, nay, the only balsam for that sore; but have you no money to spare? My master will give it you freely, but you want directions how to use it. The great and almighty Jesus will himself apply it, and it shall not fail of performing a perfect cure; but you say you want more of the spirit of sanctification; that is my master's gift likewise, and you cannot want it more than he is wanting to bestow it upon you. Surely, dear Sir, this Jesus is the only one you want to traffic with. Come to him for his treasures of grace, wisdom, and knowledge to be communicated to you. The Lord help you to look more out of yourself to Jesus; it is by this means your cold heart will be warmed, the hard heart softened, your corruptions subdued, and your sins lose their power in your soul. Do not fear to hazard your all with Christ. He can never become a bankrupt; and he can make you rich, and be never the less rich himself. The Lord make you rich in faith, in love, in hope, in knowledge, experience, and in the powerful influences of the Holy Spirit. This is the unfeigned prayer of my soul for your dear self and wife.

May the blessing of the Holy Trinity rest on your souls, bodies, and all your concerns. So prays him,

Who is your sincere friend and servant, for Jesus' sake,

S. E. P.

P.S. I desire my cordial love to all the lovers of my precious Christ with you.

LETTER XII.

Oct. 7, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED yours, and having an opportunity of sending without expense, have embraced it. I have written several letters to the Lord's dear people with you, and as they contain the truth as it is in Jesus, so I heartily wish the divine truths they contain may be confirmed more and more by the Holy Spirit in each of their hearts. It is a matter of real grief to me to find Jesus Christ, the alone Saviour of sinners, so little known by the professors in our day. There are some trimmers of the gospel, or else I fear there is more talk of souls being awakened than is true. What good can there be done without Christ? Properly speaking, a soul is not converted till it is brought to believe.

Mr. Romaine tells his people that there is a damnable doctrine goes about in these days, that souls must be converted before they believe. I assure you, in these parts, I find professors more in love with their graces than with Jesus. Well, blessed be God, I see great cause to bless God that he leads me differently from some other public persons. Where I am now, I fear the word is on my hearers quite lost. The Lord, I hope, will soon remove me. I am in expectation of going from hence soon. Oh! my friend, it is Jesus and his lovely name alone that is to my soul as ointment poured out. All glory be ascribed to him, he is my heart's delight; you say you long to have and to hear Christ alone exalted. May God keep this ever the desire of your soul, and your mind wholly to the study of Christ Jesus. No salvation without him. No holiness, any more than happiness, out of Christ. He is altogether glorious, excellent, and beautiful in the eyes of his redeemed. My prayer for you and your dear yoke-fellow is, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that you may be rooted and grounded in love, and be enabled to comprehend with all saints the height and depth, the length and breadth, of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that

ye may be filled with all the fulness of God. The Lord the Spirit help you to survey this love in all its glorious dimensions. Consider the rise of it was from eternity. It is eternal love, proceeding from God's eternal purpose in Christ Jesus ; and as its date is from eternity, so its duration will be to the days of eternity. And if we consider what it is for God to love us, we cannot but presently perceive, that if God loves us, it must be with a great love indeed. As one observes, God's love, as it is in the fountain, can never be expressed. All the acts of God's love towards us in time, and to eternity, can but barely represent it. The very giving of the Lord Jesus Christ to die for us, is but the fruit of the Father's love towards us ; and yet, what an astonishing gift of grace was it for the Father to give the Son of his love, and with him all things, to us poor worms.

Surely, my dearly beloved, we can never enter enough into the greatness of that act of God's love, for Jesus the darling, the well-beloved, the Son of God's love, to be given unto us in the everlasting covenant, to be set apart for the glorious work and office of mediator, and to be exposed to all the fiery indignation of the broken law, that we might be discharged from the guilt and punishment of it ! What heart can conceive the amazing love of God in sacrificing the very delight of his heart, and bruising, with all the weight of his wrath, his eternal Son. No wonder the Holy Ghost takes notice so often, in the record of God concerning Jesus, that his sacrifice was a sweet-smelling savour. It has scented all heaven with its fragrancy, and gave eternal contentment to the heart of God ; so that God himself is now better pleased with the souls that, through the eternal Spirit, are brought to believe, than he was ever displeased on account of their sins. All the attributes of the Godhead are more glorified and magnified in saving sinners by Jesus Christ. Eye God, perfectly satisfied with the atonement of Jesus, and with his everlasting righteousness. Eye Christ, our great Head and representative, entered for us within the vail. Glory, eternal glory, be rendered to God ; here is ground of everlasting consolation. The Lord the Spirit grant, for his mercy's sake, that our hearts may be daily more and more happy by faith in Christ ; and by the enjoyment of the Father's love in our conscience. We can never rest too

much on Jesus. We can never be too well satisfied with Jesus. He gives the heart of God full content; he is delightful to his Father; and able to satisfy the vast desire of Jehovah's heart. Oh, that we may find Christ to us a soul-satisfying portion. In this Christ, and in all his meritorious redemption and unsearchable riches, we have, and are interested in, astonishing grace. All glory be to God, the Father, Son, and Spirit; in him our life is hid. We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. Oh, for grace, oh, for the Lord to direct our hearts into the love of God. May we seek after more fellowship with Jesus in our daily walk and warfare. May we be daily enjoying more of the Father's love, by faith in the Son's salvation. May we be brought, by the eternal Spirit, to seek a supply of all our wants out of the Saviour's fulness. May we be daily growing out of ourselves into Christ, and be made more and more like our precious, precious, infinitely precious Jesus, in all things.

So prays him, who loves you and your's

Most intensely in the bleeding Lamb,

S. E. P.

LETTER XIII.

Chester, Aug. 7, 1778.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

I REMEMBER you desired me to write to you in order to stir up your mind by way of remembrance; I am your's and the church's servant for Jesus' sake, and therefore do remember my promise, and am willing to execute it.

I will endeavour, by the Lord's assistance, to commend my precious Jesus to you. Blessed be God, I trust that he is yours as well as mine. And, my dear friend, I must tell you there is none so precious, none so glorious, beautiful, and delightful, none so rich, none so faithful, tender and affec-

tionate, none so constant and unfeigned a friend, as the Lord Jesus Christ. Behold him, by the eye of faith, and you will see he is altogether lovely. View him as the bridegroom of your soul, in his glorious apparel, in his excellent greatness, in his triumphant retinue of saints and angels, and crowned with all the crowns of heaven. He, the beloved Jesus, is, as the representative of his people, seated at the right hand of the Father, where he constantly represents his divine atonement, and sits as God-man invested with all authority, and having all power in heaven and earth. View him as having the keys of death and hell fastened at his girdle, and all his and his people's enemies under his feet. Consider him as a faithful and merciful High Priest, one who, in all points hath been tempted and lived like you and me, yet without sin. And never forget, that he knows how to pity you, how to support, comfort, and strengthen you. My dear friend, meditate often upon the exceeding greatness of his love, which, like himself, is boundless and bottomless, and which passeth all understanding. Call to mind the wonders of his love, how he waded through the sea of his Father's wrath, bore the curse of God, became a worm, and no man, in order to deliver you from endless woe, and wash away your sins in his precious blood. And the Lord the Spirit help you to behold your name written upon the heart of Christ. Where would you wish to be but in the heart of Jesus? and there you are. God the Father cannot behold his well-beloved Son without seeing your name recorded among the living in Jerusalem. And when guilt ariseth in your conscience, when Satan would bring your sins to remembrance, then, my dear friend, do you cast your eye to the bleeding Lamb of God, who hath borne the sins of his people, and hath put them away by the sacrifice of himself. And never forget (Oh, that the Holy Ghost may write it upon your heart as with the point of a diamond) that God the Father loves every believer, the weakest as well as the strongest, with the same love as he doth Christ himself, that he embraceth them with the same affectionate arms of tenderness and compassion; and looks upon them in Christ without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. Take heed of harbouring hard thoughts in the heart against a precious Christ. Look to Jesus at all times, make use of him for everything, pour out all your complaints into his bosom,

and I'll assure you, my dear friend, Jesus cannot hide himself from his own flesh. Give Jesus Christ the chief place in your heart and affections. Do nothing without asking counsel of him, and may the Lord water you, moment after moment, with showers of his grace. Be often in ejaculatory prayer; be often meditating on the blessed truths of God's most holy word; ask counsel, and converse often with those who are wholly alive to God; and may the Lord make all grace abound towards you.

I am, my dear friend,

Your's in all christian services for Christ's sake,

S. E. P.

LETTER XIV.

October 5, 1778.

DEAR MRS. B.

I RECEIVED your very precious letter, which was as health to my soul and marrow to my bones. Blessed be God, may his name be eternally magnified for confirming your soul in the truths of the everlasting gospel; they are God-glorifying truths; sin and self-killing, and Christ-exalting truths; indeed Jesus, the infinitely precious, the infinitely glorious and matchless Jesus, is the most precious diamond in the cabinet of heaven; and when the Holy Ghost hath given a sinner a sight of him by faith, then there is nothing the soul more earnestly breathes after than a greater sight of Jesus, and his adorable perfections and surpassing beauty. Blessed be God, this is your case; you know that in Jesus are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; in him all the vast treasures of everlasting love, pardoning mercy, sanctifying grace, are deposited in the fulness of Immanuel, and set you longing to know more of Jesus and his great salvation. Oh, may the Holy Ghost be given unto you as a Spirit of wisdom and

understanding in the knowledge of Jesus, that you may be daily brought to see more of the glories of his divine person. In him, as God-man, all the glories of heaven meet and centre; he is the well-beloved of his Father. Such are his excellencies, that God the Father loves him upon the account of his own personal worth, and he is able to satisfy the vast desire of Jehovah's heart, and Jesus hath from eternity laid in the bosom of the Father, and hath drawn out all the love of the Father's heart; insomuch, that all the vast ocean of Jehovah's heart's love is communicated in all its fulness and freeness to Jesus, who, glory be to his name, is graciously willing to communicate it to us. God the Father is so in love with his eternal Son, and with his glorious obedience and satisfactory sacrifice, that he calls upon poor sinners to look to Jesus that they may be saved.

Mrs. B., what astonishing love must the eternal Trinity have for you before all time; the Father set his heart's love on you, and gave you a being in Christ Jesus, in the everlasting council and decree of God. It was determined that all your sins, with all their guilt and all their filth, with all their several aggravations, should be laid on the Lamb of God; and that you might have the divine knowledge of this, it was determined by the eternal Three-in-One, that the eternal Spirit should glorify Jesus in your heart. Pause a moment, and consider how infinitely God must love you; his love was so great that he gave his own co-equal and co-eternal Son for you; and to you the love of the Son was so great, that all the glories of heaven, nay, the very heaven of heavens, could not attract nor contain this almighty lover; but that you might have the greatest proof possible of his love, he burst through, came into the world clothed in our nature, and to vent his love by dying, and shedding his heart's blood. So surpassing all understanding was the love of Jesus to you, that, by his victorious power, he brake the bond of death and the grave, ascended to heaven with the voice of triumph, entered the holy of holies, having spoiled all our enemies, and took his seat at his Father's right hand, in order that he might plead continually for you before the throne. Blessed be God, there, in the immediate presence of God, Jesus appears, and pleads all the merits of his blood on your behalf. The Holy Ghost, the testifier of Jesus, hath shewn his everlasting love

towards you, in that he hath taken of the things of Christ and shewn them unto you.

Oh, blessed woman, all the riches of eternity are yours, and ere long you will join your elder brethren round the throne, in casting your crown at the feet of Jesus, in giving the whole glory of your salvation to the eternal Three. Let them be miserable that have no part nor lot in Jesus, it is your privilege to be happy; if God's everlasting love, if Christ's meritorious life and death, if the Spirit's application of Christ to the heart, can make a sinner happy, you are; glory be to God, you have all this to rejoice in. Let me add, by way of confirming your faith, that the eternal Father seeth no spot nor wrinkle in you, for he beholds you in Jesus all fair, without spot; yea, he rests in his love towards you, and joys over you with singing.

When sin, the world, unbelief, or the devil assault you, remember that there is no condemnation in the high court of heaven against you; God himself declares it, and your state before God is as complete, as perfect, and unchangeable as Christ's is; and till Jesus ceases to have an interest in his Father's heart, you need not fear. When I read your gracious letter, I could truly adopt Paul's language, "Now I live if ye stand fast in the Lord, I glory throughout all the churches of the saints in the faith of you;" and, my dear A— friends, nothing of outward things, I mean of anything next to immediate communion with God, rejoiceth my soul more than hearing from any of you. I heartily pray that your faith may grow exceedingly, that your heart may be perfectly satisfied with the precious Jesus, and his precious and perfect salvation. May the Lord the Spirit glorify Jesus more and more in your soul, by giving you to know more of the eternal efficacy of his blood, and bring you, in spite of all the malice of hell, to glory in the Lord your righteousness. So I conclude, wishing you a rich experience of God's Spirit's consolation to your soul.

I subscribe myself your servant for Jesus' sake,

S. E. P.