

S E R M O N I.

THE SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE OF THE COESSENTIAL THREE.

1 JOHN V. 7.

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost : and these three are one.

THE holy and blessed Scriptures, which were written by the *inspiration of God*, are the only infallible rule, guide, and direction for our faith and practice : they contain and make known unto us the whole of God's mind and will, and are sufficiently able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. They inform us, that God made all things for his own glory—that he is incomprehensible in his essence—immutable in his will—infinite in wisdom—almighty in power—immense and every where present. *There is no searching of his understanding.* He being self-existent—all-sufficient—the fountain of goodness—of life and blessedness, whose name is I AM that I AM, who made all things for his own glory—called all things out of nothing into being, and hath fore-ordained

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whatsoever shall come to pass.—All things in nature, providence, and grace, are *of him, and through him and to him : to whom be glory for ever : Amen.*

In the Bible we are informed of what JEHOVAH did concerning his choice and election of his people in Christ before the foundation of the world—of his love towards them—of the purposes of his grace respecting them, and his designs upon them ; and, by it, through the gracious illuminations and teachings of the Holy Spirit, we are led into the true, clear, and saving knowledge of God. Here he is revealed in the unity of his nature—in his persons and perfections—and by it, we are led to know, *that there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.*

The doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity, which I purpose at this time to treat of, is a most deep and sublime article of our most holy faith, and upon which our everlasting salvation depends : and it is purely a doctrine of divine revelation. Neither nature, nor philosophy, discovers it, nor can they reach it ; for though when it is clearly stated from the word, and spiritually understood, it may be illustrated by many things in nature ; yet it is revealed only in, and made known unto us by the word. Here it runs and is to be seen in every part of it, and though it is sometimes represented by such as are strangers to and enemies against it, that it is merely a speculative point, and people may do well enough without the knowledge and belief of it, yet this is all mistake. It

being an everlasting truth, that every article of our faith is built upon it, every truth of God is connected with it, and we cannot worship God aright, without the true and saving knowledge of it.

Jehovah has revealed himself, as the sole, true, and only object of worship, and we cannot worship him aright, if we are destitute of the true knowledge of him. We cannot attain the true knowledge of him without a revelation of himself made known unto us; and this he hath made in the inspired volume, where his incomprehensible essence and his personalities are declared. And, upon the foundation of God's word, and taking it only for my guide, in a dependance upon the Holy Spirit for his gracious and special assistance, I shall proceed, founding and building all I have to say and deliver upon this deep and sublime subject, on *God's own veracity in his word*. And, before I proceed one step further, I would observe, that the best belief of this essential and important truth, is that which is received from the bare word, and is fully believed upon the bare testimony of the Lord in the word. The words of my text contain a full and clear proof of the doctrine. *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.* That is, three in person, one in the nature and unity of the Godhead. So that the eternal Father, the eternal Son, and the eternal Spirit, are the one eternal and incomprehensible JEHOVAH. Each of them is God and Lord, and all three but one, the same in essence, equal in power, eternity,

and glory. When an unbeliever reads this text, he stumbles even with God's word in his hand, and before him. He reasons carnally upon it, ignorantly cavils at it, and argues against it, saying, how can this be? how can three be one? and one three? This is not the doctrine of the text. It treats of the unity of the Godhead, and of the distinct modes of subsistence in the Godhead, and declares that though the persons in the Godhead are three, and are distinct as to their personalities, so that the Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Father, the Holy Ghost is neither the Father nor the Son: yet the essence, nature, or Godhead, which is the fountain of the Divine persons, and in which they exist, is one, for *God is one. The Lord our God is one* JEHOVAH. Gal. iii. 20. Deut. vi. 4.

The words of the text contain and hold forth the following truths. First, the *unity* of the Godhead.—Secondly, a *trinity of persons* in the Godhead.—Thirdly, their *proper deity*—and *distinct* personality.—And Fourthly, that they are *three testifiers or witnesses, for there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.* The unity of the Godhead is what the Scriptures carefully guard; which truth is fully contained and eternally secured in the word JEHOVAH, which we translate LORD, and which, whenever it is printed in capital letters in the Old Testament, always signifies JEHOVAH, which is the incommunicable name of God, expressive of the incommunicable nature of the Godhead. It signifies

necessary existence, or existing by a necessity of nature. The Psalmist in the 83d Psalm, ver. 18. expresseth himself thus, *That men may know that thou whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the Most High over all the earth.* Jeremiah says, *JEHOVAH is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting King. At his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.* Jer. x. 10. And the Lord himself speaking in the 42d of Isaiah, verse 8, saith, *I the JEHOVAH, that is my name.* And this word JEHOVAH, occurs six thousand eight hundred and fifty-five times in the Scriptures. So that the nature and essence of God is one—infinite and incomprehensible, without division, or multiplication. And this leads me to prosecute the present subject.

First, to prove from the Scriptures, that there are three persons in the Godhead. Secondly, that each of these hath a joint concern in the works of creation, providence, and grace. Thirdly, that each is God and Lord. And Lastly, that they bear their joint testimony concerning the salvation of elect sinners by Christ Jesus.

I am first to prove from the Scriptures, that there are three persons in the one infinite—incommunicable—and incomprehensible Godhead. And this I shall endeavour to do from the following passages in the infallible word. In the 1st chapter of the book of Genesis, we read of God's creating the heaven and the earth, and at the 26th verse of it we hear him speak thus, *Let us make man in our image, after*

our likeness; these words must have been and were directed by one of the Divine persons to the other two, for the *Us* here, manifestly points out a plurality. It is not a consultation with angels—for they are not of his council. *Who hath been his counsellor?* No creature. Man was made after the image of God. And it is truly remarkable, that the first word used in the Bible concerning the Deity, is a word of the plural number: The word translated, and read by us, God, is allowed both by Jewish and Christian writers, to be a plural one, and it is used on purpose to point out the persons in the Godhead; and their joint concern in the creation is evidently spoken of. *In the beginning God* (in the Hebrew ELOHIM) *created the heaven and the earth, and the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep: And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and God said, let there be light, and there was light.* Here are all the three divine persons jointly concerned. Here is God the Father, to whom creation is always in Scripture ascribed, though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit, for we have in these words the beginning of the creation, which God created. Here is God the Spirit spoken of as performing his part in this great work, *He moved upon the face of the waters.* And God the word is taken notice of. *God said let there be light, and there was light:* which the Psalmist explains in this very manner in the 33d Psalm, verse 6. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made: (i. e.) by the essential word, who*

spoke all things out of nothing into being, and all the host of them, the sun, moon, and stars by the breath of his mouth. All things in the airy, starry, and in the third heavens, the Spirit, who is here styled the breath of JEHOVAH, created and formed.

When man, the last and noblest of all God's works in this lower world was to be brought into a state of existence, you have this plural word used—*Let us make man*, which evidently implies that there is a plurality of persons in the Godhead. In the 3d chapter of this book, we have God again speaking in the same manner at the 22d verse. After Adam was fallen from his original righteousness and purity, it is recorded, *that the Lord God said, behold the man is become as one of Us*, which is generally understood to be spoken by way of irony or sarcasm at man's deception by Satan. Yet this word *Us*, and this manner of speaking prove, that there is more than one person in the Godhead. We have this plural expression again in the 11th chapter of Genesis, verses 6th and 7th, where, upon attempting to build a city and a tower, whose top the builders would wish, if possible, to reach to heaven, and which vain attempt was set about after the flood; we read of the Lord's taking notice of it. *And the Lord came down to see the city, and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do, and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do. Go to, let Us go down,*

and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. Now this could not be spoken to angels, for the work of confounding the language of the Babel builders is expressly ascribed to JEHOVAH, and not to any created agents. *So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth. The Lord did there confound the language of all the earth.* In the 6th chapter of Isaiah's prophecy, we have this plural expression again. The prophet has a vision of the Lord of Hosts, and heard the seraphim crying, *Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory.* This thrice holy is a proof of a trinity of persons. For the Father is holy, and is styled by Christ in the 17th of John, HOLY FATHER. The Son is holy, and is called in the 9th chapter of Daniel, THE MOST HOLY. And the Spirit is holy, and his title is, The Holy Spirit of Promise. See Eph. i. 13. But, lest we should be mistaken, and think this thrice holy was only the rapture of devotion, the prophet at the 8th verse says, *Also I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?* which plainly points out a trinity of persons—for the voice of the Lord respects Jehovah the Father, who is always represented as sending the Son and the Spirit, and never as being sent by them. And concerning this vision we have an inspired apostle applying it to Christ. *These things, said Esaias, when he saw his (i. e.) Christ's glory and spake of him,* John xii. 41. And the apostle Paul applies this likewise to the Holy Ghost in the last

chapter of the Acts, where he quotes the 9th and 10th verses of the 6th chapter of Isaiah, and thus applies them to the unbelieving Jews. *Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet, unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people and say, hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive.* Again, in the 4th chapter of Daniel, where that great change is spoken of, which was to take place in Nebuchadnezzar, and his kingdom, it is said at the 17th verse, *This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the HOLY ONES*, evidently alluding to the persons in the Godhead. And in the New Testament we have an open and express manifestation of all the sacred Three, at our Lord's baptism, where the voice of God the Father was heard, proclaiming Christ to be his beloved Son. The second person was there seen, manifested in the flesh and sealed and anointed as the true and promised Messiah. And the Holy Ghost was seen to descend in a bodily shape like a dove, and lighted upon the adorable Saviour. And, besides this, there are these following proofs from the New Testament. This plain declaration of John's, *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost.* The command for baptism, which is by our Lord's express order to be performed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Matt. xxviii. verse 19. And that apostolic benediction, 2 Cor. xiii. verse 14. *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the com-*

munion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen. To which may be added that most solemn invocation of the apostle John, in the first chapter of the Revelation, where, addressing the seven churches of Asia, he speaks thus, *John to the seven churches which are in Asia: grace be unto you, and peace from him which was, and which is, and which is to come:* which is the best paraphrasis and explanation of the word JEHOVAH that can be given, and which involves and includes the three divine persons: the Father by him which is, he being the *I AM that I AM*: the Son by him which was, which was with God the Father, and was God; and the Spirit by him which is to come, who was promised to come from the Father and the Son, as the Comforter and Spirit of Truth. Grace and peace are prayed for from the Father and the seven spirits which are before the throne, (*i. e.*) the Holy Spirit, who is but one in personality, but is prayed to under the consideration of his sevenfold influences towards and upon the churches; and the Spirit and Jesus Christ are joined together in this address. So that prayer, which is an acknowledgment of God, is here put up by an inspired apostle to all the three divine persons, which is a full and clear proof of their existence in the Godhead, and of their coequality and coefficiency. From the joint suffrage, therefore of the Old and New Testament; from the plurabexpressions of the one, and the plain and positive declarations of the other, it will appear fully and clearly, when these are properly stated, and rightly explained,

that there is a trinity of persons in the one self-existent JEHOVAH. And, without going any further for proofs of a distinct personality in the Deity, which if all were brought that the Scriptures afford, well nigh the whole of the inspired volume must be quoted. I proceed

Secondly, to prove that each of these divine persons hath a joint concern in the works of creation, providence, and grace. God the Father is said to be the creator of the heavens and the earth. Thus in the first chapter of Genesis, *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.* Again, Isaiah xlii. verse 5. *Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein.* And it is declared by Paul, in the 8th chapter of 1 Cor. *To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things;* and in the 3d of the Ephesians, verse 9, *that he created all things by Jesus Christ, not as an instrument, but as a coefficient cause.* So that in the first chapter to the Hebrews, it is said, *that by him he made the worlds.* And, that the Son and Spirit were jointly concerned in this work, appears from express Scripture. That in the 33d Psalm, before quoted, fully proves it. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.* Here is an express mention of the eternal three—the *Lord*—the *word* of the Lord—and the *breath* of his mouth—by whom the heavens and all the hosts were

created and made. The apostle John tells us, that *In the beginning, was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.* In which we have an express testimony of the distinct personality, eternity, and deity of God the Son. The beginning, is the same as Moses in the first chapter of Genesis speaks of, and which our Lord calls the beginning of the creation which God created. Mark xiii. 19. All before the creation was boundless eternity.

None was before the world but JEHOVAH. To be before the foundation of the world, before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world was formed, is brought in by Moses in the 90th Psalm, as a proof of God's eternity. No angel, nor any creature was before the world. For all things in heaven and earth were created in the space of six days. But the essential word, the wisdom and consubstantial Son of the Father, was before the world, was present at the making of it, and had his almighty power manifested in it, and by it. John declares, in the words before cited, his personality, his eternity, and his divinity, and proves it further by adding, *all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* John i. verses 1, 2, 3. Paul, in the first chapter of his epistle to the Colossians, verse the 16th, tells us that Christ is the Creator. *For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principa-*

lities, or powers ; all things were created by him,— by his own almighty power, and for his own glory. And then he gives us an everlasting proof of his eternal deity, *and he is before all things ; there is his eternity. And by him all things consist ;* therein his omnipotent power is displayed : it being owing to omnipotence, that the whole creation is upheld and sustained. And the work of garnishing the heavens with stars, is expressly ascribed to the Holy Spirit. See Job xxvi. verse 13. *By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens ; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.* And Elihu ascribes his creation and life unto him. Job xxxiii. verse 4. *The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the almighty hath given me life.* And the renewing the earth at every returning spring, which is a work of omnipotency, is attributed unto him in the 104th Psalm. *Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created : and thou renewest the face of the earth.* And his omniscience and omnipresence are declared in the 139th Psalm, verses 7, 8, 9. *Whither shall I go from thy spirit ? or whither shall I flee from thy presence ? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there : if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there : if I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea : even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right-hand shall hold me.* Now these Scriptures assert and prove that the eternal three are jointly concerned in the creation of all things.

I go on to produce such others as speak of their

joint concern in the works of Providence. I shall give an instance of it in that remarkable affair of bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt, and leading and conducting them through the wilderness, which is spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, in the 63d chapter of his prophecy. *I will mention the loving kindneses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed upon us, and the great goodness towards the house of Israel; which he hath bestowed upon them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving kindneses.* For he said, *Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour. In all their affliction he was afflicted; and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he (saved them or) redeemed them, and carried them all the days of old: but they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit.* Now here is an exprefs mention of the eternal three, as being jointly concerned in this affair of providence. Here is JEHOVAH their Saviour, who in all their afflictions sympathized with them. Here is the angel of his presence, sent by him to conduct them to the place which he had appointed for them, of whom JEHOVAH speaking to Moses, saith, *My name is in him;* that is, his perfections; for the whole fulness of the Godhead dwelleth in Christ Jesus substantially. And here is the Holy Spirit whom they rebelled against and vexed: so that in this act of providence we see all the trinity engaged and concerned.

The almighty power of the spirit, and his concern in the government of the world, are declared in the 40th of Isaiah, *Who hath directed the spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, or who instructed him, and taught him the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are but as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance; behold he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.* The affairs before referred to concerning Nebuchadnezzar, shew that each of the eternal three is jointly concerned in providential events. Our Lord in the 5th of John's gospel, saith, *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work:* speaking and referring to the work of Providence. So that from his own true and faithful word, it appears that he is equally concerned in upholding, governing, and disposing of all things, with the Father and the Spirit. We have a remarkable instance of it respecting the destruction of Sodom. When that awful providence was executed it is said, *The Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah, brimstone and fire, from the Lord out of heaven.* Gen. xix. verse 24. Now here are two spoken of, and to whom can this be ascribed, but to Christ the second person? who appeared to Abraham and told him of the destruction of the places; whom Abraham supplicates and addresses as the very true and essential JEHOVAH. See Genesis xviii. verse 22, &c. The angels had no concern in this affair, for whenever it is spoken of

in Scripture, it is ascribed unto God. See Jerem. l. verse 40. Amos iv. verse 11. And we know who hath said that, *the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son.* John v. verse 22.

I proceed to observe and prove from scripture testimonies, that the three in JEHOVAH, have likewise a joint and equal concern in grace, in all the acts of it towards us, in us, and upon us. It is the great promise contained in the Old Testament, that God the Father would send a Saviour, a great one, who should *save his people from their sins.* The person promised is the Son of God. So saith Isaiah, *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, who is the mighty God.* Isaiah ix. verse 6. According, and agreeable to which are the Lord's words in Hosea, *I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God.* In the 48th chapter, verse 12, of Isaiah, we have JEHOVAH the Saviour speaking of himself as the I AM. The first and the last, whose hand laid the foundation of the earth, and whose right hand hath spanned the heavens, whose voice they hear and obey; and he speaks of his being sent by the Father and the Spirit, as the Saviour and Deliverer of his people. *Come ye near unto me, hear ye this, I have not spoken in secret; from the beginning, from the time that it was, there am I, and now the Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me,* verse 16. Again in the 61st chapter, verse 1, we have an account

of all the trinity, as concerned in salvation-work. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me, &c.* Here is the person anointed; here is the Anointer, the Lord God; and here is the Anointing, the Spirit of the Lord God. Nor can we be ignorant that this passage belongs to Christ, seeing he explains it thus and applies it to himself, in the 4th of Luke. The Son of God in our nature was anointed with all the unction of the Spirit's gifts and graces, who descended and rested upon him; who himself was the Spirit of the Lord God, who proceeded from the Father and the Son; and who with the Father and the Son is to be worshipped and glorified. But, it being a work of too great length for the limits of a single discourse, to quote all the Scripture proofs that might be given, I shall refrain and confine myself to the following. In the first chapter of Peter's first Epistle, we have the eternal three mentioned, and their particular acts of grace towards the elect, respecting their salvation, mentioned also. *Elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto the obedience, and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ;* for so the words should be read, says a great critic. In which Scripture these acts of grace are ascribed to Father, Son, and Spirit. Election is ascribed and attributed to the Father, redemption to the Son, and sanctification to the Holy Ghost. So likewise in the 3d chapter to Titus, the apostle involves the whole three per-

sons, as jointly and equally concerned in our salvation. In which Scripture the whole trinity is held forth. *But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us (richly, or) abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.* God our Saviour in this passage, is God the Father, from whose kindness and love our salvation proceeds; and which hath been manifested through the incarnation and work of Jesus Christ our Saviour, through whose most precious bloodshedding and prevalent intercession, the Holy Ghost is shed on us richly and abundantly. So in the first chapter to the Ephesians, all the acts of the Divine persons towards us, in us, and upon us, are taken notice of. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places (or things) in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will: to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. And he observes that these persons were sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is (saith he, verse 14) the earnest*

of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Thus I have endeavoured from express passages of Scripture to shew, that the coequal and coeternal three, are jointly and equally concerned in the works of creation, providence, and grace.

I go on, Thirdly, to prove that each of the Divine persons is God and Lord; and surely if the Scriptures ascribe unto each of them the work of creation, providence, and grace, this will prove each to be God and Lord. But I shall in this matter more particularly confine myself to such Scriptures as ascribe essential Deity unto them, from the consideration of their boundless and immense perfections. And here I shall do little else than quote the inspired word, which will stand good to all eternity.

Now God, as essentially considered, is self-existent, eternal, unchangeable, almighty, omniscient, omnipresent, infinite in holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. And my work is to prove, that God is all this, personally considered.

And first, as it respects the Divine Father, his being before the world proves his eternity. Ps. xc. verse 2. As his name JEHOVAH proves his necessary self-existence, Isaiah xlii. verse 8, so his own express declaration in the prophet Malachi proves him unchangeable: *I am the Lord, I change not.* His being almighty, is declared in and by all his works of nature, providence, and grace: *Abba, Father, says Christ; all things are possible*

unto thee. Mark xiv. verse 36. He is omniscient : *I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins.* Jer. xvii. verse 10. He is omnipresent : *Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord ?* Jeremiah xxiii. verse 24. He is infinitely, essentially, and invariably holy : Holy Father, is his style and title : John xvii. 11. *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.* Pf. cxlv. 17. He is perfectly just : *He is the just Lord who will not do iniquity.* Zephaniah iii. verse 5. He is good : *The Lord is good.* Pf. cxviii. 1. And, He is true. *The Lord is the true God.* Jeremiah x. 10. Now as all these Scriptures prove him to be God and Lord, and his being expressly called God and Lord.—*The Lord is the true God :* And the incommunicable name JEHOVAH being ascribed most justly unto him, Psalm lxxxiii. 18, he making himself known also by this name, Exodus vi. 3, and the Deity of the Father not being disputed, I shall rest this truth upon the foundation of the essential perfections of Deity, which those Scriptures referred to, ascribe to JEHOVAH the Father, as personally considered, praying that it may be remembered by the reader, that the fountain of the Divine persons is the boundless essence, or Godhead, and that the distinction of the Divine persons in the Godhead, is as eternal as the nature of God ; that it is by a necessity of nature, each being self-existent, self-sufficient, distinct in personality, but coequal, coessential, and consubstantial in Deity.

I shall go on to prove, secondly, that all the

essential perfections of Deity, such as eternity, immensity, omnipotence, omniscience, immutability, necessary and self-existence, are equally ascribed and attributed to the Son, as being coessential and consubstantial with the Father; of which we have a full proof in these words, *for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.* Col. ii. 9. “Which is to be understood of the Godhead, as subsisting in the person of the Son of God, and not as subsisting in the person of the Father, or of the Spirit.” Dr. GILL.

The eternity of Christ is asserted in, and may be concluded from his own express declaration. *Before Abraham was, I am*; which is agreeable to his expression in the 43d of Isaiah, *I, even I, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour.* His Divine Father addresses him thus, in the 45th Psalm, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.* Paul says, Col. i. verse 17, *He (i. e.) Christ, is before all things*; so that here is proof of his eternity. John says, *he was in the beginning with God.* And the prophet Micah speaking of him, chapter v. verse 2, saith, *whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*

He bears and wears the essential names and titles which are equally ascribed to the Father, such as *God*; *the Lord God of the holy prophets*; *King of Kings*; *and Lord of Lords*; *the living God*; *the true God*; *the great God*; *the only wise God*; *God over all, blessed for ever, Amen.* See John i. 1. Rev. xxii. 6. ch. xix. 16. Heb. iii. 12. 1 John v. 20. Tit. ii. 13. Jude 25. Rom. ix. 5.

The apostle asserts that Christ is immutable and unchangeable, in the first and last chapters to the Hebrews: *Thou, Lord, (or JEHOVAH) in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou change them, (or, fold them up) and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail: first chapter, 10th, 11th, and 12th verses. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever, 13th chapter verse 8.* That Christ is almighty is declared and manifested in his works of creation, providence, and grace; and is expressly declared by himself. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.* Revelation, chapter i. verse 8. Is Omniscience an attribute of Deity? It is in the Son of God *These things saith the Son of God, all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts.* Revelation, chap. ii. verses 18 and 23. *The word of God (i. e. the essential word) is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.* Heb. chap. iv. verses 12 and 13. Omnipresence belongs likewise unto him. *No man hath*

ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. John iii. verse 13. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. John i. verse 10. And he hath promised to be with his church always, even to the end of the world, which he could not be, were it not for the immensity of his Divine nature, and which this promise serves to be a proof of. He is likewise infinitely, essentially, and invariably holy; for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead substantially. Colossians ii. verse 9. And his style and title is the Holy One of Israel, and his maker. Isaiah xlv. verse 12.

The incommunicable name *Jehovah*, is given unto him. Zech. ii. 10. Ps. lxxxiii. 18. Jer. xxiii. 6. This is the name whereby he shall be called, *The Lord our righteousness*. He is expressly called God and Lord. Stephen recommends his departing spirit to him, and while the enemies were stoning him, he calls upon Christ, saying, *Lord Jesus receive my spirit*.

Having, I trust, given you infallible scripture evidence, that all the essential perfections of Deity dwell in the Son of God, who by essential union with the Godhead, is coequal and coeternal with the Father, and the Spirit; I shall make the following quotation, which will further confirm this truth: *Jehovah* is the peculiar and incommunicable name of the Divine essence, subsisting in a plurality, (*i. e.*) a trinity of persons. A learned writer (Mr. *Spearman*) observes, *Jehovah* is the Being necessarily existing of and from himself, with all ac-

tual perfection originally in his essence. John expresses it by *He which is, and which was, and which is to come*. Rev. i. 4, 8, 11, 17. compared with ch. iv. 8. It would be almost endless to quote all the passages of Scripture wherein the name JEHOVAH is applied to Christ. Let those therefore who own the Scripture as the rule, and yet doubt of his essential Deity, only compare in the original Scriptures, Isa. vi. 1—5, with John xii. 41. Isa. xlv. 24, 25, and Jer. xxiii. 5, 6, with Acts xiii. 39. 1 Cor. i. 30, 31. vi. 11. Isa. xl. 3, with Matt. iii. 1, 3. Mark i. 3. Luke iii. 3, 4. John i. 23. Mal. iii. 1, with Mark i. 2, 3. Isa. xliii. 3, with Rev. i. 17, 18. Joel ii. 32 or 35, and I think they cannot miss of a scriptural demonstration, that JESUS is JEHOVAH, says the Rev. Mr. PARKHURST, in his Hebrew and English Lexicon, page 173, 174.

I proceed to shew, thirdly, that the same boundless perfections of eternity, immensity, omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, immutability, necessary and self-existence, are equally ascribed and attributed to the Holy Ghost, as being coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son, who is by essential union with the Godhead, one with the Father and the Son.

He is called God, Acts v. 4, and Lord and God, 1 Cor. xii. 5, 6. He is eternal, and this he must be, he being present at the creation of all things, as we observed before, whose concern in creation we have already taken notice of.

He is called the Eternal Spirit, in Heb. ix. 14.

And he being JEHOVAH, must also be self-existent and immutable. He is omniscient, and omnipresent, as appears from the 139th Psalm, and from Acts v. 3. He is the object of divine worship, equally with the Father and the Son, and is joined with them in baptism. All the prophets and apostles were inspired by him. *Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* 2 Pet. i. 21.

He it was who testified before, in the prophets, and by their writings, the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. It was by him the human nature of Christ was formed; it is by him that sinners are regenerated and quickened up to new and spiritual life. He raised up the New Testament church, and is the author of all spiritual gifts and graces. He is the Lord and giver of all spiritual life. He furnished the apostles for the important work assigned them by Christ, and still qualifies and bestows upon his churches, pastors after his own heart, *to feed them with knowledge and understanding.* A believer in Christ need only look into the Bible, and he will have incontestible proof of the Divinity of the Holy Ghost; for who could declare the deep things of God, and discover and reveal all the secrets of Deity, but he, who in his personality, is coequal, coessential, and coeternal with the Father and the Son; of whom it is said, that *he searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.* 1 Cor. ii. 10. The Scriptures were given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. So saith the prophet David. *The Spirit of the Lord God spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.* 2 Sam.

xxiii. ver. 2. A real Christian hath in himself an everlasting proof and evidence of the eternal power and omnipotence of the Spirit in regeneration, and the work proves the agent to be God. For who can raise the spiritually dead, and quicken them and impart everlasting life unto them, but the spirit of the living God, who is in himself and of himself, the life-giving Spirit? The apostle addresses the Holy Spirit in that prayer of his, recorded in 2 Thes. iii. ver. 5. *And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and to the patient waiting for Christ.* And he is styled God by Peter, Acts v. verse 4. *Thou hast not lied unto men but unto God.* And he is called both God and Lord in the 1st of Corinthians xii. verses 4, 5, 6. *Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.* He is essentially and immutably holy, and his proper title is *the Holy Spirit.* He is invoked to breathe upon his garden, the church, Canticles iv. verse 16. He is called *Lord God.* JEHOVAH, the incommunicable name, expressive of the incommunicable nature, is given him in the 3d chapter of Ezekiel, from the 24th to the end of the 27th verse; and also in the 31st chapter of Jeremiah, verse 33.

And here I would observe, that this name JEHOVAH, belongs to each of the Divine persons, and that all of them as coexistent in the Godhead by essential union, are the one incomprehensible God. That the name JEHOVAH belongs to the first person cannot

be denied, and that it is given unto him, none will dispute. His *name alone is* JEHOVAH (*though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit*) *the most high over all the earth.* That it belongs to Christ, and that it is given unto him, cannot be denied, when we read that the children of Israel at Meribah tempted JEHOVAH, which the apostle tells us expressly was Jesus the rock of salvation. 1 Cor. x. 4, 9. And in the 10th chapter of Zachariah, and last verse, we have this remarkable promise, *And I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord,* which belongs to the Holy Spirit. JEHOVAH, the incommunicable name, is also given to our Jesus in the 12th chapter of this prophecy; read from the 8th verse onwards, and you will find that JEHOVAH, who promised to defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, promiseth also, to pour upon the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication; and you need only look into the 19th chapter of John, verse 37. and you will find this to be our Jesus, for the evangelist there applies Zachariah's prophecy to Christ. Having thus far proceeded, from express testimonies of Scripture to prove, that eternity, immensity, omniscience, immutability, holiness, truth, and every essential perfection belong to the uncreated Spirit; by way of a confirming proof, I refer to the following Scriptures, Genesis i. verse 2. Hebrews ix. 14. Job xxiv. 13. Psalm cxxxix. 7. Psalm civ. 30. 1 Corinthians ii. 10, 11. Acts v. 3, 4. Ephesians i. 13. And proceed to observe, that

He is spoken of by Christ as the Spirit of truth. And that all essential perfections dwell in him, is naturally to be inferred from his searching all things, yea, the deep things of God: and from the incommunicable name JEHOVAH being given unto him, as it is in the passage in Ezekiel before referred unto, and likewise in Isaiah, chapter vi. verse 8, as will appear by Paul's application of it to the Holy Ghost in the last chapter of the Acts, verse 25, &c. JEHOVAH, whose voice the prophet heard, and by whom he was sent on his prophetic office, Paul tells us was the Holy Ghost. The incommunicable name JEHOVAH, is also given to him: Jer. xxxi. 31. Heb. x. 15.

I go on therefore, lastly, to consider that the three in JEHOVAH bear their joint testimony concerning the salvation of elect sinners by Jesus Christ. And it will not be amiss, to consider it as one of the chiefest designs of God in the revelation which he hath given us of his mind and will, to make known unto us, and set before us, that covenant of grace which obtained among the persons in Deity before all worlds, styled the *everlasting covenant*, which the Lord calls *my covenant*, and is, *his holy covenant*: in which the Holy Father, the Holy Word, and the Holy Spirit are jointly concerned and engaged. And here I would observe, that though there are three persons in the Godhead, yet there is but one will in God, and that it is the distinct acts of that will in the Divine persons, which give form and being to the covenant of grace.

The Scriptures reveal the love of the Father as proposing,—the love of the Son as engaging,—and the love of the Holy Spirit in revealing this great grace of salvation from all our sins and miseries. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son. In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour. And the Holy Spirit's love is expressly mentioned, Romans xv. verse 30. Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, &c.* The Holy Ghost was concerned in the great offering, which Christ made of himself for the sins of his people; hence the apostle speaks thus, *For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?* Hebrews ix. verses 13 & 14. The Father hath sent the Son to be the saviour of the elect world. The word hath been made flesh. God was manifest in the flesh, and the ends of his living and dying are answered. *He hath put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; hath brought in everlasting righteousness, and made peace by the blood of his cross.* And the Holy Spirit hath been pleased, and still does and will continue to reveal Christ in the word, and by it, to the hearts of Christ's purchased ones,

testifying *that God hath given to them eternal life, and that this life is in his Son*; for the eternal three have enacted it by a divine record, properly made and enrolled in the court of heaven, and they themselves are the witnesses of it. Wondrous Grace! And they are very highly honoured when poor sinners are drawn to believe it, and give full credit to, and rely wholly upon it. All which being made known in the written word, the Holy Spirit draws poor sinners by it to Christ for life and salvation. And whoever receiveth God's testimony concerning Christ, *hath set to his seal that God is true*. The Scripture may be considered as the Father's testimony concerning Jesus. And this is his will, *that whosoever seeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have everlasting life*. And to every such person he declares, *I will be merciful to your unrighteousness, and your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more*. And this is Christ's testimony that he hath given in the word and left upon record, *Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out*. And this is the Holy Spirit's testimony, *Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely*. May it be given unto us to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and to receive the testimony (or record) of the Father in our hearts; that through the grace of the Spirit, we may be sealing God's truth by our faith. And seeing, that *this is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*; and as the eternal three bear record to this truth, may we daily seal it by fresh acts of faith, and say, this is my act

and deed; and through grace, honour the holy and eternal three, by trusting to and in the finished salvation of the Son of God for everlasting life. And here it most justly deserves to be considered by us, how sure the salvation of the elect is. The eternal three by their joint council and covenant, confirmed with their joint oath, declare that there is life and salvation for every one that believeth in Jesus. They have set their joint seals to confirm the faith of believing souls. God the Father hath set his seal in eternal, personal, unconditional election. *The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his.* 2 Tim. ii. verse 19. The Son hath set his seal, even his blood, which is the seal of the new and everlasting covenant, whereby it is confirmed and ratified, that redemption work is finished, and the fruit of it is the *forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.* The Holy Spirit sets his seal also, for it is by him, that believers *are sealed unto the day of redemption.* As each of the divine persons hath manifested himself in the covenant of grace, and revealed himself in the word, where the Father's love, the Son's salvation, and the Spirit's grace are made known, so believers have each of the Divine persons dwelling in them, and have real fellowship with each of them.

The apostle speaking to the saints at Corinth, saith, *Know ye not, that ye are the temple of the living God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* And again, *Ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said,*

I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God and they shall be my people. That the Father dwelleth in them appears from 1 John iv. verses 12 and 13. *If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his spirit.* That God the Father is here spoken of, is evident from the next words, which are these, *And we have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the saviour of the world,* verse 14. And that the Spirit dwelleth in believers, is evident from their being said to be his temple. *What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?* 1 Cor. chap. vi. verse 19. See likewise in Romans chap. viii. verse 11. And as it respects Christ, he is said to dwell in our hearts by faith. And to be in us the hope of glory. Ephes. chapter iii. verse 17. Colossians i. verse 27. And as it respects believers having fellowship with the Divine persons, John declares in his own name, and for others also, *Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* And that all this is through the grace of the Holy Spirit, appears from these words, *For through him we both have an access by one Spirit unto the Father.* Ephesians, chapter ii. verse 18. So that from hence it appears, that real saints have in themselves, an incontestible proof and evidence of the doctrine of the trinity, by the real and experimental fellowship which they have with them by faith in prayer and praise, and in all their spiritual exercises. And, indeed, this will be their

perfect happiness in heaven, fully to enjoy perfect and uninterrupted fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; who will through the God-man as the medium, fully possess their souls, and fill them brimful with eternal glory.

O! that you may be daily experiencing the Father's love in your own hearts, by faith in the Son's salvation, through the gracious influences of the blessed Spirit; that you may be ascribing blessing and glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, three persons in one glorious and incomprehensible Godhead; to whom be equal and most exalted praise, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

S E R M O N II.

GOD'S TESTIMONY OF HIS SON.

MATTHEW, Chap. iii. Part of Verse 17.

This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

THESE words contain the Father's testimony concerning Christ, and which was declared upon the following occasion. In order to prepare the minds of the people of the Jews, and fill them with the expectation of Christ's manifestation in the flesh,