

John the Baptist is sent, as the fore-runner and harbinger of the Messiah, to preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins ; and, according to my own private thoughts, which I humbly submit to be considered by you, one great end and design (as I conceive it) of John's baptism, was that the Saviour of Israel might be publicly manifested. John was born six months before Christ, but, by divine providence, was prevented from having any interview with him ; and though he was to proclaim him, saying, *Behold the Lamb of God*, he was as yet kept concealed from him ; and the way in which he was to know the Messiah, was by the descent of the Spirit upon him ; agreeably to which he saith, *He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.* John, chapter i. verse 33.

Accordingly, among the vast multitudes which came and presented themselves, and submitted to John's baptism, our adorable Jesus came from Galilee to Jordan to John, to be baptized of him, *But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me ? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness, then he suffered him.* Upon which most solemn occasion, the following things were transacted. *And Jesus, our great High Priest, when he was baptized, [having parted the mystic wave] went up straightway out of the water ; and lo ! the heavens opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God de-*

*scending like a dove, and lighting upon him. And lo ! a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* These words were spoken by God the Father, concerning God the Son, as clothed with our nature, and when he was publicly invested into his divine office of saviourship, and anointed, sealed, and declared to be the Messiah, the great saviour, the prophet, priest, and king of his church and people, who was to save them from their sins. And here it may not be amiss to take notice how the eternal three, which bare record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, were pleased to manifest themselves in their distinct and divine personalities ; insomuch, that it used to be a saying among the ancients, “ Go to Jordan and learn the doctrine of the trinity.” Here was the Son of God dwelling personally in the nature of man, which he had assumed into personal union with himself, and by which he became Immanuel, God with us ; submitting to the ordinance of baptism ; and upon him the Holy Ghost descended to consecrate him, and to make him known to be the Christ of God. Here is the voice of God the Father from heaven heard, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* So that here is God the Father proclaiming, God the Son receiving, and God the Holy Ghost setting his seal to this everlasting and fundamental truth of the everlasting gospel ; that Jesus is the Son of God, and the anointed. The words of our text contain two things.

First, that Jesus Christ is God's beloved Son: *This is my beloved Son.* Secondly, that in him God is well pleased: *In whom I am well pleased.*

The first truth to be considered by us in the words before us is, that Jesus Christ is God's beloved Son, and this is clearly revealed in the Sacred Scriptures: we have in the text God's own testimony to it, and the descent of the Spirit upon Christ is another testimony; for in consequence of the visible descent of the Holy Ghost upon Christ, John says, *I saw and bear record that this is the Son of God.* John, chapter i. verse 34. Nay Christ himself laid down his life for the confirmation of it. See Luke, chapter xxii. verse 70. And John declares it to be the professed design of his writing his Gospel. *These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name.* John, chapter xx. verse 31. He whose praises the evangelical Isaiah celebrates in the ninth chapter of his prophecy, and whose illustrious titles he there declares, is said to be the Son who was to be given by his Divine Father to his church and people, as their almighty Redeemer.

And when Christ asked Peter in the name of the rest of the apostles, *Whom say ye that I am?* The answer which he returned was, *Thou art Christ the Son of the living God.* And with this truth the apostle Paul began his ministry. *And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God,* Acts chapter ix. verse 20. And the real knowledge and experimental belief of this truth, is made by the apos-

the John, a fruit and evidence of the new birth, 1 Epif. chap. iv. ver. 15. *Whofoever fhall confefs that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God.* Chrift is called in the word, the only begotten Son of God, his own Son, the Son of the Father in deed and truth, the Son of his love. And it is very obfervable in the epiftle to the Hebrews, where the offices and priesthood of Chrift are fo particularly treated of, that Chrift, as the eternal, effential, and coequal Son of God, is very particularly noticed and obferved, as the fole foundation of, and as that which fitted him for his mediatory work and office, and from whence it receives all its value, worth, and dignity. So likewise when it is affirmed by John, that the blood of Jesus Chrift cleanseth from all fin, that which the whole ftrefs and emphasis of the word refts upon is, that he is the Son of God; *The blood of Jesus Chrift his Son (i. e. the Son of God) cleanseth us from all fin.* Chrift as to his divine nature is JEHOVAH, and he is ftyled JEHOVAH our righteousness, Jer. xxiii. 6. All the fulnefs of the Godhead is faid to dwell in him bodily, *i. e.* fubftantially; Coloffians ii. 9. *He is,* faith Paul, *God over all, blessed for ever. Amen.* Rom. ix. 5. He is ftyled the Great God—the Living God—the True God—the only wife God. All divine works are in the Scriptures afcribed unto him; every effential perfection of the Godhead is attributed unto him; and he is the object of worship—trust—hope—praise and adoration. In the felf-existent Godhead, Jesus

is by essential union with the Father and the Holy Ghost coequal and coeternal. In him the Father hath been everlastingly delighting. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost have spent an entire eternity abstracted from all creature society and communion in mutual love, delight, and complacency towards each other. But this being a subject too vast for our finite minds and comprehensions, I shall drop it and proceed to what is the subject of the text; and would go on to observe the testimony of God the Father in these words, *This is my beloved Son.* These words, though they contain an eternal truth in them as applied to the person of the Son of God, essentially considered, who is as such the object of his infinite love, and boundless complacency, yet they belong and are properly to be applied to the Son of God, considered as God-man—Mediator, who as such is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person. It hath been hinted before, and I must again repeat it, that Christ being in his divine person, the eternal and only begotten Son of God, lays the foundation for his glorious undertakings, actions, and goings forth in the covenant on the behalf of his elect.

The greatness of the work of engaging to redeem and bring all the elect to glory, and the glory of the office of mediation between God and man, could not be performed by any but one who was equal with God. Nor could any mere creature bear and sustain the glory due to the Mediator. Hence it is to be noticed by us, that the Holy Ghost,

foretelling in prophecy concerning the birth of our adorable Jesus, is careful to insert his highest titles, such as Wonderful—Counsellor—the Mighty God—the Everlasting Father—the Prince of Peace. To let us know that our all-glorious Mediator was every way qualified as to his divine person, for the performance of so glorious a work ; he being in the form, or as some have chosen to render it, *in the nature of God*, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God. As the Son of God, he engaged with his Divine Father on the behalf of his people in the council and covenant of grace, and was anointed and consecrated to his glorious work and office before the foundation of the world, and (was in repute, and) bore the title of God-man—the head and representative of his body the church, from eternity, as may be seen in the 8th of the Proverbs. For what can the bringing forth, and setting up, which Christ the essential wisdom of the Father is there speaking of, be attributed and applied to, but to the appointing and setting up Christ in his office-character and capacity ? All which was, as it is there affirmed to be, before the mountains were settled—yea, from everlasting. The words in our text are to be found in the 42d of Isaiah, verse 1, where God the Father is proclaiming the Mediator, and calling upon poor sinners to view him as one every way qualified and suited to save, redeem, and bless them. *Behold*, saith JEHOVAH the Father, *My Servant* (so Christ is called on account of the work of servitude he had engaged to perform in fulfilling the law and making satisfaction for sin) *whom I uphold,*

*mine elect in whom my soul delighteth.* And here Christ being now actually entering upon the performance of the work, the Father publicly declares concerning him, to shew his high value and estimation of him, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* Christ was not only as the essential—eternal—and only begotten Son of God, beloved by his Divine Father; but considered as mediator, he is the beloved of the Father, and all his mediatorial office, and every act and part of it, is well pleasing unto him. Christ, as GOD-MAN—the Fellow of the Lord of Hosts, is the everlasting object of the Father's love and delight—in him God's heart can be fully satisfied, and in him he can have and take everlasting content. It is in him God has chosen all the elect; it is in him God has loved them with an everlasting love; it is in him God views them with unceasing complacency and delight, and rests in his love towards them, and rejoices over them with singing. It is in him God has accepted them, and in him he beholds them perfectly righteous, holy, without spot, unblamable, and unreprouable. The Father hath loved Christ as mediator before the foundation of the world, see John xvii. 24. And he loves him upon the account of his mediation; and as he loves him the mediator, so he loves all his members: *thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.* It should never be forgotten by us, that our salvation is a covenant salvation, and proceeds from the everlasting covenant, which took place between JEHOVAH and the MAN—the GOD-MAN, the BRANCH.—This proceeded from God's everlasting love, was the effect of the manifold

wisdom of God, and was designed for the display of sovereign grace, and covenant mercy. And Christ's suretyship engagements with the Father, were highly pleasing unto him. His eternal delights were in him, not only as his Son, but as a Redeemer. God's delight (saith a truly great and excellent man) in Christ, and Christ's rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and his delights in the sons of men, are coupled together. Proverbs viii. 30, 31. As if God delighted in him, because he delighted in the redemption of man. And what could be the ground and foundation of God's promises to Christ the Mediator, but his great pleasure in and with him for his undertaking the work? What else can be the meaning of these words which the apostle cites to prove the deity of Christ? Heb. i. 5. *Again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son:* that God would be always to him a Father, accepting his obedience, and he would always be a Son, offering upon the cross, or pleading upon the throne, his sacrifice and sufferings; a Father to him as mediator, to countenance, encourage, and accept him in all his undertakings? This is a promise made to Christ; but what need of any promises to Christ, considered only as the Son of God, equal with the Father? It is a promise to Christ as the seed of David (the place the apostle cites it from is 2 Sam. vii. 14.) And if to him, as the seed of David, it is made to him as mediator, promising a kingdom to him upon his suffering, and an eternal acceptation of him as an obedient Son;—the ground whereof was his purging our sins by himself. Heb. i. 3. And



that Christ, as mediator; is the object of the Father's highest complacency and delight; that in him, as such, his soul delighteth, and that, for this cause he is beloved by him, will appear when we consider how the thoughts of God in all ages of the world have been employed about him. God was in Christ from everlasting, contriving, consulting, counselling, and planning the great work of reconciliation; the vast and numberless thoughts of God centered in this one thing, that Christ should be the great reconciler of all things in heaven and earth, and that he should make peace by the blood of his cross. All the thoughts of God discovered to us in the Sacred Scriptures refer to this. The spirit of prophecy was given chiefly for the publication of this. *The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.* And this, from the beginning of the world, was a witness of Christ, and of what God had appointed him to be, and to do, and to suffer. God spake by the mouth of all his holy prophets which have been since the world began, concerning the person, incarnation, work, offices, and sufferings of Jesus—the Lamb, appointed by the council and decree of the eternal three, to be slain for sin, and who hath been set forth as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, in and by the sacrifices, types, figures, and prophecies concerning him. In and by all which, a testimony was given of the Father's high value and love of the person and mediation of his Son. Christ was the beloved of the Father, in his incarnate state, and it is styled, the acceptable year of the Lord. It was highly acceptable unto him to behold his coequal

and coeternal Son assume the body which he had provided and appointed for him in the everlasting covenant; by the assumption of which, he was to honour his Father's law and justice to the uttermost, and in it completely finish the work of salvation. And as all the acts of Christ's mediation, spring from the fountain of love indwelling in him and overflowing towards his people, so every act of it likewise declares his love to his eternal Father, and the highest obedience to his divine will. Hence, when the essential word was about to become incarnate, and humble himself, and be made flesh, by the assumption of the human nature, he says to his Divine Father, *Lo, I come, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.* And Christ, as mediator, was the object of his Father's love; when viewed by him, as clothed with human nature, the person of Christ as man-mediator, was highly beloved of God. Here was to be found in him perfect holiness of heart, and every faculty of his body and mind was constantly employed in the performance of the whole will of God, he being the Holy One of God. Christ's human nature was perfectly complete. He, as man, was fairer than the sons of men; and as Christ's human nature had no subsistence of its own, but immediately upon its assumption was united into a personal union with the Son of God, so the human nature of Christ was made the fountain of all habitual grace and holiness; and there is more holiness in it than is to be found in all the saints and angels in heaven. He, as man-mediator, received the spirit without measure, his lips were

full of grace and truth, all his garments did smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia; and he, as the mediator, had the whole confluence, all the fulness and perfection of grace dwelling in him. He was, as thus fitted and qualified in the human nature, the beloved of the Father, *Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.* The Holy Ghost was poured out upon him, and the Spirit of the Lord did rest upon him, even the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. And this anointing of him with the Holy Ghost, and with power, was a fruit of the Father's love and delight in him, as it was a fitting him for the discharge of his work and office. The Father did it out of the infinite affection he bore his Son for undertaking the work of mediation. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands. The bestowing of the Spirit upon Christ, in his unmeasurable gifts and graces, is ascribed and declared to be the fruit of God's delight in him as mediator, Isa. xlii. 1. *Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my spirit upon him.* And which delight was testified when the eternal Spirit visibly descended upon him; then it was manifestly acknowledged by the Father, that Christ was his beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased.

Having thus observed unto you, that Christ, as the only begotten Son of the Father, in truth and love, is the everlasting object of his highest love, and that, as

mediator, he hath been beloved of the Father from eternity, which appears from the counsels, thoughts, purposes and decrees of God from everlasting, respecting reconciliation, and which hath been fully manifested by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, types, and figures, which exhibited Christ as the sole and only mediator—and which hath also been manifested by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who came from the bosom of his Father, was proclaimed by an angel at his birth as a Saviour, Christ the Lord, was filled with the Spirit without measure, and declared by JEHOVAH the Father, to be his beloved Son.

I proceed, and shall go on to consider the second part of my text, which contains these words, *In whom I am well pleased*; and shall endeavour to set forth unto you, how the Father is infinitely well pleased with Christ, and in him infinitely and everlastingly well pleased with all his people. And here I might observe, that God's delight in Christ, and his being in him and with him well pleased, appears from the everlasting appointment of him to the work and office of mediatorship, and to the decreeing and anointing of him to his threefold office of prophet, priest, and king, which was from eternity. For all that the Father did in his publicly anointing Christ, was only making known what had been before transacted within the veil. God's solemn call and appointment of Christ to the work, his anointing and sealing of Christ, his proclamation concerning him, saying, *I have laid help upon one that is mighty*, are an everlasting proof that in him God is well pleased. Nor would the Father have reposed such a

trust in Christ's hand, as the complete salvation and glorification of all the elect, had he not been in Christ well pleased. Every office which Christ sustains, the whole work of salvation which Christ wrought, being all appointed by the Father, undertaken at his call, and executed in obedience to his divine command, the greatest glory and honour were thereby given to the highest perfections in the divine nature; and in Christ-Jehovah, the Father is well pleased. This will clearly appear as we survey the whole of Christ's work; and let us first take a view of Christ in his threefold office of prophet, priest, and king: who as he was called, appointed, and installed into each of these offices, by his Divine Father, so he has borne his testimony of his being well pleased with him in the execution of them.

With respect to his prophetic office, we have the Father's testimony concerning his being the great prophet over the house of God, and of the Father's pleasure in him as such in the 17th of Matthew, where on the holy mount, as Peter calls it, when Christ was transfigured, and Moses the giver, and Elias the restorer of the law appeared, a voice came from the excellent glory, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.* Which manifestly refers to what Moses had said, Deut. xviii. 15. He, as the great prophet of his church, hath all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and knows the utmost of his Father's will. He, as sent of God, spoke the words of God, and continues to deliver out, and make known fully to his church, all his mind and will, by his word, and by his spirit. He is

also faithful to him that appointed him to this office, and is highly acceptable to his Father in the discharge of it. Herein is a proof of it, inasmuch as the Father, not only declares it, but sends us to him for instruction, and bids us to *bear him*; which he would never have done if Christ, as the prophet of his people, was not every way qualified to make us wise unto salvation.

Again, the priestly office, which is indeed the foundation of Christ's prophetic and kingly offices, is highly well pleasing unto God the Father, and he is infinitely well pleased in him, and with him in the performance of it. Christ took not the honour of this office to himself, but was called and appointed by the Father unto it. Heb. v. 4, 5. *And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest, but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec*; which fully proves that the person, office, and eternal priesthood of Christ are well pleasing to the Father, seeing, that Jesus having offered the sacrifice of his body and soul upon the altar of his Deity, and being entered into the holiest to present it, the Lord said unto him, *Sit at my right hand until I make thy foes thy footstool. The Lord swears and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*

And, as it respects his kingly office, JEHOVAH the Father testifies his being well pleased with it, Psalm ii. 6, 7. *I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. I will,*

(saith the Mediator) *declare the decree, the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* Christ was inaugurated into his kingly office, and invested with it from all eternity, and he was anointed with the Holy Ghost in the human nature, at his incarnation, and baptism, and especially at the time of his ascension, when he was made, or declared to be, Lord and Christ; when he, as the ascended Lord and King of his church, gave gifts to men, in which, and by which, his being as King-Mediator, highly acceptable to the Father, was declared and discovered. The government of all worlds, beings, and things, being committed to him, and all power in heaven and earth being given unto him, and his having upon his vesture and upon his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, and LORD OF LORDS, are an everlasting proof, that his kingly office, and his discharge of it, are highly well pleasing to his Divine Father. The prophet Micah describes Christ in the exercise of this office thus, *He shall stand and feed (or, rule) in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God, and they shall abide; for now shall he be great unto the end of the earth; for the time will come when all kings shall fall down before him, and all nations shall serve him.* God the Father commands and requires obedience from us to Christ his anointed King, saying, *Kiss the Son, embrace his laws, submit to his government; which would never have been enjoined, had not the kingly office of Jesus the mediator, and Jesus in the exercise and discharge of that office, been highly well pleasing to the Father.* Again, Christ as

incarnate, and as obeying the holy law, is well pleasing in the sight of God. Jesus, as God-incarnate, was beheld by his Father with the utmost complacency and delight; and he was well pleased with him as the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. How delightful must it have been to JEHOVAH the Father, to behold his coequal Son in our nature made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, and setting himself upon obeying and observing, fulfilling and magnifying the moral law, which had been broken by the first man in paradise, and by the deeds of which, no flesh could be justified, seeing that in Adam all had sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Immanuel, God-Jesus obeyed the law personally, perfectly, and invariably. His heart was filled with perfect love to God, his delight was continually in the law of God, it was his meat and drink to do the will of him that sent him. Love to God was the principle of all his obedience; the moral and unalterable law of God, that eternal standard, was the rule of his obedience, and God's eternal glory his end in view. He obeyed from the heart, he perfectly fulfilled, in his life, the holy law; and his righteousness God was well pleased with. These words may well be considered as the Father's testimony to this truth, *The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake, he will magnify the law and make it honourable,* Isa. xlii. 21. The righteousness of Christ magnified the holy law; and Christ by his personally obeying it, brought more glory, and put more honour upon it, than all the obedience of men or angels ever could have



done. He being, as to his Divine Person, God, his obedience had an infinite excellency and glory in it, and as such God the Father is well pleased in him as JEHOVAH the righteousness of his church and people. The pleasure, content, delight, and complacency which the Father takes in the obedience and righteousness of Christ are inexpressible and inconceivable by us, and it requires the power of the Holy Ghost to make us in the least measure acquainted therewith. As the Father was well pleased in and with his Son's divine, complete, perfect, and everlasting righteousness; so he was likewise with his bloody sweat, sufferings, agonies, sacrifice, and death. The highest act of Christ's obedience to his Father's will, was his laying down his life for his people; and the greatest glory he brought to God, was by his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. As the Father testified of Christ at his baptism and transfiguration, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*; so a little before the time when Christ's sufferings began, Jesus said, *Father, glorify thy name* (meaning in himself, by his sufferings and death) *then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it* (in his incarnation and obedience, in his ministry and miracles) *and will glorify it again,—*by supporting him under and carrying him through his sufferings and death, and by raising him from the dead, and setting him at his own right hand. Accordingly, with this in view, Christ entered upon the work of satisfaction and atonement. He, as the MAN, JEHOVAH'S FELLOW, stood in the law-place, room,

and stead of the elect; their sins were placed to his account, and he stood charged by divine justice for them; *the Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all.* He was made by JEHOVAH the Father, sin for us, and he stood up between our sins and infinite justice: the sword of divine justice was drawn forth and sheathed in the sinless humanity of the immaculate Saviour. And the sufferings of Christ, for the expiation of sin and satisfaction of justice, were well pleasing to the Lord. Hence the prophet saith, *It pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief.* Never did JEHOVAH the Father behold his Son, as our mediator, with greater pleasure and delight, than when he beheld him bearing our sin, enduring the curse and wrath due unto it, and making his soul an offering for it. He beheld the sacrifice of Christ with infinite delight; he smelled the odour and perfume of it, and was refreshed; and Jesus was never more beloved by his Father than when, in the garden, he sweat great drops of blood; and when, upon the cross, he finished transgression, and made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness. There God shewed that he was well pleased with his Son as mediator, in accepting his sacrifice, and testifying his everlasting satisfaction with Christ in offering it. Herein also the love of God the Father towards his elect was manifested to the uttermost: inasmuch, as God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up freely to suffer and die the death due to their sins, that they might escape the stroke of justice. And God loved Christ, because he

laid down his life for the sheep. And here is the love of Christ manifested to the uttermost in bearing the sins, iniquities, and transgressions of his people, and his Father's curse and wrath, to deliver them from endless woe. *Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.* There was in and by the sufferings, atonement, and death of Christ, a perfect and an everlasting satisfaction given to all the demands of infinite justice; and the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ beheld the travail of his soul and was satisfied. Divine justice was not more incensed against sin, than divine holiness was pleased with the offering of Christ for sin. The sacrifice of Christ fully restores the honour due unto God's law, and it has in it an eternal value, endless worth, and an everlasting efficacy. Again, as God the Father was well pleased with the sufferings, blood-shedding, and death of his Son, so he declared it by raising him from the dead, when he said unto him, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* And Christ appeared to be God's beloved Son in whom he is well pleased, in his being exalted by the power of God to his right hand, and seated by him upon his mediatorial throne, as the Lamb newly slain. So everlastingly well pleased is the Father with Christ, and with his death, that he will have the remembrance of it kept up in the churches of his saints below, in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and he will have the Lamb that was slain appear in the midst of the throne, that he may continually view him with everlasting delight, as the

Lamb who hath taken away sin, and abolished it for ever. John tells us, Rev. v. 6, *And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, (or, living creatures) and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb, as it had been slain.* He will, throughout eternity, be viewed in heaven by all his redeemed, as the Lamb that was slain, and they will behold in his glorified humanity, the wounds which he received when he became their sacrifice, which will serve to unite their hearts in everlasting love to him. And here I would observe, that as God is well pleased with the ever blessed Mediator, so he is likewise, in him and with him, well pleased with all the elect; and this will appear when we consider that they were united, by the bond of everlasting love, to Christ, and set by him as a seal upon his heart before all worlds. He represented them in the everlasting covenant, and undertook their cause, and became their surety. For their sakes he was manifested in the flesh, in their law place he stood and acted. Their sins he bore, their curse he sustained, he died for them, considering them as one with him; the members of Christ are always considered by the Father in relation to Jesus, in whom God beholds them everlastingly righteous as they shine in his sight, and are viewed by him, as wrapped up in, and clothed with the robe of Christ's righteousness, that garment of salvation, in which they are eternally justified, and in which they will be eternally glorified. *Christ hath loved us, saith John, speaking of believers, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.* And, as

God beholds his people in the atonement of his Son, they are all fair, immaculately pure; and as such he is everlastingly well pleased with them in his beloved Son. God takes no view of his people, but in Jesus; he sees them, represented by Christ, their head, high priest, and surety, complete in him. He communicates all his love, grace, and mercy unto them through Christ the Mediator; and these are actually conveyed into their hearts, through the agency of the blessed Spirit. I close the whole with this observation, that this is the life of faith, the being employed in contemplating the mystery of reconciliation; and happy, inexpressibly happy it is, to be viewing the eternal engagements between God and Christ on our behalf: to be viewing Christ in his person and mediatorial office and character, observing how completely he hath finished the work of salvation, and obtained eternal redemption for us: to attend to the revelation which the Father hath made of him in the word, and the character he gives of him, and the testimony which he bears concerning him, and of his being well pleased with him, and with all his. Faith receives God's testimony concerning Christ, and by this means the belief of God's love is brought into the heart, and his peace into the conscience, and there it is actually enjoyed by help of the Holy Spirit. May God the Holy Ghost glorify Jesus in our hearts. Amen,