

## S E R M O N IV.

CHRIST'S DEMAND OF HIS FATHER ON THE  
BEHALF OF THE GIVEN ONES.

JOHN, Chap. xvii. Ver. 24.

*Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am ; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me : for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.*

**T**HIS chapter presents us with a view of our most adorable Jesus, the Son of God, the great High Priest of his church and people, praying for his whole mystic body. Zanchy calls this prayer, “ The foundation of the church from the beginning of the world to the end of it.” And certain it is, that like as the sacrifice and death of Christ extend their influences and efficacy from the beginning of time to the end of it, and reach all the elect of God, and they are saved in consequence of it: so this wonderful prayer, which may well be styled, *The Lord's Prayer*, extends its influence to all the people of God, who are equally interested in it, and as truly benefited by it, as they are by his death. We have in it a pattern and copy of Christ's intercession for his church, in the

Holy of Holies. Our Lord Jesus had glorified his Father upon earth, by his most perfect obedience unto the law, in the room and stead of his people; and he was now about to offer up the sacrifice of his sinless humanity, upon the altar of his Deity, to atone for, purge, cleanse, sanctify, and deliver his people from all their sins before the Lord. And he, having as it were the price of redemption in his hand, ready to pay down to the satisfaction of law and justice, here prays to his Divine Father in consequence of it. It may be truly said, that this is the greatest chapter in all the New Testament. The 53d chapter of Isaiah, is the greatest chapter in the Old Testament, and this is the choicest in the New: the former represents our adorable Messiah, as the sin-bearing, and the curse-sustaining Saviour; and this represents him as our interceding high-priest, wearing the names of all his spiritual Israel upon the breast-plate of his heart, appearing in the presence of God for them, and pleading, in consequence of his sacrifice offered upon earth, for the communications of grace and glory unto them.

In this sacred Scripture now before us we have the following particulars.

First, the person praying, and that is our adorable high-priest, who is the Son of God, and who for our sakes became the Son of Man.

Secondly, here is the person prayed unto, and that is God the Father, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.

Thirdly, here are the persons for whom this prayer

is offered, and that is, for the whole election of grace, for all the mystical body of Christ, for all whom he redeemed by his most precious blood.

And fourthly, here is what Christ prays for, and it is for the greatest and choicest blessings the people of God can enjoy either in earth or heaven. These things being premised, let me exhort you who are believers to draw aside the curtain, and look by faith, yea, enter with boldness, into the holiest of all, and behold what the God-man is doing for you in the heaven of heavens. This chapter gives you the clearest view of your Mediator, as acting for you in the court above. You may here see, by faith, how your persons are represented by him, that you are complete in him, and your names inscribed on his heart, which burns with everlasting love towards you; and that he makes use of all the interest he has in the Divine Father on your behalf, and for your benefit. It is truly blessed to view our Jesus as JEHOVAH our righteousness, and to behold him as bearing our sins, and as wounded for our transgressions: but to see him crowned with glory and honour, in consequence of this, as seated at his Father's right hand, with the crown of crowns upon his head, to observe his heart eternally fixed upon us, and to hear him demand heaven for us; this, discovered by the Holy Ghost to the understandings and hearts of God's beloved and called people, cannot be exceeded but by an actual admission of their persons within the vail, and by a sight of Christ face to face in heaven. To take a more particular view of this chapter would, I fear, exceed the limits of the present discourse. Let it suffice,

therefore, to observe, that we are here taught, that eternal life consists in the knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus Christ, who, by essential union with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, is the true God, and eternal life; and eternal life depends as much upon the knowledge of Christ as Mediator, as upon the knowledge of God. For God, in his divine persons, is only made known to us in and by the Mediator. *God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Cor. iv. 6.* The saving knowledge of the Godhead is attainable only by Jesus Christ. *All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Matt. xi. 27.* Our Lord says to his Divine Father, with whom he is coequal, coeternal, and coessential, *I have glorified thee upon the earth, (by his incarnation and obedience) I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.* He had magnified the law by his most perfect obedience unto it, in the law-place, room, and stead of his people, and was now about to sustain and endure its penalties; and he prays, that as the law-fulfiller, and as the atonement of his people, proof might be given of the high complacency, satisfaction, and pleasure his Father had in his life and death. *And now, O Father, glorify thou me, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.* At the 11th verse he commits, as it were, all his people into his Father's hands, and leaves them to his care. *And now I am no more in the world, but*

*these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.* At the 17th verse he prays for their sanctification. *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth; for it is by the belief of the truth the elect are sanctified, 2 Thess. ii. 13. And for their sakes (says he, ver. 19) I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.* Which words respect the offering of his body and soul in sacrifice for the sins, and in the law-place, room, and stead of his people. *We are sanctified, saith Paul, Heb. x. 10. through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified, or, separated; for the word in this place does not mean internal sanctification, but separation.* All those who were separated by the Father's everlasting love, in the decree of election, had all their sins perfectly atoned for, made an end of, and put away by the sacrifice of Christ's body and soul upon the cross, out of the sight of, and removed from before the Lord; and such persons are sanctified by the truth. "That is," says Dr. Gill, "have all their  
" sins expiated, and they are cleansed from all the  
" guilt and filth of them, through Christ himself,  
" and his sacrifice, who is the truth, or in the  
" truth, as it may be rendered, really and truly,  
" in opposition to the legal sacrifices, which atoned  
" for sin, not really, but typically." Our Lord proceeds to pray, not only for his apostles, who were now present, but for all who should believe on him through their word. *That they all may be one, as thou*

*Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.* And this being the principal blessing in grace, union with himself and his Divine Father, he repeats it again in verses 22, 23, and then in the 24th verse, which contains the words of our text, he speaks to his Divine Father, on the behalf of his people, thus, *Father, I will, that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.* The words of our text naturally lead us to take a view of the highest and deepest act of grace towards the elect of God, which mounts to the highest pinnacle of glory that it was possible for them to be raised unto; I mean, union, real and actual union, with the Son of God, considered as God-man; who, as such, is the fellow of the Lord of Hosts. And that I may deliver myself the more fully and clearly, I must observe, that this is a subject of pure revelation, and contains the utmost and ultimate designs of JEHOVAH's grace. In order therefore to launch into this boundless ocean, which is too vast for the highest angel or saint in glory fully to comprehend, we must attend closely unto what is revealed and declared on this subject by our Lord in this chapter. He prays in the verses immediately preceding the text, for the open manifestation of the union which was between him and his elect, which is in itself wonderful and indissoluble; which union is the fundamental blessing, the fountain, and spring of all other blessings; and which our Lord speaks of to

his Divine Father thus, *I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me.* In which words we have the pedigree of our union discovered. As first, the Father is in Christ, and then Christ is in believers. This scripture, in my view, makes the eternal and incomprehensible union of the three coequal and coeternal persons in the self-existent godhead, the pattern and foundation of it. *There are Three which bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one* in essence, equal in power and glory. And the divine persons have a mutual inbeing in each other, in mutual love and delight, and in possession of one common and equal glory. And as nothing can add to God's essential blessedness, so nothing out of God can be a motive unto him; and therefore if it be his pleasure to go forth into creature acts, his supreme sovereign will must be the sole cause, and his own glory must be his ultimate end and design. And this is asserted in Scripture, *Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created,* Rev. iv. 11. *The Lord hath made all things for himself,* Prov. xvi. 4. which was his sole and supreme motive. *Who hath first given unto him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again. For of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.* Rom. xi. 35, 36. The principal glory he designs to himself in the election of his people, is the manifestation of the glory of his grace. Now in the vast heart of God it was his sovereign will and pleasure to lay his coequal

Son as the foundation of all his decrees, purposes, and designs. He chose and appointed him, in whom, as second person in the trinity, all the essential fulness of the godhead dwelt, to be the head of the whole election of grace. *I was*, says Christ, *set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was*, Prov. viii. 23. which words refer to his being set up in his office-character and capacity, as God-man mediator—the head of his body the church. He existed from everlasting as the eternal Son, and the essential word of God; and he was set up in his office-character and capacity as head of his people, and bore the title of God-man from everlasting; and the elect were *chosen in him before the foundation of the world*. Eph. i. 4. Christ, as God-man, was the object of election, the head, root, and foundation of the elect. He hereby became the man, the fellow of the Lord of Hosts, the delight of the Father, who ushers him into the world, saying, *Behold mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth*. And Christ, in the 8th of Proverbs, tells us, *I was daily his delight*, speaking of his Divine Father. And adds, astonishing grace! *My delights were with the sons of men*, ver. 31. Christ, who in his person is by nature essentially God, the incomprehensible Jehovah, is now to be considered by us as God-man: in this view of him, he is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person; in whom God the Father could behold with unspeakable pleasure and delight, all his perfections displayed—his glory discovered to the uttermost—and view his elect with everlasting pleasure and satisfaction.



Jesus Christ is the foundation in election, all the elect being chosen by the Father in him, were laid upon him, and are one with him from everlasting, He, the head, and they, his members; and this laid the foundation for his suretyship-engagements with the Father on their behalf. He is stiled by the apostle, the head of the church: he was their head in eternal election; and they, by their fall in Adam, being in a state of sin and misery, he undertook and became their Saviour from it. The Scriptures treat of these three wonderful and incomprehensible unions. First, of the union of the three divine persons in the Godhead. Secondly, of the union of our nature with the person of Christ the Son of God. And thirdly, of the union of Christ's person as God-man unto the persons of the elect; upon the account of which union it is that God loves the elect as he does Christ himself. *Thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me:* and this union is real and eternal, and will issue in eternal glory. So then, there is not only an essential union between the Father and the Son as they are one in essence, but there is a union between the Father and Christ as mediator, and Christ is the medium of our union with God; and both the Father's union with Christ, and his with us, are for our perfection; because, whatsoever grace Christ hath, by virtue of his union as mediator with the Father, is to be communicated unto us, according to our necessity. It hath pleased the Father to treasure up all grace and glory for us in our living and everlasting head. *Our life is hid with Christ in God.* And from our union with Christ flows

communion. In consequence of it, we partake of all the benefits of his undertakings for us, and shall enjoy uninterrupted fellowship with him in heaven throughout eternity.

Now it is the utmost blessedness of grace which the elect are to enjoy, and which Christ makes mention of in the words of our text. Nothing will content the heart of Christ, but that his church and people should be brought unto, and possessed of the utmost bliss: and this is to be continued unto them, and enjoyed by them for ever. *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.* These words contain the strength of Christ's love, and the uttermost of his desire; and nothing short of this, of seeing all his people in glory, and presenting them before his Father, saying, *Lo, I, and the children which thou hast given me,* will satisfy his heart, and give him true complacency. These words discover what the heart of Christ is towards us, now that he is entered into eternal glory; for when he uttered these words, he had a view of the glory he was about to possess: and yet, as though heaven would be no heaven to him, except he had all the travail of his soul, the purchase of his blood with him in glory, he speaks to his Divine Father, not in a supplicatory, but in an authoritative manner, *Father, I will, that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.* In attempting further to open and explain this truly great and sublime passage, I shall endea-

your to shew what this glory is which Christ demands for his people. And indeed the words may be considered as a demand; as it is upon the footing of the everlasting transactions which had been between his Father and himself, and upon the performance of his covenant-engagements, that he thus addressed his Divine Father. This is clear from the whole of the chapter. And it is likewise plainly discovered, that the whole of his undertakings and work was solely for the sake, and upon the account of those elect persons whom the Father had given to him, and for whom he became incarnate. And this he carefully observes, and uses as a motive which he knew would work upon his Father's heart. He had before in this prayer said, *Thine they were, and thou gavest them me*; and he now again will be sure to observe it; which leads us naturally to make this observation, that Christ's intercession extends its influence no further, nor for any other, than those whom he died for. His intercession is founded upon his oblation. The high priest under the law, was to bring a censer full of burning coals, taken from off the brazen altar, and incense in his hands, and put it upon the fire before the Lord, within the vail, that the cloud of the incense might cover the mercy-seat. Levit. xvi. 12, 13. Now as the high priest going into the holy of holies after the sacrifice, was a type of Christ's ascension after he had offered himself upon the cross; so the blood he was to sprinkle was a type of Christ's blood; and the incense he was to kindle, burn, and fume between the cherubims, was a representation of Christ's intercession in heaven: and the burning coals

taken from off the altar of burnt offering, signified not only that Christ's execution of his priestly office in heaven, was founded upon the sacrifice of himself upon earth; but likewise that the same everlasting love which he manifested towards his people in laying down his life for them, is so far from being abated by all the sorrows and sufferings he has undergone and endured for his people, that he is moved and actuated by the same love which he had in his heart when he made his soul an offering for sin, to plead their cause in the holiest above. In our further attempting to explain the text, I would first endeavour to speak of what this glory is which Christ here demands, and signifies unto his Divine Father, that it is his will his people should behold, and which he calls my glory: and these words of our Lord, ver. 5, may serve to be a guide unto us. He had there uttered himself thus, *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.* And what this glory was must be the subject of our present inquiry. Now in the first place, he had the essential glories of the Deity, as the Son of God—a glory which was essentially and underderivatively possessed by him, and which glory was not given him, nor layed down by him; nor was it to be begged for: for our adorable Jesus is JEHOVAH by nature, the self-subsisting, and the all-sufficient God; and the glory of his Godhead he could not part with, and therefore it is not his essential glory he here speaks of. But, secondly, the glory here spoken of, is the glory which belongs to Christ as God-man, a glory due to

his person as thus considered. It is a personal glory due unto him and given unto him. To speak more fully in the words of Dr. Goodwin: "It is the glory  
" of the very Godhead dwelling personally in him,  
" breaking forth in, and shining through his human  
" nature. As if the sun, being encompassed with a  
" case of crystal, how glorious would that crystal  
" be! a glory, such as is only worthy to appear in  
" him that is one person with God. This is the  
" greatest and highest glory, as well as mystery, God  
" manifested in the flesh, seen of angels, taken up  
" into glory." This glory that was thus due to the person of Christ as God-man, is the glory which he had by design and appointment; and which, as he bore the title and character of God-man, he had with the Father before the world was; and it was this glory Christ laid aside, and emptied himself of, and which the Scriptures treat so largely of. For it was a right and due belonging to the human nature which the Son of God in wondrous grace assumed, to have been immediately exalted and glorified in heaven. But, in order to perform the mediatory work, and act in a mediatorial character and capacity, our adorable head, the God-man, Jesus, JEHOVAH, humbled himself; and though he was rich, (for all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him) yet for our sakes he became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be rich. Over and above Christ's glory, as JEHOVAH essentially, as God-man, in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily, or substantially, he has an acquired glory, resulting from his work of mediation, considered both

as an head, and a redeemer of his church and people; and therefore my interpretation of the glory Christ prays for on his own behalf, and wills for his people, is, that the glory of his person as God-man may appear, and the glories of his mediatorship be discovered, and he be possessed of it, also that his people may behold him in his personal and mediatorial glories in which he shines within the veil: to this may be added, that the appearance of Christ before his incarnation, gives some intimation of it. In the 6th chapter of Isaiah, the prophet says, *In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above (or about it) stood the seraphims, each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory.* And that that prophecy and vision referred to him as God manifested in the flesh, is evident from Christ's own application thereof to himself, as prophetically spoken of him who was to come. *These things said Esaias when he saw his glory and spake of him,* John xii. 41. And the apostle John, speaking for himself and other apostles, says, *We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* And Peter, who was present when the glory of the Godhead darted its rays through the manhood, breaks forth, saying, *We were eye-witnesses of his Majesty.* And I apprehend it, and therefore speak it, that Christ will be the sole medium in heaven by whom we shall

enjoy God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to the uttermost perfection of bliss and happiness; and therefore our beholding the personal glories of Christ, our seeing and beholding him face to face; in this will consist the beatific vision. In him God will be to us all in all; and what higher felicity can be thought of? What greater blessedness can we partake of, than to behold, gaze upon, and enjoy God in Christ? To see all the glories of the Deity shining forth in the person of God-man? Having very faintly endeavoured to give an hint of what I apprehend to be the meaning of the glory of Christ, spoken of in the text, I proceed to consider how the saints become entitled to a sight of it; and this, I could venture to affirm, is theirs in consequence of their union with the person of Christ; and which I think may be gathered from the words of the text. For the argument or motive that Christ urges is this, *For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.* Now Christ was loved in his election from everlasting, and the elect with him, and they were chosen in him, and out of that love were given unto him; and to what end, or for what purpose? Even to behold, admire, and adore him in his person and glory, that being what they were ordained for, more than for their own glory: and which he mentions not, for it ariseth from their beholding his, and was ordained for his. “And if it be asked what  
“glory is it of Christ’s they are to behold, the an-  
“swer is, the glory of his person, first absolutely de-  
“creed him, which is the height of his glory in hea-  
“ven, where it is they are ordained to behold it.” Dr. Goodwin. And Christ resolves God’s loving and

electing them into this as its cause : *For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.* So that here it may justly be observed by us, that God's grace towards us is beyond all our thoughts and conceptions, as it is manifested in this wondrous act, in choosing our persons in Christ, and loving us with the same love he does him. And this is the uttermost of Christ's will, and discovers his boundless love unto us, that we, the elect, should be where he is to behold his glory : *Father, I will, that those whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me : for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.* Let us view and admire the unsearchable grace of Christ. How is his grace towards us discovered here ! He loved us from before all time. His delights were with the sons of men from everlasting. When about to become incarnate, he uttered himself thus : *Lo, I come, I delight to do thy will, O God.* When he had assumed our nature, he, as though all his delight was in suffering for his people, says, *I lay down my life for the sheep.* And here it is, *Father, I will, that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am.* Christ is in heaven at his Father's right hand, and has the crown of pure gold upon his head. He is made most blessed for ever, as Mediator ; and where he is, his people are to be also, that they may behold his glory. His presence, a sight of him, and the enjoyment of him, constitute the heaven of heavens in eternal glory. And here I end. May God the Holy Ghost bless the reading of it. *Amen.*