



SERMON VIII.

The BELIEVER SEALED.



EPHES. i. 13, 14.

— *In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise, which is the Earnest of our Inheritance.*



HIS Chapter contains an Epitome of the Gospel, in which the Apostle, after his usual Salutation, wishing Grace to the Saints at *Ephesus*, adores *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, for blessing his People *with all spiritual Blessings in heavenly Places in Christ*; and,

and, beginning with electing Love, as the Foundation of all other Blessings, he mentions their Adoption into God's Family, their Acceptance in the Beloved, with that Redemption they have through his Blood, attended with the Forgiveness of Sin, and their obtaining an Inheritance, to which they were *predestinated, according to the Purpose of him who works all Things after the Counsel of his own Will*; and that, in Consequence of their being thus ordained unto eternal Life, it was given to them to believe, or put their Trust in the Son of God, after *that they had heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of their Salvation*: Upon which, he adds the Words of the Text; *In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise, which is the Earnest of our Inheritance.* In which we may observe the Order in which spiritual Blessings are conferred: The Gospel is first preach'd, then render'd the Power of God unto Salvation; and when the Report of it is received, he who, as a Spirit of Illumination, convinces of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment, as a Spirit of Promise, seals the Believer, by giving him the Earnest of his Inheritance, until the Redemption of the purchased Possession.

The Meaning of the Word *Seal*, as applied to the Believer, when under the consolatory Influences of the Lord, the Spirit;

and what is intended by the *Earnest*, or first Fruits of our Inheritance, being largely consider'd in the preceding Discourse, what remains of the Subject is, to inquire how far we may know, and safely determine, that a Promise is set *home* upon our Hearts, and our Souls sealed in meditating upon it, by the Spirit of God? a Question of the greatest Importance, as to Christian Experience, though not without its Difficulties. In the Resolution of which, we shall,

- I. Lay down some general Rules, taken from the Nature of the Promises, the Manner of their Impression, and the Influence which they have on the Hearts of the Saints.
- II. Apply them to some particular Cases, in which the Saints have usually found the greatest Advantage, by conversing with the Promises; and which may serve to direct them how to judge in all others.

I. Then, we are to propose some general Rules, by which we may determine when a Promise is sent from God for our Instruction, Support, or Consolation. And when ever that is the Case,

1. The Promise will be evidently pertinent, and suited to our Circumstances; and this either in the very Letter or Terms of it,
or

or in some Inferences, or Deductions, which we are inabled to gather from it.

The Spirit of God being infinitely wise, can never be supposed to impress upon our Minds a Passage of Scripture for our Comfort, which is either contrary, or foreign to our Case. Thus suppose the Believer enjoying Health of Body, prosperous in his Affairs, comfortable in his Mind, happy in his Friends and Family; such an Intimation as that, *Behold, happy is the Man whom God correcteth; therefore despise not thou the Chastening of the Almighty^a*; or, *Whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a Father the Son, in whom he delighteth^b*; or that of the Apostle; *If ye endure Chastenings, God dealeth with you as with Sons; for what Son is he whom the Father chasteneth not^c*; can hardly be concluded to be given in as special Promises; for, where they are so, they will appear to be as suitable as seasonable; Words fitly spoken, like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver: Not that we intend hereby that every Saint should be capable of knowing the exact, precise, critical Meaning of every Portion of Scripture, or of every Promise that is brought home to him; this the most Judicious will not pretend to; but whatever may be the Conceptions which they may form of the Import of a Promise, if it

^a Job v. 17.

^b Prov. iii. 124

^c Heb. xii. 7.

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is sealed by the Spirit of God upon their Hearts, it will appear to have some Thing agreeable to their Situation, and visibly calculated to administer Relief.

2. When ever a Promise is peculiarly impressed by the Spirit on the Mind of a Christian, there will be some new Degrees of Light, and farther Measures of holy and spiritual Liberty found with him; it is not easy to conceive the surprizing Difference with which the same Person reads, or meditates on the same Promise, at various Seasons: Sometimes it is to him as a dead Letter, or as a Tale that is told; but at other Times, whilst he is musing, the Fire burns, and, e'er he is aware, his Heart becomes like the Chariot of a willing People: Thus the two Disciples, whatever Knowledge they might have before of the Writings of *Moses* and the Prophets, saw Things in a new Light whilst Christ was expounding to them the Scripture; and, upon his disappearing, they say, with Gratitude and Wonder, *Did not our Hearts burn within us whilst he talked with us by the Way, and whilst he opened to us the Scriptures*^d.

Where the Spirit of God is as a Sanctifier, there is Liberty from the reigning Power and Dominion of Sin; where he is as a Comforter, he says to the Prisoners, Go

^d Luke xxiv. 32.

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being fully persuaded that God is faithful, who has promised, and that all his Promises are Yea, and Amen in Christ Jesus; when he is enabled by them to see the Grace wherein he stands, he rejoices in Hope, and that sometimes with a Joy unspeakable and full of Glory.

And to this we may add, that the Relish of it usually abides and continues with him for some time; nor is he, for the most Part, so attentive to the Voice of God at first, as afterwards, when it is fasten'd upon him as a Nail in a sure Place. And when this is the Case,

4. The Believer's Apprehensions of God, and the Riches of his Grace, are proportionably raised and exalted, and his Sense of his own Vileness and Unworthiness more strong and lively.

Satan will sometimes transform himself into the Appearance of an Angel of Light, and may be suffered to lull asleep the carnal presumptuous Sinner, with false and delusive Hopes, founded on mere counterfeit and imaginary Experiences; but it is as destructive to his Interest, as it is opposite to his Inclination, for the Sinner to be humbled at God's Feet, and lie low in his own *Eyes*; where Knowledge puffs up, and *supposed Comfort* renders haughty, proud, and conceited, we have Reason to suspect them; nor can I ever believe a Promise to be sent
from

from God to the Soul ; but, whilst musing upon it, he will be ready to say with the Prophet, *Wo is me, I am undone, a Man of unclean Lips* ; or with *Job, I have heard of thee by the Hearing of the Ear ; but now mine Eyes see thee ; therefore I abhor my self in Dust and Ashes.* And whenever he is enabled to look through the Promise, into the heavenly World, and with Pleasure and Propriety, to say, It is *mine*, an Inheritance prepared for *me* ; he will be as thoroughly solicitous after that Holiness, which is to render him meet for it, as he rejoices in that Righteousness which is his Title to it ; nor can we possibly entertain almost a more dishonourable Thought of God, than to imagine that there is any one Word in the Bible, in the Promises, any more than the Precepts, that gives the least Incouragement to that abominable Thing, which his righteous Soul hates.

These are some of the general Rules with which, comparing our Experience, we may form some Judgment how far a Promise is set home upon the Soul by the Spirit of God. Which leads us,

II. To attend to some particular Cases in which the Promises of the Gospel have been more especially owned of God, for the Support of his People. In the Consideration of which, the fore-mentioned Rules will

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will appear to have their Use and Importance. As,

1. We may take a View of the Believer in the Morning of his Conversion, the Time of his Espoufals, when he first knows what spiritual Peace and Comfort mean. The Promises which are most commonly the Means of Incouragement at that Time, are such as these; *Turn you at my Reproof: Behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my Words upon you*^f. *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your Sins be as Scarlet, they shall be as white as Snow; though they be red like Crimson, they shall be as Wooll*^g. *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters, and he that hath no Money; come ye, buy and eat, yea, come buy Wine and Milk without Money, and without Price*^h. *In the last Day, that great Day of the Feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any Man thirst, let him come unto me and drink*ⁱ. *Wherefore he is able to save to the utmost, all who come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession for them*^k. Whence the awakened Convert begins to be satisfied of Christ's Power to redeem and save him; and whilst conscious of Guilt, and apprized of his own Unworthiness, he is in Doubt whether he is as willing as able; he sometimes

^f Prov. i. 23.
ⁱ John vii. 37.

^g Isa. i. 18.
^k Heb. vii. 25.

^h Chap. iv. 1.

hears

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hears the still Voice of Christ in such Language as that, *Who hath despised the Day of small Things* ; or, *He will not break the bruised Reed, nor quench the smoking Flax*^m. *Come unto me all ye who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest*ⁿ : And, *Who-soever cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out*^o. *Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth ; and he that seeketh, findeth ; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened. For what Man is there of you, whom, if his Son ask Bread, will give him a Stone ? Or if he ask a Fish, will give him a Serpent ? If ye then being evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children, How much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good Things to them that ask him*^p.

Now, taking it for granted, that one or the other of these sweet Passages of Scripture dwells on his Mind, following of him from Place to Place, Would he know whether it is from God ? Let him, in a Dependence on the Teachings of the Holy Spirit, apply the foregoing Rules, and ask himself, as in the Sight of God, Whether they are not suited to his Case ? Whether he has not a more spiritual View of the gracious Import of them ? What was that Glow,

^l Zech. iv. 10.
^o John vi. 37.

^m Isa. xlii. 3.

ⁿ Matt. xi. 28.

^p Matt. vii. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Warmth,

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Warmth, and Power with which they were impressed? Whether for a Time, at least, he was not inabled to rest upon, and rejoice in the Good contained in them? And, what Influence they had upon his Mind, when thinking on the Mercy of God? What farther Views of the Evil of Sin, the Plague of his own Heart, and the Ingratitude of his former Conversation, together with earnest Breathing after more Communion with God, and a greater Likeness to his Son; and if he can set to his Seal in the Presence of a Heart-searching God, and as going to his Bar, that they were to him as Life from the Dead, and furnished out some Degree of solid Comfort and spiritual Joy; whilst stripped of himself, and filled with adoring Apprehensions of sovereign, distinguishing Grace, he was made, more than ever, to hate Sin, and value the Saviour; he may warrantably take them for Messages of Peace, sent from his reconciled God and Father, to excite in him that good Hope, through Grace, which shall never leave him ashamed.

2. We may consider the Saint under sore Trials, great and pressing Afflictions.

Trouble is common to all; *Man is born to it as the Sparks fly upwards*; he is of *few Days, and full of Trouble*; nor are the best of Men exempt from it; many are the Afflictions of the Righteous, though different

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in their Kind and Degree; sometimes Personal, at other Times Relative, and, in some Instances, they are united; when, with *Job*, they are emptied from Vessel to Vessel, spoiled of their Substance, bereft of their Children, charged as Hypocrites by mistaken Friends, mocked and reviled by their implacable Enemies. Now the Promises which are given to them under such Circumstances, are either for Instruction or Consolation; of the first Kind, are such as that in *Job*; *If they be bound in Fetters, and holden in Cords of Affliction: Then he sheweth them their Work, and their Transgressions that they have exceeded. He openeth also their Ear to Discipline, and commandeth that they return from Iniquity*^a: Or that of *Ezekiel*; *I will cause you to pass under the Rod, and bring you into the Bond of the Covenant. And there shall ye remember your Ways, and all your Doings, wherein ye have been defiled, and ye shall loath your selves in your own Sight, for all the Evils that ye have committed*^b: Or that of *Hosea*; *Therefore behold, I will hedge up thy Way with Thorns, and make a Wall, that she shall not find her Paths. And she shall follow after her Lovers, but shall not find them: Then shall she say, I will go and return to my first Husband; for then it was better with me than now*^c.

^a Job xxxvi. 8, 9, 10.
ii. 6, 7.

^b Ezek. xx. 37, 43.

^c Hosea

Those

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Those suited for our Consolation, are,
The eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath are everlasting Arms: And he shall thrust out the Enemy from before thee, and shall say, Destroy them^t. And that of the Psalmist; For in the Time of Trouble he shall hide me in his Pavillion; in the Secret of his Tabernacle shall he hide me, he shall set me up upon a Rock. When my Father and my Mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up. Wait on the Lord; and be of good Courage, and he shall strengthen thine Heart: Wait, I say, on the Lord^u. Cast thy Burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: He shall never suffer the Righteous to be moved^x. It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy Statutes^y. They that sow in Tears, shall reap in Joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious Seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his Sheaves with him^z. And, Thou hast been Strength to the Poor, a Strength to the Needy in his Distress, a Refuge from the Storm, a Shadow from the Heat, when the Blast of the terrible ones is as a Storm against the Wall^a. And, Thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee

^t Deut. xxxiii. 27. ^u Psal. xxvii. 5, 10, 14. ^x Psal. iv. 22.
^y Psal. cxix. 71. ^z Psal. cxxvi. 5, 6.
^a Isa. xxv. 4.

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by thy Name ; thou art mine. When thou passest through the Waters, I will be with thee ; and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee : When thou walkest through the Fire, thou shalt not be burnt ; neither shall the Flame kindle upon thee ^b. And, Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ ? Shall Tribulation, or Distress, or Persecution, or Famine, or Nakedness, or Peril, or Sword ^c ? Or, Our light Affliction, which is but for a Moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory ^d.

These, and many others of the same Kind, are scatter'd up and down the sacred Oracles, and often given in to the Saint, when ready to sink under the Weight of Afflictions. That they are suitable to such an End, cannot be disputed ; and when they have a Tendency to suppress our hard Thoughts of God, to still our Murmuring against him, and engage us to submit to his Sovereignty, and subscribe to his Disposals, waiting for the promised Issue of the Dispensation, sensible that we are chastized less than our Iniquities deserve ; and waiting with Desire, to be thoroughly purged from all remaining Dross, and weaned from the World, we long for Heaven as a Place of sinless Perfection : When they are thus owned of God for these valuable Purposes,

^b Isa. xliii. 1, 2.

^c Rom. viii. 35.

^d 2 Cor. iv. 17.

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the Believer may safely conclude they are imprest on his Mind by a divine Direction or Appointment.

3. If we consider the Saint under dreadful Temptations, in the Midst of Snares, and trembling under the Apprehensions of the Remains of indwelling Sin, and the Danger of being carried away by the Power of his own Corruptions; here also God has not left himself without a Witness, in many exceeding great and precious Promises; nor has any one of these been made of more universal Service than that Declaration of our Lord to *Peter*; *Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as Wheat: But I have prayed for thee that thy Faith fail not*^e. And when this has been brought home to the Soul, and attended with a proper Discovery of his own Insufficiency, and proved the Means of ingaging him to rely on the Care and Faithfulness of his gracious Advocate, he may safely determine whence the Intimation comes; for it cannot be an Enemy who would lead him to be diffident of himself, and to be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might: And when the Apostle says, *The God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your Feet shortly*; How does the Believer sometimes meditate upon it with Pleasure and Satisfaction? As

^e Luke xxii. 31, 32.

he knows that none but a God can give him the Victory over this Adversary ; so the Consideration of his being at Peace with him, and reconciled to him in the Blood of his Son, gives him Incouragement to hope that he will do it ; and as he has ingaged to do it shortly, How does this animate him during the Conflict, and excite his Confidence, as to the Issue of it ? and so when he reads, *That there hath no Temptation taken you, but such as is common to Man : But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what ye are able ; but will with the Temptation also make a Way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it*^f. It serves, when impressed by the Spirit of God on his Mind, as an Answer to an Objection that may before have harrassed him, as if he was alone in his Temptations, and his Case peculiar to himself : And he is then brought to wait in the faithful Discharge of his Duty, believing that God will either support him under, or break the Snare, and make a Way for his Escape ; the Example of the Apostle, when brought thoroughly to view, and applied closely to himself, is no less instructive than comfortable, whilst he observes, that the Messenger of Satan was sent to prevent too high an Opinion of himself, after the extraordinary Revelation

^f 1 Cor. x. 13.

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which had been made to him ; and after he had spread the Case before the Lord, and importunately cried for Help, the Answer was, *My Grace is sufficient for thee ; my Strength shall be made perfect in thy Weakness* : Whence the Saint concludes, when warmly meditating upon it, though unable in himself to resist the least Temptation, he can do all Things through Christ's strengthening of him, and fighting under the Banner of this Captain of Salvation, going out in the Strength of this Lion of the Tribe of *Judah* ; having on the whole Armour of God, he is freed from a slavish Fear of the Enemy, and sometimes inabled to rejoice that no Weapon formed against him shall prosper ; and that in the End, he shall be brought off a Conqueror, yea, more than a Conqueror.

4. View him under great Darknes, complaining of Desertion, and calling in Question all his former Experiences, saying with *Asaph*, *Will the Lord cast off for ever ? and will he be favourable no more ? Is his Mercy clean gone for ever ? Doth his Promise fail for evermore ? Hath God forgotten to be gracious ? Hath he in Anger shut up his tender Mercies* ^h ? How suitable to his Case, sometimes, is the Answer of *Manoah's* Wife to her Husband ; *If the Lord were pleased to*

^s 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8, 9.

^h Psal. lxxvii. 7, 8, 9, 10.

destroy,

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destroy, he would not have shown us such Things as theseⁱ. When he has read, or thought of the Relation of the four Lepers, who reasoned with each other, Why sit we here until we die? If we enter into the City, the Famine is there, and we shall die there; if we sit still, we die also: Now let us fall into the Host of the Assyrians; if they save us alive, we shall live; if they kill us, we shall but die^k. How has this been owned of God to quicken him in his Application to him for Mercy, in the earnest Language of Job; Though thou slayest me, yet will I trust in thee: And though he may not be able in this Season of Distress, as at other Times, to trace the Lord in his gracious Dealings with him; yet it is not without its Use, when duly impressed on his Spirit; that he can say with the Man, whose Eyes the Saviour opened, to the inquiring Jews; This one Thing I know, that whereas I was once blind, now I see: And when those precious Promises, attended with Light and Heat, break in upon his Mind, that when Sion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me; it's answered, ^l Can a Woman forget her sucking Child, that she should not have Compassion on the Son of her Womb? yea, they may forget; yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee on the

ⁱ Judges xiii. 23.
xlix. 14, 15, 16.

^k 2 Kings vii. 4.

^l Isa.

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Palms of my Hands, and thy Walls are continually before me: He is obliged to say, melted with the Grace, and astonished with the Condescension, Lord, it is enough; If I am on thy Heart, ingraven on the Palms of thy Hands, the Time shall come when thou wilt break through every Cloud, and shine upon me as the God of my Salvation: And when he reads what God says to his Church, and is enabled to apply it to himself, What Refreshment attends the Revelation! ^m Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed: Neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to Shame. For thy Maker is thine Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his Name; and thy Redeemer, the holy One of Israel, the God of the whole Earth, shall be called. For a small Moment have I forsaken thee, but with great Mercies will I gather thee. In a little Wrath I hid my Face from thee for a Moment; but with everlasting Kindness will I have Mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer. For this is as the Waters of Noah unto me: For as I have sworn, the Waters of Noah should no more go over the Earth; so have I sworn that I would no more be wrath with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be removed, but my Kindness shall not depart from thee; neither shall the Covenant of my Peace be removed, saith the

^m Isa. liv. 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Lord,

Lord, that bath Mercy on thee. And thus he concludes with the Apostle, that he has Reason to be content under the most melancholy Dispensations, since he has an Assurance, and is inabled to rest in it, that God will never, no never leave nor forsake him.

5. Supposing the Saint conscious of Guilt, mourning over his Departures from God, with what Savour sometimes does he think of that Passage, *Go, and proclaim these Words towards the North, and say, Return thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine Anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep Anger for ever. Only acknowledge thine Iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God. Turn, O backsliding Children, saith the Lord, for I am married unto you*ⁿ. Or when the Prophet says, *O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine Iniquity. Take with you Words, and turn to the Lord, say unto him, Take away all Iniquity, and receive us graciously; so will we render the Calves of our Lips*^o: And also that of the Prophet; *I have seen his Ways, and I will heal him also, and restore Comforts unto him, and to his Mourners. I create the Fruit of the Lips; Peace, Peace to him that is afar off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord, and I will heal him*^p. Now,

ⁿ Jer. iii. 12, 13, 14.
lvii. 18, 19.

^o Hof. xiv. 1, 2.

^p Isa.

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where these, or such-like Portions of Scripture come from God, they are attended with a Sight of the Evil of our Conduct, and the Saint filled with Shame and Regret for his part *Disloyalty*, judging and condemning himself, confesses with *David*, *Against thee, thee only have I sinned and done this Evil in thy Sight*; and sees more of the Value of that Blood, which cleanseth from all Sin, and heartily desirous to forsake every evil Way, receives the Intimation of forgiving Grace, with the utmost Gratitude and Praise.

Lastly, When under Bondage, through Fear of Death, and terrified with the Thoughts of an approaching Dissolution, How reviving is the Promise, *That neither Death nor Life, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*^a. That Christ, by his Death, *destroy'd him who had the Power of Death, that is the Devil*^r: Or that Triumph of the Apostle, *O Death, Where is thy Sting? O Grave, Where is thy Victory? The Sting of Death is Sin; and the Strength of Sin is the Law. But Thanks be to God who giveth us the Victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ*^s. In the View of that, the Enemy appears disarmed, and with *David*, the Saint can say; *Tho' I walk through*

^a Rom. viii. 38, 39.
xv. 55, 56, 57.

^r Heb. ii. 14.

^s 1 Cor.

the dark Valley of the Shadow of Death; I will fear no Evil. Though my Flesh and my Heart fail, God is the Strength of my Heart, and my Portion for ever^t: Or with Job, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth. And though after my Skin, Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for my self, and mine Eyes shall behold, and not another; though my Reins be consumed within me^u.

Thus it would be easy to show you how richly God has provided for the strong Consolation of the Heirs of Salvation. And if, at any Time, they are at a Loss to determine, whether a Promise is sent to them under a divine Direction, they should ask themselves, Whether it is not proper to them, suited to their Case, and tends to exalt the Redeemer, to humble them before God, and make them thirst after more Fellowship with him, and greater Meetness for the Injoyment of him? where these are the Fruits, we may be satisfied of the Original; it cannot be from themselves; for at other other Times they converse with the same Promises, without any considerable Impression; it cannot be from the mere Working of natural Affections, because Na-

^t Psal. xxiii. 4. and lxxiii, 26.

^u Job xix. 25, 26, 27.

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ture cannot rise higher than it self; nor is it the Voice of an Enemy, as contrary to his Nature, and destructive to his Interest. From the Whole we observe,

(1.) That we have here a glorious Proof of the Deity and Personality of the Holy Spirit, as he could not sanctify the Unclean, root out Corruption, and form, maintain and perfect the new Creature, were he not the Lord God Almighty; so neither could he know every Part of the Believer's Case, much less supply him with suitable Comforts, making his troubled Conscience easy, binding up his broken Heart, speaking Peace to him when in the Depths of Distress, were he not Omniscient, Omnipresent, and All-sufficient. And as the Father is said to seal his People by the Spirit of Promise, as the Work be-speaks his Divinity, the Dispensation proves his distinct Personality: So that we may conclude with the Apostle, that *there are three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one* ^x.

(2.) Let this encourage the doubting Christian; God's Word is full of Promises, his Spirit can easily apply them, and make them as precious to him as they are great in themselves.

^x 1 John v. 7.

(3.) Hence

(3.) Hence we may learn, that where Persons are Strangers to that Faith which is of the Operation of the Spirit of God, they are mistaken in all their supposed Comforts, their Hope is mere Presumption; for it is *after ye believed ye were sealed*; the Spirit never can be supposed to set his Seal to a Blank, or attest a Falshood. Now the first Evidence of our being Heirs of God, and Joint-Heirs with Christ, is, that it is given to us to believe: He who has not the Spirit as a Sanctifier, can never be supposed to have him as a Comforter.

(4.) This may serve to remove the Charge of Enthufiasm laid against the Saint, when speaking of his Pleasure, in conversing with the Promises; for though he may sometimes be mistaken, through Weakness or Inadvertency; yet a most rational Account may be given of God's dealing in this Manner with his Servants. And where the fore-mentioned Effects attend the Spirit's Sealing, whether immediately, or by a Promise, the Christian may rest easy in himself, and bless the Name of his God, whilst he has Food to eat, that the World knows not of, and a Joy in Believing, which a Stranger intermeddleth not with.

Lastly,

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Lastly, Are there so many Promises made to the Believer, whilst here, and not the one half told him of what he shall enjoy hereafter ; How should this raise his Expectation, make him eager to be gone to that World, where the unknown Treasures of Glory shall be possessed as his Inheritance, for ever.

