

moment of his life. And he did what no other law-giver ever did; for he not only expounded his own law in its vast extent, but obeyed perfectly his own exposition.

He stood up, with the utmost stoutness of spirit and ardour of zeal, for the honour of God's law, and its eternal obligations and authority over the souls of all men; especially against those filthy ANTINOMIANS, the Pharisees, who were the grand corrupters of the eternal and immutable law. Christ hated all opposition to the divine law: he disdained all opposite self-will to God: he looked upon it as senseless and absurd; as contrary to right reason, and quite repugnant to the idea of man's natural and moral dependence on God: he abhorred all the inventions of men in religion, which he knew to have a direct tendency to enervate the obligations and corrupt the spiritual sense of the divine law: he would not give place to men or devils, no, not for an hour, in their attempts to diminish the dignity, and tarnish the glory of the holy and eternal law, which commands all that is right, and forbids all that is wrong.

He rejoiced to see men and angels obey the divine law: he was exceedingly pleased to see the law of God obeyed in other men, and was charmed with every instance of faith, love, and obedience. Yea, he carried matters so far as to
love

love even the mere external resemblance of virtue. He looked on the young man, and loved him. See Dr. Watts's admirable Sermon on the lovely Youth perishing in Sin, vol. i. 8vo.--- Christ rejoiced much more to see the centurion's faith: the poor woman, by her faith, conquered his heart: and it pleased his generous, compassionate soul, to see the humble, penitent prostitute wash his feet with her tears.

Upon the whole, we must be forced to observe, that Christ loved to be determined by the divine law: he was always delighted to know the whole will of GOD: he shewed in his own temper and conduct, that obedience to GOD was the most wise, the most just, and the most lovely action, above every thing else in the world: he evinced and displayed the beauty and justice of the LAW OF NATURE, and shewed the dignity and splendor of VIRTUE before heaven, earth, and hell.

4. CHRIST incessantly worshipped GOD his FATHER, with the most sublime SPIRIT OF RELIGION.

The worship which Christ paid to GOD his father was an act of his understanding, choice, and affection: it was an act of his whole soul, applying itself to the knowledge of the nature and excellent properties of GOD, with actual thoughts of his glorious majesty and dominion; recollecting the shining purity of his perfections

with the most intense veneration and delight, acknowledging God as the supreme GOVERNOR of the world; the first CAUSE and chief GOOD, and last END of all things.

The sublime worship which Christ performed to his heavenly father, flowed from a pure nature, consisting of holy powers and affections; not only from his soul, as a rational and free agent, but from his soul as inlaid with holy springs of action, full of divine elasticity, evolving with their utmost force and fire into the immensity of God's perfections, and spreading abroad into the infinitude of his love.

Christ's admirable worship was actuated by the influence and incessant agency of God the Holy Spirit on his mind. This blessed agent gave him clear ideas of God every moment, and lively perceptions of the beautiful qualities of the divine nature. He, by this means, kept up the full force of his holy inclinations, and the free, fixed choice of God in his soul: he inspired him with a lively taste for the good, the sublime, and the beautiful character of God: and this blessed Spirit gave him an actual power to perform his worship with the highest delight.

Christ worshipped his father with sincerity and integrity of heart: he had a single aim and intention to please God his father, and approve himself to him through the whole course of his
life:

life : he knew the divine will in its full extent, and applied himself to the practice of it in all its branches : he maintained a perfect consistency of conduct in all his thoughts, words, and actions ; and was all of a piece in his behaviour in solitude and in company : he was always as good in secret as he appeared to be in the public view of thousands of spectators.

God demanded his heart : and Christ gave him his heart ; his whole heart and soul, and strength and mind. Sincerity was the blood and spirit of every grace in Christ's spotless soul. Christ never had one grain of deceit in his precious immaculate mind. Hypocrisy and lukewarmness never for one moment had a dwelling there. No, but he adored God with all the united powers of his heart : he worshipped him with the collected force of all his faculties and passions, which flowed with a full stream of life into God.

Christ, in the daily actions of worship, felt a most spiritual activity ; a quick sensibility of God, and a lively ravishment of affection an unutterable transport of love and joy in all the divine perfections.

God is a spirit every where present and every where active ; therefore Christ gave him a living active service every moment. Acts of worship were the delight and recreation of his whole existence and life.

Christ

Christ exerted all the force of the most excellent spiritual habits, or abilities and dispositions to love and glorify God. RELIGION appeared in its full power and glory in the soul of Jesus Christ. Here you see what true RELIGION is in its utmost grandeur and beauty, and approaching towards infinite perfection. All the living springs of grace flowed out of his holy soul: all the fountains of the great deep of Christ's powers and graces were opened up, and ran with a full stream into the boundless ocean of God's perfections.

Jesus Christ felt an incessant admiration of the beauty of God: that is, he exerted a respectful and pleasing emotion of soul at the grandeur, novelty, and beauty of the divine character: he had the utmost esteem for him as the most worthy being: a desire after him as fit to do himself all possible good: he felt the most intense good will to him, as fit to receive the utmost good: and he felt the richest delight in God, as an ocean of the purest good, the centre and repose of immortal spirits.

He had a vivid consciousness, that in God there was every thing agreeable to his noble powers and affections, every thing suited to his most refined MENTAL TASTE: he felt an active joy streaming into God, and rolling back from God, with intense unbounded fire: he felt a deep
reverence

reverence of the divine majesty, an awful sense of his boundless grandeur, as present to his mental eye; yea, and as if God was present to the eyes of his body, and stood visibly before his face; or as if Christ's human frame had been actually in the very heaven of heavens.

The deepest humility abode in the heart of Christ every moment of his life: he had a low esteem of himself when compared with the divine nature, existing in three intelligent and free agents in the undivided being of God. Christ, in his human nature, knew he was made of dust and ashes in his body; that he was a dependent being on God the supreme being every moment; and, that, as a rational existence, he was dependent on God the SUPREME REASON: he felt this dependence every instant of time, and he acknowledged this dependence with every power of his soul, and with every sentiment of his heart.

The utmost beauty of vital holiness, or an universal rectitude of mind and manners were displayed by Christ before men, devils, and angels. You see in him the truest and nicest adjustment of all his powers to the harmonious perfections of God, and the ardent exertion of the whole assemblage of graces on their proper objects. The actions of his heart were suited to the distinct glories of God: he delighted to see

God

God every moment: he felt the energy of an omnipresent God working in his human structure, and determining his existence and rational powers from moment to moment: he saw God with delight wherever he was, on earth or sea: and he felt an exquisite pleasure at every new sight of God; and he wished to repeat that sight, that prospect, that view, that delicate sensation, that enjoyment of God's presence; and the more frequent repetitions yielded still sweeter fruitions to his pure and spotless soul.

Christ adored his father with the most sublime ends that ever entered into a mortal breast. In every act of worship he had the most exalted aims at the illustrious and boundless glory of the great and good God. The glory of the divine character was his sole object and principal end in every action. Christ's ideas met his father's ideas every moment: he had the same end as his father had in all the ideas of his infinite mind and understanding.

Let us amplify this thought a little more; in order to discern with delight the amazing dignity of the character of Christ.

God is a spirit infinitely good and happy, full of blessedness; therefore Christ approached him with cheerfulness.---God is a spirit of infinite majesty and grandeur, therefore Christ came before him with reverence.---God is a spirit of the
highest

highest power, dominion, and independent glory; therefore Christ adored him with the deepest humility and lowest prostration of soul.---God is a spirit infinitely holy; therefore Christ approached him with the utmost purity of nature, inclinations, powers, and affections.

God is a spirit infinitely glorious; possessed of a full assemblage of all possible perfections; therefore Christ acknowledged his adorable excellencies in all he thought, in all he said, in all he did, in all the turns of his life, and in all the measures of his conduct: he made every sentiment of his soul, every word of his tongue, every action of his life, contribute to the glory of the eternal character of God; by having the highest and noblest aims in the worship of his father, above all the saints in glory; yea, so intense was the ardour of his soul, as to rise far above the highest angels of God.

He considered the object of worship, God; and the subject of worship, himself. God is a spiritual being; Christ was a perfect reasonable creature. The NATURE of God instructed Christ what worship was fit to be paid *to* him; and Christ's OWN NATURE, and amazing powers and passions, instructed Christ what kind of worship was fit to be presented *by* him. Christ had a precious soul, as an image of the wisdom, power, goodness, holiness, and IMMORTALITY of God;

and the astonishing correspondence of his nature *to*, and the harmony of his powers *with*, the natural and moral perfections of GOD, taught him all those glorious actions of adoration and invocation, dependence and consecration, delight, gratitude, and praise, which were fit to be expressed towards GOD every moment of his life. In a word, Christ in his worship expressed the utmost conformity to, and representation* of, the beauty, truth, justice, and purity of the most high GOD.

II. The TEMPER of CHRIST towards Himself.

The first glorious virtue you see in Christ is,

I. CONSIDERATION and SELF-FURNITURE.

This is the prime quality of the heart, which gives a man self-enjoyment; and it appears to be an exquisite beauty of the soul. In Christ it appears in its utmost loveliness and perfection. This kept his reasonable powers always in exercise, and gave him an habit of attending to all things of the noblest nature and highest importance. The use of our reasonable powers, in serious and regular consideration, is good in itself; and the fixing our thoughts upon GOD, and all worthy objects, is a matter of free choice :
and

* A representation of GOD in human nature was exceedingly wanted in the world. Man, by his horrid apostacy, had made nothing but a representation of the beast and the devil for thousands of years, in all the parts of the Pagan world. How great was the goodness of GOD in giving us such a glorious model of his perfections in the person of Christ Jesus †

and such an exercise of thought affords unspeakable satisfaction and pleasure.

Christ considered what his own noble nature and capacities were, as they came pure and vigorous out of the hands of God : and he used his reasonable powers to the best and highest purposes. His mind was principally turned to the word of God : and, above all, he contemplated the GODHEAD in all its infinite perfections : and he considered his soul as dignified with a union to the eternal person of the Son---he loved and delighted in this astonishing union. He as clearly discerned the difference between moral good and evil as he could see the difference in colours, or any other sensible qualities which are the object of the sight, or the taste. He contemplated the works of God through the whole structure and beauty of heaven and earth : he considered God's ways of providence every moment of his life. A thoughtful temper was most easy and delightful to his soul, and gave him the sweetest relish of his whole existence. In a word, his thoughts on God and eternity were never for one moment out of his mind. On every thing he thought, and said, and did, he might inscribe this motto, " I THINK and ACT FOR ETERNITY."

2. HUMILITY and wise SELF-VALUATION,

Christ had a low and modest esteem of himself, when compared with the divine nature subsisting

in three glorious persons possess of all possible and infinite perfections. He made himself of no reputation; and instead of a violent desire to be the greatest, he became a worm, and consented to be *ἐξουθενώθη*, made nothing of, (Mark ix. 12); yea, less than nothing. Instead of a haughty scorn of others, he was willing to be treated with scorn and contempt for our sake. Instead of a greedy desire after applause, he suffered his good name and honour to be torn to pieces and trodden in the dust. O! you sons of pride, come here, and blush; come here, and see the deformity and ugliness of your own infernal temper.*

3. MEEKNESS and QUIETNESS of SPIRIT, with wise SELF-VINDICATION.

Christ never indulged rash anger or fierceness: he never gave way to violent anger or fury: nor did he ever harbour continued anger, which is called malice, or a deliberate purpose to revenge an injury.

Christ shewed his meekness in a full submission of soul to the authority of the word of God, and in an absolute resignation to the will of divine providence. His meekness towards men was admirable; he had the greatest calmness of temper under provocations, and his meekness expressed itself in a care to avoid giving offence in word or
action

* I am obliged to contract my thoughts,---the subject will be resumed in another part of our work.

action to others ; and a sweet modesty of behaviour towards all men ; comporting himself with his station and circumstances ; and particularly he expressed his meekness in the offices of instructing, exhorting, and rebuking his disciples and mankind. He discovered the softest gentleness, which is the direct opposite to being fierce and eager : he shewed all long suffering and forbearance, and appeared with all the sweetness of love and goodness in his whole conversation.

4. CONTENTMENT and SELF-POSSESSION.

Christ had no displeasure and grief at his situation and lot in providence : he was pleased with the station in which he was fixed by God : he had no irregular affections after persons or things : nor did he pursue any thing out of time, or beyond what was needful. He had no fretting at his own station in life, nor envy at the peace and prosperity of others. He had no anxiety or distrust of his father's care, nor murmuring at his father's disposals ; but, having food and raiment, he was contented and pleased with his whole condition and circumstances ; making the best of all events, so as to acquiesce in them : referring himself to futurity and eternity, as the nature of those things which fell to his lot might require : being resolved to be satisfied with temporal things, and all things that could not or would not be rectified till eternity came on, and
delivered

delivered him from all pains, trials, and vexations.

5. PRUDENCE and SELF-MANAGEMENT.

Christ's temper and conduct was a most beautiful conformity to all the rules of reason, truth, and decency, at all times, and in all circumstances. His prudence consisted chiefly in preserving a conduct consistent with his circumstances in life, and suitable to the character he appeared in; and which he ought to keep up and maintain till death. He avoided all inconsideration, affectation, vain amusements, and trifling conversation: he scorned all disorderly conduct, or living without a wife, manly, sublime plan of action every day and every hour. He was prepared for all future events, whether common or most alarming; and met every event with a prepared mind and heart.

6. FORTITUDE and SELF-CONSISTENCE.

He had a firm and steady disposition of soul, which secured the due and full exercise of all the virtues and graces of his lovely temper. Fortitude is the regulator and strength of all the virtues of the heart. Christ guarded against an habitual doubt and suspense of mind: he watched against a wavering temper, and never gave way to that opposite to true courage, having too low or unbelieving thoughts of God. He never felt
any

any superstitious fear, arising from poor, low, narrow thoughts of God. He had a lively vigorous faith in the divine omnipresence, which animated and invigorated his sublime and glorious heart to cut through all dangers in his way to God, and in his great work of redemption. He had a strong persuasion of God's incessant assistance; a fixed determination of will to pursue his great end; a confidence and trust in God; a resolution and boldness to face all dangers and oppositions from men and devils; with a sincerity, integrity, and GREATNESS of mind, which made him dare to defend the truth at all times, without disguise, deceit, or duplicity. He discovered the most sedate and quiet temper, with a continual perseverance in all sorts of great actions towards God and man. This glorious frame of mind prevented much evil, or taught him to conquer it, and rise like a mighty giant from under the power and pressure of infinite mountains of evil. It enabled him to perform the greatest good that men, or angels, or God, ever beheld; and brought him off with eternal honour into the heaven of heavens.

III. The TEMPER of CHRIST towards his PEOPLE and MANKIND.

I. LOVE to his PEOPLE.

Christ had a vast esteem for all his people, considered as recoverable from the ruins of the fall;
fall;

fall; and viewed as washed in his blood, cloathed with his perfect righteousness, and adorned with the graces of his spirit. Thus he viewed them as beautiful, excellent, and endued with the most amiable qualities, worthy of his highest and dearest esteem.

Christ considered them as worthy to receive good, as fit for his most ardent good-will, and every way the proper recipients of all his blessings, and the fit objects of infinite benevolence.

He had a desire towards his people, as beautiful and fit to please his heart, as agreeable to his holy mind and taste, as suitable to stand in connexion with him to all eternity, and as worthy of that most precious connexion. Christ had delight and joy in seeing his people: he loved to have a sight of them, and he felt the highest pleasure on every review of them: he loved to have new views of them, and to enter into the most tender connexions of soul with his people, and the most wise, rational, and endearing converse with them: in this manner he treated his disciples on earth: he had the most delightful union of his will with the persons of his beloved people. Christ had all that tender love, which suffereth long and is kind; which envieth not, vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up; did not behave himself unseemly; sought not his own; was not easily provoked; thought no evil;

evil ; rejoiced not in iniquity ; but rejoiced in the truth. He bore or covered all things ; believed all things ; hoped all things ; endured all things ; his love never failed.

Christ's love was astonishing towards poor sinners. He pitied and spared poor sinners, and bore long with them before he called them by his grace : he forgave many and great offences, supported and comforted mourning sinners, and covered all their offences with the robe of his righteousness and the mantle of his love.

Christ was very tender towards his disciples in their mistakes and errors about religion, and the blemishes of their character and conversation. He considered the weakness of their rational capacities, their low and mean education : he allowed for different degrees of divine impressions on their hearts, and the small measure of grace they had received, with their feeble attainments in religion : he disliked all evil censures and hard-hearted oppressions of poor penitent sinners, and ordered all his affections to an habitual moderation, referring the final state* of men to the day of death and judgment.

Christ was full of goodness and pity to the poor. He searched out their distresses and wants :
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* The only exception to this is Christ's awful censure of the Pharisees, and the dreadful denunciations of his wrath upon them, in that awful chapter, Matth. xxiii.