

UNION: or, a Treatise of the
Consanguinity and Affinity between Christ
and his Church.

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Preface

HEARING an *Apostle* say, that he used not the excellences of speech, nor the enticing words of man's wisdom, when he came preaching the Gospel of *Jesus* amongst the Gentiles: I conclude, that what was *then* useless, is altogether as unnecessary *now*. Truth needs no art, but manifests itself by plainness of speech, in the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power.

I believe I may say, without uncharitableness censure, that mankind in the general judge according to appearance, and not with righteous judgment; the flowery style, the swelling words of vanity alluring to the flesh, is that, which (by reason of the depraved senses) is most pleasing to the ear, and striking to the mind, it being not important, whether it contain the matter or not: The Truth itself, being seldom that which the reader falls in love with; it is language, sounds, and pomp of words, that enamours a fluttering world.

To urge, that the allurements and elegance of speech adorns the truth, and removing the prejudice which many have conceived against it, excites them to read with delight, &c. — I saw, this plea will be found upon impartial inquiry, to be a flat contradiction of the scriptures, a stale device of Truth's grand enemy: For, let the *same subject*, be but treated of in the true apostolic language, viz. the plainness of speech; and those raptured admirers of the sublime, however nervous its argument, will reject it.

Union

THE doctrine of *Union* between *Christ* and his *Church* renders the system of man's redemption by his blood, beautifully consistent, and worthy its glorious Author.

It explains the harmony of the divine perfections, and reveals God, acting according to the principles of his nature, in the salvation of mankind by *Jesus Christ* our Lord.

Hence, it appears greatly worthy of our consideration; and in treating thereof, I would observe the following method:

- I. Attempt, the proof of *Union* as necessary to the equity of salvation by *Jesus*.
- II. Explain, as far as I may, the nature thereof.
- III. Hint its antiquity, and unchangeable duration.

- IV. Point out a few of the never-failing springs of consolation, arising therefrom.

The *Union of Christ*, and his *Church*, appears to me, a truth of such importance, that can see no consistency in the doctrine of salvation by Jesus, without it.¹ My present design, is to render, with as much plainness of speech as possible, the reasons of my ideas; intending thereby, to prove at once, the necessity, and utility of this grace.

¹The method of grace and salvation, according to Union, is not at all contradictory to the sovereignty of God: that being sufficiently manifest, where he hath decreed the honour, and the glory of his Son, as the principal, and leading maxim in all his divine appointments. "He was before all things, and by him all things consist." The creation of man, and his being appointed to obtain saivation, by *Jesus Christ*, is a farther proof of divine sovereignty; nothing moving the Almighty thereunto, but his own will: Yet this hinders not the *method* and *execution* of this grace, its being according to equity, and *that such*, as we by *reason* and *Revelation* may properly conceive of. But when sovereignty is introduced from first, to last; to the utter exclusion of equity, which is often done; (as a palliative for man's ignorance in divine things) the consequences attending are dangerous. First, as it depreciates the sacrifice of *Christ*, and makes death unnecessary: since *Absoluteness* might have remitted the offence without shedding of blood. — Or if it is hinted, that this condition *took place* and was *accepted* from mere sovereign pleasure only: Then, of consequence it was not proportionable, as an atonement unto the offence: and its dignity as the blood of God denied: nor (upon such a supposition) was it necessary that our Saviour should be more than man. But, if the scriptures dignify the blood of *Jesus*, in saying, that God purchased the Church: *with his own blood*, if *he* was made a curse for us: if *his* sufferings as the punishment sin was equal to the offence; then it was accepted, not from *mere absoluteness*, but from the harmony, and full consent of mercy, and truth, righteousness, and peace. Again, such an [*sic*] use made of divine sovereignty, would be to reject the testimony of *Moses* and the prophets; where they declare that God will not hold the sinner guiltless, nor acquit him without the shedding of blood: even the blood of the offender. To throw a light upon which, and to instruct the people in the mystery thereof, they were taught from the union subsisting between themselves, and their sacrifices, to respect the blood, and death, of their sacrifices as their own: and as such, was the blood taken by the High Priest into the holy presence; where the names of the people engraven on the stone of memorial, were present with the blood: confessing it, and claiming the benefits resulting from the shedding thereof, as a punishment adequate to their sin. — Which blessings, were remission and justification to life. Thus through all the dispensations committed to *Moses*, the symbols of equity are inseparably connected with the figures of salvation by *Jesus*. — From all which it appears, that God's sovereign grace, and will to save mankind, hath been executed according to strictest truth, and equity: and such is the wisdom, that God is unspeakably glorious in the honour and glory his *Son* hath obtained thereby: and manking infinitely advantaged. — Should it be objected, that the Apostle himself resolves certain queries in the sovereignty of God; saying "who art thou that repliest against God, shall the thing formed, say unto him who formed it, why hast thou made me thus?" &c. I answer, the Apostle was not speaking here of salvation and the method thereof, but of the people: some of whom, as respecting the *Knowledge* of the truth, were taken whilst others were left. The wherefore some, believe, and others do not, is not the object of faith; nor does it fall within my line to shew; and should I be inquisitive, the answer is recorded; *What is that to thee, follow thou me*, such inquiries being more curious than profitable; our Saviour will give no other answer: it being not necessary to our peace and happiness. And as God has not thought fit to reveal himself in that particular, we are constrained through ignorance, to resolve it into his sovereignty, though, it is not to be doubted, but the time will come, when the equity of this, and all his ways with man, will clearly appear. "And ye shall know that I have not done without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord God." Ezek. xiv. 23.

I. I apprehend it necessary to the harmony of the divine perfections. For, as all the hopes, and expectations, of the creature from the Creator, are founded upon the supposition of his goodness; men of every sentiment, will agree to this proposition, God is good.

And, that we may rightly conceive of him under this character, it is as necessary we should see him *justice, holiness, and truth*; as *mercy and love*: since all those properties must unite, and act in perfect harmony, to constitute real goodness. Thus considering the almighty, we are verily persuaded, that as a God infinite in goodness, he *doth not, will not*, act from one attribute, to the dishonour of another. Nor may we expect any exhibition of *mercy, and love*, but in a way of *justice, purity, and truth*. Therefore, it doth not appear how God from a principle of mercy, and peace, towards mankind, could punish sin upon *Christ*, without the concurrence of righteousness, and truth: nor can this concurrence, or harmony, be proved; without *union* between *Christ*, and those for whom he endured the *cross, and despised the shame*.

1st, Because, contrary to truth: which declareth that every man shall die for his own sin. 2 Cor. xxv. 4.. Deut. xxiv. 26. And again, “*whosoever hath sinned against me, Him will I blot out of my book,*” Exod. xxxii. 33. This was the answer of God unto *Moses*, when he would have atoned for the sin of the people, by suffering in their stead. Nor will he destroy the righteous with the wicked, because the judge of all the earth doth right. Gen. xviii. 25. “*Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and the righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked.*” Exod. xxiii. 7. Thus the voice of truth is, that the sinner shall die for his own sin: and that the righteous shall not suffer. “*Say ye to the righteous it shall be well with him, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him.*” Isai. iii. 10, 11. This is the language of *truth*: one jot, or tittle of which, shall not fail; though heaven, and earth, should pass away: therefore, such an *union*, or relation, between *Christ* and his *Church*, as gives *Him* the right of redemption, and brings *Him* under that character which is obnoxious to punishment, is absolutely necessary, that his sufferings for sin, might accord with the declarations, and demands of truth.

2dly. It is contrary to *justice* to afflict the innocent: to punish, and destroy him, is cruelty, and injustice. Without the consideration of *union*, where is the justice of charging the black rebellion, and crying guilt of *man* upon the pure and spotless head of *Jesus*? but God doth nothing unworthy

of himself, or contrary to the harmony of his nature. To say that the undertaking on *Christ's* part was voluntary, neither proves, nor implies, his right to suffer: because it is not his *willingness*, but the approbation of *divine justice*, which proves his right to taste the death of the cross. And, as the nature and property of justice, is always its own rule of acting; it cannot admit of the innocent's being punished, nor of the transgressor's being acquitted: For God the righteous judge, hath pronounced a woe unto such who justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him, Isaiah v. 23. I am aware of an objection here, from such who would establish imputation, without relation, or *union*, viz. that the law admits of one man's being surety, or bondsman for another; and can justly oblige him to fulfil his engagements: to this, I answer. It is most absurd to make human laws a standard for God's method of dealing with mankind; except, it be first proved that those laws are fully conformable to the law of God; in justice, and equity: until this be proved, what man decrees, or what the law of nations is, hath no weight at all when brought to teach the way of God with man. Besides, I know not of any human laws, which admit of suretyship in *capital* offences; and sin is not only a *debt*, for which suretyship is sometimes admitted, but a *transgression*, a *crime*, capital in the highest sense, only atoned for by the shedding of blood; by the *death*, yea, by the eternal *death* of the sinner: which justice must inflict, before it can be properly satisfied; nor can it possibly admit of a surety here: because, it can only punish Him, whom it *first* finds guilty; and that not by reckoning him to *be* what he is *not*, according to human quibbles; but according to artless, reasonable, divine equity; which can only declare such guilty, on whom the fault is found, and can only find the fault on such who have committed it: *We* only committed the fault, upon *us* only can it be found: Therefore, without such an *union* between *Christ*, and *us*, as exposes *us*, in *his* person, to judgment, and con demnation; the harmony of the divine perfections, doth not appear in the things which he suffered, because contrary to truth and justice.

Again, it is contrary to *mercy*, as mercy may not, consistent with its own nature, trespass the limits of truth and justice. But, if *Jesus* suffered for sin, without such an union to the sinner, as made his sufferings and blood, to be regarded as that of the offender; though there be an appearance of merey towards *us*, there is great lack of it towards *Him* who suffered for sin, unjustly charged upon him. Such is not the nature of infinite goodness, to shew mercy to *one*, through injustice to *another*: But, if united to the sinner,

there is a *consistency*, yea, a *divine equity*, in his sufferings; and mercy appears to *man*; where God hath provided himself a lamb for the burnt-offering: the like appears to *Christ*, where God hath engaged to support him under his just sufferings, to hold his hand, and to keep him, when he gave him a purifier to the people. *This* is mercy, tempered with justice, and in the faithful view of *this*, every believer can sing of mercy and judgment.

Again, it is contrary to *wisdom*; yet God hath marked out all his ways in infinite wisdom: But that system which is not founded in equity, hath no exhibition of true wisdom in it; nay rather accuses God (if imputed to him) either as lacking wisdom when concerting his plan, or else, of *unwillingness* to give us a specimen thereof: and consequently of denying his own praise, and man's happiness; which consists in admiring, and glorifying him, in the discoveries of his infinite wisdom. For, where is the wisdom of imputing sin to Christ which he had no right to bear? and whence his right, if not from union to the sinner? But grant *this*, then indeed the great deep breaks open, and wisdom, infinite wisdom appears: whilst each beholder, with wonder cries, O! the depth! who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

It is also contrary to *love*: the scriptures are very explicit, in declaring the Father's love to the Son; but the punishment of this Son, for crimes he stood in no relation to, implies, a defect, in love: yea, rather a greater love to *man*, the offender, than to his well-beloved *Son*, who was the "brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person:" and is withal a manifest contradiction to the divine testimony, which asserts the pre-eminence of *Jesus* in all things. Withal, to love the impure, is inconsistent with the morality of the divine nature; therefore, where the Father giving his Son is at any time mentioned as an evidence of his love to mankind, it is a proof of his superlative love unto him,² and a manifestation of his glory; the descent of his humbled life, and bloody death, being the appointed depth, from which he was to ascend above all heavens, that he might fill all things; and that he might thus inherit the boundless, infinite riches of his Father's

²*God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son &c.* The superlative love of God to his Son, is manifest here: where the valuableness of the gift so infinitely prererable to the receiver, is, in order to enhance the grace intelligibly hinted. God's giving his *Son*, and giving himself, is a synonymy in scripture; and confirms the above proposition; the lesser being always blessed of the greater. Only considering, that all things were made *for him*, and that *he is the appointed heir of all things*, it will appear in brightness, that the honour and glory of the beloved Son, and of the Father in him, was first and principal in view, when he was given for the life of the world; consequently, God's love to the world, was subordinate unto that wherewith he loved his Son; and all his grace and kindness unto the world, subservient unto his glory.

love, it was necessary he should suffer what he did; and, that the extendings of the love of *God*, to *man*, might, be *subordinate* unto the love he bears to the eternal Son of his bosom, his *union* to those for whom he suffered the death of the cross appears absolutely necessary.

The *union* of *Christ*, and his *Church*, is a necessary consideration, for the right explication of the scriptures: without which, they would want a key, and a great part of them be altogether unintelligible, and without any just propriety in phrase. To prove which, I need only note a few of the numerous passages which are pregnant with this matter. And here I design not the least intimation of my quoting all the scriptures which positively speak of this truth; nor will I affirm, that those mentioned, are of the whole, the most pertinent to the purpose, but having their light and perfection in *Jesus Christ* our Lord; and being (as I conceive) such as treat of *His union* with the *Church*, I oft make use of them, as a confirmation of my doctrine, when discoursing on this subject: therefore, occurring the more readily to my memory, I mention *them* in particular, as "In thy book all my members were written." Psalm. cxxxix. 16. "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Eph. v. 30. "Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it." I Cor. xii. 25. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the, memberis of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ." 1 Cor. xii. 12. "Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." Cor. xii. 27. "He is the head of the body, the Church." Coll. i. 18. "The head over all things to his Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Eph. i. 22, 23. "Ye are complete in him." Coll. ii. 10. "We being many are one body in Christ and members one of another." Rom. xii. 5. "And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross." Eph. ii. 16. "And they two shall be one flesh; this is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." Eph. v. 31, 32. "For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one." Heb. ii. 11. "And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one, 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." John xvii. 22, 23. "And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter, so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good unto the potter to make it." Jer. xviii. 4. "She was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth

in one day? Shall a nation be born at once?" Isaiah lxvi. 7, 8. "In whom also ye are circumcised, with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ:" Coll. ii. 12. "Buried with him in baptism." Coll. ii. 11. "I am crucified with Christ." Gall. ii. 20. "Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?" Psalms xlix. 5. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead unto sin, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed." I Peter ii. 24. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him." Rom. vi. 6. "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Coll. iii. 3. "Dead to the law by the body of Christ." Rom. vii. 4. "If we be dead with Christ, we believe we shall also live with him." Rom. vi. 8. "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin; but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. vi. 11. "Thy dead shall live, my dead body shall they arise." Isaiah. xxvi. 9 "After two days will he revive us, in the third day will he raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." Hosea vi. 2. "Hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. I Pet." i. 3. "Not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. iii. 21. "Now hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh through death." Coll. i. 21, 22. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." 2 Cor. v. 19. "And was raised again for our justification." Rom. iv. 25. "And hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ." Eph. ii. 6. "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." Eph. ii. 5. "And you being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses." Coll. ii. 13. "Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him." Eph. i. 3, 4. "We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." I John iii. 2. "Because as he is, so are we in this world." 1 John iv. 17. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began." 2 Tim. i. 9. "He hath made us accepted in the beloved." Eph. i. 6. "Israel shall be saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation." Isaiah xlv. 17. "Surely shall one say, in the Lord I have righteousness and strength: in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." ver. 24, 25. "This is the name wherewith

he shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness." Jer. xxxiii. 16. "This is the name wherewith he shall be called the Lord our Righteousness." chap. xxiii. 6. "To them who are sanctified in Christ Jesus." 1 Cor. i. 2. "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God, is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that according as it is written, he that glorifieth, let him glory in the Lord." ver. 30. "They shall call his name Emanuel, which being interpreted, is God with us." Matt. i. 23. Time would fail me, to mention all the scriptures which I apprehend are full of this matter; and *are*, as I conceive, incapable of any *consistent* explication, that takes not in the *union* subsisting between *Christ* and his *Church*. If what I have already said, hath the weight, which it appears to me to have; then, without *union* with *Christ* all our hopes and expectations by *him* are groundless, and without the least shadow of reason: what I have said before, when proving the inconsistency and unreasonableness of his suffering for sin, without *union* to the sinner, is of equal force to prove this assertion, as I am persuaded, that all the ways of God with *man* are founded in equity.

Though I might offer many more reasons showing the necessity of this *union*, yet at present I shall forbear; judging the hints already given, sufficient to the purpose. I shall therefore hasten to consider its nature, attempting in my measure an explication there of according to truth.

In speaking of the nature of *union*, as subsisting between *Christ* and his *Church*, I might have recourse to numerous similitudes which the scriptures afford; and which the *Holy Ghost* makes use of to that purpose; but shall confine myself to a few only, and those, such as show the matter with more ease and familiarity.

The apostle shows us *Adam*, as a figure of him who was to come. Rom. v. 14. I would therefore consider wherein this divine grace was shadowed forth in *Adam*: *Moses* tells us that when God created *Man*, male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name *Adam*, in the day when they were created. Gen. v. ii. Thus were the *twain* created in *one*: the *Woman* in her *Husband*, where they, had *one* name given them: he called their name *Adam*: It was whilst they were in *this* condition, that the Lord God breathed into their nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. It was whilst they were in *this* capacity, undistinguished in person, that the Lord God commanded man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely

die." Gen. ii. 16, 17. It was whilst the *twain* thus existed in *one*, that the Lord God brought all the beasts of the field, and fowls of the air unto *Adam*, to see what he would call them, that he might at once, give a specimen of his wisdom, in making their names explanatory of their nature; and also by this act be instated in that dominion over the creatures, which the Lord God had given him. Yea, it was whilst the person of *Adam* was *plural*, as containing the woman, in himself, that the Lord God said unto them "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it," &c., and when the Lord God afterwards (causing a deep sleep to fall upon *Adam*, and taking the rib from his side, of which he made the woman) brought her unto him, *Adam* said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man." Gen. ii. 21. Thus, her existing in a distinct personality, did not hinder her *union* to the man, for when *Adam* saw her, he said this is *now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh*, as truly so *now*, as when she only existed a rib in my side. The *twain* were created in *one*, the woman in her husband: similar with *this*, the *Church* existed in *Christ*; "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." Eph. i. 4. "Having this purpose and grace, given us in him, before the world began." 2 Tim. i. 9. The *man* and woman, under this consideration, had, but *one* name: he called their name *Adam*. So *Christ* and his *Church*, in this *union* bears *one* name, *both* are called the Lord our righteousness. *He*, Jer. xxiii. 6. and *She*, chap. xxxiii. 16. We the righteousness of God in him. 2 Cor. v. 21. The Lord God covenanting with *Adam* as the *head* of the earthly creation, as having the woman in himself, drew a figure of his covenant with *Christ*, as having the *Church* existing in *him*; *he* as the *head* engaging for his *members*; as the husband for his *wife*, as the *King* for his *subjects*, as the *root* for his *branches*, &c. Which covenant was afterwards confirmed of God in *Christ*, when he swore unto *Abram*, that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. The promises made unto *him*, are all yea, and amen, in *him*, 2 Cor. i. 20. In *him* declared, in *him* fulfilled upon all his members. *Adam* having the *Woman* in himself, manifesting his wisdom in naming the creatures, and withal his dominion over them, was the wisdom of his *wife*; and her honourable exaltation in point of dominion: so *Jesus* having the *Church* in himself, in all the displays of his wisdom, is the wisdom of the *Church*. 1 Cor. i. 30. Likewise *his* dominion, where all things are put under *his* feet, is the exalted grace and glory, which was promised the *Church*. Psalm viii. compared with Heb. ii. 6, 7, 8, 9. *Eve* when taken from *Adam* into

a distinct consciousness of existence, was not less related unto him, than when she was only a rib in his side, as appears from *Adam's* testimony, she is *now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh*: In like manner, the *Church* when put forth in the creation of *Adam*, into a distinct personality from her *head* and *husband Christ*, was not less *united* unto him, than when she only existed in him; which she did, before the earthy man was created, or ever the worlds were made: as is manifest from the apostle, who tells us, that he speaks of *Christ* and his *Church*, where he says that they *twain shall be one flesh*. Eph. v. 32. "Members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, (verse 30,) one spirit (Cor. vi. 7.) with him their own Lord and husband: After this manner, (according to my apprehension) did the beginning of the creation of God preach Jesus: and the union of *Adam* and his *spouse* represent that of *Christ* and his *Church*.

The next thing I shall attempt an explanation of this divine *union* by, is the *fall* of *Adam*, and of the world in him; for *this* also abounds with instruction, with positive and intelligible figures of the *Lamb* and his *wife*. The apostle tells us, that "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." 1 Tim. ii. 14. "Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man in the Lord." Cor. xi. 11. From hence we gather, that *Adam* was not deceived in his own person; but knowing what *Eve* had done, and seeing their ruin inevitable, he voluntarily put himself into her condition, by receiving the fruit from her hand, and eating thereof such was his love unto his wife. And as they were not, (though distinct in person) without each other in the Lord, *her* transgression extended unto *him*; and his *union* unto her, made it equitable, for the curse and condemnation of *her* folly, to fall upon *him*; and that without the consideration of *his* consent and compliance with *her*.

In like manner, *Christ* the *husband* was not deceived: but his *wife*, the *Church*, being deceived, was in the transgression. Yet as the *union* was such, that *Christ* was not without the *Church*, nor the *Church* without *him* at any time; it was equitable for *her* curse and condemnation to fall upon *him*. Withal, such was his love unto his *spouse*, that he voluntarily put himself in her condition, when he appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh, tempted in every point like her, that he might compassionate her ignorance and wanderings, and be touched with a feeling of her infirmities. Moreover, the scriptures affirm, that "by the offence of one judgment came upon all men unto condemnation." Rom. v. 8. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Rom. iii. 23. It is evident hence, that in *Adam's* of-

fence, all offended: which supposes such an *union* between *Adam* and his offspring, that *his* sin was *their* sin and *his* ruin *their* ruin; thus by *his* offence, were *they* made sinners; whilst *they* included in *him* were in passivity, and *he* the active consciousness of the whole. And, that his sin hath reached the ends of the earth, hath corrupted the whole mass of mankind, both the scriptures and common experience, (from the visible effects thereof daily produced in everyman) abundantly declare. If it be granted, that there was such a *union* between *Adam* and his *offspring* as rendered his sin theirs, why should it be thought a thing incredible, that the like *union*, subsisting between *Jesus* and his *seed*, renders his condition theirs? especially as the apostle hath stated the matter thus: "As by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous." Rom. v. 19. The scriptures here shewing the method of *sin* in *Adam*, and of *grace* in *Christ*, takes an occasion to illustrate the *latter* by the *former*: intimating, that as *sin* came upon all *Adam's* posterity by *his* single act; before *they* had any capacity of sinning, after the similitude of *his* transgression; or of personal concurrence with *him* in his iniquity: it must have been from such a *union* to him, such an inclusion of the whole in *him*, as rendering *his* condition theirs in whatever state he was: hence, *his* sin, its curse and fruit, was *their's*, before they felt it, knew it, or ever were conscious of existence. Thus by *one man's* disobedience, *many* were made sinners. In like manner, *Christ's* righteousness is upon all *his* seed: by *his* single act, before they had any capacity of obeying, after the similitude of *his* obedience; or of assenting to what *he* did, or suffered: this manifests such an *union* to *him*, such an inclusion of the whole seed in *him* as renders *his* condition *theirs*, in every state which he passes through; insomuch, that *his* righteousness, with all the blessings and fruits thereof, is *theirs*, before they have known it, believed it, or ever were conscious of existence. Thus by the obedience of *one* are many *made* righteous.

"For as in *Adam* all die, even so in *Christ* shall all be made alive." 1 Cor. xv. 22. (Besides proving the general resurrection) the apostle explains in those words, the matter whereof I am treating. As all died, and were lost in *Adam*, when *he* was caught in toils of sin and death, it is evident *they* were then united in *him*, then *united* to *him*, so that *his* sin was *their* sin, *his* death, *their* death. As in *Adam* so in *Christ*, *united* in *him*, in all *he* did, and suffered; saved in *him*, crucified with *him*, risen with *him*, ascended and seated with *him* in heavenly places, &c. Why may not our salvation in *Christ* from *union* with *him*, in *his* obedience, and death, be judged as rea-

sonable as our condemnation in *Adam*, from *union* with *him*, in *his* sin and misery? I acknowledge the *latter* is more familiar, *when I would do good evil is present with me*: whilst the *former* is more remote from our senses, and only manifest, when “we look not to the things which are not seen but to the things which are seen.” But, if laying sensible things aside, as that which is temporary, we attend wholly to the testimony of the scriptures; having the anointed to guide us, we shall enter into truth, and spiritual things will be manifest. I would now proceed to consider *Aaron* clothed with the garment of his priesthood, as a figure of *Christ*, and his *Church united*. It may not be denied that *Aaron* was a type of *Christ*; neither as I conceive, that the garment was a figure of the *Church*, as attending circumstances sufficiently prove. The different colours and materials, in the garment, denote the many nations, languages, kindreds, and tongues, gathered into the body of the Lamb: where Jew and Gentile are reconciled, and both made one. *Aaron’s* garment was so contrived, that he should bear the names of the people upon his shoulders, engraven upon the stones of memorial: his bearing them on his shoulders signifies his carrying their names, persons, and burdens, through the whole of what he officiated in. This answers well to *Jesus*, who says of his Church, “He bare them, and carried them all the days of old.” Isa. lxiii. 9. The names of the people were also engraven upon the breast-plate of judgment, which (*Aaron* bearing them on his heart) implied his tender concern, and care for their welfare. And, how carefully concerned *Jesus* is, for the welfare of the people, let his humbled and sorrowful life, his sharp, dolorous sufferings, his shameful and bloody death upon the accursed tree, bear witness. And, that their names were engraven on precious stones, denotes first, the value of them, since the most valuable of gems were appointed to receive the engraving. The everlasting durability of their names was hinted here also, where such stones were ordained to bear them, whose nature admits not of their being erased. This also leads to *Jesus*, who says, “Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands.” Isa. xlix. 6. *Aaron* could not be consecrated [*sic*] until he had the garment on him. Neither could *Jesus* officiate as the High-Priest and Saviour of the people, without taking upon him the seed of Abraham. Heb. ii. 16. It being necessary that he as an high-priest, should have somewhat to offer, When *Aaron* had his garment on him he was anointed and not before: it was then the precious ointment was poured on his head, and running down his beard, reached the hem of his garment. Concerning which oil the Lord saith, “upon man’s flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye

make any other like it, after the composition of it, it is holy: and it shall be holy unto you: whosoever compoundeth any like it; or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people." Exod. xxx. 32, 33. May it not be determined that this oil, answers to the unction which is from the holy one; the anointing which guides us into all truth: that "washing of regeneration, and renewing, of the holy ghost, which be shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour." Tit. iii, 5, 6. *Jesus* when anointed with the *holy ghost*, and with *power*, was clothed with the people; they being anointed in him. "Behold how pleasant a thing it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity; it is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirt of his garment." Psal. cxxxii. 1, 2. The composition like unto this, forbidden by the Lord, is a compound of such virtues, amiable qualities, gracious dispositions, &c. as are thought to abound in man and when distinct from the consideration of *Union* with *Christ*, and of being anointed in *him*, men profess themselves anointed with the *holy ghost* and with *power*, imputing every change of sentiment, and behaviour, to the immediate influence of the divine spirit: and thus judging of spiritual things, by their own passions, and fleshly reformations, they may be said to pour the oil upon the flesh of man; yea, upon the stranger, contrary to the divine institution.

Aaron was to have his garment on when he ministered in holy things, nor was he to enter into the holy place without it, lest he died; and it was to be unto him for glory and for beauty. A true representation of *Jesus*, clothed with the people; when by himself he purged our sin, offering himself up unto God, through the eternal spirit; having put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And, as by *union* to *him*, they were crucified with *him*, so also being risen with *him*, he entered not into the holy place without *them*: but like *Aaron* he entered, wearing the people into the immediate presence of God: and there presenting *himself*, said, *behold I, and the children whom God hath given me*. For, when *Aaron* entered into the holy place, with blood in his hand, (the names of the people sparkling upon his breast-plate, before the face of God,) the blood which he then offered, was respected in justice, as the very blood of the offending people; whose names being engraven on the garment were there present, and sparkling, were seen in the blood, by divine justice: there rendering a reason of their expectations from the mercy seat. On this account, was the breast-plate called the breast-plate of judgment; because, by what was there represented, it is evident that mercy was

expected in a way of judgment; that the song might be of mercy and judgment. The very same *union* (with as much more reality, as the substance hath above the shadow) is there between the sufferings and blood of *Jesus*, and the people: That blood, and wounded form, with which he entered into the holiest of all, and in which he still appears as a lamb who hath been slain, relates so truly to the seed of *Abraham*, whom he took upon him as a garment, who were contained in his body as members thereof, of his flesh, and of his bones, as to be in justice, respected as their own blood, shed for their sins: and a sufficient reason rendered, of their faith *in*, and their hopes *from* the mercy seat. "Almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission." Heb. ix. 22. Into the breast-plate of judgment, *Moses* put the *Urim* and *Thummim*, the *Lights* and *Perfections*; whereby a free intercourse was opened, between God and man: This was a true representation of divine wisdom and purity; of God manifest in the flesh, dwelling in the midst of the people, Psal. cxxxii. 14. "This is my rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it." Thus the *Urim* and *Thummim* was a figure of the *Godhead*, *Aaron* of *Christ*, and his garment of the people; these three agreeing together in one; as where *Jesus* speaking to the Father, saith, "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, John xvii. 23, at that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and you in me, and I in you." John xiv. 20. *Aaron's* garment was to be unto him for glory, and for beauty: so also was the *Church* to be unto *Jesus*, "all things were made for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist," Coll. i. 16, 17. and "He is the appointed heir of all things." Heb. i. 2. His being *before all things*, implies, that his honour, and glory, was what the Father had first, and principally in his view, when the decree went forth for the creation of man: whilst all his permissions concerning man, and all his immediate dealings with him, are rendered, in infinite wisdom, subservient to this view. And indeed, upon this foundation, where he hath made all things for the glory of his Son, and hath put all things in subjection under him, decreeing him the homage and worship of every knee; with a full acknowledgment of his being Lord: I say, upon this foundation, hath the Father established his own glory, and praise. As appears from Phil. ii. 9. 10, 12. *All things were made for him*, that as a *Son*, he might have an *inheritance*, as a king, he might have a *kingdom*, as a *bridegroom*, he might have a *bride*, and as a *head*, he might have a *body* consisting of many members. And, that he might be the Saviour of that body, was man created in a mutable state. "For the creature was made

subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope," Rom. vii, 20. That the creature being deceived through sin, and lost in the bondage of corruption, *Jesus* might have an opportunity of exerting his grace, his wisdom, power and love, in the redemption of their soul by his blood; and in saving them in himself, with an everlasting salvation. This being the means of his obtaining that everlasting name, glory, honour, immortality, and eternal renown, which had been decreed and promised him, "he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name." Phil. ii. 8, 9. God having, in the riches of his wisdom and love, so inseparably connected man's happiness with the glory of his son, that each is included in the other: and here are the people the glory of *Christ*, as the priestly garment was the glory of *Aaron*. "For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me, the whole house of Israel, and the whole house of Judah, that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory," Jer. xiii. 11. "out of Zion the perfection of beauty God hath shined." Psal. l. 2. And as beauty consists in a perfect body, where none of the members are lacking, nor any thing superfluous: bearing withal a just proportion in every part, so is the *Church* the beauty of *Jesus* as the fulness of him who filleth all in all. Eph. i. 33. "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth, thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there were none of them." Psal. cxxxix. 15, 16. Time would fail me to mention all the particulars of this mysterious garment: as those also of sundry other mysteries in the *Jewish Church*, which I apprehend were instituted as positive figures of that blessed *union* subsisting between *Christ* and his *Church*.

I might go on, to use similitudes drawn from Moses and the prophets, as a farther explication of this matter, tending also to prove and confirm it: for such was the manner of the holy ghost's speaking unto the Fathers, under the Old Testament. But as all who profess Jesus Christ, understand not the scriptures, nor the power of God, it is probable that this method may be objected unto, and the matter treated by many as fables of Allegory. I would therefore consider what the New Testament says thereof, as using greater plainness of speech, and by all the literals acknowledged, as speaking more to the purpose.

Our Saviour teacheth us the grace of union under the similitude of a vine and its branches: I am the the vine, ye are the branches. John xv. 5. Where our Saviour takes on him this appellative, the vine, he is to be understood as speaking of himself according to his human nature, hence he is called the plant of renown, Ezek. xxxiv. 29. The plant which the heavenly Father hath planted: Mat. xv. 13, wherein his husbandry appears. When the the stock or set is first planted, there are no branches thereon: but nevertheless, the husbandman knowing its seed to be in itself, planteth in hope; being well assured of its putting forth its branches, and bearing fruit thereon in due season: All his skill, care and sufficiency, standing engaged for the same.

Thus Jesus, when first planted by the Father's hand, as the first, and only begotten, chosen and beloved, was as the stock or set, whose branches doth appear; but having then his seed in himself, he was to put them forth as his branches in due season; according to the appointment and foreknowledge of the great Husbandman: his wisdom, power, care, and all-sufficiency, standing engaged for the same. As the *stem* and *branches* make one tree; so *Jesus* and the people make one body, one man, one *Christ*, one elect, one beloved of the Father, one crucified, raised, and everliving, the *stock* and *branches*, making one tree, grow in one soil; so *Christ* and the people are jointly rooted, and grounded in the Father's love: "And hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." John xvii. 23. "Heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." Rom. viii. 17. Standing with *him* in the same relation to the Divine Majesty; "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God." John xx. 17. The root and branches, making one tree, have but one and the same life, sap, and fruitfulness. So *Christ* and the people, have both one, and the same eternal life: "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." 1 John. v. 11. Therefore the Saviour saith, "Because I live, ye shall live also." John xiv. 19. They have also the same fruit, for the fruit is not of the branches distinct from the stem, nor of the stem, without the branches: but of the tree, consisting of stem and branches. So also is *Christ*, who says, "from me is thy fruit found." Hosea xiv. 9. In brief, if Jesus meant to teach us the *union* subsisting between himself and his *Church*, under the similitude of the *vine* and its branches, which he certainly did; *then*, whatsoever *can* be said of the oneness of the tree, consisting of stock and branches, as a figure: *can* with much more propriety be said of *Christ*, and the people united, as the thing signified. The date of that *union* which the

branches hath to the stem, is equal to their existence: yea, as considered in the stock, the *union* which made them one therewith, was before they had any apparent existence. And, though the vine stock in *itself* may have the most fruitful qualities; yet it cannot exhibit the same, by bringing forth fruit to perfection, except it first put forth its proper branches therefore the existence of the branches, yea, the *union* thereof to the stem, and their life therein, is *before*, yea, necessarily *antecedent* to all their fruitful productions. So also is *Christ*; our *union* to him bearing a superior date to our apparent personal existence. Therefore, said to be *chosen in him*. Eph. i. 4. And to have "grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." 2 Tim. i. 9. And though Jesus as root and stem, was possessed of qualities infinitely fruitful; yet there was neither possibility nor occasion of his exhibiting this by bringing forth his fruit; except his people or proper branches, are first put forth: accordingly they were put forth in *Adam* to a personal existence; and sin entering, his bringing forth fruit was possible, and an opportunity administered him, of signaling himself in so doing: for, as the *union* of the branch to the stem, is not lessened by sprouting into an apparent existence, but is as full as when they were hidden in the stock; neither was the *Church* or members of *Christ*, less united unto him, when put forth in *Adam*, than what they were, when only existing in him; being still his true and proper branches. But, smitten with mildew, and blasting, in *Adam's* offence, their life, sap and fruitfulness, was repelled and driven back to the root; until the Great Husbandman in infinite wisdom, so manured and dressed the root, that forcing the life and sap upwards, the branches were passive unto its influence, until all its fruit appeared. In order to their fruitfulness, the branches were purged in the vine: there the superfluities of the whole were cut off, and all necessary for their perpetual fruitfulness accomplished. In like manner, the *Church* included in *Christ*, were purged in *him*, in order to *their* fruitfulness. "In putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." Col. ii. 11. When he had by himself purged our sins. Heb. i. 3. "Being now justified by his blood." Rom. v. 9. And "sanctified through the offering up of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Heb. [sic] x. 10. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Heb. xiii. 12. The vine thus purged, brings forth its fruit upon the native branches; having no other medium of bringing it forth. Thus *Christ* brought forth all the fruit of his pure conception, his spotless birth, his circumcision, and holy life, his bloody, shameful, and terrible death, his glorious resurrection

and ascension, upon the people, as the branches. Having taken on him the seed of *Abraham*, *he* in *them*, and *they* in *him*, fulfilled all righteousness, obeyed the law, and endured the penalty for the past transgression, being thus made perfect in one. And because, through all this, the people were in passivity, and *Christ* the active consciousness, and quickening spirit of the whole, therefore, saith the prophet, "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us, for thou also hast wrought all our works in us." Isaiah xxvi. 12. "From me is thy fruit found." Hosea xiv. 8.

Again, the apostle treats of this glorious grace of *union*, under the figure of the oneness and harmony of many members in one body. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ." Cor. xii. 12. The complete body here spoken of, is similar to *Christ*, and the members which fill up this body, to the people. Take away the members, and there will remain no body; take a *few*, yea, *one only* away, and the body is not perfect; deny the proportionable perfection of any one of these members, and then the symmetry of the body is destroyed. So also is *Christ*; take away the people, or deny that they were united to their head *Jesus* at some certain time, then was there at that time no *Christ*: or, if all the *Church* were not united to him, but some particular member, or members, stood at any time unrelated unto him; then was he not, a *perfect Christ* at that time: or, if it be possible that a bone of that body should be broken, or a member cut off, then may he yet be rendered an imperfect *Christ*: and withal a deficiency in his power will appear, because, no man hateth his own flesh: but naturally cares for it, loves and cherisheth it: or, if this *Church*, as united to *Christ*, is not perfect according to the perfection of beauty, in righteousness, holiness, wisdom, &c. then is *Christ* deficient in those particulars: which to affirm, will be agreed upon by all his worshippers, to be blasphemy. From hence we may infer, that whatever *Jesus was*, whatever he *did*, *suffered*, or *now is*, under the character of *Christ*, the people, as the *fulness of him that filleth all in all*, are not excluded; but to be considered *with him*, and *in him*, in the same circumstances and condition, through every dispensation. "Jesus is head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Eph. i. 22, 23. This leads us to the consideration of the human body as the intelligible figure of this sublimity, our *union* with *Christ*. The *head* and *members* are one in conception: this represents the people's *oneness* with *Christ*, as the object of the Father's love. "Thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." John xvii. 23. As the *head* and *members*

are born at once; so *Christ* and his *Church*, were *united* in his *birth*: as pure, and free from the original taint. And also in his glorious resurrection, as born from the dead. As the *head* and *members* in one body, are nourished by the same food, so *Christ* and the *Church* live by the same grace, good will and eternal love of the Father. As the *head* and *members* in one body, have but one life, so *Christ* and his *Church* have but one eternal life, one life unto God, our eternal life is in Christ. John. v. 11. "Because I live ye shall live also." John xiv. 19. This is the word of the Lord. Again, from the harmony of the body, the *head* and *members* have but one condition: they mourn together, and rejoice together; so also is *Christ*: we were planted together with *him*, in the likeness of *his* death, and are also with him in the likeness of *his* resurrection. As the harmony of the body prevents all schism therein, so that the *head* saith not unto the feet, I have no need of you: neither is there any separate interest in Christ; nor will he say unto the people, I have no need of you: nor will the feet, though thus acknowledged, boast themselves against the head, usurp its dignity, and say I have no need of thee: but will confess, and reverence it as pre-eminent as the seat of wisdom, by which the economy of the whole is preserved: so also is Christ, made of God unto us wisdom. 1 Cor. i. 30. As the *head* is the source of light to the body, the wise man's eyes being in his head, Eccl. ii. 14; so also is *Christ the light of the world*, John viii. 12. The head is the seat of reason to the body, by which it is directed, and influenced to shun all dangers, to refuse the evil, and choose the good; it is the disorder of the *head* only, that can deprive the body of this: if the *head* is free, the hurt of any other member cannot spoil the economy of the body; so also is *Christ*, he as the *head* is our divine reason and influence; as for the people, the Lord saith of them, "it is not in man that walketh, to direct his steps." Jer. x. 23. *Christ* as our *head* is above all distress, cannot be disordered; therefore the harmony and economy of his body cannot be spoiled, which makes us sing,

Christ's our head, gone up on high,
 And we his body are;
 All our fears before him fly,
 Our each distracting care.
 Though we Satan's dart should feel,
 His power can never strike us dead,
 He may bruise us on the heel,
 But cannot reach our head.

Again, the increase and nourishment of the body, is by *union* with the head, "from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered and knit together increaseth with the increase of God." Col. ii. 19. The *head* first receives the food, relishes and prepares it for the whole body: so also is *Christ*; as the *head* he first received the grace, it being given us in him before the world began: as the head he tasted for us, not death only, which he tasted for every man; but life and immortality, which he entered into, and relished in our name, and nature, as the *head* for the body. He, as our *head*, prepared our food for us, which he did, by fulfilling the condition, and enduring the penalty, that we might inherit the promise: our *union* to him, making his condition ours, we are nourished by him. As the *head*, though the most exalted and comely part, is yet a member of the body; it hath a right to suffer for the other members the chastisement of their peace: so also is *Christ*, when they smote the judge of Israel upon the cheek with a rod, it was the iniquity of his heels which compassed him about: the chastisement of *their* peace which he bare, and their iniquities which were laid upon him. They having wandered into forbidden paths, had the punishment of their wanderings inflicted upon their head; it was the sacrilege, blood, and oppression of the hands, that was visited upon the head, when Jehovah's flaming sword awaked against the man who was his fellow. The union and harmony of the body renders it equitable to punish and chastise the whole body in one member, for its offence in another; because, if "one member suffer, all the members suffer with it." 1 Cor. xii. 26. As the union of the body makes it equitable to punish the *head* for the offence of the other members; with like equity doth the members participate with the head in all its honours and glory. Thus the crowning of the head, crowns the whole man; and every member partakes of the honour.

The precious ointment poured upon the head, runs down to the hem, the whole man; yea, every member is anointed in the anointing of the head, by the laying on the hands upon the head only, the blessing was conferred on the *whole man*. Thus whether "one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it," 1 Cor. xii. 26; so also is *Christ*; is he crowned with glory and honour? Behold he saith in his appeal to the Father, "The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one." John xvii. 22. Our head Christ first, as having the pre-eminence, is *immediately united* to the Father; and we by him. *He is immediately* the Son of God, and we have the adoption of children by him. Eph. i. 4. He is the *immediate* object of the Father's love, but we by *union* with him, are

beloved, as he is beloved. John xvii. 23. He is the first elect, *immediately* the chosen of God but we by *union* with him were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Eph. i. 4.

Thus considering him, as the head of his body the Church, Ave give him the pre-eminence as *immediately* receiving all grace and glory from the Father: which honour, all the members as united to him the head, must necessarily partake of in him. Thus the union of head and members, mutually communicating their condition to each other, when rightly weighed, throws a light upon the matter; and shows us how Jesus hath from hence, the right of redemption: the justice of his bloodshedding appearing here, those where the harmony of the body, renders the punishment of one member, that of the whole man. According to the laws of *union* and *harmony*, the whole body may be considered in each member, but with greater propriety, in the more exalted, pre-eminent member the head. Accordingly, the scriptures are very explicit on this point, and speak very much of our being in Christ, chosen in him, justified in him, sanctified in him, saved in him, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in him. According to this *union* or being in him as branches in the vine, as members in the body, &c. the people are considered together with him, through all the circumstances of his birth, life, death, resurrection, and glory. "She was delivered of a manchild, who hath heard such a thing, who hath seen such things, shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day, or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." Isaiah lxvi. 7, 8. *Christ* was certainly the man-child here spoken of: compared with, Rev. iii. 5. And yet, this man-child is here shown to be the children of Zion, to be a nation born at once. Hence we conclude, that the *union* between Christ and the people, is such, that they as "members of his body, or his flesh, and of his bones," (Eph. v. 30.) were in him in his birth, that they might inherit the blessings of his holy nativity: that of Jer. xviii. 2, being here fulfilled. Man being the vessel marred between the potter's hands, was not rejected, but here was made *another* and *better* vessel; where the nature once spoiled by sin, was born into the world pure and spotless, and *called the Son of God*; and here, was that saying brought to pass, a *woman* shall compass a *man*. Under this consideration, we see Christ prepared and qualified to accomplish the work which was before him: not only as having hereby a capacity of suffering death, by being clothed with a mortal body, and made a little lower than the angels, but having taken on him the seed of *Abraham*, Heb. ii. 16; being *made of a woman, made under the law*.

He, as having the people in himself, had the right of redemption, and *as* them, stood engaged to fulfil every requisite to the glory of God, and their eternal salvation: which requisites, were *first* a holy principle, a privation of original guilt, fulfilled in his birth; a just observance of the law, and conformity to the divine nature, fulfilled in his life; and a full propitiation for the sin that was past, accomplished in his sufferings and death. The whole of which, he did; as containing the people in himself, who are upon that account, not only represented as being *in him*, in his birth, as above; but also in the whole of his life, death, and resurrection. In him were they circumcised, and the body of the sins of their flesh, put off by the circumcision of *Christ*." Col. ii. 11. In him fulfilling the law, and walking in all the ordinances of God blameless. Crucified with him, Gall. ii. 20; and that the resurrection of Christ was the resurrection of the people, from death, as the wages of sin, the Holy Ghost testifies by the prophets, Isaiah xxvi. 19: "Thy dead shall live, my dead body shall they arise." And, Hosea vi. 2. "After two days will he revive us, in the third day he will raise us, and we shall live in his sight." And by the apostle, as Eph. ii. 5, 6; "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ." From hence it is evident that the *union* between Christ, and the people, was such (as head and members in one body) that they were *with him*, and *in him*, in his birth, his life, his death, resurrection and glory. Therefore his sufferings, wars, and triumphs, all are theirs; and they have a right from this to rejoice in him; in what *he has done*, in what *he is*, and in the acceptance he hath found with the Father; and that, over all the weakness and vanity they perceive in themselves.

Again, the *union* of Christ and his Church is taught from the similitude of a building; of which Christ is both the foundation, and the top-stone: as appears from Isaiah xxviii 16; "Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone." And, Luke xx. 17; "The stone which the builders refused, the same is become the head of the corner." As the whole building is locked in, and enclosed, between the foundation-stone, and the head-stone: so also is Christ. He is the *Alpha* and *Omega*. The building was begun, and finished in him. He is the foundation of our election, grace, and sonship; we having all by *union* with him: and the whole is supported by him; so is he, as the author and finisher of our salvation, as made wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification unto us, the head of the corner, our *first* and *last*, our security in eternity and time. "In whom you

also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Eph. ii. 22. We consider Christ appointed the Saviour of man in the eternal decree, as the foundation laid; and in his incarnation, holy birth, and life of righteousness, as the building rising; until through his sufferings, death, resurrection, justification in the spirit, and reception in glory, the building was finished ; and the head-stone brought forth with shoutings, crying grace, grace, unto it. The people as chosen in Christ, had this grace given them, that Jew and Gentile should be builded together in him, until they were found a meet habitation of God through the Spirit. The foundation and corner-stone, with the middle stones, make one building: so Christ and the people make *one* house, where God delights to dwell: *one* temple, the glory of which as the latter, is greater than that of the former. Here God walks in the midst of the people, as he hath promised; because his dwelling in Christ, is his dwelling in *them*. To come up to the faith and understanding of this, in the Spirit is the substance of that shadow, where the tribes of Israel, at a certain age, came up from every quarter of the land, to the temple at Jerusalem, to worship. Again, the union of Christ and his Church is represented under the figure of a man and his wife: "For this cause shall a man leave his father, and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh: this is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and his Church." Eph. v. 31, 32.

These words of the apostle, are a quotation from Gen. ii. 23, 24, where Adam on the first sight of his Eve, declares the union subsisting between them. It is evident from his words, that this relation did not consist in that matrimonial connexion, which commenced, when by mutual consent and covenant, they cohabited and possessed each other: but was dependent on something prior to this. The source of their union, and kindred relation, was their being *one* in the love of the Father; where they were undistinguished in sex, &c. their being neither male nor female, in Christ Jesus, in whom they were loved, and chosen, before the world began. And yet the man was not without the woman, nor the woman without the man in the Lord. This source, had its first opening in their concreation, in one body, and human intelligence: which body, and intelligence was male though not without including the female: but the latter, according to the distinction of sex and personal existence, was, as being in the male in a state of passivity, and the male, the active consciousness of the twain in one. Adam, considering his perfection in knowledge, could not be ignorant of this, his true state; and therefore expecting the woman to be distinguished in person and sex, as a

manifestation to his senses, of the truth of her being, and union unto him; he knew her when the Lord God brought her unto him; and though there was a deep sleep upon him, when she was built from his side, yet when he saw her, he said, she was flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone; alluding unto the *former* truth, and not unto any thing which was to follow. For they were not made more one flesh, by that mutual, matrimonial embrace which followed, than they were before: the latter, as a fruit in consequence, being only declarative of the original truth, always apparent to God, and in itself, with him, perfect and permanent.

Thus the matrimonial bond of union was with them a consequence, and fruit of an antecedent union and kindred. This also is more manifest where Abraham, when he was old, caused his servant to swear by the Lord God of heaven and earth, that he would not take a wife to his son of the daughters of the land: but that he would take him a wife of his kindred: such also was Isaac's injunction to Jacob. In this particular also, Esau offended; by marrying the daughters of Heth, where there was no union or kindred previous to the marriage. From all which, it appears that Adam's speech to Eve, was grounded upon that kindred union which subsisted between them before their marriage.

When the apostle had said, that a man and his wife should be one flesh; he immediately adds, *this is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and his Church*. From whence we may observe, that the *Union of Adam and Eve*, of which I have already spoken, was truly a figure of *Christ* and his *Church*: And again, that this figure, though close and pertinent, is but a figure; an imperfect representation of the matter, which made the apostle turn from the fleshly marriage, and say it is a great mystery; and pointing to the Union of Christ and the people, as the grand truth or thing signified, say, *but I speak concerning Christ and the Church*. The union and kindred relation of Adam and Eve, and of the patriarchs and their wives, previous to their marriage (the latter being subsequent to the former, and a positive proof thereof) according to the primitive law: The earthly things being a pattern of the heavenly, represents the *oneness of Christ* and the *Church*. Their marriage as a figure, shews our believing or closing with Christ by faith: And that *union* and kindred, which subsisted between them before marriage was a shadow of the *union* between Christ and his Church, before the Church is brought to the knowledge of her husband, by believing, or ere they are married unto him, who is risen from the dead. But, as marriage is the consummate end of *union*, it is to be considered as explanatory of

the blessings contained therein; it shews the *woman* under her *husband's* name, in a joint possession, and enjoyment with him, of his state and condition. As one flesh, they cannot be insensible of each other's state, but must mutually feel pain, ease, hunger, thirst, joy, sorrow, happiness, and unhappiness; cannot possibly hate each other, because no man hateth his own flesh. As one flesh they have but one interest, one aim, and end, are not twain in any condition, but constantly one in all things. If this idea of marriage is true, it is easily perceived that it is only true in Christ. Previous to our marriage by faith with him who is risen from the dead, there is a discovery made of his person, of his being our kinsman redeemer, of his right to demand us: hence it appears wrong to refuse him, nor are we under the *compulsion* of that divine right which he hath to us, only; but he also shews us his glory, his personal beauties, his suitableness to our wants, and this he doth, until our *reason* is convinced, our objections silenced, and the full consent of all our powers gained, to be his; to bear his name, to commit ourselves fully to him, with all our concerns; until we cease from care, contented and rejoiced that he should clothe us, feed us, instruct us, protect, nourish, guide and preserve us unto everlasting life. The conscience judging of Christ (thus revealing himself) that he is pure, accepted of God and lovely, discerning, withal the right of appropriation (from *Union* and relation unto him) joins itself in affinity unto him; yea, puts him on, wrapping itself in him; and thus standing in his state and condition, it is purged from all guiltiness; and retaining no consciousness of evil, it is holily bold towards God, having "the answer of a good conscience towards God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ," 1 Pet. iii. 21, "because that the worshippers once purged, should have had no more conscience of sins," Heb. x. 2. "made perfect as pertaining to the conscience." Heb. ix. 9. And that the church as married unto Christ, is under his name, appears from, Jer. xxxiii. 16, where *she* is called the "Lord our righteousness," and from Rev. iii. 12, "I will write upon him my new name." And that *she* is a joint possessor with him, the apostle bears witness, *If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.* Rom. viii. 17. And, that his state and condition is upon us, John testifies, saying, "*because he is, so are we in this world.*" John iv. 17. And, that being one flesh, the husband cannot be insensible of our state, but must have a fellow-feeling with us, and that in the tenderest manner, in honour unto himself, and in love unto us, is evident from the Scriptures, "we have not an high-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," Heb. iv. 15, "who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on

them that are out of the way," Heb. v. 2, "for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye." Zec. ii. 8. "In as much as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Mat. xxv. 40. And that no man hateth his own flesh, when spoken of the marriage *union*, hath its truth, and perfection in *Christ*, for he hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," Heb. xiii. 5, though a woman should cease to have compassion, on the son of her womb, "Yet will I not forget thee," Isaiah xlix. 5. "so have I sworn that I would not be wroth 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 Lord that hath mercy on thee." Isaiah liv. 9, 10. Thus marriage, consisting of love, and *union* as the first; the espousal, or contract as the second; the consummation, with all the attendant blessings to the bride, with glory and honour to the bridegroom as the third; represents the *union* of *Christ* and the *Church*; The first, answering as similar to that ancient kindred *union* subsisting between them wherein he always loved her; the second, being a figure of his being made flesh, where he betrothed us unto himself; and the third, of the knowledge, and enjoyment, we have of our lovely bridegroom by faith; when believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. When we enter into the joy of our Lord, according to the conscience; his whole state, yea, all the blessings of his birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, is apprehended, claimed, and possessed, by us as our own proper inheritance. I might yet go on attempting to explain the nature of this *union*, the scriptures being very full of it: But as what I have already said, may probably be as much to the purpose, as any future hint, should I say much more; and intending at first setting out, to study brevity as much as possible: I shall leave what I have written on the nature of *union*, unto the reader's consideration; and hasten to treat of its antiquity, unchangeableness, &c. according to my first proposal.

Union between *Christ* and the *Church*, is a matter universally acknowledged; where that deference, which is justly due to the scriptures, is paid: though, it is a subject very rarely treated of: Which silence concerning it, implies, either a general ignorance of the nature thereof, or, that it is respected as a matter, neither conducive to the glory of God, nor the happiness of mankind: and therefore not necessary to be taught. And where the nature thereof is in some measure known amongst men, and the utility of the doctrine allowed, they are much divided about its antiquity; before our believing, or faith in *Christ*, say some: Whilst others with as much

strenuousness assert the contrary. But, if what I have already offered to the consideration of the public, shall be allowed to have any weight, or argumentative force; it will appear, that our *union* with *Christ* is not only antecedent to our faith, and believing, but also to all that he did, and suffered, for us men and for our salvation. The matter proposed in the gospel to be believed is true: and relates to the person of Christ and his benefits. That he was the Son of God, the Christ, the true *Messiah*, the *I am*, is a matter proposed to be believed, upon the credit of the divine testimony: Because this is a truth, therefore it is to be believed, and as it is a truth before believing; it is evident that it is not made a truth by believing; but is in itself a truth, perfect, and permanent, whether believed or not.

So also with relation unto his benefits, that the Father is well pleased in the beloved Son, is a truth; to be believed: and not to be made a truth, by believing "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins, return unto me, for I have redeemed thee." Isa. xlv. 22. This positive testimony of redemption, and the forgiveness of sins, is declared unto them who believed not; upon the credit of which truth, they are called upon to return unto their God. "Cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned." Isa. xi. 2. This was a truth concerning those who knew it not, and was to be declared unto them as such, that they believing it, might be comforted. That he hath "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification, is true; and therefore recorded to be credited, and rejoiced in. And, if it appear that the gospel is true before our believing, then *union* with *Christ* before *faith* is true; The latter being necessary to the truth of the former; as I have sufficiently shewn under the first proposition in this treatise; where the *necessity* of union with him, not only as previous unto our faith in him, but also unto his suffering for our sins, I think appears pretty obvious. That God loved mankind before Jesus died for them, the scriptures affirm: where they made the latter, a fruit of the former; and if God loved them before, he certainly saw them in a sinless state; for it is contrary to the holiness of his nature, to love the *unclean*, being of purer eyes than to behold iniquity: But in themselves, as related unto the earthy *Adam*, they were unclean: Therefore he must have beheld them in Christ, loved them in *him*: which if true, then were they in *him*: And, as being in him in this sense, doth not suppose their knowledge of his person, through the belief of the gospel, but a passivity with respect to them; as branches hidden in the stock, or the woman in the man; it implies the closest union,

and the necessity thereof (before their believing) to render and preserve them objects worthy of the divine love and favour.

Jesus in his appeal unto the Father, says, "thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." And again; "thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." In those words, the love of the Father unto the Son, is represented as the grand Archetype of his love unto the people: The Father loved the Son before the foundation of the world; but saith the Son, thou hast loved *them*, as thou hast loved *me*. The Father loved the Son, as the brightness of his glory, and his own express image: But saith the Son, thou hast loved *them*, as thou hast loved *me*. The Father loved the Son, and preferred him before angels, having not said unto any of them, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee: But saith the Son, of the children of men, thou hast loved *them* as thou hast loved *me*. The Father loves the Son with everlasting, unchangeable delight and pleasure: But saith the Son, thou hast loved *them* as thou hast loved *me*. The Father loveth the Son, and hath revealed it unto him, yea, hath given him the knowledge of it above measure: But, saith the Son, "that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." From all which it appears, that *Christ* and the *Church*, are one object of the Father's love; of his choice, good-will, delight, and pleasure. *He* the head, and they the body, constituting the elect precious, the Man beloved of God and accepted. But the head being the medium, between God, and the body, hath the pre-eminence in all things. And, as the head was never without the body, nor the body without the head in the Lord, the body hath always been by *union* with the head, entitled unto all the blessings, honours, and glories thereof. Nor doth the head withhold from the body, that glory, and honour, which he immediately receives from God, but divinely sheds it over the whole man; according unto that "washing of regeneration, and renewing of the holy ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." Therefore saith the head, the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one." John xvii. 22. But to be brief, what hath already been urged to prove the necessity of *union*, proves it to be also before faith; it being necessary unto the Father's loving us, as he loved his Son, yea unto his choice of us in his Son; necessary unto the engagements of Christ on man's behalf; otherwise he had not the right of redemption: necessary unto his suffering the death of the cross for us, as hath been largely shewn in the former part of this work. It is also necessary unto our believing a truth, except it appear that our faith, or believing,

makes it a truth. Indeed the apostle says, “through faith we understand the worlds were framed by the word of God.” But he doth not say that faith made the worlds. So truly through faith we understand our union with Christ: yet it is not our faith that makes it.

But if it is not true until our believing, and by means thereof; then doth believing make that a truth, which was not a truth, and faith creates its own object, and then embraces it. This looks like the heathen idolatry, first making their gods, and then trusting in them. Or, like Milton’s adventurous flight of Satan, through chaos into the new world; which he performed before the bridge was made. That this is contrary to the Scriptures, is evident from, 1 John v. 10, 11. “He that believeth not God hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son, and this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.” The truth here proposed to be believed, is this, that God hath given to us eternal life in his Son; and that this is a truth before it is believed, is evident; otherwise it doth not appear, how our unbelief makes God a liar. Besides, to deny this truth, is to depreciate the sacrifice of Jesus; and to make it an insufficient atonement for sin; without faith and compliance on our part: Thereby making misis [*promises* ?] made unto him, wholly dependent on the will and actions of the creature. And how fully this frustrates the grace of God, I leave unto every man who knows himself, to determine. Moreover, I take it, that where the all-sufficiency of the sacrifice of Jesus to put away sin, and that without any act of ours, either mental or external, is denied, it amounts to what the Scriptures call a crucifying of the Son of God afresh, and putting him to open shame. But to acknowledge the all-sufficiency of the sacrifice of Christ to put away sin, without any act of ours; and yet to deny this a truth until believed, (*viz.* that he hath put away sin by the sacrifice of himself) is a palpable contradiction; a position founded in prejudice and obstinacy, without the least shadow of reason; otherwise we are to consider such a confession, as containing an equivocation; and when they confess the sacrifice of Christ as having put away sin, they make it synonymous [*sic*] with the sorrow, hatred, fear, faith, love, joy, &c. which they feel in their own bosoms: Thereby making no account of the person and personal sufferings of Christ, they embrace a phantasm. Of this spake the Saviour, when he said, false Christs should arise and deceive many. And indeed, our modern profession of Christianity, seems to be taking large strides towards this deception; where passion, humour and pride is opposed unto the Lord that bought us. Or, will there yet be some way found out to reconcile

its being a truth *before* believing, with its becoming a truth *by* believing? A proposition of this sort might suit the subtilities of Scotus and Aquinas, but the definition thereof, would be too laboured, artificial, and sophistical, for honesty and common sense. The gospel is plain, simple and unartificial, suited to the meanest capacity; and would be more universally known, was it not for that unreasonable estimate which men set on themselves, on account of their learning, wisdom, experience, &c. thence judging themselves qualified to direct the consciences of their fellowcreatures, they will not suffer them to think for themselves; nor commend them to Jesus, and the word of his grace; but always amusing them with an artificial religion, consisting of directions how to attain to faith, to sanctification, &c. and yet to consent that they can do nothing, but that the agency of the spirit is free as the wind: With resolving cases of conscience, and thereby appropriating the authority of law-givers, withal giving such definitions of saving faith, true holiness, &c. as none but schoolmen can understand: thereby puzzling the minds of people, puffing up the vain and opinionated with pride and arrogance, from a supposition of their being possessed of those excellencies; and distracting the minds of the more phlegmatic and melancholy, through the fear of their not being possessed of them. But should mankind be released from those chains, and suffered to think for themselves, how natural would it be for them to conclude when God proposes a matter in his word to be believed, that that matter is true before they have believed it. Therefore, if it is true, that Jesus was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification, and that before our faith, that which was necessary unto this transaction, namely our union with him, is true also before faith. If it is not our faith or believing that makes this union, then it is an act of eternal love, the purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; the antiquity of which is obvious, nor may its date be fixed, because exceeding the limits of time. And what hath been from everlasting will be unto everlasting, the eternal sameness of the person of Jesus, being an undeniable proof of the unchangeableness of this union, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever." Who says unto the Church, "because I live, you shall live also, for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. I am He who was dead, but am alive, and lives for evermore." It is easy to see, that if our union with Christ was dependent on our faith, or believing it would be changeable; except it appear that we are perfect, and unchangeable in the faith. And it by being perfect and unchangeable in the faith we understand a believing the whole

with a full understanding of the mystery, of what God hath spoken by the mouth of his prophets and apostles, and that constantly, and without the least shadow of wavering; it will appear pretty plain unto such who know themselves; that mankind are very far from being infallible, and perfect in the faith. And if any would pretend unto this perfection, (as the pride of man dare do anything) whilst the things yet appear in them, which shew the least distrust and doubtfulness of God's providence and grace; we must be excused when we declare without fear, that they deceive themselves, and the truth is not in them. If the union of Christ and the Church, is dependent on her faith, and knowledge of him, then is it proportioned unto her faith, and admits of degrees, it is also subject to change, yea, may possibly be dissolved; as it is not impossible according to the Scriptures, for a person once believing, to turn from the faith. But saith the apostle, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. viii. 38, 39. And, as the apostle here doth not intend an impossibility of believers departing from the faith, or falling from grace; (having elsewhere proved this possible) he of necessity points out something, which remains a truth, should they cease to believe. And such a truth as their unbelief cannot make void, or of none effect: And that is the love of God; always embracing them in Christ Jesus, from which, the loss of their light and confidence, can never separate them; the seal of their foundation being God's knowledge of them and not their knowledge of him. From all which it appears, that the union of Christ, and his Church, hath been of old, before faith, before time: and remains to be indissoluble, and unchangeable.

I would now consider the objections generally made unto the grace of union; and endeavour to give them satisfactory answers.

The old trite objection, of its tending, unto licentiousness, leads the way, saying, if union with Christ is the ground of our acceptance with God, and our security in his favour; then the doctrine of rewards and punishments, is overthrown; and man hath nothing left to stimulate him to virtue.

Answ. To work from an expectation of being rewarded, is to make it of debt; and not of grace: But the nature of the Deity is so infinitely pure; so holy, just, and true his laws; that it is impossible man should make him his debtor: Nay, it would be the highest arrogance to pretend it: The scriptures are against it, when they protest that no flesh shall glory in his presence;

common experience in its sober moments is against it : for that teacheth us, that every man living is infinitely short of conformity unto the divine nature; therefore the notion of obedience from an expectation of reward, is a tacit acknowledgement, of man's utter ignorance, both of himself, and his God. And then, to suppose that the fear of punishment is necessary to excite man to obedience, is to reverse the scriptures. The gospel is preached for the obedience of faith; that, being thereby delivered from fear we might serve him in holiness, and righteousness, all the days of our life.

But the obedience of fear, is diametrically opposite unto the obedience of faith: the former, hath its rise and maintenance from a lie; from that habit, and principle, which makes God a liar; by not believing the record which he hath given of his Son. But the latter springs from a belief of the truth; from a full persuasion of the love of God, and of his being reconciled in Christ Jesus. The former, is a doing evil, that good may come; for where the fear of punishment is judged necessary to obedience, unbelief is established, and authority given to crucify the Son of God afresh, and to put him to open shame, to trample his blood under foot, and count it an unholy thing; for all this is tacitly taught, in the fear of punishment as necessary unto obedience; and yet this manifest antichristian policy, is generally taught by those conscience-directors, who seek *themselves*, and not Christ Jesus the Lord. They very well know, that ignorance, unbelief, and fear, are the nerves of implicit obedience, unto their doctrines and traditions. But, that such an obedience, is far from being compensate, for the despite done thereby to the spirit of grace, and dishonour to the crucified one, they shall sooner or later know; when all their works shall be burnt up, and they shall suffer loss. But the obedience of faith is genuine, free from artifice, without fear, dependent on the perfect amity of God; yea, consists in a constant persuasion of, and rejoicing in this truth; that Jesus Christ the Son of God, died upon a cross, and rose again from the dead, having thereby justified us from every charge once brought against us; and sanctified us from all our pollutions. To submit unto this, to have the conscience purified through the view and belief of this, yea, to have every thought brought in captivity unto this, is the true obedience of faith. And, this is so far from being urged by fear, that fear would annihilate it. And so far from having an eye to the reward, that it answers unto that charity, which seeketh not its own; but says, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee; or thirsty, and gave thee drink, &c. Therefore, that the grace of union with Christ, and salvation in him overturneth the doctrine of rewards, and punishments, as that which influenceth our

lives, is a truth: But then, it only overturns what the Scriptures explode; and what reason confesseth mean, and selfish, and not that generous disinterested service of love, which it declares worthy of the divine being, and becoming the dignity of man.

Object. But, doth not the Scriptures rather establish the doctrine of rewards, and punishments, as that which excites to choose the good, and refuse the evil? Is not this their express language, “say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings, woe unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him?” Isaiah iii. 10, 11. With many other texts of like import.

Answ. Unto the right understanding of the scriptures, it is necessary to know, that they consist of two parts, letter and spirit, or law and gospel; now the letter, (or the law) killeth, saith the apostle, but the spirit (or the gospel) giveth life. And as this is needful to be known, so is it also, that we should be able to distinguish one from the other; else how doth it appear that we rightly divide the word of life? If the gospel be considered, as God’s good sayings, or glad tidings to mankind, we need only consider briefly the state and condition of man; and then, what may with any propriety, be called glad tidings, unto one thus circumstanced, will easily appear. Man is a fallen creature, who breaking the law of his God, incurred the penalty of eternal death: And, is so far from having ability to extricate himself, that all the imaginations, and thoughts of his heart, are continually evil; without wisdom, without strength, there being none righteous, no, not one; all being shut up, and concluded under sin, they have neither power to will, nor to do; Now what can be called glad tidings unto a creature in this condition? surely nothing short of that, which tells him all is given; and that freely, without condition on his part, because he can perform none; without money, and without price, because he hath nought wherewith to purchase; and that the grace, which redresseth all his grievances, and replenished him with all good, is given him in Christ Jesus, who hath brought this life and immortality to light by the gospel; by his birth, life, sufferings, death, and resurrection: confirming all his blessings and glory unto his Church, by the grace of union. This appears to be the gospel of glad tidings, and is a doctrine with which the scriptures abound.

The law, is considered as the very opposite of this; consisting of commands, to fulfil its precepts on pain of damnation, of threatenings, and curses, against all who offend it, though but in one point, and never makes any promises of happiness unto mankind, but upon condition of perfect obe-

dience; which is always implied, (though not expressed) in every requisite, yea, even the most minute, entitling to the inheritance of the promise. The doctrine of rewards and punishments, is indeed contained in the law; but then it rewards none but such who fulfil every jot and tittle thereof: and curseth every one, who continueth not to do all that is written in the book thereof.

The gospel gives us all, without requiring ought of us. But the law, giving us nothing, requires all of us. And thus distinguishing them in the scriptures, we appeal from the law, unto the gospel: Our authority for so doing, is founded on what follows; whatsoever the law saith, it saith unto them that are under it: But Jesus was made of a woman, made under the law, therefore the law speaks unto him; and commands him to perfect obedience. But, the law can only curse the sinner: God sent "his Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, he was made sin for us, Christ hath delivered us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." The equity of which proceeding, appears from the union subsisting between Christ and the Church; of which I have sufficiently spoken. And thus, considering the whole law fulfilled in Jesus, its precepts obeyed, its penalties endured, he now inherits the promise: And apprehending ourselves in him, united into him, through all his doings, and sufferings, his condition, and state is ours. And thus standing in him, we can indeed read the law, or the doctrine of rewards and punishments, without fear: Because the punishment, yea, all the threatenings in the book of God, have been executed upon us (as sinners and law-breakers) in him. Hence is it we dare not read the demands of the law unto ourselves, as distinct, or separate from the view of our union and oneness with him: because we cannot answer them; it being only designed as a ministration of death, to slay us to ourselves, and it, make us dependent on him. Nor, dare we read any one threatening in the scriptures against the sinner, and ungodly, unto ourselves, out of him; because we cannot endure it. And, to imagine from any worthiness in ourselves, that we come not under those characters, which the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against, and which, are so dreadfully threatened in the word, is, to be most wretchedly ignorant of the spirituality of God's law, and consequently, of the condition of human nature; for, where the holiness of the law is known, it will appear, that there is not one obnoxious character in the scriptures, which (according to the purity of the law) doth not belong to all mankind: nor can the most upright amongst men, in justice deny its belonging unto them: Therefore, our exemption from such characters, and

from the punishment due unto them, is only by union with Christ: where his character is upon its before the Father. And, according to the consciousness we have of our salvation state, standing here, we are free from the fear of present or future punishment, having seen the end of it in Christ Jesus, and therefore are no longer to be influenced thereby. And as to the promised reward, the promises were made unto Abraham, and to his seed: which seed (according to the apostle) is Christ; it is also to be observed, that previous unto inheriting the promise, there must be a fulfilling of the law; to make it appear that the promises of God are not against the law. Where the promises in general speak unto man, it is unto him, as willing, obedient, repentant, fearing the Lord, believing, &c. every which characterism amounts unto what the law demands of man, viz. Satisfaction for its dishonour, received by sin that is past, and perfect obedience unto its precepts for the future. And although those requisites are not expressly mentioned in every promise, they are nevertheless implied, otherwise the promises of God would be against the law, which God forbids. Now, if the promise only rewards the man whom the law approves of, as holy, just, and true, it is easy to perceive that Jesus only is the man: "For all the promises of God, in him are yea, and in him amen." 2 Cor. i. 20, Therefore the rewards are his, he as the head is crowned with glory, honour, and immortality; whilst every member by union with the head partakes of his honours: Whereas, to expect reward for the work of our own hands, would be to set up for ourselves, to act independent of our head, and to refuse him the pre-eminence in all things. But when we give him this, we are neither influenced by the fear of punishment or hope of reward, but by our head, Christ alone; our hearts are in his hand, and committing ourselves with all our concerns unto him, we permit him to guide us, and are passive with him. And certain it is, the more we are delivered from that religion which consists in self-seeking, the less injurious we are in this present world.

Object. Doth not your description of the person unto whom the promises belong, make salvation conditional, by asserting that the promise rewards none, but such whom the law approves of? This contradicts the apostle's doctrine, "by grace ye are saved."

Answ. That God is sovereign, I grant, but that he saves mankind from mere sovereignty, or arbitrary grace, without having respect unto his law, as a transcript of his own perfections, I think I ought to deny: Because he has pledged his faithfulness and truth, unto his law, that the transgressor should be punished; and that it should be established, rather than made

void, by the faith of the gospel: whereas the law would be against such promises, as hath no respect unto its justice and purity. But “the Lord is well pleased for his righteousness’ sake, he will magnify the law, and make it honourable.” Isaiah xlii. 21. Again, grace without truth; or salvation, without respecting the purity, and justice of the law; would be to pour contempt upon the death and blood of Jesus Christ our Lord, as not necessary unto salvation; and to make it either merely accidental, from the rage of his enemies; or at farthest, exemplary only: which supposition, would overturn, and invalidate the testimony of the scriptures, concerning his fulfilling all righteousness, enduring the curse of the law, and washing us from our sins, in his own blood. Again, to suppose that mankind are saved by any new law, consisting of repentance, faith, and new obedience, substituting sincerity, in the stead of perfection; I say to suppose this, would be to make God changeable: first, giving a law, as a rule of righteousness, and a standard, whereby to know good and evil; and, in process of time giving another, upon easier terms: which could not be, without a change in his perfections: his nature, and perfections being the original of every law, given by him to mankind. But I would not multiply words, to confute what hath not the least shadow of reason, or foundation in the scriptures : For Jesus says, “think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets, I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil: For verily I say unto you, “till heaven and earth pass, one jot, or one tittle, shall in no wise pass till all be fulfilled.” Matt. v. 17, 18. “It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.” Luke xvi. 17. It is evident that our Saviour means by this law, that which was given upon Sinai: nor, did he give any new commandment, which was not included in that law, as appears from his testimony elsewhere. But, when I assert that the promises are only fulfilled on such whom the law approves of, and that Jesus only was the man, thus approved of God; I consider him, under the capacity of the second Adam; including the people in himself; who, by union with him, inherit the blessing. And, though they can upon this consideration, claim the forgiveness of sin, as an act of Justice in God; yet are they saved by grace: Their election in Christ, their union with him, their eternal life, with all the blessings thereof, was God’s purpose, and grace, given them in Christ Jesus, before the world began: according to which grace they are saved. Again, as it was grace that founded, so was it grace that executed this plan of salvation; we being passive in the hand of grace: when he washed us from our sins in his own blood, when he created us a-new, and presented us unto himself a glorious Church without spot

or wrinkle, or any such thing; we, as in him, being in passivity: inactive, and incapable of merit, makes that to be mere grace unto us as individuals, which unto him as including mankind, was conditional.

Object. The doctrine of union with Christ, (before faith) and of salvation in him, tends to make faith, or believing void: because, if I am united unto Christ, justified, forgiven, and accepted in him before I believe, where is the necessity of believing at all?

Ans. To build without a foundation, is to labour in vain. How shall they believe, except they hear! saith the apostle: And what shall they hear, if the truth to be believed, hath no existence until it be believed? but, having spoken unto this under the article of union before faith, I wave it here.

I would only ask, is it from the belief of our union with Christ, and salvation in him: or from the disbelief thereof: that occasion is taken to live in unbelief, and believing counted unnecessary? not from the latter according to the objection; because, to disbelieve a falsehood, is negative orthodoxy: and to say it is from the former, is the most palpable contradiction; because, whosoever believeth that believeth what the gospel proposes to be believed: therefore, the objection of course falls unto the ground.

Every man, proposing a system unto his fellow-creatures, doth it with a view that they should believe it; be it true or false: so also, when union with Christ, and salvation in him before they apprehend him, is taught the people, is it not with a view that they should believe it, and believing, rejoice, with joy unspeakable and full of glory? It certainly is: and therefore, is not designed to keep them in unbelief. Again, it is the word of God, where by faith comes: the declaration, even unto unbelievers, of their warfare accomplished, and their iniquities pardoned as well attested in the scriptures, hath certainly a more genuine tendency to produce faith, and confidence in God, than to tell them if they will believe, &c. they shall be justified, their sins be expiated, and forgiven. However smoothly, and artfully, this may be worded, it is impossible to free it from the idea of condition, and what is yet worse, such a condition, as man hath neither wisdom, will, nor power to fulfil; yea, it is still in effect to preach the law. Believe, and thou shalt be saved: is certainly similar unto, do this and live; man in himself, being as capable of doing the one as the other. When mankind are taught, that their eternal salvation depends upon believing, (and what is yet more strange, believing a matter which is not fact until believed) it is natural for every man, whose conscience is alarmed, to attempt it; but the more he endeavours, the farther he is off; like rowing against a violent stream: the dread

of coming short through unbelief, and his weakness, and utter incapacity to believe, rushes upon him like a torrent, bears him back with violence: until discouraged, and enervated, he sinks, overwhelmed with fear and bondage. Indeed, where believing is only respected as a bare assent unto a proposition, mankind may with some shadow of reason talk of their abilities, and of the easiness of the condition, pretending that it is an instance, of the richest, freest grace, where salvation is promised upon believing. But it is not always practicable with a mind that is in earnest to assent unto a human proposition without demonstration, much less respecting divine things; because, the difficulty in believing increases in, proportion to the magnitude, and concernment of the matter believed, which difficulty, is owing unto the propensity of human nature, to an evil heart of unbelief, unto the remoteness of heavenly things from our natural ideas, and their contrariety unto our senses. Believe, and thou shalt be saved, (equal to any other law precept) when enforced upon the mind of man, generating with his weakness, begets unbelief, and fear, but never produceth faith: that comes only by the word of life, that word which bringeth salvation, declaring him, as made of God unto us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, that whosoever glorieth, should glory in the Lord. The belief of the truth cometh by hearing of its perfection, reality and immutability of our being delivered from the curse, in him who was made a curse for us, of our being saved in him, with an everlasting salvation, of his being such an high-priest as becometh us: In brief, of our oneness with him, and indisputable right from thence, to consider ourselves according unto him, as our head and husband. Thus, whilst men are *not* put upon believing in order to save themselves, but are taught calmly to hear the word that bringeth salvation, they according to the power of the Holy Ghost, either instantaneously or gradually credit the report: and consequently enter into the belief of the truth, without their once *attempting* to believe, or troubling or perplexing themselves about it. Whilst such who are more concerned about their believing, than the truth of Christ, are distressed under the difficulty, yea, the impossibility of their performing it, when they have exerted themselves to the utmost. Therefore as the doctrine of union with Christ (before faith) and salvation in him, appears in this light, viz. the word by which faith cometh, nothing is more notorious than the unreasonableness of the objection, that it makes void faith.

Object. But doth not such an union with Christ destroy his pre-eminence, tending to exalt man, to the degrading of Christ.

Answ. By no means: it rather establisheth his pre-eminence, where the people as the members by union with him the head, are chosen, beloved, called, saved, and accepted of God. They receive no honour, grace, or blessing, but by him: and being apprized of this, he is all their hope and salvation. They look unto the Father, by him; nor dare they at any time approach him, but in him. He hath done all, suffered all, and obtained all. But the glory which he hath received, he freely gives unto them: whilst they confess him their head and Saviour: and as such, they honour him, and eternally give him praise. Christ in his office capacity, answers unto the idea of the human body; which being one, is composed of many members: the church being his body, is composed of many people, of which he himself is a member, *viz.* the head, the pre-eminent, and most highly exalted; upon whom all the members are dependent for honour; the head only, wearing the crown: for unction, the head only was anointed [*sic*]: for all blessings, the head only receives them immediately from God, being always the medium between him and the body, and appointed to guide, influence, and nourish it. Every member brings its tribute unto the head, and with praise, confesseth his pre-eminence; whilst the head is not ashamed to call them brethren. The more highly they perceive themselves exalted, the more glorious and eminent the head appears before them: for as much as through all exaltations, in time and eternity, a just and proportionable distinction is kept up and maintained, between the head and members, in dignity, beauty, and glory; and this all the members know, when influenced by their head; therefore the doctrine of union with Christ, doth *not* destroy his pre-eminence, nor exalt mankind unto his dishonour.

Object. But doth not the doctrine of union, which supposes Christ to suffer under the character of the sinner, contradict the apostle, who saith, "Christ also hath once suffered for sin, the just for the unjust." 1 Pet. iii. 18.

Answ. To intimate that Jesus was a sinner, in thought, word, or deed, is what I never intended, but would abhor the thought, as highly blasphemous: nay, the prince of this world when he came, having nothing in him, was therefore constrained to appear in visible form, and tempt him by his outward senses. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens; this was his proper, personal, individual character; and in this sense the apostle is to be understood speaking, when he saith, the just died for the unjust. But then we are told by another apostle, that he (*viz.* God) "hath made him sin for us, who knew no sin,"

2 Cor. v. 21; from which it appears, that he who in his individual character was sinless, was yet notwithstanding, as the head and representative of the church, made sin, yea, made a curse for us: and under that character, was punished with that death, and condemnation, which was due to man's offence. And this accounting of him a sinner, in the eye of justice, as it was equitable, so was it not from any personal guile; for he knew no sin, but from his union unto the sinful people, which rendered the punishment of their sin upon him, an act of divine, and strict justice. Thus it appears, that the doctrine of union, which represents Jesus suffering under the character of the sinner, doth not suppose him such in his own particular person; nay, strongly witnesseth the contrary, and respects him only thus, by such an imputation, as (considered on the article of union) is just and true with God, and man.

Object. This doctrine of union, as it speaks of our being one with Christ, in all he did, and suffered, seems contrary unto his testimony by the prophet; where he says, "I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me." Isaiah lxiii. 3.

Answ. It is evident from the words, that his meaning is; he received no help, or assistance from the people; this the fifth verse sheweth, "I looked and there was none to help, &c. therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me." The doctrine of union contains no such proposition as this, that the people were fellow helpers with Christ, when he atoned for sin, and destroyed the enemies of their salvation. In this sense they were not with him. In this sense we were not with Adam when he sinned, we were not abetting, concurring, and active in his offence; and yet we were in him, according unto union; in him offending in the great transgression.

We were also with Christ, and in him, through all he did and suffered; though not active, not aiding, or assisting in his obedience, nor enduring any part of his torments, according to our sensation. In this sense, he "trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him." And when the scriptures speak of our being in him, of being crucified with him, raised with him, sitting together in heavenly places in him, &c. as they evidently speak of these things according to union; so, when compared with our Saviour's saying by the prophet, before mentioned; it appears that we were in him, and with him, through all: but not active; we were altogether in a state of passivity, whilst the toil, and torment, were wholly his. Yet through all, he was greatly conscious of his including the people in himself, his life, and death, being that of the whole body, "for if one member

suffers, all the members suffer with it.” Thus, though we were not with him, as helping, or assisting him according to the prophet; yet were we always in him, and with him, according to the grace of union, so abundantly taught in the scriptures. The objections already mentioned, and which I have answered, being those which chiefly arise in the minds of serious unprejudiced persons against the doctrine of union, I shall not consider any more at present, as I do not intend any thing controversial, and have no expectation of pleasing the captious.

I shall proceed to consider, as proposed at first, a few of the never-failing springs of consolation, which arise from the grace of union with Christ. And first, from the harmony of the divine perfections (as manifestly established in the grace of union) is a consolatory consideration, every man apprehending it, can abundantly testify: we can have no confidence towards God whilst we imagine that his attributes are contrary to us.³ And I am persuaded

³Should it be objected, that the perfections of the Deity, by reason of his infinite greatness and glory, are unknown to us: that have no *certainly* about them, and therefore that it is arbitrary to attempt the proof of any thing thereby: I would answer, “whoso cometh unto God, must believe that he is.” But, how to believe that he is, how to conceive of a being without properties, I know not: I therefore must conceive of the Divine Being, according to such properties of his nature, as instinct, rectified by revelation suggests. God is a being infinite in power and goodness; and goodness diversified, is justice, truth, purity, love, mercy, &c. Should it be objected, that by reason of ignorance, it is possible our ideas of justice, truth, mercy, love, &c. may not be strictly true, and consistent with the nature of such properties, especially when we ascribe them to God. *Answer.* God deals with us according to revelation, and requires its to determine of things thereby: the apostle saith, “That the Gentiles which have not the law, are a law unto themselves, having the law written upon their hearts, accusing or excusing them;” suggesting to them, such a thing is just, and such unjust; this is true, that is false: this mercy, but that is cruelty; such is love, and such is hatred; the one they approved of as good, and ascribed to the Divine Being, as his nature and properties, and the other they censured as bad, and thereby distinguished all evil beings. This simple voice of nature, differs from revelation only as the lesser light which rules the night, differs from the greater which rules the day: and what is discoverable by the lesser light, is much more so by the greater; for revelation reflecting upon those innate principles, throws such a light around us, that we can come much farther, see more clearly, and determine with greater certainty. Thus our natural ideas of justice, truth, mercy, love, &c. (as simple, before debauched with passion and prejudice) are improved by the scriptures; until we discern the infinite difference between the nature of God, and the nature of man; the former appears holy, just, true, merciful, and gracious, whilst the latter is quite the reverse; every man living being altogether vanity. If it is possible that our ideas of the divine perfections should be wrong, then have we no rule, whereby to discern between good and evil; we may give up the scriptures, renounce the evidence of nature, shut our ears to its voice, and commence sceptics in right earnest: we may no longer reprove any thing a man can possibly be capable of, for fear lest from a wrong idea of the divine perfections, we should reprove the good. And yet, such is the pride of man, that rather than he will be thought ignorant, or give up any indefensible tenet imbibed, he will shelter himself front the attacks of truth under such pleas as these: how know we whether our ideas of the divine perfections are right, or not? thus to sap the argument of his antagonist, he would fain remove the foundation, yea, renounce the only authority which he or any other, has to conclude his own tenets right. Where the scriptures are acknowledged, the divine perfections are confessed the origin of that revelation: the latter being always considered as a transcript of his nature, and properties: and there we find him declared holy, just, righteous, true, wise, merciful, love, &c., nor hath

that this imagination is very natural unto all such who have seen human nature in its ruins; and, striving with all wisdom, power, and diligence, to repair its breaches, have found that their utmost efforts have been like untempered mortar, which still falls off, and makes the breach worse: or, like a piece of new cloth, put upon an old garment, still enlarging the rent. Where persons have been thus exercised, (though they might at times have a faint hope in the mercy of God) they have thought it inconsistent with his justice and purity, to save them from the wrath to come. But when the grace of union with Christ is manifest unto them, they can see all things consist by him: "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

Mankind may now rejoice in the justice, and purity of God; yea, appeal unto him as just, as holy, as faithful, because according, unto union with Christ, justice hath been satisfied, in his bloodshedding and death; where they in him, and he in them, have been fully punished for all their iniquity: upon which the Lord saith, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Heb. x. 17. Hence he is just to forgive them their sins, and to cleanse them from all unrighteousness. Yea, according unto his holiness, may they now have confidence in him. Though his eyes are purer than to behold iniquity, they may approach him, and stand before him with boldness; being by union with Christ, sanctified in him, holy in him, yea, he himself is their holiness: when this is discerned, we are no longer terrified at the holiness of the Divine nature, but have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus: yea, have unspeakable delight in the holiness of God, and infinite expectations therefrom. As the promise is to such who confess and forsake their sin, it is fulfilled upon us in Jesus; all the promises of God being in him yea, and in him, *Amen*. There have we, (with all the prayers, and supplications, strong crying and tears, which Jesus offered in the days of his flesh) confessed our sins unto God; and where he (having purged our sin) appeared the second time without sin unto salvation, we

he left us in the dark concerninl the meaning of those terms; but by his commands, promises, threatenings, prohibitions, and in the latter days more perfectly by the doctrine, and example of his Son, he hath distinguished the good from the evil, separating between the precious and the vile. After such an exhibition of the divine properties, we are no longer at a loss to conceive of them with certainty, but are taught to look for truth in the harmony of them; it being found there, and only there. True it is, no man can comprehend him, nor by "searching find him out, to perfection;" nay we see but in part, we know but in part, nevertheless, we apprehend and conceive of him, and by what we understand of him, we determine with certainty; therefore, whatsoever appears contrary to his perfections, according to what we apprehend of him, must be much more contrary with him in proportion as his excellencies and self-knowledge, exceeds what we can possibly know of him, and here all proportion fails, and is lost for ever.

have eternally forsaken them: therefore we appeal unto the faithfulness of him who hath promised. In this blessed union, this infinite love and grace of God our Father, unto us in Christ Jesus; we see the harmony of his nature in all his dealings with us, and can sing with untold delight, thou art glorious for ever, our Father, our God, thou art love, thou art mercy, thou art righteousness, thou art justice, thou art holiness, thou art faithfulness, thou art truth, holy and reverend is thy name, O Lord God of Hosts! And yet all thy glorious perfections agree in one, to accept us, delight in us, rejoice over us, and bless us with eternal life, and all its happiness in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Again, in this gracious union, the scriptures are all fulfilled; and the key of David given us, that we may open, what no man can shut, and shut what no man can open. When men who are strangers unto this union, take it upon them to expound the scriptures, it is amazing to see, with what contradictions and inconsistencies it abounds! The precept, the threatening, the promise, and gracious declaration, are all jumbled together; often overthrowing by one, what they have set up by the other. But in Christ they all agree in one: in him the precept is fulfilled, the threatening endured, the promised reward received, and the free and eternal salvation of God, continually embracing the children of men: therefore, standing in the grace of union with Christ, we are at peace with all the scriptures. He in us, and we in him, have fulfilled all righteousness, fully kept the commandments of God, and suffered the punishment due unto our sins; and now inherit the promise, whilst the voice of words, yea, every terrifying sound is silenced: and nothing now heard but the sound of grace, love, and good will. Jesus is now the shield of our faith, by which we resist the fiery darts of the wicked one, would he come upon us with the threatening; and urge, because we answer the character of the sinner threatened, it must be executed upon us. Unto this fiery dart we oppose our shield, Christ as made a curse for us: would he set before us, the precept, and insist on our destruction, because we cannot fulfil it; we still hold up our shield, and plead "Christ the end of the law for righteousness." Will he trouble us about the promises, and urge that God is either unfaithful, (who hath promised) otherwise we are not the people unto whom they are made, because we do not inherit them, have not the pure heart, the right spirit, do not yet see all things put under our feet, &c. our shield is still our defence; we answer but we see Jesus, and can testify that he who hath promised, is faithful; for Jesus hath the clean heart, the right spirit, the heart which hath the law written therein, that it

may not depart from God; we see all things put under his feet, “insomuch that all the promises of God are in him, yea, and in him, Amen.” Where union with Christ is manifest, it is enough for salvation and happiness, in time, and eternity, that he hath suffered, that he was obedient, that the promise is fulfilled in him, because being joint heirs with him, we have a just claim unto his inheritance: hither are we led unto righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. This man is our peace, yea, even when the Assyrian comes into the land; our union with him, is our security, and defence against the face of the enemy: and as I have hinted before, his fiery darts cannot hurt the soul that abides in him; we are then able to resist them all, by holding up our shield, by opposing Christ unto all: he being our sun and our shield, not only our shield for defence, but our sun, to enlighten, and quicken us unto the use thereof. Did men but know, what safety and peace we have here, they would despair of terrifying us, as they hope to do, by their writings and preachments: loading us with opprobrious names, and ignorantly levelling the threatenings and curses, in the scriptures against us. Beholding him, to be the death of death, and the victory of hell; and how he hath hid us in the secret of his pavilion, from the strife of tongues, they would either join the angels’ song: “Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, and good will towards men;” or else, despairing of making us miserable their enmity, stingless towards us, but gnawing to their own bosoms, would so increase their torment, that they would willingly cease from us, forget us, and let us alone. What is impossible with man, is possible with God. If we read the scriptures out of Christ, they require impossibilities of us: hence it is, that some who are aware or this, and yet ignorant of the power of God, are obliged to have recourse unto new laws; laws of their own making, where, by a sincere intention, and all possible obedience, they would evade the force of the scripture perfection, and put a foil upon the sword of the spirit: but truth needs no artifice, unto this sword, unfoiled, sharp, and two-edged as it is, piercing through the soul and spirit, joints and marrow, discerning the thoughts, and intents of the heart, Jesus bared his bosom: and sheathing it in his own heart’s blood, the divine, glutinating power thereof, hath rendered it impossible to draw it again to another execution; God is just and true, and *will* not; men or devils *cannot*.

When we read the scriptures in Christ, we determine according to the possibility of things with God, unto him who believeth, all things are possible. The impossibilities and jarrings, with which the letter abounds: such as the demands of perfect obedience, of satisfaction for sin, of salvation

by grace, by works, of the forgiveness of sin by Christ, and yet judged according to the deeds done in the body, and giving an account at that day for every idle word, &c. all this, I say hath its harmony and perfection in Jesus, nor have all the masters in Israel, for these seventeen hundred ears, (though there have always been those who attempt it) been able to point out a reconciliation, and harmony of scripture out of him. But in him, as the representative of man, as having the people in himself, and he in them, the preceptive part is fulfilled perfectly; —and all the threatenings executed upon the sinner, in him: in him saved by grace, in him justified by works, accepted in him having redemption in his blood the forgiveness of sin. Our account for the idle word, is, that in ourselves we are carnal, sold under sin, and have no good thing, but, that in Christ we are filled, in him sanctified, in him accepted, and therefore appeal from the first Adam, unto the second. In like manner we account for the deeds done in the body, Jesus having atoned for the evil, and done the good. These, and all other parts of scripture, which may appear in a critical, and contradictory light, unto a person who hath not yet apprehended the union, is yet nevertheless consistent, harmonious, and gracious, unto all such who know what it is to be one with Christ, and Christ with them. In this light we can read the scriptures with pleasure, in seeing all fulfilled in him, every dark saying opening in him, and he gloriously triumphant, filling all in all. We also read them profitably, forasmuch, as speaking thus of Christ, they hush and banish the fears arising from, nature or temptation they fortify the mind against the face of the enemy, cherish and support us, under all the vicissitudes of life: and when depressed beneath the sense of human nature in its ruins, they present us with a glorious prospect of immortality, in the perfect resemblance, and likeness of Jesus; and to warm, and refresh the mind more effectually, they bring the prospect near, and show us *now* the workmanship of God created anew in Christ Jesus, now passed from death unto life, it is done, saith Jesus, I am Alpha and Omega.

Again, from the grace and truth of union, the Christian hath a right to reckon of himself, of his state and condition towards God, according to Christ; according to the state and condition which he is in: hence saith the apostle, “reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Rom. vi. 11. And O (what grace is this!) that we helpless worms, whose every word, work, and thought is unholy, yea, in whom according to the stongest [*sic*] testimony of our senses, and reason, there is yet found the motions, life, and love of sin; should

have a right to reckon ourselves dead unto sin: dead unto what we yet feel the *life* of, dead unto what we yet feel the *love* of, dead unto what is yet stronger than we, and against which, our utmost efforts when compared with its strength, are feebleness itself; it esteems all our iron as straw, and our brass as rotten wood; and, yet to reckon ourselves dead unto this, what an amazing reckoning it is! Yea, not only dead unto sin, whereby we are exempted from its filth, guilt, and condemnation. But we are to reckon ourselves positively holy, righteous, and fruitful, alive unto God! and that in opposition to all we see, feel or understand of ourselves, according to sense. What are we then to reckon ourselves by? by Jesus Christ our Lord; let the heavens rejoice, and the earth be glad, for the Lord hath “raised up a horn of salvation, in the house of his servant DAVID according to the mouth of all his prophets, which have been since the world began.” Union with Christ is our right of appropriation, otherwise we appropriate him and his benefits improperly, yea, unjustly, but in this light we can say, “Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world.” John iv. 17. Hence, we have authority to conclude, if he is righteous, we are righteous, as he we are holy, as he we are wise; as he we have obtained redemption, and are accepted with him. This doth not suppose any excellency or worthiness in ourselves, whereby we are distinguished from our fellow-creatures, or set above our neighbours, for then we should glory in the flesh, and should become an adulterous generation, which glorying is not good, but deeply odious unto all who are espoused as chaste virgins unto Christ; insomuch that they can say, as hinted by the prophet, “shameful spuing shall be on their glory:” Hab. ii. 16. But Jesus is our all, and our perfection is in him: “that according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” Against hope, believing in hope, in Christ will we glory, against all the hopeless, depressing views, we may have of ourselves, when comparing ourselves with ourselves. We would always believe in hope, in hope of his being accepted; of God’s being well-pleased in him, and of our being accepted, and well-pleasing as him, by the grace of union with him: here we look to things eternal, and unseen, and not unto things present, which are seen. Our right and privilege, is to judge of ourselves and our state towards God, by union with Christ: by the Father’s choice of him, his choice of us, by his love to him, his love unto us, by his acceptance of him, his acceptance of us, by his eternal life, and glory, our eternal life and glory: and all this, without once considering the work of our own hands, or the desires, yearnings, or meditations of our hearts. But

passing from ourselves unto Jesus, we are wholly found in him, not having our own righteousness, &c. Unto all who know themselves, this is certainly a life-giving word, the word that bringeth salvation; nor can any thing but that self-righteous principle, which is abhorred and detested of God, withstand it; and that letteth, and will let, until it be taken away, which the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming. But, unto all the Gentiles, the outcast, the destitute, the sinners amongst mankind; with all who know themselves, and groan beneath the miseries of man; here are tidings of great joy: there is a Saviour born unto you, a Saviour who is Christ the Lord; and what is more, though you are worthless, he is worthy; though you are lost, he is found: though you are unrighteous, unholy, unwise, yet he is righteous, holy, wise: and withal, so nearly related, so closely united unto you, that you may reckon yourselves to be what he is, and viewing him as yourselves through all he did and suffered, have your conscience purged from dead works; stand washed, and acquitted in his bloody death, and have the answer of a good conscience towards God, by his resurrection.

Moreover, in the grace of union the foundations are raised, and a glorious truth presented unto our view; which as it is perfect, and permanent, before our believing, so is it, if at any time we should be overtaken with unbelief and doubtfulness. This is that which at first authorizes, excites and encourages us to credit the gospel report. This is that, which strengthens in us what is often ready to die. This is that which raises us when fallen, which brings us back when we have wandered, and affords strong consolation, unto all who have fled unto Jesus for refuge; hence if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, &c. Whilst he wears the character of righteous, we shall be accepted of God, and glorious in his sight; and that is everlastingly, for Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. The gospel is here a relation of facts, and of who Jesus is, what he hath done, and that he hath loved us, hath saved us; hath washed, forgiven, and accepted us; the divine beauty and reasonableness of which, appears in the grace of union. This grace doth not require us, sophistically and unnaturally, to make that a truth by believing which was not a truth before; but first proposes Jesus, as the truth, the grand original truth, before all things, and by whom all things consist. The ocean whence the rivers of grace and providence first had their rise, and whither, (after having run through the intricacies of time) they tend again, discharging and emptying themselves of all their floods, into the bosom of

that mighty deep whence they first received them: that his might be the kingdom, power, and glory. That he is the truth of all the types, predictions, and prophecies of the Jews, the truth of wisdom, righteousness, holiness, redemption, and salvation unto the Gentiles, is what the gospel declares; affirming, illustrating, arguing, persuading, until the arm of the Lord is revealed, and the report believed. Thus faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Hence, I would cry unto the ends of the earth, your warfare is accomplished, your iniquity is pardoned. You, who are lovers of pleasure, pursuing the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life, as the highest, chiefest good. Wherefore will you spend your money for that which is nought, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Wherefore will you thirst after vanity, and attempt filling your belly with the east wind? The Lord, your God, hath given you a land, flowing with milk and honey, beauty, honours, riches, length of days, wisdom, perfection of righteousness, strength, holiness and liberty unlimited, all divine, all eternal, all heavenly glorious, are yours in Jesus, whose riches are unsearchable. Hence, he calls all the ends of the earth to look unto him, let those glorious prospects of grace and salvation, the bounty, and benevolence of God to men, render the fashion of this world, old and unseemly in your eyes, until it pass away, and you be found looking at the King in his glory, and the land which once was very far off; but is now brought nigh by the blood of Jesus. This when seen, shall sicken your ear to every sound, your eye to every object, and your heart to every enjoyment, wherein the voice of Jesus's blood, the beauties of his person, the riches, and greatness of his salvation, are not made manifest; and shall learn you to separate between the precious and the vile.

You, who with Esau, have been seeking repentance with tears, and that for a long season, but have not yet found it: unto you I also call, and ask you why will you die? Consider the apostle and high-priest of your profession, Jesus Christ; let his strong crying and tears, his tears of blood, yea, rivulets wept from every wound, and perspiring pore, let his agonies, pains, and unknown sorrows, and all for the transgressions of the people, be well considered: for he is exalted a prince, and a Saviour, and gives you this repentance; why will you yet cry, bless me, even me also, O my Father; he hath blessed you in Christ, with all spiritual blessings; whilst all those grievances which you labour under, by looking unto yourselves, and judging according to appearances, are redressed in him: why then will you die for lack of righteousness, whilst he is your righteousness and strength?

why will you faint under the sense of your unholy dispositions, whilst he is your holiness? why will you groan in the bondage of nature, while he is your liberty? O! why will you perish, for want of what you have? of what is eternally yours, by the gift of God by the grace of union, by the love, and integrity of your head, high-priest, and Mediator, Jesus; who is faithful in things pertaining unto God, and man? He is found of such who seek him not, and reveals himself unto them who have not asked after him; whilst you who have been mourners all your days, frequenting his ordinances, and seeking him in all appointed means, are yet strangers unto, and neglecters of the great salvation: wherefore? because you seek it as it were by the works of the law, you seek to establish what God hath rejected; and are always rejecting what God hath chosen: therefore saith the apostle, "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God;" be ye reconciled unto his grace, unto the riches, and salvation thereof, unto the method and manner of its working, and appearance; "for he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." And this he hath already done for us, and to be reconciled unto this, is to be happy. Thus Jacob is grace, and Esau is works, the one obtaining what he had not expected, nor sought after: whilst the other, who sought it carefully with tears, obtained it not. Yea, and where there hath been a drawing back, a falling away from the truth as it is in Jesus, until sunk in misery and darkness, until having nothing left them to look at but themselves, they are affrighted, and at their wits end: unto them would I call, and exhort them not to sorrow as men without hope; because Jesus is alive, and liveth for evermore. Your God, and Father is not disappointed in you; you have not deceived him: he never expected any thing from you, more or less, than what he hath found. The satisfaction which he had in you at first, was beholding you as the travail of his soul, and as such, he beholds you still. Your unbelief cannot make his grace of none effect, and though you have denied him, yet he cannot deny himself. That which was a truth before you believed, at the first, *viz.* Christ being your "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," is a truth now, even when you have ceased to believe: insomuch, that in every time of need, though you have sadly departed from him, you have the same foundation, authority and encouragement to believe and be assured as you had at the first. It is the scripture testimony of Jesus, what he is, and what he hath done and suffered, that is the ground of our confidence; and not the reflexion that we repent, believe, or obey; and it is most certain that this ground remaineth, that this foun-

dation is unshaken, for “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day and for ever;” and that our unbelief, or any change passing over us, as in ourselves, cannot alter him who is unchangeable, and always righteous and accepted. In him we are always as he is, according to which similitude God always beholds us, and accepts us; therefore, our change of frame or disposition, cannot change his views of us; for, as he only beholds us in Jesus, he can always say that he “beholds no iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel, the Lord his God is always with him, and the shout of a king is among them:” O! glorious grace! O triumphant love! let him who is fallen from hence, say, rejoice not against me, mine enemy, for though I fall, I shall yet arise. Doth not this testimony quicken unto faith and confidence in Jesus? Doth it not obviate, and silence all the complaints and objections of the broken and despairing spirit, and bring back to the Saviour, that which was driven away? surely it does; thus, from the grace of union, which renders Jesus such an high priest as becometh us, we obtain favour, and find grace to help us in every time of need. Salvation, and perfection in Jesus Christ our Lord, by union with him, is that glorious truth; which first authorises, encourages, and influences to believe and that which preserves us spotless and acceptable unto God, when we fail to believe, and credit his testimony; and infinitely above all other considerations, hath a tendency to raise us in our hope and confidence towards God; and to preserve us from desperation. It is therefore unjust and unnatural, to charge this doctrine with having a tendency to indulge people in unbelief. Considering the condition of man, and the testimony of Jesus, I would challenge all the masters of Israel, to produce a system, more powerfully tending to reconcile man unto God: and to raise the doubtful soul unto confidence in him: let all such, who (through the experience of human weakness, or the power of temptation) are fallen from the faith of the son of God and sunk to the hell of their senses, consider this matter; and renew their strength as eagles.

Furthermore, from the grace of union, we are taught to consider Jesus as the hero of the Scriptures. All the members bring their tribute unto him, as the exalted head. If what I have already aimed at proving, is true; that primarily as the head of his body the church, all the promises were made unto him, all the threatenings fall upon him, &c. then by him we inherit, by him we have atoned: we claim no good out of him, nor will we acknowledge the evil, for as much as in him we have been purged. All the beauteous characters in the Scriptures are his, and are only typical in the persons unto whom they are given in the letter; which is abundantly evident, from the contrast

appearing in every one of them; they being all guilty of vices, diametrically opposite to the virtues for which they are famous; righteous Noah and Lot, both charged with drunkenness, and one with horrid incest. Faithful Abraham with distrust, meanness of spirit, lying, or equivocating, as in the case of Sarah. Meek Moses with unwarrantable passion, unadvised speech, and such swellings at the waters of strife, as barred his entrance into the promised land. It charges holy David, the man after God's own heart, with such weaknesses and crimes, as are by no means consistent with holiness; but were a glaring proof of his heart being very unlike the heart of God. And Solomon so famous for wisdom, had his dark side; how great were his follies: and whilst much might be said for his wisdom, how many instances might be given of the most stupid and God-provoking foolishness in him. Job also admired for his patience, gave the most pregnant proofs of impatience and peevishness. It will be natural to inquire from hence, why the Scriptures which give those men the most beautiful and amiable characters; as righteous, faithful, meek, holy, wise, and patient, should at the same time present us with a contrast in each of them drawn in such strong colours, that the most palpable contradiction appears? The answer is easy, let God be true, and every man a liar. Those men, were all types of Jesus their characters figurative of his: therefore divine wisdom thought proper, not only to stain their glory, by suffering such blemishes in their spirit and conduct, as gave the lie unto their virtues, but also to record the same; that at best they might appear but mere shadows, reserving the substance for Jesus. Therefore who so reading the characters of those men, are not taught to look beyond them, unto the blessed Jesus, have yet read the Scriptures to little purpose; having not yet known them, nor the power of God. Neither the prophets, nor apostles, wrote with the view that such who venerate their writings, should have their persons in admiration; neither theirs, whose character they drew, as eminent, and famous, in the Church of God. But, the spirit which moved them designed through the whole, the honour, and glory of Jesus Christ: that passing on from every man we might attain to the admiration of the person, and excellencies of Jesus, as the only righteous, the only faithful, the only meek, wise, holy, and patient, until all with an unwavering tongue shall cry, thou art altogether lovely, worthy is the lamb, of the kingdom and glory. But, lest any who are used to please themselves with mankind, having men's persons in admiration, should think we deal hardly with the saints of old, (for it is often found more dangerous, even among Christians, to speak lightly of the pious men, than

it is to speak so of Christ) when we say that they were not the men, which they are represented to be, their conduct and behaviour considered: — I would here premise what will be equally obnoxious unto them, that those persons were really what the Scriptures say they were, that is, righteous, faithful, meek, holy, wise, patient, &c. without any exception: They were so in Christ. I know the Jew however Christianised, by profession, will either rave, or sneer at this; but let him, he that sitteth in the heavens, will laugh him to scorn: and the Christians indeed, will remain undisturbed. I would calmly ask, what is the medium between Christ and man? — if it is not true of them in themselves, as I have it is not; nor true of them in Christ, as the Greek and Jew insinuates; where is it true of them? it must have its truth somewhere, I speak unto you who acknowledge the Scriptures. I am well aware of your answer, viz. the divine wisdom characterises them according to what they were in part, and not in the whole. I would ask another question, have we any other rule for the rule of right and wrong, good, and evil, than the divine law? and doth not that law demand perfection? doth it not when broken in one point, declare the transgressor guilty of the whole? doth it not curse whomsoever continueth not to do all things written in the book thereof? and Jesus saith, that heaven and earth shall pass away; but one iota, [*sic*] or tittle of the law shall not fail, until the whole be fulfilled. But having spoken of this matter before, I refer you unto it: and shall only observe here, the arrogance and impropriety, of assuming the character of righteous, meek, faithful, holy, &c. according to the works of our own hands or habits of the heart: This is flying in the face of God, and giving the lie to the divine perfections as revealed in the law; yea, it is in fact a denying our only Lord God, and Jesus Christ: for unto what purpose is he made wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption? is it not that whosoever gloryeth, should glory in the Lord? But, when persons assume those characters from the consideration of what they are in part, as in themselves; they glory in themselves, and not in the Lord. This is that Antichrist of whom we were told that he should come, yea, who was so early in the world as the days of the apostles; and prevails so mightily in the Christian world at present, that the generality of Christians under his influence, are upon a level in faith and doctrine, with the Jews: or but very faintly distinguished from them: The Jew maintains the necessity of inward and outward holiness in every man, and looks for the Christ to come: The Christian, especially the reformed, with superior ardour, and, repeated asseverations, declares for the same way of holiness, and looks also for a Christ to come; an inward

Christ, consisting of gracious habits, pious breathings, sincere, and upright dispositions, and which in effect, is to agree with the Jew, in declaring, that the man of Galilee, who was crucified without the gates of Jerusalem in the reign of Tiberius, was not the true Christ: Or according to the highest idea of him, was but a figure of an inward, and spiritual Christ to come thus Antichristianly denying that the true Christ is come in the flesh. Again there are others, who would be distinguished from the Jew, by confessing that the true Messiah is come, and that according to his obedience, death and resurrection, he is the remote cause of man's salvation. But, then it seems if he is not applied, he is no Christ at all. Hence it is, that many who call themselves preachers of the gospel of Jesus, make use of this expression: an unapplied Christ is no Christ at all. What can a Christian think of such a vile phrase as this?

This is in effect to make Christ a mere quality, a dispensation, which exists and takes place, upon a certain change wrought in the creature: A Christ created, and made by application.⁴ And yet, how we should apply what doth not exist, or is not true before, is, I confess, a subtlety which I do not understand, and therefore, the phrase appears to me as ridiculously nonsensical as it is blasphemous: and the latter it is, if it has any meaning, because, it is certainly a denial of the person of Christ, and a setting up of another Jesus: such a one, as the apostle feared would corrupt the Corinthians from the simplicity which was in Christ. Our Saviour foretold the arising of false Christs, (and every Christ hath his pophets) and that

⁴Jesus Christ as the only good, the true Balm, was applied unto our wounds and diseases, when he took part of the same flesh, and blood, with the children. And, as a plaister, or medicine, when applied, must unite and become one, with the wound or disease, that by its superior virtue, it might drain and swallow up, and eradicate the opposite evil; so Jesus united unto our infirmities, bare our sins, and sicknesses, and carried our sorrows; purging them by himself, through the things which he suffered, until his resurrection fully proved the evil eradicated. Hence he dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him. Thus, the grace and love of God, was applied to the misery of man, in the person of Emanuel; and all our prierances redressed in him. He, being according to the condition of his person and office, the physician, medicine and patient. With his stripes, we are healed. Of this grace and truth, the holy ghost is our witness; who is said to receive of the things which are Christ's, that he might shew them to the people. Hence, it is called in the Scriptures a manifestation, a revelation, or declaration, but never an application, as I remember: This being rather an adopted phrase of antichrist, to give false ideas on such an occasion; even such, that are most derogatory to the person, death and resurrection of Jesus. Far be it from me, to aim at making any man an offender for a word: but where words are expressive of facts, and of singular import, designed to form ideas, it is right to inquire whether they are warrantable or not, and, upon inquiry it will be found, that the word application, is not, when used as expressive or believing the gospel, or receiving Christ; especially where it is asserted, that an unapplied Christ is no Christ at all. Is not this to make his office, yes, his very being, to depend upon such an application? a most shocking proposition! and abhorred of all who conceive of Christ according to the Scriptures.

they should shew great signs, and wonders. Except a few vain, insignificant pretenders, amongst the blinded Jews, who were not able to shew any great signs or wonders, but from pride, and lunacy, dreamt they were somebody; I say, excepting those, I never heard of any one, who pretended to be the Christ. And, if any poor lunatic, has at any time talked wildly of his being the Christ, he hath not deceived any body, neither could he shew great signs and wonders. Therefore, those could not be the false Christs spoken of, and yet the word of the Lord is true; false Christs there must be, and I think it behoves us to inquire what they are. False Christs are things which bear the name of Christ, and have that honour, power and glory attributed unto them, which belong only to Jesus of Nazareth: a prevailing deception, attested by great signs and wonders. If false Christs are those things which are called Christ, and are not, I think it is not impossible to find them out, and to prove that they are now in the world, and have deceived many. The false Christ is a compound of pride, darkness, deceit, self-love, enmity against the true Christ, &c. but then it bears the names of humility, the light within, faithfulness, truth, love to God, and zeal for holiness; (in contradistinction to that dangerous proposition, of salvation by the blood of Jesus Christ alone, and of being complete in him, though sinners in ourselves, where mankind are ignorant of the scriptures, and of the power of God, and yet reading and hearing of Christ being in them, and being also bid to examine themselves, whether a Christ be in them, they look into themselves; thus inquiring, have I Christ, do I love God, and hate iniquity? am I changed? am I humble, heavenly-minded, thirsting to be more holy, and lamenting my faults? do I increase in light, knowledge and understanding? If I do, then I have Christ: this is Christ in me the hope of glory. This is the Christ whom many look unto, and respect as the true Christ. This hath its great signs, and wonders. This pretends to cast out devils, and to work such changes in mankind, as answers to the Ethiopian changing his skin, and the Leopard his spots; pretends to produce signs of it, in such, or such persons; once greatly vicious, but now made either perfectly holy, or in a great measure so; even perfect in parts, if that can be understood. Furthermore, the considerations of this great change, and the feeling of its holy tempers and dispositions; is a contemplation so ravishing, a sensation, or frame of spirit so transporting, that it triumphs over the fears of death and hell, and anticipating the joys and powers of the world to come, makes the deceived cry out, partly in the words of the apostle, "who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect!" Who shall condemn? but then, taking

liberty to differ from Paul, instead of founding it with him upon this fact, Christ died and rose again. The disciples of the false Christ rather cry, who shall condemn? I am converted, I believe, I bear the fruits of the spirit, I have the marks of grace in me! who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? and I am certainly one, for he has distinguished me from my neighbours! and made me holy as the elect of God, thanks be to God, I have by much assiduity in all the ordinances, by constant application unto all the means of grace, at last made my calling and election sure: and now how happy, how blest am I! come life, come death, I am ready: Thus can the false Christ shew great signs and wonders. True it is, this is ascribed to different causes; one cries, why me, why me, what am I that I should be so blest! and talks of discriminating grace, as though God was a respecter of persons. Whilst another says, O blessed self-denial, and patience: Now I am blest with the fruit of my labours and sorrows, I shall never repent of my watchings, fastings, and prayers, nor of the grievous mortifications I have passed though, since I am possessed of that holiness wherein I can see God. Whilst a third exults, that he has not been misled by that outward and carnal Christ, who might probably suffer in the reign of Tiberius, without the gates of Jerusalem: But that he has been obedient to the true spiritual Christ, who was always in him from his mother's womb, sometimes as a spirit of burning, convincing of sin, at other times as a spirit of judgment or a light shining in a dark place; shewing him what was right, with the path wherein he should walk: that he hath the faithfulness to follow this Christ, and not as many of his fellow-mortals, resisted the light, is now the joy of his heart. Thus however things are ascribed to different causes, and different terms made use of, yet the same matter is intended; and all come to this point at last; that the true Christ, is a compound of righteous qualities, and holy dispositions in men. Hence it is that human virtue is idolized, and complemented with the name of Christian; upon this principle even heathen philosophers are supposed to have had Christ in them: especially such amongst them who were famous for their piety, though heathen. Yea according to this, it is enough to have appearances to whine, and cant, talk much of the work of the spirit, upon the heart,⁵ of human goodness, moral

⁵I would not be understood as speaking slightly of the spirit of truth, or of his operations in the heart of man, according to the scripture account thereof: which is there undeniably made to consist in receiving of the things which are his, (viz. Christ's) and in shewing them into us; that Jesus Christ alone might be glorified: and this the spirit is constantly engaged in, until we answer fully, in heart, and mind, unto the character of the true circumcision; who worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. But in the spirit of error, reverses this character: pretends to shew mankind other excellencies than what are

virtue, and exclaim against sin and sinners: I say, if men have but those appearances, they are according to the principle of the false Christ, to be deemed devout, and pious Christians; though they speak in the most irreverent terms of the person of Jesus, and scandalize the doctrine of salvation alone by his blood; ridicule his mysteries as whimsies; and with the old Pharisees, accuse him as the ringleader of the wicked, and the cause of the profaneness which is in the world. And so zealous are mankind become for this holiness, or Christ as it is promiscuously called, that such who are considered as gospel ministers, will not now grant any thing farther concerning Jesus of Nazareth, than what they think tends to promote this holiness, or inward Christ : Thus is this made the grand criterion whereby to judge of all truth: it being now common to inquire upon any proposition concerning Jesus Christ, doth it tend to promote inward holiness and true heart-work? if it does, receive it: if it does not, reject it; let it be what it will. From hence it is evident that this holiness within them, hath infinitely the preference before the person of Christ, since he shall not be allowed to plead his own cause, where there is the least suspicion of his doctrine clashing with their conceptions of inward holiness, or Christ in them. Like the Martyr Stephen's antagonists, they will then put their fingers in their ears, and run down his testimony with noise and tumult. But, if the least sparkle of this inward holiness, or Christ be seen, or in short, if there be nothing of this nature seen, provided there is a good will towards it, a hearty zeal

found in Jesus, such as reformations, changes, pious motions and desires in themselves: and this it doth, until their worship of God dwindle into form, their rejoicing be in the work of their own hands; and all their confidence be in things of the flesh.

Antichrist, or the false spirit, seeks not the glory of Jesus; but speaks of himself, of its own operations of joys, sorrows, hatred to the evil, and languishment after goodness; by him wrought on the heart: and teaches his anointed ones to conclude thence, that they are favorites of heaven: to look on themselves as greatly distinguished amongst mankind, by what they call inherent holiness: Yea, and to be jealous of the doctrine of Christ, because it holds forth to man, the testimony of salvation; bound up, and sealed, where Jesus is Alpha and Omega. This spirit, insinuates that the doctrine which treats of the person of Christ, of his life, sufferings, death, and resurrection; of our being justified and sanctified in him; is a very dangerous, if not a diabolical doctrine: and chiefly because if it does not immediately oppose, it teaches to slight, and disregard the work of the spirit upon the heart; will not suffer men to look unto that quarter for comfort: will not admit of it as an evidence for heaven: nor suffer them from thence to exalt themselves above their fellows: but will always be proposing Jesus as a salve for every sore, and a perfect redress of all grievances. Thus Antichrist accuses the spirit of truth, (because he glorifies Christ) of heresy; in denying the work of the spirit upon the heart: and supported by tradition, and its cloud of witnesses, it storms so violently, prates and insinuates so successfully, that it hath almost jostled Christianity out of the world: and hath introduced instead thereof, gross enthusiasm, self-righteousness, bigotry, and superstition amongst the more zealously religious part of mankind, and amongst such who are less concerned, Deism, with all the pride of moral virtues. This is that spirit which I set in face against, and of which I speak, wherever I have through my book ranked this phrase, the work of the spirit upon the heart, amongst the cant terms of Judaism blended with heathenism.

and stickling for it, let it be (as before hinted) under whatsoever name it may, whether morality, virtue, piety, holiness, the work of the spirit upon the heart, or Christ within; I say, towards all such in whom any thing of this nature can be seen, or if they are but contentious for it; they have the most enlarged bowels and extensive charity. Towards all such, they are exceedingly prodigal of their favours; insomuch, that whether they desire it or not; yea, whether they will accept it or not, they will Christian them: Yea, if a Jew, a Mahometan, a Deist, or an Atheist, be according to the phrase, a good man, a holy liver, he must be supposed to have an interest in Christ, notwithstanding he do not believe in him, but rather reviles him; and whoever questions it, will be deemed a very uncharitable and censorious bigot. On the other hand, if a man hath a sinner character, makes to pretensions to inward holiness, is not contentious, or noisy about it; though he may believe in Christ, venerate him, have all his hope and dependence for salvation upon his death and blood: I say, a man of this character stands no chance: it would be reckoned credulous, yea, the greatest abuse of charity, to Christian such a man, or to conclude him interested in Christ. From this doctrine, those inferences naturally arise: A Jew, a Pagan, a Turk, a Deist, or Atheist, if good and virtuous, according to, the before mentioned goodness, is preferable to the most zealous worshipper of Jesus, and believer in him, if imperfect and sinful. Again, goodness and holiness in man, by whatever name it is called, more infallibly demonstrates the accepted of God, the person with whom he is pleased; than Jesus Christ, his death and resurrection, or any confidence or trust in him: consequently, this virtue, this holiness, this inward work, is preferable to the person, the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. To be able to draw those inferences from the principles of Free-thinkers, Socinians, and Arians, would not at all surprise: but to see them naturally rise, from the doctrines of such, who would be contradistinguished from the former, and considered as preachers of Jesus Christ, may possibly surprise some who have been used to say unto the work of their own hands, ye are our gods.

If we consider the Bible-saints and their excellencies, in a figurative light, as I have already hinted; our Jesus will appear the hero of the scriptures: or, if we respect them as being really in Christ, what they are characterized in the letter, (for it is easily proved that they were not so in themselves,) he still hath the pre-eminence in all things, and every beautiful character given unto man in the scriptures is primarily his: as the substance of the shadow, or as the head, who by union with the body, blesses

all the members with his own condition, and character: whilst they, above all things, rejoice in his beauty, power, and excellencies. That one thing so greatly desired by the Psalmist, is granted unto all who discern their union with the head: namely, to dwell in the house of the Lord for ever, to behold his beauty, and to inquire in his temple. Though the consideration of such a glorious salvation in Jesus, is infinitely refreshing, and delightful, yet is there a higher felicity, consisting in the clear views of his personal beauties, and glories. Thus the elders who surround his throne, though perfected in his likeness, wearing crowns of glory, palms of victory, cast all their honours, and themselves likewise, before his feet: prostrating, and singing incessantly, worthy is the Lamb: thereby intimating, that his personal worth, dignity, and beauty, as beheld by them, is their highest heaven, their sublimest consolation. For this the Saviour prayed, "Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.["] Unto the eye of sense, there was neither form, nor comeliness, whereby men should desire him, when in the day of his humiliation, his judgment was taken away: when his face being more marred than any man's, and his form more than the sons of men, he was pressed with our sicknesses, sins, and sorrows: then, he appeared like the tabernacle of old, (as covered with badgers' skins) mean and contemptible, unto all such as judged according to appearance: but unto those who conceived aright of his beauty and glory, even then, his form was most excellent and his comeliness perfect, the fairest of the sons of men, grace and truth were poured into his lips. My beloved, (saith the spouse) is white and ruddy, the chief amongst ten thousand. Yea, he is made the central point of all beauties, and excellencies, as when thus described: "His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy, and black as a raven, his eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set. His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers. His lips like lillies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh. His hands are as gold rings, set with the beryl, his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires. His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold. His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. His mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely." Thus gold, precious stones, ivory, marble, spices, flowers, trees, mountains, rivers, gums, birds, &c. are here collected, to form a composition of beauties, figurative of him. Yea, whatsoever is seen in all the creation of God, all the excellencies and beauties, whether they are glories terrestrial, or celestial, are figures of him: all transmitting their lustre to him, all pointing to him as their

perfection, and he whose glory and honour was the ultimate end of their creation: All things were created by him, and for him, saith the Spirit. His beauties of holiness, how inexplicable! how divine! Pure, without austerity; wise, without vanity; humble, without pride; self-denying, without self-love; holy, harmless, undefiled; purer than the heavens, holier than the angels, he only is holy: he only is the Lord. Such was his self-denial, that though he was rich, yet he became poor. Though all honour, power, and glory, was originally his; his name and character the most exalted, yea, though without robbery he was equal to the Most High, yet “he took upon him the form of a servant, and made himself of no reputation.” Whilst the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, the Son of Man had no where to lay his head! As a stranger, and pilgrim, he passed through the worlds which his own hands had made, and unfeignedly felt the want of such necessaries and refreshments, which the creatures, from man, to the reptile, yea, even to the smallest insect, through his providence, were abundantly supplied with. In all this he sought not himself, but through all his unchangeable motto was, not my will, but thine be done: it being his meat and his drink to do the Father’s will. Such was his self-denial, that though he was that just one: in his own individual self was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens; yet was he content to be numbered amongst the transgressors; and to be accounted seditious, a rebel, a glutton, a wine-bibber, a blasphemer, a deceiver, a demoniac, an encourager, and ringleader of the most notorious sinners: unto those accusations, he replied not, but by his silence denying his holy character, he seemingly acknowledged the charge exhibited against him,⁶ and submitting to the punishment, was content to make his grave with the wicked.

He denied himself so far as to permit Satan, (a creature of his power, and one whom he had before crushed to everlasting darkness for his rebellion) to tempt him, and that with the glories of a world, which he himself had made, and which at that time, he upheld by the right hand of his power; all living, moving existing in him, and governed by his providence. And also, with worshipping him, who was not only his creatute, but a creature fallen and accused, and whose very being, was enmity against him. Yea, he suffered

⁶Though as an individual he was perfectly holy; and the charge of sin brought against him by his enemies, as false as Satan; yet as the head and representative of the people, as personating the sinner, he confessed the charge by his silence. Otherwise it does not appear, wherefore he was silent, when the cause of truth called upon him to make his defence. That his great and unparalleled humility was evident in this transaction, does not prove that his behaviour in this particular, was calculated *only* to exhibit that beauty. Therefore may we construe his silence a tacit acknowledgement of his being *made sin for us*.

the tempter to sift him like wheat; to rush upon him with all his policy and power, by every gate of hell: to try him with despair, presumption, self-murder, and with an inordinate love of life, by using the most extravagant means for the preservation thereof: yea, even to hazard his knowledge of himself, of his own dignity and glory, as the Son of God, upon the success thereof.

Thus seeking, if by any means he might oblige him to deviate from his own law, and rule of righteousness, written by Moses, and the prophets. How beautiful his humility! he patiently endured the contradiction of sinners against himself. How conspicuous his love, through the things which he suffered! many waters could not quench it, neither could the floods drown it. His meekness! how apparent, when as a lamb led to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers dumb, he opened not his mouth: when he was reviled, he reviled not again, nor did he hide his face from shame and spitting, but calmly gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks, to them who plucked off the hair. These, and every other godlike disposition and perfection, shining in him, through his life and death, renders him at once the object of wonder, delight, and pleasure. Yea, such is his superlative beauty, that when we have considered all excellencies in heaven and earth with the utmost exactness and impartiality, we are still with relation to them all, constrained to cry, "As the apple-tree is among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." Surprisingly rare! one amongst thousands, yea, only one in all the wood: distinguished from all in fragrance, fruit, and shade. Well may every admiring worshipper say, "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste."

He is beautiful in the majesty of his power, and the glory of his kingdom. All power in heaven, and in earth, is given into his hand. By him kings reign, and princes decree justice. The Queen of Sheba came from the uttermost parts of the earth to bear the wisdom of Solomon, and to see his glory, (but behold a greater than Solomon is here,) And "when she saw his wisdom, and the house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and the siting [*sic*] of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cup-bearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord, there was no more spirit in her."

We also when we come up to Zion, to see the king in his beauty, with the queen standing on his right-hand, shining in gold of Ophir, are equally surprised, astonished, and smitten with wonder. How glorious the displays

of his wisdom! in creation, redemption, and providence, especially in that admirable economy with which he governs his own house. There he shews the beauties of holiness, holiness for ever becometh his house, and reverence his saints. Of experience, having been tempted in every point like unto us. Of compassion, he has compassion on the ignorant, and such that are out of the way. Of sympathy, he is touched with a feeling of our infirmities. His wisdom, love, and power in guiding, protecting, enriching, and causing all things to work together for the good of them who love him, and are the called according to his purpose, is most beautifully seen here. The house which he had built, where through the labours of his life and death, he hath built us in himself, an habitation for God, through the spirit.

The meat of his table, his flesh is meat indeed, his blood is drink indeed: by union with which, we are fed with all his grace, and fruits. The sitting of his servant, the rest that remaineth for the people of God, which rest is in him, where all those who believe entering cease from their own works, as God ceased from his. The standing of his ministers, their continual readiness to execute his will; and with unwearied pleasure and delight, to bear his message to his church; he maketh his ministers a flame of fire, administering by the word of his cross, light and heat, all around them. Apparrelled with him who is the righteousness of the saints, they bear witness of his royalties, majesty, and glory, as the king of kings, and Lord of Lords.

His cup-bearers, those who offer everlasting praise, resulting from his blood and death; which, as the juice of the true vine, the fruit of his own doings, and sufferings, he drinks for ever new, in the kingdom of the Father. His ascent into the house of the Lord, the union of natures in his person; by which the man in him, is one with God, and therefore goes up unto the house of the Lord.

When the Queen of Sheba saw this, only in the figure, there was no more spirit in her: but breaking forth in strains of ecstasy, it exceedeth, saith she, "the fame which I heard, the half was not told me, happy thy men, happy these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, that hear thy wisdom, blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel; because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice."

What then must be the strains, when our great Solomon, in all his wisdom, majesty, beauty, and glory is seen. Such is the poverty of speech, yea, of the most expressive, words, that we are utterly incapable of declaring, what we then conceive of his eternal excellency. Whilst our utmost concep-

tions bear no proportion to his real glories, his transcendent beauties: but are as a moment of time to eternity. Thousands of thousands minister unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand, stand before him: let us mingle with the multitude thus blest with his presence; saying with a loud voice, worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory and blessing: and with every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth: and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, saying, blessing, and honour, glory, and power, unto him that sitteth upon the throne, unto the Lamb forever and ever. *Amen.*