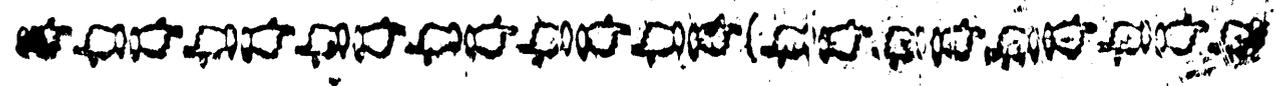


Mr. Buell's

S E R M O N,

U P O N

The Knowlege of GOD in CHRIST.



1771

A spiritual Knowledge of GOD in
CHRIST, comprehensive of all Good
and Blessedness.

A

S E R M O N

Preached at *ENFIELD,*

May 14th, 1771.

Published at the Desire of many Hearers.

By Samuel Buell, A. M.

PASTOR of the CHURCH of CHRIST, in
EAST-HAMPTON, ON LONG-ISLAND.

IT is written in the Prophets, and they shall be all taught
of God. *John 6. 45.*

For God, who commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness,
hath shined in our Hearts, to give the Light of the Knowledge
of the Glory of God, in the Face of Jesus Christ. *2 Cor. 4. 6.*

—Blessed art thou *Simon Bar jona*: For Flesh and Blood hath
not revealed it unto thee; but my Father. *Mat. 16. 17.*

—Happy is that People, whose God is the Lord.

Psal. 144. 15.

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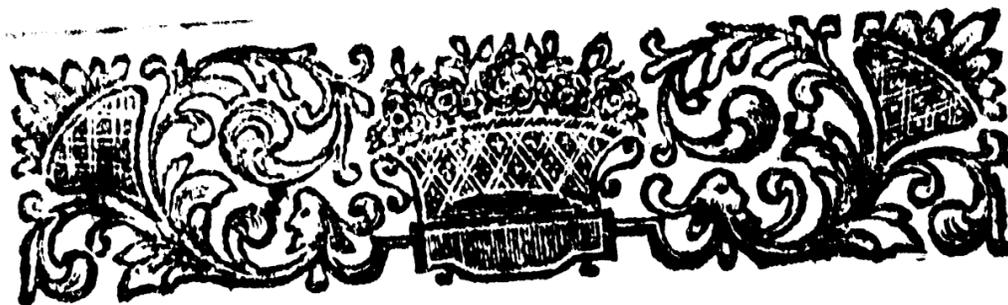
To the R E A D E R.

Immediately after the following Sermon was preached, I was desired to permit its Publication by the Press, which I then refused. Some Time since the Rev. Mr. Potter, (in whose Pulpit it was deliver'd) wrote me repeatedly, that it's Publication was solicited by many Hearers; in compliance with their request, as soon as the many other Demands upon my Time would allow, I have transcribed it for the Press. The Sermon was wrote at large, but deliver'd memoriter.—Whether there is the least Variation from what was deliver'd, and now appears, let them judge who heard.—They who are apt to imagine that Treatises of this Kind, have in them a Tincture of Enthusiasm, do well to consider, that 'tis one Branch of Man's Misery—naturally he has not Light enough to discern his own Darknes: And therefore, when the absolute Necessity of divine Illumination is urged upon him, as one 'alienated from the Life of God, through the Ignorance that is in him,' he is prone to retort, am I blind also?—The Sermon comes abroad in that plain Manner of Address, and with that particular application, with which it was delivered:—For which, I am not disposed to apologize; tho' I have much occasion to, on account of its deficiencies; as being very sensible, that 'tis in no due measure labour'd and finish'd, in comparison with its interesting and important contents. However, I doubt not, but serious people will look upon the truths contained in it, of universal concernment, of eternal consequence, and infallible certainty.

That God, the Father of Lights, and Father of Mercies, would be pleased, for the divine Mediator's sake to accompany these truths with the energetical influences of the Holy Spirit, dispel all darkness from the mind and heart of the reader, give him a spiritual, experimental and practical knowledge of his glory in the Person of Christ, and an interest in that immense and immortal good and blessedness, which is inseparably connected therewith, is the unfeigned prayer of
His servant in Christ Jesus,

EAST HAMPTON,
Octo. 25, 1771.

SAMUEL BUELL.



A spiritual Knowledge of God in Christ,
comprehensive of all Good and Blessedness.



J O B XXII. xxi.

Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace:
thereby good shall come unto thee.

As the Lord liveth, and as the soul liveth, and must forever live, let him that hath an ear to hear, know and be assured, that true holiness, and thereby real happiness commenc'd for the present, immense and immortal felicity for the future, have an inseparable connection, with a supernatural knowledge of the living and true, the glorious and eternal God. I verily persuade myself, that there is no intelligent person, who will not readily acknowledge, that there is within them, an undying part, an immortal soul of such vast desires and boundless wants, that no created good in all the universe, nothing short of internal glory, communicated from Jehovah's uncreated inexhaustible fulness, can exclude all possible want, and afford substantial blessedness for both worlds. This assented to, I expect the most solemn attention to
the

the message I have now to deliver, in the name of the great I AM.

Are you then solicitous to obtain the knowledge of duty and happiness? attend to the words of *Eliphaz* in our text, 'Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee.' He indeed mistook as to *Job's* state, as did his other friends; he concluded from the extraordinary sufferings *Job* was under, that uncommon guilt was upon him. But in the supposed case, the matter of his counsel was excellent, nothing could be better said, or more to the purpose. He hath given ministers of the gospel a noble precedent and example how to address and deal with sinners estranged from God. We must threaten and exhort, persuade and propose the promises of peace and blessedness: We must speak to them from mount *Sinai*, by the terrors of the law; and from mount *Sion* by the encouragements of the gospel; set before them life and death, good and evil, the blessing and the curse, and promise them the greatest good, upon complying with their absolute duty. Supreme authority may awe, fears of wrath drive, and hopes of mercy draw, and each contribute to hasten the souls return to God through Christ.

The former part of our text contains a proposition concerning duty; 'Acquaint now thyself,' &c. the latter, a proposition of mercy, or a copious all-comprehensive promise, 'thereby good shall come to thee.'

Observe we first, the good counsel given.

'Acquaint now thyself with God.' This the good

good counsel given, this the duty to be urged upon all, especially upon such as are estranged from God, and enemies to him. Those who investigate the original word, expressive of the act or duty called for, have their usual criticisms and various readings. Acquiesce in God; join thyself to him; return into his favour; accommodate thyself to him. One of the *Rabbins* translates the text thus, 'profit with God;' our translation renders it well, 'acquaint thyself with him:' Be not a stranger to God; but get a spiritual knowledge of him; fix your affections upon him; join yourself to him in a covenant of friendship, and keep up a constant correspondence with him. This act, *acquaint*, with relation to God as the terminating object, supposes a moral separation and judicial distance between God and sinful man: a return to God and union with him through Christ by faith. And implies a spiritual supernatural knowledge of God; nearness of access to him; holy familiar converse with him; mutual communications between God and us; a delightful complacency in; and a supreme affection toward him. We may here observe, That man by nature is a stranger to God, and that every act of sin increases estrangement from him: That a pious person, walking with God, is one of his acquaintance and familiars: And that it is the great duty and important interest of all, to become acquainted with the Lord *Jehovah*.

Another branch of the good counsel is, 'be at peace.' This may be taken as an effect of acquaint

acquaintance. Peace shall be to thee, upon acquaintance with God. Peace, as the *Hebrews* use the term, comprehends all good : Health of body, the success of all affairs, welfare of mind, or soul prosperity in a *theological* and divine sense. An heavenly calm, a sweet composure of mind, and all the solid comfort of a quiet submission to the hand of God, shall be thine, upon acquaintance with him. Or this clause may be taken rather as a duty, and not so properly as a promise. Be reconciled to God, do not carry on an unholy war with him; but yield entire submission of spirit to him. Here is gospel language, like that of *Paul*,—‘ We pray you in Christ’s stead, ‘ be ye reconciled to God.’ See to it, that this acquaintance and reconciliation be speedy. *Now*, without interposing delay, *now* before it be too late : ‘ Agree quickly with thine adversary.’ Hence it may be natural to observe, That we ought to be quiet and submissive under the dispensations of God, and that we shall be so, upon being duly acquainted with him. That we can have no true peace, nor real happiness, ’till we spiritually know God. That such as are estranged from God, and enemical to him, must be speedy in contracting acquaintance, and making their peace with him.

We may secondly observe, the promise and good encouragement which *Eliphaz* gives ; ‘ thereby good shall come unto thee.’ All happiness accompanies and flows from acquaintance with God, and reconciliation to him : It shall come, infallibly come, thereupon to thee, who-

foever

foever thou art. It must needs be so, in the nature of things, and by a divine constitution. The learned tell us of profitable, honourable and pleasant good; our text fully and eminently comprehends them all. All the good we can desire, temporal, spiritual and eternal, shall be ours, upon acquaintance with the all-sufficient God. He will come unto us, take us into covenant and communion with himself, and bring all good with him, as all good is originally and infinitely in him. The dews of grace, the showers of the Spirit, will fall into our bosom, spiritual peace, strength and comfort unutterable, will flow into our souls with a divine freedom, flow perpetually as a river doth, which is fed by a constant spring, when we truly know God in Christ. Thus the words of our text in their connexion, intimate: that what God commands, he also commends: that which by absolute authority he enjoins, by infinite goodness he proposes, as most gainful for us : that so far forth as we are estranged from God and irreconciled to him, so remote are we from real good, and true happiness. Nearness to God, (in a moral point of view,) is the foundation of our blessedness. Or, knowlege of, conformity to, and communion with God, is comprehensive of all solid good and felicity. Therefore acquaintance with the glorious God is most profitable, immensely gainful ! There never was any one of the human race a loser by acquaintance with God. Countless thousands are, and will be everlasting gainers thereby.

I shall single out the following observation, for the subject matter of present meditation.

OBSERVATION. There is a knowlege of, and an acquaintance with the glorious God, verily most gainful, as comprehensive of all good and blessedness.

- In the prosecution of this observation, I shall,
- I. Give you a description of that knowlege of, and acquaintance with the glorious God, which is so very gainful.
 - II. Illustrate and confirm the observation.
 - III. Make improvement, as your time will allow.

I. Then, I am to give you a description of that knowlege of, and acquaintance with God, which includes the comprehensive gain of all good and blessedness.

There is a rational and natural knowlege of God. Knowlege by the book and light of nature and conscience. God hath placed *many characters* of his divine excellencies upon his works of creation and providence. 'The heavens declare the glory of God : And the firmament sheweth his handy works.' † His glory twinkles in the stars, re-beams from the moon, and blazeth in the sun. The apostle plainly affirms, the works of creation demonstrate the *eternal power and God-head*, of him by whom they were created. * There are such traces of the divine perfections, by creation and providence, as clearly discover that a sovereign Spirit, rich in goodness, most

Psal 19. 1, † Rom. 1. 19, 20.

most wise in counsel, and powerful in operation, gave being to, and governs the world. There are not only visible testimonies of the being of God and his glory, but there is also an internal witness by natural conscience ; which gives support to an innocent person, and latheth the guilty : making sensible of the supream Judge to whose tribunal he is subject. But such knowlege, simply considered, is not the knowlege of God in Christ, and therefore not most gainful. There is a doctrinal and speculative knowlege of God, by the light of divine revelation. By the light and letter of law and gospel, and christian education, we have super-added advantage to obtain the knowlege of God, both that He is, and what He is. This we call a notional and speculative knowlege, or ' the form of knowlege and of the truth. † Keeping up a distinction between such knowlege, and that which is spiritual and experimental, called the favour of knowlege. * 'Tis evident from the whole tenor of the gospel, that multitudes who live under the clear light of it, remain blind to all its peculiar glories, never have any saving benefit by it ; but are finally lost, eternally lost. For, ' if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.' †

There is moreover, a knowlege of God by the common illumination of the Divine Spirit. Awakened

† 2 Cor. 2. 14. * 2 Cor. 2. 14. † 2 Cor. 4. 3.

wakened sinners by the common influences of the Spirit, have a clearer view and idea of the dreadful guilt of sin, and its connexion with punishment, and very fearful apprehensions of God's terrible wrath. They have a great sense of God's natural perfections, and awful majesty. They may be greatly affected with the natural goodness of the things of religion: and with a sort of transport repeat that known saying among the *Rabbins*, 'Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.' * They may hear the word, 'and anon with joy receive it,' and greatly rejoice for a season, as the stony ground, and *John baptist* hearers. Yet be destitute of that knowledge of God and acquaintance with him, which is most gainful. To speak affirmatively—that knowledge of, and acquaintance with God, which is verily most gainful, as comprehensive of all good and blessedness, eminently consists in a spiritual and supernatural sight and sense of the infinite moral beauty, and holy loveliness of God's glorious perfections, exhibited to view in the person and mediation of Jesus Christ, relative to man's redemption, together with the effects which depend thereupon, and natively result therefrom. That I may be the better understood, I shall present to view, the respective parts of this description—But as preliminary I would just observe, that when I speak of the glory of God, as manifested in and by Christ, and so of consequence, in and by the gospel, I would be understood as viewing the gospel in its connexion with the
divine

* Luke 14. 15.

divine law. The moral law is a transcript of the divine perfections: and a sight and sense of the glory of the gospel implies the knowledge and belief of the divine law, 'as holy, just and good,' worthy to be magnified and made honourable. Unless the law be thus viewed, the design of Christ's mediation will never once be rightly understood.

The first object of attention, in the above description, is the glory of God's redeeming perfections or glorious attributes exhibited to view, in the person and mediation of Jesus Christ, relative to man's redemption by him.—We have no direct intuitive apprehensions of the divine essence, or its properties: nor intuition into God's subsistence in the *Trinity of Persons*. If in the light of glory, there will be an *intellectual vision* of the essence of God; yet sure we are, that in his *own essence*, being and existence, he is, and ever will be, absolutely incomprehensible—dwelling in light inaccessible, perfectly known unto himself only. His nature being immense, and all his holy properties essentially infinite, the conceptions of our minds are swallowed up and lost, when we would exercise ourselves directly on that which is absolutely immense, eternal, infinite. Our conceptions of God, and of the glorious properties of his nature, must be formed by *divine revelation*, and representations of his infinite excellencies in the effects of them, and thereby reflections of his glory. God first made a manifestation of his being and excellencies, by *outward acts and effects*.

effects, in and by the creation of all things out of nothing—thereby declaring the glory of his creating perfections, his wisdom, goodness, and power—which was, and continues to be, the immediate ground of all natural religion. But of all the effects of the divine excellencies, the constitution of the Person of Christ as the foundation of the new creation—as the *mystery of godliness*, was the most ineffable and glorious. Jesus Christ in his divine nature, absolutely considered, as the eternal Son of the eternal Father, is the essential image of the Father; but when we speak of him as *incarnate*, as he assumed our nature into personal subsistence with himself, he is to be consider'd both in his own entire Person, God and Man—and in the administration of his office, the image and great representative of the nature, will and glory of God unto us. 'Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness—God was manifest in the flesh.' A mystery beyond our comprehension, the glorious and eternal *Word*, which was with God, and was God, was made *flesh*, and dwelt among us. This assumption of our nature into *hypostatical union* with the Son of God, this constitution of the same individual Person in two natures so infinitely distinct, as those of God and man, is a singular expression of the glorious properties of the divine nature—and wherein God will be known, admired and glorified to all eternity. The Person of Christ is the foundation of all the holy counsels of God, with respect unto the vocation, sanctification, justification,

justification, and eternal salvation of his *church* and people, as unto his own eternal glory. These counsels of God concerning his own glory, in the salvation of his *church*, have their execution and accomplishment, in and by the Person of Christ incarnate, and his work of mediation thereon. From whence it follows, that the Person of Christ is the great representative of God, and of the glorious properties of his nature—with the holy counsels of his will. Therefore it becomes evident, that *that* knowledge of God which is saving and most gainful, is the knowledge of God in Christ. The gospel is eminently a declaration unto us of God and his glorious perfections, in the Person and mediation of Jesus Christ—*Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God*. Christ is the image of the invisible God, the express image of the Person of the Father. When we speak of him as the Son of God, with respect to his *divine nature*, absolutely consider'd, in the unity of the *divine essence*, 'He and the Father are one.' † Their nature is one and the same. In this respect the one is not the image of the other—for one and the same thing cannot be the image of it self in that wherein it is one. When we speak of our Lord Christ with respect unto his *divine Person*, as the eternal Son of God, consider'd in his *personality*, or distinct *personal subsistence*, and possessing all divine excellencies, in this respect, he is the *essential image* of the Father's Person. When we speak of our Lord Christ, in his *incarnation*, or in the assumption of

† Joh. 10. 30.

of our nature into *personal union* with himself, in order unto the work of his mediation, in this respect he is the only *representative image* of God unto us. The compleat image and perfect representation of the divine Being and excellencies, with respect to God's proposing himself unto us, as the object of knowlege, faith, and obedience. Thus in him alone, we see, know, and learn all the divine excellencies, so as to be conformed to God, in his *moral image*,—live unto him, and enjoy him for ever. Hence our Lord declares, * that he who hath seen *Him*, hath also seen the *Father*.* Agreeable thereto the apostles gave their testimony concerning him, ' that they saw *his glory*, the glory as of the only begotten of the *Father* ; † For he is the brightness, the effulgency, the resplendency of divine glory—the character or express image of the Person of the *Father*. ‡ In the Person and mediation of Jesus Christ, according to gospel representation, we have exhibited to view, the surprising harmony and glory of all the holy properties and perfections of the divine nature. In Christ all the divine attributes are united in their full lustre of infinite eternal glory. There never was such an illustrious display of divine wisdom and goodness, as in finding out and constituting this way of representing unto us, the glorious attributes of God. In Christ, a God of infinite, inflexible justice, and absolute purity and holiness, shews infinite mercy to poor, guilty, justly condemned sinners. When the mercy, goodness, and love

* John 14. 7, 9. † John 1. 14. ‡ Heb. 1. 3.

of God, boundless as his essence, take their full scope and have their compleat exercise, in relieving and beautifying self-ruined and miserable creatures, and shine and triumph in infinite grace and glory, severe and awful justice and absolute holiness sit on the throne of glory, and beam forth in infinite and eternal honour : truth and faithfulness, power and sovereignty keep their place and rank, and all the divine attributes display their awful endearing glories, worthy of the infinite eternal majesty of God. The time would fail to observe in particular how the glory of each divine attribute is manifested and shines forth in the Person and mediation of Christ—concerning them in general, it may be affirmed, that there is an immense revenue of glory appertaining to them, which glory of God in them is seen and known to saving gainful purpose only in the face or person of Jesus Christ, as the apostle declares. †

Having briefly spoken of the real *formal object* of that knowlege and faith which comprehends all good and blessedness—the glory of God represented unto us in the Person and mediation of Christ ; the next particular of our general description of that gainful knowlege, is the manner of knowing. This we say, is a spiritual and supernatural sight and sense of the infinite moral beauty and holy loveliness of God's glorious attributes, thus manifested in Christ.

The comprehension of all humane literature falls short of this knowlege—The efforts of natural

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† 2 Cor. 4: 6.

tural reason, even with the help of external divine revelation to aid speculation, without the illumination of the divine Spirit concurring, cannot attain to the first dawning of this knowledge of, and acquaintance with the glorious God: 'Tis in kind and species so pure, sublime and glorious. The means of revelation, or the objective light by which this knowledge is conveyed to our minds, is eminently the glorious gospel, viewed in its connexion with the divine law. * The Holy Spirit by a powerful sacred illumination of the mind, enables the subject he shines into and radiates, spiritually to behold and apprehend the glory of God, as presented to view in the face or person of Christ, as the apostle expressly declares. † This is having 'an unction from the holy One'—and being taught of God. This teaching is often expressed in sacred scripture, by seeing. Now to a clear sight, three things concur, an object conspicuous, a perspicuous medium, a well disposed organ, or a clear eye. A blind man cannot see at noon-day, nor the most clear-sighted at midnight. In the present case, the divine glory as the object, is set in due light by the gospel, *the medium*—and the Holy Spirit well disposes the organ, and opens the eye of the mind, that it may spiritually behold the object. That the organ or soul may be well and fitly disposed for sight, as a rectified faculty, the *new heart* is given, and the soul formed and put into a capacity to see and relish moral beauty or holiness. The divine Spirit now shines into

* 1 Cor. 3. 18. † 2 Cor. 4. 6.

into the soul, and communicates spiritual and supernatural knowledge of the 'God of glory.' This knowledge comprehends just conceptions of his natural and moral attributes and perfections. The subject of this divine irradiation eminently has a sight and sense of the infinite moral beauty and holy loveliness of God's perfections, manifested in the person and mediation of Christ. All God's attributes now appear worthy of his nature, and no one more admirable and amiable than his infinite holiness: which is the summit, the glory of all the divine perfections, that derives a lustre to all the rest. Without holiness, wisdom would be but craft and subtilty, power would be but tyranny, and mercy would degenerate and lose the glory of its nature. So that holiness is the result of all excellency, it is the divine excellency itself, or that in which the moral excellence and beauty of the divine nature does primarily consist. The new born and divinely enlightened soul eminently has a sight & sense of God's being glorious in holiness. Those very arms of infinite power and love, which drive back the devouring flame, and are stretched forth to apprehend and embrace the guilty sinner, just sinking into hell, appear to be sprinkled with the blood of the immaculate *Lamb Jesus*, and beam forth the divine beauties of unutterable awful glorious holiness. Infinite mercy is beautiful and glorious, for it is holy mercy—Infinite love is amiable and excellent, for it is holy love. All the perfections of God, especially those re-

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lative to our redemption by Christ, appear and shine with holy ravishing beauty, and infinite eternal lustre, when they are unveiled to view by the sacred illumination of the Holy Spirit. Therefore the divinely enlightened soul, in the view of the beauties of holiness, readily adopts the words of the *Psalmist*, 'Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool, for he is HOLY :' § And at times, even with sacred transport, attempts to celebrate the glorious holiness of the *triune* God, in the sublime words of the *seraphick anthem*,—'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of host, the whole earth is full of his glory.'*

As to the effects which depend upon, and naturally result from, a spiritual sight and sense of divine glory, for brevity sake, some few hints only, at present must be given ; tho' a branch of our general description of the knowlege of God.—The subject of *this* knowlege has entirely new, most convincing, and satisfying evidence of the truth of the gospel. Now the gospel of Christ, 'who is the image of God,' is known to be divine, and believed 'with all the heart.' A sight of *this* glory, by a sort of divine *metamorphosis*, transforms the spectator into the image of the moral perfections of the divine nature. Now the soul spiritually sees and truly believes that God, who is an absolutely perfect, an infinitely glorious and amiable Being, is the uncreated, inexhaustible fountain of all good, the chief happiness, and only satisfying portion ; Sees and believes his *law* to be 'holy, just, and good,' divinely excellent and amiable—

§ Psa. 99 5. * Isa. 6. 3.

amiable—worthy to be magnified and made honorable—even by the obedience and blood of his co-equal, co-essential, and co-eternal Son *incarnate* : Sees the infinite evil of sin, against so glorious a God, that it is the violation of infinite obligation to him ; and that it's proper demerit is everlasting death, according to the sanction of the divine law.—Of consequence, that if a satisfactory offering be made for sin, it must be an atonement of infinite value ; and that 'tis absolutely impossible for this to be done by men or angels : Sees and believes the infinite dignity, & superlative excellence of the Person of Christ—the infinite meritoriousness and value of his obedience unto death : The perfection of his law-fulfilling righteousness to justify the guilty—the sufficiency of grace derived from his undiminished fulness, to sanctify the polluted sinner before God. The divinely enlightned soul, has such a sight of God and Jesus Christ, as opens to view the foundation of faith—the gospel method of salvation now appears, as it really is, worthy of God, full of God, full of beauty and glory—And in the view of the infinite excellence and everlasting safety of *this way* of salvation, the heart fully acquiesces in it, as perfectly suited to honour God and Christ, and to promote purity and felicity for ever. It now appears infinitely reasonable and soul-happifying to love God 'with all the heart,' primarily on account of what he is in himself ; to delight in him supremely ; to yield undissembled submission to his will in all things ;

things; and to be entirely devoted to his service and glory at all times. The divine law is spiritually understood, heartily loved, and cordially embraced as a rule of life—a sense of infinite blame, self loathing, self-abhorrence, and godly sorrow, for want of conformity, now have a continual residence in the soul. The God of glory is seen and known as an *universal all-sufficient good*, in whom all possible excellencies and perfections meet—every thing that may commend and endear him to men and angels, and attract their eyes and hearts to him forever. The habitual propensity and bias of the soul is now toward him, with purifying hope placed upon him; with strong aspirations after the highest measures of conformity to him in holiness; and of solemn delightful communion with him; and the fullest assurances of his everlasting love. The divine attributes unfold to view, as the foundation of holy gloriation in God, the pillars of a divine *sabbatism* or rest, and sources of immutable, unbounded, and everlasting consolation.—Now the soul goes unto God, ‘as its exceeding joy;’ worships him in spirit, and rejoices in Christ Jesus, with joy unspeakable and glorified. And oh! how ardently does the soul that beholds the glory of God in Christ, long to have guilty, perishing immortals renounce their infinitely criminal disaffection to God in his moral character, return home to him through Christ, upon the free invitations of the gospel; elect and choose him as their rightful Lord, chief good, and last

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end—and take up their sole contentment in him, as the fountain and source of all good and blessedness for ever. In fine, the real subjects of *this knowlege*, seem to have a new world of wonders, ever-growing glories, perpetually opening to delightful view: And without reasonable controversy, *this knowlege* lays the foundation for the exercise of all evangelical graces, the spiritual acceptable performance of all holy duties, for divine comforts in time, and for all the ineffable eternal joys of heaven.

II. I am to illustrate and confirm the observation.

I. Here, let it be considered, that such a knowlege of, and acquaintance with the glorious God, as hath now been described, is a special spiritual saving blessing,—in its nature and quality superlatively excellent. The great *Parent* of the universe, every hour and moment gives millions and countless millions of evidences, that he is a God of vast and boundless benignity to our world; but only witnesses the eternity of his special love, by a spiritual manifestation of his glory in Christ. Every *Dives* has his sumptuous fare, a *Judas* his purse, and finally descend to their *own place* of endless flaming torments. Common bounties are inconsiderable when compared with special blessings. An empire, with all its affluence and grandeur, without the knowlege of God in Christ, is but as a crumb flung to a dog. The spiritual knowlege of divine glory, in the nature and quality of it, differs from every kind of com-

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mon bounty, and species of knowlege in the universe : Being in it self, in a peculiar sense, of divine original, and also in it self, of a divine and holy nature—an emanation or communication of internal glory from God's fulness, as the beams of the sun are something of the sun. The knowlege of the glory of God in Christ, is as much superior to all other knowlege, as the *object* is superior to all other *knowable objects* ; therefore of transcendent excellence. ' A knowlege that passeth knowlege'—a knowlege that brings fulness with it, as the apostle speaks, even all the fulness of God. † The blessed angels of heaven, who dwell in the glorious presence of God, and have the joys of heaven to fill them, who before will not trouble themselves with expence of their noble thoughts upon inferior objects, yet we learn that *they*, as it were, turn away their eyes from that express glory which is before them in heaven, to gaze intensely upon the bottomless mysteries and boundless glories of God in Christ. The knowlege of divine glory renders the subject of it most excellent. 'Tis the brightest ornament of intelligent beings. The perfection of knowlege—without which all light is but darkness, and all knowlege but ignorance. In all other knowlege, accursed devils in hell, surpass the greatest proficient amongst men ; but the knowlege of the infinite moral beauty & holy loveliness of God's glorious perfections manifested in Christ, surpasseth the comprehension of all the angels of darkness. *All destitute of this knowlege,*

† Eph. 3. 8.

knowlege, are by the Holy Spirit himself, stigmatized with the ignominious epithet of spiritual fools and ideots, how wise and knowing forever they may be in other respects. The spectators of divine glory have those rays and beams of glory divine reflected upon, and communicated to them, which dignify and render them, ' the most excellent ones in the earth,' and will be the eternal ornament of their souls. This is their *glory*, and in this they may, and do, and will forever glory, ' that they know the Lord.' §
2dly. The subjects of this knowlege, are pardoned, justified and accepted of God, as righteous unto eternal life. By a divine constitution and promise, a spiritual knowlege of God in Christ hath the pardon of sin annexed to it : for it is said by God himself,—' They shall know me—I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.' † ' They who see the glory of God in Christ, see that he can ' be just, and the justifier of *them* that believe in Jesus,'—and seeing, believe, and believing are justified, by the imputation of his *suretyship-righteousness*, which becomes *truly theirs*, thro' *faith*. In Christ ' they have redemption thro' his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to ' the riches of grace.' Unpardoned guilt is the burden of conscience, the sting of death, and the fuel of hell. 'Tis sin only that makes us miserable ; for when our iniquities are forgiven, our blessedness begins—hence, ' Blessed are they whose

§ Jer. 9. 24.

† Jer. 31. 34.

‘ whose iniquities are forgiven.’ They are made accepted *in Christ* the beloved :’ For, ‘ the Lord ‘ is well pleased for *his righteousness* sake.’ The Father speaking of Christ his Son, ‘ the Lord our ‘ righteousness,’ saith, ‘ By his knowlege he shall ‘ justify many ;’—which according to the *original* may be read, *He will make a righteousness unto many.* That which he himself performed as the cause of righteousness, he will communicate to many. Christ having ‘ fulfilled all righteousness’ for *his people*, and what he did and suffered for them, being legally reckoned *theirs*, they are delivered from the curse and condemnation of the *law*, and so from an everlasting hell : And they are accounted righteous unto eternal life, for, the righteousness of Christ by which they are justified, is called *everlasting* : † And *grace* must needs ‘ reign through *that righteousness* unto ‘ eternal life.’ ‡ Thus blessed are they who truly know God in Christ. The apostle amplifies *their* blessedness in the 5th chapter of his epistle to the *Romans*, from verse 1st. to the 12th. He assures us,—They have peace with God—that they have access to him by faith—perseverance and standing, in their blessed state,—joy or gloriation in hope of the glory of God—Gloriation in adversity—The love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost given them—An infallible certainty of continuing in a state of reconciliation with God—Security from future wrath—Undoubted communication of eternal life—

† Dan. 9: 24. ‡ Rom. 5. 21.

life—Also joy or gloriation in God Himself. So great blessedness accompanies justification, which is connected with the true knowlege of, and acquaintance with God in Christ. Oh happy they who thus know the Lord !

3dly. They are in a state of favour with God, adopted into his family—and have a new and saving covenant-relation to him, as their God. ‘ I will give them an heart to know me, saith ‘ God—that I am Jehovah, and they shall be ‘ my people, and I will be their God.’ † Dying both *morally* and *legally*, thro’ the breach of the first covenant, we fell under a *relative* death too ; but by virtue of the covenant of redemption, upon union with Christ by faith, those who ‘ were without God,’ are joined again in a saving relation to him. Thus they have a *relative life*, according to that, ‘ in his favour is life.’ On their part, there was a *real* enmity against God ; on God’s part, a *legal* enmity against them : But they are become ‘ reconciled to God by the ‘ death of his Son ;’ and taken into an everlasting covenant of peace with him. * ‘ Being justified by faith, they have peace with God.’ He lays down his *legal enmity* against them, never to be taken up again. They become the confederates and friends of God : And that spiritual, holy, and blessed PEACE, which was decreed for them by the Father, and purchased for them by Christ, is now ushered into their hearts ‘ by the ‘ Holy Ghost.’ This peace is a mutual concord between

† Jer. 24. 7. * Ezek 37. 26.

between God and them, so that the heart of God is carried out towards them, and in like manner, their hearts towards God, by a delightful inclination of friendship. God addresses them by the appellation *Hephzi-bab*, † my delight; and they in their turn, delight themselves in the Lord. This peace is of a divine nature, and of a divine original, resulting from the purpose of divine grace from everlasting—from the fountain of the infinite mercy, and philanthropy or love of God to man. They have now a most delightful 'peace of conscience,' and a sense of the divine favour, which spreads a surprizing serenity and heavenly calm over their spirits: And while they taste the immense sweetness of the divine love and favour, they infinitely prefer the friendship of God to all other things: For they now experimentally know, that, 'in his favour is life.' And that, 'his loving-kindness is better than life.' They have also now *friendship with all the other friends of God*: Not only with *holy men*; but are also admitted into the bonds of fellowship and friendship with the *blessed angels—thrones, dominions, principalities and powers*. And all the efforts of their enemies against them are in vain; for that God who has all power in himself, and all the events of time and eternity under his direction, is engaged *for them*. While guarded by such a *Protector*, who can be successful against them? All salutary good in rich abundance, flows from *this peace*,—'which passeth all understanding.'

† Isa. 62. 4.

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They are also taken as children into the family of God: And this is more than the former; as it is more to be one's *son*, than to be his friend. They who are taught of the *Father*, come to the Son; that is, believe in, or receive him, and 'to as many as received him, to them gave he power (dignity or privilege) to become *children of God*.'—A very glorious and blessed *filiation*; for it is divine in its original, surpassingly excellent in its nature, and endless in its happy and great consequences. They are become the children of God by a new spiritual birth, and a marriage with the Lord *Jesus*—And are called by a *new name*—and 'are of the household of God'—are under the protection of their God and Father, who has the power of life and death in his hand, and all worlds at his command. He feasts them upon angels food: and gives them to drink copiously of the wine of gospel peace, love, and joy—They have a spirit of adoption to cry *abba Father*, and 'by a new and living way,' have free access to the throne of his grace, and are admitted to a delightful converse, and holy familiarity with himself,—Yea, their fellowship and communion is with the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Spirit*. They are privileged with the indwelling presence of the divine Spirit, and he, 'bears witness with their spirits that they are the children of God.'—If children then heirs too, heirs of God, and joint heirs with *Jesus Christ*: Heirs of a kingdom,—which, 'tis the good pleasure of their heavenly Father to give them. In the right of *Jesus*

Jesus Christ their elder brother and head, by a spirit of adoption, they call God their *Father*: And are replenished with unutterable consolation, from that all-comprehensive message, the risen *Lord of life* sent to his pensive *disciples*— and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.—But your time will not allow me to descant on the royal prerogatives, the admirable immunities, the divine fruitions, the exalted honours and glorious privileges of ADOPTION. Its abounding excellent contents, are sufficient to fill volumes, and to exhaust ages, in the most diligent search and delightful contemplation. I only glance upon the glorious theme for the illustration of my reigning topick. This amiable and shining character, *The children of God!* is a character really existing in our world, but too bright and dazzling, to be viewed in its united and full glories, while in this state of dark and dull mortality. ‘Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when HE shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.’ †

Moreover, a new and saving covenant relation to God, is annexed by promise to a spiritual knowlege of, and acquaintance with him; therefore such a knowlege is most gainful.—The promise of eternal life to the subjects of this knowlege,

† Having multiplied scripture quotations in this discourse, I have for brevity often omitted citing book, chapter and verse. Tho’ usually have included scripture phraseology in commas, or italic letters. They who read the holy scriptures much, (as all ought to) will best know when scripture phraseology is used.

lege, comprehends in it, such a *relation to God* which they upon being *justified* are brought into. ‘I will say to them, thou art my people; and they shall say, thou art my God.’ * Reconciliation, adoption, and God’s being their God, are branches of the promise—‘I will be their God,’ † seems to be more than the two former, as it is being advanced to the utmost height of relation to God. In consequence of Christ’s *giving himself* for his people, a ransom of infinite value, a *promise* of God’s giving *himself* to them, comes in and takes place, as an ample reward of the service performed by Christ as Mediator: which purchased *reward* of *his*, redounds to them. Hence that, ‘I am thy exceeding great reward.’ Therefore, they who truly know God in Christ, being *justified*, *reconciled*, and *adopted* into the family of God, have this *heritage* falling to them by promise; God himself becomes their God. ‘If children, then heirs, heirs of God:’ and ‘if a son, then an heir of God through Christ;’ God himself being the heritage. So that they have right to him and interest in him, as their own *property*. It is said, ‘all things are theirs;’ ‡ but ’tis a saying infinitely greater, *God himself* is theirs. This new and saving covenant relation to God, is his gracious engaging through Jesus Christ the Mediator, that *he will be their God*, and that *they shall be his people*. When God engages himself to be their God, he makes over himself to them, in all his infinite perfections, and

* Hosea 2. 23. † Heb. 8. 10. ‡ 1 Cor. 3. 22.

and all his most glorious subsistences. His people are not hereby deified; no, but in a well understood sense, all his attributes are theirs; his infinite *wisdom* to direct them, and to order all things for their best good, his omnipotent *supream* and eternal *power* to protect and defend them, his inflexible *justice* to make all the benefits purchased by Christ for them forth coming to them, his glorious *holiness* to transform them into the same image, his boundless *mercy*, to pardon, pity and succour them, his infinite *grace* to deal bountifully with them, his inviolable *fidelity* to fulfil all the promises to them in their time and order, and his adorable *all-sufficiency* to supply all their need, and to render them completely and eternally happy. In his *divine subsistences* also he is theirs—All the *persons* of the glorious Trinity are theirs: The divine *Father*, the divine *Son*, and the divine *Spirit*, theirs, *thy makers* (Hebrew) *are thy husbands*. Christ fulfilling the conditions of the covenant of redemption as Mediator, by purchase, according to promise, had a *new* kind of *interest* in God, as his *God*, and become heir to the blessed *heritage*—and his redeemed in and by him; which opens the grounds of that—‘I ascend to my God, and ‘your God’—and hence that also, ‘heirs of God, ‘joint heirs—heirs with Christ.’ So that God the *Father* is and will be their God and Father, and set his love upon them for ever. God the *Son* is and will be their Lord and Saviour, to save them from sin and wrath. God the *Holy Ghost*,

is and will be their sanctifier, comforter and guide to eternal glory. All those who truly know the God of glory in Christ, have all these divine persons jointly engaged to promote their immortal purity and felicity; and this whole adorable *Trinity* shall be actually enjoyed by them for an endless ever-more. O the immense and boundless gain, good, and blessedness, of having all the divine *attributes*, and the glorious *subsistences*, thus engaged for us, possess, and to be enjoyed by us forever. If an interest in all that infinity of glorious perfections, which are in God himself, and an interest in, and communion with, the undivided *Trinity*, can compleat their consummate happiness, who are truly acquainted with the glorious GOD, they begin to be, and finally shall be, absolutely, perfectly and eternally blessed. God is their God—this surely is the top stair of happiness—this is the sum of all felicity! ‘Heirs of God,’ Himself their own *property*; a property in its full contents, infinitely and eternally beyond the comprehension of men or angels! Here is gain, good and blessedness with a witness! Words, thoughts, are swallowed up and lost, like a drop falling into a shoreless ocean! ‘What shall we say to these things?’ If we say any thing, it must be in the language of inspiration—‘Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord—Yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord.’

4. They who spiritually and truly know God in Christ, are conformed to him in his moral excellences, and become possess of that holiness

with which blessedness is connected. Holiness is essential to happiness; for, 'without holiness no man shall see the Lord.' Now 'tis by 'beholding the glory of God,' that we are 'changed into his image,' and become possessors of that holiness, to which blessedness is annexed: agreeable to our Lord's declaration, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God'—that is, delightfully enjoy him. Therefore as happiness consists in holiness, by means of a spiritual knowledge of God, such *knowledge* is most gainful.—The happy subjects of this *knowledge* have inchoate glory or glory begun—having the first fruits of the full immortal harvest. Being *called* and *justified*—by that excellent holiness which is freely bestowed upon them—by the vision of God in the light of grace—by possession and enjoyment of him—by the sealings of his Spirit—by the assurances of salvation—and by holy joy and gloriation in him, they have *glorification* begun in this life, as a sure pledge of its being consummated in the next. Hence, it is familiar to the holy Spirit, to delineate holiness under the names of *beauty* and *glory*, and to make use of the terms, *heaven* and *glory*, as strictly applicable to *them*, and as expressive of *their* begun *happiness* and *glorification*. Agreeable thereto, we read 'of the beauties of holiness'—and often find the term *glory* applied to the *church of God*—and the subjects of divine knowledge are said to be blessed 'with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ'—'and to sit with him in heavenly places'—to be 'changed from glory to

to glory'—and 'to rejoice with joy unspeakable and *glorified*. Which leads me to observe,

5. A spiritual knowledge of God, and acquaintance with Him, is most gainful, for it is *satisfactory* knowledge, and divinely consolatory. If we admit the divinity of the *schools*, viz. That the *ingredients* of *happiness* to an intelligent being, 'are knowledge of, and contemplation upon the glorious perfections of God'—'superlative love to him'—'and a delightful sense of his love:' *all these*, in the most excellent and noble sense are comprized in a divine view of his glory in Christ. The subjects of spiritual knowledge—under the enlightning beams of the divine Spirit, eminently and in a superior manner, behold the infinite attributes of the God of glory, and contemplate upon them with unutterable delight and satisfaction—and their infinite attractive beauties and glories, excite efforts of the most exalted love, blended with a pleasure all divine—and light of evidence, and a feeling sense of God's love to them attending, give comfort and joy, that is the prelibation of eternal glory. This knowledge of divine glory, yields abundant satisfaction and comfort, to the mind, conscience, desires, and all the powers and faculties of the soul. All other knowledge leaves the intellectual appetite unsatisfied; and the enjoyment of all created good, is insufficient for substantial pleasure: for, it is not equal in dignity and duration to the soul of man—in no due measure adequate to the boundless thirsty cravings of the immortal spirit after happiness—'tis vanity of vanities, all

all is vanity.' They who persevere in ignorance of God and his glory in Christ, are roving amongst a thousand vanities in quest of happiness, changing the laborious chase, by flight from object to object; but perpetually renewing the disappointment, 'till death forces upon them terrible conviction, that empty shadows and painted hopes fluttered and deluded them, and that they must now lye down under the keen anguishment of everlasting despair.—But they who are truly acquainted with God in Christ, have recourse to Him, and fix upon Him by faith and love, as the original and eternal fountain of *blessedness*, as well as of being: not only everlastingly *self-sufficient* for his own being and blessedness; but also, the *all-sufficient* spring of blessedness unto them forever. They know God in Christ full of love, full of treasures of blessedness, full of power to preserve them, full of grace to transform them, full of fidelity to keep covenant with them, full of wisdom to conduct them, full of redemption to save them, full of glory for their absolute purity and everlasting joy. Under divine illuminations they see so much of holy beauty and excellence in God's nature, and glorious perfections shining in Christ, that they cannot but love Him above all things, and rejoice in him, with all the powers of their souls: the rays of the heavenly *Spirit*, plentifully issuing from Him, pervade the utmost parts of the soul, and copiously pouring in upon *them*, his sweetest consolations, they possess the preludes of fulness of future joy, and the

the first splendors of the *third heaven*. They now piously exult and delight, repose and solace their souls in the great I AM. They now perceive the knowlege of God in Christ, the scale of *paradise*, the key of the ark of the covenant, with which its treasures are unlocked, for a never-ceasing flow of divine joys and satisfactions from the infinite eternal ocean of life and blessedness in the Godhead.—The happy subjects of these divine views and sublime joys, are very sensible that no words can express the *blessedness* of 'nearness to God'—to *Him* they address themselves, saying, 'Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none on earth that I desire besides Thee.' They now understand the import of *Philip's* request, to our Lord, 'shew us the Father and it sufficeth us.' They are well and truly assured, that there is a knowlege of God, which affords satisfaction divine. Repeated views of divine glory, teach them, that according to the degree of knowlege, ordinarily, is the degree of divine joy and satisfaction—and that knowlege perfected, will give compleat and eternal satisfaction: where their hopes and desires run over with pleasure and earnestness to the perfection of all in *heaven*. 'As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness.'

6. A spiritual supernatural knowlege of God, is comprehensive of good and blessedness, for the subjects of it have their perseverance secured while they live—the reception of their soul to heaven at death—(unstung) a glorious resurrection

tion at the *last day*, and a blessed eternity. This topic of argument affords variety and large compass of thought—issuing in that eternal life of blessedness, of which our Lord spake, saying, ‘This is life eternal, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.’ But private meditation must enlarge here—for I perceive the time is elapsed.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

USE I. If loss and gain are proportioned by knowlege and ignorance of God, then it concerns, greatly concerns us, to be serious, strict and impartial in the examination of ourselves, whether we spiritually know God, or not. If you read the holy scriptures with any tolerable degree of attention, you must needs observe distinction made between *knowlege* and *knowlege*,—that they speak of the *form*, and of the *savour* of knowlege. That there is a spiritual and supernatural knowlege of God, Christ, and divine things, that is spoken of as peculiar to the *saints* or true believers; which natural men have nothing of, nor can have as such. Saints are spoken of as having a *spiritual understanding**—as having the knowlege of God’s glory by his shining into their hearts—as beholding his glory and being changed into his image by his Spirit.—Unregenerate natural men are spoken of as incapable of discerning spiritual things†—as not having seen, nor known God—that to them the gospel is hid

* Col. 1. 9.

† 1 Cor. 2. 14.

hid—that they are dead and blind—dead and blind as to a sight and sense of the glory of God’s moral character, and the supreme beauty and holy loveliness of divine things. Such is the native blindness of the mind, that we are in eminent danger of deception about the knowlege of God. No doubt multitudes rest in a meer doctrinal and speculative knowlege of God, and divine things—they may see truth *rationaly*, and yet not see it *spiritually*. Many deceive themselves by taking a common, for a saving illumination of the holy Spirit. How is it with you my hearers, (or readers) have you that knowlege of God which I have spoken of as immensely gainful, comprehensive of all good and blessedness?—I beseech you by all the blessedness inwrapt in *this knowlege*; and by all the loss and misery included in the want of it, that you enter upon an accurate scrutiny and strict examination of yourselves, what your knowlege of God is. Seriously consider that you are now acting for eternity, and that your everlasting life and happiness turn upon this hinge, namely, your knowlege of God in Christ. If you are capable of attention to the most interesting and important concernment that ever your mind turned a thought upon, or possibly can, attend to this business and duty of examination. That I may afford you some assistance and befriend you in the work—I will present to view some of the concomitants and effects of a spiritual sight of divine glory, in addition to, and connexion with, what has already been said of the native effects thereof. Here

dential and convincing that 'tis the gospel of the blessed God. Hence that of the apostle, 'For our gospel came to you, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.*' Men may hold the great doctrines of the gospel as matters of opinion, talk of them by rote, and according to what they have read, and heard from others; but those who are divinely enlightened, have a spiritual conviction of the truth of the great things of the gospel, as seeing God and glory in them, so that they become to them certain divine realities—which are full of *weight, power and influence*, to command their hearts and govern their lives: therefore they can testify that they have seen the truth of what they assert. 'We speak that we do know, and *testify* that we have seen.' 'And I saw, and bear record, that this is the Son of God.' 'Now we believe—and know indeed this is the Christ.'—Thus, 'he that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself.' I beseech you, admit the application, while interrogated, what reply can you make to these things?—Do you thus know God, Jesus Christ, and things divine?

I proceed, if you spiritually know God in Christ, you see your own infinite vileness, and are acquainted with self-abasement, self-loathing, and self-nothingness before him. You never see so much of your own vileness and contrariety to the infinite purity of the divine nature, as

* 1 Thess. 1. 5.

when you have the clearest manifestations of divine glory. I grant indeed, that the young convert under the first saving illuminations, may be so taken up with viewing the perfection of Christ's righteousness to justify, and the infinite excellence and eternal safety of the way of salvation by Him, and various new glories opening to sight, which engage his attention, that for a time, a sight and sense of sin and vileness is not so full and clear as afterwards. But time and experience serve to evince, that the more clearly we behold the glory of God, the more we see of our own defilement, and want of conformity to his moral excellences. When the enlightened soul beholds God in the glory of his inflexible justice and infinite holiness, it even trembles before the bright and pure flame, and is seized with the deepest abasement in the view of its own infinite unlikeness to that spotless rectitude and perfection. It now cries out with those worshiping seraphims, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts.'—And joins with *Isaiab*, the worshiping saint, in that humble language,— 'Wo is me, for I am a man of unclean lips.' Now the saint abhors and loaths himself, for self-wisdom, self strength, self-righteousness, self-ends—for sinful self, in every point of view, saying now mine eye sees thy glory, 'I abhor myself in dust and ashes.' Beholding the transcendent goodness, love, and grace of God in Jesus Christ, the soul is abashed and confounded, stands dumb and speechless, at the sight of its

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own cursed ingratitude and base returns to him—is filled with indignation at itself, and a self-loathing for violating infinite obligations to him. Now the soul sees every blemish, every defilement, and the abomination there is in all **sin**, more sensibly than ever, as in the light of God's perfection. Sin appears infinitely contrary to all that is in God, to his holiness, to his glory, to his justice, and to his grace, and becomes infinitely odious. And while the soul sees him upon a seat of majesty, and has realizing views of his immensity, his self-original, his supremacy, and eternal excellence, O, how it **sinks**, as it were, into nothing! and feels itself less than an atom, in the view of the great I AM. Now, my friends, is your knowledge of the God of glory effective of these things?

Again, if you truly know God, and are acquainted with him, you thereby know real mortification to this world. The grass withers, the flower fades, and created beauties with their little glimmerings disappear and vanish when 'the glory of the Lord is revealed.' When you get so near to heaven, as a spiritual sight of God's glory will assuredly bring you, this earth is so small a point, that it cannot be seen:—a present God, unfolding his glory to view, will drive time objects afar off—and command the world to utter absence. This carries the soul on high, makes it ascend mount *Nebo*, and *Pisgab*, and from thence it descends, by faith's sagacity, the promised glories of the immortal sanctuary above.

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so as to become mortified and dead to all enjoyments here below, in point of satisfaction.—That which the men of the world so warmly pursue, and spare not to damn their souls for, appears but a pitiful worthless thing in the view of them that see divine glory, and know those treasures of love and sweetness, those heaps of excellences that are stored up in God. They see the glory of God in and by the *cross* of Christ, and by the *cross* of Christ they are crucified to the world, and the world to them.—They look upon the world only as a fleeting shadow; upon heaven and glory, God and eternity, as the greatest realities, and infinitely most worthy of their highest valuation. The reason why people are so inordinately in love with this world and so sordidly attached to it, is because they know not God:—they who know God to be great and glorious, see every thing below him little. A spiritual sight of his infinite greatness and glory, swallows up all the imaginary glories of the world, as the sun in the heaven extinguishes the light of the stars. Examine we then, whether our knowledge of God does thus operate?

Moreover, holy admiration and undissembled praise will natively flow from a spiritual knowledge of God. When God appears upon a throne of majesty, as *self-sufficient* and the first of beings, the unmeasurable fountain of being, perfection, and blessedness—and is seen in the glory of his *all-sufficiency*, as giving being to all things—in the glory of his infinite *supremacy*, as the supreme

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preme of beings,—and the soul has realizing views of his infinite knowlege and holiness, his boundless goodness, his independency and ubiquity, its holy wonder and undisssembled praise, rise with astonishment at the transcendent height of infinite glory, and gracious condescending notice such a GOD takes of such a nothing. ‘ Lord, what is man (will the soul say) that thou takest knowlege of him! or the son of man, that thou makest account of him!’ That I who was plunged in darkness, guilt and misery, helpless and hopeless in myself, not deserving a beam from his face, nor a crumb of hidden manna from his bounty; meriting by my sin the full flames of hell, and his flaming vengeance forever, that this God thro’ his Son the Mediator, should give me the full sunshine of his presence, the seal of his infinite eternal love, and the first fruits of heaven, lo, here is the wonder of wonders! grace! grace! *Amen, Hallelujah.* I am be-marvelled with mercy, I am silenced with wonder, and must sit down with astonishment; for I cannot utter the praises of Jehovah as I ought. My friends, who can behold such manner of dispensation, and remain dispassionate, unmoved, unimpressed?—Is it possible to view the boundless goodness of God, in the manifestation of his glory, and not be filled with an overflowing admiration and amazement, associated with utmost gratitude, at the inexhaustible stores and treasures of the riches of that goodness, and the height, and length, and depth, and breadth

breadth of grace and love which passeth knowlege? Will the infinitely great and glorious God, ‘ who inhabiteth eternity, the high and lofty one, who dwelleth in his high and holy place,’ indeed make known himself to, and dwell with man on earth! ‘Tis a truth, but an astonishing one! justly calling for, and challenging our admiration, and our praise.

I add, if you truly know God, as seeing his glory in Christ, your knowlege is practical—it will influence you to live to, and act for his glory. ‘ Without knowlege the soul cannot be good;’ nor will meer knowlege if the heart remain unchanged, and the life unreformed; be any thing but bare speculation; an useless and unprofitable thing. The devils have light and knowlege; but have no holy practice. All the knowlege in the world, all the light that can shine into the heart, if it rest idly there, makes no man the better man, or Christian. There is a mighty power and efficacy in a spiritual knowlege of God, influencing the subject of it, to endeavor a universal conformity to the divine precepts—and to pursue holy practice with the highest earnestness and diligence—persisting therein to the end of life. They who are acquainted with God, are acquainted with delightful evangelical obedience—flowing from the noble principles of faith and love, directed by divine rules, with an ultimate view to the divine glory. All pretences to the knowlege of God, without such obedience, are vain, and grossly delusive. The
apostle

apostle is express—' He that doeth evil, hath not seen God.'

I add, They who are truly acquainted with God, are acquainted with strong desires, that others may be brought to the like saving knowledge of him. They see God to be the supreme good, rightful Lord and sovereign, infinitely worthy of superlative love, and universal obedience:—They see that in him are inexhaustible treasures of goodness and grace, that he imparts and communicates with a divine freedom—they know that the blessedness of man consists in the knowledge of him, conformity to him, and the fruition of him—that *heaven* is inwrought in his smile, and *hell* in his frown:—They argue from the less to the greater, if there is so much unutterable happiness in the enjoyment of communion with God, in the present twilight state of imperfection in grace, what will open vision, perfect conformity, and full fruition be?—Hence the most benevolent and vehement desires arise in their souls after the eternal salvation of others:—They travel in birth for the formation of the amiable image of Christ in them—they find the native language of holy *David*, is now theirs, saying,—' come and taste, and see, that the Lord is good and gracious:—' The Spirit and the bride say come.'—But inasmuch as I have before touched upon some of *these effects*—and in that the time would fail to enlarge, I shall at present only add here,

LASTLY,

LASTLY, Those who spiritually and truly know God in Christ, find that the more they know of him, the more divine comfort, and the more abundantly they have spiritual longing of soul excited in them, after increasing knowledge, conformity to, and the enjoyment of him. They well know there is that in the enjoyment of God, which is of a soul-satisfying nature, and divinely comforting—that the more they know of God, the more they are refreshed and comforted, and the more they yet thirst, and breathe out their very souls in longings after conformity to God in holiness, and the delightful enjoyment of him. When their minds see the reality of the infinitely amiable and glorious attributes of God, they feel an inconceivable delight and satisfaction in that boundless ocean of good and perfection, and do as it were expand, open and stretch forth themselves, to grasp as much of it as they can take in—even to be filled with the fulness, with *all* the fulness of God. They are not content with any supposed measures of attainment, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort: But, ' forgetting those things which are behind, they reach forth unto those things which are before, and press toward the mark of perfection.'—Each one crying out in himself, ' O when shall I come and appear before God! ' Oh when will God come and appear gloriously to me and in me! Who will deliver me from this body of death! O that mortality were swallowed up of life! Now, my friends, do you find *these ef-*

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feels and *attendants* of your knowlege of God? Do you experimentally know these things, and do they abound in you? If so, you may draw this comfortable conclusion, that you have that spiritual knowlege of God in Christ, which is comprehensive of all good and blessedness.

USE II. From what we have heard, we are led to see the true nature of the *christian religion*, and how sadly mistaken many are, in point of knowlege.—Religion is a thing of the greatest importance in the world; yet it seems to be the least known of any thing.—There are many controversies and warm disputes about it, and but little of it in the world at the same time. While the learned contest, for what each *party* calls truth and orthodoxy, multitudes are amused and kept in a fluctuating state of mind;—some become *sceptical* and *deistical*—some fix upon bare morality as safest, absurdly supposing 'tis no matter what a man's principles are, if he is but honest in them and outwardly moral, and so has a good life;—just as if a man may have true religion, tho' he has no right apprehensions of God, and have a good life, while he has a rotten unregenerate heart, full of enmity against God and his *law*—'or just as if a corrupt tree, brings forth good fruit.' However people divide in opinion, as to some *circumstantials* in religion—there are some *fundamental* truths which all the various denominations of professing christians must be united in, as ever they would have a *good hope* of being saved. Without vain boasting,

I may boldly assert, such are the *truths* we have now been hearing. These truths in sum and substance must be experimentally known, and truly believed, or we cannot be finally saved. That scheme of religion which does not include these things in it, must necessarily fall, and fail its fond votaries forever. Whereas they who truly know *these things*, have eternal life in them. Here then let us fix, come to an established point, and know what to depend upon, as to our everlasting *all*. Here is no ground for just complaint of over curious speculation—or abstruse nicety of metaphysical distinction—*these* are plain *Bible* truths. Let us now briefly compendize, as it were, in one view, what has been more largely explained. True religion comprehends in it the knowlege of the mystery of God, and of Christ in the light of grace. Jesus Christ must be the foundation and at the bottom of our religion—'for other foundation can no man lay.' We must see and know God, as exhibiting his glorious perfections to view, in and by the person & mediation of Christ.—In Him, 'God is reconciling the world unto himself;' in Him then, and no where else is he to be known to saving purpose:—and that as he is the representative image of God the Father. 'Tis not then to know God as a philosopher may know somewhat of him, speculating upon the glory of his creating and governing perfections; but 'tis to see him in the glory of his redeeming attributes manifested in
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the face or person of Christ. Nor is it to know God as the learned *Rabbi* setting with the *scriptures* before him, speculating by the aid of reason only, and resting in theory, how large soever in latitude; but 'tis to know God in Christ spiritually and supernaturally—to know him by the aid and illumination of the holy Spirit—by light shining into the heart to give the knowlege of divine glory—by beholding and being changed—'by the Spirit.' 'Tis so to know as to have a sense and relish of moral beauty and the holy loveliness of God's glorious perfections:—'Tis a knowlege with all those effects, which the gospel assures us, will natively result therefrom. In connection herewith we may include all the good and blessedness comprehended in, and annexed to such knowlege:—And upon the whole we may say, these things are eminently the glory of the christian religion—the life and soul of it, that wherein it differs from, and infinitely excels whatever any false religion pretends unto:—and a departure from *these things* is the highest *degeneracy* from the mystery and glory of the christian religion:—the real want or absence of *them*, is the cause why the knowlege and profession of the truth, with very many, is so *fruitless, inefficacious and useless*.

Use III. From what we have now heard, we may infer, that ministers of the gospel may, and verily ought, in the course of their preaching, to insist very much upon the agency and operations of the holy Spirit, in the business of religion—

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and that God's people ought to pray much for the divine influences. We have heard there is no saving knowlege of God, nor blessedness for man, without the agency and operation of the holy Spirit—therefore, as ever we would give due honor to him—and promote the Redeemer's kingdom among men, we ought to insist much upon the necessity, the excellency, and advantage of *his* powerful and sacred *ministration*. We should bear this *truth* about with us, in our hearts, in all our prayers, in all our preaching, and in all our conversation, that nothing will be done to purpose, in the affair of man's eternal salvation, without the agency and influences of the holy Spirit. In the present case it does not, and must not suffice, to give the *single, cold and casual* hint, concerning the *holy Spirit*, his office and agency in the *application* of redemption.—When the influences of the holy Spirit are left out of our divinity, or treated with a cold neglect, can we hope for a divine blessing to attend us in such a way of ministration? Surely we cannot.—The *Spirit's* honor is concerned to blast such *defective performances*—and we are likely to waste our breath in vain.—Is not this one great thing that has quenched and grieved him, and even provoked him to manifest his awful, but just, resentment, by suspending his sacred influences, that he has no more honor given him, in our prayers, and in our sermons?—If we honor him, he will honor us; but if we despise or neglect him, what can we expect, but

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to be lightly esteemed.—Inasmuch as all saving knowlege, and all substantial good and blessedness depends upon the agency and influence of the divine Spirit, the Lord's people ought to pray fervently and incessantly for his influences in behalf of themselves and others. The Spirit of God is the chief of the blessings, that are the subject-matter of a christian prayer; for it is the sum of all spiritual blessings; which are those that we need infinitely more than all others, & are those wherein our true and eternal happiness consists. When the disciples came to Christ, and desired him to teach them to pray, he directed them to pray for the Holy Ghost—'If ye being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?' Plainly importing that the holy Spirit is the sum of all blessings we are to pray for—and also that there is no blessing we have so great encouragement to pray for, as the Spirit of God. 'Tis abundantly evident from a variety of scriptures, that God makes the prayers of his people a means through which he executes the purposes of his mercy toward *Zion*—and it appears by countless prophecies and promises, that the latter-day glory is to be ushered into the *church, and world*, in answer to the earnest incessant prayers of God's people.—In this view of things, how ought they to pray—'giving the Lord no rest,' 'till he comes.

USE IV.

USE IV. Hence we see the love of God to believers—and their infinite obligations to the adorable *Trinity* for manifestations of the divine glory.—According to the divine œconomy, there is a certain method and order of proceeding in the work of our salvation, mutually agreed upon by the Father, Son, and Spirit, whereby each person takes and performs his proper part. I need not stand here, to handle this great fundamental point, 'That in the essence and nature of our one God, there are found a plurality of persons:' I mean only to observe, that the three persons in the God-head have undertaken distinct offices, or bear their several parts, in the work of our salvation. God resolving to manifest all that was in himself, and to be glorified as God to the utmost, these three glorious persons designed and contrived such works as should severally, and apart, serve to make known, that there were three persons, as well as several attributes. These three persons chose the work of our salvation above all their other works, wherein to make known such a distinct discovery of themselves, each having a peculiar proper hand in our salvation: and each of these three persons will have their love distinctly considered, and their several work, which manifests their love distinctly viewed and acknowledged by believers. In the preceeding discourse, we have heard of 'the great mystery of godliness,' the person of the Son incarnate—representing in and by his person and mediation, the glorious perfections

fections of God—that a spiritual knowlege of these glorious perfections, is by the illumination of the holy Spirit. Now, the assumption of human nature by the Son, that thereby divine glory might be exhibited to view, was by the ordination and appointment of the Father, and by the voluntary susception of the Son—and in that the holy Spirit illuminates believers, that they may behold the divine glory; we have herein all persons of the adorable Trinity at work for the salvation of believers—and manifesting their love to them. God's intent in the gospel is as well to set up and magnify the three Persons in the believers heart, as his attributes, and the riches of his grace and mercy in common.—Therefore we find the apostles, at times, presenting to the believer's view, what in a more particular manner, the divine Father has done for him—what the divine Son, and what the divine Spirit,—and how the love of each divine Person is therein manifested. The divine Father's love in electing the believer, in laying out all the blessings he shall have in Christ, in choosing, appointing and calling Christ to die for him, in giving Christ to him, and him to Christ, and in imputing the death of Christ to him:—The love of the divine Son, in his work, in giving himself, and that so willingly, in having an eye to him, and suffering for him, when he hung on the cross:—The work and love of the divine Spirit, to the believer, in renovation, sanctification, consolation, and preparation for heaven.—

Thus

Thus we have a distinct discovery of the love of all the three Persons in their several workings, and contributing to the work of our salvation. The sum of this œconomy and dispensation may be expressed thus, viz. The Father chooses, the Son redeems by his blood, the Spirit sanctifies, or applies and perfects the redemption.* All is done by the Father, Son, and Spirit, according to their order of subsistence, and according to mutual agreement among themselves. The reasons why the three persons chose this work of our salvation, above all their works, wherein to make such a distinct discovery of themselves, seem to have been, because as the mystery of the Trinity, is the highest of all things to be known of God; so man's salvation was the chiefest of all his works, therefore the greatest stage to display his glory on. In this œconomy and dispensation the love of each Person is manifested, and believers in special infinitely obliged unto each Person, and bound to praise and glorify them accordingly. Come then, ye divinely enlightened souls, ye saints of the *Most High*, come *view* the distinct agencies of the three glorious Persons in your salvation, and *feel* the mighty force of obligation! Their emblazon'd coat of arms is held up to view, to be admired and acknowledged. Behold, all Persons of the adorable Trinity, by an ineffable union, and blessed co-operation, engaged to promote your eternal salvation! the Father in election, the

* 1 Pet. 1. 2.

the Son in redemption and justification, the Holy Ghost in sanctification and application : Behold, and acknowlege the infinite overflowing love of God therein. See how, in the affair of your salvation, God hath loved you with all that is within him ; content nor satisfied was he, to shew forth all his attributes therein, and thereby manifested unto us, but he would have the *Persons* also set at work, and employed therein, and thereby manifested unto us. Oh, love beyond degrees ! and obligation to praise and glorify infinite ! ‘ Bless the Lord, oh our souls, and all within us, bless his holy name,’ let nothing be untuned or unstruck in this concert ! What praises, in sublimer strains than *Gabriel* songs, are forever due to the adorable Trinity, for infinite excellence, and infinite love manifested ? The seraphs have their doxology to the sacred *Trinity*, ‘ Holy, holy, holy, is *Jehovah* of hosts.’ —The primitive christians abounded in doxologies to God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and so should we. Before I dismiss this use, shall I dart a thought forward, and tell you, believers, you will be made very welcome, when you come to heaven ? For each *Person* will love his work in you. Methinks, (as to the matter of it) the divine Father will say, this is a soul which I chose from everlasting, and set my heart upon so long ago :—Saith Christ, this is a soul I represented and shed my blood for on the cross :—And saith the Spirit, I have taken infinite pains with it to prepare, keep, and bring it to this.

And

And thus all rejoice and glory in it, and will forever :—and involve our consummate eternal salvation, with *their* own infinite eternal glory.

UES V. Hence we learn, that the day of saving illumination and conversion is a soul-enriching, soul-happifying, blessed-making day to the sinner—worthy to be perpetually remembered. In this day the person becomes possessor of that knowlege, which in its nature and quality is most excellent—is pardoned and adjudged righteous to eternal life—adopted into God’s family—conformed to his moral excellences—interested in an infinity of divine perfections, and in the divine subsistences—rejoices in God, and has a firm title to eternal life.—Oh, blessed-making day ! How immense the gain ! The birth-day this, of eternal glory ! This the day in which ‘ the fowler’s snare is broken—the prey taken from the mighty’—the empire of satan destroyed in the soul, and the empire of King Jesus erected. This is the day of espousal—the day of gladness and joy—the day in which the sinner is transformed into the image of the Son of God, and translated from his native state of sin and misery, to a state of holiness and happiness, from unbelief to faith, from guilt and condemnation to pardon and justification, from the bondage of corruption to the glorious liberty of the sons of God, from loathsome filthiness of flesh and spirit to sanctification and honor, from impotence to strength, from death to life, and, as it were, from hell to heaven.—

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The day worthy to be had in everlasting remembrance.—But the time fails, omitting various uses—I shall now conclude by way of particular address—

FIRST, To the people of God, truly acquainted with him. I congratulate you in bliss—I give you joy—Hail happy souls! In the name of the Lord I pronounce you blessed! I bring you good news to-day—You must die, in order to the more full knowlege of your blessedness, that you may be knowing of it to all eternity. What if the essential powers of your souls shall be forever stretching themselves on all sides, and forever drinking in larger measures of glory?—What if you shall find an eternal advance of your heaven?—The Godhead is an infinite ocean of life and blessedness, and finite vessels may be forever enlarging, and forever filling in that sea of all-sufficiency:—and there shall not be the least diminution by imparting—nor shall the souls of the redeemed ever be nearer than at an infinite remove from comprehension.—Mean while, O ye saints! be pressing forward after more clear transforming views of boundless divine glory. Your God is infinitely equal to encreasing acquaintance—and much more may be known of him in the present state than many of his children conceive. I know many of his people, who long since their first acquaintance with him, did not apprehend so much of him, would ever be known and enjoyed in the present life, as they are now assured may be by their own

own happy experience. I am fearing some of you don't know at what a high rate you may live with heaven, while here upon earth. Aspire after the fullest measures of conformity to God, enjoyment of him, and assurances of his love. Let the weakest long to be as *David*, and the *David's* as the angel of the Lord before him. 'Tis no fault to desire to be as good, as holy, as happy as an angel of God. Awake, arise, O ye saints! There is infinitely much more in God, pursue after it, 'till you have gotten as much as a created being can receive.—As acquainted with the glorious all-sufficient Jehovah, have recourse to him and converse with him, at all times, and upon all occasions—live upon him, and grow great in him—and so walk before and with him, as that others may be induced to glorify him. Do all you can in your proper spheres to bring others into acquaintance with your God. You live surrounded with thousands of perishing immortals, who know not, nor *will* to know God in Christ. Alas, for them! they are going with dreadful precipitancy to the burning lake—to the pit of darkness—to darkness without light—to pain without ease—and to sorrow without joy, and know it not. O pity them! and pray, pray hard, for them—as *Elijah* for his servant, that their eyes may be opened.—Pray much for the latter-day glory. Pray, rejoice, and praise evermore. Take the comfort of what God has done for you, and give him the glory. Adore the mystery of the *incarnation*, and

and bless God *incarnate*; for this is the ground of all your saving knowlege, and of all your blessedness. Hold in view, and long for the perfection and felicity of the sanctuary of immortality. For the open vision and fruition of God in glory, and a participation of those ever encreasing glories and wonders, which will forever excite the freshest efforts of the most exalted love and praise:—To which let your souls say, *amen*, and join the everlasting HALLELUJAHs!

SECONDLY, To sinners in a state of security. It may justly seem wonderful that there should be any of this character in a christian assembly; yet 'tis to be feared some such there are. Ye stupid immortals, what, brought up among *bibles* and ministers all your days, and yet unmindful of your immortal concerns! Your stupidity is enough to strike every human breast with trembling awe, and the whole creation with deep surprize! How can you forget those things for which you have a memory given you? Forget the eternal God, eternal joy, eternal woe, and that just *law*, by the sanction of which you are condemned to be burnt in a fire that is eternal! Great is the sinfulness of your present security, as it implies in it, the vilest injustice, rebellion, and presumption—and proceeds from the accursed principles of infidelity and enmity against God—and horribly reflects upon all his infinite attributes. It is absolutely inexcusable, and extreme folly, even to madness and distraction.

tion. Your sins rival the stars for multitude, are red as crimson in their aggravations, have brought the wrath and curse of God upon you—and expose you every moment to be struck dead and damned at once, and that most aggravatedly, as well as eternally. Poor secure sinner, 'tis surely high time to awake out of sleep, for your damnation slumbers not. Acquaint now yourself with God, and become reconciled to him, or expect to know him as an irresistible, omnipotent, everlasting enemy. I beseech you to repeat a few words after me, secure sinner,—if I sleep on in security a little longer, without acquaintance with God, how shall I meet death?—Let me give the answer, sinner,—You will meet death—that king of terrors to nature, in all the forms of terror and overwhelming amazement! O my soul, what will the day of eternal judgment be to thee, if thou sleepest on estranged from God? I will tell thee, sinner, it will be the day of vindictive justice—the day to hear the dire *anathema*, the thunder of almighty vengeance—'depart ye cursed.'—O eternity, eternity, eternity, what wilt thou be to me, if I sleep on a little longer in sin, without acquaintance with God! Let eternity answer, an eternity of misery, misery, unspeakable misery! What say you, sinner, are you willing to be miserable, compleatly miserable, and forever so? Eternity in misery, no end to loss, no end to torment, is all despair? O this is the Hell of Hell! Awake, awake, and flee from the wrath

to come! You who are young people, in sin and security, I presume, you intend to become serious and pious in some future time, that is, you flatter yourselves so.—But let me tell you, this is the beaten road to hell: No doubt thousands now in hell once had the same intention you now have. What if death should cut you down between the present *now*, and that period of time in which you intend to become religious? You give up the ghost, and where are you? Dare not to risque your eternal all on fleeting breath; but now acquaint yourselves with God, even to-day, for to-morrow may be too late forever. Ye ungodly sinners of every age and order, by the dread authority of the eternal God, by the terrors of death, and the final judgment Day, by the joys of heaven, and the torments of hell, and by the value of your immortal souls, I intreat, I charge, I adjure you, to awake out of your security, and arise from the dead, and acquaint yourselves with God in Christ.

THIRDLY, To awakened Sinners.—Some such I am willing to hope there are, who have conviction of sin and guilt, misery and danger, making the all-important inquiry ‘Sirs, what must we do to be saved?’ Now is your time if ever to become acquainted with God—~~now~~ while his Spirit is striving with you, by convictions and admonitions of conscience. ‘Tis the office and province of the holy Spirit to convince of sin, righteousness, and judgment—and

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make *application* of redemption. A work this of equal necessity as that of impetration or procurement. Here neither the word written, nor the word preached, nor ordinances, nor providences are adequate causes in themselves; but intirely depend on the action of a superior cause, for all their success and efficacy. Where the holy Spirit suspends his gracious presence, there is all weakness, and darkness, and deadness, in the souls of men:—but where he divinely exerts the powers of his office and the perfections of his nature, there is proportionable strength, light, and life. He can do all his pleasure without controul; however he strives with sinners for a limited time only, and being *resisted* and *grieved* he often withdraws his forfeited presence, and righteously gives them up into the hand of their own counsel. And if he departs with a resolve to return no more, strictly speaking, the sinner’s day of grace is over and gone forever. ‘Tis therefore of infinite moment to awakened sinners now to become reconciled to God through Christ. There must be no interposing delay in an affair of such infinite and eternal consequence! Now ‘the Spirit and the bride say, come, and let him that heareth say, come.’—Will you, can you, dare you dash gospel offers back in the face of heaven? ‘Tis infinitely perilous! Now you will likely make or break for an endless eternity: As your convictions issue, so will your state probably be forever. Is it possible for you,

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who

who are convinced of your shameful folly, and hateful impiety, in that you have ran away (with the prodigal) from the Father of mercies, to feed on swines husks—who see all created good infinitely incapable to felicity your souls—who find and feel you must have God for your almighty friend, portion and happiness—who see his justice in dooming of you to flaming ruin forever—who are convinced you must be changed, or must be damned eternally—I say, is it possible for you to hesitate one moment, whether you will be happy or miserable for an endless evermore?—How long will you stand halting between two?—How long will you go on to despise God, and refuse his love, and all the blessedness of acquaintance and peace with him?—Why will you longer make light of that, which you can't possibly over-value? Now the great and mighty Monarch of Heaven freely tenders you an alliance and acquaintance with himself—and a marriage union with his Son,—for which 'all things are now ready.'—The heavenly Bridegroom, the King of Glory, is come:—Behold, He is come, and now knocks at the door—'Lift up your heads ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory will come in!' Give him the empire in your hearts, ye perishing sinners, and crown him with the honor of your eternal salvation.—In a word, to conclude, I have now, my dear hearers, set life and death, the blessing and the curse before you.—Next to the glory of
God,

God, and the honor of Christ our Lord, I have done it to the end, that saints may have increasing views of their blessedness, and their obligations to the *triune* God; and that sinners may be drawn to the acceptation of gospel offers of salvation. But how infinitely short must all descriptions fall of the importance and excellence of knowing God in Christ? May you and I, who speak and hear of these things, may every soul of us be made so happy, as to have the Father of lights beaming into us with the knowlege of his glory in the face of Christ, and learn the extent and glory of this blessedness, by sweet and everlasting experience.

AMEN and AMEN.

