

GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,

I N

BECOMING POOR FOR MEN,

DISPLAYED AND ENFORCED

I N

A CHARITY SERMON preached

I N

THE FRENCH PROTESTANT CHURCH,

I N

NEW-YORK, *December 27, 1773.*

By ABRAHAM KETELTAS, A. M.

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TH E great mystery of godliness according to St. Paul, is God manifested in the flesh, and suffering to redeem a fallen world. This was the grand important truth, contained in the original promise made to our first parents, typify'd by all the ceremonies and sacrifices of the Mosaic oeconomy, and predicted by all the prophets. This which has been the delightful subject of the author's contemplation and ministerial labours, is the principal topic of the ensuing discourse which is now presented to the public by particular request. If this feeble attempt to lisp the great redeemer's praise, may through the grace of God be happily instrumental, in raising honourable thoughts of him, in the minds of men, and shedding abroad his love in their hearts. If it should be the means of exciting penitential remorse and true holiness in the souls of impenitent sinners, and enflaming the gratitude of every sincere christian to his dying saviour, finally, if it may tend to advance the interests of virtue, destroy the empire of sin, and promote a charitable, catholic, and benevolent disposition, the author will rejoice that he has not herein laboured in vain.

Jamaica, Feb. 25, 1774.

A. KETELTAS.



2 CORINTHIANS viii. 9.

For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

NO disposition is more amiable in itself, none more attracts the regard, esteem, and admiration of mankind, than that which prompts a person to sacrifice his ease, his comfort, his reputation, and his life, for the welfare of his friends and country. I could easily relate a number of instances from sacred and profane history to confirm the truth of this observation. I will only mention one, taken from the inspired volume; which is that of **MOSES THE CELEBRATED LAWGIVER AND LEADER OF THE JEWS**. This great and illustrious personage drawn out of the river **NILE**, by the daughter of Pharaoh, was by her adopted and introduced into all the luxury, splendour and magnificence of her father's court. Here he was raised to an almost *regal dignity*, and enjoyed all the pleasures, delicacies, riches and honours of human life. Here he was surrounded, flattered and served by obsequious and submissive nobles, and enjoyed the company of wise and learned men, for which **EGYPT** was famous. Here he at once possessed the delights of sense, the sweets of philosophy, the charms of human literature and the glories of earthly grandeur. Here he enjoyed **ALL** that ambition could desire, or royal bounty could bestow. But did Moses content himself with this great variety of sublunary bliss? Did he rest satisfied with the charms and allurements of Egypt? No, *Moses, although come to years* (when ambition is strongest) *refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and choose rather to suffer affliction for the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sense for a season*. Animated with love, and influenced by compassion to his suffering brethren, he magnanimously renounced the pleasures of life, and the splendour of Pharaoh's court for a state of distress, pain and

reproach, he renounced the ease, the opulence, and the delights of a palace, for the indigence, difficulties, and horrors of a waste and howling wilderness. Nay so great and disinterested was the love of Moses for his brethren, that he not only deny'd himself the comforts and chearfully submitted to the miseries of human life, but was willing to be rejected with his family, and to become a poor outcast and vagabond for their sake. When Jehovah threatned to reject the rebellious Israelites. How earnestly did Moses plead for them? With what tears of love and compassion, did he deprecate the divine judgments, and implore his maker's forgiveness in their behalf? After they had affronted their infinite benefactor in the most outrageous manner, by paying their homage, praise and adoration to a golden calf, and he was ready to extirpate their remembrance from the face of the earth: Moses interceded for them, saying, *O Lord! this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold, yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin, and if not, blot me I pray thee out of thy book which thou hast written.* Was ever love to mankind stronger, and more disinterested? Was ever benevolence nobler and more exalted than that of Moses? Yes my brethren, I can direct your thoughts to a much more exalted, an infinitely sublimer love, to a benevolence inconceivably more noble and disinterested, a benevolence which not only eclipses that of Moses, but obscures and infinitely transcends the united benevolence and kind offices of all the friends of the human race, and this is no other than that wondrous love, mentioned by the inspired apostle in my text, in which he thus addresses the Corinthians, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that tho' he was rich, yet, for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."

The chapter of which our text is a part, with the following, may be well called a charity sermon, for in it the main design of the apostle is to persuade the Corinthians to a liberal contribution, for the poor saints

at Jerufalem. In this fermon, the apoftle employs a variety of motives and arguments to excite them to this great and important duty. He exhorts them by the illuftrious example of the Macedonians who gave beyond their ability—By their own former promptnefs to beftow—By his commendation of their generofity, which he begged them not to difcredit, and thus make *him*, not to fay *themfelves* afhamed—By the confideration of the manna, which was diftributed to all alike, and only profited fo far as it was employed, for immediate and neceffary ufes, but corrupted and fpoiled when hoarded up by the hand of avarice—By the fcanty harveft of him who fowed fparingly, and confequently by the greatnefs of the heavenly reward proportioned to the greatnefs of our charity and kind offices—By the obvious propriety and neceffity of the duty in order to prove our chriitian character—By the natural readinefs of every one to give alms, who is under the power of divine grace—By the thanks and prayers of thofe whom they relieved, which would procure for them the Almighty's bleffing—By the fpiritual favours God had fo liberally beftowed upon them—And by the promifes they had made to contribute to the neceffities of their poor fellow-chriftians.

All thefe arguments the apoftle employs to excite the Corinthians to liberality; but there is one argument more which he urges to this purpofe, which is more weighty than all the reft, which is more powerful than every other motive, and the moft efficacious fpring of all evangelical obedience, and that is the infinite benevolence of Chrift propofed for their contemplation and intimation in the text. For ye know, fays he, the grace of our Lord Jefus Chrift, that though he was rich, yet for your fakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. In difcourfing on thefe affecting aftonifhing words I fhall endeavour by divine affiftance

1. To give you a representation of the glorious perfon, whole transcendent kindnefs is celebrated in our

text

text, and explain to you the meaning of his being rich.

2. To display his amazing condescension, benevolence and grace, in becoming poor, although rich.

3. To consider the persons for whom this illustrious favour thus impoverished himself.

4. The advantages which result to them from his voluntary poverty, sufferings and condescension.

Lastly. The use we ought to make of these stupendous truths, and the influence they ought to have upon our hearts and conduct.

And God grant that I may so speak, and you may so hear, that those who have hitherto remained unmoved by, may now savingly feel the all-powerful constraints of their redeemer's love; and that those who are his true disciples may grow and increase in grace, and in the knowledge and esteem of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

I. Then I am to give you a representation of that glorious person, whose transcendent kindness is celebrated in the text, and explain to you the meaning of his being rich. But before I attempt this agreeable task, I beg leave to observe, that no created imagination can conceive, much less can a mortal tongue express, except in a very imperfect manner, the greatness, excellencies and glories of the divine redeemer. They are all like his nature, infinite, and therefore cannot be measured or displayed by a finite hand, they can only be measured by him who measureth the sea in the hollow of his hand. The saints in glory who have heard the liveliest and justest descriptions of Immanuel upon earth, are constrained to acknowledge, as the Queen of Sheba did with regard to Solomon; the one half of his divine character has not been told us, what do I say? the one half, the thousandth part of our redeemer's glories, cannot be exhibited upon earth. When we shall come to see him face to face, in the mansions of bliss, with what tumults of melting gratitude? With what transports of inexpressible admiration shall we not cry

out? Is this he who loved me and died for me? Did such a God die for such a worm? O stupendous condescension! Vast, unparalleled infinite grace and benevolence. The apostle in our text styles this adorable person, our Lord Jesus Christ, each of these titles if fully explained, might afford matter sufficient for a discourse, but I shall not enlarge upon these points; a brief illustration of them, is all the present occasion will permit.

The word Jesus, is equivalent to the Hebrew name of Joshua, which signifies a saviour, and was given to our redeemer by the angel, as the properest to manifest the design of his incarnation, which was to save penitent and believing sinners. *Ye shall call his name Jesus* (says the angel) *For he shall save his people from their sins.* The name Christ here ascrib'd to our redeemer, is of the same import with the Hebrew word Messiah, which signifies anointed, and teaches us, that our blessed Immanuel was anointed by the father with the holy spirit, and solemnly consecrated, to be the prophet, priest, and king, of his church. The title Lord, signifies one who has power and authority over others, to prescribe laws for the rule of their conduct, call them to an account for their disobedience to his commands, reward the loyal, and punish the refractory and rebellious. Jesus Christ is Lord in the sublimest sense of the word, as he is our creator, our preserver, our redeemer, our lawgiver and our final judge. Christ, as our creator has the best right in us, and an uncontrollable authority over us; For what title can be so strong, as that of the creator to the creature, brought into existence by his infinite power. As our preserver he hath delivered our soul from death, our eyes from tears, and our feet, from falling. By the supplies of his providence, and by the exertions of his power, wisdom and goodness, he has nourished and brought us up as children, conferred upon us innumerable favours, and delivered us from dangers and destruction to which we have been continually exposed, and therefore

fore what vassal can belong to his sovereign by so firm an obligation, as we do to him? If we have a right to the slaves we raise, feed and cloath, how infinitely better a right has he in us, arising from his continual support and maintenance. He has not only created and preserved, but he has redeemed us by the infinite price of his own most precious blood. When we were the prisoners of divine justice, and so liable to death and everlasting damnation, he bought us, he laid down his life as a ransom for us, and therefore no slave whatever bought with money, is by infinite odds, so much the legal property of his master, as we are the acquired property of Christ by redemption. Moreover the blessed Jesus is the great lord chief justice of the universe, before whose tremendous bar, all the inhabitants of heaven and earth shall be arraigned, and by whose final sentence they shall be doomed to endless happiness or everlasting misery. What an infinitely, great and august personage is this, and how well doth he deserve the title not only of LORD, but of LORD of LORDS.

The word *Kurios*, *Dominus*, or *Lord*, is looked upon by some divines as signifying the same thing with the Hebrew word *Jehovah*, the incommunicable name of the eternal God, which is frequently ascribed to Jesus Christ in the Old Testament, and which imports the self-existence, independence, supreme power, uncontrollable efficacy and universal dominion of the most high, and is a title of such superlative excellence, that Augustus and Tiberius, both of them Roman Emperors, and the first the most powerful and universal earthly prince that ever sway'd a sceptre, refused to assume it to themselves, and by their public edicts, forbid the application of it to them upon any account whatever. Orrosius an antient historian, assigns this reason for those edicts, " Since Christ (says he) during
 " the reign of these two emperors had assumed our
 " nature, and actually lived amongst us, it was not
 " fitting any man should take upon him the name of
 " Lord, whilst the undoubted Lord of all mankind
 " was conversant here upon earth. That

God, none can doubt, who firmly believe, and properly understand, the inspired writings. There he is expressly stiled the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the almighty; and what more just and precise definition of the *self-existent deity* can we desire, than these remarkable and emphatical words?*

The apostle in our text asserts, concerning this divine person, that he was rich; this point I shall now endeavour to prove and explain to you from those authentic records concerning him, contained in the inspired volume, by which we are assured, that he possessed every thing great and excellent that can accompany wealth, or be procured by it, yea infinitely more.

1. *He was rich in all the perfections, attributes, and dignity of the divine nature.* In him dwells all the fullness of the godhead bodily, he is that word which was in the beginning with God, which was God, by whom all things were made, and without him not so much as a single being was brought into existence, he rounded in his hands those enormous globes that are fixed or revolve in the firmament, he bowl'd them flaming through the vast profound, and he exerts that constant and unremitting energy which is the life and support of the universe, he is the only wise God, as well as our saviour, his wisdom plan'd that vast, complicated stupendous system, the least part of which confounds the pride of human understanding, and astonishes the sublimest mortal mind. His wisdom plan'd all the laws of nature, and arrang'd the various parts of this beautiful creation, with such consummate skill, that to ex-

* *The sacred scriptures abound with a variety and multitude of proofs, that our Lord Jesus Christ is the supreme eternal God. In these infallible oracles, divine names, titles, attributes, honours, works, and worship, are ascribed unto him. And indeed if he had not been possessed of a nature properly divine he could not have executed the infinitely great, and important work of our redemption. If he had been a mere creature, he could not have merited eternal life for us, or procured us a release from everlasting misery by his suffering.*

plain the structure of the least considerable of them, and assign the reasons thereof, is the greatest effort of human sagacity. His power is vast and infinite, he measureth the wide extended watery world in the hollow of his hand, and meeteth out the vast circuit of the heavens with a span, he comprehendeth all the dust of the earth, all the solid contents of the terraqueous globe in a measure, he weigheth the enormous mountains in scales and the endless hills in a ballance. He fills immensity with his presence and nothing is hid from his all-seeing eye and where two or three are gathered together in his name he is present in the midst of them, the royal psalmist declares that of old he laid the foundations of the earth and that the heavens are the works of his hands, that they shall perish, but that he shall endure, that they all shall wax old as doth a garment, that he shall change them like a vesture and they shall be changed but that he shall continue the same and that his years shall have no end.

2. *The Lord Jesus Christ was rich on account of his almighty and boundless dominion and the immense number and exalted dignity of his subjects.* He was sovereign of the whole heavenly hierarchy, and universal nature is under his imperial sway. Angels are his ministering servants and Devils tremble at his wrath. The beloved apostle speaking of the angels who continually worship the lamb and surround his throne says the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands. Saint Paul declares that by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers. All things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist, and the same apostle assures us, that he is far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. His throne is established in the
 heavens

heavens and his kingdom ruleth over all, he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written king of kings and lord of lords. He was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows and he sits at his father's right hand, angels and authorities and powers, being made subject to him. Is he a mighty monarch who has kings and princes for his subjects? How powerful then is the Lord Jesus Christ, whose ministering spirits angels are even angels who so excel in strength, that only one of them in one night slew 185000 men in the camp of the Assyrians.

3. *The Lord Jesus Christ was rich on account of his vast possessions and wide extended kingdom.* The revering patriarch justly styles him, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth. His empire is so great, that no finite understanding can state its limits or compute its boundless dimensions, it is higher than heaven, what can we see, it is deeper than hell, what can we know the measure thereof is longer than the earth, it is broader than the sea. It is said, the Spaniards boast, that the sun never sets upon their king's dominions; but with regard to the king of glory, we may truly affirm that he possesses and governs immense regions far beyond the utmost limits of the sun's light, heat or influence. We are apt to think the British empire very large and all its inhabitants a very great multitude, but the British empire with all its inhabitants, is but a very inconsiderable part of the terraqueous globe and the innumerable swarms of animals that live upon it: And yet the whole terraqueous globe with all its innumerable swarms of living creatures, compared to the vast and unlimited empire of the Messiah is less than nothing and vanity. See what the evangelical prophet says on this subject in one of the sublimest discourses that ever was penned. Behold (says he) the nations are as a drop of the bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the ballance, behold! he taketh up the isles as a
very

very little thing all nations before him are as nothing and they are counted less than nothing and vanity. *

4. *The Lord Jesus Christ was rich in every moral and intellectual accomplishment and possessed of every grace and virtue.* He was the lamb of God without blemish and without spot. He was perfect innocence and the holy one by way of eminence. He did no iniquity neither was guile found in his lips. We beheld his glory says the apostle as the glory of the only begotten of the father full of grace and truth. all the combined excellencies and moral charms of men and angels, centered in Christ and shone forth with transcendent lustre. With him were hid all the treasures of knowledge and wisdom. He was the brightness of the fathers glory and the express image of his person. His understanding was infinitely capacious, his nature infinitely holy, and his disposition infinitely benevolent and amiable.

5, *The Lord Jesus Christ was rich in all the happiness of heaven.* This happiness was great in proportion to the infinite joys of paradise and the comprehensive capacity of the redeemer's mind. Our saviour lay in the bosom of the father before the world was, and the bosom of the father denotes the very summit of possible happiness. Our blessed Immanuel speaks of this in the 8th. chapter of the Proverbs of Solomon, the Lord (says he) possessed me in the beginning of his way; before his works of old, I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning or ever the earth was. When he prepared the heavens I was there, when he appointed the foundation of the earth: then I was by him as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always

† *If every fixed star is a centre to surrounding worlds, which for ought I can see is the contrary, is a very probable hypothesis how infinitely great must the redeemer's power be, and how amazing the number and extent of his dominions? Now that the creator and Lord of so many thousand worlds, should suffer the greatest pains and die on a cross for the guilty inhabitants of this small speck of creation, especially when he left fallen angels to perish in their sins, is a thought in the highest degree astonishing affecting and transporting, the most powerful to fill our hearts with gratitude and compel us to holy obedience.*

before

before him. O the immense, the inconceivable felicity, of being thus in the bosom of the father ! enjoying all the delights of his all-sufficient nature, and the infinitely transporting emanations of his almighty love. In heaven the Lord Jesus Christ enjoyed the company, the praises and adorations of the angels, those pure and unclouded minds, so eminent for the vast compass of their understandings, and the spotless sanctity of their natures. Who can conceive the amazing and extatic raptures, which must have resulted to our Lord, from the intimate converse, the sublime devotions, the flaming zeal, the obedient love, the submissive adorations, the ready and faithful services of those exalted and powerful spirits. Thus, my dear brethren, the Lord Jesus Christ was rich in all the perfections of the divine nature, rich in the boundless extent of his dominion, rich in the immense swarms of his subjects, rich in all the endowments of his own vast and comprehensive mind, and rich in all the boundless and unknown joys of paradise. Yet though he was thus amazingly, thus immensely rich, yet he emptied himself of those glorious treasures, he laid aside this transcendent dignity, he left these divine honours, and submitted to the meanest condition, and lowest abasement for our sakes. This infinite mind, this great soul, became an infant and grew in wisdom ; this exalted and sublime spirit, conversed with simple and ignorant fishermen ; this holy one of Israel, pitched his tabernacle among sinners and blasphemers, and submitted to be treated as such : The divine saviour, though he was in the form of God, yet made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and being found in fashion, as a man he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. But this leads me to the

2d. General head of my discourse, which was, *to consider the amazing condescension, benevolence, and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, in becoming poor although thus rich.* How then did the lord of life and glory become poor?

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this he did by taking on him human nature, and that in a low condition, and by suffering all those evils and miseries, which are the attendants of poverty and mean circumstances. Altho' it would have been great condescension in him to have been born of the most illustrious princess, and in the most magnificent palace in the world; yet he chose to be born of a poor virgin, to make his first appearance in a homely stable, and to lay his tender limbs, in a hard and uneasy manger; and the sequel of his life answered to the beginning of it. Although the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, the son of man had not where to lay his head. So poor was this divine personage, that he subsisted either by his own labour, or on the charities of pious women and friends who ministered to him of their substance. When called upon for tax money he had nothing to pay, till Peter had taken a fish with a piece of silver in its belly; often he had not a farthing to buy himself bread, his diet was of the homeliest kind, his dwelling place the huts and cottages of his few indigent disciples. His apostles and constant companions were poor illiterate fishermen, not one rich man being of the number. Thus for our sakes he was reduced to poverty, nay to beggary as the Greek word in our text imports.

But Christ not only suffered poverty itself, but its usual, though not constant attendants. He suffered the vilest contempt, the most unparralleled unkindness, the bitterest sorrow, the most outrageous cruelty and the most tormenting pains.

1. *He suffered the vilest and most abject contempt.* This Lord of angels was led about by the Devil his inveterate foe and exposed to his insolent and horrid temptations. He was despised and rejected of men. He was called by way of contempt, the Galilean, the Nazarene, the carpenter, the carpenter's son, a companion of publicans and harlots, a confederate with the Devil, a glutton, a drunkard, a blasphemer and a traitor. He came unto his own, but his own received him not. He

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was treated not only as the meanest but the vilest of mankind, he was scourged, mocked, and spit upon, he was arrayed with the ensigns of mock royalty; a worn out purple was thrown over his body, a crown of thorns was placed on his head, and a sceptre of reed put into his hand. He was smitten on the face by the servant of the high priest, fet at night by Herod and his men of war, derided by the Roman soldiers, blindfolded and buffeted by an enraged populace among whom he had wrought so many miracles of love. They smote him when blindfolded, and said unto him, prophesy thou Christ who it is, that smote thee? When nailed to the cross they bowed down to him in derision, and said, hail king of the Jews! and even in the agonies of death, which generally disarm the most inveterate malice, they mocked his expiring groans, saying he saved others himself he cannot save. If he be the Christ, the Messiah, let him come down from the cross and we will believe him. They preferred a robber and a murderer before him, and crucified him between two thieves as the most atrocious offender of the three. When Pilot would have released him they said away with him, crucify him! crucify him! which was the most shameful and painful death they could inflict, being the punishment of slaves, and from which a Roman citizen was exempted. His benevolent admonitions were slighted, his astonishing miracles ascribed to an infernal power, his whole ministry was disregarded, he was betrayed by one apostle, denied by another, and in the extremity of his grief perfidiously forsaken by all.

2. *He met with the most unkind and ungrateful treatment.* The world was made by him, yet the world knew him not, the inhabitants of Nazareth who ought to have gloried in his residence amongst them; as they were not ignorant of his divine and benevolent disposition, the inhabitants of Nazareth thrust him out to the brow of the mountain on which their city was built, in order to cast him headlong from the precipice. Altho' he shewed the Jews many good works from his

his father, they basely attempted to stone him. When he was weeping over their obstinate impenitence and deploring their approaching ruin, they were secretly and maliciously conspiring to put him to a most cruel death. Whilst he was labouring for their spiritual good and speaking more forcibly and affectionately than ever man spake, they endeavoured to insnare him by their discourse, and proposed the most insidious questions in order to draw words out of him that might endanger his life. Those who eat his bread lift up his heel against him. His beloved Peter, his bosom friend, denied him when he stood most in need of his friendly acknowledgments, he denied the dear redeemer to his face, he denied him before the Jewish council, he thrice denied him with oaths and curses, which were like so many daggers to the redeemers heart, his disciples who had long experienced his inviolable fidelity, and his unshaken friendship, who had long been convinced of his divine mission, basely and treacherously forsook him in the hour of his distress, nay in the midst of his concern for their welfare, they basely left this lamb of God to be worried and torn to pieces by inhuman wolves, without attempting any thing in his favour, his own creatures who were formed by his hand, supported by his bounty, and for whom he was about to shed his precious blood, were clamorous for his condemnation and crucifixion. O thou ever loving! ever lovely saviour! never was a benefactor so ungratefully treated, never was there such base unkindness returned, as was offered to thy sacred person.

3. *He was overwhelmed with the bitterest sorrow*, what are the principal causes of our grief? The anger of those we tenderly love, the unkind treatment of those whose love we deserve, the distresses of our friends, the fruitlessness of our endeavours for the good of others, the awful impenitency, incorrigible wickedness, and eternal destruction of those whom we tenderly pity; all these causes conspired to distress and overwhelm the tender heart of our dear Immanuel, and therefore
well

well might he adopt the words of the mourning prophet, and say, behold ! and see, all ye that pass by if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger. He was indeed a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. Under the views and apprehensions of his father's wrath ; he himself tells us ; that his soul was sorrowful, exceeding sorrowful, sorrowful even unto death. The Greek words, employed by the evangelists, to describe our Saviour's grief, are awfully emphatical, and import that he was assailed with sorrow on every side, and that his distress was vehement, and astonishing beyond conception. He was penetrated with sorrow, at the ingratitude and perfidiousness of his friends, the cruel and inveterate malice of his enemies, and their consequent miseries and destruction. With what a melting heart, with what weeping eyes did he not lament the obstinacy, and ruin of Jerusalem ? When he came near (says the evangelist) he beheld the city, and wept over it, and said : O Jerusalem ! Jerusalem ! thou that killedst my prophets, and stonedst them that were sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, but ye would not ? O that thou, even thou ! hadst known, at least in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace, but now they are hidden from thine eyes.

4. *He suffered the acutest and most racking pain, the most violent and severe torments.* His enemies studiously cruel, obliged him to drink the cup of wrath and astonishment, even to the very dregs. He suffered the distresses of hunger and thirst, heat and cold, labour and weariness, he uttered feeble, infantile cries in the manger, and strong expiring groans on the accursed tree. He was smitten, stricken of God, and afflicted. He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, he was at once forsaken of God, and abandoned by men.

He gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked out the hair, he hid not his venerable face from shame and spitting, " he went galled with the lashes of the scourge, and penetrated with the pungent thorn; thus, thus, he went to his ignominious, to his tormenting exit." When ready to faint with the smart of the stripes he had received, and the crown of thorns, he wore, the merciless Jews, beyond measure barbarous, loaded him with the weight of his own cross, and then cruelly nailed him upon it. There, there he hung for six painful hours, enduring unutterable smart, and the most amazing anguish, and when he cryed, I thirst, they gave him vinegar, mingled with gall to drink, thus adding every bitter ingredient to his cup of sorrow. This he suffered from the hands of men: But O! how much greater was the distress he felt, from the hand of God. Who can conceive the horrors of his mind, and the severity of his sufferings, when he cried out, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me? Who can tell the extremity of his anguish, when in the days of his flesh, he offered up supplications, with strong crying and tears unto Him, who was able to save him from death? Who can tell what he endured in the garden of Gethsemane, when in the bitter agonies of his soul, he sweat great drops of blood? What created imagination can comprehend the excessive sorrow, that overwhelmed his mind, when he cried out, my God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me? Thus the Lord Jesus Christ endured the severest torments from the rage of men; thus, thus, he bore the infinite weight of the wrath of God, till he sunk under the awful burden, and expired on the accursed tree. Thus he fainted, bled, and groaned, and died, his sacred body was cruelly mangled, and then laid in the silent grave.

"Darkness his curtain, and his bed the dust,

"Tho' sun and stars are dust beneath his throne."

Surely never did a prince banished from his throne,
by

by the fury of his rebellious subjects, robbed of his authority, and forced to wander and work as a slave, in the kingdom he once governed, make a meaner and more abject appearance, than Jesus, the Lord of glory. I have read of Edward the 2d, who once filled the imperial throne of Great-Britain, and arrayed in royal robes, received the homage of her illustrious nobles; that this unhappy Monarch was led about for a shew, by his rebellious subjects, shaved on the high way, with dirty water taken out of a ditch, and at last inhumanly put to death, by a red hot iron thrust into his body, which caused him to utter the most horrid shrieks. When I read this dismal story, my heart melted within me, at the affecting view of fallen Majesty; But O! what is this in comparison of the Creator and Lord of the universe, led to crucifixion by the vilest and meanest of his creatures? What is this in comparison of the king of angels and men, scourged, mocked and spit upon? What is this in comparison of an incarnate God, sweating blood through extremity of anguish, tormented with lingering pains, on a cross, crying out with a loud voice, and giving up the ghost.

Thus, my Brethren, ye see the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though rich, yet he for our sakes became poor. This high and mighty possessor of all things left his throne of glory for the pangs of death. He quitted all the happiness of the paradise of God, for all the miseries of this vale of tears. He left the company and adorations of angels, for the insults and blasphemies of men and devils, all the sacred delights of his father's bosom, for all the wretchedness of a sinful world. O the amazing poverty! the astonishing condescension of our Lord Jesus Christ!

The apostle ascribes this voluntary poverty of our Lord, and his surprizing humiliation to his grace.*

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* The word grace is used in various senses in the holy scriptures.
1. It signifies the absolute, free, unmerited, eternal love of God to sinners,

Ye know (says he) the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, by the word of grace is here undoubtedly meant, the benevolence, or kind disposition of our Lord Jesus Christ, towards sinners, who deserved his displeasure and everlasting damnation. The incarnation, poverty and sufferings of our Lord, were all the effects of free, rich, and sovereign love, to which we could not plead the least title. The scriptures are very express; that the salvation of fallen man, from the foundation to the top-stone, is all the work of unmerited, unparalleled grace, infinitely superior to the freest pardon ever granted, by the best earthly prince, to the most flagrant rebels. Grace is opposed, in scripture, to human merit, which is entirely excluded with regard to pardon and justification. Not by works of righteousness, which we have done (says the apostle) but according to his mercy he saved us. By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. We are justified *freely by his grace*, thro' the redemption there is in Christ Jesus. Observe the grand invitations of the gospel, they are all the language of free grace, see Isaiah 55, 1; compared with Revel. 22, 17. I shall not enlarge upon this point, because it will be farther illustrated under the next head of my discourse, which was,

3. *To consider the persons for whom the Lord Jesus Christ thus voluntarily submitted to poverty.* These persons were in general all who repent, believe and obey the gospel, and particularly the converted Corinthians; for the apostle addressing them says, Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though rich, yet for *your sakes* he became poor. Who then were these Corinthians?

sinners, in Jesus Christ. 2. The sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. 3. The general holy temper and disposition, or the particular branches of it effected by those influences. 4. It means favour, and especially a charitable donation; it occurs several times in this sense in our context. The word grace occurs in other senses, which it is here needless to mention.

Corinthians? They were the most profligate and abandoned people of all the inhabitants of *Greece*. They are represented by antient historians as immoral and debauched, even to a proverb. They were so infamous on account of whoredom and uncleanness; that to act the Corinthian, was in other words, to act the fornicator, the whoremonger, and the adulterer. If you would learn their character from the pen of inspiration, and know infallibly what atrocious offenders they were; read the 6th chap. of St. Paul's first epistle to them, 9th verse. Know ye not, says the apostle, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor the lascivious, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God; and such, says he, were some of you, so excessively vile, so scandalously wicked, that it was a wonder fire did not fall down from heaven, and consume them, or that the earth did not cleave under their feet, and open them a speedy passage into the nethermost hell; and yet, O matchless grace! for these infamous sodomites, for these heaven-daring offenders, the Lord Jesus Christ, though rich, became poor. But there have been still greater sinners, than even these Corinthians, I mean the inhuman murderers of our Lord Jesus Christ. They had heard his heavenly discourses, they had seen his stupendous miracles, they had been eye-witnesses to his innocent, holy, and beneficent life. Nay, they had received the most distinguishing marks of his favour; yet, after a thousand barbarous indignities offered him, they at last outrageously nailed him to the accursed tree, between two thieves. Nevertheless, whilst they are actually driving the nails through his sacred hands and feet, he prays for them, saying, Father forgive them, nay, he not only prays for them, but actually pardons them, and raises them to mansions of eternal bliss and glory.

——— “ Survey this wond’rous love,
 “ And at each step let higher wonder rise,
 “ Pardon for infinite offence, and pardon
 “ Thro’ means that speak its value infinite,
 “ A pardon bought with blood, with blood divine,
 “ With blood divine of him, I made my foe,
 “ Persisted to provoke tho’ woe and awe
 “ Bled and chastiz’d a flagrant rebel still,
 “ A rebel ’midst the thunder of his throne,
 “ Not I alone a rebel universe,
 “ My species up in arms, not one exempt,
 “ Yet for the foulest of the foul he dies,
 “ Most joy’d for the redeem’d from deepest guilt.
 “ Bound every heart, let every bosom burn,
 “ O what a scale of miracles is here !
 “ Its lowest round high planted in the skies,
 “ Its towering summit lost beyond the thought
 “ Of man or angel. *Young’s Night Thoughts.*

Before I quit this head I would remark, that the greatest sinners may as easily obtain mercy, under the gospel dispensation, as the least ; for in the eyes of God’s holiness, the best of men are vile, hell deserving creatures, and all the difference, between one man and another is this ; that one man is not so great a sinner as the other, altho’ they are all, even the whole human race, very, very great sinners. Sometimes God, to shew the sovereignty of his grace, pitches on the most atrocious offenders, such as the profligate Corinthians, and the cruel murderers of our Lord, for the objects of his mercy. Our Saviour tells the self-righteous Pharisees, that publicans and harlots should enter into the kingdom of heaven before them ; and why this ? Was it because notorious sinners were less offensive to God’s holiness, than smaller transgressors ? By no means, but because the latter relying upon their negative merit, and their own imperfect and external righteousness, gave themselves no concern for a Saviour ; but the former, convinced of their great and multiplied transgressions, and overwhelmed with an affecting sense of their utter unworthiness of the divine favours, cast themselves entirely upon the mercy of their judge, and the atonement of his

his son, and indeed if I was possessed of all the virtues and moral excellencies that ever adorned human nature, this should be my only refuge, and I would seek salvation in the same way, as if I was the vilest miscreant; that is the way of free, sovereign, unmerited grace. But here, to guard against mistakes, I beg leave to repeat, what I first observed, that we must sincerely repent, and turn from sin to holiness with all our hearts, as ever we would reap any benefit from the sufferings of Christ. The abovementioned Corinthians, were regenerated, changed and became new creatures, otherwise Christ would have profited them nothing.

The apostle declares of them, that they were washed, that they were sanctified, that they were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of God, i. e. the sinner became a saint, the wicked a good man, the idolater became a worshipper of the true God, the thief became honest, the unrighteous became just, the unclean, holy, the whoremonger pure in heart, the covetous, generous, and in short every vicious habit was put off, and every virtuous habit was assumed and exercised. Christ indeed died for the ungodly; but not to save them in, but to save them from their sins—he gave himself for us, says the Apostle, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify us unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. A merciful prince will forgive and restore a traitor; but only upon condition that he pleads for pardon, acknowledges his treason, throws himself upon the mercy of his Sovereign, lays down the arms of his rebellion, renews his allegiance, and becomes a good and faithful subject; and this is exactly the case with regard to the great God's forgiving sinners, and receiving them to his forfeited favour. †

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† That universally and justly admired writer, Mr. Hervey, denied that the covenant of grace required conditions on the sinners part, which led him into several absurdities, some of which were pointed out to him by Mr. John Wesley in such a manner, that he

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I now proceed to my fourth proposition, which was to shew the advantages that result to sinners from Christ's voluntary poverty and condescension. God made man after his own image, which consisted in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness. This image, the treasure of the mind, was lost by the fall, and man, in his present state is a poor, wretched, miserable, blind and naked creature. Being therefore in himself poor and empty, he stands in absolute need of supplies from another, and blessed be God, there are unsearchable riches in Christ, to satisfy all his wants, and out of his inexhaustible fullness, he may receive even grace for grace; he is made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. The blessed Jesus is heartily willing to confer these inestimable treasures upon all who sincerely desire them. He conferred them upon the elect Corinthians, and bestows them daily upon every true believer. Ye know, says the apostle, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. Riches then, spiritual and everlasting riches are the advantages that accrue to us from our Lord's incarnation, obedience and sufferings. But the limits of a discourse will not permit me to dwell upon this pleasing theme. In many sermons I could only display a small part of *these unsearchable riches of Christ*. If I could paint to you the sweetness of pardon to a despairing sinner, the peace of God, which passeth all understanding to a troubled mind. The transports of a conscience void of offence. The sublime pleasures of
divine

was unable to make a rational defence of his opinion, against Wesley's objections. Mr. Hervey acting upon this opinion; in his letter to the condemned malefactors at Northampton, did but ill discharge his embassy to them, not mentioning repentance and conversion in it, though absolutely necessary to their salvation.

Hervey's letters 2d vol. 56 letter.

Hervey's letters to John Wesley, letter 9th.

N. B. The author by no means approves Wesley's theological sentiments, or his observations on Hervey's dialogues, in general.

divine grace in the heart, the melting raptures of the love of Christ shed abroad in the soul, the inexpressible delight excited in the mind by a stedfast faith in the promises of God, and a lively hope of future blessedness, the unspeakable joys that flow from communion with the Father and his Son Christ Jesus. The supporting, exhilarating consolations of God's word and spirit, the noble entertainment which religious knowledge and contemplation afford, and the exalted pleasures of a pure, pious, devout and benevolent heart and an, active, useful, holy life. The sweet ravishing foretastes of heaven here, and the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory hereafter. If I could paint all these privileges of the believer in their proper colours, you would readily own they were exceeding great and precious. But eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither can the heart of man conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; they are rich in wisdom and knowledge, rich in all the aimable virtues and beauties of holiness, they are rich in faith, rich in good works, and rich towards God, they are rich in grace here, and they will be infinitely rich in glory hereafter; they shall inherit an incorruptible crown, they shall inhabit that holy city, the least of whose ornaments, are gold and pearls, and precious stones, even that city which hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; because the glory of God doth enlighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. In short, they shall inherit an everlasting kingdom, where sin, ignorance, poverty, sorrow and pain shall be forever banished, where all tears shall be wiped away from the believers eyes, and where there will be a fulness of joy, and increasing pleasures for ever more.

Thus, my brethren, I have finished the doctrinal part of my discourse, thus I have briefly and very imperfectly explained a text, that contains the very marrow of the gospel, and discloses the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh. I might,

with great propriety call this text a glorious compend of evangelical truth—*speculum theologiae in Christo*—a glass in which we may, as it were, see the whole body of speculative and practical divinity in Christ. I now proceed to the last thing proposed, which was to shew the use we ought to make of the preceeding truths, and the influence which they ought to have upon our hearts and lives.

1. *What we have heard teaches us the infinite evil of sin, and ought to influence us to hate and forsake it.* Christ was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. Our sins were the accursed cause of all the poverty, affliction and sufferings of our blessed Lord. Our sins crowned him with thorns, nailed him to the cross, caused his agony and bloody sweat in the garden, and brought on him the pangs of death. We cannot, therefore, be the real friends of this gracious Saviour, except we slay those sins which crucified him. If we do not put off those vile dispositions, and forsake those abominable practices, which were the murderers of our infinite benefactor; we are enemies to the cross of Christ. There cannot be a more awful and powerful dissuasive from sin, than the believing contemplation of an incarnate God, bleeding on the cross, to make atonement for it. The terrors of God's wrath against sin appear in legible characters, in the miseries of this vale of tears. In the awful destruction of the ungodly, in the flames of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the deluge which buried all the inhabitants of the old world; except those in the ark,—in the tremendous ruin of Jerusalem, and other ungodly cities, in the dreadful scenes of the last great day and the horrors of the infernal world, as they are pourtrayed by inspired writers. Yet, in in none of these tremendous spectacles, seperately considered, nor in all of them united together, are the terrors of God's wrath against sin, so greatly and awfully displayed as in the cross of Christ. Therefore, nothing can so powerfully dissuade, and terrify from
sin,

sin, as the view of this affecting, this amazing catastrophe. If, therefore, any man pretends to glory in the cross of Christ, and yet continues in the allowed practice of any known sin, he is a liar, and the truth is not in him. Every whoremonger, adulterer, profane swearer, drunkard, sabbath breaker, fraudulent, profane, worldly minded, unrighteous person, is so far from being a friend to Christ (whatsoever forms of religion he may at times put on) that he crucifies the Son of God afresh, and puts him to open shame.

In the cross and sufferings of Christ, all the perfections of God ~~are~~ forth with the utmost lustre; they indeed are very bright and conspicuous in the works of creation and providence; but they are much more so in the plan of our redemption, in the amazing humiliation of our glorious Immanuel. Here mercy and truth have met together, here righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Here we may see verified the declaration which God made unto Moses, saying, I am the Lord God, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, yet who will by no means clear the guilty. Here we see holiness in all its purity, veracity in all its strictness, justice in all its rigour, and mercy in all its tenderness—compassion with its bowels yearning over miserable sinners, and grace infinite, inexhaustible, unmerited grace, embracing, enriching, imparadising the vilest and most unworthy traitors.—O the heights, and depths! the lengths! and breadths of the love of Christ. It passeth knowledge.—“ If
 “ all the love of all the angels in heaven, and all the
 “ love of all the saints upon earth was united in one
 “ heart; it would be but a poor heart in comparison
 “ of that which was pierced with the soldier’s spear.”
 This amazing love of Christ, manifested in his becoming poor for our sakes, is the strongest motive to a holy life. The two grand principles of religion, upon which hang all the law and the prophets, are the
 love

love of God, and the love of our neighbour, and what can more powerfully animate us to the exercise of these sacred passions? What can so sweetly and irresistibly attract us to the practice of virtue? What can raise our gratitude to God to so high a pitch? Or what can so effectually persuade us to forgive our enemies, and do good to all the world, as the view of an incarnate God, fainting, groaning, bleeding, dying for our redemption. This caused our Saviour to declare, and I if I be lifted up, i. e. upon the cross, will draw all men unto me, and this made St. Paul cry out, the love of Christ constraineth us, to live no more to ourselves, but to him who died for us, and rose again.

Are these things so? Then how unfaithfully to God and the souls of men, do those ministers execute their important office, who do not habitually employ this all constraining motive, who do not constantly preach Christ crucified. They may content themselves with dry lectures on morality †, in which Christ is left out; but sure I am nothing will so effectually influence to universal holiness, as the contemplation of an incarnate God, out of love to perishing sinners, expiring on a cross.

† The author means not here to disparage the preaching of gospel morality, enforced by proper motives, this he esteems an important part of ministerial duty, and thinks it owing to a deficiency in this respect, that in many places people imagine themselves converted and interested in Christ, and for a shew make long prayers, when they injure their neighbours, devour widows houses, persecute and oppress the helpless, do good to none, and are guilty of fraud, lying, perjury, malice, revenge, injustice, backbiting, pride, uncleanness, and other vices, which are the distinguishing characteristics of the devils children.

But if some ministers do not preach up gospel morality, there are others who substitute morality in the stead of Christ, and preach almost nothing else, neglecting to display the dying love, and celebrate the praises of Him whose ambassadors they are. Such preachers, as these, are here reprehended, and the absurdity of their conduct is exposed by Mr. Rollin, a popish author, who justly observes, that a gospel minister is to look upon himself as the disciple, not of Socrates, Seneca, or Marcus Antoninus, but of Christ, and therefore ought to preach the grand peculiarities of his gospel. " Talk

" Talk they of morals, O thou bleeding love,
 " Thou maker of new morals to mankind,
 " The grand morality is love of the ,
 " Religion thou the soul of happiness,
 " And groaning Calvary of thee, there shine
 " The noblest truths, there strongest motives sting,
 " There sacred violence assaults the soul,
 " There nothing but compulsion is forborn." † or rather,
 There nothing that can win the heart is forborn.

Young's Night Thoughts,

There cannot be a subject of meditation at once so
 pleasing to the understanding, and so improving to
 the heart as the love of an all-gracious Redeemer.
 For this reason our blessed Lord instituted the sacred
 ordinance of the sacramental supper, as an everlasting
 memorial of his body broken, and blood shed for the
 remission of our sins. For this reason, the wisest and
 greatest saint that ever lived determined to know no-
 thing save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. For this
 reason, in the most august conversation that ever was
 held on earth, the only topic of discourse was the
 death of Christ. And for this reason, the great assemb-
 ly of the church triumphant sing loud hallelujahs un-
 to him, who loved us, and washed us from our sins
 in his own blood. This is the grand mystery that the
 angels are ever desiring to look into, and therefore it
 ought to be the grand subject and center of our con-
 templations.

What we have heard should teach us patience under
 our sufferings; and comfort us under all our afflic-
 tions; are we full of pain and misery? do we labour
 under doubts and fears? are we treated with the ut-
 most unkindness and cruelty from those who stand in
 the nearest and dearest relation to us? do we endure
 the distresses of poverty, and want the comforts and
 necessaries of life? Do our friends, those whom we
 love, those whom we have faithfully served, and for
 whose good we have continually laboured, ungrate-
 fully

† Dr. Young here speaks very inconsistently, for if sacred violence
 assaults the soul; then surely compulsion cannot be forborn.

fully forsake us? do they tear our characters in pieces, pursue us with unrelenting rage, and strive to accomplish our ruin? are we assailed at once with afflictions from without, and unspeakable anguish from within? is the Devil permitted to tempt us, and doth God hide his face from us? do we murmur and despond on this account?—Murmur not, do not despond, O thou guilty, hell-deserving sinner; thy innocent Saviour suffered these very evils, in an infinitely severer manner, he suffered them for thy sake, he suffered them to deliver thee from that hell, from those everlasting torments, which thou richly deservedst, and to raise thee to that boundless, inconceivable happiness of which thou wast utterly unworthy.

He sunk beneath thy heavy woes,
To raise thee to his throne,
There's not a gift his hand bestows
But cost his heart a groan. •

Consider that all the evils which thou (a guilty worm) sufferest, are infinitely less than the Lord of life and glory bore for thee; therefore be patient and resigned to the will of God, under thine afflictions, and comfort thyself with the ravishing contemplations of his everlasting love, and the infinite happiness which that love has reserved for thee beyond the grave.

How loudly do the great truths we have heard call upon us in the words of the apostle John: *Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.* Away then with all malice, hatred, and revenge—away with every obstacle which the Devil has raised upon the ruins of real Christianity, to impede the operations of divine love, and let us cultivate a wide and extensive benevolence towards all mankind—this is the distinguishing badge of our Christian profession, *by this (says the blessed Jesus) shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love to one another.*

Forever blasted then be all attempts to alienate the
hearts

hearts of fellow Christians from each other, and may the God of love, prosper and bless all the sons of peace, who seek the welfare of the whole human race, and labor to promote and diffuse a spirit of universal charity and benevolence †. That divine Redeemer whose transcendent kindness has been set before us, gave himself a ransom for all, died for all true penitents of every language, tribe and nation. Let us all imitate his bright and shining example, and let the same mind, the same temper, the same disposition be in us, which was also in Christ Jesus.

What we have heard strongly inforces the great duty of contributing to the necessities of the poor, for which benevolent purpose we are now met together. The great apostle of the gentiles once urged the words of our text, to inkindle the compassion of the Corinthians, towards the poor Saints of Jerusalem; and I now address the same affecting words to you, my brethren, to excite your pity towards the indigent members of this congregation. Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. If then this gracious Saviour did thus impoverish himself, to enrich us with everlasting treasures, how infinitely reasonable is it, that we should bestow, what we can easily spare, for the relief of our distressed fellow creatures. I need not enlarge upon this constraining argument, in order to excite your charity—this has been already done in the preceding discourse, and I doubt not but every heart
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† The author heartily detests the declaration of a celebrated Rabbi; that *charity is barbarity*, than which he thinks the father of lies scarce ever insinuated one falser or more pernicious, more contrary to the benign genius of the gospel, and its genuine and universal prevalency. By this accursed maxim torrents of the best Christian blood have been shed, the unhappy divisions of the reformed churches fomented and continued, and the hearty union of fellow protestants obstructed and prevented. The Roman Catholics invert this maxim sometimes, and say that barbarity is charity.

In which the love of Christ is shed abroad by the Holy Ghost, feels itself already powerfully drawn to the exercise of liberality, and stands not in need of further exhortation on that head †.

I shall only suggest, that those who now implore our compassion are in a peculiar manner the objects of charity—they are not only poor, but many of them strangers, and not only poor and strangers, but the poor of a church, which, though generous, is incapable, on account of the small number of its members to do much for their relief.

Therefore their eyes, my brethren, are principally turned towards you, who, though not of this congregation, are charitably come here, this day, in their behalf. They intreat your pity, they beg your alms in the name of him, who was born of a poor virgin, and became a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief, in order to promote your eternal felicity—they implore your assistance in the name of him, who not only endured the extremes of poverty, but fainted, bled, groaned and died for you, this infinitely benevolent Saviour, and all his prophets and apostles plead with you, in behalf of his distressed members—this gracious Immanuel declares he esteemes the favour done to his poor people as if done to himself—he will not forget even a cup of cold water given to a disciple; but whosoever, from proper principles, doth the least favour to him, or in his name, and for his sake to others, shall receive an hundred fold, and obtain eternal life.

What we have heard teaches us the infinite value of our souls, those souls must needs be very precious, for whose redemption an incarnate God impoverished himself, and died on a cross. The misery to which they are exposed in their natural state, must undoubtedly be very very terrible, since he suffered so much

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† A considerable part of the address, in behalf of the poor is here omitted, to shorten the sermon.

to deliver them from it, and the felicity of which they are susceptible; and to which they will be raised through grace, must be transcendently glorious, since he has done so much to accomplish it. Let us then look upon the salvation of our souls as the one thing needful, and sacrifice every other interest to that which is so infinitely important.

From what has been said we may learn whether we are of the happy number, for whom the Lord of glory became poor. Have we, like the Corinthians, been washed from our sins, renewed and sanctified by the spirit of God, and justified by the righteousness of his dear son? Have we been convinced of our lost and undone condition by nature? of our poverty and wretchedness, and have we betaken ourselves to the affluent fulness, the unsearchable riches of Christ? Have we received him for our Saviour, and rested upon him for salvation, as he is offered in the gospel? Are we vitally united to him by faith and the spirit? and are we thus become interested in his inexhaustible treasures. Are we rich in faith, rich in good works, and rich in grace? has the grace of God effectually taught and enabled us to deny all ungodliness, and every worldly lust, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world. Is the same mind, the same benevolent temper in us which was also in Christ Jesus? Like him, is it our study to do good, and promote the temporal and eternal welfare of mankind? Are we rich towards God, transformed into the divine image, endowed with every divine virtue and amiable disposition, which are the beginnings of eternal life? Has the amazing benevolence of Christ, and his gracious interposition in our behalf, inflamed our hearts with the love of God, and of our neighbour? These, as I have shewn, are the genuine effects of the grace of Christ, and where these are not, we in vain pretend an interest in this glorious Saviour.

To those who are not interested in Christ I first beg

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leave

leave to address my discourse. Unhappy sinners you have this day beheld, an awful display of God's anger and fury against sin, you have seen, what bitter pains, what unspeakable agonies, the Son of God suffered, when he stood in the place of sinners. If these things were done in the green tree, what will be done in the dry. If the innocent, beloved Son of the Father, endured such unspeakable pangs and terrors, how dreadful will your doom be if you fall a helpless sacrifice to his avenging justice. Did the father so severely punish his broken law, upon him, who was his delight before the foundation of the world. How inexpressibly great will your torment be, who are the objects of his infinite abhorrence, his almighty wrath, and his aggravated fury and displeasure? Was the soul of Immanuel sorrowful, exceeding sorrowful, sorrowful even unto death, under the frowns of that God, to whom he stood in the intimate relation of an only begotten and dearly beloved son. Then how must the damned in hell, be crushed by his almighty arm? and how intense, how sharp must be their pains, who stand in no other relation to him; but that of heinous transgressors, and detested traitors. O therefore fly from this wrath to come, and bring forth fruit meet for repentance, fly from the uplifted sword of divine vengeance, to that gracious Saviour whom I now preach unto you. But shall I urge only the terror of God's wrath, let me rather plead the love of his Christ, to induce you to seek salvation through his blood, and prevent your eternal ruin, before it becomes impossible. You have heard what an infinitely gracious Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ is; you have heard how greatly he impoverished himself to enrich us with everlasting treasures, how much he has done and suffered to gain your love, and prevent your destruction, and will you, O sinners! continue to act in opposition to these affecting, these endearing, these all constraining motives. How sharply, yet how tenderly doth his love at once reprove and aggravate your ingratitude, and
render

render your impenitency not only base beyond measure; but utterly inexcusable. Methinks I hear him saying to you, O sinner! did I, though rich, become poor for thee, did I bear the infinite weight of the wrath of God, and in the agony of my soul sweat great drops of blood for thee? Did I for thy sake utter feeble, infantile cries in the manger, and strong expiring groans on the accursed tree, and yet will not all these gain thine heart? Did I leave the delights of my father's bosom, and the company of adoring angels, did I quit the joys of paradise, and subject myself to all the miseries of this vale of tears for thee, and wilt thou not quit thy sinful pleasures and companions, thy wicked ways, and destructive pursuits for my sake? Wilt thou do nothing, wilt thou deny thyself nothing for him, who has done and suffered so much for thee, who endured the cross, and despised the shame that thou mightest possess everlasting riches and honour? I beseech thee by the amazing sorrow, the exquisite pains, the dying agonies I suffered for thee, to lay down the arms of thy rebellion, and be reconciled to God before the act of indemnity expires. Thus doth the Lord Jesus Christ, as it were, accost every impenitent sinner, to whom the gospel is preached, and let me assure all such, that as they who despised Moses's law died by the mouth of two or three witnesses, those shall be punished in a much severer manner, who tread under foot the Son of God, despise his blood, and refuse the invitations of his grace.

From what has been said we may learn there is encouragement for the greatest sinners to apply for mercy to the throne of grace; the profligate Corinthians, and the murderers of our Lord, obtained the divine favour by repentance and faith in his merits, and by the same method the most atrocious offender, into whose hands this sermon may happen to fall, may be reconciled to God.

I now pass on to address the children of God, under a view of the preceeding truths. Ye know, my brethren,

brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; that although he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor; that we through his poverty might be rich. For us he condescended to be born in a stable, and laid in a manger, for us he was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, for us he was stricken, smitten of God; and afflicted, he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, the chastisements of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed; for us he was scourged, mocked and spit upon; was arrayed in a ridiculous robe, held a sceptre of reed in his hand, and wore a thorny crown. Though rich in all the glories of the divine nature, rich in all the happiness of heaven, and rich in the possession of universal nature, yet for our sakes he became a poor, helpless, distressed sufferer upon earth, that we through his poverty might be rich, rich in faith, rich in good works, rich in grace here, and inexpressibly, inconceivably rich in the paradise of God hereafter. Since then we are thus enriched, thus ennobled by our Saviour's bounty, since we are bought with a price, with such a price as the blood of an incarnate God, let us glorify our supreme benefactor with our souls and bodies, which are his. Let us always think of him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God.

Let us think of him in our private retirements, talk of him in our social interviews, glory in his cross, and make our boast of his righteousness. Let his astonishing, his unmerited love constrain us to live no more to ourselves, but unto him, who thus loved us, and gave himself for us. Let our souls magnify the Lord, and let our spirits rejoice in God our Saviour, and however poor we may be as to this world, let us herein exult, that we are rich towards God, and heirs of an everlasting kingdom, an infinitely better, and more enduring substance than ever was possessed by any earthly monarch. Let no afflictions then overwhelm us with desponding melancholly thoughts; let no doubts of our heavenly father's love disquiet and sadden our hearts. For he that spared not his own son, but gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things. Therefore, blessing and honour, and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, to the seven spirits that surround it, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. AMEN.