



THE
ALL-SUFFICIENCY
OF CHRIST
TO SAVE SINNERS

WITH THE PREVALENCY
OF HIS INTERCESSION

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With the Prevalency of His Intercession

by Ezekiel Hopkins

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[CHRIST IS ABLE TO SAVE THE GREATEST OF SINNERS](#)

HE IS ABLE TO BESTOW UPON US ALL-SUFFICING MERCY

HE IS ABLE TO SAVE FROM THE GREATEST MISERY, AND TO
SUPPLY THE GREATEST WANTS

HE IS ABLE TO SAVE, WHEN NONE ELSE CAN

WHEREFORE HE IS ABLE ALSO TO SAVE THEM TO THE
UTTERMOST, THAT COME UNTO GOD BY HIM; SEEING HE
EVER LIVETH TO MAKE INTERCESSION FOR THEM. - HEB.
7:25.

INTRODUCTION

THE general design of the Apostle in this Epistle, is, to shew the dignity of Christ, above the Levitical Priesthood: which he doth, as by many other deep and accurate arguments; so, likewise, by affirming him to be a priest, after the order of Melchisedec, in the last verse of the foregoing chapter.

In this chapter he prosecutes the argument, by drawing a long parallel, between the priesthood according to Melchisedec's Order, and the priesthood according to Aaron's Order: and, in every comparison, he gives the pre-eminence to the former above the latter; and thereby proves, that Christ, who was a priest after the

order of Melchisedec, obtained a more excellent priesthood than they, who were priests according to the Order of Aaron.

I. Now because, in this parallel, there are many things hard to be understood, I shall give you a brief EXPLICATION of them, and thereby bring you to the Text.

Concerning this Melchisedec, there is much enquiry who he was. Some think him to be Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Second Person in the Blessed Trinity; who assumed human shape then, when Abraham returned from pursuing the four kings: but this is altogether impossible, because the Scripture makes him to be the King of Salem, a visible and a temporal king over Jerusalem; for, by Salem, that must be implied, as is clear from Ps. 76:2. Others conjecture this Melchisedec to be the same with Shem, the son of Noah; but whether it was he or no, it is not much material: this is certain, that he was appointed and raised up by God to be an eminent and illustrious type of our High Priest, Jesus Christ.

i. Now, though the Levitical Priesthood was a clear type of Christ's Priesthood, yet this Melchisedec, who lived four hundred years before the institution of that order, WAS A MORE CLOSE, ADEQUATE TYPE, and far superior to them. And this is here expressed:

1. In that he was King of Salem, as well as Priest of the Most High God: v. 4.

Now the Levitical Priests were not kings, as he was: as, in those first ages of the world, it was an usual custom, for the same person that was king to exercise the priestly office; and therefore he was a more express resemblance of Christ, than the Aaronical Priests were.

2. In that he was described to be first King of Righteousness, and then King of Salem: v 2 that is, the King of Peace.

Herein, also, he is a most lively type of Christ, who observed the same order, Christ was King of Righteousness, to subdue our sins and sanctify our natures: and he was King of Peace, to pacify our consciences, through the assurance of pardon and acceptance; for this peace he doth usually bestow upon us, as the fruits of righteousness formerly communicated to us.

3. In that he was without father or mother, without descent; having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, as Melchisedec is described in the third verse.

And, herein, he outvies the Aaronical Priesthood: for their birth and death the Scripture records; but, of Melchisedec, it witnesseth that he liveth: v. 8. Now, herein, he is a nearer resemblance to Christ, than they: for Christ, as God, was without mother; and, as man, he was without a father: as God, he hath not beginning of days; as God and man, he is without end of life.

4. In that Aaron, who was the father of all the Aaronical Priests, did pay tithe to him: so v. 4. And he received them from him: v. 6. which

denotes that Abraham himself was inferior to him: as v. 7. and much more the children of Levi, the offspring of Aaron, who themselves are said to pay tithes to Melchisedec, being in the loins of their father Abraham: as we have it in the 9th and 10th verses. As the public acts of the parent are interpretively the acts of a child, so likewise Abraham's paying tithes to Melchisedec is recorded by God, as Levi's paying tithes in Abraham's loins; and, thereupon, they were professedly inferior to him.

ii. That this comparison may be the more clear and evident, we must consider, that MELCHISEDEC WAS A TYPE OF CHRIST, UNDER A TWOFOLD RESPECT:

As he was in his own Personal Capacity.

As described to us in the Scripture.

For there is a great difference, as we shall see anon.

1. If we consider his Personal Capacity, so he was King and Priest: he was really, in himself, so: he met Abraham, received tithes from him, and conferred a blessing upon him. But there are other things spoken of this Melchisedec in the sixth chapter, which to understand as really agreeing to the person of Melchisedec were utterly impossible: as, that he was without father or mother, or without descent, or beginning or end of life; as we have it in the third and eighth verses: and therefore some, considering that this description could not agree

to any man, have fondly fancied that this Melchisedec was not true man; but was either Christ or the Holy Ghost, or some angel.

2. Therefore, we must note, that these things were spoken of Melchisedec, not as really he was in himself, but as he is represented to us in the Scripture. Therefore he is said to be without father or mother, because the Scripture mentions nothing of them; records nothing of his parentage or pedigree, nothing of his birth or death, but is, purposely silent in these things: v. 3; that he might be made like unto the Son of God. The Scripture is purposely silent concerning the pedigree of Melchisedec, and the beginning and ending of his days, that he might be a more lively type of the Son of God; who himself, in his divine nature, was without beginning or end of days. So that, though truly and really Melchisedec was a man, born of parents by a long descent from Adam, whose life had a date both when it begun and when it ended; yet it is truly said that he was without these, because they are not mentioned and recorded in the Scripture. Now among these high privileges and prerogatives, Melchisedec doth typify the Priesthood of Christ better than the Aaronical Priests could typify him; for he is one, that abideth and continueth a priest: v. 3: and he liveth, as in the eighth verse. The Scripture speaks nothing, either of his laying down his office or his life.

Now, in this, he is an eminent and conspicuous type of Christ, our High-Priest. For,

(1) He hath not laid down his Life, so as to lose it: for he was made after the power of the endless life; as v. 16.

(2) Nor hath he laid down his Priesthood, so as not to exercise it: for he is a priest for ever; and, because he continueth for ever, therefore he hath an unchangeable priesthood; as in v. 24.

The words of the Text are a most comfortable inference, drawn from all this discourse concerning the eternity of Melchisedec's Priesthood: the eternity of it, I say; because the Scripture speaks nothing of the cessation of it. So that my Text is a comfortable inference: Christ is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him; seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. Doth Christ for ever live, and for ever sit at the right-hand of God? doth he continually lay open his wounds, repeat over his sufferings, plead his death and merits, claim a right to a sure purchase? is he continually perfuming heaven with the odour of that sweet incense, which he daily offers up with prayers for all the saints? Beleive it, such a Sacrifice must needs be acceptable: such an Advocate must needs be prevalent: such a Saviour must needs be all-sufficient. Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him; seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

II. In these words we have,

A position couched under a Supposition. The Supposition is this: If so be Christ shall ever live to make intercession for the saints. The

Position is: That Christ doth live for ever to make intercession, &c. which the Apostle before proves: He is a High-Priest for ever.

There is an Inference or Corollary drawn from it: Therefore he is able to save them to the uttermost, &c.

FIRST. In the Position observe these two things:

First. The Eternity of the Life of Christ in the highest heaven.

Secondly. The Eternity of his Priestly Office.

The former is this: He liveth for ever. The latter is, And he liveth for this very end, to make intercession for us.

SECONDLY. In the Inference we may observe,

First. The Truth inferred and asserted: He is able to save.

Secondly. The Measure and Degree of this salvation: and that is, to the uttermost, to all ends and perfections: he is able to save to all perfections; that is, altogether.

Thirdly. The Persons, whom he is able thus perfectly to save: and they are those only, that come unto God by him. And these are described,

First. By their Obedience: They come unto God; that is, they perform service, obedience, and duty to God.

Secondly. By their Faith: They come unto God BY HIM; that is, by Christ.

All the duties and services which they perform, they tender up by faith in Christ, and by Christ to God: They come unto God by him.

THIRDLY. And, besides all these, here is a Connexion of the Inference and the Position together, by the word wherefore: WHEREFORE he is able to save, &c. In the connexion we have also the number of those, for whom Christ makes intercession: not for all men, but for those, that come unto God through him.

Oh, what a rich vein of Scripture is before our eyes, which lies as an inestimable and unsearchable treasure in golden mines! Though I may seem to have but broken and crumbled the words, yet there is abundance of preciousness in every part and parcel of them. I shall not now stand to raise and insist upon all those observations, that might pertinently and properly be made from the words thus divided; but shall briefly speak to some few.

i. From the TRUTH inferred, He is able to save to the uttermost, observe,

Doct. I.

That JESUS CHRIST IS AN ALMIGHTY AND AN ALL-SUFFICIENT SAVIOUR.

He is a High-Priest and a Saviour all-sufficient:

1. By his Father's eternal designation: Ps. 89:19. I have laid help upon one that is mighty, &c.

2. By his own voluntary susception and undertaking for us: Ps. 40:7, 8. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of thy book it is written of me.... to do thy will, O my God. And the Apostle quotes it in Heb. 10:7.

3. By the infinite glory and excellency of the divine nature: which hath a double influence to make him an All-Sufficient Saviour.

(1) It puts an infinite worth and value upon his sacrifice; and so hath made his offering acceptable, and a full price and ransom for sinners. It is called the blood of God: Acts 20:28. Feed the flock of God... which he hath purchased with his own blood. And, certainly, the blood of God must needs be an all-sufficient expiation for the sin of man.

(2) It gave Christ a power and an ability, to appease and satisfy infinite justice and wrath; and to break the chains of death, and the bars of the grave, under which he had been detained, else our salvation had been a thing desperate and deplorable: but, herein, is

he manifested to be the Son of God and Saviour of the World, even with power, in that he died and rose again.

4. He is an All-Sufficient Saviour by his human capacity. As he would not have been able to save us, unless he had been God; so he would not have been capable to save us, unless he had been Man.

Now Christ's Humanity hath a Twofold influence into the work of our redemption.

(1) In that, thereby, that person, who is God, became passive; and a fit subject to receive and bear the wrath of God.

(2) Hereby satisfaction is made to offended justice, in the same nature, which transgressed and offended. By man came death; and by the man Jesus Christ came the resurrection from the dead: 1 Cor. 15:21. And therefore Christ saith, a body hast thou prepared me: Heb. 10:5. To what end? The Apostle tells us, that, through death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil. Both natures are here required: his Human Nature, without which he could not suffer death; and the Divine Nature, without which he could not destroy him who had power of death.

5. He became an All-Sufficient Saviour, by the overflowing and unmeasurable unction of the Holy Ghost.

Thus, Isa. 61:1. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings, &c. John 3:34. God

gave not his Spirit in measure unto him; yea, the fulness of the godhead dwelt bodily in him: Col. 2:9 and all this was on purpose to furnish him with gifts and graces, suitable to the discharge of the great work of his mediatorship. Now, certainly, since he was by God the Father designed, and of his own self ready and willing, by his Humanity capacitated, by his Divinity fortified, and by the unction of the Holy Spirit furnished to the work of our salvation, he must needs be an All-Sufficient Saviour; able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him.

ii. In the next place, for the PERSONS whom Christ is thus enabled to save, they are described by their Faith and Obedience: They come to God by Christ. Observe,

Doct. II.

He Only Saves Those That Come Unto God by Him.

That CHRIST HIMSELF, ALTHOUGH HE IS AN ALL SUFFICIENT SAVIOUR, ABLE TO SAVE TO THE UTTERMOST, YET HE IS NOT ABLE TO SAVE THE DISOBEDIENT AND UNBELIEVERS.

He only saves those, that come unto God by him.

Now this,

1. Is not for want of merit or virtue in that sacrifice, which our High-Priest hath once offered up: not for want of any value or preciousness in his blood, or sufficiency in his price; for there is intrinsic virtue enough in the blood of Christ to save the whole world.

2. Nor is it from any natural dependance, that salvation hath upon faith and obedience; for God was free, and might have disposed of the eternal inheritance upon other terms. But,

3. It was only upon the ordination and appointment of God, who hath instituted the way of salvation to be by the death of Christ, who hath appointed the virtue of his death to be applied to us only by the grace of faith; which faith, without obedience and good works, is in itself dead, and can neither justify nor save us. So, then, without faith and obedience Christ cannot save us: because that virtue, whereby he should save us, cannot without these reach us; faith being the conveyance of the virtue of Christ's merits to the soul.

That is the Second Proposition.

iii. The Third and last shall be raised from the CONNEXION of both parts of the Text put together. Therefore he is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him; because he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Observe from hence.

Doct. III.

That THE TRUE GROUND AND REASON OF CHRIST'S ALL-SUFFICIENCY TO SAVE SINNERS, IS LAID UPON THE PREVALENCY OF HIS INTERCESSION FOR US.

And this, because it is the most comprehensive point, taking in both the former, is that, which I choose to insist upon.

In the prosecution of which Doctrine, I shall speak concerning Christ's Intercession.

His All-Sufficiency to Save, which depends upon and flows from it.

I. Concerning CHRIST'S INTERCESSION, I shall enquire into Three things:

What it is, and wherein it doth consist.

What the Extent and Latitude of it is.

What are the Benefits, that do redound to believers by it.

i. For the opening WHAT IT IS, we must know, that Intercession is a law term, borrowed from Courts of Judicature; and signifies the action of a proxy or attorney, either in suing out the rights of his client, or answering the cavils and objections brought against him by the plaintiff.

Thus doth Christ for believers. He appears for them: Heb. 9:24. He is entered into heaven, appearing in the presence of God for us. Nay, he doth, in some sense, carry believers into heaven with him, and there set them before his Father's throne; as we have it, Eph. 2:6. And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Even as the high-priest did bear the names of the Twelve Tribes upon his breast, when he entered into the Holy of Holies; so Christ, when he entered into heaven, bears upon his heart the names and persons of all his, and presents them before his Father. He hath taken their cause, and pleads it with God his Father; as the Apostle speaks: We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 1 John 2:1.

This Intercession is of Three sorts.

1. Charitative Intercession.

And, thus, one man is bound by the duty of charity and conscience to pray and intercede for another. And of this kind of intercession we have mention made, 1 Tim. 2:1. I exhort, therefore, that, first of all,

supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: that is, intercession of mutual charity one for another.

2. There is an Adjutory Intercession, a helping intercession.

And, thus, the Holy Spirit makes intercession for believers: Rom. 8:26, 27. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered, &c. He makes intercession for us, because, by his holy inspirations, he makes those prayers and intercessions for us, which we make for ourselves. And this is an Adjutory Intercession. We are indigent, and see not our own wants, nor have we tongues to express them; and, withal, we are dull and heavy, and make not importunate supplications; and, therefore, God sends his Spirit into our hearts, to discover our necessities to us, to raise desires in us, and to put words into our mouths and teach us what to pray for, and how to pray as we ought.

3. There is an Official and Authoritative Intercession. And this properly belongs to Christ.

And this may be considered under a Twofold respect.

(1) His Intercession, in his state of Humiliation.

And this is in a congruity to that debased state, wherein, with strong cries, and tears, and groans he made supplications to God: Heb. 5:7.

Yea, when he was under the sharpest agonies; when he was bruised by God and broken by men, suffering the wrath of the one, and the wrongs of the other; when his own pains might have made his prayers selfish, or his enemies' malice might have made him revengeful: yet, even then, he forgets not to intercede for them: Luke. 23:34. Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. Although he was made in the form of a servant; despised and rejected of men, (Is. 53:3.); accursed of God (Gal. 3:13.); exposed to reproach and injuries; devoted to death: notwithstanding all this, his intercession was not at all regarded the less, or the less prevalent; but, even in this low estate and vile appearance, he prayed with majesty and authority, Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, &c: John 17:24.

(2) His Intercession may be considered as performed on our behalf, in his state of Glory and Exaltation.

After his offering up of himself here upon earth as a sacrifice upon the cross, he entered into the Most Holy Place; and there he prosecutes the same suit, which he here commenced: Rom. 8:34. It is Christ that died; yea rather, that is risen again, who is ascended into heaven, where he continually maketh intercession for us.

This Glorious Intercession of Christ doth principally consist in these following particulars, which I shall endeavour to illustrate and open.

[1] In his appearing in the court of heaven in both natures, as our Mediator and Advocate; ready to answer any charge laid in against us, or suing out any good thing that belongs to us.

Thus, when Joshua, the high-priest, stood before the angel in filthy garments, Zech. 3:1. Satan stood at his right-hand to accuse him: the accusation was true: the crime was manifest: now, here, the Angel (that is, Jesus Christ) interposeth: he appears for us, saying, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan: what though the garments be filthy, I will take them away: I have caused their iniquity to pass from them. And this may be for our abundant consolation: though Satan, by his accusations and temptation, stand continually at our right-hand to resist us; yet Christ, in heaven, always stands at the right-hand of God to plead for us and silence Satan. And this was typified to us, by the high-priest entering into the Holy of Holies, to make intercession for the people.

[2] Christ presents, as his own person, so likewise the Persons of all his blessed ones throughout the world, of all believers and the elect ones, to God the Father.

And that, not only in the general or total sum, that they are so many thousands, for whom he obtained mercy, for whom he must obtain salvation; not only as the high-priests among the Jews, who only had the names of the Twelve Tribes engraven upon their breast-plates, but not the name of every particular person of those tribes: but Christ hath every particular saint's name engraven upon his breast,

and makes mention of every particular saint in his intercession to his Father: He is the good shepherd, John 10:14, that knows every one of his sheep by name: v. 3. Let the meanest Christian, who is so obscure that his name stands unknown upon earth, take comfort and rejoice in this, that his name is well known in heaven: Christ hath often spoken, and God hath often heard it. Yea, though Christ hath so many to hear, so many to relieve and gratify, yet let not the meanest, the most inconsiderable saint on earth think that he forgets him: for he knows him by name; and takes as much care and sollicitousness for his salvation, as if there were not a soul in the world to save besides him; making prayers for him, that his faith fail not, as Christ said to St. Peter: and what is said of him may be applied in truth to every believer: Luke 22:32.

[3] Christ's Intercession consists in presenting the Performances of his people unto God.

All the duties and services of all the saints on earth do only ascend to God, when as they are presented to him by Christ. For he is that Angel, mentioned in Rev. 8:3 having a golden censer, with much incense, which he offers up with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, &c. It was a true speech of him, John 9:31. God heareth not sinners: and, therefore, he never heareth us, because we are sinners; but he always heareth his Son, who speaks over for us the same prayers that we have before spoken: and so he hears us, speaking by him; and he is well-pleased with those duties, that otherwise would be an abomination to him.

[4] Christ presents to God as our services, so also his own Merits; and that as the full and equitable price of all the mercies for which he intercedes.

For Christ's intercession is not a bare begging of blessings, to be bestowed gratis upon us; but all his transactions in the court of heaven are in a way of satisfaction and purchase. Is sin to be pardoned? lo here is the blood of propitiation and atonement. Is mercy to be procured? lo here is the price of the purchase. All, that we receive through the intercession of Christ, is, at once, both the effect of free grace and bounty, and yet likewise the purchase of all-sufficiency and of a meritorious price. In respect of us, all is free: in respect of Christ's undertaking; without our pre-ordination, free, as to performance; without our premonition, free, in the effectual application of it to us. But, though all this is free grace, in respect of us; yet, in respect of Christ, it is the purchase of a full price, and cost him the laying aside of his own glory, the obscuring of himself in a vail of flesh, and the assuming of a body to prepare him for the work of our redemption: it cost him the losing of his life, the shedding of his most precious blood to accomplish that redemption: 1 Cor. 6:20; 1 Cor. 7:23. Ye are all bought with a price, &c. We are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold... but with the precious blood of Christ: 1 Pet. 1:18, 19. Now, as Christ once offered up himself upon the cross, so he continually offers up himself in intercession; and presents that blood to his Father, that he formerly shed for sinners: and, therefore, it is remarkable, that where Christ is called our Advocate, he is called likewise out Propitiation: 1 John 2:1,

2. If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is also the propitiation for our sins: noting to us, that the validity of the intercession of Christ consists in the merits of his death and sufferings; which price, offered up as a propitiation unto God in his intercession, is for the sins of all those that believe.

[5] Christ also presents his Will and Desire to his Father, in his Intercession: which, by virtue of his merits, is always heard and granted.

And this he doth, not in a supplicatory manner, but by authority; by the absolute dominion, which he hath over those mercies for which he intercedes: Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me, may be with me, &c. All authority is given to the Son: John 5:22. Therefore it is said, Rom. 8:34 that he is at the right-hand of God making intercession for us: which phrases import, that all power, both in heaven and earth, is consigned over to Christ; and, therefore, his intercession at the right-hand of God is an intercession with authority; such an intercession as cannot, as shall not be denied.

So, then, in these Five Particulars, we may see wherein the Intercession of Christ consists: in presenting his own Person, and appearing in the court of heaven for Us; in offering up our Duties and Services; in presenting his own Merits, and likewise his sovereign and uncontrollable Will to his Father: by all which we may rest abundantly secured, that all the good things, which we ask in his

name and that he asks on our behalf, shall be certainly conferred upon us.

So much for the First thing propounded, what the Intercession of Christ is, and wherein it doth consist.

ii. Let us consider, according to the method proposed, this Intercession of Christ IN THE LATITUDE AND EXTENT OF IT.

I shall do this under a Twofold respect:

In respect of the Time, wherein it is made.

In respect of the Persons, for whom it is prevalent.

1. Consider the Intercession of Christ, in respect of the Time.

And so we may take notice too, how he performed it before his assumption of flesh, and likewise how it shall be performed after the consummation of all things to all eternity.

(1) As to the former, observe, that though it be most eminently performed since the hypostatical union of both natures in the person of Christ; yet it was also effectually performed before his taking of our flesh upon him.

For, as now Christ intercedes upon the account of those sufferings, which he hath undergone in his body: so he interceded, and his intercession was prevalent, before he was made flesh; though the

merit, which made that intercession prevalent, was wrought out in the flesh. Therefore we find, in the Old Testament, Christ interceding before he was God-Man, actually; but, as the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, he was afterwards to be made God-Man: Zech. 1:12. The angel of the Lord (that is, Jesus Christ) answered and said, O Lord of Hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, &c. Yea, the saints then alive made use of the name of Christ, in their prayers to God the Father: so you have it, Dan. 9:17. Now, therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, &c. and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. So that hence you see, that Christ's intercession began in heaven, long before his abode here upon earth: yea, it was the very first part of the office of his mediatorship that he entered upon: Christ did nothing as Mediator, till after the Fall: and the first thing which he did as in that relation, was interceding for fallen man; to keep him from death threatened, and to restore him to life which he had forfeited.

(2) Consider Christ's intercession, not only as performed from all eternity, but after the consummation of all things.

He intercedes for his Church, not only while militant on earth, but when triumphant in glory: He ever liveth to make intercession for us. Christ is said to be a priest for ever: Heb. 6:20 and to have an unchangeable priesthood, in the verse before the text. The priesthood of Christ hath two parts, Oblation and Intercession: his Oblation was when he made his soul an offering for sin, and offered

up himself as a sacrifice to God upon the altar of the cross: now this part of his priesthood is ceased, Heb. 10:14; 9:26. By once offering up himself he hath perfected for ever, them that are sanctified, &c. Christ being a priest for ever, and not being a priest any longer in respect of his oblation, it remains, that the eternity of his priesthood descends upon his Intercession only; and, therefore, his Intercession is eternal.

But, you may ask me, "What need shall we stand in of the Intercession of Christ, when we are glorified with him; and what then shall he intercede for?"

To this I answer: The Intercession of Christ is twofold, Conciliatory and Reconciliatory. The first is that, whereby mercy and all good things, both temporal, spiritual, and eternal, are effectually procured for us, and bestowed upon us: the other is that, whereby pardon, justification, and atonement are freely conferred upon us. While we are upon the earth, we stand in need to receive the benefit of both these Intercessions: for they are aptly suited to our twofold state, of wants and miseries, and of sin and imperfection. Our Wants are supplied, by his Conciliatory Intercession; and our Sins pardoned, by his Reconciliatory Intercession: and of both these we have absolute need while we live here in this vale of tears. But, accordingly as the church and people of God do out-grow the state of want and sin, so likewise these Intercessions of Christ, our High-Priest, cease.

[1] Christ's Reconciliatory Intercession ever ceaseth in heaven, when he hath gathered together the number of his elect into one: for then they shall all be in a full, perfect, and sinless condition. We shall then never more offend God, never more be alienated and estranged from God by sin: and, when we are possessed of such a blessed state as this, there shall be no more need of a Daysman, to make intercession and reconciliation for all distances; and enmity shall be utterly abolished. Therefore, Christ's Intercession doth not last for ever, as to this part which is Reconciliatory.

[2] As for his Consolatory Intercession, whereby he obtains for us mercy and all good things, that is, those good things that are either temporal or spiritual, or that respect either this life or the future state of glory in heaven; the former part of this Intercession of Christ shall likewise shortly cease, because this life itself shall shortly cease, and the saints themselves also: for, when all, that have been translated or that have died, shall be raised to a better life, all the wants which they do now sustain, a want of grace, or a want of peace, or a want of protection, or a want of provision, inward wants or outward worldly wants or evils, shall all cease there: and therefore the Intercession of Christ, as it respects the mercies of this life, shall shortly cease.

Christ's Intercession for Future Glory, is either for the substance of it or for the continuance of it.

As for the Substance of their Glory, Christ intercedes for that before he crowns them with it: John 17:24. Father, I will that those, whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me. The Beatifical Vision is the very glory and happiness of the saints in heaven; and, when they are brought to behold this glory of Christ, this Intercession ceaseth.

But, then, there is Christ's Intercession for the Continuance of their Glory. And this is that Intercession, which is everlasting; that Intercession, which he ever liveth to make. As our Saviour Christ ever lives, so he ever makes Intercession for the saints; that they may never be cut off from God's presence, nor fall from their happiness, nor forfeit their glorious inheritance: for, in heaven itself though we be there in a most perfect and sinless state, yet, were it not for the Intercession of Christ whereby every moment he procures us a confirmation of that estate, we should have no more security of our continuance than the angels which fell, who were more holy and happy than ever we were; we should have no more confirmation than Adam had in Paradise, who forfeited his happiness by the mutability of his own will. Therefore, I say, the continuance of the saints now in heaven depends upon the Everlasting Intercession of Jesus Christ.

Thus we have considered the Extent of Christ's Intercession, as to the Time wherein he makes it; and that, before his incarnation, and likewise after the consummation of all things.

2. Let us now consider the Extent of Christ's Intercession as to the Persons, for whom he intercedes.

And that is for all his, in opposition to the world. We have this plain in Christ's prayer on earth, which is the pattern and draught of his intercession in heaven: John 17:9. I pray not for the world; but for them, which thou hast given me out of the world. I pray for them; those, that thou designest shall be brought to glory by my merits. Now, of these, some are yet in a state of nature; disobedient, impenitent, unbelievers: others are in a state of grace; actually converted and regenerated: Christ intercedes for both: for these latter he intercedes throughout the whole chapter. John 17:20. Neither pray I for these alone, but for all those, that shall believe on me through their word: many of which were then living, and received the benefits of Christ's intercession in their effectual vocation and conversion. For unbelievers, Christ prays that they may obtain grace; for believers, that they may obtain more grace, and through it be brought to glory.

And that is the second consideration in respect of the Intercession of Christ, as to the Latitude and Extent of it, both as to the Time and Persons.

iii. Another thing propounded, is, to consider, the Intercession of Christ, IN RESPECT OF THE BENEFITS THAT FLOW FROM IT: and those are very great and manifold blessings, worthy to be obtained by so great an Advocate.

There are but Two things, wherein the office of an Advocate properly consists:

To defend his client from wrongs and injuries.

To procure good things for him.

The first he doth, by answering the accusations and exceptions, that are brought against him; and the latter he doth, by suing out his right and title. Both these the Lord Jesus Christ, our Advocate, doth for us.

1. He defends us from those Evils, that our adversaries, by their accusations, would bring against us.

As we are sinners, God's justice, our own consciences, and Satan's malice come in as our adversaries, and all lay their several charges against us. Justice calls for vengeance, Conscience thunders, Satan rages, and all accuse us. God calls to the bar. "Sinner, such and such a sin thou art guilty of, that deserves eternal damnation."—"True, Lord," saith Conscience: "I will witness the same against him, having warned him of it and checked him for it; but he hath fallen upon me, and wounded me, while I, in thy name, have given him these admonitions."—"True, Lord," saith the Devil too: "All this he did upon my suggestions and temptations, therefore resign him over to me for punishment."

Now when the poor sinner stands mute and trembling, his mighty Advocate pleads his cause; and silences all these accusations that are

brought against him, and sets him right. And this he doth Two ways.

(1) He doth it by reconciling God and Conscience, through his own blood.

Which blood, as it is the blood of atonement, so it reconciles God and us; and, as it is the blood of sprinkling, so it reconciles our own Consciences to us. As it is the blood of atonement, so we are reconciled to God, and God to us: Rom. 5:10. We are reconciled to God by the death of his Son: and it is that blood, which speaketh better things for us than the blood of Abel; for, as that cries to God for vengeance, so this cries louder for mercy and forgiveness. As it is the blood of sprinkling, so it reconciles our own Consciences to us, and makes them at peace with us: Heb. 10:22. Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, &c.: an evil conscience, that is, an accusing and an affrighting conscience: it is said to be sprinkled, because the blood of Christ must first produce purity in our souls, before it can procure any well-grounded peace. That is the first particular, how Christ defends us from the accusations of our adversaries, by reconciling the justice of God and our own consciences to us.

(2) Our Advocate defends us, as by reconciling God and our own consciences to us, so by stopping the mouth of the Devil; who, because he can never be reconciled, therefore he must be silenced.

So we find that Christ stopped the mouth of that great accuser, Zech. 3:2. The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord, that hath chosen

Jerusalem, rebuke thee, &c. Thus our Lord Jesus Christ, by his powerful intercession, silenceth all the accusations that are brought against us, by the justice of God and our own consciences, reconciling them unto us, and stopping the mouth of our implacable adversary the Devil; so that none of their accusations, though preferred against us, can prevail to our detriment or disadvantage. All this we have summarily collected together in Rom. 8:33, 34. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he, that condemneth? It is Christ, that died; yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right-hand of God, making intercession for us.

This is the first great benefit, which we receive from the Intercession of Christ: he defends us from those evils, which our adversaries, through their accusations, endeavour to bring upon us and prefer against us.

2. I now come to speak of those Good Things, which, by Christ's merits we have a Right and Title to.

And innumerable are the benefits, that redound to believers by the Intercession of Christ.

If you enquire what they are, I answer,

(I) In General, the whole work of our salvation depends, as well upon the Life and Intercession of Christ, as upon his Death and Sufferings.

Though this may seem strange possibly to those, who are wont to hear our salvation ascribed only to the death and sufferings of Christ; yet it evidently appears from Scripture, that our salvation and all the benefits we are to receive and expect do as much flow from the virtues of his glorious life and intercession, as from the merits of his death and passion.

There are Two things requisite, before any good thing can become ours.

A Meritorious Procurement or Purchase of the thing itself.

An Actual and Effectual Application of it to us.

Now the Purchase is made by his death and sufferings; but the effectual application of them is by his life and intercession. By the former, the mercies are purchased: by the latter, the purchase is enjoyed. Therefore, if Christ had only died, and not risen again, and overcome and triumphed over death in his own empire, and triumphed over the grave as in his own territories, his undertakings had redounded to his own disappointment, but not at all to our salvation: but, herein, saith the Apostle, doth he declare himself, to be the Son of God with power... by his resurrection from the dead: Rom. 1:4 our hopes of salvation had been all buried in the same grave with him, but that what he died to purchase he lives to bestow: for he ever liveth to make intercession.

There was no one prejudice, that hindered the Gospel so much from taking place in the hearts of the Heathens in the primitive times, as the death and cross of Christ; for they believed that he was lifted up upon the cross: but would not believe, that he was raised from the grave. Their natural reason herein taught them this inference, That, to expect life from Christ, was to hope for it from him, that could not preserve his own, or restore it again after the loss of it.

It is true, it seems to natural reason, to be folly thus to hope for life from a dead person: were it not that his life applied what his death purchased; and our salvation, which was begun on the cross, is perfected on the throne. And therefore we have it in Acts 2:24. God raised him from the grave, because it was impossible that he should be held of it.

"Why was it not possible that Christ should be held of the grave?" I answer, upon these Two accounts.

One impossibility was in regard of his Person; another, in regard of his office: for, as he was man, so he abhorred death, and a separation from his body; and, as he was God, so he was able to reunite them, to overcome death, and burst asunder the bars of the grave: so that, as man having a desire to live, and as God having power to live, it was impossible for him to be detained prisoner in the grave.

But this is not all: there is another impossibility in regard of his Office. He was appointed to redeem lost man, to rescue him from eternal death: and therefore it was impossible for him to be kept

under the power of any temporal death, because this could not be done while he lay under a restraint of the grave: his death would have been but a dead thing to us, without his resurrection: it was his life, that put virtue into his death.

The obedience of Christ hath a Twofold virtue.

As it is a Satisfaction to Offended Justice.

As it is a Purchase of Forfeited Mercy.

Both these become benefits to us, by Christ's life and intercession.

[1] His Satisfaction to Offended Justice, whereby we are reconciled to God and God to us, that satisfaction which was purchased and procured by his death, becomes beneficial to us by his life.

So we have it, Rom. 5:10. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. But the actual application of this is by his life: therefore it follows, in the same place, much more shall we be saved by his life. We were fully reconciled by his death, in respect of merit; but we are much more reconciled by his life, in respect of the effectual application of that merit to us.

[2] Christ purchased those Blessings and Mercies, which we had forfeited; and they are made effectual and beneficial to us by his life.

There are three great and principal mercies, which Christ purchased for us; Justification and Pardon, Sanctification or Holiness, and the future Inheritance of Life and Glory. These three become effectual to us by Christ's life.

1st. Justification and the Pardon of our Sins become effectual and beneficial to us by the life of Christ.

Rom. 4:25. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. If he had not risen from the dead, he himself could not be justified; much less could we be justified by him. And, therefore saith the Apostle, 1 Tim. 3:16. And, without controversy, great is the mytery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, &c. that is, he was manifested in the flesh, in his incarnation: he was seen of angels, in his glorious ascension: but he was justified in the Spirit, in his resurrection. Had he never been raised from the dead by his Spirit, that is, by the almighty power of the divine nature, he had not been declared just, nor could he ever have justified us.

2dly. Sanctification and Holiness is the powerful effect of the life of Christ, though it was the purchase of his death.

Therefore saith the Apostle, Phil. 3:10. That ye may know him, and the power of his resurrection: that is, that power, which, through his resurrection, he doth apply to us, and by which he raiseth us up also to newness of life. And this he calls our being planted together in the likeness of his resurrection: Rom 6:5. For, if we have been planted

together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.

3dly. Our future Inheritance of Life and Glory, is likewise, ascribed to the life of Christ, though it was purchased by his death.

John 14:19. Because I live, ye shall live also: that is, because I live eternally in heaven, ye shall live eternally in heaven also.

So then, in the General, you see that there is no benefit redounding to believers by the death of Christ, but the same doth redound to them likewise by the life of Christ: which life is ever employed in the work of Intercession: He ever liveth to make intercession for us. See what the Apostle saith: Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. It might happily be inverted to us: Whether the Lord lives, he, lives for us; or, whether he dies, he dies for us; and, whether the Lord lives or dies, it is for our advantage.

But this is only in the general; and, therefore,

(2) To come and descend to Particulars: there are very many great benefits, that do redound to believers by the life and Intercession of Christ.

[1] Hence we obtain the mystical union, both to God and one another.

John 17:21. Christ prays, that his saints may be all one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee. And from this union flows all that fellowship and communion, which they have either with God or with one another: their communion with God depends upon their union to him in the sameness of spirit; and their communion among themselves depends upon their mutual union to the same body; and both depend upon this prayer of Christ.

[2] The inestimable gift of the Holy Ghost, likewise, is the benefit of Christ's Intercession.

John 16:7. If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you: so, John 14:16, 17. I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you for ever. All the motions, breathings, evidences, and supports of the Holy Spirit which you enjoy, as they were the purchase of Christ's death, so also are they benefits obtained by his life and intercession for us. Hence also was it, that, in the first age of the Church, there were those extraordinary and miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost; the gifts of tongues and healing, &c. Acts 2:33.

[3] Through this Intercession, we have boldness and confidence at the Throne of Grace.

Heb. 4:14, 15. Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God... let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Eph. 3:12. In whom we have

boldness and access with confidence through the faith of him. Who would not be encouraged to go boldly to God, that hath an Advocate to plead for him, that never yet had the least denial?

[4] Hence, also, we receive all our strength and growth in grace.

John 17:17. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. Grace, together with all the measures and degrees of it, is derived to us, as from Christ's fulness, so by his intercession: it is received by our prayers, and conveyed to us by his prayer.

[5] Hence we obtain, likewise, perseverance and continuance in grace.

John 17:11. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me. I have prayed, saith Christ to Peter, that thy faith fail not: and, upon this incense of Christ's prayer, is built the perseverance of the saints in grace.

[6] Hence, likewise, we are preserved both against temptation; and, from sin, when under temptation.

John 17:15. I pray.... that thou shouldest keep them from the evil: that is, from the evil of temptation, so that Satan never come near us; or, from the evil which he tempts us to, so that though he assault us he may never prevail: that we may be either free from temptation, or at least victorious over it. So, Luke 10:17. The Devil is bound up by this almighty prayer: and, though there be no saint on earth, that

enjoys perfect freedom either from sin or temptations to sin; yet these temptations would be much more frequent, and always prevalent over us, did not Christ's prayer interpose by mighty force and strength, and beat back Satan's fiery darts that they cannot reach us, or rebate their force and sharpness that they cannot hurt us.

[7] From Christ's Intercession we, likewise, do obtain acceptance of all our duties.

He sees the iniquity of our holy things, and cleanses us from all the imperfection, corruption, and sinfulness, that adhere to them: even by that incense, that he offers up with the prayers of all the saints, he makes them acceptable and a sweet savour to God the Father. Not that the incense of the Intercession of Christ casts a mist before God, that he should not discern the faults and infirmities of our best services: yea, he clearly sees them, and fully knows them; yet those performances, which in themselves were abominable and sinful, through the perfume of his incense become a sweet savour to God, and he accepts of them with as much complacency and delight as he doth of the perfect services of the angels themselves.

[8] From the Intercession of Christ we receive the benefit of the Spirit's making intercession for us in our hearts; with prayer for us, that we, through the Spirit, may be enabled to pray again.

All our prayers are, indeed, but the echoing back of his own Spirit: Gal. 4:6. Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father. The Holy Ghost is here

called the Spirit of his Son, because Christ hath purchased him for his by his death, and sent him into the hearts of his by his authority and commission.

Thus you see there are sundry great Benefits and Privileges, which we receive by the life and intercession of Christ in heaven.

But you may say, "Doth Christ's Intercession always prevail? Is he never denied? And may we be certain to obtain all these benefits by him?"

I answer, we may: and this certainty is grounded upon Three things.

First. In that the Father always hears and grants him all his desires: John 11:41, 42. I know that thou hearest me always. He is the well-beloved Son of God: and, therefore, as we are bid by that heavenly voice, Mat. 17:5 to hear him, in all his commands; so will his Father hear him, in all his requests.

Secondly. The Father himself loves us; and is willing and ready to give forth those good things to us, that we stand in need of. So we have it, John 16:26, 27. I say not.... that I will intercede for you: you may be fully assured I will; and, therefore, whatsoever I ask shall be granted: for my Father.... loveth you, and will deny me no request that is for your good.

Thirdly. That all these benefits are at the command and disposal of Christ himself: and, therefore, as he intercedes that these benefits

may be bestowed upon us, so he himself will bestow them; for they are at his command, and under his authority: Mat. 28:18. All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth: and, therefore all these things shall certainly be conferred upon you in their due time and order, through the prevalency of the Intercession of Christ.

Thus I have cursorily run over these things, which might have been much dilated upon, because I will hasten to that, which is more practical.

Thus much for that Position, That Christ ever liveth to make Intercession for us.

II. The next thing, that remains to be treated of, is the Inference deduced and drawn from the Position: Therefore, he is able to save to the uttermost those that came unto God by him: from which I shall handle CHRIST'S ALL-SUFFICIENCY TO SAVE; and, therein, labour to set forth the freeness and fulness of divine grace in the salvation of sinners.

In order whereunto I have already shewed you, that Christ was made thus an All-Sufficient Saviour, by the Father's designation, and his own voluntary susception; by the capacity of his human nature, fitting him to receive wrath; by the power of the divine nature, enabling him to reluctate it; and by an unmeasurable unction of the Holy Ghost, furnishing him, with all endowments requisite to perfect our redemption.

Christ, being thus every way qualified for this great work, is made all-sufficient to save: and his all-sufficiency to save will appear in these following particulars.

CHRIST IS ABLE TO SAVE THE GREATEST OF SINNERS

i. IN THE GREATNESS OF THE NUMBER AND THE HEINOUNESS OF THE NATURE OF THOSE SINS, FROM WHICH HE IS ABLE TO DELIVER.

Though your sins be as many as the sands, and as great as the mountains, swelled up with fearful aggravations that make them out of measure sinful; yet he can say to the mountains, "Be removed, and cast into the bottom of the sea" even the red sea of his own blood; and it shall be done. This was prefigured by the Scape-Goat, Lev. 16:21 upon which the iniquities of all the children of Israel were laid, that he might carry them into the Land of Forgetfulness. And, as the Scape-Goat, so the Paschal-Lamb represented Christ, and his all-sufficiency to save: and therefore we have that speech of John the Baptist, John 1:29. Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. Yea, this was alluded to by the imposition of his name: Mat. 1:21. Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.

There are Two things in sin, which we stand in need to be saved from.

From its Pollution; which, of itself, is enough to exclud us out of heaven, into which no unclean thing shall ever enter.

From its Condemnation; by which we are excluded out of heaven, and adjudged to hell.

From both these, he is able to save to the very uttermost.

I. Christ is able to save you from the Pollution and Defilement of your foulest lusts and sins; and that, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost: Tit. 3:5.

Those spots of defilement, that have so polluted and stained your consciences, that no tears, though your eyes were turned into ever-running streams, would ever be able to wash out, yet the sprinkling of the blood of Christ can. It can purge the heart and conscience from dead works: Heb. 9:14 and change the scarlet and crimson complexion of it into whiteness and purity. There is no sinner here this day, though his heart be as foul and black as hell, though his life swarm with abominable lusts of all sorts, yet, Christ, by his Almighty Spirit and efficacious grace, can in an instant transform and new mould him; and, of a desperate and outrageous sinner, make him an humble and broken-hearted saint. See that black catalogue, 1 Cor. 6:9, 10, 11. Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers.... nor thieves.... nor drunkards.... shall inherit the kingdom of God. What saith the Apostle concerning such? Such were some of you: why, is it possible that grace should change, or mercy pardon, or the Devil lose such great sinners as these are? Yet such

were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified.... in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Yea, and this all-sufficiency of Christ to save and sanctify the vilest and most flagitious sinner, is made more eminently glorious in these particulars.

(1) In that he is able to effect this mighty change in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, without waiting upon the methods of previous preparations or dispositions.

The Spirit doth not always stand knocking by common motions, persuasions, and convictions, and legal terrors: but, sometimes, forceth and breaketh open the heart; and, by his irresistible efficacy, suddenly surpriseth the soul, and seizeth on it, and captivateth it to the obedience of the Lord Christ. As, at mid-day, when we remove the shuts of our windows, light doth, not enter in by degrees, first dawning and darting in some weak beams of light, and then some further degrees; but it springs in at once, and at one moment irradiates and enlightens the room with a perfect and full-grown brightness: so, sometimes, the Sun of Righteousness doth arise upon the heart, without the circumstances of a dawning; though this is not, indeed, God's usual method in converting sinners. Nay, sometimes, it darts both light and warmth, at once, through the whole heart; by which our Almighty Saviour can, in a moment, work a greater change by far, than God wrought in all the Six-Days' Creation: he can, at once, melt down the hard heart and subdue the stubborn will, tame

headstrong passions and violent affections, and demolish the strongholds of iniquity that have many years been fortifying against him: he can both wound and heal, kill and make alive, destroy sin and plant grace; and that, with such dispatch, as can prevent, not only the endeavours, but the observation of a sinner.

(2) The all-sufficiency of Christ to save and sanctify appears in this also, that sometimes he works this mighty change at such an unlikely season; when the sinner is the hottest and the most eager in the prosecution of his lust.

It is easy to shew, by some remarkable instances, what he is able to do, by converting a sinner to himself, not only without preparations to assist him, but against the strongest preparations that the sinner and the devil have made to resist him. Some have been surprised by grace in the very act of sin, that might have provoked justice to have damned them: mercy hath made it an opportunity for their salvation: some circumstances in their sin have proved to be the beginning of their conversion. Thus St. Paul, in the midst of his threatening, in the height and heat of his persecutions, when he was going to Damascus, to hale and imprison those that made profession of the name of Christ, was, by the almighty grace of Christ, turned to be an Apostle. And so, in Isaiah 58:8. Notwithstanding that he goes on to add sin to sin and iniquity to iniquity I have seen his ways, saith God, and I will heal him; by my efficacious and almighty grace breaking in upon him in a moment.

(3) Christ's all-sufficiency to sanctify and save a sinner appears to be eminently glorious, in that he is able to work this great and mighty change by such contemptible means, as, to the eye of human reason, is altogether insufficient to achieve it; and that is, by the preaching of the word.

Should God himself speak out of heaven in thunder; should we hear the voice of his terrible majesty in the clouds, "Repent, Repent, or eternally perish;" should some angel, that is now ministering among us, make himself visible, and from this place denounce wrath and vengeance against impenitent sinners, and promise peace and pardon to all that shall believe, repent, and reform their lives; should some damned wretch be released out of hell, and sent hither on purpose to warn you to repent, or for ever to be swallowed up in fiery wrath, if you should see him speaking flames at every word, this were a likely course to move you: for who would be so senseless and obdurate, as not to be convinced at such a sermon as this? But know, that God hath committed the word of reconciliation not unto them, but unto us, earthen vessels as we are. And yet, alas! what can we do? we can but stammer out a few words, that are soon last, that are soon scattered: we can but reprove men for their sins, threaten them with wrath, admonish them to fly to Jesus Christ for his righteousness, and beseech them through him to be reconciled to God. Now, that this should be of such force as to persuade conscience, to break the heart, to ransack the bowels, even of those very sinners, who perhaps came with prejudices, contempt, and scorn; what is this, but a plain and evident demonstration of the almighty power of God, who, by

the foolishness of preaching, saveth those that do believe; thereby convincing the world that there is nothing so weak and contemptible, but God can by it bring to pass things wonderful and miraculous.

That is the First thing, whereby it doth appear, that Christ is all-sufficient to save sinners: the greatness of the Number, the heinousness of the Nature, and the Pollution of those sins, from which he is able to deliver; as I have shewed in these Three particulars.

2. Christ is able to save, not only from the pollution of the foulest, but from the Guilt and Condemnation of the greatest sins; and that, by a free pardon and remission of them.

What greater sins than blasphemy and persecution? yet, saith St. Paul concerning himself, 1 Tim. 1:13. I was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor.... but I obtained mercy. Therefore, we cannot say with Cain, as the marginal note renders it, "My iniquity is greater than can be forgiven: I have out-sinned mercy; and there is nothing remains for me, but the fearful expectation of the fiery indignation, which will certainly devour me." Is not that blood of infinite value, which God shed for thee? Hath not this all-sufficient Saviour borne the whole wrath which thou shouldst have borne? Hath he not brought life and immortality to light; and wilt thou be so injurious as to think thy sins more vile, than his blood is precious? or, that there is more venom in them to destroy thee, than there is virtue in his blood to save thee? Let not the Devil persuade thee, before the commission of thy sins,

that they are so little, that they need no pardon; nor, after the commission of them, that they are so heinous, that they cannot be pardoned. Man is in nothing more provoking to God, than when he believes that his sins cannot be pardoned.

There are but two sins which are unpardonable. The one, is the dreadful Sin against the Holy Ghost; and the other, is Final Unbelief. Final Unbelief cannot be pardoned, because the death of Christ, by which all pardon is obtained, can be applied to the soul by no other means than faith. The Sin against the Holy Ghost cannot be pardoned, because it is a malicious rejection of the blood of Christ, and all pardon by it.

Hast thou reason to think thyself guilty of either of these sins?

Thou canst not say thou art guilty of Final Unbelief; for that cannot be, until the last moment of thy life.

But that, which most of all troubles the despairing soul, is, lest it hath committed the Unpardonable Sin against the Holy Ghost. And this many are afflicted with: this they fear; and so, in the extreme anguish and horror of their souls, they cry out that they are lost, that they are damned, that there is no hope, no pardon for them. If it be so indeed, that there is no pardon for thee; yet this outcry confutes itself: for the Sin against the Holy Ghost is, of all others, the least jealous and suspicious. I am persuaded, that the consideration of the nature of this sin will persuade us, that there is no man guilty of it, but he, that is also given up by God to a reprobate mind and a seared

conscience, and so grown quite past feeling as never to complain of his miserable condition.

Thy very troubles, therefore, thy very despairing thoughts, shew that thou hast no reason to despair, and that thy sins are not unpardonable: and, therefore, be they what they will, the deformity of them never so ugly, the guilt of them as ghastly as thy guilty conscience represents them, yet there is an all-sufficiency in Christ to save thee fully.

Is it the numberless number of them, that affrights thee? Were they yet more, Christ can save thee from them: 1 John 1:7. The blood of... Christ... cleanseth from all sin. Dost thou complain, O Soul, that thy sins are as many in number as the sand upon the sea-shore? yea, but dost thou not know likewise, that the sea can cover the sands? so the overflowing blood of Christ can reach the uttermost borders and extent of all thy sins; and keep them from the sight of God, that they shall never more appear.

Is it the greatness and the heinous nature of thy sins, that afflict thee? Possibly thou mightst think I flatter thee, to tell thee thou shouldst gather ground of hope rather than of despair: for thou hast now a plea for pardon. See how the prophet David urgeth this as an argument with God, for the forgiveness of them: For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity: why? It may be they are so great, that they cannot in justice be pardoned: Yea, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great. It is a very strange argument, one would

think, thus to plead with men: "Pray pardon me, because I have done you a great injury": and yet, with God, whose thoughts are not as the thoughts of men, and whose ways are not as the ways of men, this strange argument is very forcible and prevalent: "Lord, pardon me, because I have sinned greatly:" thou speakest more reason by far, than if thou shouldst say, thy sins are great and heinous, and therefore there is no hope of pardon for them.

3. Now Christ's all-sufficiency to save the greatest and the worst of sinners appears in these following particulars.

(1) In that he is able to save the Oldest and most Accustomed Sinner; and to make the last hour of his life the first of his eternal happiness.

And, in this, if in any thing, the almighty power of Christ to save is made most wonderfully glorious. When an old sinner, that hath trudged on apace to destruction, and hath arrived even at the very brink of hell, when there were but a few steps between him and eternal death, nay when he stuck there, and there was nothing to recover him, for Christ then to give him a lift over that vast gulph, and then give him another lift over to everlasting life, what can be said in this case, but what the Psalmist saith in Ps. 89:13. Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand? Such a man's condition is very sad and dangerous: and, if any thing were too hard for all-sufficiency to achieve, it were altogether desperate.

Now there are several things, which advance the power of Christ in saving Old Sinners. As,

[1] That the Devil's possession of an old overgrown sinner is mightily confirmed both in strength and title.

In Strength; in that he hath had time to fortify every stronghold of iniquity, and to make them impregnable. In Title; because, through long possession, the Devil pleads right by prescription, and time out of mind over the soul, so that it seems almost a vain attempt to rescue that soul from sin: and, though all things were made by and for God, yet here you see God's title seems as it were to fail, and the Devil's takes place; for, by a long custom in sin, such outstand the offers of grace, abuse the patience of God, and provoke him to give them up judicially to hardness of heart; by long delay, they more strengthen the Devil's title, and make their salvation the more difficult and hazardous.

[2] Old Sinners are so soaked and drenched in the cares and concernments of this world, that, by a strange sottishness, the nearer they approach to the evil day, the further they put it off from them; never thinking of eternity, until they are irrecoverably swallowed up in it.

As those, that work in deep mines, see not the sun, and know not how the day passeth away: so those earth-worms, that toil and drudge to load themselves with thick clay out of the bowels of the earth, never consider how far their day is spent, nor how near their sun is to setting; never consider once how the day goes over their

heads, but still work deeper and deeper till they have opened a passage through earth into hell, into which at last they fell headlong.

[3] Old Sinners have long built up and supported themselves with false and flattering hopes.

Either presumptuous conceits of God's mercy, or proud conceits of their own merits, or some such rotten principle or other: and, because, with these, they have worne out many storms of conscience and many powerful convictions, they will not forsake their hopes, nor let go their vain confidence; but cry out peace, peace to themselves, till they and their hopes perish together.

[4] By a long course of sinning incorrigibly, they have wearied out divine patience, and all the strivings of the Blessed Spirit of God; till, at last, they have provoked the Lord to pronounce a curse and a judicial hardness upon these Old Sinners.

And, because they would not be purged when he would have purged them, therefore they shall never be purged from their iniquities, till wrath seizes upon them, and seals them, and sets them aside for the Devil.

The condition therefore of Old Sinners is very dangerous and deplorable, and very seldom are such converted and saved.

But, yet, this is not the cause: the oldness or customariness of their sins makes them not unpardonable, nor sets them out of the reach of

Christ's all-sufficiency to save; but, because they are so tough and stubborn, that they will not come to God through Christ, that they may be saved by him. Yet, notwithstanding their case is thus forlorn and desperate, the all-sufficiency of Christ may be extended unto such as these, to bring them to salvation, and to cure and heal them, and save them from those sins that would deprive them of it.

Poor sinners! did you never read that Christ staunched an issue of blood that had run twelve years? Mark 5:25 and how he straightened a woman that was bowed together eighteen years? yea, how he healed an impotent man, that had an infirmity thirty-eight years? John 5:5. And shall a miracle of power be able to cure an old disease, and not a miracle of grace be able to cure an old sinner? Though your bloody issue of sin hath run long; though you have lain bound under sin not seventeen or eighteen, but perhaps eighty years; yet come, though it be in the last hour of the day. Though your sins are old, yet they are not so old as those mercies that are everlasting. You are not too old for grace, nor too old to be new-born. Lazarus riseth again, though he had lain four days in the grave; and the same hand, that raised him, can raise you from the power of the Devil, though you have lain there not four days, but fourscore years, dead in sin and trespasses. The Thief on the Cross Christ saved, not many hours before his death: as though Christ would shew the world, by this example, what he can do in a desperate case. And could he thus save, when he suffered; and cannot he much more save, now he is glorified and triumphant? Old houses, many times, are repaired and made meet habitations again: so you, though you have been an old

tenement for the Devil, may be so repaired by grace as to become a temple for the Holy Ghost. Be persuaded, therefore, yet at length to accept of the tenders of an all-sufficient Saviour. Your day is almost spent, and your life stands upon the brink of the grave: if you now neglect so great salvation, as the Lord Jesus in the Gospel proffers to you, your death may be so soon as to prevent another offer of him to you; but it shall not, nay it cannot be so soon, as to prevent salvation by Christ, if you accept of this offer.

(2) Christ is able to save those, who have Frequently Relapsed into the commission of the same sin.

This is that, I know, which galls and stings the consciences of many sinners. It is not so much the multitude of their sins that affrights them, as the frequent commission of the same sins. "Oh," saith one, "I am guilty of reiterated and oft-repeated sins. I have committed the same sin, again and again; notwithstanding I have been convinced of it; notwithstanding I have prayed, resolved, and vowed against it. Notwithstanding all the convictions and overtures which I have had, and notwithstanding all the resolutions which I have made, I have again relapsed into the same sins; and those, not of ordinary infirmity and human frailty, but sins of a gross and scandalous nature. And are such sins pardonable?"

I answer, These relapses, although they are very dangerous, yet they are not altogether incurable. It is hard, to soften a heart, that is treacherous to God and to itself, and very deeply engaged in some

particular lust; when we are frequently overcome by the same corruption, by the same temptation: but, yet, this is not such an aggravation, as should leave our sins, unpardonable, or us desperate. The Jews, indeed, have a tradition among them, that the fourth relapse into the same sin makes it an unpardonable offence; but we know that the mercy of God and the infinite merit of Christ, are not stinted by any number of sins, nor by any number of the same sins. It is not with us as with drowning men, that if they sink the fourth time they never rise again. Certainly, that Christ, who bids us to forgive our brother, though he should offend us to seventy times seven offences, and hath not excepted reiterated provocations, will, upon our repentance, so much oftener forgive us, as his great mercy is above our charity. Though we have committed those sins and provocations against himself; though it be matter of bitter and deep humiliation, that any corruption should be so prevalent as frequently to overcome us, and that notwithstanding conviction, contrition, and heart-breaking confession: yet it is no cause of despair of mercy. The grace of Christ can subdue such rooted sinners as these. And what sins soever the grace of Christ can subdue, the mercy of God can pardon.

(3) Christ can save the profoundest and most notorious Backslider.

And backsliding is the greatest obstruction to a sinner's hope. This is that, which fills him with fears and terrors: "Oh, I have been guilty of apostacy. I have tasted of the sweetness of the heavenly gift, and of the powers of the world to come: yet I have fallen back to my carnal

temper, from the holy ways of God; and have again backslided and wallowed in my former pollutions, from which I seemed sometimes to be cleansed and refined. And is this Apostacy pardonable?"

I answer, There is indeed an unpardonable apostacy, described in that dreadful place, Heb. 6:8: it is impossible for such a one to be renewed by repentance, &c.: this is the same with the Sin against the Holy Ghost: and this no man is guilty of, but he, that hath cast off all means tending to salvation and eternal life, and all desires after it. There is also an apostacy from great attainments, both of gifts and graces: when a man's zeal to God's glory cools, when his vigour in holy duties faints, when his relish to spiritual objects vitiates, and he returns to a lukewarm and indifferent temper, and it may be to a sinful and wicked life: though this be very sad and dreadful, yet the man is both pardonable and recoverable: see that most comfortable place, Jer. 3:22. Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God.

I shall not instance in any other aggravations, which make sin out of measure sinful, and make the sinner out of measure dangerous; since, if the Old Sinner, if the Relapsing, if the Apostatizing Sinner be pardonable and saveable, none then have reason to exclude themselves from the hopes of eternal life.

Indeed, the only danger is, lest the wickedness of men abuse this most comfortable doctrine; and turn that into presumption, which is

only intended to arm them against despair.

Indeed, both Presumption and Despair do tend, in divers manners, to enrage and harden men in sin.

The Despairing Person judgeth, "If I must not be saved, if my sins are such as that there is no pardon for them, to what purpose do I then live strictly, and vex, and cross myself, and perplex my life? I will let loose the reins, and enjoy myself; and reap as great a crop as I can of pleasure: and, if I must to hell, I will make the way as delightful as I can."

And the argument, on the other side, that encourageth and hardeneth the Presumptuous Sinner, is this: "Christ is able to save to the uttermost the vilest sinners. We hear no sins are beyond his all-sufficiency to save: therefore," say they, "what need we trouble ourselves to repent and reform? We will yet awhile indulge ourselves in sin: for the efficacy of Christ is as able to save in the last moment of our lives, as after many years' preparations."

We see iniquity every where fearfully abounding: and, though we use to say despair kills its thousands, and presumption its ten thousands; yet, if we narrowly consider, possibly it may be found that this kind of despair in men, arising from sloth and carelessness, is as great a source of impiety as presumption. Whence else is it, that many, who are convinced, and whose consciences are blackened with the sense of wrath, persist still to add iniquity to iniquity; but because they think that there is no salvation for them, that their doom is fixed, and

that their state is determined? and, therefore, since they must pay so dear as eternal damnation, they are resolved to make up their pennyworths in their present pleasures of sin: like those in Jer. 18:12. And they said, There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart. I should judge it one of the most conducive means to promote men's endeavours after godliness, if I could but bring them to a serious and settled belief that their salvation is attainable: for, certainly, so good a thing as salvation is, cannot but stir up affections and industry proportionable to our apprehensions of the valuableness of it.

Hence, then, to tell men what great sins Christ can pardon, what great sinners he can save, is no encouragement to presumption, but rather to the exercise of holiness: for, since the way to heaven is cleared from impossibilities, it is most unreasonable for men to stick at difficulties. But, if any abuse this doctrine of Christ's all-sufficiency to save the greatest sinners to sloth and the support of their wickedness; promising themselves peace and happiness in the end, though they go on in sin presumptuously, adding iniquity to iniquity; let me only tell them, and it will be enough to damp all their vain hopes, that, though Christ be able to save to the uttermost, yet he is not able to save, them in their sins, but only from their sins.

That is the First Demonstration of Christ's All-sufficiency to save sinners, in these particulars. He is an All-sufficient Saviour, because he is able to save men from the greatest Number, and from the most heinous sins in their Nature; though they be as many as the sands,

and as great as the mountains: he is able, by his sanctifying grace, to remove the Filth of our sins; and, by his justifying grace, to remove their Guilt: and he is able to convert and change the sinner at such an Unlikely Season, when he is hottest and most eager in the prosecution of his lusts: he is able to do this by the most contemptible Means: he is able to save the Oldest Sinners; those, that have frequently Relapsed into the same sins, and the greatest and most notorious Backsliders, if they do but at last repent and return to him.

HE IS ABLE TO BESTOW UPON US ALL-SUFFICING MERCY.

ii. Another Demonstration is this: Christ's all-sufficiency to save appears in this, that HE IS ABLE TO BESTOW UPON US ALL-SUFFICING MERCY.

He is able to instate us in the choicest and richest blessings, that we are able either to receive or imagine; and, therefore, he is able to save to the uttermost. If I should now mention temporal blessings in this account, the instance would sink too low. The world stands but as an empty cypher, and signifies but a great round nothing, when it is reckoned up with blessings which flow in upon us through Christ's all-sufficiency: and, yet, what a big vanity is this world, in the estimation of most, men! If they have but a little part of it to bestow; it may be some slavish office, some slight and trivial gift; what a

distance do they keep at! how are they overwhelmed with suitors and floods of attendance! and, when they see how many stand in need of them, they are apt to think themselves sufficient, and to stand in need of none. Should I say to the ambitious and proud man, Christ is able to make all the princes of the world crouch and humble themselves unto thee, and lick up the dust of thy feet: should I tell a covetous person, that Christ is able to make gold and silver not only as plenteous as stones, as in Solomon's time; but that he can turn stones into diamonds and dirt into gold, that he can sequester the estates of all men in the world and bestow them upon him; I need say no more unto such; for these men would believe, that Christ, by this, would prove himself an All-sufficient Saviour: this is that little, which they most regard and admire. Indeed Christ can do all this, for he is Lord of the whole World, and of all things in it: they are at his beck, and at his disposals. Yet had he no other, no better treasures to bestow than the whole world, it would not be satisfactory, since the whole world itself is but a poor insufficient thing: but Christ will have his all-sufficiency to be seen and glorified, by giving that to his people, which is an all-sufficing good.

Three things, therefore, Christ doth bestow upon them, which indeed are all-sufficient.

Christ giveth unto his people,

An Interest in an All-sufficient God.

A Possession of All-sufficient Grace.

An All-satisfactory Inheritance.

1. He gives them an Interest in an All-sufficient God.

All-sufficiency is God's most comprehensive attribute; that, which speaks out all the rest in one word. Wisdom, Power, Justice, Mercy, Goodness, Truth, are several perfections of the Divine Nature, that shine gloriously, each of them in its own sphere; but All-sufficiency is as it were the gloss and lustre, that doth redound or result from all these attributes combined together. Other attributes are like several stars, that shine with their proper and distinct light; but All-sufficiency is like a constellation, when all the stars make but one light. Therefore, when God proclaims himself to Abraham to be God Almighty, or God All-sufficient, Gen. 17:1 it was as much as if he had said, "I am Wise in heart, Mighty in power, Merciful in disposition, Just in proceedings, Good in promises, Faithful in performances:" for All-sufficiency is the issue and product of all the rest of God's attributes. Oh what a rich portion have they, that have all God's attributes for their own! This All-sufficiency, by Christ, becomes ours: Heb. 11:16. God is not ashamed to be called our God. What can Christ do more to approve himself to be a Saviour to the uttermost, than giving unto his an infinite boundless good? If the power of God, the wisdom of God, the salvation of God can save them, they are sure to be saved to the uttermost: and hence David so often glories, that God is his portion: Ps. 16:5; 78:26; 119:57. And what conclusion doth he draw from all this? Ps. 23:1. The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want. "No, Soul: it is impossible for thee to want: all things are thine

own: God is thine, and all God hath is thine: while others seek to quench their thirst at the broken, leaky cistern; thou mayest lay thyself at the fountain and spring-head of living waters, and there find complete satisfaction. Certainly, unless All-sufficiency may fail, unless God's attributes moulder and drop away from him and leave him a destitute and indigent God, thou canst never be impoverished and without supply." God's wisdom is full of counsel, his power is full of protection, his mercy is full of pardon, his truth and faithfulness is full of security: and those, certainly, must needs be ravenous and unsatiated desires, which such an All-sufficient God as our God is cannot fill and satisfy.

2. Christ also instates the soul in an All-sufficing Portion of Grace.

Grace hath a double signification. It may either be taken for Subjective or Objective Grace; or, what is the same, for Relative or Real Grace.

Relative Grace is that, whereby a change is made in the relation in which we stand to God.

In a state of nature, we stood in a threefold sad and wretched relation to God. We were Strangers to God, Rebels and Enemies, and also Guilty Malefactors; and, as such, were liable to eternal condemnation. But, the grace of God intervening, makes a blessed change in all these relations: of Strangers, we are brought near, and enrolled in the family of heaven; and so are made children of God and heirs of glory, by the grace of adoption: of Enemies, we are made

friends and intimates; and accepted through the Beloved, through the grace of redemption: of Guilty Malefactors, we are acquitted, and pardoned, and accepted to eternal life, by the free and absolute grace of Justification. Now this Relative Grace is not that, which is wrought in us; but it abides in God, and is only terminated upon us: indeed it is nothing else, but the acting of God's special love and favour towards us; and the word grace, in Scripture, is very seldom taken in any other sense but for Relative Grace, the acting of God's love and favour determined to us.

Subjective or Real Grace is that, whereby a change is wrought upon our natures, in our first regeneration; and whereby it is carried on gradually to perfection, in our further sanctification.

Universal habits of holiness are infused in our conversion by God; which, in Scripture, are called the New Man and the New Creature: we usually call them the Principle of Grace, and the Working of Grace. Those specifical habits, which are as so many branches of this universal habit, are, as I may so speak, the several limbs and members of the New Man: and are commonly called the Graces of the Spirit, as the grace of faith, love, and hope; and likewise the Spirit's acting of these graces, is called the Acting of Grace. Of these two kinds, the former is properly called Grace: the latter, improperly; because, wherever it is wrought, it denotes the special favour and grace of God towards that soul.

Now both Relative and Real Grace have an all-sufficiency in them, and are of an all-sufficing nature.

(1) A Christian's portion in Relative Grace is an All-sufficing and Satisfactory Portion.

It is so great, that you can desire no more: for this grace admits of no degrees; and he, that hath any of it, hath as much as any can have. Here, therefore, the weakest Christian may have abundance of comfort: others, possibly, may have greater measures of gifts and parts, and of the sanctifying graces of the Holy Ghost; but, in Relative Grace, all stand upon the same level. Adoption, Justification, Reconciliation, Mystical Union, all the privileges which Christ hath purchased for believers, are all common; and no more belong to the strongest, than to the weakest and most feeble Christian. An infant may be as much a son and heir, as a grown man. Others may, possibly, have greater measures of the Spirit of Adoption, whereby they cry Abba, Father; but none can have a greater measure of the Grace of Adoption, nor is God more a Father to one than he is to another, no more to the strongest than to the weakest Christian: and, though one may have a greater measure of the Spirit of Adoption, yet all believers have the like measure of the Grace of Adoption; others may have a greater familiarity and acquaintance with God, but none can be more reconciled to God than thou art, if a true believer: others may have a more comfortable sense of this adoption, yet none can be more adopted and more justified than thou art. We do not usually beg of God further measures and

further degrees of these things; but, if we stand under these relations to God, and have but the evidence of it in our own consciences, then we rest fully satisfied; therefore what Philip said to Christ, Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us, may every true Christian say, "Lord, shew me my Father, shew me that God is my Father, that I am adopted into the number of his children, and this sufficeth: I have no more to ask, no more to receive, in that particular."

(2) As the Christian's portion in Relative Grace is satisfactory; so, likewise, is his portion in the Sanctifying Graces of the Holy Spirit an All-sufficient and Satisfactory Portion.

"How can that be?" may some say. "Are not Christians always unsatisfied in their present attainments; and think they have got nothing, if they fall short of absolute perfection? Either they are not sufficient, or else their desires are most unreasonable."

I answer, Though the truth of grace wrought in a Christian makes him always desirous of more than what he hath already; yet is that grace sufficient and satisfactory, in Three respects:

[1] The least degree of true grace is sufficient to make the heart upright and sincere; sufficient to break the reigning power of sin, and to cast Satan out of his throne: it is sufficient to sway the heart to God, as its chiefest good; and to make his interest in the soul victorious and prevalent over the interest of the world and flesh. This sufficiency the weakest degree of true grace hath.

And, herein, is Christ's power and ability to save most eminently glorious. Grace is a creature, in its own nature, mortal and corruptible; and, should Christ but for a moment suspend his influence, every temptation, every corruption would easily destroy it: now for Christ to preserve this weak and helpless creature in the midst of so many strong and mighty corruptions that oppose it, argues as all-sufficient a power, as it doth to preserve alive a single spark of fire in the midst of the raging and foaming sea. Now Christ not only preserves this weak grace alive, but makes it victorious and triumphant over all the powers of hell: they are not able to stand before it: it batters down their strong-holds: it routs armies of lusts and temptations: it alters and changes every faculty of the soul, and reduces them all to obedience; as if it were Christ's design, not only by his power to save the soul, but to do it in such a way as should most of all shame the Devil, baffling and subduing him by such a weak and contemptible thing as grace. And therefore St. Paul, when he prays against that temptation which sorely buffeted him, 2 Cor. 12:9. God answers him, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect through weakness: as boisterous and as raging as thy temptations are; yet it shall appear, that thy weak grace, through my strength, shall at length overcome them.

[2] The least degree of true sanctifying grace is sufficient to entitle the soul to heaven and glory.

Let weak and doubting Christians, therefore, know this for their comfort, that the promise of eternal life is not made to the degrees of

their grace, but to the truth of it; not to grace as strong, but to grace as true. Now the truth of grace may be in the least and in the weakest degree. That grace, to which our salvation is principally ascribed, is our faith: now it is not said, he only, whose faith is so strong as to overcome all temptations and all doubts and to flourish up into assurance, he only shall be saved; but, whosoever believes shall be saved, though his faith be very weak and very wavering. And the reason of this is clear: for faith doth not save us as it is a sanctifying, but as it is a justifying grace; for, if it saves us as it sanctifies, then must all perish, since the faith of the strongest believer is mixed with so many imperfections, that render him worthy of eternal death. Faith therefore saves, as it justifies; and justifies, as it entitles us to Christ's perfect righteousness: which title we obtain by being united to him and made one with him, through this grace of faith. But a weak faith is a most sure and inviolable bond of union to Christ, as well as a strong faith: a weak faith can make a full conveyance of the righteousness and merits of Christ to the soul, as well as a strong faith: therefore, the weakest faith of the most trembling and timorous Christian doth as firmly entitle him to heaven and glory, as the most strong and undaunted faith of the most assured Christian. Thus, then, though the children of God complain sadly of the weakness of their grace: yet, in the very least and meanest degree of grace, there is a twofold sufficiency; a sufficiency to break the reigning power and dominion of the strongest lust, and a sufficiency to give a firm title to heaven and glory. And what would you have more? Hath not Christ approved himself an All-sufficient Saviour, in

giving and dispensing such grace, that the weakest and lowest condition of believers hath such a great sufficiency as this is?

But this is not all: for

[3] The least degree of true grace is a sufficient ground of joy and comfort; for comfort and satisfaction, for joy and assurance.

These overflowing joys, this glorious assurance, believers may abound with, even then when they most of all complain of the poverty and weakness of their grace. It is not the degree of our graces, that gives us comfort and satisfaction; but it is the knowledge and evidence of the truth of them in our own consciences. The sun may be in a black and dismal eclipse, when many glittering and twinkling stars are not: the tallest cedars cast the longest shade: and so, many times, that Christian, that is the tallest and the most eminent in godliness, may be under the blackest and saddest desertions. The measures of comforts are not stinted by the measures of grace; but the meanest grace is a ground of true and inward joy and satisfaction, when the Spirit's witness doth irradiate it to us, as well as the greatest degree of grace. Joy and satisfaction flow from grace: both as it is the possession of that which in itself is very desirable; and because, more especially, it is the earnest of a future glorious inheritance. And hence it is, that there may be, at once, in the same heart, a complaining for the want of grace, and yet joy unspeakable and full of glory for what we have. As grace in itself is the most desirable good, so a Christian sadly complaineth that he

hath no more, but is stinted and kept so short in his allowance: but then, as grace is the earnest of future glory, so it yieldeth joy in the very possession; as knowing that a penny is as good an earnest as a pound, and the weakest grace may as firmly assure a Christian of eternal glory as the strongest.

Thus I have shewn that there is an all-sufficiency and satisfactoriness in the weakest and lowest degree of grace, if it be but sincere. For, it is sufficient to make the heart upright and sincere: it is sufficient to break the reigning power of sin: it is sufficient to cast Satan out of his throne: it is sufficient to sway the heart to God: it is sufficient to entitle the soul to heaven and glory: and, consequently, is always a sufficient ground of true joy and comfort.

3. If an imperfect state of grace be of an all-sufficing nature, what will it be, when grace shall mount up into Glory? If there be so much in the earnest, what will there be in the Inheritance itself?

And this declares the all-sufficiency of Christ indeed, since he is able to instate us in such great and rich possessions, that the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what they are, as the Apostle speaks. St. Paul, who once suffered a translation, and himself gives us a relation of his voyage into the other world, tells us no more than this, that he was caught up into paradise, and that he heard words unutterable, that it was not lawful or possible for him to utter: 2 Cor. 12:4, to 11: the happiness of heaven is so great, that it cannot be fully known, till it

be fully enjoyed: it is a remaining rest, an inaccessible light, fresh and overflowing pleasures, an incorruptible crown, an eternal kingdom, too much for me to utter or you to conceive. Nevertheless, if the sight and full fruition of God, if the society of angels and the spirits of just men made perfect, if everlasting songs of praises and hallelujahs, if eternal raptures and ecstasies can be accounted a supporting and an all-sufficing good, all these serve to extol the all-sufficiency of Christ our Saviour, who can bestow upon us this ravishing, satisfying joy and glory. God is now to us the spring-head and fountain of all our mercies and comforts; and we lie below at the fall of this spring, and draw refreshments from him only through the conduit pipes of providences and ordinances, and live upon second-hand enjoyments; but, in heaven, we shall be laid close to the fountain itself, and drink in divine communications as they flow immediately from God, without having them deadened and flattened in the conveyance. Now, we behold him through a glass darkly: then, we shall see him face to face, see him as he is, and know, him as we are known by him. And, if it causeth now such raptures of joy in us, when he sometimes darts in half a glance of his eye upon the soul, oh then within what bounds can our joy contain itself, when we shall constantly fix our eye upon God, and stedfastly behold his face; that face, from which the most glorious angels, as conscious of their own unworthiness to behold it, cover and veil their own! If now, when God gives us some glorious discoveries of himself, we are ready to faint and melt down under them, certainly, in heaven, when we shall lie under the glorious rays of the Deity beating fully upon us, they will be so great, that there were no living there did not the same God

strengthen as well as fill our capacities. This is that Beatifical Vision, that heaven of heaven, that glory, wherein the angels are satisfied; that sight, wherein God shall bestow upon us a clearer eye than that of faith, and be always present with us in a nearer way than that of comfort. This is that all-sufficient and all-satisfying state, which the Lord Jesus Christ can and will bring all his unto: a state of inconceivable and endless felicity, far surmounting in glory whatever our narrow conceptions can now apprehend: a state, wherein we shall for ever join with angels in singing praises to the Lamb, who hath redeemed us with his own blood, and manifested himself to be an All-sufficient Saviour, able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him; purchasing so great and glorious an inheritance for them, and bringing them to the possession of it.

That is the Second Demonstration.

**HE IS ABLE TO SAVE FROM THE
GREATEST MISERY, AND TO SUPPLY
THE GREATEST WANTS.**

iii. Christ's all-sufficiency to save doth appear in this, that HE IS ABLE TO SAVE FROM THE GREATEST MISERY, AND TO SUPPLY THE GREATEST WANTS.

1. There is but one Estate of Misery, out of which Christ cannot save; and that is a state of damnation. And yet the damned spirits are not finally irrecoverable, for want of intrinsical value and satisfactoriness in Christ to deliver them; but because Christ never intended to purchase salvation for them: had his sacrifice been intended for them as it was for us, and the means applied to them as well as to us, those chains of everlasting darkness, which they are now reserved in, would have dropped off; and they would have been snatched as brands out of the fire, in which, for want of this, they must burn for ever. Suppose what estate you will short of hell, we are by Christ recoverable out of it.

I shall instance in two particulars, wherein the very depth and bottom of our misery doth consist.

We are, by our sins, forfeited to the Justice and Vengeance of God: and he, that can imagine a greater misery than this, never knew what it was to fall into the hands of the Living God.

We are in the possession of the Devil: and he is that strong man, that rules with rigour; and, unto him, we are all naturally become slaves and vassals.

Now when we are thus liable and obnoxious to the Wrath of God as our judge, and fallen into the hands of the Devil as our jailor, will it not be acknowledged, that Christ saves from the uttermost misery, if he can rescue us? Is there any, that can deliver us, when both God

and the Devil and all the powers both of heaven and hell set themselves against us? Yes, the Lord Christ hath done it already.

(1) In respect of God, and of Divine Justice to which we stood obnoxious, he hath fully satisfied and paid down an all-sufficient price for our deliverance.

Therefore saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. 6:20. We are all bought with a price, &c. 1 Pet. 1:19. The precious blood of Christ, And this is such a price, as hath discharged for us the very utmost farthing of all that we owe to divine justice. And, therefore saith God, in Job 33:24. Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom: I have discharged him from the guilt of his sins, and obligation to punishment: I am fully satisfied.

(2) But, though the judge be thus satisfied, yet the Devil, the jailor, would fain retain the prisoner, and is resolved not to part with him upon these terms: he hath possession of him, and he rules in him and over him, and therefore rescue him who can. Therefore Christ saves us by conquest and plain force, in respect of the Devil. After he hath satisfied God, he subdues Satan, and completes the work of our redemption.

And, therefore, in Scripture, we read of the sufferings of Christ, by which our salvation is achieved, under both these notions. As Christ paid the price to God's justice: Mat. 20:28. He gave his life a ransom for many. 1 Tim. 2:6. He gave, himself a ransom for all. And as a victory gained over the Devil: Through death, Christ destroyed him

that had the power of death, that is, the Devil: Heb. 2:14, Col. 2:14, 15. Blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances, that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. And, having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. He hath exposed the Devil and all the black host of hell to shame and infamy, in having their prey so strangely plucked from them: and he triumphed over them in his cross; v. 15.

And thus he saves us, by ransom in respect of God, and by conquest in respect of the Devil; he saves us from the greatest misery imaginable, from the dungeon of the lowest hell. So long as your case is not so desperate as to be in hell, be your misery more or less, this makes no difference in respect of Christ, though it calls for greater love and thankfulness from you to him for your deliverance.

Seeing, therefore, that Christ is thus able to save us from the utmost and greatest misery, it appears that he is an All-sufficient Saviour.

2. As he is able to save us from the greatest misery, so he is able to relieve us in our greatest and most pressing Wants, be they inward or outward, be they corporal or spiritual.

My God can abundantly supply all your need, according to the riches of his glory by Christ Jesus: Phil. 4:19. Is it pardon you need? in Christ we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace: Eph. 1:7. Is it peace with God? we have it with him, through Christ: Rom. 5:1. We have peace with

God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Is it peace of conscience? The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus: Phil. 4:7. Indeed Christ is such an overflowing fountain of all good, that he fills the empty and satisfies the thirsty: and all that rely upon him, He is able to save to the uttermost, yea all that come unto God by him.

HE IS ABLE TO SAVE, WHEN NONE ELSE CAN.

iv. Another Demonstration of Christ's all-sufficiency to save appears in this, in that HE IS ABLE TO SAVE, WHEN NONE ELSE CAN.

He appears to save those, that come to God by him, when neither men nor angels dare stand up in their behalf; and, if they did, they could not relieve or help them: then Christ interposeth.

And, as Christ alone procures salvation for us, so he alone can apply that salvation to us. And this he doth, more especially, at Two Seasons; when all others are but miserable helpers or comforters to us. As,

1. When the dreadful Terrors of the Almighty surround us.

When God brandishes his sword over our heads; when he makes deep wounds, and, instead of balm, pours into our consciences fire and brimstone; oh, what Saviour can then deliver us? then, when those insolent hopes and vain confidences of salvation, with which we formerly supported ourselves, forsake us? then, when our own righteousness, in which we formerly trusted, is as filthy garments; or, like a searchcloth, increaseth our torments? then, when all the pleasures and debaucheries of the world, that men have formerly delighted in, are only to them as if a person stung with wasps should apply honey to assuage the smart? So, truly, when their waspish consciences stung them with the guilt of sin, they sunk to the honey, to the sweet delights and pleasures of the world: but, now, this honey is turned into gall and wormwood: God and they are enemies: he hath dipped his arrows in the lake which burns for ever, and hath shot them all flaming into their souls; so that they are all of them but one wound: and what relief is there for them? A wounded spirit who can bear? Yet Christ bare it upon the cross, when he cried, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And he, that cured himself, can also cure another: this blood, poured into these wounds, is present remedy, and gives present ease and relief. And, therefore, as he designs to make peace between God and us, so likewise between man and himself; giving him that peace of conscience, which quiets and appeases: Isa. 61:1. It is no less work to reconcile man and conscience together upon good and warrantable grounds, than to reconcile God and man together: and it is only Christ's all-sufficiency, that can do either.

2. Another season is, when we shall appear before the Tribunal of God, at the Last and Terrible Day.

What a dreadful sight will it be, to behold and see heaven and earth all wallowing in flames; and angels flying through the air, and driving whole shoals of men before them to judgment; the Judge being set, the books opened; God, Conscience, and the Devil accusing; and all the world crying out, "Guilty, Guilty;" and the sentence passing on them accordingly, and millions of them dragging to execution from the bar where they were condemned! You cannot then cry to your honours and dignities to save you; for you must all stand upon the same equal level. It is not your righteousness, that can then save you: no; the defects of it shall then be found part of your charge. What then is there to save you? your guilt is manifest; your judge impartial: and, if once sentence is passed, the execution is speedy. And, certainly, now it is time for an All-sufficient Saviour to appear, when the whole world is burning about them, and hell under them; God frowning in their very faces, and the Devil attending them at their backs ready to hurry them away to torments. And, now, when there is no pity to be expected from angels or men, then Christ appears to be an Advocate, to answer for his, and to silence all the accusations produced against them: and, by his satisfaction and perfect righteousness, he brings them off with shouts, and the applause of glorious angels and saints.

And thus it appears he is able to save them, when none else can.

v. Christ is able to save to the uttermost, in that HE IS ABLE TO SAVE THOSE, THAT CONDEMN THEMSELVES, AND THINK THEIR OWN SALVATION A THING IMPOSSIBLE.

There is a twofold judging and condemning of one's self: one, in point of merit and desert; the other, in point of issue and event: the one judgeth himself, as one now deserving condemnation; the other, that he must suffer it: the one, as due; the other, as unavoidable. Now Christ saves from both these; and that gloriously.

1. He saves those, that judge themselves worthy of eternal death.

Yea, indeed, he saves no other: 1 Cor. 11:31. If we.... judge ourselves, we shall not be judged. And why is this self-judging so necessary, in order to our being acquitted by God; but only because it is Christ's design in saving sinners, to glorify his exceeding great and all-sufficient power? and, therefore, we must acknowledge ourselves to be lost in ourselves, that so God's power may be owned to be exceeding great and glorious in Saving us.

2. Christ can save those, who do not only judge themselves worthy of eternal death, but those who judge themselves appointed to it.

He can save those, who think it impossible that they should be saved. And, questionless, there is now many a soul in heaven, who on earth cried out, there was no hope, no mercy for them; that hell and wrath was their only portion. And this shews what an All-sufficient Saviour

Christ is, who can save beyond our hopes, and contrary to our expectations.

And thus I have arrived at the end of the Demonstrations of Christ's All-sufficiency, to save from the greatest Misery, and to relieve us in our greatest and most pressing Wants. He is able to save us, when none else can; and he is able to save those, that condemn themselves, and think their own salvation a thing impossible: he is able, both to save those, that think themselves worthy of eternal death; and those, that think themselves appointed to it.

III. Having thus displayed, though weakly, the all-sufficiency of Christ to save, we will proceed to close up the subject, with some brief APPLICATION of this doctrine.

Uses

USE i

This should teach us, TO HAVE MOST HIGH AND HONOURABLE THOUGHTS OF THS LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHO IS THUS ALL-SUFFICIENT TO SAVE.

Omnipotency, though it were but to destroy us, were justly the object of our dread and reverence; but omnipotency to save, deserves our most affectionate esteem. It should raise wonder in us, when we consider God's power and goodness in the works of creation; but,

when we contemplate the work of redemption it should raise our wonder to an ecstasy. Christ's almighty power was not so glorious, then, when he spake the world out of nothing; then, when he lifted up the sun into the firmament, and kindled the stars as so many shining torches that dart forth light upon the world and extend their influences to the whole universe; as when he appeared in flesh, despised and of no account, in the form of a servant, to accomplish the wonderful work of our redemption. What he did in the former, was by the association and joint-workmanship of the other persons of the Blessed Trinity; but, in this, the whole work lay upon him: he trod the wine-press of his Father's wrath alone. In the former, though he shewed his power to be great, yet he did not put it forth to the uttermost: he could have created more worlds, and he might have made more of each sort of creatures, and these far more beautiful and glorious than they are; but, in the work of redemption, Christ's infinite power is extended to the uttermost: his person was infinite, and his sufferings were infinite; one proportionable to the other. His omnipotency as our Redeemer is far more glorious, than his omnipotency as our Creator. Christ first gives the honour of his all-sufficiency to this end, that, for his undertaking so great an employment as the accomplishment of the work of our redemption, we might honour him in his own person, as we honour the Father in his: John 5:23. Certainly, there is good reason why we should ascribe honour to him, from whom we receive salvation.

USE ii

Is Christ an All-sufficient Saviour? WHY DO WE THEN RELY UPON THAT, WHICH IS ALTOGETHER INSUFFICIENT?

What the Prophet said, in another case, 2 Kings 1:6, 7. Is it.... because there is no God in Israel, that thou sendest to enquire of Baalzebub, the god of Ekron? the same may I say: Is it because there is none deputed to be a Saviour, because there is none appointed, none able to save, that men betake themselves to false refuges? to broken reeds, that are so far from supporting, that certainly they will both betray and wound them? It is a strange folly, that most men are guilty of, that, when God hath provided them a Saviour to their hands, one that is able to save to the uttermost, yet, with a great deal of toil and labour, they seek to set up other saviours of their own: as if it were just reason to distrust the mercy of God, because they have deserved his wrath. There is not one here, who has not hopes of heaven and a blessed eternity; and something we all rely upon, as sufficient to heart us up in it. If I should go first to one, and then to another, and put the question, "Do you hope to be served?" where sits the person, that will not shew his strong hopes; and almost disdain that such a question should be asked him? "Yes," would every one say: "we have all good hopes; and, though the most perish and few are saved, yet we have all hopes that we are of the number of those few." Were but the grounds and reasons of men's hopes made visible, we should find, that that, which they most support themselves upon, is no better than that mentioned in the book of

Job, to say of gold, Thou art my hope; and of the fine gold, Thou art my confidence.

1. Some trust presumptuously to the Mercy of God to be saved.

And this is the plea of many ignorant persons: here, it may be, it is a secret to those who can pretend more knowledge in the mysteries of salvation, that God is merciful and gracious, and that the world is but scared out of their wits, when we represent God in such furious shapes as if he were all vengeance! his mercy is infinite; and who would not hope? It is true: but his justice and severity are as infinite as his mercy: why then dost thou not fear? Must God remit the attribute of his mercy, if he doth not save thee? Why thou thyself judgest he is infinite in mercy, though he hath condemned thousands of others. "But we will never believe, that that God, which made us, will destroy us." If this be all, know that the devils have as good a plea as this: were not they the workmanship of God? were not they more glorious creatures than thou art? and he, that spared not the angels which fell, will least of all spare thee: doth not the Prophet direct us against this plea, Isa. 27:11? It is a people of no understanding: therefore, he, that made them, will not save them; and he, that formed them, will not shew them mercy.

Quest. "But how can it consist with the goodness of God, to punish momentary sins? Those, that are but as a flash, and gone in the twinkling of an eye, how can he punish with everlasting destruction?"

Ans. It is true, the act of sin is momentary and transient; but yet there is something in sin, that is permanent and eternal: and that ariseth from the guilt of it. God doth not punish for the act of sin, that is past and gone; but for the guilt of it, that remains: the black guilt of that sin, which was committed a hundred years ago, remains still upon the souls of the damned; and therefore God justly punisheth them and will do so eternally, because all their eternity of sufferings can never satisfy the offended justice of the divine majesty. These hopes, therefore, are all vain.

2. Some trust to their own Righteousness: and set up their own good works and duties for their All-sufficient Saviour.

There is nothing harder than to persuade men to look beyond themselves for life. As they have been their own destroyers, so they would fain be their own saviours: and yet what is this, but a delusory sottishness? and those are hardliest beaten off from relying upon their own righteousness, who have the fewest good works. But this is a weak ground of hope, which men venture their souls upon for eternal happiness. It is observable, that the hope of a hypocrite is compared to a spider's web: Job. 8:14: spiders' webs, you know, are spun out of their own bowels: when the spider hath made its web with much pains, and set itself in the midst of it, it is but a weak and defenceless thing, easy to be swept away: so is it with these vain hopes of sinners; they are spun out of their own bowels, out of their good works and righteousness, and, when they set up themselves in the midst of them, expecting to catch heaven in their web, they will

find it but a weak and indefensible thing: for conviction of sin will break this web; if not, death and judgment will, and then the sinner will unexpectedly drop into hell. Now from the consideration of all this, it greatly concerns us not to trust to or rely upon our own, but Christ's righteousness, lest we fall into condemnation.

Christ had done Two things for us as our Saviour:

He hath made a full Satisfaction and Expiation of the Guilt of our sins.

He hath procured Acceptation of our Persons and Performances with God.

Now if we trust to our own righteousness for either of these, we make that our Saviour, and not Christ.

Examine yourselves now; and search what it is, that you propound to yourselves when you perform duties towards God.

Do none of you perform duties to this end, that thereby you may be freed from the Guilt of sin, and pay down a price for your former transgressions? When you commit sin, many times, do not you think you will make amends to God by the next prayer and confession, and bemoaning of yourselves for it? That, which men rely upon for the satisfying of their consciences, they rely upon for the satisfying of divine justice. Now when conscience grows vexed and angry, what are methods that men use to quiet it? If they can but reckon up the

number of their good works and duties, they value them, instead of the blood of Christ.

Do none of you rely upon your own righteousness and good works, to procure Acceptation with God? For mark, upon what account men hope their duties shall be accepted, upon the same they hope themselves shall be accepted. Put it to the trial: do not you hope that your duties shall be accepted for their own sake? True it is, you pray that God would hear and answer you for Christ's sake: but yet the generality of men rest upon the excellency of their prayer to make them acceptable; for consider, have you not different hopes of the acceptation of your duties, upon your different performance of them? If your hearts are sometimes drawn out in prayer and mightily enlarged, do not you rise up and say with full confidence, that your prayers are accepted with God as a sweet savour? but, at other times, when your hearts are more dead and flat, and your prayers hang heavy upon your lips, when you can but groan and chatter, then you conclude you are afraid that God doth not regard that prayer nor accept of it. This is an evidence, that you measure the acceptance of your duties, by the worth and excellency of them: the one is dull and sluggish, and that you give over as lost and vain; the other vigorous and sprightful, and you doubt not but that pierceth heaven, and obtaineth audience with God: never thinking of the intercession of Christ, which alone can make them acceptable. If this be the end which men make of performing their duties, to make them their Christs, and rely upon them for salvation; though it be a means to it, yet it is insufficient of itself to obtain it.

USE iii

Is Christ an All-sufficient Saviour, able to save to the uttermost? LET US THEN BE PERSUADED TO COME TO HIM, TO ACCEPT HIM FOR OUR SAVIOUR.

Were I now to press you to some hard and difficult duty, to the exercise of self-denial and mortification, to be willing to lay down your lives for Christ, I might rationally suspect that these exhortations should be rejected; unless they came with great power, strong arguments, and prevalent motives: but, when it is only to accept of that Christ who hath laid down his life for you, and of that salvation which he hath laid up for you and tenders to you; certainly, such an exhortation as this carries argument and motive enough in itself to prevail. But, because men are wedded to their own sins, and because they are resolved against their own happiness, I shall lay down some considerations, which, if they do not persuade them to close with Christ, may at least convince them how unreasonably they put away salvation from themselves.

And, here,

1. Consider, that you all stand in most absolute need of an All-sufficient Saviour.

You are lost, beyond all the power and skill of men and angels to recover you; and God protests that he will save you no other way but by Christ: Acts 4:12. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there

is none other name given under heaven. There is no choice for you, but either Christ, or eternal damnation; either the Son of God, or the Wrath of God. You are all under guilt, and there is no other way of satisfaction to divine justice, but either his blood or yours. You now hear these things; and, possibly, slight them: but that day and hour are coming, and will not tarry, when death shall snatch you away to judgment; and when you shall lift up those hands at the great bar, with which you thrust away salvation from you. That Christ, whom you have scorned and contemned, as a merciful Saviour; you will then tremble at, as a most severe and just Judge.

2. Consider, If you now come in to Christ, he is willing and ready to receive you.

He himself tells you so: John 6:37. Those, that come to me, I will in no wise cast out. Indeed, all-sufficiency to save, without willingness, serves only to increase the anguish of our ruin and destruction. But this may be for our comfort, that Christ hath no more power in his hand to save us, than willingness in his heart. It is not indeed Christ's power, that despairing souls use to object against; but his will. "We know," say such, "that Christ is able to save us: but how know we that he is willing?" Truly, his all-sufficiency gives us good security of his will. Hath Christ left the bosom of his Father, hath he undergone no less than infinite wrath and sufferings, and all for this end, that he may be an All-sufficient Saviour? and shall we yet doubt, after all this, whether he is willing to save us or not? Certainly, if it stood Christ in so much to procure to himself ability to save, we have no

reason to doubt, that, since he hath obtained that ability, he should now want a will to do it. Therefore, since Christ was appointed by the Father to save sinners, and since he was fitted with an all-sufficient power to effect salvation, and since this all-sufficiency wants not willingness, be persuaded to accept of him; and be as willing to be saved by him, as he is willing to save you.

3. Consider, that though Christ be an All-sufficient Saviour, and able to save to the uttermost; yet he is not able to save those, that refuse and reject him.

A medicine doth not cure, because it is compounded of such and such precious ingredients, though never so well suited to that distemper; but because it is applied: so neither doth Christ save us, as he is compounded of many precious ingredients that qualify and fit him to be an all-sufficient Saviour, as his Deity, Humanity, unction of the Holy Spirit, and his own willingness; but as received, as believed on, and applied to the soul by faith: and, therefore, whatever he hath done or suffered in his life, death, or resurrection, will all be but in vain to us; and his precious blood will run waste, if, through impenitency and unbelief, we reject this All-sufficient Saviour, and keep at a distance from him.

4. Consider, If you do not accept of Christ and salvation by him, you will be rejected by him to your greater and sorer condemnation.

Think you not, that it will heighten your sin here, and your misery hereafter; that, when God hath been at so much cost and so much

care to furnish an All-sufficient Saviour for you, you should be found to neglect so great salvation? Think not, that the tenders of Christ and salvation, which are made to you, are indifferent; that, though you slight and neglect them, you shall be in the same condition you were before: no; but the despising of Christ, and the abusing of grace, and the neglecting of so great salvation, are those things, that inspire and enflame hell-fire, and make the never-dying worm to gnaw more cruelly, and will sink you deeper into that scalding lake that burns with fire and brimstone, where you shall be burnt in streams and drowned in flames. It had been better for you, that there never had been a Christ tendered, grace exhibited, and salvation purchased for you by Christ. If we neglect this salvation, we are without hope or possibility of recovery for ever. Pray observe what the Apostle speaks, after he had been comparing Christ and Moses, together with the wrath that should follow upon the despising of the one and the despising of the other: Heb. 10:28, 29. He, that despised Moses' Law, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God; and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing; and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace? These shall not have so much mercy afforded them, as to die without mercy.

And, thus, I have handled this excellent portion of Scripture, concerning Christ's Intercession, and his All-sufficiency to save all that come unto God by him.

MONERGISM BOOKS

The All-Sufficiency of Christ to Save Sinners, by Ezekiel Hopkins
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