

SPARKLES OF GLORY,

or Some beams of the Morning-Star. Wherein
are many discoveries as to truth, and peace.

To the establishment, and pure enlargement of
a Christian in Spirit and Truth.

*"Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD;
his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall
come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain
unto the earth." Hos.6:3.*

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A. TO THE HIGH AND HONORABLE COURT OF PARLIAMENT.

What others have done by the Law of your authority, presented before ye their advice in matters of Religion; I shall, from the law of love to your just authority, present ye, not my advice {the Lord himself advise and counsel ye} but some things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, and the peace and prosperity of your Kingdom; and that I may not be disobedient to the heavenly vision, Acts 26:19, or the light of God revealed to me.

There are two Principles in the world which have these sad and dark conclusions attending them, the two Principles are these.

1. That such as conform not to the Doctrine and Discipline established; and yet as to the State are good Subjects, and peaceably affected, shall be proceeded against by fines, imprisonment, &c.

2. That such as shall speak upon the Scriptures, or open them, publically, or in private, and are not ordained by the laying on of the hands of that present established ministry of a kingdom, shall be proceeded against by fines, imprisonments, &c.

The sad and dark conclusions which follow are these.

1. All the glorious discoveries of God, above, or beyond that System, or form of Doctrine, &c., as sanctioned by the State, shall be judged, and sentenced, as Heresy and Schism; and so God himself shall be judged by man, which must needs be a sin, bringing much desolation; unless they that enact such Laws, were that very infallible Apostleship for interpretation of all Scriptures; as the first Apostleship was for writing all Scriptures. And is God, a God of the Jews only, is he not a God of the Gentiles also? Rom.3:29. That is, is God

limited to one sort of men? "Thou thoughtest {saith the LORD} that I was altogether such an one as thyself," Psal.50:21, that is, a God merely of one image or figure; behold, "the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him," II Chron.2:6, for he dwelleth not in temples made with hands, and where is his habitation, and who hath known the place of his rest? Isa.66:1. That is, what is man that he should conceive that God is only in a place, or temple, or form of worship, or system of doctrine of his form or making, since the time is come, that we do no longer worship in this temple, nor at Jerusalem; but they that worship, must worship in spirit and truth, Jn.4:23, which truth, is he only who is the truth. Jn.14:6. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Jn.4:24.

2. Many thousands of precious Christians shall be under delinquency, as to fines, imprisonment, &c., and under the scandal of heretics and schismatics; because not seeing by that one light, nor believing in that one proportion of faith, nor receiving such interpretations and consequences of Scriptures, for the very Scriptures themselves; and by such persecution, the civil power which is received from God, shall be turned against God, or against the more spiritual administration of God; and so God's administrations are dashed one against another. "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Acts 9:4. "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm," I Chron.16:22, not as having dominion over the heritage, or lordship over faith.

3. That were to set up the Church institution of the Jews amongst Christians; and not according to God's divine appointment, but mans; for God in that first Government of the Jews Church under the Old Testament, joined to the Kings and Magistracy then, a Priesthood with Urim and Thummim; and Prophets anointed of God as a certain, true, infallible, directive power for ordering that

way of administration; but this way of Christians now, without any such warrant, or appointment of God brings back again the same Church Government, under the New Testament, which was typical as to Christ the King, and Priest, and Prophet, and joins to Kings & Magistracy now, a ministry less of God, less certain, less true, not infallible; so as all texts, instances, and examples brought from the Old Testament of the Kings, Princes, and Magistrates of Israel, compelling to the worship of God, without proving the continuance of the same Church Government under the New Testament; and the like Priesthood, and Prophets accordingly sent of God to direct them, is all invalid, and of no effect as to such proceedings.

4. The infinitely abounding Spirit of God, which blows when and where he listeth, Jn.3:8, and ministers in believers according to the gift and prophecies, according to the will of the Almighty God, Rom.12:6, pouring its self out upon all flesh, Acts 2:18, giving out the word and making the company great, who publish it, Psal.68:11, even this almighty, all glorious, infinitely abounding, dispensing, and revealing Spirit, is made subject to the Laws & Ordinances of men, to the pleasures and wills, to the measures and forms of men, to outward ceremonies, as ordination, &c. God must not speak till man give him leave; not teach, nor preach, but whom man allows, and approves and ordains.

5. This making laws for punishing all that conform not to the doctrine and discipline established, destroys the true interests of all states and kingdoms, excluding all societies of men, but of one sort and form, though never so peaceably affected, or obedient as men and subjects, respectively to the State, and Civil Government thereof, and was never found in any State, or Church Politics by Divine Appointment, but in that one nation of the Jews, whose Government, as to such a form, God himself

peculiarly made, owned and preserved, and the Lord Jesus himself fulfilled and dissolved.

For Heresy and Schism, I know ye ought not to tolerate any, but to let them bear their own judgement, which is spiritual admonition, Tit.3:10, church censure, rejection, excommunication, I Cor.5:5, which if effectual, as all true, right, spiritual censures have been and are, II Thes.3:15, is that just proportionable judgment for such Gospel sins, if not effectual; then the insufficiency, weakness, unprofitableness of such as assume such Church power, and censures, will appear before ye.

And as to that point of the present ordination, which some have so pressed upon ye, distinguishing to ye, that their ordination was from the Bishops, as Ministers, not as Bishops. Right Honorable, consider, that distinction cannot be, for there was no such thing as Ministers in the Church of Rome, or of England as to this successively pretended ordination; but Priests, and Bishops, or Episcopacy, and Priesthood; and surely if Episcopacy doth not, yet Priesthood doth altogether evacuate the essence of ministry now under the New Testament as by such ordination, and how much more rational are their arguments, who hold their Ministry lawful, from the lawfulness of Episcopacy; than those, who deny Episcopacy, &c., and yet have no ordination but from them.

For this Christian liberty, it is such as preserves not only the outward peace of Christians who enjoy it, but the peace and prosperity of Kingdoms, and Magistrates, who establish it; and the life, glory, and happiness, destruction, and the death of Kingdoms is wrapped in the Christians life or death; they are the parts and Members of Christ, Eph.5:30, the apple of his eye, his jewels, his anointed, his prophets, his children. Psal.105:15.

As therefore ye look to be prospered by this Spirit of God; as ye look for wisdom from this Spirit of God to

govern this State; as ye look for comfort from this Spirit of God in all your distresses; as ye look for gifts from this Spirit of God in all the administrations; as ye look for the sweet spiritual breathings and refreshment from this Spirit of God in all the several changes of this creation; love, preserve, indulge this spirit; quench not, oppose not, oppress not this spirit, I Thes.5:19, Acts 7:51, Eph.4:30, confine it not to one outward form or fellowship of men, which are not that Catholic Church, that apostleship of infallibility; and they that are spiritual, live in that spirit & truth, which makes them free indeed, Jn.8:32,36, and it is below that Spirit of God, to petition liberty of conscience in spirituals, from any men or magistrates in the world; because God will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling to all Nations, and a stone of astonishment, Zech12:2, and the spiritual Christians will rather hold forth such things, to bear witness to the truth, and to desire all to forbear persecution, as much for their own sakes who persecute, as for theirs who are persecuted.

And for that just power of magistracy, I acknowledge that it is a power ordained of God, for administration of justice and righteousness in the societies of men, and nations, Rom.13:1-3, a minister of God for good, a terror to evil works; and that we are to be subject to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake; and for this cause we pay tribute to whom tribute; honour to whom honour; and all societies of Christians by no pretense of religion, or liberty for the worship of God, are to resist or disturb the civil administration of this power, Rom.13:4,5, but as to that consideration; all Christians are to suffer according to the will of God, {all lawful ways for preservation of States and Kingdoms still excepted,} and all such Magistracy are to preserve their respective States, by all wholesome, lawful, cautionary Laws and Ordinances in Peace; so as while liberty or indulgency, as

to the tender consciences in Religion is spoken on, yet no less security of the State, no diminution to the just power of Magistracy; no less preservation of the Peace of the Kingdom is desired by those that are truly spiritual. And though many suffer under the name of heretics and schismatics before ye, for not conforming to the present doctrine and discipline established; Right Honorable, consider, whether this doth not call in question all the very present doctrine and discipline so established; for by this very thing of judging all inconformity to the present worship and form of things to be heresy; by the same, all this present form of worship and confession of faith is judged heresy and schism, to the late former government, and doctrine established in the Church of England; this present synod of men being no more that visible Catholic Church, and infallible Apostleship, than the former were, so as the changing the former Articles of the Church of England into a new confession of faith, the Episcopacy into Presbytery; and so altering both the fundamentals in religion and the discipline, is equally new light and heresy. As to the former doctrine and discipline, {and if it be objected,} but this present Synod, are men of more light and piety than the former, and so they establish more truth, and bring in more Reformation; if so, why is there not more love, more peaceableness, more self-denial, more power of godliness, than there was in the suffering Bishops, and the Preaching lay-martyrs then; who loved Christ in himself, and in one another.

And now, {Noble Senators,} since very worthy things have been formerly done by ye unto this Nation; let not your sun set in a cloud, nor your light shine upon those that have loved you as the moon once upon the water, making it of the color of blood, are ye not come to the Kingdom in Peace? Are not the gleanings of Ephraim in the Vintage? Did not David say, II Sam.19:22, shall any man be put to death this day in Israel?

The Lord enlighten ye {if it be his will} more and more, in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and of the love of God, and of all who have anything of God in them, and let you see those things which concern your peace in this your day.

Your Honors Humble Servant, John Saltmarsh.

B. TO ALL TRUE CHRISTIANS.

Friends,

The only scope of this Book, is to mind ye of an higher excellency, than mere created things can afford ye, of the truth as it is in Jesus, or in Spirit.

And of that unity of Spirit which Christians should live in, under their several forms and attainments, and I have not held forth any discovery of truth, or of any higher dispensation, so as to darken too much other dispensations in which Christians live, or to lessen and undervalue their attainments, but only to be faithful in the power of God to his discoveries in my own spirit.

I desire we may all bear one another's burdens, and consider, that God is in all his several dispensations, and measures, and that believers are not to hasten out of any till the Lord himself say, come up hither; and the stronger are to bear the infirmities of the weak.

I am not against the law, nor repentance, nor duties, nor ordinances, as some would say, so as all these flow from their right principle, to their right end.

I am not against the settling of Church-Government prudentially, as now, so as all of another way be not persecuted. Because I know God hath his people under several attainments and measures, and is to his

people in all these, in his mere grace and love, as formerly to the Bishops and thousands of weak Christians in Queen Elizabeth's, and Queen Mary's days of Martyrdom, in their forms.

I am only against any form, as it becomes an engine of persecution to all Christians differing from it.

I am not against the sitting of an Assembly or Synod at Westminster, that are so persuaded, because, that is but to allow such liberty to others consciences, as we desire ourselves; and surely if they would propound such things only as they have received, or they are in conscience persuaded of to all the Kingdom; and so leave it to the Spirit of God and their ministry to persuade and convince all others, and not desire power from others to compel; this were but to minister as they had received.

I have stated some things, and truths, as they are held in those very grounds; the Spirit of God in the Reader may judge truth without any determination of man.

I have spoken concerning the liberty of some that are spiritual in outward things of worship and discipline without sin, yet of no other, but as the wisdom of God shall direct to edification, and with care of offence, and Scriptures allow. To the weak I became as weak; to them that were under the Law, as under the Law; to them that were without Law, as without Law, though not without Law to God. I Cor.9:22. Now in this Scripture, liberty to things of former institution by God and of no such institution, is discovered; those words, under the Law, contain liberty to things once instituted, and those words, without Law, to things not instituted, and therefore the Apostle saith, we know, an idol is nothing, I Cor.8:4,7; howbeit, there is not in every man that knowledge; and again, to the pure all things are pure, Tit.1:15, and that, that goes into the man, defiles not the man. Mk.7:15. And yet I know this very truth, as well as that of the grace of

God, and all other truths may be turned into wantonness, and licentiousness, and not pure Christian liberty.

I am for the knowledge of God in the Father, Son, and Spirit, and for true Christianity, as it is in life, and spirit, and power of godliness, and for love to all, but never to the sins of all. "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Phil.3:3.

I have spoken of the true Christian under that more gross form of Episcopacy, not approving that form, but in order to higher and more spiritual discoveries; and this I do, because I find God in lower as well as higher, in purer as well as more corrupt administrations; and in tenderness and respect to many thousands in this Kingdom, and many other Kingdoms, who are not yet out of this form, and yet God may be in them, as in Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, in England formerly and of late, God having his more spiritual times for them, as well as others.

I have spoken of things here sometimes very briefly, because I find less of man in writing the substance and truth of things, so far as revealed to us, then in tedious discourses and paraphrases, which are many times rather the works of reason, and wit, and art, than of the Spirit of God; and I have writ not in that common method of men, because I received it not accordingly.

I find two things which make some outward Ordinances so exceedingly, and in divine right stood for; the one is, an opinion, that there is a very model in the letter of Scriptures to be discovered; which is to reduce Christians to bondage again, and to a form without those very gifts, which is not to be found in the word.

The other opinion is, that the setting up such a form, is an immediate way of fixing God, and his Spirit upon it, which indeed is a finer kind of Idolatry, to conceive that God enters into outward things, and

conveys his all glorious, and almighty Spirit by them, when as they are only signs, figures, and images of more spiritual and heavenly things enjoyed, or to be enjoyed; and that of God's appearance and conveyance of himself in outward things, according to this opinion, is such as the Papists hold, as to images, and to things conferring grace *ex opere operato*, {from the work worked,} and all Idolaters accordingly, conceiving that God immediately informs, glorifies, and spiritualizes those forms, and figures to the beholders; as the Israelites when the Calf was made, cried, "these be thy gods, O Israel." Exod.42:4.

I know Ordinances used in their true nature, and as things that are the parables, figures, and types of spiritual things, are not to be rejected, but many Christians do sweetly partake of them in this their state of weakness and bondage, wherein God makes heavenly things appear by earthly, that men, as Thomas, may see and believe, though blessed are they that have not seen, and yet do believe. Jn.20:29.

All I have now to say to ye, is this, something of a mystery of God, and something of a mystery of Satan.

That of God is this, that the Lord doth in much wisdom suffer the weaknesses of some spiritual men to come forth; and by this, he carries spiritual things in more mystery, and manages the glory of his spirit through ways and things which are an offence, and scandal before the world; by which some stumble and fall, and are broken. Christ was set up for the falling as well as rising of many in Israel. Lk.2:34.

That of Satan is this, to observe how he fortifies corrupt nature against the Spirit of God; which Spirit he knows can only destroy his Kingdom, and reveal the Kingdom of God; and therefore counterfeits the Spirit by false revelations and appearances; transforming himself into an angel of light, II Cor.11:14, and then casting all

this as a scandal, upon the pure Spirit of God by reproaches, viz., of praying by the Spirit, and preaching by the Spirit, and new Revelations, and new Light, thus making the world blaspheme, and the weaker saints afraid of the glory of the Spirit, lest it prove a delusion.

1

THE TWO CREATIONS OR TWO NATURES OF FLESH & SPIRIT.

These two Creations are two distinct Natures, from whence all things of Flesh and Spirit come forth; the two Adams are the two seeds, roots, or principles of these two Natures or Creations, the Old and New, Eph.4:22,23, so as in the knowledge of these two there opens a prospect both of heaven and earth, of the first man, and the second, I Cor.15:47, who are the womb of all things carnal and spiritual, and into whom are gathered up all the Mystery of Christ and Antichrist, and from whence the Mystery of both are brought forth before those that are spiritual, the spiritual man judgeth all things. I Cor.2:15.

The first Adam is the root of all fleshly Creation and Excellency; the glory of the first Creation is gathered up into him, as the light into the body of the sun, the life of angels, or spirits, of sense or beasts, of nature or vegetation, is all in him; so as man is all created excellency in the map or abridgement; and God, making his Tabernacle with man, Rev.21:3, dwells at the same time with all his Creation; man being the glorious and bright sum or whole of the Creation, was a figure and type

of the Son of God Jesus Christ, Rom.5:14, and therefore he was said to be made after his own image, Gen.1:26, which Image was Jesus Christ, called by the Apostle the Image of the invisible God, Heb.1:3, the brightness of his glory, and express Image of his Person.

And while man was thus in the image of God, and stood and lived in Communion with God, walking in that Paradise, or that Glory of his first Creation in obedience to God, and participation of God, he was the image of all, or any created excellency, as it was, or is, or shall be in order to a more excellent life, to a life out of itself, in him, who is the fountain of life. Psal.36:9.

And while man was in this communion and dependency to God, as he was made in his image, or as he was the likeness, and similitude of God, he was the figure and image of Jesus Christ in his new creation, Eph.4:24, or whole body or saints, who know no other life than in God, whose springs are all in him; the Lord God being their everlasting light, and their God their glory.

While they, like the golden Candlestick in Zechariah, Zech.4:12, are fed with the golden oil that is continually flowing and issuing through the golden pipes.

The excellency of this first Creation is but earthly, or fleshly in the Spirit's account, and as it stands in distinction to the second Creation, or new man, or Lord from heaven; I Cor.15:47, so as the circuit or furthest attainment of man in this Creation is but to things of this Creation, from things of rational and angelical glory, to things of lowest, and most earthly life or excellency, of which Solomon was an image, as his heart was large like the sand on the sea-shore, and as he was wise from the Cedar in Lebanon to the wormwood in the wall; from the highest to the lowest part of this Creation, comprehending all from the top of this Creation to the bottom; and seeing the face of God in this, more darkly, as in a glass, the invisible things of him, being clearly seen and understood

by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead. Rom.1:20.

Now all this excellency and glory of the first man did leave God, being tempted of the woman, and the serpent, which were a figure of fleshly wisdom without God, and of the weakness of this Creation in its own nature, as it was drawn away and enticed from its life in God, and communion with God, to live in its self, or own life, and to be to its self what God should have been, wisdom, and life, and righteousness, power and strength, and preservation, and all things.

And as it left God, life, and communion in him, was a figure, or image of this Creation, departing from God, and living out of God; and now, according to this independent subsistence or life from God, it apostates and degenerates into that nature which is called the seed of the serpent, the old man, the mystery of iniquity, II Thes.2:7, which appeared all along in the cursed figures or types of Cain, Gen.4:1, of Esau, of Ishmael, of the children of the bondwoman, Gal.4:23, of Judas, of Antichrist, of the whore of Babylon, Rev.19:2, so as all the knowledge of sin, of all fleshly abominations, whether more spiritual, or carnal, are discovered in the knowledge of this first man thus discovered as he lives not in God, nor in communion with God, and lives a life distinct from the life in God, and all his actings and workings are from his own life, his life of this Creation, and to himself, not from God, nor to God.

The second Adam or Jesus Christ is that quickening Spirit, or Lord from heaven, and is the root of all the second or new creation, which is created according to God in righteousness, and true holiness, Eph.4:24, which righteousness is called the righteousness of God and true holiness, which is an holiness more glorious than the holiness of the first Creation, an holiness which is of

God, not of man, and therefore true holiness, or holiness in truth.

This Jesus or second Adam as he is Spirit is called the Image of the invisible God, Col.1:15, the brightness of his glory, and express Image of his Person, Heb.1:3, is the life manifested, I Jn.1:2, the Word of God, he that is alive for evermore, Rev.1:18, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, Rev.1:8, this is he who is the wisdom, mind, or understanding of God, Prov.8:14, and was in God, and is the Immanuel, or God with us, or God making his tabernacle with men.

This Jesus Christ is that glory of God in which the Father is revealed, and so none knows the Father but the Son, Jn.1:18, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.

This is he who being in the bosom of God declares him to the sons of men, and so rejoices in the habitable parts of the earth. Prov.8:31.

This Jesus Christ is the revelation of God, even the Father; this is the glass or crystal of God, in whom we with open face behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, and are changed from glory to glory. II Cor.3:18.

The sons of men taken into this glory of the Son of God, are that new or second Creation, that new Jerusalem, which came down from God, the city of the living God, Heb.12:22, the spirits of just men made perfect, the new creature, the heavenly men; as is the Lord from heaven, I Cor.15:47, so are they that are heavenly; the spiritual men of him who is the quickening Spirit, I Cor.15:45, so as Jesus Christ is made unto us the wisdom, power, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption of God. I Cor.1:30.

This Jesus Christ is the root, seed, principle, or original of all this new and heavenly life, glory, and spirit to the sons of men, wherein they enter within the vail or flesh, which is the first Creation, beyond which is this glory, and light. The vail of this first Temple or Creation

being rent by him who crucified all flesh through the eternal Spirit, Heb.9:14, and entered into his glory, Lk.24:26, and is now passed into the holiest through whom we have access to God, even the Father, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant; which blood was the first Creation and Excellency crucified to the very life and blood of it; this was the seal or mark of the New Testament in his blood.

This Son of God is he who came to restore the first Creation from its enmity to God, and so in that Ministry of his flesh became the word of reconciliation, II Cor.5:18, by which the world was reconciled unto him; and in this Creation wherein man had sinned and departed from God, living in his own life, the Son of God was manifested in this Creation to condemn sin in the flesh, and to take away sin, and to fulfil the righteousness of the Law in the flesh of this first Creation, the law being weak through the flesh, Rom.8:3, and thus he was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; not only righteousness according to the law, Christ being the end of the law {for righteousness} to everyone that believest, Rom.3:21,22, but the righteousness of God, a righteousness of more glory and excellency.

The Son of God did not only fulfil this, bringing home this first Creation, or man to God, according to his first excellency and communion with God; but in this appearance in the flesh he was a figure of God whose design is to make his Saints his Temple, I Cor.6:19, his Tabernacle, Rev.21:3, his Body, I Cor.12:12, his new Creation, Eph.4:24, his new creatures, II Cor.5:17, his habitation or house, Eph.2:22, and God thus manifested in flesh was a figure of that mystery of godliness in us, I Tim.3:16, or God becoming an Immanuel, Isa.7:14, or God with us.

And in his crucifying all this first glory in which he appeared, revealed that old design of God, that mystery hid from ages, and now made manifest to the Saints, I Cor.1:26,27, nailing all the flesh of his Saints to the same Cross, and being lifted up draws all men unto him, which is the Mystery of the Gospel, or Christ crucified; all the life or excellency of this first Creation, being crucified in the Saints as in Christ, whereby they enter into their glory as he did into his, Lk.24:26, and are in the same glory of God made one, as he and the Father are one.

This is that fellowship of Christ's death, sufferings, and resurrection, spoken of by Paul, into which the Christian is received. "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." Phil.3:8-10.

And now all things of this new or second Creation, as they are spiritual and heavenly, are only in and through the same Spirit, and discerned in the same Spirit.

And the whole Christ, or Son of God, is head and body, he and his, I Cor.12:12, who shall enjoy and live with God in one Spirit, when God shall be all in all, I Cor.15:28, and the fulness of the stature of Christ grown up to be the body of him who filleth all in all. Eph.1:23.

And Jesus Christ in this consideration of the whole man, nature, or body in which God is revealed, is the beginning of the Creation of God, the first born of every creature, in whom all things subsist. "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature, for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that

are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him, and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Col.1:15-17.

2

THE TRUE CHURCH.

That is the church or body of Christ which is baptized by one Spirit into oneness and unity of Spirit, Eph.4:3, a unity or incorporation with Christ, being made perfect in one; even one, "as thou Father art in me and I in thee." Jn.17:21.

This body is that wherein all the members live, and are quickened in one and the same Spirit with Christ, I Cor.12:13, and in this unity if one member suffers, I Cor.12:26, all the members suffer with it.

All the members of this body have the same care one of another. I Cor.12:25. This body is spiritual, and all the members of it are spiritual, I Cor.3:1, because Christ is the head of it, and he is a quickening Spirit, and the Lord that Spirit.

That is the true Church, which is the Temple of God, where God dwells; ye are the Temples of the Holy Ghost, Jesus Christ is the chief corner stone of this Temple, Eph.2:20, elect and precious, I Pet.2:6, this is the Temple which the Angel measures with a golden reed and the Altar thereof, Rev.11:1,2, or the eternal Spirit, upon which all the first creation is offered in the Saints as it was offered in Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself, Heb.9:14, leaving out the outward court, or the flesh and first Creation, and all outward

administrations, which are given to the Gentiles to tread down.

The Tabernacle and Temple were figures of this wherein God and the glory of God appeared; and all gatherings, communions, or fellowships called Churches in the Gospel, were clearer types of this.

This is the Church which is the pillar and ground of truth, I Tim.3:15, the general Assembly and Church of the first born, Heb.12:23, which are written in heaven.

This is the Church to which Jesus Christ is all, and in all, filling all, the Apostle to this Church, the Prophet, Pastor, and Teacher, preaching to it, prophesying in it, feeding it, and watching over it, and teaching it, so as all are taught of God. "It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Jn.6:45.

This is the Church against which the gates of hell cannot prevail, having Jesus Christ its rock and foundation. "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matt.16:18.

This is the Church to which all the promises of spirit, life, and glory are made to the believers and members that are in this Fellowship and of this Church.

And into this Church all are admitted through the Spirit of Christ, and all are discerned members in the same Spirit, and tried by the Spirit. "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth." I Jn.2:20-21. "But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." I Cor.2:15.

And this Church of Christ being thus baptized by Spirit into one body, is not to be divided by any outward things which are of this Creation, Col.2:20,21, which are visible, outward, and perishing; or by any fellowship and

ordinances below the glory of the Spirit, which are part of the first Tabernacle; nor are the members of this spiritual Church to be divided by any schism or division, procured or effected by any principle less, or less excellent than the Spirit of God.

And therefore whatsoever fellowship in pretense of Church-notion, or Baptism-notion, or Presbyterial-notion, shall cast itself into any model of the letter, which allows not communion with other believers in Spirit, in whom the power of the Spirit, and of Christ cannot be denied, but to be visible and apparent, though not in the practice of some particular ordinance; such fellowship will in the day of the Lord Jesus or clearer revelation of Christ, see how they have offended many little ones, whom in these outward things they ought to have pleased to edification, the law of love, and spirit or life being more royal and excellent, Rom.13:10, than any worldly rudiment whatsoever. "And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using; after the commandments and doctrines of men." Col.2:19-22.

3

THE TRUE PERSONAL REIGN OF CHRIST AS IT IS SPIRITUAL.

The Lord Jesus is entered into his glory, having crucified flesh, and sits at the right hand of God, or in the choicest

glory of the Father, where he is the Lord that Spirit, II Cor.3:17, and the Lord of glory.

The Lord Jesus must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet, I Cor.15:25, he fills all administrations of Dominion, Judgment, Power, and Magistracy, in the world, which is part of his Kingdom here, all judgement and power in heaven and earth being committed unto him, Jn.5:22,27, yet this is not his spiritual reign, though administered by him who is in Spirit.

The Lord Jesus hath a kingdom inward and spiritual, the kingdom of God is within you, Lk.17:21, the kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy, Rom.14:17, the kingdom of God is in power. "For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." I Cor.4:20.

The Lord Jesus denied his kingdom to be of this world, Jn.18:36, or to come with observation, Lk.17:20, as lo here, or lo there, as the glory of the world, and the kingdoms of the world is in its appearance.

The Lord Jesus his coming is as lightning from East to West filling heaven, Matt.24:27, lightning is a glory without figure, so shall Christ's coming and revelation in Spirit be; for as the lightning lighteth from one end of heaven to the other, so shall the coming of the Son of man be.

The Lord Jesus his coming is in spirit and glory, in revelation in his Saints; he shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe. II Thes.1:10.

The Lord Jesus reigns already, all things are put in subjection under him, death, and hell, and sin, and antichrist, and the wicked; only we see not all yet put under him. Heb.2:8. Jesus Christ reigns in Spirit, only his reign appears not yet, for now are we the sons of God, but it doth not appear what we shall be, I Jn.3:1, but when he shall appear, we shall be like him.

All the prophecies, and promises of glory, and a kingdom of Antichrist to be destroyed, of the great battles, of the thrones, of the new Jerusalem, of him on the white horse, the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings are most glorious in Spirit, and most suitable to Christ in the glory of his Father, and for any other figure of Christ's reign or kingdom, in any fleshly glory, political or monarchical kingdom, according to any pattern upon earth; these conceptions or notions are occasioned by the allegories, and allusions, and parables the Spirit speaks; which they that are weak and carnal, as some Disciples and Pharisees were, take more in the Letter than in the Spirit.

4

ANTICHRIST WITHIN US.

That antichristian mystery which seems to be working in so many figures and shapes without in the world, and makes up the truth of those Scriptures of the beast, and the whore, and the false prophet, &c., flows only from the antichrist within us, or the mystery of iniquity which lies in the flesh, or old man, or man of sin, the son of perdition, II Thes.2:3, as in the root, seed, or principle; and in us you may find all the delusions and deceivableness of unrighteousness, with all the several figures it appears in, in the Revelation, and Epistle to the Thessalonians, and the spirit of the natural man in us acts all that wickedness in us, which in the world comes forth, only in images more visible, and fleshly; and to the destruction of this antichrist we should look, and lay the axe to the root of the tree, carnal wisdom, self-righteousness, high imaginations, fleshly apprehensions

of God in Christ, changing the truth of God into a lie, with all the false testimonies of our own spirits for the Spirit of God, the counterfeit sealings and assurances of our carnal hearts, the deceivableness of carnal reason, with all other actings of the flesh.

5

DOCTRINE OF BAPTISMS.

The Doctrine of Baptisms is such a doctrine as clearly and spiritually understood, and opened, will establish the spirits of many Christians, who are much in the dark in these, not distinguishing nor discerning the Baptisms as they are in their own Nature, and in Spirit, or as the truth is in Jesus. Eph.4:21.

6

THE BAPTISTS.

Baptism of Water being a Legal Ordinance though a more clear administration of Christ, was administered always by persons of more than ordinary gift and spirit, for in all Legal administrations which pointed at and shadowed Christ, still they were performed by some properly and specially, and extraordinarily enabled for that Office or Ministration, and therefore the tribe of Levi was for administration of Ordinances then under the Law, and Abraham for circumcision, Moses, and Aaron, &c., John Baptist, the Apostles, and the more than ordinary gifted Disciples as Philip and Ananias; nor is there any extant in

all the New Testament who did administer Baptism, but they were such as by a power and gift more than ordinary, could make demonstration of their calling to the administration of water, which was first in that way of doctrine performed by him, then whom a greater Prophet hath not risen, even by John who Baptized, and so Philip and Ananias, the one working glorious miracles at Samaria, the other having a vision from God to warrant and glorify his call to that administration upon Paul, and so all the Apostles and seventy Disciples, were such who went about doing miracles as men excellently gifted for administration, and whereas the Scriptures make mention of some Disciples as those with Peter who did not appear to do anything more than others, Acts 10:48, nor Philip, nor Ananias at the time of their administration of water, it ought to be sufficient to us, that the Scriptures doth set forth John Baptist and the Apostles and Disciples that were more than ordinarily gifted, and Philip and Ananias who had sufficient warrant to themselves by such glory upon them for that office and administration of water upon any, and for those other Disciples, surely we see and read enough to tell us, in those that were so gifted; and in them and their gifts, there is light enough to show us the glory of those Baptists that did undertake to administer, which in the Scripture method is sufficient for all others of whom the Scripture is silent.

And for that of Christ's Disciples, both in John's time and Christ's, and after his Resurrection, in the Acts of the Apostles, baptizing by water, we find this; that the Lord Jesus himself baptized none but his Disciples, nor did he in his first sending them forth, give them any power to baptize as in his Ministry, but they Baptized upon John's account, that of water being his ministration who Baptized unto Christ as well as they, though not in that clearness of ministration and Doctrine, as they did, and therefore Paul did tell the Corinthians he was not sent to Baptize,

and did it according to his spiritual liberty, he was a Jew to the Jew, &c., and Peter and the rest did it upon the like account; though I believe they were under more bondage to these outward things, as washing, for Peter was an Apostle to the Circumcision, Gal.2:8, and Ananias who baptized Paul was a Jewish Disciple.

And further, I believe, that as the Lord did suffer the Law of Ceremonies to die out by degrees, and to be worn out by the ministration of the Gospel, so he did that part of John's Ministry, of washing, by the Baptism of Christ, of his Spirit, I must decrease but he must increase, Jn.3:30, which surely was spoken not according to the persons of John, and Christ, but according to their ministration which is the great thing the Scripture takes notice on.

7

THE BAPTISM OF SUFFERINGS.

The Baptism of Sufferings is that passion, crucifying and death, which the body or flesh of Christ was to be Baptized or washed in. "Can ye be Baptized with the Baptism that I am Baptized with?" Matt.20:22,23.

The Baptism of Sufferings is that, in which the Lord Jesus was to be perfected according to the flesh; it behooved him to make the Captain of our Salvation perfect through sufferings. Heb.2:10.

The Baptism of Sufferings is that Jordan; that stream or flood of Passions which all the Spiritual Israelites were to pass through; this was that River of Brimstone, which is kindled from the breath of the Lord Jesus himself, through the flowings of which he was able to conduct all his, and land them safely upon the shore or

land of Promise, or on the other side Jordan. "I have a Baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" Lk.12:50.

This Baptism of sufferings is that, in which all the whole flesh of Christ is to be Baptized, all which flesh is not that only which Christ appeared in, but that of his body or members. "Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized." Mk.10:39. That I may "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." Col.1:24.

8

THE BAPTISM OF WATER, OR OF JOHN.

The Baptism of water is John's Ministry unto Christ; "I indeed Baptize ye with water unto Repentance," Matt.3:11, the Baptism of water was a legal washing, and therefore reckoned amongst things that are legal, the first Tabernacle stood in meats and drinks, Heb.9:10, and divers washings and carnal Ordinances, which divers washings are called Baptisms in the Greek.

The Baptism of Water was therefore in its Ministry administered by John, who was a Prophet nearer the more clear Revelation of Jesus Christ than the rest, for a greater Prophet than John hath not risen, and therefore this Ministration was administered by him who was a Prophet, or one rather upon the account of the Law, than the Gospel, for he that was least in the Kingdom of God is greater than he. Matt.11:11.

The Baptism of Water was not given in Christ's Ministry to his Disciples or Apostles, who, when he sent them out to preach first to the Jews, gave them not one

word to Baptize. Matt.10:5-8. The Lord Jesus was Baptized by John the Minister of Water to fulfill righteousness for his, the Righteousness of washing which was Legal as Circumcision, Col.2:11,12, therefore we are said to be Circumcised with him in circumcision, buried with him in Baptism; the Baptism of Water was performed by the Disciples, and Apostles of Christ in the Name of the Lord Jesus, as all other Legal Ordinances were, for Circumcision and all was to Christ, who was the end of the Law; but Jesus Christ himself never Baptized any, never was an administrator of it in his own person, Jn.4:1,2, he Baptized none but his Disciples, so as his Disciples Baptized none, as his only Ministration, but as from John, and as in his Ministration unto the Lord Jesus, and as a Ministration which was begun by one who was so eminent a Prophet, and so acceptable to Disciples that were weak and Legal.

The Baptism of Water was more used by those Apostles or Disciples, which were Jewish, and to the Jews as Peter who had the Apostle-ship of Circumcision, Gal.2:8, and so did judaize more; than by the Apostle who was less a Jew, and had not seen Christ in the flesh but in the Spirit, and was an Apostle to the Uncircumcision, and professed he was not sent to Baptize, I Cor.1:17, but to preach the Gospel.

This Baptism of Water was called a Baptism of Repentance, and of Manifestation to Israel, because that coming of Christ in the flesh was the first opening of the Mystery of Christ in the flesh, Jn.1:31, to those who were under sin and bondage, as the Jews and the Gentiles were. "Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." Acts 19:4-5.

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST, OR GIFTS.

The Baptism of the Holy Ghost or Gifts, is that Baptism which is said to be more properly Christ's ministration. "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." Matt.3:11.

The Baptism of the Holy Ghost or Gifts, was that Baptism which the Lord Jesus promised his Disciples to fulfill upon them, and upon their Ministration, "go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," Matt.28:19, and lo I am with you, &c., or, I Disciple those Nations, and Baptize them with the Holy Ghost in your ministration; for we all know that Apostles and Disciples could not disciple or baptize any. "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed," I Cor.3:5, and this Ministration of the Holy Ghost, or Gifts was to last that Age, for so is the Greek, not for ever and ever, or to the end of the world, as is commonly read, but to the Age, or during the time, or for the fulfilling of that ministration.

The Baptism of Gifts or the Holy Ghost was administered from Christ, in the Disciples ministration, "repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call," Acts 2:38-39, which promise is that of gifts or the Holy Ghost, which was that thing promised by John upon Christ's Ministry, "he shall

Baptize with the Holy Ghost;" and was promised by Jesus Christ himself, "ye shall be Baptized with the Holy Ghost," &c., Acts 1:5, and "Paul laid his hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost," Acts 19:6, and the Holy Ghost fell on them, Joel 2:28, this was a promise in the Prophets too.

The Baptism of the Holy Ghost or Gifts and fire was in figure. Gifts held forth the flowing of a more spiritual Nature, or of the Spirit upon those who were true spiritual Disciples; and fire was a sign or figure of the power of the Spirit, in the Spiritual Disciples, burning up and destroying flesh, and the body of sin in them, even this first creation, upon which it fell, for it sat upon each of them in fire, signifying, by its resting upon their flesh, what part was designed to loss and purification, "the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." I Cor.3:13, if any man's work be burnt he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.

10

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST.

The Baptism of Christ, which is his own proper and Spiritual and only ministrations, is that by which all true Christians are Baptized into fellowship with him, and oneness with him; and so becomes wholly washed in the New creature, or New man, or Baptized into the very Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, of which that Baptism administered in gifts, or the Holy Ghost by the Apostles, more visibly was a sign.

The Baptism of Christ, who is the Lord that Spirit, "now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty," II Cor.3:17, the image of the invisible God, "who is the image of the invisible God, the

firstborn of every creature," Col.1:15, the quickening Spirit, is that one Baptism spoken of in Ephesians, chapter 4, one Lord, one faith, one Baptism, for Jesus Christ administering in himself, and his own Spiritual Nature, can only make us thus one with himself, and with his own body.

The Baptism of Christ thus Administered in his own Spiritual Nature upon his, is that very Baptism by which we are in the fellowship of his sufferings and of his death; for as many as are baptized into Christ, are Baptized into his death, Phil.3:10, and as many as are baptized into Christ have put on Christ; so as this Baptism, by which we are all Baptized into Christ, and put on Christ and his death, is spiritual; for Christ cannot be truly put on, nor anything of his, his sufferings, death, or resurrection, but in Spirit and Truth, whereby we are truly crucified and dead with him, to ourselves and the world, and alive with him in one spirit; the same Spirit that raised up Jesus Christ shall also quicken our mortal bodies. Rom.8:11.

The Baptism of Jesus Christ is that whereby we are baptized into his body; now his body is a Spiritual one, and fashioning like his glorious one, by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." I Cor.12:13.

The Baptism of Christ is that whereby we are complete in him; now we are complete in him only by being one with him in Spirit and Nature, Col.2:10, he being made unto us Righteousness and Sanctification, &c., and thus we are said to be circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, Col.2:11,12, and buried with him in baptism, wherein also we are risen with him through faith, or Spirit; so as we are Baptized in him as we are Circumcised in him; that is, we are all in him; and as the Circumcision is without hands, so is the

Baptism, it being the Apostles whole business in this chapter to take us and the Colossians up higher than rudiments, which perish with using.

The Baptism of Christ is that true spiritual washing and cleansing wherein all his are baptized, not the putting away the filth of the flesh, I Pet.3:21, but the answer of a good conscience towards God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and this is the Baptism which is said in this place to save us, as Noah's Ark did those eight persons in figure, therefore saith the Apostle, the like figure whereunto Baptism doth now save us.

11

THE DIVERSE MINISTRY, WITH THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST IN HIS SAINTS.

Under the Law there was a Priesthood, the administration of the Law and Sacrifices being gathered up into one Tribe, that of Levi; none was to take this Office, Heb.5:4, but he that was called of God as was Aaron.

Under the Law there were Prophets, as Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, &c., the Interpretation of the Law, and the more spiritual Revelation of the will of God, were administered by the Prophets, or some few to whom the word of the Lord came.

Both Priests and Prophets were types and figures of Jesus Christ to come, Heb.9:9, the great High Priest and Prophet of his people as well as in ministry to the people.

In the more clear Revelation of the Gospel, the administration of Christ was committed to a few, or certain disciples in distinction of Gifts and Office; twelve

of whom were called Apostles, and seventy Disciples. Lk.10:1.

When Jesus Christ went out of flesh into spirit, or ascended, he confirmed and settled this ministration, by pouring out gifts of Spirit, for the more glorious and visible quickening, and spiritualizing this ministration; he ascended up on high and gave gifts unto men, he gave some Apostles, some Evangelists, some Prophets, some Pastors, some Teachers for the work of the Ministry, &c. Eph.4:10-13.

During the Ministration of Jesus Christ in the Church in this distinction, and diversity of gifts, there were such as were spiritually and visibly gifted accordingly, I Cor.12:10, so as the Apostles and Evangelists, and Prophets, and Pastors, were known to be such, both by the saints or people of God, to whom they did, according to their gifts administer, and to themselves, they administering in the knowledge of such gifts of Spirit as were in them.

During this Ministration of Jesus Christ by Apostles, Evangelists, Prophets, Pastors, &c., the Disciples that were not in the distinction or number of such, Acts 8:4, but were only called Disciples, yet did preach and administer, Rom.12:6, as they had received.

Antichrist, or the Mystery of Iniquity, came in upon this Ministration by Gifts and Ordinances, and the glory of the Spirit and power of gifts went off from the visible Church, as the glory of God from the Temple to the threshold till it was wholly departed; this was the falling away prophesied of by Paul, II Thes.2:3, and by John in his Epistles, I Jn.4:1-3, and in the Revelation, Rev.13:1-8, in the vision of the Churches of Asia, and of the Beast, and false Prophet.

All things in the visible Churches of the Nations were, and are, in the absence of the Spirit and of gifts, administered by Arts and Sciences, and Grammatical

knowledge of tongues and languages, and according to some spiritual measure received in some, to whom these things are in some degree sanctified and spiritualized.

All knowledge and understanding of the Original, all interpretation of Scriptures is according to the outward and inward administration of both, through arts, sciences, and tongues acquired, and through such a measure of spiritual understanding as each have received.

There is no restauration of these gifts of the Spirit, which were in the first ministration of the Church, as of Apostles, Evangelists, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers, according to the first institution, that is, so as the gifts of all these offices are clearly to be seen and discerned in the Spirit, to be the very unction and gift either of Prophet, or Pastor, or Teacher, as in the first Ministration, which will more clearly appear in singling that pure gift of the Spirit, that is in each, from the habits of arts and sciences, and languages acquired; and from that spiritual understanding which is in all the Saints, according to that work of the Spirit, or regenerate part in them, which is one and the same for nature and substance of regeneration with all, so as no superadded, or proper, or distinguishing gifts appear upon any other account, but either a natural or artificial, or purely spiritual account; not upon any account of distinction of gifts and office as at first, when the Spirit was poured out, and this will appear yet more in comparing times and persons, and gifts; our times with the first, our Pastors even of all Churches with the first, and the gifts of all now with the gifts then; for then the Spirit of God was poured out in gifts, and the Disciples were taught of God, and Propheied and Preached from the mere gift, and Spirit received; but now Prophets and Pastors are taught from another account, viz., upon a more artificial and industrious and human account, and their regenerate nature; then they ministered and spake as the Oracles of

God, for then they spake as the Spirit only gave them utterance.

The Ministry that is raised up to destroy antichrist, or the man of sin, which prevailed against the first ministry and gifts, is to be more glorious, and powerful, and mighty, as the ministry of gifts was more excellent than that of the Law; and so destroyed that power of Apostasy that had prevailed upon the Priesthood and Law then; so the Ministry that is to destroy that mystery of iniquity, which prevailed upon the Gospel Ministry of gifts, must be more excellent and glorious and powerful than that, and this is Jesus Christ himself called the Prophet whom we are to hear, "for Moses truly said unto the fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people," Acts 3:22-23, and that GOD of whom we shall all be taught, as "it is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Jn.6:45. Ye shall be all taught of God; and he that shall destroy Antichrist by the brightness of his coming, and that Angel with the everlasting Gospel, Rev.14:6, Rev.18:1, prophesied on by John, preaching and enlightening the earth with his glory; this is the day of Jesus Christ, whose coming is prepared as the morning. "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD, his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." Hos.6:3.

The Ministry of Jesus Christ, this Angel of the Covenant, Rev.18:1, is through his people who are his Angel, or the Angel and Messenger to him, as he is the Angel to God or Messenger, or he that was sent of God;

and this Ministry is a Ministry of Jesus Christ in all his saints or people, according to his administration of light, and glory, and truth in them, shining in them to the revelation of truth and the Gospel. This Ministry exceeds the Priesthood of the law, which was but in one tribe, and one sort of men, and was but a Ministry of Christ to come in the flesh; this Ministry is of Jesus Christ the Prophet in the whole body of his Saints, come in the flesh, and perfected in spirit, and entered into glory. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Lk.24:26.

This Ministry of Jesus Christ the great Prophet in all his saints or people or body, is a Ministry exceeding the Ministry of the Gospel in gifts of miracles, and other gifts; for that was in some, this in all, that of men more immediately, this of Jesus Christ more immediately, that of some gifts, which though excellent in their nature and operations of the same Spirit; yet these might be in such as were not spiritual but carnal, but the pure Ministry of Jesus Christ in his Saints, in himself, as he is the quickening Spirit and Lord from heaven, is in none, but such as are of his body and in one spirit with him.

The present Ministry of men amongst all the Churches at this day according to any appearance of the Spirit of God in them, though running through the channel of Arts, Sciences, and Languages acquired by natural power and industry, is such a Ministry, as we may hear and receive or partake of anything of God or Christ there, that we find in their administration, though this be not that pure Ministry of Christ in Spirit, as we find the Apostles and Disciples of Christ in the Jewish worship in the Synagogues, and Temple under the Apostasy and Corruption.

And this Principle of bodily and local separation I find is both Legal, and Jewish, and literal; and is sucked in by the Saints from the first Gospel-discoveries and from

the Law, and Mosaical principles of separation, and when the Spirit of God is more in them, they shall see it, and hath been, as I clearly find, no little hindrance, and is at this day, to the power of the Gospel, and Jesus Christ in spirit, and the body of Christ in the unity of the spirit; and since our controversies in these outward things and Church ways, &c., have increased, the law of love and spirit, and power of godliness hath much abated; while form and mere letter, and something of outward order have taken up the place.

And though this may be an offence to such, as Paul saith, who make conscience of the idol; yet we know, saith he, an idol is nothing, I Cor.8:4-6, nor an idol temple; but when they shall see the Christian as he is in spirit, and the new creation, and no other thing part of him but what is glory, spirit, and life, and that all the law of outward order and form is only a supplement to the absence of the Spirit of God, and to order their outward man amongst men to their fellow saints and the world, while the law of the spirit of life is not in them shining, and conforming them in spirit and love to the image of Christ; and for my part I am far from denying any Gospel form, or way which appears to be the practice of the Saints then, because I conceive that saints see gathering and practicing are yet under such a ministration, and are to walk in it while they are in bondage and weakness.

But on the contrary I am far from thinking these administrations to be our glory, and high point of Reformation which our Brethren of the Independent, and Baptism, and Presbyterian way do, but in all tenderness, love, and yet faithfulness to them, rather a ministration of bondage and weakness to the Saints; because the Scriptures make it clear, calling such ministrations our seeing darkly as in a glass, and seeing in part, and that when the more perfect is come than that which is in part shall be done away. I Cor.13:8-12.

THE PASSAGE FROM LOWER MINISTRATIONS TO HIGHER.

The administrations in which God hath appeared, and doth appear yet in some proportion, are these.

The law or righteousness of the first Creation in which God had communion with man, Gen.1:26, and man with God, yet rather as with a Creator, Gen.2:7,8, than with a Father, or an Immanuel, and in the outward Court, or first Creation, Gen.2:15-18, not in the inward or holiest, paradise itself being but an image of the excellency of this Creation.

Man having fallen through the temptation of the serpent, Gen.3:1, or fleshly wisdom, and the espousals of the woman, or the weakness of that Creation wherein he was made, hath the first law of righteousness presented to him in a new ministration of letter by Moses in Tables of stone from God, in which the first glory and excellency was ministered to man in his fallen and apostate condition. "But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away." II Cor.3:7.

And because the law or first righteousness was weak through the flesh, there was the lowest ministration of angels, viz., by visions, dreams, &c., Heb.1:1, added, and likewise a ministration of Priests, Sacrifices, Ceremonies, Tabernacle, Temple, Prophets, by which man might have access unto God and speak with him, yet but in the outward court, or flesh, or things of this Creation, though he filled these with another glory, a

richer and a more excellent discovery of his love in the promised seed.

There was another ministration added of war and peace of the Nations, enemies in the flesh, Exod.17:16, and of a promised land, Jos.1:11-15, or blessing in the flesh, and the Israelites or Jews were to pass under this ministration, through all the enmity, oppositions, and battles of the Nation to this Canaan, all which was accomplished to them in letter, and in that, in figure of a more spiritual enmity, and kingdom, and glory, which is fulfilled in the more Gospel-revelation, when the fulness of time came.

The next ministration is something clearer than all these, and something brighter than the law, yet not so clear nor full as that of the fulness of time, which followed it, or of Christ in the flesh, and this ministration was that of John, than whom a greater Prophet did not rise, Lk.7:28, yet he that was least in the kingdom of God was greater than he, "he was a burning and a shining light." Jn.5:35. The law and the prophets were till John, Lk.16:16, he was the Prophet of the highest, and was sent to prepare his way, Matt.3:3, and to make Christ manifest to Israel by word and water, and this was only a ministration in order to one more spiritual, was to decrease, as the other did increase. Jn.3:30. The Baptism of the Spirit or fire was to lick up this of water, as in that figure of the sacrifice performed by Elijah the Prophet, I Kngs.18:34-38, when the fire came down and sucked up all the four barrels of water.

The other Ministration was the Gospel in the flesh of Christ, or in gifts and ordinances something more clear and in more discovery, and revelation; for the flesh of Christ in which he taught, and did miracles, and was circumcised and baptized, was a copy or draught of that ministration of gifts and ordinances, which was as perfect as the first Creation in its glory and purity, and yet higher

and nearer to God, coming forth in more revelation of an Immanuel, or God with us. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Isa.9:6.

A further Ministration was more nearness and participation of God manifested in flesh, or of Christ; and that was in graces or operations and fruits of the Spirit, Gal.5:22, as of faith, repentance, love, self-denial, humiliation, meekness, all which are a sweet spiritual administration, even the light of the glorious Gospel of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." II Cor.4:6.

Another Ministration respectively to a more excellent glory to come is that by angels in their highest administration, which is the only Angelical and Seraphical revelation, being something below the Spirit, yet higher than reason, or man's highest principle; and this John received, all those more excellent discoveries to be fulfilled in their seasons. Rev.1:1-2:29.

There is another Ministration of more spirit, of love, meekness, self-denial, suffering, overcoming evil with good, and conquering by receiving in the wrath and enmity of the world, and this I take one of the last and glorious truths, respectively to the flesh and the world, into which God will gather up his people by times and degrees, from all worldly and fleshly interests and engagements, wherein they shall be carried up into a more full enjoyment of God and conformity to Christ in his sufferings, death, and resurrection. "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." Phil.3:10.

The Lord Jesus walked first in this truth, he was led as a sheep to the slaughter, when he was reviled, reviled not again, I Pet.2:23, when he suffered he threatened not.

The Lord Jesus revealed this Gospel-truth and distinguished it from the law, which law was, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.

But he saith, resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on the one cheek turn to him the other also. Matt.5:39. "But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Matt.5:44-45.

The Apostle to the Romans reveals this, "dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink, for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Rom.12:19-21.

The Lord Jesus prophesied of this, blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth, through their meekness they shall inherit, through their meekness only shall the jealousy and enmity of the nations be allayed concerning them.

John in his vision of the latter times saw an appearance of this. "Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus," Rev.14:12; to which that of the Apostle to the Hebrews answers, "there remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." Heb.4:9-10.

The last, and more full, and rich ministration, and most naked, is that of God by himself in Spirit to the sons of God, into which Jesus Christ the fore-runner is entered, Heb.6:20, "and I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." Rev.21:22-23.

And this Ministration is fulfilled then, when Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom unto God; and this is not only done upon the whole body of Christ at the last, but is fulfilled in its particular accomplishments, and mystery of Spirit here, there being found these transitions, passages, and resignations, and exchanges of glory in the Saint. He that can receive it let him receive it, though "a man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." Jn.3:27. The more full and naked Ministration of God by himself in Spirit, "and I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." Rev.21:22.

And as God hath appeared in all these former, saving the last, into which Jesus Christ hath entered, so they remain still as figures and as so many several signs or planets in this Creation and the other, for believers to be born in, and to pass thorough in some proportion and measure till Christ hath delivered up the kingdom unto God.

God hath appeared in all these former administrations to his people, and they have enjoyed him in these degrees, and distances, and approaches; and they remain still as figures, and as so many signs and planets in the first Creation and the second for Christians in some measure and proportion to pass thorough; so as he that is of any spiritual discerning in these, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the height, and depth, and breadth, of God's ministration to his People,

and to know saints according to the measures they receive, and the ministration they live in with God.

I have drawn out these ministrations in their particular orbs, and spheres, and circles, which I could have folded up in three only, of Law, Gospel, and Spirit, or of Letter, Graces and God, or of the first, second and third heavens; but I saw God something abounding and variously dispensing, and I followed him in that fulness and variety so far, as he hath lighted my candle.

I shall now discourse a little more generally of all these, and of the passage from these, and of God appearing in these, and his going out from these, till he hath scattered all these veils before him, that he and his may see and enjoy each other with open face, where we shall see as we are seen and know as we are known.

The Christian passes through several ages and dispensations; as Christ was in the world, so is every Christian; he was made under the Law, under Circumcision, under Baptism, and the Supper of bread and wine, and then he crucified all that flesh as he walked in under those dispensations, and entered into glory, for thus it behoved Christ to suffer and enter into his glory. Lk.24:46.

The Jewish Church, or dispensation which was according to Moses, and the letter in which they were led out in carnal and more fleshly courses, as in the proceeding against the Nations by war and fighting, with all their other legal rites and rudiments were a clear figure of the Christian under age, or under tutors and governors, and worldly rudiments.

The Disciples of Christ, according to John's ministry and Christ's in the flesh were another type or figure for all Disciples of their age and ministry, and the Spirit of Christ works in all the Disciples according to such a way, and proportion, and measure, and dispensation, the heir as long as he is a child differing nothing from a

servant, Gal.4:1, though he be Lord of all, until the time appointed of the Father.

And I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, I Cor.3:1, even as unto babes in Christ, I have fed you with milk, and not with meat.

And the great and excellent design or mind of God in all these things is only to lead out his people, church, or disciples from age to age, from faith to faith, Rom.1:17, from glory to glory, II Cor.3:18, from letter to letter, from ordinance to ordinance, from flesh to flesh, and so to Spirit, and so to more Spirit, and at length into all Spirit, when the Son shall deliver up the kingdom unto the Father, and God shall be all in all, which last transition, or resignation, or resolution of all into the kingdom of God is not, as some think, only when the fulness of times or ages is come, but is transacting and finishing in parts and members of the body of Christ, and is not one single act, point, or effusion of glory, but a perfecting and fulfilling it in the several members of Jesus Christ, till the fulness of the stature of Christ be made up, and the Church become the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

For the day dawns, and the day-star arises in the heart, II Pet.1:19, shining more and more unto a perfect day; and he who is the bright and morning Star still shining into the glory of the Sun of righteousness, Mal.4:2, and the light of the Moon shall become as the light of the sun, Isa.30:26, and the light of the sun as the light of seven days, till the Lord God himself be the everlasting light, and our God our Glory.

Thus is the Christian or Disciple of Christ, passing on upon the several degrees, and measures, into the glory of Christ, and crucifying each condition as he passes through it, as all the Disciples have done before; the Jews passed out of that of the Tabernacle into the Temple, and from thence into the flesh of Christ, that Temple

destroyed and raised up in three days, a greater than Solomon being there, and from thence into Christ Crucified, and so into a ministry of spirit and life.

And the Disciples all of them had a measure of time and season in each Ministration, and God had his when he filled the Tabernacle with a cloud, and the Temple with Glory, and the flesh of Christ with unction or spirit above his fellows; and while God lived in each ministration, quickening, and glorifying, and acting it for himself, that presence of God and of Spirit, was to the Disciples like the Sun in Summer, shining upon them, the candle of the Lord shining upon their heads, and his secret upon their Tabernacles. Job 29: 2-4. But when the line of God's season was run out to its point and extremity, that he would no longer stay there, nor have his glory inhabit in such or such a ministration, then that ministration became but a place of desolation, a solitary place for the Satyrs to dwell in, and the screech Owl to sing in, that is for the Spirit of Apostasy and of Antichrist or iniquity to possess and act in.

And for Disciples to stay longer in any ministration than the Lord, or the life and spirit of Christ is in it, is as if Lot should tarry in Sodom, Israel with the Ark, when God was departed, the Jews in the Temple, when the Vail was rent, and the glory gone off to the threshold, and from thence too; their house being left unto them desolate, even that house or ministration where the light of God did formerly dwell.

As if the Disciples of Christ that went into the Grave should step in and sojourn there where his body had lain, and was risen and gone, seeking the dead amongst the living. The disciples of Christ were a true figure of such, who when Christ was dead were embalming the body, and would preserve it with spices and ointments when the spirit and life was out of it.

The Jews were a figure of such who would preserve their Law, and the shadows of all their worship, when Christ had left them, who was the life and substance of all that ministration. Peter and the rest were a true image of such, Matt.26:51,52, who in that sword he wore was a true figure of all such as Christ suffers in a warlike and defensive posture about his flesh, or whom he suffers to be so far conformed to the fashion of the world, as to guard and preserve those fleshly privileges of his presence and power amongst them, and in that activity of his to rescue and preserve, that flesh and body in which so much glory and excellency had appeared, and so many miracles were done, beyond that point or end of ministration, which God even the Father and the Son himself had set, was a figure of all such as should stretch out any dispensation, or ministration of God farther than the line or spiritual sinew of it will bear.

13

THE SPIRIT AND LIFE OF OUTWARD ORDINANCES.

The second Man or Adam in whom we all live, is a quickening spirit, and the Lord from heaven, and is at the right hand of God, viz., in the choicest glory of the Father.

That by which the people of God, or all true Christians are born; is the seed of God, or Word of God, or the divine nature of Jesus Christ, or the Spirit of God, which is called sanctification, regeneration.

That the true spiritual Christian is that new creature, that sanctified one, or regenerate one, who is thus born, and hath Christ formed in him, and this new creature is fed by the Spiritual life of Christ.

That the new creature, or spiritual man, is one who receives all his growth and increasing in the power, seed, and principle of the Spirit of God, or Jesus Christ.

That the Ministry or Ministration by which he grows up to that fulness of stature in Jesus Christ, is a Ministry or ministration of glory and spirit.

That the true and spiritual Baptism, by which every Christian is baptized into Christ's death, is the Baptism of Blood, which is the righteousness, spirit, or life of Christ.

That the due and spiritual Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is the very body and blood of Christ in the Spirit, or that pure spiritual nature of Jesus Christ, quickening and feeding up the Christian into a spiritual life and union with God.

That the true spiritual Minister is Jesus Christ, who is called a Minister of the Sanctuary which the Lord pitched and not men.

That Jesus Christ is the true Spiritual Apostle, sent out from God to reveal the Father, and is so called by the Spirit of God in Scriptures, the Apostle and High Priest of our profession.

That Jesus Christ is the true spiritual Prophet that teaches his people so as they are all taught of God, and is so called in Scriptures a Prophet, which the Lord God raised up, instead of Moses.

That the true Spiritual Pastor is Jesus Christ who is that one Shepherd prophesied on, who can lead his people only into green pastures, or places of life.

That the spirits of just men made perfect, or the true Christian in spirit are those true spiritual Elders in the New Testament.

That the true Church of Christ, is that spiritual company whom Christ hath washed in his blood, clothed in his righteousness, sanctified in his spirit, espoused to himself; this is the City of the living God, the heavenly

Jerusalem, the general Assembly, and Church of the first-born, the House, and Temple, and Kingdom of God.

That the true spiritual keys of the Kingdom of God is the very Spirit of God, the very Spiritual power of Jesus Christ upon believers and unbelievers, who hath the keys of David, and opens, and no man shuts, and shuts, and no man opens.

That true spiritual excommunication is Jesus Christ, who is mighty in spirit and power in all his, pronouncing an Anathema Maranatha or curse upon all flesh, and delivering the body or sinful flesh over to Satan, or the power of darkness, whereby flesh and every fleshly member is cast out from all communion with God and Jesus Christ, and from those who are indeed born of God, and are the true Spiritual Church of God, which is no more than that true difference and distinction, which Jesus Christ puts betwixt the precious and the vile.

The true Spiritual Gospel-Order, which the Apostle rejoiced to behold, is that spiritual distinction and variety in the body of Christ, wherein one member differs from another in measure of Spirit, and Glory, and Power, and yet all complete and make perfect that body of Christ in the Spirit, for he being a spiritual head must have a spiritual body.

The true Spiritual government is Christ reigning in the Saints in Spirit, ordering them in thought, word, and deed, holding forth his power, and scepter, which is a scepter of righteousness against flesh and blood, principalities and powers, spiritual wickedness in high places.

The true Spiritual Covenant is the New Covenant, which God makes with Christ for us, and wherein he is manifested to be their God, and they his people, to teach them, and write his law in their hearts.

The true Spiritual Ordination is the hand of Jesus Christ, stretched out or laid on upon the spirits of such

Christians as preach or prophesy of the Ministry of the Gospel, that is, such are rightly and purely ordained, and sent out, who are sent out from the power of the Lord Jesus, to whom all power in heaven and earth is given, and are anointed of him to preach the Gospel and sent of him, who ascended to give gifts unto men, some apostles some evangelists, some prophets, some pastors, some teachers.

The true spiritual trial or examination of the gifts of any is then, when the Spirit of the Prophets is only subject to the Prophets, that is when the gift by which any one speaks of Jesus Christ is manifested in the hearts and spirits of the Saints when they see the truths they minister as they are in Jesus, and in themselves, and in them that are spiritual, and truly anointed by the same Spirit; and so are all Prophets according to the measure given, or as they are all baptized into one spirit and body, and have all received of his fulness, who is that great Prophet raised up of our brethren like unto Moses, and are redeemed to be Kings, and Priests, and Prophets, even partakers of all his offices in spirit, he being the spiritual head of all his, who are the spiritual body, his Church.

14

THE CHRISTIAN UNDER EPISCOPACY, PRELACY, PRESBYTERY, BAPTISM, INDEPENDENCY, &C.

The whole world was divided into Jew and Gentile; the Jew was that only visible Church of God, to whom pertained the glory, and the adoption, and the covenants, and yet this Jewish Church was exceedingly fallen from

its glory and purity both of Priesthood, and Worship, and Administrations, when Christ came. So as now the Prophecy seemed to be fulfilled, they were now without a King, and without a Priest, and without a Sacrifice, and an Ephod, and a Seraphim; and were corrupted with many traditions and doctrines of men, teaching for doctrines the traditions of men. Thus was the Jew, and their Church.

The Gentile had changed the truth of God into a lie, and had worshiped the creature more than the Creator; and had changed the glory of the incorruptible God, and were given up to a reprobate mind, and were therefore called sinners of the Gentiles alienated from the life of God, strangers to the Covenants of Promise; thus were the Gentiles full of Idols and Idol-temples, sacrificing to devils, and that way of the knowledge of God, which was both in the law written in their hearts accusing or excusing, and in the whole Creation, where the eternal Power and Godhead was clearly seen, even in the things that did appear, even that way of the knowledge of God in them was darkened, and they became vain in their imagination, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Now when Jew and Gentile were both thus, yet God had his people amongst both, amongst the Jew, where Zacharias the Priest, Elizabeth, and Mary, and Joseph, and Simeon, and Nicodemus a Ruler of the Pharisees, and Joseph of Arimathea, with many such, were like so many stars in a dark night.

Among the Gentile there was a Job, a Queen of Sheba, a woman of Canaan, the wise men that came to Jerusalem, the Greeks that came to see Jesus, Cornelius the Centurion, so as in every Nation he that serveth God, and worketh righteousness is accepted of him, and God is no acceptor of persons.

When John came, who was a burning and a shining light, he preached to, and baptized all Judea, who went

out to the Baptism of John, and taught his Disciples by forms of prayer, and such rudiments, to their weakness, and God had his people here that were under no more knowledge of Christ, not higher revelation, than this washing to Repentance, and to him that should come after him, and this low way of communion with God in forms or rules of prayer given out by John, for so John taught Disciples.

When Christ came preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and teaching in Parables and Mysteries, he had a People and Disciples who knew little of his sufferings that he should die and rise again, as Peter, and the rest, and knew little of that glorious doctrine and truth which he spake and preached to them, till he took them alone and expounded to them those Mysteries; and his Disciples were under a form and rule of Prayer as John's were, "Lord teach us to pray as John taught his Disciples." They saw little more of him than his fleshly presence, and miracles, they loved him, and clave to him, and followed him, but had very few discoveries of him in Spirit, except some few of them, James and Peter and John, before whom he was transfigured in the Mount, which was but figurative and typical of a more spiritual revelation. And when the Spirit of Christ was come, and the Apostles were sent forth in clearer evidences and demonstrations of Truth, then some were under John's Baptism, and knew not of any Holy Ghost; some were under the law, Rom.2:23, and zealous of the Law and Circumcision; some regarded a day, some ate herbs, some were eating such things as were sacrificed to Idols, &c.

So as here God's people were found some in a corrupted Church, as that of the Jews, some under false worship and traditions, some under legal rites, under forms or rules of prayer, some under John's Baptism, under bondage of days and times and other outward

things, under the ignorance of Christ's death and resurrection, and of the Holy Ghost.

So as all these things considered, there will spring these Conclusions.

That the Nations commonly called Christians, who are under the account of others as falls in their Church-constitution, worship, forms, and order, yet these things are not exclusive to the true Christian in spirit, or one born of God, but in these commonly called Christians, though under Episcopacy, or Prelacy, or Presbytery, yet there may be such as have the true seed of God in them, partakers of Jesus Christ, true disciples of Jesus Christ, respectively to regeneration or the new birth, if they wait in the increasing of Christ, and revelation of righteousness from faith to faith.

That there are true and spiritual disciples of Jesus Christ, under forms of prayer, who have little more communion with God than in those forms, as of common prayer, book prayers, outward rules of worship, &c., so as they wait in these to be brought up into a more distinct work of revelation truth, when discovered to them by the Spirit of Truth.

That there are such who are Christians anointed by the Spirit of God, under observations of days, times, meats, drinks, several opinions of Christ, of the Holy Ghost, of the resurrection, of Church order, of Baptism, of Water; which is John's Baptism called Anabaptists; so as they all in these several measures pass on from faith to faith, Rom.1:17, and glory to glory. II Cor.3:18.

THE CHRISTIAN IN TRUTH.

That which forms, essentiate, or constitutes the true Christian, is the Spirit of Jesus Christ, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, so as a man is a Christian from birth, as he is born a man, so he is born a Christian, both are from birth, and seed, the one of flesh, the other of Spirit.

The Christian is one, who is of the second Adam, as all men are of the first, and the second man is the quickening spirit, the Lord from heaven, and so are they that are heavenly.

The Christian is one, in whom Christ is formed or figured, {as the Greek word implies,} one that bears the image of the heavenly man, who is the image of Jesus Christ, as Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God.

The Christian is one, who hath the incorruptible seed in him, or the word which liveth and abideth forever, which word is the Lord Jesus Christ who quickens the Saint, and is the life of the Saint, "you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." Eph.2:1.

The Christian is one, who is in fellowship and conformity with Jesus Christ in his crucifixion, death, and resurrection, in whom the flesh, and life of the flesh must die, as it did in him, and the Christian, as Christ did, must live in Spirit to God.

The Christian is one, who is the new creature, or new man, for he that sits upon the throne in his Spirit saith, behold I make all things, all new, old things in him, as corruptions and lusts do pass away. II Cor.5:8.

THE WITNESSES IN SACKCLOTH.

The Ministry that hath been since Antichrist or the mystery of iniquity reigned without, or in the worship of God in all societies of Christians called Churches, whether in Presbytery, Independency, or Baptism, is not the same with that first Ministry of the Gospel in pure gifts, and is no other than the witnesses in sackcloth.

The Lord Jesus ascended up on high, Eph.4:8, out of flesh into Spirit, and gave gifts unto men, he gave some, Eph.4:11, Apostles, some Evangelists, some Prophets, some Pastors, some Teachers.

In this administration of gifts, the mystery of Jesus Christ, or the Gospel was revealed, and carried on, till the time prophesied on by the Spirit of God, wherein the mystery of iniquity should prevail, and the falling away should be, and the man of sin should be revealed, II Thes.2:3-12, and perilous times should come, II Tim.3:1-5, and this mystery of iniquity did so darken and overcast all this administration of the Gospel in gifts, and ordinances, or outward administrations, as there was a visible apostasy respectively to those very pure gifts of the Spirit, and pure administrations respectively to the first institution, and this is no more than the experience of our own age, and the times before, so far as any History can make apparent, doth clearly demonstrate; so as that administration of Spirit or Ordinances, which hath been in several times since the first pure Gospel-day, or time {wherein the Spirit did minister in truth and demonstration} hath been but in some faint and small discoveries of the Spirit and Letter, as in those of Huss, Luther, Wickliffe, Calvin, Peter Martyr, and Bede, with all the rest of our many Martyrs in the kingdom, who were

glorious lights respectively to the darkness of that generation, yet if compared with the pure glory of the first Gospel administration in gifts and ordinances, were far below, and in darkness, and weakness to that; so as I look upon all God's ways of the administration of his Gospel to hold some proportion one with another; the Tabernacle, and Temple, and Laws of outward administration were such ways and means God did appear in, and so in the Priests, and Prophets, God at sundry times and in divers manners speaking to our fathers, Heb.1:1-3, and afterward God took up our very flesh to administer in, and so came, and spoke to us by his Son, and after all these, the Lord went out from these after his usage of them, and appearance in them, and then they were no more an ordinance or way to God, as they formerly were; nor did ever the Lord enjoin the restitution or reassuming of them again, when the Temple was once rent, the veil of it, the Lord was no more in it, nor in their Priesthood, and Sacrifices, &c., nor when once the Lord Jesus had ended his administration in the flesh upon the Cross did he ever restore it in that very way again, or intend it according to that first appearance, but in a more glorified state.

And so in all reformations respectively to these former administrations they never returned back, or reassumed the same again, after once God had refused it, and laid it by. When Christ came in the flesh he did not make it his work to settle the Priesthood again, but to lead them into the spiritual glory and fulfilling of all those legal dispensations, and carry them on into more Gospel-administrations, and that which was more excellent and perfect.

So it is in that first Gospel-administration of gifts and ordinances after Christ ascended, there were such pure operations of Spirit, as in gifts, and some outward institutions, and Church administrations, but these were

only the Ministration for that age, as the Tabernacle was for its age, and the Temple, Priesthood, and Sacrifices for their age, and the flesh of Christ for its age or time; so as the falling away is no more, but the Lord gathering up, or taking in the out-goings, operations, or gifts of his Spirit in such a way of ministration, and till this was done, there was a withholding of the mystery of iniquity from being revealed; therefore saith the Apostle to the Saints, "and now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time," II Thes.2:6, "for the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way," II Thes.2:7, and truly that mystery did not work freely, nor powerfully, till the Lord had removed the glory of his Spirit from the Churches, the presence of which did exceedingly prevent, and withhold, and put an hindrance to the revelation and dominion of that man of sin.

And the Spirit of God foreseeing God about to leave this ministration of Gospel-glory, to the world; and bring a night upon all that day and brightness of his Son, prophesied of the times to come, and to succeed that glory, viz., in the last days perilous times shall come, men shall be lovers of themselves, II Tim.3: 1-5, covetous, proud, boasters, &c., despisers of those that are good, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the Power thereof.

But there were false Prophets among the People, even as there shall be false Teachers amongst you; who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, &c., II Pet.2:1-3, and many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken off, and through covetousness shall they make merchandize of you.

"But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit." Jude 1:17-10.

"Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." I Jn.2:18.

So as from all these places of the Apostles, we may see their Prophecies of the Antichristian times, which are the times of the flesh, and of the spirit of iniquity, reigning amongst the Saints, or in the Christian world, the Lord of Glory Jesus Christ in Spirit, being all this time crucified in Spiritual Sodom, Egypt or Babylon, which is the Kingdom of the Flesh and the Powers of Darkness, and this is the state and condition of the Church of Christ, or those who are the spiritual vessels, or golden cups of the Lord's Temple and carried away captive, and live under the power of flesh, and of spiritual wickedness; so as all the time of the reign, and prevailing of this mystery, {which mystery is in a threefold principality or eminency, Rev.19:20, viz., of the beast, the false prophet, and the devil, all which three work as well without, unto the world, as within, in the flesh of every saint,} all the time of this reign or prevailing is not a time of any restitution or restauration of the first ministry, or gifts, or ordinances as was in the Apostles times, but is the state and persecution of the Lord Jesus in Spirit, and the time of the woman's being in the wilderness, Rev.12:6, all things in this time seeming as a waste, and barren dispensation about her, not inhabited by the Spirit of God, and she in a retirement of Spirit dwelling with God, out of the power of the Dragon who casts only his flood after her, but not upon her.

So as here is no more in this time of Antichrists reign in the Flesh and the World, but only the Churches oppression in spirit, and the crucifying the Lord in spirit.

And all these appearances of the Lord Jesus in many glorious saints who in particular ages appeared were but appearances of him who is that faithful and true witness, against this power of the man of sin, and were but drops of the vials, soundings of the trumpets, openings of the seals, before the battle of the great day, when fire shall come down from God out of heaven, Rev.20:9, and devour them, the Lord Jesus being revealed in flames of spirit, and glory, against all flesh.

So as there is not any word appearing in all the Scripture, that the first ministry by gifts, and ordinances shall in any measure be continued, though in part, or in reservation to the restored, as if this were the great work the Lord intended to bring to pass, viz., the setting up a purer ministry of gifts to teach his people, or restoring some legal ordinances, as baptism of water, the church way, or presbytery of elders, and all the glory of the last times or ages should be only the bringing in these, and taking them out of the hands of Antichrist, all which arise from a mistake of the type of the Jewish Apostasy and Captivity which figured out the Spiritual Church or New Jerusalem in Babylon, or captivity to the flesh, or man of sin in all his deceivableness and power, and the restoring of all shall be only the appearance of the Lord Jesus who shall destroy Antichrist with the brightness of his coming, II Thes.2:8, and the two edged sword of his mouth, his Spirit.

And there is not a word spoken in all the Scriptures of these things to be restored as gifts and ordinances, but the glory of the Lord in Spirit, and therefore the Reformation or Restauration that the Lord Jesus brings with him, {for Moses, Joshua, and all the reforming kings of Judah, were but types of him, the last and most

excellent and glorious Reformer, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords,} that Reformation I say that he brings with him, is the revelation of himself in spirit, he and his Father being the light and temple of his people, Rev.21:22, for there shall be no other there. "The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee, but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." Isa.60:19.

This shall be a glory without sun or moon or stars or any such low or faint appearance as gift or ordinance, but the Lord God shall be the everlasting light, and God the glory; and light shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea; light shall not sparkle or be in bright beams as in a gift or an ordinance, but it shall flow out from the Lord himself, even cover the earth, swallowing up or overflowing all earthly administrations. And it shall be as much apostasy in the Saints to go back to that first ministry of the Gospel times, which was the ministry to the first discovery of that mystery hid from ages, as it would have been in them to have gone back to the Jewish Temple and Priesthood, &c., and have taken the setting up of those to have been the great and only Reformation of Christ come in the flesh, and as the Lord Jesus himself did in his coming in the flesh fulfill all these, and destroy nothing, save only as to the outward and perishing nature of those ordinances and rudiments, of the law; so in this his last glory to be revealed in the saints here, he shall not destroy any of the first ministry of the Gospel by gifts and ordinances, but shall fulfil it, it being but a type of his glory to be revealed in the Saints, and the former ministry is only destroyed as to that outward perishing part of it.

And this destruction of Antichrist, and the glory to be revealed, is the Prophecy of the Prophets; and John in the Revelation and is the sum and substance of all types, and ministrations which were before.

So as all the pretended reformations by gifts and ordinances, which tends to a reducing us to that first ministry of the Apostles times, which that of Presbytery, of Independency and Baptism-way endeavors, is but a building up such things as the Lord would have destroyed; it being an administration which he would use no longer, and therefore suffered Antichrist to prevail upon it, and the man of sin to overcome it, and as God to sit in the Temple, or in all that outward form and worship, figured out in that word the Temple as God, or as God himself used to do, when he was pleased to appear there.

And therefore all that ministry and pastor-ship and teaching is not at all upon the account of the first Gospel ministrations, according to that very glory of the gifts, and pure anointing, by which they did minister as the oracles of God and very truths of God, as they did then, so far as they spake or did anything in the Holy Ghost; but they now, I mean the pastors and ministers, do speak and minister doubtfully, darkly, uncertainly, more in the flesh than the Spirit, not at all in anything of unction, or anointing exceeding any private Christian, or distinct according to any gift of the Holy Ghost, but so far only as they exceed others in parts, wit or learning, which are upon a lower account of the Spirit, than the firsts gifts upon that of arts and sciences.

And therefore if pastors, ministers, and christians, who cannot now minister as the oracles of God, nor according to the very gifts of the Holy Ghost then, will be content to Prophecy, as Christ will only allow his Witnesses to do, even all that bear witness of him, in sackcloth, according to that poor, low, and legal account and humble condition they are in, it being yet the time of Antichrists reign, not of Christ's, and not assume to themselves the names, offices, preeminence, glory, obedience, very administrations, which were then in power, and in the Holy Ghost, both in Pastor and

Churches, and not walk as full and rich and wanting nothing, Rev.3:17, when as they are poor, miserable, and naked, the Church of Laodicea being a figure of all such, for my part, I then shall look on all such as in the Spirit, and walking humbly with God, and prophesying in sackcloth, and waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus; nor do deny, but Christians in these ways and administrations have enjoyed God sweetly, though they be not such ways as God approves on, though he suffer; as many of the Godly Bishops, and Martyrs, did enjoy Jesus Christ in their times of Ceremonies and Forms of Prayer, God still appearing to his, as they are in Christ, not in such or such an outward way or form.

There remaineth two or three choice Scriptures to open concerning this, and they are these.

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Eph.4:11-13.

"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." I Cor.12:28.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt.28:19-20.

From all these Scriptures these Conclusions are made. 1. That there is a Ministry of gifts, of teaching, and ordinances. 2. That this is for the perfecting of the Saints. 3. That this is to last to the end of the world.

Now these Scriptures are much mistaken according to such results and conclusions.

The Scripture to the Ephesians shows only that there was such a Ministry of gifts and offices, but not any such continuance of them to the end of the world. For where it is said, for the perfecting of the Saints, &c., till we all come &c., that hath relation to the tenth verse, or to Christ ascended, that he might fill all things; and this, of the perfecting of the Saints, &c., is only an exposition or clearer interpretation of that tenth verse, how he fills all things, viz., by perfecting his Saints in the work of the Ministry, or that glorious and spiritual administration of himself upon his, to bring them all into the unity of the faith, so as he may be one in them and they in him, the Lord one, and his name one, which is that unity of the faith.

Nor can this Scripture intend any other thing than this, viz., to show first how the Lord fills all things, as in verse the tenth, and how he set up a ministration of gifts in the first discovery of Gospel-glory, he gave some Apostles, &c., and how he himself perfects the saints by being their fulness, and so edifies or builds up his body, and brings forth that unity of the faith, or one glorious evidence and revelation of himself in the whole body.

Nor can any other thing bear the weight of such expressions but Christ himself. Who can perfect the Saints but Christ? Who can edify the body or build it up but Christ? Who can bring forth unity of faith but Christ? For no gifts either of Apostle or Prophet, or &c., can perfect the saints. Though I have the gift of Prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, I Cor.13:2-3, and though I have all faith, and have not love or Christ, who is the love of the Father, it profiteth me nothing.

But suppose it were so, that the ministration of gifts and offices, there spoken on, were for the perfecting of the saints till the unity of the faith be, what doth this

prove to the present ministration of gifts and offices now, or since the falling away amongst us, for we have none of them in the pure gifts of the Holy Ghost or Unction, and we must either have all or none; there is no taking these gifts and offices in pieces and parts, as they do generally, distinguishing them into extraordinary and ordinary; the extraordinary, they say, are Apostles, Evangelists, Prophets, and these, they say, are ceased, but Pastors and Teachers, they say, are ordinary, and remain; but where is this distinction to be found in the Word? Are not all gifts of the same Spirit? Doth not the Scripture reckon them all equally necessary in the Church? Doth it anywhere speak of Apostles, Evangelists, Prophets, only for the first Age, and Pastors and Teachers for the Ages after? Doth not the Scripture say expressly that God hath set some in his Church, I Cor.12:28, and so reckons according to some order in the excellency of gifts and office, not according to the expiration of some, and the life and continuance of the rest, saying, Apostles, Evangelists, Prophets are to cease, only Pastors and Teachers remain, but he saith plainly he hath set all these in his Church, not excepting one sort more than another. Nay, a Pastor or Teacher in the true and proper gift and office, was as spiritual as the other, viz., of the pure anointing or the Holy Ghost; but Pastor and Teacher hath been considered in a lower capacity, and industry, art, natural parts, and learning have been taken in in after times to the composition of a Pastor and Teacher, and upon this account those offices have been thought ordinary, which were upon the mere and pure account of the Holy Ghost; so as if they will have Pastors and Teachers only remain. Where is the Scripture for excepting the rest, and where are the very same gifts? And pure anointing of Spirit for watching, feeding, and teaching?

And if they will have these Scriptures to hold forth such a continued ministry of necessity to the perfecting of the Saints, where are all the rest, viz., Apostles, Evangelists, &c., for all are reckoned both in Eph.4:11-13 & I Cor.12:28, and where are those very gifts of pure anointing? And why so many hundred years without these? What hath become of the Saints since the first great falling away? How have they been perfected? If all these were for that very work, and yet not visibly extant for so many years? Nay, the pure gifts of the anointing of the Holy Ghost not appearing in any of the most glorious Reformers, as Luther, who had much darkness, as in that of Consubstantiation, and in his passions to King Henry, and in many other particulars of his, &c., and so of the rest, save only they shone forth in the more glory because of the darkness of that Generation.

For that other Scripture in Matthew 28, "go teach and baptize, and lo I am with you," &c., it is only {as I take it} and merely in application to the Apostles and Disciples of that Age and Ministration, whom the Lord bid go and teach what he had commanded them, and baptize into the name or mystery of God, which word baptize is a figure Christ uses to express the depth of a spiritual mystery, as in that, "can ye be baptized with the Baptism that I am baptized with," and, "he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost," &c. And that phrase, "to the end of the world," is {if more clearly translated} to the finishing of the Age, or that Age of Ministration.

Some of these things are scatteringly spoken on in other places of my Book, but here more perfectly and clearly.

MAGISTRACY, A POWER ORDAINED OF GOD.

The Magistrate is a power ordained of God, an image of the Power and Judgment committed to Christ; Scripture and the gift of wisdom, justice, and righteousness are his unction now, as the oil or anointing was his unction under the Old Testament. Rom.13:1-5.

Magistracy for form is not one and the same, but divers, according to the several polity of Nations and Kingdoms, by Kings singly, or Kings and States jointly; as in this Kingdom, or States singly, as in the old notions of Monarchy, Aristocracy, Democracy, and that each nation is subject according to its polity, and form, to the respective government, and that Scriptures clothe and invest that form in its very first being and constitution, and that form receives an image of God upon it, as the first man, who as soon as he became such a model of earth or clay became a man, and had the glory of God upon him and dominion over the creatures.

These Powers and Magistrates upon earth are set up for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well, justice and righteousness being that very line or golden reed by which they are measured, the very scales by which God weighs them, where if they be found too light, he gives their Kingdoms to another. "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." Dan.5:27-28.

All lawful subjection is to be rendered, honour to whom honour, tribute to whom tribute, and subjection to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; prayers and

supplications are to be made for them, that we may lead a peaceable and a quiet life in all godliness and honesty.

Magistracy is set up, not only to be an image of Christ to the world, but to administer Peace and Judgment to the world and societies of men, and more principally to his people in the flesh, who while they are nursing fathers to them do administer truly, and to Christ in his people; when persecutors, Christ still turns their administration, though evil in itself, into good for his, all things working together for good to those that love God. Rom.8:28.

The high and glorious design of Christ in Magistracy is to open a way in all their kingdoms and dominions for the Spirit of God to breath in, kings shall be thy fathers, &c., and walk in such outward administrations as it pleaseth the Spirit of God to appear in to the Saints, who are in flesh and weakness, and so far as concerns any outward administration of Christ, Jesus Christ becomes a subject in his Saints to the power he hath committed to Magistracy, they having power to hinder and further his spiritual design so far as it comes forth in the outward man; therefore all power of Magistracy turned against the Spirit of God in this appearance shall, and all such Kingdoms and Nations as proceed accordingly, viz., to oppose that Kingdom, Power, and Dominion they receive from Christ against him in his spiritual Kingdom, shall be dashed to pieces like a potters vessel. "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." Psal.2:10-12.

But all such Nations, States, and Kingdoms as shall administer not only judgment and righteousness in the world, but shall bring their glory and honour to Christ and his Spirit in his People. Peace shall be within their

walls, and prosperity within their Palaces, judgment shall flow there like a river, and righteousness like a mighty stream. "And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it, and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it." Rev.21:24.

18

THE DISCERNING OF SPIRITS.

There was such a manifestation of spirit given to the people of God in the first Gospel-times as they could in the very unction or anointing of God discern spirits and try spirits, "ye have an unction and ye know all things," "the same anointing teacheth you," "to another the gift of discerning spirits." I Cor.12:10. "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." I Jn.2:20. "But he that is spiritual judgeth all things." I Cor.2:15.

In this manifestation of spirit were all false teachers, I Jn.4:1, deceivers, antichrists, and hypocrites judged, and discerned; II Jn.7, "I will come to you," I Cor.4:19, saith the Apostle, and will know, "not the words of them that are puffed up, but the power."

This manifestation of spirit is that in which spiritual men are known and revealed to each other, and have as full assurance of each other in Spirit and in Truth as men know men by the voice, features, complexions, statures of the outward man.

The manifestation of spirit may be darkened, and clouded in Christians sometimes, and hath been in the purest times, when the Disciples did not know; Simon Magus, nor Demas, nor Hymenaeus, and Philetus, nor those that went out from them, nor Judas. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been

of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." I Jn.2:19.

The manifestation of spirit hath been much lost and darkened in the Churches for many hundred years, since the Antichristian darkness upon them; and therefore they have judged spiritual things in a mist, and in much dimness and doubtfulness, it hath been neither night nor day.

For supplement of this manifestation of spirit, Christians walked by Candle-light, and Star-light, and set up marks and signs of trial and demonstration in the letter and outward man, so as any hypocrite might appear for a true Christian, and therefore most of their way of Manifestation hath been from formal relations and confessions of faith, and experiences according to the Law or standard of their own spirits, trying and judging all other measures of grace by their own.

The experience of Christians, who have the Spirit of God in them, is very clear concerning the workings and manifestations of the same Spirit in others, as in Prayer, Preaching, Prophesying, Conference, Conformity to Christ, Spiritual Conversation, so as Christians can in a manner say, the Spirit of God is here and here, or here I taste, and see something of God; here is a spiritual savour, there is none; as in natural things there is such a proportion betwixt the sense and object, that the sense knows and discerns its own object, as in smelling, tasting, seeing, hearing, so in Spirituals; and as there is an outward, a letter, or Scripture-Christianity by which men are distinguished as Jew and Gentile, as Professors and Profane, as of the visible Church and of the world, so there is in the true spiritual Church, or Kingdom of God in Truth, a more pure spiritual and glorious way of knowing each other according to that true spiritual glory, nature, and light that each walks in, being all children of the day

and of the light. "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness." I Thes.5:5. And this is no more than the fulfilling of that promise, "then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not," Mal.3:18, but it is in that day when the Lord makes up his jewels, which the more glorious revelation of Jesus Christ in the Saints gathering his people into more unity and glory of Spirit.

All works and fruits of men, as they are christians and spiritual, must either be judged and discerned in the same spirit and measure of light and glory in which they are wrought, and from whence they flow, or else it is but a mere formal, outward, pretended, false, and fleshly way of judging in those that so judge; and thus the tree is truly and purely known by its fruits, and faith by works. The same Faith & Spirit shining and discerning, in those that judge the works of their faith, who are judged.

And thus we may see how Synods and Councils of men, and visible Churches have erred in their judgments, and discerning of all others, judging all higher attainments of light and glory, heresy and schism; and by this sentencing the Lord himself, and confining him only to their own measures and degrees, which is that very spirit of Antichrist sitting in the Temple of God, and judging as God, nay judging God himself according to his other manifestations which they see not, nor receive, unless they pretend to be that only select Apostleship for interpretation and revelation of Scripture, as the Apostles, who were the first Preachers of Scripture; and this they must do upon their ways and grounds of discerning; but what shall be done to these that judge before the time, and the day, or more full revelation of Jesus Christ, the false Prophet shall be taken and cast into the lake that burns with fire, and these that judge God in their brethren according to such manifestations as are not in

themselves, shall be judged of God their Judge, even of the Lord Jesus the Judge of quick and dead. Cain was an image of all such, judging his brothers sacrifice, and for that was sentenced of God.

19

PRINCIPLES OF WAR AND PEACE.

War is the more natural work of the Nations of the World, who shall, according to Christ's Prophecy, be dashing one another in pieces till the last appearance of Jesus Christ, there shall be Wars and rumors of Wars, Nation shall rise against Nation, and Kingdom against Kingdom. Matt.24:6,7.

War is from the Law, and Principles of nature, according to which the Nations of the world live, and are acted, having no higher a law to raise them, and carry them up into more glorious dispensations; for the Law or Principles of nature dictate thus, preserve thy self, thy life, thy lands, thy rights, an eye for an eye; and a tooth for a tooth. Exod.21:24.

The true Christian, so far as he is in nature and under this law, he is acted according to the world, and to the mere Principles of nature and law; and therefore it is that the Christians to this day are found at the same work with the world, and two are grinding at one mill, two are in one field, two in one bed, Matt.24:40,41; that is, the true Christian and the mere natural man are together in one work, at one plough, in one bed or way of Peace, and worldly rest, till the Lord Jesus be more manifested in Spirit, or in his coming and revelation, and the one, or true Christian, be taken, and the other left, the one taken up higher into more Spirit, and more of Christ, the other

left in their mere nature, and legal principles, and worldly doings.

The Jews were not only a type of the true spiritual Church, but of the Christians under the lowest dispensation; and in the model of their armed Tribes and Generals, as of Moses and Joshua, were a figure of the Christian under pupillage and bondage to nature, Gal.4:2, and the laws of nature; and so they were led out against the Nations who were a figure of worldly tyranny and oppression, to recover their land of rest, or such worldly privileges as they had in promise and donation from God.

Under the Gospel the Lord suffered the same figure in Peter, who walked about with Christ in his fleshly appearance, with his sword girt about him, and attended his Person till Christ bid him put it up again into his sheath, because he was now going out of that dispensation of flesh into more glory, Matt.26:52, into the same glory that he had with God before the world was, Jn.17:5, and was accordingly providing a more spiritual dispensation for them, even the Comforter or Spirit of truth, all which were a figure of all the Disciples of Peter's fellowship and weakness, whom the Lord would suffer in an armed and defensive posture, till he provided a more spiritual Ministration for them, and a way of more spirit, light, and glory. "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken, ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." Lk.24:25-27.

IN ORDER TO PEACE, AND SUFFERING, AND LOVE.

A. THE WILL OF GOD.

A Christian is most perfected in the Will of God, in laying himself down to rest in the bosom of such providence as the Lord opens to him; for nothing creates perplexity and disquietness of Spirit, but when the will of man is in complying and in a motion distinct from the will of God, when the Spirit of man moves in its own fleshly course and circuit, and so runs out into a dispensation further than the law of present providence will fairly allow it; and in this way, men study, plot, desire, lust, are passionate, inordinate, unquiet, unstable, and like the troubled sea foam out themselves; upon this account, men lust and have not, Jam.4:2, they kill and desire to have and cannot obtain, they fight and war yet they have not; are with child, Isa.26:17, and bring forth wind, and work no deliverance; they say the bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones, the Sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into Cedars. The Lord Jesus held forth another pattern and figure, "lo I come to do thy will O God," Heb.10:7, not my will, but thine be done; "it is my meat and drink to do the will of my Father," Jn.4:34, the Apostle answers this, as in water face answers face, I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content, Phil.4:11-12, I can be abased, and I can abound, the reason of all is, from the spiritual anointing they receive, I Jn.2:27, by which their understandings are enlightened, Eph.1:18, to see all the various workings and contrary contextures of providence meeting in one

point or line, the will of God, Rom.8:28, so as all things work together for good to those that love God.

B. GOD CHANGING DISPENSATIONS.

The Christian is most at peace when he is willing to be gathered up by God from such ways and ministrations below as he hath lived in formerly, if he see God clearly in it, for God hath his times of letting out, and winding up, of using such or such a ministration, and then breaking it, and laying it by, and appearing in other, and we must not limit the Holy One of Israel, nor fix him always upon the same point of dispensation; he went out from his Tabernacle into his Temple, from thence into the flesh of Christ, and so into ordinances, and gifts, and graces, and Spirit; with the Jews he was in war, in peace, in captivity, in deliverance, or return; and in this exchange of dispensation, God reveals and shines forth his wisdom, glory, and power upon his and upon the world, which wisdom, power, and glory being in that fulness and infiniteness in himself, cannot appear in one globe and ball of glory below, upon this Creation, but as in parts, and scattered beams, and divers workings; and therefore John saw the Lord in a vision like a Jasper upon a Throne, and a rainbow round about the Throne; which rainbow is a glory of many colors, Rev.4:3, or a figure of the glory of Jesus Christ in many appearances of things below.

C. THE LAW OF NATURE AND GRACE.

The Christian is one who should live in an higher region than flesh or nature, and when God saith come up hither, he shall live there, even in spirit with him; so as though grace destroys not nature, yet it perfects and glorifies nature, and leads it out into higher and more excellent attainments, than it can find in itself; nature lives by this

law, preserve thy self, thy life, thy lands, thy rights and privileges, Matt.5:43, Lev.19:18, Lk.9:13, Mk.10:38, Matt.5:40-44, avenge thy self, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, and love only thy neighbor. Grace lives by this law, deny thy self, forsake lands, life, houses, take up the cross, if he take thy cloak let him have thy coat also, love thy enemies, bless them that curse thee, I Cor.4:12, I Pet.2:23, when thou art reviled revile not again, when thou sufferest threaten not.

D. THE GOSPEL METHOD OF VICTORY.

Sufferings are ways of victory in another method and form, he that conquers under persecution, receives in the enmity, wrath, and opposition of his enemies into himself, and there quenches it, and destroys it in spirit; for the Christian being one with the Lord Jesus, flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, is partaker of that power and glory which was in Christ; and through him {who hath overcome the world} we are more than conquerors, Rom.8:1, I Jn.5:4, and this is our victory, even our faith; and the strength and life of Christ is shed abroad through all his People, so as death hath no sting for them, and the grave no victory over them, the violence of fire is quenched, mouths of lions stopped, kingdoms subdued.

E. HOW RESISTINGS IN SOME ARE OF FLESH, AND OF THE LAW OF NATURE IN OTHERS.

Resisting is ever from want of conformity to the will of God; and though God orders and disposes all the ways of man, and acts them to his own purpose and glory, yet the weakness and selfish courses of man are no way excusable because of that, for man acts from a principle of his own, and of flesh contrary to that revealed and manifested providence that God held forth to him, and in

that he originally and naturally departs from God, and becomes a god unto himself, judging good and evil for himself, which is the tasting of the forbidden tree, and seeks out many inventions. Thus it is in some, yet in others it is from that very law of nature and self-preservation under which they live and are acted.

F. ADVANTAGE CHRISTIANS HAVE OF BONDAGE.

There are times of bondage which God hath for his elect, and through which they must pass into more spiritual liberty and enjoyments of Jesus Christ; for God hath this design, Acts 8:1,2, to increase his Gospel by scattering such as profess it amongst other people, that the earth may be filled with knowledge, and to make his own fulness the portion of his people, and to carry them through some conformity to the flesh of Jesus Christ, even the fellowship of his sufferings and death, which is most spiritual, as it is most inward, and in spirit or sinful flesh, but as it is more outward, and carnal, as in persecution; so it is a figure or image of the more spiritual; and further, the bondage of God's people, according to this account I speak on, is in the type of the Jews bondage, when the Chaldeans were to take Jerusalem, Jeremiah told them he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans shall live, Jer.38:2, and shall have his life for a prey, and go forth, says he, to the King of Babylon's Princes and live, but if ye stay in the City ye shall be consumed, which is a figure or shadow of abiding longer in any dispensation, or way, then God is clearly in it, and his presence appears upon it.

**G. UPON WHAT ACCOUNT THE PUREST AND
FREEST OUTWARD LIBERTY IS.**

The People of God shall receive their best and purest outward liberty upon another account than their own strength, design, and activity, and that is by these ways. The glory of Christ and the light of God shining more in their faces and outward man, the nations shall bring their glory unto them, and shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, Zech.8:23, and say, we hear that God is in you. The meekness, peace, love, and righteousness that shall appear from them, as beams from the Sun, shall much prevail upon the world, which are those only graces that the world can love and be enamored on in God's people, for they are graces that go out to the blessing, and prosperity, and preservation of the world, and in such a dispensation as this, it is, that all men love God, because he appears to them as in things of their own nature, his Sun shining upon the unjust and his rain upon the wicked, Matt.5:45, and in such a dispensation it is that men shall love the people of God, while they shine upon them in such things as they can bear, and love, though still according to another revelation of them; or manifestation of God in them, they shall be hated, as they do God himself. And the other way for liberty is the power of God upon the hearts of Princes, and nations of which Cyrus and Darius were figures; and the King of Babylon lifting up the head of Jehoiakim. Jer.52:31. And that other way is the spirituality of God's people, raising them from the love of worldly Interests and Engagements, save only for righteousness sake, and the good of nations in administration of judgment, and peace, and when Christians appear to the world more disengaged from the love of power, dominion, riches, earthly glory, and the nations find them not in their own ways, nor desiring to live with them in their borders, and fruitful plains, nor

seeking their vineyards, nor plucking apples from their trees; their jealousy, revenge, enmity, in part and persecution shall cease towards them; the other way is, God shall make Jerusalem a burdensome stone, and a cup of trembling to all nations, they shall be weary of afflicting them, because of the affliction that shall come upon them where they are carried away captive, and the Philistines were a type of this, when they found the Ark of God plaguing them with emerods, and they were to send it away with an offering.

21

A WORD CONCERNING HERESY AND SCHISM.

Some books have been writ against me and I have been silent, and was rather willing to sit under the shadow of another's contradiction and reproach, than to reply, till God by his Spirit, in the hearts of such as did oppose, might bring forth my righteousness as the noon day; and then we, who had been enemies through the several measures of light we see by, and judging each other rather in flesh than spirit, might rejoice and embrace as brethren in the unity of the same faith; and I saw further, that in books of controversy I left my adversary still upon some account with me for passion and recrimination, as all others do on all sides, whom I see write; therefore I rather made it my choice to enter into the chamber {or retirement of spirit} and shut the door upon me till the indignation be over-past, Jer.26:20, for we can set but letter to letter, and Scripture to Scripture, and argument to argument, and interpretation to interpretation, and nothing can be judged till the day or time of more

revelation of truth, till the Holy Ghost and fire sit upon each of us trying every man's work of what sort it is, and burning up that in us which is hay and stubble; for writing book after book in such a line of replies and rejoinders, hath usually more of man than God in it, and we seem to say with our lips we will prevail, our tongues are our own, who is Lord over us? I am not against contending for truth earnestly, but that is in spirit, not in flesh, nor passions; and I know well that the Spirit of God is flowing in, and is a fire in the bosom, but still as a refiners fire trying and purifying, not scorching nor burning up that which is pure and spiritual in one another; and I know some allowance there must be on all sides to infirmities and darkness, and several conceptions of truth in all, which yet hath not been; and I know not any of us that either preach or write on Scriptures in such a light of Spirit as the Apostles writ the Scriptures.

A. HERESY.

Heresy is a choice, in the signification of the word, and in the application of it in Scripture, it is a choice of some other thing for truth than is truth, by those who seemingly received truth, though after they make another choice of that which is contrary to truth. Heresy which was judged by the Apostles accordingly, was a choice of something contrary to the faith and sound doctrine of Scriptures delivered by inspiration or in Spirit and Truth; so as Heresy is something against the very Doctrine of Faith in the Word or Scriptures, not against any interpretations, doctrines, conclusions, glosses, comments, or preachings of men, who speak not Scripture, nor the word of truth originally nor infallibly, as the Apostles did; but so far as that is the very Scripture they speak, and so far as they speak the truth in Jesus; and in the Spirit of God, else they teach for Doctrines the Traditions of men.

B. SCHISM.

Schism is a breaking off, a renting or dividing from Christians who are in an outward profession of truth, and in an outward fellowship of truth. Now there may be Schism in visible Churches or fellowships of Saints upon this account, but there can be none in the true body of Christ, or the spiritual Church, which is baptized by one spirit into one body, for they that are joined to the Lord are one spirit, and they are made perfect in one; and so far as they are in that one spirit cannot be divided, nor can suffer any Schism; so as the dividing from men merely, or the fellowships of men merely, or the errors of men, or departing into higher attainments of truth, while the rest of the visible fellowships sit still, is no Schism, for if so, the Protestants were a Schism to Rome, and Presbyterians to Bishops, and all that go on from faith to faith, from glory to glory, to the rest whom they leave behind.

22

TRUTH.

There is but one Truth, and that is Jesus Christ. "I am the way, and the truth," and he is Truth in the original or pattern; and we see nor know no more Truth than we see and know in him, this is called "the truth as it is in Jesus." For Jesus Christ is the Alpha and Omega of all things, and comprehends all essence, and form, and life, and spirit of things in himself; and all things of this Creation are but Shadows and Images of this Truth, and the outward forms of that glory. This Truth makes free, that is the operation of it; and therefore so much of Truth or of Christ any one knows or receives, so much freedom or liberty they

receive, and so much they are delivered into the "glorious liberty of the sons of God," and where "the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." And therefore as Truth is in any, so is spiritual liberty, and the Spirit of bondage in them passes away, and such are disburdened of the legal terrors, fears, of the lies, delusions, false conceptions, traditions under which they have lived as they grow up into Truth. The Spirit of Truth only teaches and reveals this Truth; and opens those "treasures of wisdom and knowledge" which are in Christ. Truth, though it be but one, yet it shines forth in many streams of glory, and opens like day. In Jesus Christ this variety of truth appears that truth, or glory, or true brightness of God, and all that truth of this Creation or forms of the world; and all truth of Letter of Scripture, or outward Ordinance is in its pure Essence and Spirit in Jesus Christ. Truth gathers up men more into Christ from the flesh and loose vanity of the world; and therefore we are said to have our loins girt with truth; the girdle of truth, as it were, binding us up, and keeping close in Spirit to the Lord. There is a fulness, settlement, and establishment in truth, as in things of this world; there is a far more solid and real enjoyment in the substance of things here than in their shadows, counterfeits, or pictures, because there is a nature, or spirit and life in that thing to be enjoyed, and answers the spirit and life of him that enjoys, by communicating something substantial, solid, and proportionable than images and shadows are. So it is in the truth, Jesus Christ, in whom is life, and more excellent, glorious, and spiritual form, or life, exceeding the nature of things here, and communicating more true and solid glory, than all things here, which are but as shadows to that, as other things are shadows to them; therefore, says David, "I shall behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness," as if the face or likeness of God, which is Jesus

Christ the image of the invisible God, could only satisfy; and the soul in such a prospect of light and glory is truly awakened, till when, it is but asleep and in dreams and visions of its own spirit, all the life and discoveries of sense and reason being but dreams rather than true awakenings; and therefore the more anyone hath seen of truth in Jesus, the more spiritually and highly they judge of all outward things, being not satisfied in the mere letter or form of them, but in the spirituality of them, and true life of them, which is Jesus Christ.

23

THE MYSTERY OF TRUE CHRISTIAN LIBERTY FROM GOD, NOT FROM MAN, OR THE POWER OF MEN.

We have hitherto filled much paper with Scriptures, Reasons, and Arguments for Liberty of conscience, and thus far it hath been well in order to the peace of those whose consciences in outward things runs cross, contrary, and destructive to others, both in rule and practice, so as when Christians are under several forms and administrations, and these diametrical, or opposite to each other, and mutually contradicting and expelling each other, here can be no Peace nor Preservation of all, but from an indulgency or liberty in all; and this is such a liberty as men may give to men; this is the liberty of the outward man, and is upon the old legal, and first Gospel or New Testament account, as in the mere letter, as in those Scriptures; but this is yet below the true Christian Liberty, and a mystery unwritten, which is originally from the Spirit of God, and is merely spiritual, and works from a pure enlargement of spirit, and a true spiritual Prospect

of all outward things, which is an image of that liberty which is in God, who appears under his several forms of Creation pure and holy in himself or his own nature. But this is a mystery yet, and a land of peace and purity, not yet clearly discovered; nor the right inhabitants of it, but to some; and this liberty will further appear as the Lord Jesus is more and more revealed in the Saints, judging the world in Spirit, and reigning over the tyranny and power of men in a glory of Spirit, which shall judge and torment their adversaries, while they shall triumph over all the practices in the flesh against them.

24.

A DISCOVERY OF THE HIGHEST ATTAINMENT OF THE PROTESTANTS GENERALLY IN THE MYSTERY OF SALVATION.

Adam was the first man, created after God's own image, I Cor.15:48, he was a public person, Rom.5:12, and he sinning, sin entered upon all, and death by sin; the Law was afterwards revealed by God to Moses, wherein was a copy of that first image or righteousness from whence man fell, and under the condemnation of which all mankind were by nature, Rom.5:12, or as born of their first Parents. The way of life or salvation, which was revealed to be a way out of this condemnation and death, Rom.5:19, was by Jesus Christ, the Son of God, born of a Virgin in the fulness of time made under the Law, and fulfilling the Law, Rom.8:3, bearing our sins, crucified, dead, buried, and risen, ascended, and entered into glory, Heb.9:24-26, and sitting at the right hand of God, making

intercession for us; and by the Preaching of this Jesus Christ in the Ministry of the Word which he hath set in his Church, Eph.4:8-11, a true and lively faith is begotten in the hearts of men, such as are elect or chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world were laid, not from any works foreseen, Eph.1:4, but of God's mere grace, Eph.2:8,9, and by this grace so begotten, they apply Jesus Christ and all his merits to righteousness and justification, Rom.3:22-28, and through this, and the sanctified use of all other ordinances of God, as Preaching, Prayer, &c., the regenerate are more and more sanctified, and so built up in graces of faith, I Cor.1:18, repentance, love, new obedience, and made to persevere through the power of God unto salvation, II Pet.1:5-7; nor is the Ministry of the Law useless in this, the Law being a part of this Ministry to bring men to Christ, Gal.3:24, or to make them seek out for mercy, they discerning their misery by the preaching of the Law, it being God's usual method in Scriptures not to proclaim the Gospel without this preparatory of humiliation and contrition, Matt.11:28, and men so humbled and wounded by the Law are only fit for the mercy of the Gospel or of Jesus Christ. This Jesus Christ they believe to be one ascended according to that body he appeared in, Acts 1:11, and sitting at the right hand of God, and in the figure of glorified flesh, according to which all the Saints shall be glorified in their souls and bodies; and in Jesus Christ thus glorified in flesh, and entered thus into his Father's glory, they believe; and to the Lord Jesus in this figure and form of glory without them they are carried out in faith; and through Jesus Christ thus they believe that they are justified, and through the Spirit of God in this Jesus Christ they are sanctified.

25

OF FAITH.

Faith, they say, is a grace wrought by the Spirit of God, whereby a believer rests upon Jesus Christ for justification, and this they call faith of adherence; and when this faith works through love, obedience, self-denial, and other fruits, they call it faith of assurance; for, they say, assurance is obtained through the Spirit of God bearing witness in promises and good works, as well as by itself; and faith, working thus, is sanctification too, or holiness wrought by graces.

26

A FURTHER DISCOVERY AS TO FREE-GRACE.

They believe Jesus Christ ascended in the body accordingly, and glorified in flesh; and through Jesus Christ thus ascended, and sitting on the right hand of God in this figure and bodily form, they accordingly conceive all graces of Spirit to flow forth into the Saints in faith, love, obedience, &c. But they look not on justification as flowing from Christ acted upon by the faith of a believer first, and so a consequent of believing or of faith, but an antecedent or going before faith; they hold Jesus Christ to be righteousness and justification to a sinner, and that all are justified before they believe or repent; and faith, repentance, are fruits of righteousness or justification, Christ being given to open the eyes of the blind, Lk.4:18, and to bring the prisoners out of prison, &c., and that all

such righteousness and justification clothes the sinner so completely through God's imputation, that all sin is done away like a thick cloud, and none imputed to believers; Christ hath taken away all sin by his offering up one sacrifice once for all, I Pet.2:24, and that faith in the believer doth nothing, Heb.9:24-26, no not instrumentally as to justification, but as by way of revelation and manifestation of that justification. Hence it is that they affirm no believer ought to pray for pardon of sin, being a righteous person, at once in Christ, and wholly pardoned; but all this righteousness and justification they take upon the account merely of God's imputation, of Christ without us, or in heaven, who calleth things that are not as if they were; and they look upon all works and duties, &c., as works flowing from love, and from justification or righteousness, not directed to justification or in any order to it, we believe, repent, love, and obey {say they} not that we may be saved, but because we are saved; and any other way of believing, obeying, &c., they look upon as legal, and not so purely Evangelical; and they hold forth all the work of justification and righteousness to be of mere grace, and that all Gospel promises are free; and Christ is freely proclaimed to sinners as sinners, in the Ministry of the Word. So as their highest attainment is this, that God doth all to sinners in mere grace, Ezek.16:6-8, that no sin is imputed to sinners, Eph.2:6-9, but they are pure only by imputation, I Cor.1:30, and so no believers are punished for sin, I Pet.2:24, but from sin, Isa.53:6, and all works of grace in a believer is because they are saved, Lk.1:74,75, or pardoned; not that they may be saved or pardoned; and all they are to do is from love, II Cor.5:14, not from bondage, or from a mere outward Commandment; and the Gospel or grace of God in Christ is free, I Tim.1:15, and in free promises; and so to be preached to sinners, as sinners. They, commonly called

Presbyterians, Independents, Anabaptists, &c., hold all points of doctrine, as to justification, sanctification, faith, &c., the ministry of the word and sacraments, which they call means of salvation; all these hold alike with the common Protestant; this being the sum of the Articles of the Church of England made by the Bishops and confirmed by Queen Elizabeth, King James, and King Charles; and there hath been no Reformation further, nor any higher attainment in these things, than the Bishops made, and the Synod in England formerly. And all the Reformation that hath been endeavored, hath been only in some outward things, as Discipline or Church Government, and some outward ordinances of Baptism, and the Supper, not any purer or more glorious discoveries of God, or the Spirit, or Jesus Christ, or our union with the Spirit, or glory, as to spiritual things, or Christ risen, but as to Christ in the flesh, or under the law, of which these ordinances were a sign.

27

A DISCOVERY AS TO THE GENERAL POINT, OR CHRIST DYING FOR ALL.

They {Universalists & General Redemptionists} say the Scriptures hold forth all sinning, and Christ dying for all, and the promises of Christ generally to all, upon condition, and exhortations to all to repent, believe and come to Christ, and therefore conclude the Lord Jesus or second man was given from the Father to give a price of redemption for all those who fell in the first man; and those, they say, were all mankind, and with Christ a Ministry of reconciliation and graces to all that will not willfully reject, or refuse, or put by the offers of grace and salvation so tendered, but remain passive, and so far as

in them lies, not oppose the Spirit and means of grace, though they acknowledge they can do nothing of themselves to obtain faith or any other work of salvation, but all that is merely of the Spirit of God working in those who are called; and upon these general terms of grace they affirm also the election of some which they conclude from that work of God in them who are called of God through the means of grace, they not resisting that call, or present offer of grace. And this they say is the Gospel of salvation preached to all, which all may receive if they resist not.

28

THE LAST DISCOVERY, AND AS SOME SAY, THE HIGHEST AND MOST GLORIOUS, CONCERNING THE WHOLE MYSTERY OF GOD TO MEN, AND THIS CREATION.

God being infinitely one, yet in a three-fold manifestation to us, of Father, Son, and Spirit, would make out himself in an image in this creation, or nature, and therefore he takes to himself one part of it into union to himself, according to one way of manifestation called in Scripture, light, love, grace, salvation, father, bridegroom, glory, and that part of nature which enjoys God in this manifestation of grace or salvation, is called the Angels, the Saints, the Elect, the Son, the Tabernacle of God; the new Jerusalem, the Temple, the Spouse. Psal.36:9, I Jn.2:8, I Jn.4:8, Tit.2:11-13, I Jn.3:1, Jn.3:29, I Pet.1:12, Heb.1:7, Eph.1:1-4, I Cor.12:12, Rev.21:2-3.

He takes to himself the other part of the Creation, and there he is present, but not in this way of grace and

light, but of another manifestation called law, justice, wrath, everlasting burnings; and these are called devils, wicked men, Psal.139:8, Acts 17:28, Col.1:17, flesh, which live in God and subsist in him as creatures in their being, but not in his grace and glory, not in that manifestation of his, the light shining in darkness but the darkness comprehending it not. Jn.1:5.

This is the mystery God is in, as to this Creation and the brighter part of it, as to Angels and Saints; and to the darker part of it, as to devils and wicked men; and all that God doth here below, under the Sun, is to preach this in several ways or ministrations, as in the appearances of this creation, in light, and darkness, and in the Scriptures.

The Scriptures are no other than a way or ministration by letter of this mystery, Jn.5:39, and all the passages there from the first man to the second, from the Old Testament to the New, with those two very appearances of the two men or Adams, were but a ministry or way of God to signify or figure this mystery, I Cor.15:47-48, and so all the rest we read of, as of Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, Israel and Judah, Saul and David, Judas and the Eleven, Christ and Antichrist; and thus these set forth and figure this mystery. They say Adam was a way by which God preached first to man, and was not the first man in whom all stood and fell, but a way by which this mystery of God was made to appear first to the Creation, and Adam held forth nature or a part of this Creation in communion with God as to grace and love, while he stood, and another part of the creation or nature out of communion with God, as to love and grace, but in communion or union to God as to law and justice, or wrath; and thus they interpret those Scriptures of man's first glory and fall less in the very letter, and more in the mystery, and according to

Adam, in this two-fold state, were all the rest, Cain and Abel, &c.

God in the Old Testament preached this mystery, though more darkly and in shadows, as in the law, Gal.4:21-24, and sacrifices, and in the children of the bond-woman and of the free, of Israel's walking with God, and apostatizing.

And that the Gospel or fulness of time of the clearer discovery of this mystery was the Lord Jesus himself, or God manifest in the flesh, or as in one man, a figure of the whole mystery, as to grace and love, or God in flesh, or in his; or of God in that other part of his Creation, his Church or Saints, and all that God did in this single and particular manifestation in flesh, as in one man, was only a more full, clearer, excellent, and spiritual ministry of the mystery of salvation; therefore Christ is called a Minister, one sent, an Apostle. Lk.4:18, Heb.3:1. And all that Christ did from his childhood to his crucifying death and cross, was a discovery of God by this figure in the whole mystery, how God is in all his, and how he works, and hath his times of law, of graces, and Gospel, of crucifying and offering up all to death through the eternal Spirit which is the blood of the everlasting Covenant, Heb.9:14, or Seal, whereby God witnesses to his people that he is their God, and they his people, by killing all the strength, and life, and power of the first Creation, and carrying it up into a more excellent and glorious life, his own Spirit.

And so all Christ's birth, growing, submitting to ordinances, crucifying, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, were so many discoveries as to us in the flesh, of the whole mystery of God in the Saints, made out in these parts and degrees, and several ages, and conditions, to show how God weakens and brings to nothing the life of nature, or of this Creation in which he will dwell and make his Tabernacle, and carry it up into

an higher and more excellent life, Jn.17:22,23, even unto himself and his own glory.

So, as they say, all that is spoken of Christ, as in that person that was born of a Virgin, who was circumcised, baptized, crucified, dead, buried, risen, and ascended, is spoken in figure of the whole nature into which God enters, or is born into the world, and so takes our nature along with him through several administrations into glory.

So as the sum of all is this, that the Lord takes our nature into union with himself, and is present with us, in two ways of manifestation, of grace and salvation, of law and justice; and thus God is present with the angels and saints; with devils and wicked men; and Adam and Christ are the two eminent and principal administrations of this mystery; and all the rest from Cain and Abel, through all the other several persons, ordinances, and ministries; as of Prophets, Apostles, Antichrist, are but divers administrations, or discoveries of this; and all ordinances, gifts, and graces of the Spirit, are but weaker appearances of this mystery, and such ministrations as the Spirit of God administers in our nature, till it be glorified in a higher glory; when that which is perfect is come, I Cor.13:8-13, that which is in part shall be done away; God shall be unto us broad rivers and streams where shall go no ship with sails, nor galley with oars.

**AN ADDITIONAL CONCERNING
ANTICHRIST AND THE MYSTERY OF
INIQUITY.**

These Scriptures hold forth a description of Antichrist.

“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Matt.24:24.

“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.” II Thes.2:9-10.

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” II Thes.2:3-4.

“Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.” I Jn.2:18-19.

"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed." Rev.13:11-12.

"And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live." Rev.13:13-14.

"And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads." Rev.13:16.

"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters." Rev.17:1.

"So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness; and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication, and upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." Rev.17:3-5.

“And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.” I Jn.4:3.

From all the Scriptures and the revelation of the Spirit of God concerning the mystery of iniquity these things will arise. That the mystery of iniquity or antichrist is a false Christ, or false anointed one; that is, when any other thing but the Lord himself is in the place or office of Christ unto us, either our own righteousness, as our Priest and Sacrifice, or our own wisdom, with, or reason, as our Prophet, and Teacher, and Interpreter of spiritual things. And this mystery of iniquity, or antichrist, is from a falling away first; that is, from a departure from God, and the life and light of God, and dependency or subsistence in God; that is, when man, or the spirit of man will subsist of itself, live in itself, and be wise of itself, and worship of itself, and be righteous of itself; this is the man of sin, or son of perdition, or flesh which God will destroy; and this spirit of antichrist, or man fallen thus from God, sits in the temple of God as God; that is, is in all forms of worship, and there lives, and reigns, and rules the whole man into a fleshly obedience; and his coming or appearances are as Satan; that is, in spiritual wickedness, transforming himself into an angel of light, teaching, interpreting, revealing the mysteries of God in carnal reason and wisdom by natural parts and arts, not in the pure spirit and anointing of God, and so performing all things, in order to God and his worship, and communion with him, by lying signs and wonders, and all deceivableness of unrighteousness; for while the spirit of man, in its own wisdom and power, acts in the pretense of God and to God, and in the mighty working and power of Satan, it doth bring forth signs and wonders, even things wonderful in the eyes of the natural man; and such things

as are very signs, very images, and shadows of spiritual things, though not the things themselves.

And the appearances of this man of sin are many and divers, therefore called many Antichrists; and as this man of sin opposes the Lord Jesus in spirit and light he is called the beast, that ascends out of the earth, or the lowest part of the creation the flesh; and by the fire or fleshly counterfeiting of the Spirit, which he works in the sight of them that dwell on the earth or of those that are in the flesh, he deceives; and yet such is the power of this beast or this spirit of flesh, as it constrains men, and compels them, and overcomes them wholly to its own power, making such in whom it reigns to receive a mark in their hand and foreheads, that is, to own and profess this fleshly wisdom and actings, and to practice and put forth the power of it against Christ in spirit.

And this is that whore too, for when the spirit of man is departed from God and the life of God, it is become an adulteress, having left its first love, or husband, which was the Lord himself, and sits upon a beast, even upon the flesh, a beast of scarlet color, that is, bloody and persecuting the precious and spiritual appearances of the Lord Jesus, and this is a beast of seven heads and ten horns, which heads and horns are but figures of carnal wisdom and power, and the seven and ten figures of perfection and completeness, as to the man of sin; for the number of the beast is the number of a man, and yet his number is but 666, that is, is but a number of weakness and imperfection, and work, or bondage; not the number of God or of seven, which is perfection and rest.

And the whore is adorned with gold and pearl, which are those excellencies of nature and forms of worship and Scriptures with which she decks herself, and is adorned as a counterfeit spouse of Christ, and upon her head is mystery, that is, all this appearance of hers, even her highest and choicest, her head, is mystery to all, who

are made drunken with the cup of her fornications, or spiritual whoredoms and idolatries, they discerning none of these, but all being in mystery to them.

And this Antichrist is one who denies Christ coming in flesh, or God in his people, who is coming and coming, that is ever flowing out in fresh and glorious discoveries and manifestations of himself, forbidding all beyond them as new lights and false revelations, and fixing God and his appearances in their Conceptions, Votes, and Results, and Councils, and Consequences, and Conclusions, and Laws of worship.

This Antichrist thus described is found in man, or the spirit of mere man, in all his departure or falling away from God, in all his lying signs or counterfeiting of the spirit, in his sitting as God, in his being a beast or opposing the Spirit, in his scarlet color, or his crucifying's of Christ in us; in his denying the Lord's coming or further manifestations of his light and Spirit in us, and thus quenching the Spirit.

And from hence he flows out and spreads himself in the world in all idolatrous forms of worship, in all false interpretations of God, and of the truth as it is in Jesus.

30

THE SEVERAL ATTAINMENTS OF THE COMMON PROTESTANT.

The common Protestant, as to doctrine and fundamentals, are so far in a discovery of the mystery of salvation, as to behold a state of condemnation in sin, and a way of salvation by Jesus Christ, and faith in him; yet some take this way to be but a knowledge of Christ after the flesh, and of Christ as one single person or figure of a man, and

the first glimpse of the love of God, and but merely a discovery beyond the law; and all but a fleshly spirituality.

31

THE GENERAL REDEMPTIONIST.

They that are for general redemption through Christ, in the gospel proclamation of grace to all, and his dying for all, some say, attain no higher in this, than Christ after the flesh, and fall into the same consequence with those that hold the particular election and reprobation of some; and though there be in this a more general ministration of Christ held forth according to the letter, yet they say it goes not so high as the mystery of Christ in Spirit and in pure glory and truth, but of Christ in glorified flesh and as in one single person or figure of a man; and all end but in a fleshly spirituality, and in an attainment as to the mere letter of Scripture.

32

THE FREE-GRATIAN.

They that have discovered up into free-grace or the mystery of salvation, singled out from conditions, qualifications, and works, some say, attain no higher in that, than a discovery merely beyond the common Protestant, both going no higher than a justification by imputation, and through Christ after the flesh as in one single person or figure of a man glorified in flesh, or the body without and in a local glory or a circumscribed nature, and putting all the righteousness upon a mere

account in God, and all the taking away of sin or sinful flesh upon a non-imputation or not-accounting in the crucifying, death, or fiery trial of the flesh, and the pure spiritual, incorruptible seed of God within, Christ in us the hope of glory. And their highest attainment, as to duties and works, is only, as some say, to the nature and manner of their production or flowing forth, they counting the nature and original of all no higher than a habit of grace or quality, and their proceeding as immediately in the nature of that, which they say is love; all they do being from love, and in love, not in bondage.

CONCLUSION.

And these attainments are not such as are therefore condemned, because no higher, or more spiritual, but are only considered as not the highest, but in order to the mystery of salvation, and several measures and ages of attainment, and seeing darkly, as in a glass, till that which is perfect is come.

33

A DISCOVERY OF PRAYER.

That which hath been discovered concerning Prayer is this. First, that they who could not pray in the Spirit might use a form of prayer, as John taught his Disciples, and the Lord Jesus his, in that of Our Father, &c., and David in the Psalms; and the Apostles and Christ himself are found in the same form and expressions of prayer very often; he went away and prayed the same things again; Moses prayed arise Lord, &c., and again arise Lord; this is the first discovery, and is truth though truth in weakness & infancy.

A further discovery is, that prayer is rather a work of the Spirit than of any form, and that no set form ought to be put upon the Spirit of God, but what it freely breathes and speaks, and all constant speakings to God in this {as they call} a conceived way, or impremeditate or ex-temporary way is taken commonly amongst Christians for prayer in the Spirit, and for that spiritual way of prayer which the Disciples of Christ used in the Gospel, who were grown up from the infancy and childishness of forms or words taught them, which is but a mere natural or outward thing, as they say, which any may perform by strength of natural parts, as wit and memory and affections.

The furthest discovery as some say, is this, that Prayer is no other but the revelation of the will of God or mind of God, Rom.8:26,27, as to such and such particulars either spiritual or temporal, and is an immediate, proper, and spiritual act of the Spirit of God in the Saints, and that all such speakings as are not from the very manifestation of the Spirit of God in us, are but such prayers and petitions as natural reason, and memory, and affections may form and dictate, and doth usually; and that there is no difference betwixt such kind of praying and forms of prayer, {though it may be extemporary or conceived, as some who can pray upon this account three or four hours, and nothing more frequent now;} nay this kind of prayer is far worse, by how much it transforms itself more into an angel of light and is not, sitting in the Temple of God as God; or pretending its self to be the Spirit of God, and is not, being more properly the flowings and breathings of reason, and the strength of man's wit, and memory and affections, and is constantly performed in public and private, and thus fire is fetched down from heaven in the sight of men that dwell upon the earth, or such as are yet more below than above, or in heaven, and spirit, and thus the people

of Israel prayed, whose prayers were an abomination; thus the Pharisees made long prayers, &c.

So as Prayer then according to this discovery, is the Spirit of God only revealing and speaking in the people of God, we know not what to pray for as we ought, Rom.8:26,27, that is, we, as we are ourselves, know not, and therefore all that we pray, and not the Spirit of God in us, not that Spirit of Prayer, spoken on in Scripture, is but the spirit of man praying, which is but the cry of the creature, or a natural complaining for what we want, as the Ninevites and the children and beasts of that city all cried unto the Lord.

But in pure prayer the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, the Spirit of God which makes intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered, that is the speakings or manifestations of the Spirit of God, or not so utterable by the flesh or voice of man, and the Spirit maketh intercession for the Saints according to the will of God, or according to God {as in the Greek} that is Prayer is God speaking in us his mind and will; and therefore the Lord Jesus taught this in that form and doctrine of his; thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven, wherein he set forth that more spiritual and perfect Prayer which was only according to God, and which the Saints should pray afterwards when the Spirit was more revealed.

And this is prayer in Spirit, and to pray thus is to pray in some evidence and demonstration of God and in faith or believing the will of God, as to this or this thing, at this or this time; whatsoever ye ask in prayer, believing, &c.

And all other asking or seeking of God which are not thus in Spirit, and in the will or mind of God in some evidence or pure work of Spirit, or raising of Spirit, is but the asking of creatures as creatures; and thus all mere natural and carnal people pray, and are heard and

answered many times, in the mercy and goodness of God, who makes his Sun to shine upon the just and unjust.

All exhortations in Scripture to this duty of prayer, as seek ye my face, pray continually, watch and pray, be fervent in prayer, ask and ye shall have, &c., are only then rightly, effectually and properly applied and obeyed, when the Spirit of God doth it in the Christian, when the Spirit of God breaths in and reveals the will of God, and acts in the duty or expressions, and the Christian speaks in himself, or in presence of others, that mind of God; and so this Spirit of God clothes its self in flesh, or letter, or expressions, as to the outward man; and they who say Amen in the Spirit, as the Apostle saith, say Amen in the same Spirit, or else they are not in prayer in a pure spiritual closure, or unity of Spirit.

Prayer is the workings and weaker or fainter manifestations of the Spirit of God in the Christian, while he is in bondage, that is, while God is not the fulness, the light and glory, and all in all unto him; for where there is any asking or seeking or desiring, there is not perfect rest, enjoyment, all sufficiency, and fulness, and therefore while Christians are in bondage, and not yet brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, they are under the Ministration of Prayer to God or of asking; as children are to a father in non-age and pupillage.

All Scriptures of Prayer, or concerning Prayer, and the prayers of the Saints in the vial, Jn.16:23-24, are considerable respectively to the state of weakness and bondage the Saints are in, Rev.8:3,4, praying not in the Spirit of God but in weakness or the flesh, according to their own wills; hath been usual with Saints formerly, as Paul who prayed thrice to remove the buffeting, II Cor.12:7-9, and was answered, my grace is sufficient for thee, or is it not enough that I have grace for thee in all my dealings and dispensations towards thee, live thou upon that? And the Lord Jesus himself prayed, "Father if

it be thy will let this cup pass;" yet afterwards he was more the manifestation of God, "Father not as I will," that is, not as I, or that of man in me, but as thou will; and many Christians wanting the clear and glorious revelation of the will of God, pray for such and such things, for the obtaining such and such mercies, and removal of such and such miseries, being all this while in the dark to the will and mind of the Lord; when as if the will of the Lord were seen or discovered, they would rejoice and be at rest in such conditions, and learn how to want as well as to abound, Phil.4:11,12, that is, to want such or such things as the Lord takes from them, and to abound in the Lord without those things, or with those things, which is the sweet state of the Christian, and a rest or peace in figure to that glory and fulness to be revealed in us, and those Christians as are in some measure in this light or glimpse of the fulness of God, are entered upon the borders of Canaan, and are feeding upon some bunches of the grapes of the promised land.

34

A DISCOVERY OF THE LAW.

Some say, the Law is obligatory and binding to all Christians, because moral, and so perpetual, and that it was revealed because of transgressions, Gal.3:19, and that the Law is of no less efficacy now than before to reveal sin and convince of sin, Rom.7:7, and that Christ came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it, Matt.5:17, that the ministry of the Law ought to precede and go before the Gospel, because none ought to have Christ proclaimed to them in a promise, but such as the Law hath humbled and prepared; that God doth sanctify the Ministry of the Law to conversion and sanctification of his

people, and such as preach it are not legal; thus the Protestant in general.

Others say that a further discovery of the law is this. That the Law was a discovery or appearance of God's righteousness and man's, according to the nature of both, as in the first Creation, God is revealed in the Law to be one God and only to be worshiped, Mk.12:32, and no other God's but one; Exod.34:14, and man is revealed in his first created righteousness, Lk.10:27, love thy neighbour as thy self.

The Law is in every one by nature, accusing and excusing, Rom.2:1, and God's transcribing it into tables of stone was to set before man a testimony or witness in the letter of what Law he had inwardly, the Law is spiritual, Rom.7:14, and to bear witness to his Apostasy and falling away, and to all his sins, transgressions and enormities committed.

Moses and the Prophets were Ministers of it in the letter, Jn.1:17, the Law was given by Moses, Matt.11:13, it being first delivered or preached by the Ministry of Angels, or dispensation of Angels, Heb.2:2, the Lord Jesus himself and the Apostles were clearer and more spiritual Ministers of it.

The Law, Rom.3:31, as it is in letter, and in the Ministry of Moses, Heb.10:1, and the Prophets, and Christ, &c., is a witness and image to the more excellent Law, that of the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ. Rom.8:2.

The Law, in mere letter and legal ministry, Rom.8:15, works bondage and brings forth the spirit of bondage in those who are under the Law, Heb.2:14,15, working convictions and testimonies of good and evil, whereby the law of nature is awakened and strengthened to accuse sinful flesh. Rom.2:15.

The Law, as it is a figure, or shadow, or image of spirit or spiritual righteousness, may be a Ministry of preparation or witness, Matt.3:3, as John was, prepare ye

the way; and the Baptism of water to an outward purification or washing as the letter or Ministry of the Law is; and this is a Ministry of God's first appearance to a sinner.

Men may work very high, as to God and duties and works by the Ministry of the law or letter without, and the law within, and the letter of Scriptures interpreted by no higher a light than that of the law; and yet all such righteousness is but to bondage, compared with the higher law or spirit of life.

The Law curseth all unrighteousness's to the flesh or man sinning, Rom.3:19,20, and it is that standing condemnation of flesh or sin; the Law was revealed because of transgression, Gal.3:10, and cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the Law.

All the repentance and reformation, which the Law or mere ministry of the letter works, is not spiritual but legal, and yet, if in order to a more spiritual or to Christ in Spirit, it is of the nature of John's Ministry, Jn.1:17, a preparatory and figure of more glory and truth in substance. Heb.10:1.

The spiritual man, who lives in the Spirit, is not under the mere law of the letter, but it is according to its spirituality, the principle and spiritual life of him, Rom.6:14, so as such are not under the Law but under Grace, Rom.7:1-6, and not in bondage and fear but love, I Jn.4:18, perfect love casting out fear.

They that are true spiritual comprehensive Christians know in what order and subserviency to place the law, as it is in a ministry of letter, when as the infant Christian in the first discovery of Christ or Free Grace, looks upon all Ministrations below him as legal, and so is carried out to oppose them, too disorderly.

A DISCOVERY OF DUTIES AND WORKS.

Some say that duties and works are fruits of faith and of the habits of grace in us, Gal.5:22, Col.1:10, and are the conformity of a Christian, Matt.7:16, Matt.5:16, Matt.28:20, to the Commandments and Laws of God revealed in Scriptures, and that duties are to be done because commanded, I Tim6:18, Heb.10:24, and that they are such ways and means as God hath appointed a Christian to walk in to salvation; and that according as these are performed more or less strictly a Christian, Jam.2:14,18, ought to judge himself or approve himself, and that Christians, I Cor.11:28, II Cor.13:5, are to wait upon God in duties for the Spirit and for all other discoveries of himself; thus the Protestant in general.

Others say that the duties and works of a Christian flow from the Spirit of God, Rom.5:5, Lk.1:74,75, II Cor.5:14, of love and of adoption, Rom.8:15, else they are but the performances and obedience of servants, not of sons and such as are born of God. That the mere Commandments or letter of Scripture, Rom.6:14, is not a law to a Christian why he should walk in duties, but the law written in our hearts, the law of life, Rom.7:1-6, and this is the difference of duties and performances under the mere Old Testament dispensation and the New, or pure Gospel or new Covenant, the one or that of Moses was a Ministry from without, that of Christ from within, and that duties in the letter are but images and figures of what the spiritual man doth act from that life of Christ in him, not as things commanded him, nor in relation to heaven and hell; because such obedience and actings are of service, and acted as first from without, and mercenary or of price, and for salvation.

DISCOVERY OF OUTWARD ORDINANCES.

Some say, outward Ordinances are Commands of Christ and therefore to be done because they are Commands, and that they are sanctified by God, and his Spirit, and that we are to wait on God in the use of means, and that spiritual things are conveyed by Ordinances into the souls of men; thus says the Protestant generally.

Others say, that outward Ordinances as in the letter are the Old Testament Ministration, or a Legal ministration of John's ministry, or Christ under the Law, or in flesh, and that such Ordinances as the Lord Jesus commanded while he was in the Ministry of the Law made under the Law, a minister of circumcision, and not commands of Christ as in mere glory and spirit, nor a ministration of his as in that more excellent condition and the not distinguishing Christ as in flesh, and so teaching and commanding, and as in spirit, and so ministering in pure spiritual light and glory, is the reason of all such legal doctrine and use of ordinances in bondage, as is this day in the letter, baptism, &c., church-fellowship, &c.

That the New Covenant or God revealed in his children, and teaching his is not by any outward way or ministry or means, but by the inward or unction and anointing, "ye are all taught of God," Heb.8:10-12, and no man shall teach his neighbor or brother any more, saying, know the Lord; and all conference and discoveries in letter or speech is but mere witnessing to the Lord and the discoveries of God of what we are taught, not, any ministry {as formerly} for teaching.

No outward ordinance or ministration of the creature or of letter can convey or confer or bring in pure spiritual things, Jn.3:8, there is a great mistake in that,

and they are but signs and shadows of spiritual things, II Cor.4:18, and they are to the Spirit in the New Testament as the shadows of the Old were to the flesh of Christ, Heb.10:1, figures and perishing things and to be fulfilled in Spirit and in the coming of Spirit. Col.2:20, I Cor.11:26.

They are that which are called the beholding God as in a glass, the seeing darkly, I Cor.13:12, and in part the heavens and earth which are to be rolled up as a garment.

37

A DISCOVERY OF THE JEWS AND THEIR CONVERSION.

Some say, they are those who are of the seed of Abraham and have Abraham to their Father, and are Jews by fleshly birth, and such as live yet in the Old Testament Laws and Privileges as circumcision, and have the vail upon their hearts un-taken away, Rom.9:6,7, opposing Christ come in the flesh, and expecting the Messiah yet in a more carnal glory, they shall be converted and called in before the coming of Christ in Judgement.

Others say, that the Jews were but a figure of the children of the bondwoman, and of the Christians under the Apostasy or in mere letter and corrupted forms of worship; and as the Jew was reckoned before to be the people of mere Ordinances, and of the worship of God according to the letter of Scriptures, to whom the Oracles of God were committed, Rom.9:4, and to whom pertained, &c., so the Christians generally who are now the people of the New Testament, as to letter, and of all the worship according to the scriptures in the letter, are that Jew under the New Testament, answering to the Jew

under the Old, Rom.9:6,7, there being two seeds according to the flesh and according to promise, though they by promise or faith are counted for the seed.

The calling of the Jews is the bringing up the Christians from letter to Spirit, Rom.2:28,29, and according to this mystery the Jews shall be called and converted daily and are; for in the whole Nations of Christians as of Italy, Germany, Poland, Denmark, Spain, France, Scotland, England, &c., the Lord shall call in many by his own Spirit into himself, and shall be revealed in them in power not in form.

That the Jews who are by nature Jews or according to fleshly generation shall be no otherwise called but as the other Jew of which they are a figure; and thus they interpret the call of the Jews and not in any such outward observation as men commonly suppose, Rom.11:28, not remembering that the kingdom of God comes not with observation as to the world, Lk.17:20, and that the day of the Lord shall come as a snare upon all the earth.

38

ALL FALSE WORSHIPS & WAYS, PRACTICED IN CONSCIENCE OR IN LIBERTY, WILL BE DESTROYED IN CHRIST'S DAY.

God hath a time before Christ come in spirit as he had before Christ came in the flesh, a time wherein he suffered long and was patient, and was revealed to his people, though dwelling in much Gentilism, Judaism and ignorance; and therefore God's appearance, or communion with his people from the time of the falling

away, II Pet.3:3-9, or of the man of sin being revealed, hath been in grace and long suffering, and hath patiently born his being crucified, in spiritual Sodom or Egypt, and therefore he hath been with his people under Popery, under Episcopacy, and is at this day, not in approbation of their form but in his own mere love, grace, and long-suffering, and is at this day accordingly with the people in Independency, Presbytery, Baptism, &c., and all other male-administrations.

The Lord Jesus hath a day and time to be revealed in, which is his coming in the Saints when he will judge the World, and then shall Antichrist be consumed, and the flesh of the whore of Babylon in all her administrations shall be tormented and burnt with fire, and not a little one of Babylon shall be spared, but dashed against the stones, not the purest idols she hath, even idols of gold and silver, with all her merchandise, pearls and precious stones, and cinnamons and odors, and frankincense, all things of false worship, &c., and administration, though very sweet and precious in the judgement of flesh and blood, and then shall all the saints indulgencies cease to all these things under which they are now walking, some in Conscience, some in Liberty, even then when God's indulgency ceases.

39

A DISCOVERY OF CHRIST IN US.

Some say it is no other but habits of grace in us, and such a work of sanctification and mortification wrought by the graces of the Spirit; and this they say is Christ formed in us, the image of Christ, the conformity to Christ, this the Protestant generally.

Others say Christ in us is when we are made the anointed of God, which is the Christ or the whole entire Christ as one spiritual new man. I Cor.12:12.

And that the image of Christ in us is Christ manifested in our flesh as to sufferings and death, Phil.3:10, whereby the flesh is crucified in the power of God and of the Spirit, and the outward man or the flesh is dying and perishing even day by day, and is then dead when the very life of the flesh is slain, and we live no more unto ourselves but God or Christ liveth in us, it being no more we that live, Gal.2:20, and manifested, as in resurrection, or in the life of the Spirit, wherein we who were dead in sins and trespasses are risen with Christ, who is the resurrection and the life. "I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Jn.11:25-26.

40

THE FIERY TRIAL.

There is a state and condition of Christians scarce known, and it is the fiery Trial, or that power of God put forth upon the administrations that Christians are under, I Pet.4:12, and so passing out of them into higher discoveries of God, and the fiery trial is the Spirit of God burning up or destroying such an administration to a Christian, as when a Christian passes from a mere legal state into a state less legal or more Gospel, receiving some more precious and sweet appearances of God in Grace, and free promises, in this passage there is a Fiery Trial upon that first Administration that was Legal, whereby man's own righteousness is consumed and crucified to a more excellent discovery of God; and even in that more Gospel-State of a Christian whereby he

enjoys God in that ministration of graces, gifts, and Ordinances, there will be a fiery trial in a believer's passage into more glorious manifestations of God, and there will be a burning and torment even in that ministration of his graces and gifts, &c.

And this state is prophesied of in that Scripture, the sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before that great and notable day, that is, not only the Lord Jesus the Sun {as some say} will be as darkness to the world, &c., but all that which was the glory and light of a Christian and his way of communion with God, his Sun and Moon and Stars shall be darkened and become as blood before that notable day, or that more excellent revelation of God; and that of Peter, "but the day of the Lord will come, &c.," II Pet.3:10, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up; which is not only a Prophecy of the last judgment, but of the particular judgment upon former administrations in a Christian which is figured out in the heavens and earth and elements, which are those more or less glorious administrations, and the fire is that trial by the Spirit of God which as fire burns and destroys.

This is accordingly figured out in that to the Corinthians, the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is, I Cor.3:13-15, if any man's work shall be burnt he shall suffer loss, which work is those several administrations of gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, which pass under the revelation of the day, or glory of Christ or fire of the Spirit.

This is further revealed in the Revelations, "I know thy works and tribulation and poverty," &c., Rev.2:9, and ye shall have tribulation for ten days, this was written to the Church of Smyrna, or to all Christians under the figure of that Church which was tribulation prison or bondage

and poverty, that is, while Christians are in their former administrations as in bondage, prison, poverty, looking at all they have as nothing, and all former things they were rich in as nothing, and now as bondage to a more excellent enjoyment of God.

This is likewise in the mystery of it, the cross of Christ, or the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, Phil.3:10, crucifying, and death, for as Christ crucified all that glorious administration in which he was in the flesh, and it all died to a more glorious life, even the glory of God the Father, so every Christian is to take up this cross, and to bring his highest and choicest administration to this cross, I Cor.1:17-23, and to have them all crucified to higher discoveries of God, I Cor.2:2, this is the knowledge of Christ Crucified, Gal.6:14, or self-denial.

Many Christians who are saddened, darkened, in much tribulation as to the administrations they are under, and take them for desertions and withdrawals of God, when as they are the presence of God upon such administrations making them dark and wither and consume, and the bringing in of a richer and fuller glory.

41

GOD IN HEAVEN OR IN A PLACE OF DISTANCE AS TO OUR INFIRMITY.

Many Christians in their conceptions of God and prayers or addresses to God consider him as in a local glory, and so change the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man.

God is infinite and all in all, and whither shall I go {saith the Psalmist} from thy spirit, or whither shall I fly from thy presence, and where is the place of his rest?

Isa.66:1. And say not in thy heart who shall ascend into heaven to bring Christ down from above? Rom.10:6-10. The word is nigh even in thy heart, the word {saith the Apostle} that we preach, which word was Christ the eternal Word, which was with God and was God; and thus the Lord is said to be at hand, Phil.4:5, "the Lord is at hand."

The spiritual Christian knows that all figures of place, as of God's residence, as heaven, and all such discoveries of God as to place or distance are only as to man and to the infirmities of man; and therefore prays not and speaks not to God nor of God as to place or distance, but as if he were in him and about him, his right hand embracing him and his left hand under him; and in such discovery of God as he hath by faith, &c., or any such graces and other administrations he worships not God, nor considers God as that or that discovery, because then he should worship something for God, which is not God and, as John, fall down at the feet of the Angel or some glorious ministration and worship there.

The carnal and weak Christian worships, prays, &c., and thinks of God as to form, figure, and place, and distance, and discoveries of him by graces, gifts, &c., whereas God is only to be enjoyed in those as in a glass darkly, for we have not seen his shape, nor heard his voice.

42

THE SPIRITUAL SABBATH.

This Mystery of God was held forth first in the Creation in that of the seventh day which God was said to sanctify, which was no other than the enjoyment of God in the Revelation of himself who is perfect rest and sabbath in

his own glory, the six days being accordingly a figure of the Christian in bondage or under active and working administrations, as those of the Law and Gospel are, as all forms of worship, duties, graces, prayer, Ordinances, &c.

This Sabbath was a sign to the people of God in bondage or under the law, and the Lord Jesus, in his active and fulfilling administration while he was in the flesh, was the Antitype of the six days, and his entering into glory was that very sabbath and rest, Lk.24:26, which was the bosom of the Father from whence he came and where he returned, Jn.1:18, and this is the scope of that fourth chapter to the Hebrews, and the bosom of the Father is that Sabbath or Rest, Heb.4:9, "there remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God, and he that hath entered into his rest hath ceased from his works as God did from his," that is, the Lord Jesus having fulfilled his days work as to the law, entered into his glory or rest, so Christ in that held forth the true Christian Sabbath, which was the Father, as Philip, "show us the Father and it sufficeth us;" there is fulness, rest, sabbath, and sufficiency in the Father, or Revelation of God in the Christian. So as the Spiritual Christian in the true discovery of God his fulness lives in an eternal every-day sabbath, while some live in little more than the bare sign, or one day in the week.

43

THE GOSPEL AS IN ITS OWN GLORY, AND AS IN THE SCRIPTURES OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT.

The Gospel is everlasting, for it is the tidings and Revelation of God, in love, grace, or mercy to his; or God

manifested in flesh, or making his Tabernacle with men. Rev.14:6. This Gospel which is no other than the mystery of Salvation, revealed or declared in Spirit to men, is clothed in several administrations, as that of the Old Testament and the New, the Scriptures of both being the revelation of heavenly things by earthly or created things, or by natural forms and expressions, so as the letter is a parable, figure or allegory, by which spiritual things are spoken and brought forth amongst men; they are they which testify of Christ, "these things have I spoken unto you in proverbs; but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father." Jn.16:25. The Scriptures or writings of the everlasting Gospel, are the true scriptures, as they are the very image and letter of the mystery of Salvation, or of spiritual things, or the mind of God, or as they are in that pure and spiritual order and form of words to truth itself; not as they are merely in their grammatical construction and sense or common reading, which any that understand the Hebrew or Greek may receive, and therefore the Scriptures according to such or such interpretations and consequences of men, are not to be imposed as mere things of faith and fundamentals, but so far as the spirit of God reveals them to be that very truth and mind of God in those who receive them, else they are received and acknowledged for the authority, and reputation of men, not of God, therefore Christ told the Pharisees they erred, not knowing the Scriptures, and yet they had the Scriptures, and read them, and understood them in the letter, but not in the Spirit. The Gospel being thus distinguished into the spiritual nature of it, and into the administration with which it is clothed, nothing is pure, spiritual, divine Gospel, but that which is light, life, glory, spirit, or God revealed. Whatsoever is of mere letter, form, ordinance, is of the administration or Gospel-clothing and appearance, as to men and as in the flesh,

things that are seen are temporal, things that are not seen are eternal.

So as that distinction used concerning Ordinances, when they are called Gospel-Ordinances, Gospel-Commandments in contradistinction to the legal Ordinances is a great mistake and an advancing and exalting outward things into spiritual, and putting an image of Christ and divinity upon them, which they will not bear in such an opposition or contradistinction, to the Ordinances under the law, for all the Ordinances under the law or of the Old Testament, were Gospel Ordinances, or Ordinances holding forth Christ, and figuring Christ, and so the Ordinances of the New Testament; and are all alike letter, outward, and visible, and of things that perish with using, which was the nature of the administrations of the Law, and therefore saith the Apostle they did all eat the same spiritual meat, and they did all drink the same spiritual drink, and they drank of that rock that followed them and that rock was Christ, I Cor.10:3,4, that is, the Ordinances of the Law or Old Testament were as much spiritual as those of the New Testament, that is, such things as signified Christ in the flesh, which those of the New Testament as Baptism, and the last Supper, but he concludes, be not ye Idolaters as were some of them, they sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play; that is, they did idolize those outward administrations as their manna, water, out of the rock, and Passover which they eat and drank, and rose up to play, that is lived in the mere refreshments of such formal participations and communion with mere outward things and ordinances, and were cheered, and contented with such created enjoyments of God; thus they rose up to play after their Idolatry with those administrations, as many weak Christians now, who having sat down to eat and drink in the administrations of the New Testament, as these in the

Old, rise up to play, go away fed up with created refreshments rather than spiritual manifestations of God.

44

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION.

The pure, spiritual, and glorious assurance of salvation comes from the knowledge of God, or the pure manifestation of the Spirit of God, bearing witness and giving testimony, that we are the children of God; this is pure, spiritual assurance, this is called the white stone with a new name written, Rev.2:17, which none know but those that have it, this is the unction whereby we know all things, I Jn.2:20, this is that Spirit by which we know things freely given to us of God. I Cor.2:12.

So as all demonstrations of Salvation, which are made to the soul by any rational persuasive or argumentative way, and not in the mere evidence of the pure light or spirit of God, is but moral or human and traditional, and will fail; and all applications of Gospel promises and all Conclusions from the mere letter of Scriptures which are not the pure image or figure without, answering the very evidence and demonstration of Spirit and of God within, is but a literal and formal assurance, and will fail.

All counterfeit or resembled testimonies either by Satan who can transform himself into an angel of Light, or by the mere persuasion of Nature, or the carnal conscience, whereby nature doth willingly deceive, and flatter & persuade its self, being usually unwilling to perish, and believe its own destruction, will fail.

But there are many ways of assurance of Salvation though more dim and faint, besides that more inward and purely spiritual, and that merely of God, which is enjoyed

very rarely, and I know not by whom, excepting those only to whom the Kingdom of God is revealed in spirit, and God is seen face to face; and first assurance is wrought by the knowledge of God, according to such enjoyment as the soul is under in its administration to God, as first, there are these ways of knowing God.

1. By reason or the mere light of nature, and works of this creation, and here there is a law accusing and excusing {as the Apostle saith} and how God is revealed in this as to salvation in all those Nations where the Gospel is not heard as in its outward letter and administration, or elsewhere, and how far God may administer Christ in this, as formerly to Job and Cornelius, I dare not judge, nor condemn, nor conclude; but sure there is no Salvation out of Christ; and how far God may use this light of nature or reason to administer Christ in, as he makes use of others more low and visible administrations not so excellent, I know not.

2. There is a knowledge of God by graces and gifts or fruits of the Spirit, as faith, love, self-denial, repentance, &c., and by the letter or promises and outward ordinances and duties; and as God's manifestation is in these, so is the assurance of salvation through these, and such assurance is of no higher and clearer and more glorious certainty than God through these doth afford, that is {as the Apostle saith} darkly as in a glass; and as these are shadowed and clouded, so is the assurance, and that is the reason, why so many are cast down, and afflicted as to this thing of assurance, and pine and consume because the testimonies of their Salvation are no brighter nor clearer, than such administration will admit, and here they are to wait. The reason why assurances of salvation are no more glorious nor pure, are because the spiritual Church or Saints are in Babylon, in the flesh, compassed about with the mystery of iniquity, and of Antichrist in ourselves, and

enjoy not God in that sweet and pure vision as they shall do, when they return to Jerusalem, the new Jerusalem, the City of the living God. They that speak of the assurances in pure revelation of Spirit, not comprehending all the several administrations and measures wherein God appears to his, do much mistake, and it will appear from that knowledge of God which is amongst men, in all its several dispensations, as here follows.

45

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD ACCORDING TO THE VARIOUS DISPENSATIONS OF HIMSELF.

1. God is known in the light of nature or reason and works of this creation, the eternal power and Godhead being seen by things that do appear, and man being made after the image of God, and having a law within him accusing or excusing.

2. By the mere letter or scriptures, and light of nature or reason, which is a rational dispensation heightened, from such images, and appearances of God, as it meets with there or in letter.

3. By outward ordinances or signs and images and things that do appear and thus God is seen still as in the creation or in created things.

4. By the ministry of Angels or a more high and seraphic, though still creature-ministrations of God.

5. By graces or appearances of the Spirit, as faith, repentance, love, self-denial, humility, &c., which was the ministration of the first Gospel-times under the Old Testament before Christ came in the flesh, and now in the

New Testament, II Cor.3:18, since his coming, and this is said to be as in a glass.

6. By God's own light, even himself revealed, and this is that pure, increased, divine, immediate glory, flowing from himself, or himself; Father {saith Christ} glorify me with thy self, or the glory that I had with thee, and the glory that thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one as we are one. Jn.17:22. Now let us consider, who knows God according to himself, or his own light, and glory.

None {saith God} can see me and live, Exod.33:22, so as they that see God do not live, they do not live, or that thing called themselves do not live; that which is called a man's self is his own reason, his wisdom, his righteousness, his desires or will, his imaginations, his affections, his lusts; now if these live, God was never yet seen, for none can see God and live; for when any see God it shall be no more they that live, but Christ or God that liveth in them, Gal.2:20, now who is there that hath seen God, that doth not live, in whom nothing of self lives. And that we may see how God revealed will annihilate and bring to nothing all flesh. Consider the appearances of angels, and graces &c. How was Daniel smitten into astonishment? No spirit was left in him. How was Isaiah? Woe is me I am undone, I have seen the Lord. Isa.6:5. How was John when he fell at the Angels feet? How have many left the world and worldly contents, relations, and all other creature comforts, as many anchorites and contemplative souls, who are carried no higher than by Angel discoveries!

Oh! How doth the pure appearance of God pour shame upon all flesh and fleshly glory, and excellency, upon all the visions and dreams that man hath had of God, either by pure reason, his image, or by creature-imagery or outward administration and notion by letter, or by graces, &c., for when that which is perfect is come,

that which is in part shall be done away. I Cor.13:10. The day of the Lord will be upon all our cedars and oaks and pleasant pictures, Isa.2:13, and idols of gold and silver, even our richest and most spiritual idolatry, and judgment shall be upon all the merchandise of Babylon, the pearls and precious stones, the cinnamon and odors and frankincense upon all deceivableness of unrighteousness and all false worship, &c.

46

A FURTHER DISCOVERY OF THE MYSTERY OF SALVATION IN THE GOSPEL- ADMINISTRATION, AND ITS OWN GLORY.

The Gospel Administration wherein the mystery of salvation is first discovered, is in the Scriptures of the New Testament held forth in these following particulars.

1. In repentance, which they say is a sorrow for sin wrought by the Spirit of God and the Law, flowing from Christ who gives repentance to Israel, Acts 5:31, Zech.12:10, and the Spirit of grace which mourns over him, &c., and is that godly sorrow for sin the new man grieving over the old. II Cor.7:10,11.

2. In faith, which they say is an act of the regenerate soul upon Christ, resting and believing in him for justification and righteousness, Rom.3:28, or as some say, Rom.1:17, a grace from Christ or Righteousness.

3. In conversion or calling, which is the work of the Spirit of God turning, I Thes.4:7, II Tim.1:9, Psal.19:7, or sanctifying or persuading the soul of the Christian from his sinful, and unregenerate estate, to God in Christ.

4. In justification which is God's pardoning the sins of a believer, Rom.5:9, or not imputing sins unto him, Rom.4:25, and imputing the righteousness of Christ unto

him, Rom.8:33, whereby he stands justified and forgiven, Rom.5:1, and righteous in the sight of God freely; and of God's grace through faith instrumentally, which as the hand receives Christ, as some say; without faith, as others say. Thus the scriptures in the letter hold forth the first revelation of the mystery of God in such words and expressions as these and such as these are; as prayer, good works, duties, ordinances, which are very suitable, and proportional to the first appearance of God in us or the mystery of salvation, working in its infancy and first creation in the Christian, and thus the infirmity of Christians is fitted with a manifestation of the mystery in words and forms, and all the Christian Churches of the world generally draw out all their systems and models of divinity into articles of faith and confessions of faith, according to this very letter of Scriptures, which is no other but a revelation of the mystery of Salvation as to man's infirmity, and say some, they call it their fundamentals and the highest attainment of Christianity.

Others say the mystery of salvation is no other than Immanuel or God with us or God in flesh, not only in that man Christ but in the whole Christ, Christ being no more but an anointed one, and that anointed one is our nature or weakness anointed with the Spirit, even God himself who is strength; and this mystery of great and exceeding glory is revealed in pieces and parts and after the manner of men, according to the infirmity of our flesh, within the Christian in graces, &c., and in the Scriptures or expressions and forms without the Christian.

**THE SEEKERS THEIR ATTAINMENT,
WITH A DISCOVERY OF A MORE
SPIRITUAL WAY.**

They find that the former Christians of the first or of the Apostles times, according to institutions then, and the administration of Ordinances then, were more visibly and spiritually endowed with power from on high, or with gifts of the Spirit, and so were able to make clear and evident demonstrations of God amongst them; as in the Churches of all the Christians then, in Corinth, Ephesus, &c., and that all who administered in any outward office, as to spiritual things, were visibly gifted; there was then an Apostle, Evangelist, Prophet, Pastor, Teacher; Gifts of Healing, Gifts of Miracles, of Tongues, &c., and all was administered in the anointing or unction of the Spirit, clearly, certainly, infallibly; they ministered as the oracles of God. But now in this time of the Apostasy of the Churches, they find no such gifts, and so dare not meddle with any outward administrations, dare not preach, baptize, or teach, &c., or have any Church-fellowship, because they find no attainment yet in any Churches or Church-ways, or administration of Ordinances, according to the first pattern in the New Testament, they find nothing but the outward ceremony of all Administrations; as of bare water in Baptism, of bare imposition of hands in Ordination, of bare election of Officers, as Pastors, Teachers, &c., of bare Church-censures, without the visible power of gifts of the Spirit which were before. Therefore they wait in this time of the Apostasy of the Christian Churches, as the Jews did in the time of their Apostasy, and as the Apostles and Disciples at Jerusalem, till they were endued with power from on high, finding no

practice for Worship, but according to the first pattern. They wait only in Prayer and Conference, pretending to no certain determination of things, nor any infallible consequences or interpretations of Scriptures. They wait for a restoration of all things, and a setting up all Gospel Officers, Churches, Ordinances, according to the pattern in the New Testament. They wait for an Apostle or Angel, that is, some with a visible glory and power able in the Spirit, to give visible demonstration of their sending, as to the world; and thus they interpret those places of the Revelation. This is the highest of their Attainment.

But some speak of a further discovery, and more spiritual than this of the Seekers, as this.

1. That there is no warrant from Scriptures to expect any restoring of Offices or Ordinances according to the first pattern in Scripture.

2. That the first pattern in Scripture of Offices and Ordinances, was but a more purely-legal Dispensation, or a discovery of the Gospel rather as to Christ after the flesh, than after the Spirit; and a discovery as to the weakness both of Jews and Gentiles then, respectively to visible Administrations, and gifts of the Spirit.

3. That the Administrations and gifts then, were but a ministration in part, and darkly, as in a glass, and of things that should vanish away.

4. That God never set up any Administration or Office but for a time and season, and used it as a temporary dispensation; as the Tabernacle, Temple, Law, Priesthood, &c., and then left them never to be restored. So the first Gospel-administration by ordinances, gifts, &c.

5. That to wait in any such way of seeking or expectation, is Antichristian, because there is no Scriptures to warrant any such restoration, or expectation of such administrations; and that all such waiting is that desert, wilderness-condition prophesied on by Christ;

that is, waste and barren as to spiritual things. If they say, "behold, he is in the desert, go not forth," and that it is that condition prophesied on to be in the secret chambers, or single fellowships that are in such expectations; a chamber signifying an upper room, or a room above others; so this state of seeking is thought by those of that way, to be an upper room, or higher administration, as to Presbytery, Independency, Baptism, &c., and that Lo, Christ is here, or the gathering into that way, and saying it is his, to wait in.

6. That the truth is, Christ is in all his in spirit and truth, and as the eternal seed; and his fulness is already in the Saints, Col.1:26, or all true Christians; and that all growth, improvement, or reformation that is to be, Eph.3:18,19, is only the revelation or appearance of this, when he shall appear, &c., Col.3:4, or to be revealed in the brightness of his coming, I Jn.3:2, in the day of the Lord Jesus, II Thess.2:8,9, and that he is in us that true life, salvation, glory; only we see him but in part, Heb.2:8, and that all conceptions of God or Christ, as to distance of coming, &c., administrations, ordinances gifts, Rom.10:6-8, &c., are but to expect Christ in a fleshly way or appearance, not as he is in us, our life, fulness, hope of glory, &c. Col.1:26. And this next appearance of his shall be in his own light, spirit, and glory, in himself and his. And this is that Reformation to be expected; this is the last administration of himself by himself in his, in his light we shall see light. "For with thee is the fountain of life, in thy light shall we see light." Psal.36:9.

And the Saints or true Christians shall not only see God thus in himself, face to face, as they are seen; but the world shall see him in a way of conviction and spiritual judgement upon themselves; even him that sits upon the throne.

And all that pure administration of ordinances and gifts which was and is expected by these, is but a middle

or inner-dispensation betwixt God and his; wherein God is seen as in a glass, I Cor.13:12,13, not as he is in his own glory, which is himself, which is the last and most spiritual discovery.

48

THE GROUNDS BOTH AGAINST LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE AND FOR IT, CLEARLY STATED, FOR ALL TO JUDGE.

Against Liberty of Conscience these are the strongest Grounds, and all the Grounds generally known.

1. The Magistrate is the keeper of both the Tables of the Law, and as he may punish any evil committed against the second Table, or the society of man; so he may punish any Idolatry committed against God, or the Worship of God, in the first Table.

2. The Magistrates under the Old Testament reformed; Moses and Joshua, the Kings and Princes of Judah and Israel, Nehemiah, &c., so the Magistrates now.

3. The Magistrate is the minister of God for good, and a terror to evil works, and bears not the sword in vain, and therefore may punish Heresy and Schism, because evil.

4. The Magistrates are prophesied on to be assistants to the Church of God. Kings shall be thy fathers, and Queens thy nursing mothers, Isa.49:23, and therefore may punish all such as are enemies to it, as all Heretics and Schismatics are.

5. Peter smote Ananias and his wife Sapphira with death, which was a temporal punishment, for their sin of Hypocrisy, so may the Magistrate put forth a temporal punishment for a spiritual offence.

6. Paul wished that they were cut off which troubled them, Gal.5:12, therefore Magistrates may cut off Heretics, because they are troublers of the Church.

7. The Church of Thyatira was reprov'd for suffering Jezebel to teach, Rev.2:20, and to seduce, therefore Magistrates are not to suffer false Prophets or Seducers to be.

8. The father and mother of him that is a false Prophet, shall thrust him though, and say, thou shalt not live, for thou speakest lies in the Name of the Lord. Zech.13:3. This was a Prophecy as to Magistrates punishment for Heresy.

9. If Magistrates shall not punish for Heresy, Errors and Schism, there will be nothing but Confusion, and no settlement nor establishment of any Peace, Order, or Truth in the Church.

10. It appears from the practice of all Christian States generally, who punish all such as conform not; from all Councils and Synods, who still hold this power to be in the Magistrate, of reforming and punishing Heresy and Schism.

49

THE GROUNDS FOR LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE WHICH ARE STRONGEST, AND ARE ALL COMMONLY KNOWN.

1. Moses was a keeper of both Tables only as he was a Type of Christ, and so called the Mediator of the Old Testament, Jn.1:17, and Worship of God then; but so is not the Magistrate now, the Office of Moses being fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and ending in him, Acts 3:22, even in that Person in whom all the Types were fulfilled. Lk.9:30,35.

2. The Magistrates of the Old Testament, as Moses, Joshua, the Kings of Judah and Israel, Nehemiah, &c., were in a peculiar and special way of Magistracy as to that Church-Politics of the Jews, and had a special, and peculiar, and infallibly directive power of Priesthood with Urim and Thummim, and Prophets anointed of God to assist, and direct, and instruct them in the Law, or Reformation of the Church at such times as they reformed. And the Law of the Old Testament lay more plainly and clearly in the letter, II Cor.3:6-13, not so much in spirit as the letter of the New Testament, and therefore the Magistracy now having no such special reference to a Church-Political, nor any such Ministry infallibly directive joined to them, cannot proceed so to reform, nor compel, nor punish.

3. The Magistrates under the New Testament are Ministers as to good and evil, Rom.13:4, not as to Truth and Heresy; and this good and evil is such good and evil as falls under the Law of their cognizance, that is, the Law of Nature, by which they make Laws, and judge the breach of them, which Law of Nature or right Reason, is the law or principle for administration of Justice and Righteousness in all Societies of Men and Nations, and thus the Magistrate bears not the sword in vain. Rom.13:4. But this is not as to Heresy and Schism, of which the higher Law is judge, viz., the Law of the Spirit of life which is in Jesus Christ, not the Law of Nature or this Creation.

4. In that Prophecy, Kings shall be thy fathers, and Queens thy nursing mothers, is not in its own Scripture, or any other, interpreted to be any other thing then the indulgency and favour of States and Kingdoms to the people of God; which is far from bearing witness to any destructiveness or persecution of them.

5. That Peter smote Ananias and his wife Sapphira with death for lying, Acts 5:1,2, is only a witness of God's

power and holiness put forth in an act of Miracle upon the sin of Hypocrisy, for convincing unbelievers, and confirming believers, and is no way exemplary to any Magistrate, being a power by miracle, or by an extraordinary act; and Magistracy in its administration is ordinary; and it was in an Apostle, not a Magistrate; by a spiritual, not a carnal weapon.

6. Paul's wishing that such were cut off that troubled them, holds forth no other cutting off than by Church censure or excommunication, which was a visible dividing them from that visibly spiritual body the Church, called a delivering up to Satan, &c.

7. The Church of Thyatira was reprov'd for suffering Jezebel to teach and to seduce, but this is not the Magistracy of Thyatira which was to forbid her teaching by punishment; but the Angel or Ministry of that Church, as all agree, who was rebuked because they or he put not forth that spiritual power they had of Admonition, Rejection, Excommunication.

8. The father and mother of him that begat the false Prophet, and was to thrust him thorough that prophesied lies in the name of the Lord, was a Prophecy respectively to the Law of the Jews which was amongst them against false Prophets, and had a true Priesthood, and infallible Prophets, with a special Law to try them by, and condemn them. And more spiritually was this, by the false Prophet, is meant the spirit of Antichrist, by the father and mother that begat him, they who made him a Prophet, or begat and cried him up into the reputation of a Prophet, and then thrusting him thorough for the lies he prophesied, is their spiritual smiting that Antichristian working with the Sword of the Spirit, through some new enlightening from God received, or brightness of Christ's glory, which shall stay and kill all appearances and deceivableness of the man of sin or false Prophet, and not suffer him to live.

9. That there will be no settlement of Peace, Order, or Truth in the Church if the Magistrates do not punish for Heresy, is upon mistaken and false grounds, supposing three things which are not. First, that the Church-policy of the Jews by Magistrate and Priesthood, is to be used by Christians; which is not, it being fulfilled in Christ the true King and Priest; and Christians having no such infallible Priesthood to join to Magistracy. Secondly, that civil power can establish anything of a higher glory, law and principle than itself; as all spiritual truths and discoveries of Jesus Christ are. Thirdly, the mistake of true spiritual settlement, peace, order, and truth, which receive all their being, propagation, and establishment from the Spirit of God, and the Scriptures, and such spiritual Laws as God hath revealed for ordering the outward man of the Christian by, respectively to the society or fellowship of other Christians, called Church-censures, &c., Christians being under a twofold politics, that of the Kingdom of Christ, as Christians; that of the Kingdom of this world, as men, or such as are subject to the Laws of Civil Government, and likewise supposing all peace and order to be grounded upon uniformity, not upon unity of spirit, Eph.4:3, and preservation of the civil Peace of the State.

10. That States and Kingdoms do to this day practice punishing Heresy by the power of Magistrates, and that Councils and Synods do allow it; all such practice of what States soever in this kind, doth show only what they do, not what they ought to do. And the kingdoms of the world are prophesied, Rev.17:17, on to give their kingdoms and strength from themselves to the false Church. And for Councils and Synods, they are such as have erred in other things, and why not in this, it being their great interest to establish themselves, &c., by the Magistrates power.

Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin, Rom.14:23, so as all who are compelled in things of worship to do anything of which they are not persuaded, do sin.

Gospel sins, or sins against a higher law or light than that of Nature and Reason {which is the only sphere for Civil Government to move in} is to be judged and punished by a law and light proportional, and more spiritual than any power of Magistracy; as the Spirit of God going out in Gospel-Judgement, Admonition, Rejection, Excommunication, &c.

The danger and hazard of persecution of the members of Christ, which is a sin bringing much judgment, because judged and punished by such a light and law, viz., by Synods and Councils of men who are not infallible in their decrees and judgements of truth and heresy.

By force and compulsion, men who are weak in the faith are made hypocrites, in their outward man conforming to the laws of men in fear and bondage.

All such power of compulsion in States and Kingdoms principled with any light and liberty, except Spain, France, &c., shall destroy the true interests of all such States and Kingdoms oppressing all societies and fellowships of men, as to spiritual things, though never so peaceably affected, as men and subjects.

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A MYSTERY; OR, THE CHRISTIAN FOLLOWING THE APPEARANCES OF GOD THOROUGH ALL CREATED THINGS.

That which is the pure, spiritual, comprehensive principle of a Christian, is this, that all outward administrations,

whether as to religion, or to natural, civil and moral things, are only the visible appearances of God, as to the world, or in this creation; or the clothing of God, being such forms and dispensations as God puts on amongst men, to appear to them in; this is the garment the Son of God was clothed with down to the feet, Rev.1:13, or to his lowest appearance. And God doth not fix himself upon any one form or outward dispensation, but at his own will and pleasure comes forth in such and such an administration, and goes out of it, and leaves it, and takes up another. And this is clear in all God's proceedings with the world, both in the Jewish Church and State, Heb.12:26,27, and Christians now. And when God is gone out, and hath left such or such an administration, of what kind soever it is, be it religious, moral, or civil; such an administration is a desolate house, a temple whose vail is rent, a sun whose light is darkened; and to worship it then, is to worship an idol, an image, a form, without God, or any manifestation of God in it, save to him, I Cor.8:4, who {as Paul saith} knows an idol to be nothing.

The pure, spiritual, comprehensive Christian, is one who grows up with God from administration to administration, Phil.3:14, II Cor.3:18, and so walks with God in all his removes and spiritual increasing and flowings; and such are weak and in the flesh who tarry behind, worshipping that form or administration out of which God is departed.

**A POSTSCRIPT TO MASTER GATAKER,
AUTHOR OF A BOOK CALLED
SHADOWS WITHOUT SUBSTANCE,
WRITTEN AGAINST ME.**

SIR,

The Reasons why I did not answer you, were these; I mean your last Book, called *Shadows without Substance, &c.* I found that Replies and Rejoinders did exceedingly confound and perplex the plainness, and simplicity, and glory of Truth, and had much of self, and passion, and recrimination; which I am confident the Lord will show you in much of what you have written, for I am assured that God will reveal and convince you powerfully and mightily in many passages which yourself writ, and not the Spirit of God. Lay your hand upon your heart, and consider sadly, if the advantage of the times, the glory of reputation, the passion of man in you, and the multitude of years, and fame of learning {not willing to be convinced by days or months} did not write most of your last Book.

What you wrote in the sincerity of spirit, and in that measure of truth you received, I rejoice in; and what you wrote in the artifice of your parts, your wit, and your other human advantages, or devices of flesh and blood, whereby you laid on colors to make your own arguments fair and comely to a man judging no higher than reason, or in your own measure of Truth, and whereby you laid on your darker and more shadowish stuff upon me your adversary, rendering me to the reader, both in your title-page, and throughout your book, as one that denied the Apostles Doctrine, and Christ's, because I denied your conclusions and deductions to be that very Doctrine, and

the mind of those very Scriptures of Christ and the Apostles. This, I say, must pass under the fiery trial, and you must suffer loss, so as by fire.

Surely, to deny what Master Gataker, or some Synods of men say, is not to deny what Christ and the Apostles say, unless the Spirit of God reveal in them one and the same Truth, and that they all speak by one and the same spirit, in one and the same language.

Nor did I see that you in all your writings had done anything against the truth declared by me; but had only defended yourself, and your own measure of truth, with rejection and reproaches of mine; and all this in the form only of argumentation and confutation, not in the power; so as I did rest without replying, knowing that the substance of what truth I had writ was as I had received then; and would abide, because he who is the pattern of all truth, Jesus Christ, abides the same, yesterday, and today, and forever. And for any expressions of mine, or form of words which may make truth appear to some not one and the same; I only can as yet speak truth in the language given me, when I can speak more tongues, or the languages of several Christians, of which the gifts of tongues were a sign, then I and you shall be better understood by ourselves and others.

Sir, I have spoken one particular more clearly, which you and some others spake on in my Book. And thus I take my leave of you, desiring to love any appearance of God in you, and to forgive any infirmities in you, which are of man; as I desire myself to be loved or forgiven of others.

And truly I do not expound that of contending earnestly for the Truth to be in reproaches and passions, in replies and rejoinders, and many books; but in Spirit, and spiritual affection, and pure manifestation of the same Truth.

SIR, Your friend, JOHN SALTMARSH.

A PRETENDED HERESY.

In a Book called Hell broke loose. That which is pretended, or at least believed by some to be Heresy in my Book of Grace, is this; which I desire to explain more fully, that it may appear more clearly to be Truth.

That Christ hath believed perfectly, repented perfectly, mortified sin perfectly for us. First, that Christ hath done all for us, is truth; he hath fulfilled all righteousness, both that righteousnesses which is of the Law, and that which is of the Gospel, in graces, &c., and upon this account he is made unto us righteousnesses, &c.

Secondly, Faith, Repentance, Mortification, were all in Christ originally, primarily, as in their nature, their fountain, their root or seed; and therefore he is said to give repentance to Israel; and he is the author and finisher of our faith; and it is called the faith of the Son of God; and of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace; for every grace in him, a grace in us.

And to say Christ hath done all these for us, first in himself, and then in us through himself, I hope is such a Heresy as we all believe. It may be, my want of clearer explanation, made it be taken for Heresy; which I hope will now be judged more candidly to be a Truth.

Nor can this {that Christ hath all graces and perfection in himself} prove that we stand in need of none in us, no Faith nor Repentance in us, nor mortification of sin in us, no more than Paul's Doctrine of Grace and Faith, and the Christian to be under Grace, destroy the Law, or make void Faith, or cause men to sin that Grace may abound.

I never yet denied the Graces and Fruits of the Spirit of God, which appear in Faith, Repentance, new Obedience, Mortification of sin, as may be seen in all things I have writ. It may be I may speak Truth in such a notion or conception, or measure of light as I have received it in, and not in another's. The Christian, as the English or French, can only speak in his own Tongue or Language, till the Lord be one, and his Name one amongst us; and in the meantime, let us judge Heresy by the Truth in Scripture, and in the Spirit; not as it seems to us so, or appears so, perhaps not for want of true light in what is writ, but more light to what is already writ, to make it more clearly appear true light.

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TO MASTER KNOLLYS, THE AUTHOR OF A BOOK CALLED THE SHINING OF A FLAMING FIRE, &C., WRITTEN AGAINST ME, AS TO THE POINT OF BAPTISM.

Dear Brother,

I have been long silent, not because what you wrote had prevailed in me to believe the Ordinance of Baptism by water, so practiced, of that necessity, or of that pure and Apostolic practice in these times, since the outward Court given to the Gentiles, hath been trodden down, and the gifts of Spirit, which was the glory and life of those visible administrations then, now taken away. But I was not very hasty, because I know it is not man that teacheth Truth, but God; "ye shall be all taught of God." There are three things I propound to ye, with many other.

1. That all that baptize now by the power of teaching, {go teach and baptize,} do teach in the same

gift the disciples that baptized formerly did teach, that is, as the oracles of God, in the pure manifestation of the Spirit of God, else that Command, "go teach and baptize," belongs not to disciples of less pure, less certain, and less infallible teaching, as all disciples now in mystical Babylon, or the flesh, are; but to disciples of the first anointing, or first fruits of the Spirit, such as the Apostles were, and such as Philip, and Ananias, and the brethren with Peter, &c.

2. That the Baptism of water is Christ's Baptism, or his administration; but it is John's and his Ministry, I come baptizing with water; but he shall baptize ye with the Holy Ghost; and therefore Christ never gave it to his disciples in their first Commission to preach to the Jews, nor baptized he any himself, that can be found; nor doth it appear that this in Matthew 28, is meant of baptizing by water, but by the Spirit, or baptism of gifts, which Christ baptized with in their administration, saying, "Lo, I am with you, or in you, &c.

3. That the disciples of Christ baptized only by water, as in John's Ministry, though into Christ, as all legal administrations were, viz., to Christ; and did it partly in honour to John's Ministry, {for, a greater prophet than John hath not risen,} and to the believers weakness; as in that, to the weak, I was weak; to them under the Law, as under the Law, &c., yet, saith he, I was not sent to baptize; it was no part of his Commission, but of his spiritual liberty, and to edification of the weak; for he circumcised.

And there is another thing which hath caused much mistake and confidence in this point of Baptism by water, and that is, the not distinguishing the doctrine of Baptisms, but interpreting the words of Baptism used in the Epistles, which appear to be words of mystery, and spiritual immersion, as to the mysteries of God, and of being made by one Spirit one with Christ, one in his

death, buried with him by Baptism, &c., to be of a mere literal, elementary signification, and to be meant of water only, and from this, pressing it as necessary, &c.

And further, there is no little mistake of that in the Hebrews, where the doctrine of Baptisms is reckoned amongst the first principles of the doctrine of Christ; whereas those first principles are reckoned in the Hebrews, not as if all of them were things to be forever the principles of every Christian, but of the doctrine of Christ in some of those things, as to that age; those things being first brought forth in that ministration of Christ then; for if it were otherwise, and all they of necessity as the first principles, then where is the other Baptism of gifts there mentioned in the Word? For the word is Baptisms, not Baptism; and further, the Apostle rather calls Christians up higher, more into Spirit; wherefore leaving, saith he, the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection, or, to that which is perfect, which is Christ himself. As if he should say, let us be no more weak Christians, but such as seek higher and more excellent things. I refer you to the Doctrine of Baptisms here in my Book, where I have not controversially written, but in meekness, and plain distinction of things.

Nor am I against Baptism by water, if administered according to the measure of light ye are under, and not in an Apostolical necessity and pressure, and as a dividing Ordinance to the unity of the Spirit of God in Christians.

Dear Sir, I love and tender those true appearances of God that are in you, and rejoice with you in beholding that glory by which we are all changed from glory to glory, &c., and am.

Your Friend and Brother in the Lord, JOHN SALTMARSH.

FINIS.