

# **CHRIST EXALTED**

**Above all Creatures BY GOD His  
Father; or a Sermon Preached before  
the Right Honourable, the Parliament  
of the Commonwealth of ENGLAND.**

**{At their solemn Fast, observed the last day  
of the last Month called February 1649.}**

**"And the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day."  
Isa.2:11. "And he hath on his vesture and on his  
thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD  
OF LORDS." Rev.19:16.**

**WRITTEN BY VAVASOR POWELL**

**ALONG WITH A CONFESSION OF  
FAITH WRITTEN BY THE AUTHOR.**

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## **Biographical Sketch**

Vavasor Powell, 1617-1670, Welsh Nonconformist and Fifth Monarchist, was born in Knucklas, a small village in Powys, Wales. It is said that his father, Richard Powell, was an 'ale-keeper' and 'bagger of oatmeal,' and that when his son was quite young he saw to it that he would learn the ancient languages, and become proficient in the general knowledge of the day. According to some accounts he was educated at Jesus College, Oxford, {although no official records exist of this, perhaps because he did not graduate,} and around 1638 returned to Wales, and became a schoolmaster, during which time he was brought to an understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ under the preaching of the Puritan Walter Cradock, and helped immensely by the writings of Richard Sibbes and William Perkins. In the same year as his conversion, his mind was formulated by the Spirit of truth, as he was being "separated unto the gospel of God," and called to preach amongst his native countrymen the unsearchable riches of Christ; and thus began a fruitful itinerant ministry in his home country sometime in late 1639. At the outbreak of the Civil War he left eastern Wales, where he had by now become a zealous promotor of Christ's pre-eminent glory, withdrew to England, and situated himself in London by 1642. Edward Bagshaw's biography of Vavasor Powell, mentions the fact that Powell was made vicar of Dartford in the early years of the Civil War, {1644-1646,} and describes him as "that faithful minister and confessor of Jesus Christ." In January 1646, almost three years after arriving in Dartford, he left to join the New Model Army in their military campaigns to besiege the Royalist controlled city of Oxford, which ended with a Parliamentarian victory in June of 1646. As Wales was also brought under the control of the Parliamentary Army, and their victory

seemed certain, Powell returned, {as a missionary at the request of Parliament,} having received a "certificate of character" from the Westminster Assembly, {although he had refused to be ordained by the Presbyterians,} and with a salary granted to him by Parliament he began, {by the Summer of 1648,} an extensive preaching ministry in his own native land, whose people were at this point, and in many respects plunged in the most deplorable ignorance about the salvation of Christ, which ministry took him to nearly every parish in Wales. Thomas Crosby, {History of the English Baptists, 1738,} says that "he frequently preached in two or three places in a day, and he was seldom two days in a week throughout the year out of the pulpit; nay, he would sometimes ride an hundred miles in a week and preach in every place where he might have admittance, either night or day; so that there was hardly a church, chapel, or town hall in all Wales where he had not preached." In reference to the spiritual state of Wales at this particular time, Walter Cradock, in a speech to Parliament, in July of 1646, exclaimed that "is it not a sad case that in Wales that there should not be above thirteen conscientious ministers who in these times expressed themselves faithful to Parliament." Henry Palmer, in another speech a month later to Parliament, said in regards to Wales, {and in essence how Wales may be best brought under Cromwellian Rule,} that it "is a howling wilderness; there has hardly been a sermon preached among them since the Reformation. Churches will be your strongest castles, if you furnish them well with ministers."

When King Charles I was executed in 1649, Powell supported the action, which he felt was altogether justified on the grounds that the "King had broken all ten of the Commandments," which statement, along with his loyal support at this time, brought him into favour with

the existing government of Cromwell. He preached before Thomas Foot, the Lord Mayor of London in December of 1649, and a few weeks later engaged in a public debate with the Arminian John Goodwin. The discussion was regarding the subject of Universal Redemption, Powell, accompanied by John Simpson, {Simpson, like his friend Powell, was a Fifth Monarchy Man, both holding the same political sentiments, and were afterwards companions in prison for delivering inflammatory harangues against Cromwell,} debated Goodwin and his followers on at least two separate occasions, with Joseph Caryl, and Henry Jessey, also taking part in attempting to vindicate the True Gospel. Powell, along with Jessey, Caryl and Simpson all took an active part in these debates, holding tenaciously to the blessed truths of God's Eternal and Unconditional Election unto Salvation in Christ, Efficacious Particular Redemption of God's elect by Sovereign Divine Imputation, Irresistible & Invincible Grace by the Word of the Son of God in Holy Spirit Regeneration, &c., and in essence, proclaiming the one Gospel of Christ, in strong opposition to the false gospel of Arminianism. An interesting account of the conclusion of one of these debates, {as found in the Life of John Goodwin, written by Thomas Jackson,} reads as follows, "at the conclusion of this day's debate, Mr. Henry Jessey, a minister of the Baptist denomination, a man of liberal sentiments and of a catholic spirit, interfered, and spake to this effect, 'I desire, {says he,} because there are many weak Christians here present, that are apt to be troubled, and to despair within themselves, to hear such differences between godly and learned men, they will be ready to say, they know not what to believe, nor what religion to be of; therefore I shall only desire to inform them this one thing, that the difference between the two opinions is not so great, but that men, whether they believe the one or the other may be saved through the grace of God in Jesus

Christ.' On hearing this, John Simpson exclaimed, 'Mr. Jessey! Mr. Jessey! No more of that! I conceive that they that hold General Redemption and Free Will in opposition to Free Grace, never had any experimental knowledge of the grace of God in Jesus Christ.' 'I am sorry,' replied Mr. Jessey, 'to hear such words come from you.' Then Mr. Powell prayed, and the congregation was dismissed." Those who have been brought to love and embrace the eternal truths of the Gospel will be made to wonder at Mr. Jessey's limp grasp of, or lack of contention for these truths, {at this juncture of his life,} in allowing them to be so defamed without a clear distinction in separating from, and anathemizing those who tenaciously have embraced and defend this false gospel of Arminianism, {including all forms of free-will Conditionalism, any denial of the absolute Sovereignty of God in salvation, the Redemptive nature of the death of Christ in representation, &c.,} as it is in fact an abominable evil, and as unveiled in all its Christ denying subtlety will be wholly renounced and utterly detested by all the faithful in Christ Jesus; whilst also having to acknowledge that any professed conversion under its delusionary & fabricated lies will be seen as false & spurious, and in no manner consistent with a genuine work of the Spirit in granting repentance to the acknowledgement of the truth.

In 1650 Powell addressed the House of Commons, as Parliament appointed a Commission for "the better propagation and preaching of the gospel in Wales," with Powell acting as one of the principal advisers of this body. Returning to Wales, for three years he was actively employed in removing from their parishes those Anglican ministers whom he regarded as incompetent, replacing them with such whom he felt he could embrace in Christ Jesus, which work of scrutinizing and separating constantly brought him into conflict with those who stood

opposed to his proceedings at any given time. In 1653, he was also influential in selecting Welsh Representatives to sit in Cromwell's Barebones Parliament, but it was only soon thereafter that in accordance with the general perception of his Fifth Monarchy brethren and friends that he publicly denounced Cromwell's acceptance of the office of Lord Protector, which led to his interrogation by the Council of State, and brief imprisonment. Without a doubt Powell seemed to have been swept away by the tenets of this extraordinary religious and political movement, {the Fifth Monarchy movement was active between 1649-1660,} believing like so many in that day, {brought on, no doubt, in part by the great political turmoil and eschatological fervor of the day,} that the time of the fifth monarchy, that is, the monarchy that - according to their traditional interpretation of the book of Daniel - should succeed the Assyrian, Persian, Greek, and Roman Monarchies, and which would culminate with Christ's return to earth, beginning a thousand-year period wherein he should reign on Earth, {with his saints,} and that this period was immanent, wherein all earthly rulers would be subject, or rather subdued to his ultimate authority. Even Cromwell, though certainly not a Fifth Monarchist himself, declared in his opening speech on July 4, 1653, in the Council Chamber at Whitehall, that "God doth manifest it to be a day of the Power of Jesus Christ," and that, "this may be the door to usher in things that God hath promised and prophesied of," herein revealing his own millenarian hopes and dreams. In that same speech, Cromwell had this to say in regards to propagation of the Gospel in Wales, {no doubt mindful of the decision to send Powell, along with those ministers that accompanied him there,} "then, {says Cromwell,} when we came to other trials, as in that case of Wales, of establishing a Preaching Ministry in Wales, which, I must confess for my own part, I set myself upon, if I should

relate what discountenance that business of the poor people of God there had {who had men watching over them like so many wolves, ready to catch the lambs so soon as they were brought forth into the world,} how signally that business was trodden under foot in Parliament, to the discountenancing of the Honest People, and the countenancing of the Malignant Party, of this Commonwealth! I need but say it was so for many of you know, and by sad experience have felt it to be so. And somebody I hope will, at leisure, better impart to you the state of that business of Wales; which really, to myself and Officers, was as plain a trial of their spirits, the Parliament's spirits, as anything, it being known to many of us that God had kindled a seed there, indeed hardly to be paralleled since the Primitive time." Evidently, Cromwell himself had a blessed desire to see Wales come under the power of the Gospel of Christ.

On December 18, 1653, Powell, in confederacy with Christopher Feake, {another English Independent Minister and Fifth-Monarchist,} took occasion to attack and malign the new Protectorate in no unmeasured terms, and shortly thereafter, in addressing the congregation at Blackfriar's Church, {whose pulpit was just vacated by the death of their minister, William Gouge,} Powell spoke these words on the day that Cromwell was named Lord Protector, {which he felt was a blasphemous defiance of Christ's exclusive Kingship,} "let us go home and pray, and say Lord wilt thou have Oliver Cromwell or Jesus Christ to reign over us." This was a decisive break with the Cromwellian establishment, which remark again briefly landed him in jail, although his general message to his followers at that time was to essentially abandon all political action whatsoever. Returning to Wales in 1655, he continued his personal attacks on Cromwell, especially by sponsoring a petition

entitled, "A Word for God, or a Testimony on Truth's behalf, from several Churches, and divers hundreds of Christians in Wales against Wickedness in High Places, with a Letter to the Lord General Cromwell," which action {interpreted as thoughtless zeal by many of his brethren in Christ} seemed to slightly alienate him from such men as Walter Cradock, {who by now had become the representative for Cromwellian Policy in South Wales; one writer of that period referring to Cradock as the "chiefest priest in South Wales,"} whose lack of support at this time seemed to be an evident commentary on the immoderate and extreme position of Powell in this matter. In fact, the following year, Walter Cradock himself would come to the defense of Cromwell, in another petition, which he titled, "A Humble Representation," a petition which he personally presented to Cromwell in February of 1656, and which attempted to rally together those loyal Cromwellians of Wales, to assure Cromwell of the fact that the "poor saints of Wales who were so much your joy had not degenerated from their former allegiance like Powell's Fifth Monarchist radicals."

It seems that the next few years would be spent peaching Christ, near his home in the vicinity of Powys, Wales; although one report puts him in Oxford on July 15, 1657, preaching in All Saints Church, a message, which amongst other matters, denounced Henry Hickman for his statement that "the Church of Rome, for aught he knew, was a true church," which prompted Powell to reply that "the Pope would provide him with a mitre and the Devil with a frying-pan," as Powell reckoned that Popery was "the common public enemy of all mankind." Immediately at the Restoration of Charles II, Powell, {because of his outspokenness, and his resolute refusal to take the oath of allegiance to the monarchy, being described now as "a most factious and dangerous minister,"} became a



marked man, and was arrested in April of 1660, and held in Shrewsbury, and then again arrested a short while later on a warrant by the High Sheriff of Montgomeryshire for refusing to abstain from preaching, and held until the end of June. In the following month he was incarcerated again, as his preaching, {because of its Christ-enthroned emphasis, which was interpreted as tending to sedition,} and by September of 1661 removed to Fleet Prison, London, and from there to Southsea Castle, an artillery fort originally constructed by Henry VIII in 1544, but used primarily as a prison during the Interregnum and the early days of the Restoration. He continued in prison until November 1667, upon which he immediately resumed his preaching, and was again arrested in October 1668, after preaching at Merthyr Tydfil. He was eventually re-committed to the Fleet Prison in May of 1669, and sadly died shortly thereafter on October 27, 1670, at an early age of 53. Powell was buried in Bunhill Fields Cemetery in London.

It would appear that Powell had no fear of men, imprisonment, {having spent a total of eight years of his life in prison,} or even death itself, when it came to his faithfulness to Christ. Until the end, he maintained his persuasion of Christ's imminent return, and interpreted many current events through the looking-glass of this prophetic interpretation, having his "loins girt about with truth," {as "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone,"} and his feet "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." He was the author of nine works, {his style characterized by a forcible and earnest contention for Truth,} one of which was a Concordance, indicative of his ardent love to the Scriptures of Truth. He wrote whilst in prison, and never ceased preaching whilst out, being of the persuasion that the Lord had especially equipped him

for this momentous task, stating towards the end of his life that, "I would not, {he says,} neglect, for the printing of a thousand books, the preaching of one sermon." It's also recorded that he loved the company of saints, and would often open his home to those in need, telling them at one point that he had "room for twelve in his beds, a hundred in his barns, and a thousand in his heart." At his interment in Bunhill Fields a monument {since perished} was erected to his memory, which contained an elaborate inscription written by his biographer, Edward Bagshaw.

## **CHRIST EXALTED ABOVE ALL CREATURES BY GOD HIS FATHER.**

*"Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him." Heb.2:7-8.*

Before I come to the words of my text, I will endeavour to show you the main aim and scope of the Apostle in this Epistle, which is to exhort and persuade these Hebrews to stand fast, and to persist in the faith, and to dehort and dissuade them from falling, and apostatizing from the faith.

First, to persuade them to perseverance, and to make both the exhortation and deportation more effectual, he urges several motives, and prescribes several means. The motives that he uses to persuade them are four.

1. The first motive is from Christ. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, {saith he,} that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." Heb.4:14. The Apostle to make this argument of more force shows who and what Christ was, as that he was the Son of God, Heb.4:14, heir of all things, Heb.1:2, creator of the World, the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his Person. Heb.1:3. The upholder of every creature, the Prophet, Heb.2:3, Sovereign, Heb.2:8, Captain, Heb.2:10, Sanctifier, Heb.10:10, Saviour, Heb.7:25, Conqueror, Heb.2:8, Priest, Heb.4:14, Surety, Heb.7:22, and substance of all. "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum, we have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." Heb.8:1. This is the first encouragement, and it's a very great one indeed!

2. Another motive and encouragement that the Apostle uses, is taken from the Gospel and New Covenant, and this he presses by showing the excellency of it above the Law, and how it is established upon better promises. "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." Heb.8:6.

3. A third motive is the cloud of witnesses or the many saints that did hold out, and go on in the faith, notwithstanding their great trials, temptations, and sufferings in the world. Heb.11:4-40.

4. The fourth and last motive is the wages that they should have, if they did continue unto the end, and this is called a rest, Heb.4:9, a recompence of reward, Heb.10:35, a city, Heb.11:16, a country, Heb.11:14, and a kingdom. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." Heb.12:28.

The means that he prescribes to further them to attain thereunto are four, I will but name them. 1. Faith. "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them, but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." Heb.4:2. 2. Diligence. "And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end." Heb.6:11. 3. A Consideration of Christ, especially of his sufferings and glory. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." Heb.12:2-3. 4. Keeping communion with his church and people. "But exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Heb.3:13.

Secondly, the Apostle's scope in the second place is to dehort and dissuade them from falling, and herein he shows a threefold falling.

First, a falling {or coming short} of grace, take heed {saith he} lest any of you seem to come short of the promise of grace. Heb.4:11.

Secondly, a falling from the profession of faith, called a departing from God. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." Heb.3:12. {"Note there may be a falling from the profession of grace, though not from the truth of grace; from the form, though not from the power; and from the doctrine, though not from the state of grace.} "If they shall fall away, {from their own steadfastness, as Peter expresses it, II Pet.3:17,} to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." Heb.6:6.

Thirdly, a falling into sin, take heed lest any man fall after the same example of disobedience. "Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." Heb.4:11. And that he might affright and prevent them from falling he puts three things before them.

1. The example of the Jews that were destroyed in the wilderness. "But with whom was he grieved forty years? Was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?" Heb.3:17. 2. The greatness of their sin if they did fall. "If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." Heb.6:6. 3. The nearness and soreness of their punishment and misery. "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, vengeance belongeth unto

me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, the Lord shall judge his people." Heb.10:26-30.

Objection. But they might ask, how shall we prevent this? Answer. He resolves them in that, by exhorting them to take heed of unbelief and the deceitfulness of sin. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Heb.3:12-13. So then the sum of the whole Epistle is this, that those that profess Christ, and Christianity, must be careful, and fearful lest they come short of grace and glory, and lest they return through unbelief into impiety. But to come to the text, which I have read unto you, which presents itself in a three-fold consideration. To be divided; explained; and the main positions or doctrines therein to be stated.

### **The Text Divided.**

In the words you are to consider three things. 1. By whom they were spoken, and that is either by David, {who spake them before prophetically,} or else by Paul, II Pet.3:15, the Author of this Epistle, who cites these words out of the eight Psalm. 2. Of whom they are spoken. The parties therein are either extraordinary or ordinary. The extraordinary are God the Father, and Jesus Christ. The ordinary are angels and men. {I call angels ordinary in comparison of God and Christ – God the Father humbling Christ – God the Father exalting Christ. 3. What is the subject-matter contained in the words. This is two-fold.

1. The acts of the Father, both in abasing and exalting his Son. His act in abasing him in these words, "thou madest him a little lower than the angels." Heb.2:7. His act in exalting him in these words, "thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet." Heb.2:8.

2. The two-fold state of Christ, either his state of humiliation, or his state of exaltation. In his state of humiliation we are to consider three things. 1. The degree

of his humiliation, a little lower than the angels {viz.,} in nature, for he took {as I showed before} man's frail and fleshly nature upon him. 2. The time of his humiliation, and in this sense also may those words, a little lower than the angels be understood, that is for a little time, or for a short space lower than they. 3. The nature of his humiliation, which is called in the 9th verse his suffering. Heb.2:9.

In this exaltation there be also three particulars. 1. His Coronation, "thou crownedst him with glory and honour." 2. His institution, "thou didst set him over the works of thy hands." 3. His Dominion, which is universal, "thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet." Note that Christ's humiliation is set down comparatively, but his exaltation is set down superlatively.

### **The Text Explained.**

Thus much for the division of the words; now I come to the explanation of them, and therein consider the nature of them, and the meaning of them. 1. In their nature they are an answer to the question in the sixth verse, "what is man, that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that thou visitest him?" Heb.2:6. 2. The meaning of the words are either literal or mystical. The literal meaning is this, {the words in their literal sense applied to Adam,} that God did at first make man {Adam} a little lower than the angels, in respect of nature and mortality; but he crowned him with glory, honour, and dignity, and put all creatures under him, and made him as sovereign and lord over them all. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Gen.1:27-28.

The mystical and spiritual meaning of the words is this, {the words in their spiritual sense applied to Christ,} that Jesus Christ as Man, or Mediator was made a little lower in respect of his human nature, and his state on

earth, and in a little while {or for a little while} lower than the Angels; but yet God the Father did exalt him above all creatures, and gave him sovereignty and dominion over the works of his hands, and did put all things under him, and under his feet.

Question. But what doth that expression of putting all things under his feet signify? Answer. 1. It signifies a low subjection. "He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded." John 13:4-5. 2. It signifies a through and perfect subjection, as when people are overcome and made slaves. "And David gathered all the people together, and went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it. And he took their king's crown from off his head, the weight whereof was a talent of gold with the precious stones, and it was set on David's head. And he brought forth the spoil of the city in great abundance. And he brought forth the people that were therein, and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brickkiln, and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon. So David and all the people returned unto Jerusalem." II Sam.12:29-31.

Question. Why are all things said to be put under Christ's feet, and yet we presently do not see them put under his feet? Answer. They are virtually and potentially put under his feet, but not actually and apparently; that is, Christ is Lord and Sovereign over all persons and things already by right, though yet many do oppose and withstand him, and do not submit and subjugate themselves to him; as David was the true anointed King of Israel, when yet he was persecuted, and forced to fly for his life. Having thus opened the words, there arise these two main and special Observations or Doctrines from them.

### **Observations or Doctrines.**

That Christ's way {as man} to exaltation, was by humiliation. The text holds forth this Doctrine clearly, that



he was first made lower than the Angels, then set over, or above them; so it is said in the 110<sup>th</sup> Psalm, the 7<sup>th</sup> verse, that "he shall drink of the brook in the way, {that is, he suffered death,} therefore shall he lift up the head," or before he lifted up the head, or was exalted.

Question. Wherein did the humiliation of Christ consist? Answer. In taking upon him the nature and form of his own creature man. "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil.2:6-11. It is further said that he took not on him the nature of Angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham, Heb.2:16, or the nature of the seed of Abraham, which was great humility, for the Son of God to become the son of man, and for the eternal Majesty to be clothed with human frailty and mortality.

2. Christ's humiliation did consist in his subjection to man's miserable condition, as to become sin, II Cor.5:21, and a curse for mankind, Gal.3:13, to come under his own law, and to be judged by his own justice, and liable to his own wrath. Oh, what a low degree of humility was this for Christ to yield to a death, much more to the death of the Cross, Phil.2:8, which was so shameful, miserable, and cursed. "The place of the scripture which he read was this, he was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth; in his humiliation his judgment was taken away, and who shall declare his generation, for his life is taken from the earth." Acts 8:32-33.

3. Christ's humiliation did consist in his burial, and in making his grave with the wicked. Isa.53:9. For the Lord of Heaven to be covered with his own earth, and the

God of glory to be cooped up in a dark Cave must needs declare his great humility or humiliation.

Question. What was the nature of Christ's humiliation, or what kind of humiliation was it? Answer. It was a voluntary humiliation in respect of himself, for no man did move or persuade Christ hereunto; neither did God his Father force him unto it; but Christ testifies thus of himself, "therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." John 10:17-18. And in another place he saith to his Father, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." Heb.10:9.

Christ's humiliation was a necessary humiliation in respect of his creatures that were to be reconciled and saved, for if he had not undergone that state of humiliation, the whole Creation had perished, and been lost forever; for as the Apostle said, "wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer," Heb.8:3, so may we say, that it was of necessity that this man {Christ} did offer himself, for there was no other fit to do it.

It was a grievous humiliation, such a humiliation that there was never known on earth the like either before or since. This did not only reach the body, but the soul of Christ, for he cried out in his agony, "my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." Matt.26:38. There are seven or eight words in that 53<sup>rd</sup> of Isaiah that sets out this humiliation of his, as that he was despised, rejected, stricken, smitten, afflicted, oppressed, bruised, and tormented, all distinct words, and aggravating his humiliation and sufferings. Isa.53:1-12.

Christ's humiliation was an efficacious humiliation, even upon the inanimate creatures, for the sun was veiled and eclipsed, and covered, and hid his face; the whole heavens mourned, and put on sackcloth, {so that there was darkness over all the earth, Lk.23:44,} the earth did quake, and the rocks did rent, Matt.27:51, these senseless things did express a kind of sympathy with their Creator in his great sufferings.

Christ's humiliation was an advantageous humiliation, both to himself, and to his creatures. To himself, that he came to have a body and generation, to honour and obey him. To his Creatures, that all of them have a benefit thereby; for his humiliation was their exaltation, his death their life, and his condemnation, their preservation and salvation.

Objection. But had all the creatures some benefit by the humiliation and sufferings of Christ? Answer. Yes, doubtless all the creatures in earth, and in heaven, for God is said to reconcile all things unto himself by him, {i.e., Christ,} whether they be things on earth, or things in Heaven. Col.1:20. The Angels, they were established and confirmed in their state, and stations, they that shall be saved, were perfectly justified and reconciled by his death. "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." Rom.5:9. Those that perish had their natural lives and the enjoyment of the Creatures here on earth by virtue of his death; also the whole creation {that now groaneth by reason of its bondage, caused by the sin of man} shall be restored unto a glorious liberty, which would never have been, had not Christ suffered. Rom.8:17-22. Having thus briefly opened the first doctrine, I will show you one use only that you are to make of it, and so I will come to the second observation.

The use is to exhort you to make Christ your example and pattern. Was he humbled before he was exalted? Did he stoop to go through this low door to his honour? Then learn of him this lesson of all other lessons; for he would have you learn it. "Learn of me, {saith he,} for I am meek and lowly," or meek and humble, as the Greek hath it. If you would be high, then begin low, as a builder that intends to build a great and stately edifice, he doth first dig the foundation low. Solomon saith, that before honour, is humility. And in another place, that honour is the reward of humility. Those that would look after honour, let them come by it as Mordecai came by his honour; he first puts on sack-cloth, and fasted, and mourned, and then waited at the gate of Ahasuerus until he was called to honour; he did not pursue nor seek for

it, but made it his business to honour God, and to help the poor people of God, and so he was content to take his turn, and to come to honour, after God was honoured, and when his people were advanced. There is an excellent promise made to the remnant of Judah, {which I shall allude to,} that they should take root downward, and bring fruit upward, Isa.37:31, as those trees, whose boughs and branches grow and spread most, do take deepest root, and spread in the earth most. So those that are most exalted and advanced, they are first humbled and afflicted; for where humility is not before honour, there will be a humbling and abasing after honour. I beseech you {now you are come together to humble your souls} labour to be humbled; for this is one main end why we now are met together, let's take heed then lest we depart with unhumbled hearts. And that you may be humbled, look upon Jesus Christ, for there are two special sights of Christ that do tend much to humble men.

The first is the sight of his misery or the sight of him in his answerable, low, and suffering condition. They shall see him whom they have pierced, and what follows? All the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Rev.1:7. The second sight is the sight of his glory or of him in his glory. When Isaiah had seen this, he cries out, "woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts," Isa.6:5, and this sight was a sight of him in his glory, as appears in the third verse, "holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory." Isa.6:3. These two sights of Christ my text represents to you, viz., a sight of him in his humiliation, and a sight of his exaltation. But I come to the second doctrine.

Doctrine 2. God the Father hath exalted his Son Christ above all creatures, and hath put, and will put all persons and things under him. This Doctrine flows naturally from the words, and this God foretold by his prophet in the Old Testament, saying, "behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high." Isa.52:13. This also the Apostle confirms, that Christ is before all things and that

among all he hath the pre-eminence. And in another place, that he {i.e., God} hath put all things under him. "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. And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." Col.1:15-18.

But for the further proof of this, I will come to particulars, and there be three particulars in the doctrine to be proved. 1. That God the Father hath exalted his Son Christ above all creatures. 2. That he hath put all persons and things already under him institutively and virtually, &c. 3. That he will put all persons and things under him really and actually.

For the first, that God the Father hath exalted his Son Christ above all creatures, appears, as by several Scriptures, so by two undeniable reasons. In that he hath put him to sit upon his own right hand, which is the highest dignity, power, sovereignty, and glory that he could give, and which he hath not given to any creature besides, and this exaltation Christ did not assume of himself; but the Father said unto him, "sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Psal.110:1. Yea, note this, that the Scriptures mention this his being on God's right hand above twelve times, as sometimes on the right hand of his power, and sometimes on the right hand of the throne of God. Psal.110:1; Matt.26:64; Lk.20:42; Acts 2:34; Acts 7:55,56; Heb.8:1; Rom.8:34; Col.3:1, &c. When Bathsheba, Solomon's mother came to him, he had no way to show his respect more to her than by causing a seat to be set for her, that she might sit on his right hand. I Kings 2:19. And amongst us, you know that to set one upon our right hand, is to prefer him, and to have the right hand of fellowship, was an honour among the Apostles.

Objection. But are none co-partners with Christ in this honour, and doth he alone sit on God's right hand?

Answer. There is none but he that sits upon the right hand of the Father. It is true indeed that the Queen or the Church is said to sit on the King's {or on Christ's} right hand, Psal.45:9; as also hereafter the Saints shall be upon his right hand. But this prerogative is peculiar to Jesus Christ alone, who is not only said to sit upon his Father's right hand, but is also called the right hand of God, Isa.41:10, and the Man of his right hand. Psal.80:17. A second reason to prove that God hath exalted his Son Christ above all creatures is because he hath appointed the chiefest creatures to worship him and serve him; as the Angels, God commanded them to worship him. "Let all the angels of God worship him." Heb.1:6. And we find that these glorious {and transcendently eminent} creatures did worship, and do worship him, Rev.5:14; yea, and fall down on their faces {which is the lowest sign of humility} to worship him. "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, we give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned." Rev.11:15-17.

The second thing to be proved is that God the Father hath put all persons and things under Christ. This appears from Christ being the Head of all persons and things. "I would have you know, {saith the Apostle,} that the head of every man is Christ," I Cor.11:3; and in another place, He {i.e., God} "hath made him to be the head over all things to his Church." Eph.1:22. "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious, but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed." I Pet.2:7-8. So Christ is often called the "Head of the Corner." Matt.21:42; Acts 4:11. But further, that expression {which is more than once

mentioned} of putting all things under Christ's feet, carries much weight with it, and shows an absolute, complete and through subjection. "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet." Psal.8:6. "And hath put all things under his feet." Eph.1:22. "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet." Heb.2:8.

Objection. But you may object, {as it seems by my text, that the Apostle met with such an objection,} "well, speak what you will of the putting of all persons and things under him; yet we see no such thing, but rather the contrary." Answer. Though we do not yet see all things put under him, yet the word saith so, and it will certainly be so, which I prove two ways.

Because the Father hath promised it, and do you think that he will break his promise with him? "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." Psal.2:6. "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." Isa.32:1. "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." Isa.24:23. Oh no, God's promises fail not, he keeps promise with all men, much more with his Son. God gives all his children, yea the youngest their legacies and portions, and will he detain from his Son and Heir what he hath promised him, and entailed upon him; especially seeing Christ fulfilled all righteousness. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things." Rom.8:32.

Christ lives in expectation thereof, "from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." Heb.10:13. Sure Christ's expectation will not be frustrated! I may say as Solomon said, "surely there is an end, and thine {Christ's} expectation shall not be cut off." Prov.23:18. "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion, for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come." Psal.102:13. There is an "until" or a time that God the Father hath set to the reign of his enemies; and when that time is expired, he and his Kingdom must be exalted, as afterwards I shall show.

Thus having confirmed the particulars in the doctrine, I come next to the reasons, why God did exalt Christ above all creatures, I will name four, and no more. Because he had a hereditary right to it, as the Apostle saith, "he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they." Heb.1:4. He being Son and Heir, his Father could grant him no less than a pre-emption and pre-eminence above his fellows. As under the law the first-born had greater privileges than any of the other children, and shall not Christ then, who is the first-born of every creature, have their privilege?

Because there was no fitter person to rule than he, as under the Law, the Lord would have the scape-goat to be sent into the wilderness by the hand of a fit man, Lev.16:21, {which preeminently typed out Christ,} so God would have the fittest man to be above all his creatures; and as amongst men, the greatest, wisest, skilfullest, and ablest are chosen and exalted over the people, so Christ being eminently qualified above all others, his Father set him up above all his creatures, as David, I Chron.23:1, made his son Solomon King over Israel.

Because Christ had exalted him on earth. "Now {said Christ} is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him." John 13:31. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him. And this was Christ's plea unto his Father, "I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was, &c." John 17:4-5. It was but just that the Father should glorify and exalt him, he having first glorified and exalted his Father, and he could do no less by way of retaliation, if his Son had been but a mere stranger to him.

Because Christ by his sufferings and merits obtained it, for he that would drink of such a brook in the way, deserved to lift up his head. David when he had slain the Philistine, and saved the Army of Israel, did well deserve to command them; and so this our Spiritual David, Jesus Christ, having conquered all his enemies,



and redeemed all his people by his death, he might justly claim that privilege above and over them all. Thus having proved the Doctrine both integrally and particularly by Scripture and Reason; I now come to the explanation, thereof, and for that end shall propound and resolve these three Questions.

First, over what creatures hath God exalted and put up his Son? Secondly, wherein, or in what particulars is Jesus Christ exalted above those creatures? Thirdly, how, and by what means doth God bring all creatures under his Son? To return to the first of these. Question. Over what creatures hath God exalted and put up his Son? Answer. Over all creatures in Heaven and Earth, and under the Earth, Matt.28.19, but particularly he hath power, over all angels, over all men, and over all things. "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil.2:9-11.

Over all Angels, the good Angels, as they are called his ministering spirits, Heb.1:14, for they always attend and wait upon him to do his service. The evil Angels, {or the Devils,} are also in subjection to, and under the power of Christ; for though Christ did once pray to his Father to deliver his darling from the power of the Dog, {or the Devil,} Psal.22:20, yet we find that at other times Christ rebuked these evil spirits, and they were afraid of him, least he should come to torment them before the time; which expressed his absolute sovereignty over them.

Christ is over all men; high and low, good and bad, they are all his Servants, as he testifies in the eight of the Proverbs, saying, "by me kings reign, and princes decree justice; by me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth." Prov.8:15-16. He also is called, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; and in Daniel 10.21, Michael the Prince of Israel; yea all the Patriarchs, Prophets, Kings, Apostles, Evangelists, Magistrates, and Ministers, yea all people of all Nations, Tongues, Kindred's and

Degrees, in all ages were under, and will be under his power.

Christ is above all things, {above all laws and ordinances, above all works and wonders, above all powers, and privileges; above all gifts and graces, and above all earthly and spiritual excellencies and glory,} according to that expression in the first of the Ephesians, 22<sup>nd</sup> verse, "he {i.e., God} hath put all things under his {i.e., Christ's} feet." So in I Cor.15.27, you have the same words, "for he hath put all things under his feet." Thus much in answer to the first question.

Question. Wherein is Christ exalted above all creatures? Answer. First, doubtless in all things he hath the preeminence, but more particularly in regard of his Divine Nature; I may I hope safely thus express, although it is true that the Divine Nature doth not properly admit of degrees, yet nevertheless the Divine Nature of Christ {to speak with reverence} was much veiled, clouded, and eclipsed by his Human Nature, {as a piece of gold covered with earth, or the sun darkened by a cloud, or a candle hid under a bushel,} that few did account him God till after his Resurrection, by which he was declared to be the Son of God with power. Rm.1:4. And so much our Saviour's own words, in the seventeenth of John, "I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." John 17:4-5.

Objection. But you will say that the Divine Nature was never humbled; therefore it was still exalted alike? Answer. It is true, the Godhead of Christ did not, nor could not suffer, nor be humbled, yet he that was God suffered, as those words in Acts 20:28, import. But note this, when I say, that Christ was exalted above all in respect of his Divine Nature; I mean, that none had that fulness and measure of Divinity, {or the Divine Nature,} as Christ had.

Secondly, Jesus Christ was exalted in his Human Nature above all Creatures. In that Christ's Human Nature was created and begotten in a supernatural way, even by the over-shadowing of the Holy Ghost, Luke 1:35, or as

David speaks in his person, "wonderfully was I made." Psal.139:14.

Christ was exalted in his pure and sinless Human Nature above all others, as the Apostle speaks, "he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." I Pet.2:22. "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin." I John 3:5. "And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory." Isa.6:3.

Jesus Christ in his Human Nature {or his Body} saw no corruption, Acts 2:27; though he was in the Grave, yet the Grave could neither purify him, nor prevail to keep him within it.

The Human Nature of Christ is exalted above all in respect of place, {to wit,} upon the right hand of God, as I have showed before.

Objection. Is Christ's Human Nature {or the very body that he had on earth} now in heaven? Answer. Yes sure, he that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, Eph.4:9, and the same Jesus which rose from the dead, and that appeared to his Disciples after his Resurrection, Acts 1:8,9, was taken up before them into heaven, and that same Jesus will hereafter {in that very person and nature} come from heaven. Jude 14. "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." Rev.1:7.

Fifthly, and lastly, Christ is exalted in his human nature above all, because in that nature he will judge the world, according to the saying of the Apostle, "he will judge the world in righteousness by that man {i.e., Christ} whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead," Acts 17:31, and this is the second way wherein Christ is exalted above all creatures.

Thirdly, Jesus Christ was exalted in his name above all creatures, as the Apostle speaks, "wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in

earth, and things under the earth." Phil.2:9-10. Now whether by name be understood the Power, Majesty, and Authority of Christ, or those names by which he is called in the Scripture, as Jehovah and Immanuel, yet this is most true that there is not attributed to any creature, what is attributed to him, in respect of his name.

Objection. But you will say, is not the Church called Jehovah, "she shall be called, JEHOVAH-tsidkenu," the Lord our Righteousness. "In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely, and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness." Jer.33:16. Answer. It's true, that with relation to Christ she is called Jehovah as in Ezekiel 48:35, "it was round about eighteen thousand measures, and the name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD is there," that is, JEHOVAH-shammah, the Lord is there; yet that text in Jeremiah is not rightly translated, Jer.33:16, {"in those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely, and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness,"} for it is in the Hebrew, He the Lord Jehovah, that is, our Righteous One, or Righteousness shall call her, that is, the Church should be called by Christ her Righteousness, and though "many be called gods," I Cor.8:5, in the Scripture {as the Apostle speaks} yet no one is called Immanuel, but Christ only. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Isa.7:14. "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." Matt.1:23.

Fourthly, Jesus Christ was exalted above all creatures, in his Office, as he was Mediator, for there was {and is} but one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus. I Tim.2:6. Tis true, there were other typical Mediators, as Moses, &c., but no true and real Mediator, save Jesus Christ. In Christ's Mediatorship consider, that none was fit to be a Mediator or Saviour but he, for all creatures had need of a Mediator and Saviour themselves, and therefore could not be their own

Mediators and Saviours; and that none could, or can forgive sins but he, for he only is exalted to give repentance and forgiveness of sins. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts 5:31.

Objection. But had not the Apostles of Christ, and have not the Ministers of the Gospel power to forgive sins, for Christ saith, "whatsoever sins ye forgive, shall be forgiven, &c." John 20:23. Answer. The Apostles and Ministers had and have power to forgive sins, but then it is declaratively, upon their believing in Christ, and no other ways. For as the Jews said who can forgive sins but God?

None can give Laws to the Church but Christ alone, and therefore he is called the Law-giver, and Head of the Church. "For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king." Isa.33:22. "Christ is the head of the church." Eph.5:23. Note this, that no person or persons, Civil or Ecclesiastical, were ever called head, or heads of the Church but Christ alone. "And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." Col.1:18. It is true, the Magistrates are sometimes called, the heads of the People, but not of the Church; but under the Law Ecclesiastical persons were not so much as called heads of the people, nay none of the tribe of Levi were ever chosen, or called heads; how much then do men in our days imagine, and assume power to themselves over Christ's Church {more than is given them by Christ} so that they think they may enjoin and impose what laws they please upon Christ's Church and people. But let such look to themselves.

None can discern and know the thoughts of the Children of men but Christ, for he only is the Discerner, Trier and Knower of the thoughts and imaginations of men, and he whose eyes are as a flame of fire, Rev.1:14, sees through and through the hearts, reins and inward parts of men. Heb.4:12. "But the LORD said unto Samuel, look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him, for the LORD seeth

not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart." I Sam.16:7.

None have power to judge men forever but Christ, for he is "the Lord, the righteous Judge." II Tim.4:8. The Pope pretends he can send some to Heaven, others to Hell, and some between both; yet a day will come when he, poor man, {or rather beast,} must and shall have a sentence past upon his own soul, and then where is he, and those whom he deceived? "Let them alone, they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." Matt.15:14. But so much for the exaltation of Christ as Mediator.

Fifthly, Jesus Christ is exalted in his Generation above all others, "for who" saith the prophet "shall declare his Generation?" Isa.53:8. That is, though Christ be killed, yet who shall, or can be able to tell the number of his progeny and posterity, and the branches that shall grow out of this Stem and Root? "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ...and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Ga.3:16,29.

Note that there is a double Generation belonging to Christ, and a double book wherein this two-fold Generation is recorded. Christ's natural Generation, showing from whom he came according to the flesh, and this Matthew calls, "the Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ, &c.," Matt.1:1; according to his Fleshly Generation he was of the Blood Royal, and next to the Crown {if he had claimed it} as some conceive, and why should Herod command him whilst he was but yet a child to be killed, but that he feared he {that was next heir} would have put him besides the Crown?

Christ's Spiritual Generation, {"but ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light, which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God, which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy," I Pet.2:9-10,} or his off-

spring who are his blessed Seed, called, a royal Generation, a Generation of Kings, Princes, and Priests, whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Rev.13:8. "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." I Pet.2:5.

Sixthly and lastly, Jesus Christ is exalted above all in Dominion and Government, and of this his Dominion, Government, and Kingdom, the Scriptures do amply testify, and clearly speak. "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. "And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand, and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah." Isa.22:21. For as Joseph {who was a type of Christ} was Governor in all the Land of Egypt; so Christ governs all the Nations of the earth. "O let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth." Psal.67:4. "For the kingdom is the LORD'S, and he is the governor among the nations." Psal.22:28.

And as God sent Joseph into Egypt to teach the princes of Egypt, so hath God sent his Son Jesus into the world, to teach and rule the princes of the earth. Be wise therefore ye princes, and obedient to him ye judges of the earth. "Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom, I am understanding; I have strength. By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth." Prov.8:14-16. You may more particularly consider this Kingdom of Christ, as being divided into three parts. A celestial, a spiritual, and a terrestrial part.

For the celestial or heavenly part, I desire you to turn to two special places which speak thereof. "And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom, to whom be

glory for ever and ever." II Tim.4:18. "For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Luke 22:16. Many more I might name, but I intend not to insist upon that part, yet be not unmindful that there is a Crown and a Kingdom prepared for those that love Christ, and that wait for his appearance. James 2:5.

For the Spiritual part of his Kingdom, which concerns us to know here, observe these four things.

1. The word of the Kingdom, which is sometimes called the Gospel, and sometimes the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven; the Gospel is the Law by which Christ doth rule and govern the Subjects of his Kingdom. "He answered and said unto them, because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." Matt.13:11.

2. There be the keepers of the Kingdom, which is an holy anointing, I John 2:20, and power, Matt.28:18, to open the Gospel, and to open and shut the door of the Church of Christ according to his will; the keys that were committed to Peter were nothing else {I suppose} but a calling and power as the first Minister of Christ to preach the Gospel unto the Gentiles. "And Simon Peter answered and said, thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Matt.16:16-19.

3. There be the subjects of this Kingdom, and those are called in the New Testament Believers, Rom.1:7, Saints, I Cor.1:2, Christians, Acts 11:26, the Redeemed, Luke 1:68, and Called of God, I Cor.1:9, or Churches of Saints, Rom.16:16, all which words imply that they must be in Christ Jesus, I Cor.1:30, and have grace, who are members and subjects of this Kingdom,



and not all the riff-raff {as we speak} of the world. "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints." I Cor.1:2.

4. There be officers belonging to this spiritual part of the Kingdom, which the King of Glory hath left and appointed; as Apostles, Evangelists, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers, and the like. "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 lastly, there is the seat of this spiritual Kingdom, the subjects of this Kingdom are seated and placed in the heart of their Sovereign, and Saviour Jesus Christ. Cant.8:6. As Paul said of the Philippians, that he had them in his heart, Phil.1:7, so may Christ say much more of his Members, that he hath them in his heart, and that he hath borne them from Eternity. "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." Psal.22:30. This Kingdom {especially the Word of it} is also seated in the hearts of Believers, as Christ said, "the Kingdom of God is within you," Luke 17:21; and so the Apostle saith, the Kingdom of God was in the Romans in righteousness, peace, and joy of the Holy Ghost. Rom.14:17.

Thus having ended the second part of Christ's Kingdom, I now come to the last part, which is, Christ reigning on Earth, and over the World; there are several things disputable herein; as, whether Christ shall come and reign in his own Person and Human Nature upon the earth; and if he doth reign, who shall reign with him? Whether all the Saints, or whether those only that suffered under Antichrist? Or whether the people of the Jews only? But in regards to these questions which are all controverted, we'll come to those things which are without controversy concerning this point, and they are four.

1. That Jesus Christ hath a right to all the Kingdoms of the world, as it is said, "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," I Cor.10:28; and in Psalms 72:8, "he shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." One special place besides that {I conceive} is applicable to Christ, it is in the twenty-first chapter of Ezekiel, 27<sup>th</sup> verse, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it, and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him." Here are three overturnings answerable to the three parts of the City in the Revelation, and all these overturnings are to bring Christ the right Heir to his possession.

2. The Lord hath power to dispose of the Kingdoms of the earth to whomsoever he pleaseth, as it is said in the fourth of Daniel, the 17<sup>th</sup> verse, "that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men." So in the fifth of Daniel, 21, "he knew that the Most High God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will." "But God is the judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another," Psal.75:7, and who can {or dare} say to the Lord, What dost thou?

3. Jesus Christ accounts no men so worthy, and so fit to rule his Kingdom {under him} as his Saints, therefore he makes promise thereof to them. "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him," Dan.7:27, and know you not saith the Apostle Paul, that the saints shall judge the world? I Cor.6:2. And Christ said unto his Apostles, {though poor fishermen,} "ye shall sit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel." Matt.19:28. You know among men, if a man be exalted to Honour, Office, or Place, he will prefer his own friends and servants, especially if they be fit men, and can manage those places; even so doth Christ, who finds places for his people, and fits them for those places; and indeed none are so fit to manage any work as the

Saints, for they only do their work in a right manner, and to a right end.

Fourthly and lastly, the Scriptures declare that Christ shall reign in the world, and in the nations of the world. To instance in a few, in the second of Daniel, the 44<sup>th</sup> verse, "the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever," Dan.2:44, and this Kingdom which is called, the stone hewn out of the Mountain, shall destroy and break in pieces all the remaining powers of the other four Monarchies. So in the eleventh chapter of the Revelation, verse 15, "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." And else-where it is said, "his Dominion shall be from Sea to Sea, and that he should have the utmost parts of the earth for his possession." Psalm 2:8. And in Isaiah the second and Micah the fourth, there are promises that his Kingdom {called the Mountain of the Lord} should be set upon the top of the Mountains. Surely these and many more Scriptures have somewhat of special concernment in them, that relate to this Kingdom of Christ. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths, for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." Isa.2:2-3.

Objection. But you will say, Jesus Christ himself when he was on earth, denied and refused an Earthly Kingdom, John 18:36, for he saith, "my Kingdom is not of this world." Answer. Tis true, that Christ did then deny and refuse an earthly Kingdom, for then was his coming in his humiliation, rather than in his exaltation; and to purchase a Kingdom, rather than to possess it. The time when Christ spake those words was at his departure out

of the world, but he told the Jews elsewhere, and at another time, that they should see him, and say, "blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord." Luke 13:35. {It is more than probable that Christ will come in great power and glory, as the Jews did expect him to call and redeem them. Matt.24:30; Mark 13:26; Zech.12:10; Rev.1:7.} Let us take heed that we do not over-look Christ's exalted state on earth, as the Jews did formerly his state of Humiliation; but I do observe that many people in these days do stumble at these things. That the Saints should rule and govern the world; but is there not all the reason in the world they should, seeing that the world is upheld for their sakes; also that they have been sufferers in times past, and are conquerors of some parts of it at present, and doth not Christ promise, that he that overcomes, and keepeth his works unto the end, to him will be give power over the Nations? Rev.2:26.

Objection. But some will say, the weapons of the Saints anciently were faith, tears, prayers, and patience, and they did then rather choose afflictions and persecutions than make resistance, and seek to reign over others.

Answer. It's true, that faith, tears, prayers, &c., are the best weapons, and with these the Saints do chiefly war. But yet it is as true, that the Saints may lawfully fight, for we read that they are to have a two-edged sword in their hands, Psal.149:6, as well as the high praises of God in their mouths, and in another place we read that they that lead into captivity {meaning the Roman party} should be led into captivity themselves. Rev.13:10. But you will say by whom? Surely by the Army of the Lamb, who are called, chosen and faithful. Rev.17:14. There is a Generation of new and upstart courtiers that would beg the Saints for fools, and deal with them as Ziba did with Mephibosheth; and by false ways, get what appertains unto them out of their hands; or as a cunning fellow that would come to a rich man, and tell him it is hard for him to go to heaven with all that riches, and this he doth, that he may dispossess him of his riches, that so he himself may have them; but I hope that the Saints are more wise than to be cheated out of their rights and privileges by a

generation of men, who would have Saints to be their slaves, who are themselves slaves to Satan.

Some stumble at present proceedings, and at the dealings of God in these days, saying we have neither precept nor example for what we do. I will not speak particularly and largely to this point, yet I would stir up and provoke people to look upon the hand of God, which is so evidently and eminently exalted and lifted up, though as the Prophet said of some, "they will not see, but yet they shall see, and shall be ashamed." But let us peruse a few Scriptures {instead of many that might be produced} that justify this to be no other than the hand of God. In the 110<sup>th</sup> Psalm, the 5<sup>th</sup> verse, "the Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath." So in the 149<sup>th</sup> Psalm, 7 & 8 verses, there judgment is said to be executed in the Nation, and their kings to be bound with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron, "to execute upon them the judgment written." So in Rev.19:18, the fowls of the air were called to eat the flesh of kings, of captains, and of mighty men, &c. So in Isaiah it is prophesied, that kings should shut their mouths, and bow before Christ and his Church. What, are all these Scriptures to be understood allegorically? No sure, it is more than probable, that in the same manner as Christ's great and wicked enemies opposed him and destroyed his people, they shall be opposed and destroyed.

Many stumble at this, that mean men are exalted, and the great and noble ones laid aside, and not made use of. But if the Scriptures be searched and considered, this will not appear any new or strange thing. In 21<sup>st</sup> of Ezekiel 21, "thus saith the Lord GOD; remove the diadem, and take off the crown; this shall not be the same, exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high." Ezek.21:26. So in Daniel 4:17, "the Most High {said Nebuchadnezzar} ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men." Also in Psalms 113:7-8, God is said to raise up the poor out of the dust, and to lift the needy out of the dunghill, that he may set them up with princes. Is this so strange unto men? What have we not examples enough

to wipe off this aspersion? What were Moses, Josiah, Gideon, Jephthah, Saul, David, and many others? Were they not mean men, and not trained up or educated either for civil or military employment? Who would have thought a thresher as Gideon was, a keeper of his father's asses as Saul was, or a poor shepherd as David was, should be fit to lead and rule such a people and nation as Israel was. Let us not then look so much upon men, for the Lord seeth not as man, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. I Sam.16:7. And the reason why God exalts them that are low, is, that he may glorify himself the more. Therefore be not vexed at God's dealings, for he saith, "he will come upon princes as upon mortar," and as the potter treadeth the clay. Isa.41:25.

I come to the last question, which is, how God doth bring all creatures under his Son? 1. By the rod of his mouth, or the Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation. Rom.1:16. "The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion, rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." Psal.110:2. And, by the sword of God, Rev.1:16, by which the Lord doth bring down many to the obedience of Christ, as the Apostle speaks. II Cor.10:4-5. 2. By the rod of his hand or as the Prophet David calls it an iron rod, by which he will "break them" and "dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Psal.2:9. They that will not bow by the sweet and gracious words of Christ must be broken by the heavy blows and strokes of Christ, and where the kindness and goodness of Christ will not take place, there his wrath and indignation must and will take place. Thus having cleared the Doctrine, let me beg your patience a little to apply it.

The first use then is an exhortation, and that is two-fold. The first exhortation is unto sinners, {and it is of great concernment to you,} to submit unto the Lord Jesus, "kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little." Psal.2:12. {By kissing Christ is meant obeying him, so the word is taken in I Samuel 10:1.} There are many of you here this day that stand in need of Christ, who yet have not stooped and bowed to him; I beseech you to incite your hearts to consider these motives. 1. Because Christ hath conquered

the whole World, and it can be no less than rebellion and treason in you to resist or disobey him. 2. He is your right and lawful King, and will you like the Jews refuse your King? 3. Because Christ's yoke is very easy, as he saith himself for encouragement unto men, "take my yoke for it is easy, and my burden, for it is light." 4. If you submit unto Christ, he will free you from all tyranny and slavery you are now under; he will deliver you from Satan, and sin, who now rules over you. 5. Because Christ will have no successor to call you to an account for your disobedience, and loyalty to him, for he shall abide a King forever, and you shall never change your Lord, for he is the last Monarch, and of his Kingdom there shall be no end. "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Mal.3:6. 6. Because that all the love and mercy which the Lord hath revealed to you, and bestowed on you, they are to bring you to obedience unto him. O, do consider! What mercies God hath heaped upon you, he hath given you houses, lands, children, servants, honours, pleasure, and dominion, and he hath made your enemies to stoop to you; O now what doth the Lord expect from you, but that you should submit unto his Son. The second exhortation is unto you all.

Secondly, if God hath exalted Christ, then do you also exalt him? There is not a more blessed work to be done, {now that the work of redemption is done,} than this. All should exalt Christ. 1. Because God the Father hath exalted him; what, will you not be like unto God? What shall be done to the man whom the King delighteth to honour, {said Ahasuerus to Haman,} if a man knew what such a one deserved, and though Mordechai was his enemy, yet he must have a hand in advancing him. Esther 6:6. Oh, but then what shall become of the man whom the King of Heaven delights to honour and to exalt? 2. It is the work of angels day by day to exalt Christ; and if those heavenly creatures who are a thousand times more glorious, excellent, and perfect than we are, fall down, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing, Rev.5:12; 7:12, how much more willing, and

ready should we be, for Christ hath done more for us men, than for them. 3. You have been the cause of humbling Jesus Christ, for by, and for your transgressions, he was brought from his throne {and the glory which he enjoyed with his Father} to suffer reproach, shame, sorrow, and a cursed death that was, and will you not be a means {what in you lies} to exalt and honour him whom you have so much abased. 4. You should exalt Christ because that is the way for you to be exalted; know this assuredly, that that which humbled and abased your Saviour, will never exalt and honour you. Sin was that {though but yours, and imputed to him} which abased him, and can you conceive that it will exalt you? Oh no! Righteousness exalteth a Nation {saith Solomon} and God promised "that whosoever would honour him, should be honoured by him." I Sam.2:30.

The second use is an use of examination, to try whether we honour Christ, yea or no, and whether we exalt ourselves or him? There be several Scriptures that show how men exalted themselves. The robbers of God's people are said to exalt themselves, Dan.11:14, so it is said of Adonijah, that he exalted himself, saying, "I will be King," I Kings 1:5, also Ephraim exalted himself, Hos.13:1, and God complained by Hosea, 11:7, that none would exalt him. Now that I may a little discover this spirit of self-exaltation, {and the Lord discover it unto you, and the plagues of your own hearts, from the highest to the lowest,} this wicked self comes to be indited and arraigned {before you this day} as an enemy and traitor to the Crown and Dignity of Jesus Christ, as a destroyer of Nations, and as a Murderer of souls and bodies; and as the Universal Disease which hath infected all sorts of men. For to find out this Malefactor it is needful that we make strict enquiry, and search, and for that end we will begin at home, or with the Ministers, who {I fear} are not only possessed with this enemy, but out of them it goes forth into all the Land, and from them it hath its original and rise; therefore I think in my conscience that we ministers are to confess this sin, and to take shame to ourselves for it. And that we may do so, let us consider how we are guilty hereof, I shall hint out some particulars.



We are guilty of self, in our preaching, when we preach ourselves, and not Jesus Christ; contrary to the opinion and practice of the Apostle, who saith, "we preach not ourselves but Jesus Christ the Lord." II Cor.4:5.

Objection. But you will say, how, and when is that? Answer. When we preach human learning, or the wisdom of the world in the stead and room of the pure Gospel and Word of Christ, or else when we mix and mingle both together, contrary to the Scriptures, which say, "that our preaching should not be with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit, and power." I Cor.2:4. Or further, when our main work is to prepare a fine piece {as they call it} or a handsome quaint sermon or oration, composed of divinity, history, ancient sayings, and witty sentences; and all these neatly compiled, and put together like a pretty posy, and then delivered, and acted out more like a Play than the blessed Word of God.

In the Primitive times, and for two or three hundred years after Christ {as a learned and godly man observed} the Ministers of the Gospel spake as the Holy Ghost gave them utterance, but when Antichrist began to prevail, that blessed, plain, and ancient way of preaching was left and lost, and since even till now men have made a mere trade of preaching, and it's become the fruit of study, and brain-knowledge, and the exercise of natural gifts and parts, rather than the breathings and teachings of God's Holy Spirit.

Ministers declare that they have much of self, when they appropriate and assume to themselves a power over the Saints and Churches of Christ, so as to give rules to them, and to impose Laws upon their Consciences, but Paul having a more special call, professed, that he had no dominion over the faith of the Saints, II Cor.1:24, but was a constant helper of their faith and joy, and never exercised power but with the common consent of the Church where he was.

Self appears much in some Ministers by the contempt they show to their brethren, who sometimes are younger than they, as esteeming them younglings, and terming them upstart boys, that get up into pulpits; but

let these men consider how unlike Moses they are, who wished that all the Lord's people were prophets. Secondly, let this be considered by them, that God hath not limited and confined his discoveries to old men, but as Elihu said, "there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Job 32:8. Great men are not always wise; neither do the aged understand judgment. Thirdly, such men were once young themselves, and Paul commands that no man should despise the youth of Timothy. Lastly, young men have the promise of the Spirit as well as old men. Acts 2:17. Fourthly, all ministers {for the most part} seek their own things, and not the things of Jesus Christ, as the Apostle complains, Phil.2:21, and it may be said as the Prophet said, that all men look "to their own way, everyone for his gain, from his quarter." Isa.56:11. Fifthly and lastly, there is another root of bitterness and appearance of self in the hearts of Ministers {the Lord root it out} that we love men more because they are of our opinion, than because they are saints and friends of Jesus Christ. Hereupon we make opinion, and not union with Jesus Christ {which ought to be the ground} of communion, and fellowship one with another.

Having briefly showed wherein self appears in Ministers, I now shall humbly take leave to speak to you who are Magistrates, whom God hath made honourable and employed in weighty and honourable undertakings. This self, doubtless is among you also; and if you would take the candle of the Lord, and search narrowly in your own hearts, you might find this enemy harboring, and hiding himself in your breasts and bosoms. And for a help herein consider.

1. That self appears in those who desire and endeavour to creep and get into places of Authority for their own private interests and gain. They desire their places more than they deserve them, and they look more after their places than their places want them. An example hereof you may find in Absalom, and in his words, "oh that I were {said he} made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!" II Sam.15:4. Many

are like the bramble in Jotham's parable, Judges 9:15, that would rule over the trees of the wood, but poor is the service and shelter of a bramble, fit only to stop a hole in a hedge. No better are some that seek {and serve in} places of trust. See whether any of you are guilty herein, or any of your servants, and under-officers; wherever this is found it is abominable and odious.

2. Magistrates seek themselves when they make the utmost advantage of their places, when they have got into them, as Gehazi the servant of Elisha took advantage of getting for himself from Naaman, when his Master refused and denied it. II Kings 5:21-22. {Elisha punished his servant with the same plague or leprosy which Naaman had, verse 27, a just punishment.} So the case may be with you, that though you yourselves scorn and despise bribes, and gifts, yet some of your Officers and Servants may take them; but if you do either wink at, approve of, or let such things go unpunished in them, God will impute the same to you as well as unto them. Take therefore that blessed Nehemiah for your example, who would not suffer his servants to bear rule over the people {as former Rulers did} because of the fear of God. "But the former governors that had been before me were chargeable unto the people, and had taken of them bread and wine, beside forty shekels of silver; yea, even their servants bare rule over the people, but so did not I, because of the fear of God." Neh.5:15.

3. This is a sign of much self, when men will comply with Saints, and seem to be religious out of policy to procure a good name, and esteem among men; as it is said in the eleventh of Daniel, verse 34, "that many should cleave to the people of God by flatteries." A notable example hereof we find in Ezra, {the fourth Chapter, and the second verse,} of some that came unto Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the Fathers, and said unto them, "let us build with you, for we seek your God, as ye do," &c., but mark the answer, "but Zerubbabel, and Joshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God." Ezra 4:3. As for such politicians, {that come in the evening of the day, and at the end of

the work for their own ends,} God will discover, and confound them, with their baseness and perfidiousness.

4. Examine whether you keep and detain in your hands, that which is due unto others. I do not speak this in way of reflection or reprehension, but in way of caution, and examination, therefore I beseech you look into your own hearts and see whether it be so or no with you; for as you have many opportunities to enrich yourselves in these days, so you will not want temptations to improve them for your own advantage; but observe this, that of all times, this is not a time to be building our own nests, for either shortly we are like to have enough, or nothing at all; and honest men shall either share all, or be no sharers at all, but I do not fear the latter.

Fifthly and lastly, men do exalt themselves when they do oppose the glory of God and the public good for their own private and personal interests; and of this sort there is not a few, who like Demetrius and his fellow tradesmen, cry out that their trade and profession is gone, if such things shall be tolerated, and such and such acts passed. Acts 19:24-25. But woeful is that profession or occupation that is maintained by the corruptions of the people.

Having put Magistrates and Ministers upon self-examination, let us now come to speak a word to the common sort of people. Nay, what I shall further speak in this use concerns all. Consider then.

Whether you do prefer your own righteousness before the righteousness of Jesus Christ; for of all which pertains to self, this is the most dangerous, and that rock which most men split, and undue their souls at. This was that which did undo the people of Israel of old, and this is that which is like to be the bane of many professors. "But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone." Rom.9:31-32. Oh, therefore I beseech you consider the impurity, imperfection and insufficiency of your own righteousness to justify, or save you, and

look upon that, free and full righteousness of Jesus Christ, and exalt it by believing on it, and submitting to it.

Examine yourselves whether you do prefer Christ's will or your own wills. Oh, how eager are many in these days for things that are not in the Scriptures, and to set up institutions which Christ hath not appointed. "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." Mic.6:8. Ask what is the will of God, and then what reason you have to obey it? God's will carries reason with it, why it should be obeyed, for it is good, because God commands it. Oh say then as Christ said, "not my will but thine be done," and as Paul, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?"

The third use is an use of encouragement to all those that endeavour to exalt Jesus Christ; more particularly to you that are in Authority, who may say {as Samuel} "hitherto hath the LORD helped us," I Sam.7:12, and with David, "who am I, O Lord GOD, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?" II Sam.7:18. You may call England Jehovah-shammah {as the Church in Ezekiel the last verse} "the LORD is there." Ezek.48:35. He that will rightly and impartially look, may see that the Lord is not yet departed, and so long as he abides among a people there is no fear, but great hopes {notwithstanding the greatness of their sins} that he will prosper and carry on his own work in their hands. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil.1:6.

Objection. But you will say, how shall we know that the Lord is yet with us, and not departed from us? Answer. Among many other signs of the Lord's presence, with you, consider these few.

1. That you yet do those things which are for his glory, your late actions, and your very late acts testify this, however prejudiced and discontented men would make those things your sins, which God {I believe} accounts and approves of, as acceptable services done for his glory. {Being a Sermon primarily addressing the Parliament of the Commonwealth, this, and the following

observations would be directed to those in Authority, and more particularly to Oliver Cromwell himself.}

2. Surely God is with you, for his people are with you. You have all or most of the Congregations of Saints in the Nation with you, and for you. And note this that whensoever God doth depart from any authority, power or people, God doth first take away the hearts of his people from them, that they neither approve of them, join with them, nor pray for them. This we find in Samuel, who left Saul, and came no more to see him, I Sam.15:35, and what followed? Within a very little time after, the Lord also departed from Saul and became his enemy. I hope I may say of you, as it was said of Judah, Hos.11:12, that you yet rule with God, and are faithful to the Saints.

3. This is a sign that God is with you, in that the Lord puts a spirit of zeal in some of you for a perfect Reformation; and also a spirit of assurance, that God will carry on the work of your hands.

4. The concurrence of God's Providence in effecting those great things which you have undertaken, both in this land and in Ireland, doth bespeak the Lord to be with you. The heavens smile, and the earth laughs and rejoices at the execution of Justice. Yea, some do observe that the Lord hath showed himself more gracious to this land in externals since you have appeared and acted for him of late so impartially and courageously; however some {as the Prophet speaks} will not see the hand of the Lord that is so evidently lifted up. "Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early, for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the LORD. LORD, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see, but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them. LORD, thou wilt ordain

peace for us, for thou also hast wrought all our works in us." Isa.26:8-12.

5. And lastly, this is a sure sign that the Lord is yet with you, because you have decreed and done nothing against the Saints of God, nor imposed anything upon their consciences, though you have been frequently moved thereto. Remember still those many Sermons that you have had to stir you up to be kind to the Lord's little ones; they are, as you once excellently heard, the interest of Nations, and God will deal well or ill with you, as you favour them, or frown upon them, therefore look upon the Saints next to Christ, as your safest and strongest sanctuary. "Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me forever, but now the LORD saith, be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." I Sam.2:30. Give me leave I beseech you, to put you in mind to be tender also to some tender consciences, who peradventure cannot subscribe and submit to your power and authority, favour them, and be not provoked against them, though some would stir you up thereto, who peradventure have no other ends but to weaken your hands, and to make you more odious to the people.

Objection. But some will say, though God hath been hitherto with us, and yet abides amongst us, yet we have many grounds to fear that the Lord may leave us, and that there will be a stop in the work now in our hands. Answer. Sure the Lord hath not put you upon a work that he means to lay aside, for it is temple-work, and such a temple-work as hath not been undertaken by any before. The work you are upon tends to set up Jesus Christ, and to pull down Antichrist, fear not therefore, but go on for the Lord will prosper you.

Objection. But peradventure some others will say, sin remains still among us, and God is provoked now as much as ever, how then can the work go on? Answer. God sometimes takes occasions from the sins of men to show mercy to them, and to spare them. I have time only to name you a few places. "And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again

curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done." Gen.8:21. "And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, the LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die." II Sam.12:13. "And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim, wherein she burned incense to them, and she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgat me, saith the LORD. Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her." Hos.2:13-14. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth, for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made. For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him; I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, and will heal him; I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners." Isa.57:15-18.

Objection. But that which doth most trouble us herein is, to know whether the witnesses be slain yea, or no? Answer. 1. Suppose the witnesses were not slain, yet it is an honour to be a witness to Christ, and to suffer Martyrdom for his sake, and in his cause. 2. If they be not slain, yet the time of their slaying and being dead is but short. 3. But, it is more than probable, {yea I am very confident,} that they are slain, and have been a slaying all the time and reign of Antichrist. Now Christ begins to take his great power, and to reign, and now the judgement is set, and power put into the hands of the Saints, and one of the ten Horns is cut off, and never to be put on again; yea this year, 1650, that is coming, {according to the interpretation of many, yea most godly writers upon Daniel, and the Revelation,} is to be the Saints year of Jubilee; and though it be also at Rome a Jubilee this year, {when they are at the height of their



pleasure and pride,} yet ere long God will visit them to some purpose. Therefore up in believing, and be doing, for your Lord is with you. "And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded, and he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; the LORD is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you." II Chron.15:1-2.

I have three things to exhort you to in three words, and the rather let me mind you herein, because God hath so prospered and blessed you in your Counsels and Armies, and set you up over your enemies.

1. Decree nothing that is unjust; for there is a "woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed." Isa.10:1. The Lord keep us from sinning by a Law, though we through weakness do daily sin against a Law.

2. The second thing I would mind you of, and stir you up to, is the removing of all such things as are yet offensive to the Lord's children, particularly such Laws as continue in force against them, and all superstitious relics, which keep the people still in blindness. "When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; and when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them; neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods; so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly. But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire. For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God; the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people

that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations." Deut.7:1-9.

3. Do what you can to satisfy the desires of those that are distressed; as those that suffered for, and in the Lord's cause, to whom you have given promises, engagements, and encouragements of relief and redress. Think upon poor Prisoners, whom you have partly relieved already, but they complain that the remedy is yet too short and insufficient to heal the disease, {as this day I have been desired by letters from several of them,} to move you in consideration of their sufferings. The poor of the Nation {called Beggars} are to be thought of, and not to be suffered {to the dishonour of God, and the shame of the Nation} to be out of a calling, and employment, and many to starve and perish. Remove also what oppressions and burdens you can from the necks of the people of the Land, remembering and considering that text in the third of Isaiah the fifteenth verse. "What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor, saith the Lord GOD of hosts."

I crave leave for one word more, and it is to stir you up to thankfulness. This day might have been a day of praise as well as of prayer, for God hath given all of us cause of rejoicing, and thankfulness. You that are in Authority, bless the name of the Lord, that he hath not suffered you to be broken in pieces, praise him. O praise him that he hath honoured, preserved, and prospered you so much. Also, let the Ministers bless the Lord, that there is liberty, and a door open for them to preach the Gospel, yea let all people bless the Lord, that they have a breathing and refreshing time; a time of peace, a time of

plenty, a time of Christian Liberty to profess Christ, and to worship him according to rule and conscience. Above all let us praise God that Christ is exalted. Also, let us bless God for Ireland, {yea poor Wales, as well,} that those people that were so contemptible, are like to have the greatest presence of God amongst them. I have done, only I shall pray that the Lord would make you as Ezra, a helper; as Nehemiah, the consolation of God; as Zerubbabel, an opposer of Babylon; and as Eliakim, fathers to the people of this Nation. I doubt not but this Generation, and the Ages and Generations to come, will {as they have cause} bless God for you, and the things done by you in these days.

**FINIS**

# **A CONFESSION OF FAITH.**

## **Drawn up by Mr. Vavasor Powell, Concerning the Holy Scriptures.**

The Holy Scriptures, containing the Old and New Testament, or the writings of the Prophets, Evangelists, and Apostles, {commonly called the Bible,} are the written Word of God; which {besides the plain Testimony of Scripture, in many places thus witnessing of itself} doth most fully and convincingly appear, by considering that what in Matthew is called the command, Matt.15:6, and that which in Mark is styled, the word of God, Mark 7:13, and the like may be observed, in comparing Deuteronomy 30:11,14 with Romans 10:8, where the Greek word which the Apostle useth, and is translated the Word, is herein not taken for Christ, but very often for the command, or threatening, or promise of God, in which sense it is called the Word of God.

2. Not only the outward Letter, but the true sense and meaning of Scripture is to be accounted Scripture, which appears from, I Cor.14:34; Eph.5:14; Heb.12:21 & James 4:5, where some things are said to be written, which in express and plain words are not written, but by good and clear evidence collected from thence.

3. The Scriptures were written, as primarily for God's glory, so also that men might be enlightened, converted, comforted and have hope and eternal life by believing, II Tim.3:14-16; neither do they concern, or were written for the use of former ages and persons only, but belong to all ages and persons, even to the end of the world.

4. The Scripture contains milk for babes, and meat for them that are strong, I Cor.3:2; Heb.5:13-14, and though there be some dark places hard to be understood, II Pet.3:16, yet what is necessary to salvation is plain, and may be understood by the simplest and unlearnedest of

the true disciples of Christ who are taught by the Spirit of God, Deut.29:29; Prov.6:23; 8:8,9; 28:5; Matt.13:10; I Cor.2:15; I John 2:20,27, whereas those that otherwise may be very learned, yet have not this Spirit, understand not the Scriptures, but err and wrest them to their own and others destruction. Isa.29:11; John 7:48,52; I Cor.2:8,14; Matt.22:29; II Pet.3:16.

5. This Word or Scripture, is the absolute, certain and infallible Rule of Faith, and Life or Obedience, by which all spirits, doctrines, men and works are to be tried; and no other writings whatsoever, {though written by the most knowing and holiest of men,} are to be esteemed of equal Authority, Infallibility, and Divine Majesty with these, Luke 16:31; I John 4:1; Isa.8:20; and the Holy Scripture, next to the Spirit of God who gave it forth, II Pet.1:19-21, is the best interpreter of itself. All preaching is to be out of, and according to it, and nothing to be imposed upon or binding of the consciences of any, but what is contained therein or agreeable thereunto, I Cor.2:13; Jer.23:28; Matt.28:19; Acts 18:28 & 28:23; neither is there anything to be added to, or taken from the Scripture upon pain of everlasting damnation. Prov.30:5,6; Gal.3:15; Rev.22:18,19.

## **THE PRINCIPAL DOCTRINES WHICH ARE DECLARED AND I HAVE RECEIVED FROM THE SCRIPTURES.**

### **CONCERNING GOD.**

There is but one, true, living God, Deut.6:4; John 17:3; I Thes.1:9, &c., of whom, to whom, and through whom are all things, Rom.11:36; I Cor.8:6; Eph.4:6, the only Potentate, I Tim.6:15, to whom be Honour and Peace everlasting. Amen.

2. This God is a Spirit Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, most abundant in goodness, mercy and truth, to all that love and fear him, John 4:24; I Tim.1:17; Exod.34:6;

Neh.9:6, and a rewarder to them that diligently seek him, Heb.11:6, but most just, dreadful and terrible to those that hate him, and a consuming fire to such as go on in their wickedness. Matt.1:15; Exod.20:5; Heb.12:29; Psal.68:21.

3. This One God is distinguished into the Father, the Word {or Son} and the Holy Spirit, Matt.3:16,17; 28:19; II Cor.13:14, which are not three Gods, but one God, I John 5:7; I Cor.12:4-6, the Father begetting, Psal.2:7; Heb.1:5, the Son begotten, and brought up with the Father from everlasting, Prov.8:22-24,30; Mic.5:2; John 1:1 & 17:24, and the Holy Spirit proceeding from both. John 14:26; 15:26; Gal.4:6.

### **CONCERNING THE LORD JESUS CHRIST THE SON OF GOD.**

The Word, or the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, is Jehovah, Gen.13:7,16; 18:1-2; 22:11,14; Exod.19:14, with Heb.12:27; Isa.6:1, with John 12:41; Isa.45:23, with Rom.14:10,11, the True and Mighty, yea Almighty God, I John 5:20; Isa.9:6; Tit.2:13; John 1:1-3, equal and One with God, John 5:18; Phil.2:6; John 10:30; 17:22, he knoweth and discerneth the thoughts and hearts of all men, Matt.9:3,4; 12:25; John 2:25; Heb.4:12, which evidently {with many other undeniable arguments} prove him to be very God, of the same Substance and Being with the Father; for none but God can know the heart. I Kings 8:39; Jer.17:10.

### **CONCERNING THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

As the Lord Christ the Son, so likewise the Holy Spirit is God, Acts 5:3,4; I Cor.6:19,20; II Cor.3:17; Acts 28:25 with Isa.6:8,11,12, in the 8<sup>th</sup> verse of which chapter, the word "us" {denoting Father, Son and Spirit, as also Gen.1:26,} is called Jehovah, verse 12, showing that the Son and Spirit are the Lord Jehovah, which signifies, as the Greek renders it, "one that hath his being of himself,"

or as is more fully rendered, Rev.1:4,8, "who is, was, and is to come."

### **CONCERNING GOD'S DECREES.**

God to whom all his works and people were known and foreseen from everlasting, Acts 15:18, and who worketh all things according to the counsel of his will, Eph.1:11, did determine and ordain all things that should come to pass in time, Acts 2:23; 4:28; 17:26, according to his own good pleasure and purpose. Eph.1:5,9.

### **CONCERNING ELECTION.**

God of his own mere love, before the foundation of the world, did Predestinate and Elect in Jesus Christ a certain number {known only to himself} as well of angels, as of mankind, to be to the praise of his Grace, and to obtain Everlasting Salvation through Jesus Christ, Rom.11:5; Eph.1:4; I Pet.1:2; II Tim.2:19; I Tim.5:21; Eph.1:6; I Thes.5:9, to whom God also in Christ hath given his grace, and promised everlasting life before the world began, II Tim.1:9; Tit.1:2, and all these that are so chosen, are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, shall certainly be saved, and cannot finally be deceived or fall away. Rev.13:8; 20:15; Phil.4:3; Luke 10:20; Rom.8:29-39; Matt.24:24; Rom.11:7; John 6:37, &c.

2. Such of mankind as were Predestinated and Elected before time, were Predestinated and Elected unto the Adoption of Children, that through {not for, nor without} real Sanctification, Sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus, and Belief of the Truth, they might be saved. Eph.1:4,5; Rom.8:29-30; II Thes.2:13; I Pet.1:2.

### **CONCERNING REPROBATION.**

All those that were not elected to Salvation, as well angels as men, were by God {for the glory of his Sovereign Power and Divine Justice} ordained of old to Condemnation, or to be dealt with according to God's

Justice for, and according to, their sins. II Pet.2:3,4; Jude 4,6; Rom.9:22; Prov.16:4; Job 21:30; Jer.6:30.

### **CONCERNING CREATION.**

That God, the Father, Son, and Spirit, did make the world, and all the things therein, visible and invisible, for himself according to his pleasure, and that very good; and Man {or Adam} in particular perfect, and after his own image. Gen.1:27; Eccles.7:29, &c.

### **CONCERNING THE FALL OF MAN.**

Some of the angels {now called devils} sinned, and kept not their first estate, II Pet.2:4; Jude 6; John 8:44, and Adam {comprehending also Eve} sinned, and all mankind in him; whereby all are become sinners, and under the judgment of God, and by that one sin subject to Death, Bodily, Spiritual, and Eternal; and all, as well the Elect as others, are born in sin, and are by Nature the Children of Wrath, under the Law and Curse; out of which condition, no man can redeem himself, or his brother. Gen.3:23-24; Rom.5:14-21; Psal.51:5; Job 25:4; Eph.2:2; Gal.3:10; Psal.49:7.

### **CONCERNING THE PROMISE OF SALVATION BY CHRIST.**

Immediately upon the Fall of Adam, God made a Promise of his Son, the Seed of the Woman, Gen.3:15, and afterwards, and before the Law, made and renewed a Covenant with Abraham, and the Fathers, {called the Gospel, Gal.3:8,} concerning him, how all Nations, {that is, all Believers,} as well Gentiles as Jews, should be blessed; that is, justified and saved through and by him, Gen.12:1-3; 17:7; 22:17-18; Rom.4:12,13; Gal.3:14, and therefore the Law that was given after, was neither intended, nor able to disannul the Promise, {or that Covenant,} nor to give Life and Salvation to any. Gal.3:9-13; Rom.3:28; 4:1-5.



## **CONCERNING THE LORD CHRIST, AND THOSE THAT ARE REDEEMED BY HIM.**

The Son of God did often appear, both in the likeness of an angel, and of a man, before and under the Law; he was also clearly represented by many types and figures; by Men, Adam, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, David, Solomon, &c., the first-born, the first-fruits, sacrifices, and by many other things. Col.2:17; Rom.5:14; Heb.8:1; 9:11-12.

2. All the prophets did clearly prophesy of him, and some of them in particular, that he should proceed from David, out of the Tribe of Judah, be born in Bethlehem, of a virgin; yea, the very time when he should be born was also foretold; and that he should be a Prophet, Priest, and King; a Judge and Saviour to his people; that he should die, rise up again, ascend up into Heaven, sit upon God's Right Hand, make Intercession, give Gifts unto men, and come again to judge the world; the fulfilling of which, the History of the New Testament doth plainly and fully show; so that there is a sweet and exact harmony and consent between that and the Old Testament herein. Luke 24:25-27, 45-47; Acts 3:18,21; 10:43; 13:39, &c.

3. In the fulness of time appointed and promised by the Father, God out of his own free and great love sent this his only begotten Son into the world, Gal.4:4; Eph.1:10; John 3:16; Rom.8:32, and the Lord Jesus Christ out of the like love willingly came into the world, took upon him the Nature of Man {or the seed of Abraham} and the form of a Servant, being made like unto his Brethren, and in all points tempted {or tried} as we are, yet without sin; yet being made sin, and a curse for his people, he died a shameful and a cursed death, bearing as well the wrath of God upon his own soul, as well as the painful punishment from men upon his body. Eph.5:2, Phil.2:7; Heb.2:14,17; II Cor.5:21; Col.3:13; Matthew 26 & 27, &c.

4. The Lord Jesus Christ, by dying and offering up himself as a Sacrifice to God the Father, through the eternal Spirit, hath perfectly satisfied for the sins of all that were saved before his coming in the flesh, or that shall be saved hereafter; having also reconciled them to God his Father, and procured everlasting redemption for them. Rom.5:9; Col.1:21-22; Heb.9:12,14, &c.

5. All those for whom Christ died, for them he rose again, appeared in Heaven, and continually makes Intercession for; which he doth not do for all, but only for those that God the Father chose in him, and gave unto him to be his Body, his Church, his Children, Friends and Flock, John 10, 15 & 17; Hebrews 2; Eph.1:14, &c., and when mention is made of his dying for the world, I Tim.2:5, John 6:51, I John 2:2, &c., it is to be understood, as when Abraham is said to be heir of the world, Rom.4:13, that is, of all Believers in every nation throughout the world. John 11:51-52; John 17:9,19.

6. There is no other Mediator between God and Man, but only the Lord Christ, nor no other Foundation can be laid besides him, neither is there Salvation in, or through any other, but in and through him alone; neither can any be accepted, justified, or saved {either in whole, or in part} by the Law, or by their own Righteousness and Works. I Tim.2:5; I Cor.3:10-11; Acts 4:11-12; Rom.3:4-5; Phil.3:8-9; Gal.2:16, &c.

### **CONCERNING JUSTIFICATION AND JUSTIFYING FAITH.**

All the Elect of God were gathered into Christ, and their sins laid upon him, and he by his own Perfect and Personal Obedience, without them, made full satisfaction unto God for them and their sins, and they were accepted and virtually justified in him as their Head and Representative, before they did actually believe; as they were sinners in the first Adam, before they actually committed sins themselves; as upon the payment of the Debt by a Surety, the debtor is as really and truly discharged, as if

he had paid it with his own hand; and Christ their Surety being justified at his Resurrection {as the Apostle speaks, I Tim.3:16} must be justified also from that Debt which was theirs, {for he had none of his own, Dan.9:26; I Pet.2:22,24,} and so consequently they must be justified in him. Thus the Apostle plainly affirms that God was in Christ {i.e., at the time of his Death; for with reference to that doth the Apostle there speak} reconciling the world, {i.e., that world, as was mentioned before, whereof Abraham was heir; viz., the Elect, both Jews and Gentiles, Rom.11:12,15,} not imputing to them their Trespases, II Cor.5:19, so the same Apostle in another place, saith "who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect, {meaning hereby all the Elect, as well such as are to believe hereafter, as those who do believe already,} it is God who justifieth, who is he that condemneth, it is Christ that died," Rom.8:33,34, and Christ prayed on Earth, as well for those that were to believe, as for those that were already actually Believers, John 17:20, and all Elect Children that die in their Infancy, must be in like manner so justified from Original sin, as those that cannot actually believe themselves.

2. Notwithstanding that virtual Justification, which the Elect have in their Head Christ, as they are considered members of his Body, and Part of the Universal Church; yet the Scripture shows that there must be, after they are called by the preaching of the Gospel, a personal and {as I may call it} an actual Justification of every one that is to be saved, Rom.8:30, and that by Faith only, without Works, before God, Rom.3:23-25; Rom.4:1-5, yet that Faith which justifies, cannot be alone, but is accompanied with good works, which justifies believers before Men, and manifests their Faith to be a true and living Faith, James 2:17,18, as the Fruits of Trees do show the nature of them, but are no causes of their Root, Life, or Growth. Justification is wholly of God's Grace, through the Redemption, Righteousness, and Blood of Jesus Christ, Rom.3:24,25, whereby those who truly believe in him have all their sins forgiven, which will never be imputed, nor remembered against them anymore, Rom.3:22,26;

Heb.10:14,17; true Faith also, by which the soul looks on Christ, takes hold on him, receives him, becomes one with him, and whereby Christ dwells in the hearts of Believers, is the gift of God. John 6:44,65; Eph.2:8; 3:17.

### **CONCERNING THE SPIRIT OF ADOPTION AND REGENERATION.**

All those that truly believe, God gives unto them Power {or rather as the word signifies, a right or privilege} to become his children, John 1:12, and they receive the spirit of Adoption, by which they are led, and enabled to come with confidence and boldness unto God, and to call him Father, through Jesus Christ, Rom.8:14-15; Gal.4:5,6, the Spirit itself also dwells and abides in them, as the chiefest evidence of their being the children of God. John 14:16-17; Rom.8:16; I John 4:13.

2. Regeneration, Sanctification, and Repentance, {which are the same in effect,} is a renewing of the Heart, and a subduing and cleansing of the Power and Filth of sin, with a quickening of the soul to desire to live like Christ; these are absolutely necessary to salvation, John.3:3,5; Romans 6, &c., yet these also, as well as Faith, are the gifts and works of God, which he giveth through and for the sake of his Son, and works by his Spirit in those whom he intends to save. Ezek.36:26-28; Acts 11:18, &c.

3. No man {much less all men} hath by nature, or before his conversion, either the spiritual Light, or true Faith, or Christ, or his Spirit in them, or a will or love to that which is spiritually good, or power to come to Christ, or to be subject to his Law and Will; but by nature and before conversion, the best are blind, unbelieving, without Christ, and without the Spirit, unwilling, willful, weak and wicked, John 3:5-6; Rom.5:6, 8:7; Eph.2:1-2, &c., yet sinning against the Light and Law of Nature, and not worshipping God according to what is revealed of him, by the works of Creation, they are left inexcusable. Rom.1:20-21.

### **CONCERNING REDEMPTION FROM THE CURSE OF THE LAW.**

All true Believers are really and actually redeemed from the Curse and Power {or Dominion} of the Law, and are under Grace, or the Blessings, Promises, and Privileges of the Covenant of Grace, both Temporal and Eternal, Rom.6:14, 7:4-6; Gal.3:13; on the contrary, all unbelievers and wicked persons are, and remain under the Law and Covenant of works. Gal.5:4.

### **CONCERNING THE TWO COVENANTS.**

From the beginning of the world there have been two Covenants in being, viz., the Covenant of Grace, and the Covenant of Works, called the Law and the Gospel; and all and every person in the world have been and are under one of them; the first requiring the Obedience of works, the other the Obedience of Faith, {or rather the obedience of Christ, having fulfilled every condition when he rendered a complete satisfaction to Law & Justice on the behalf of all those whom he represented, i.e., his elect,} and these are the conditions of the two Covenants. Rom.10:4-11; Heb.8:7-8, 10:15-16,22.

### **CONCERNING PERSEVERANCE IN GRACE.**

Those that do truly believe, and are once in and under the New Covenant; and in the true grace of God, as the Apostle speaks, Rom.5:2, cannot absolutely fall and utterly perish, for they are passed from death to life, John 5:24, they are in Christ and God the Father's hand, John 10:28-29, they have the Spirit abiding in them unto eternal life, I John 3:24, they sit together in heavenly places in Christ, Eph.2:5-6, and he makes intercession for them, John 17:20, and the Decree, Oath, and Promises of God are sure to all the seed, Rom.4:16, that they shall not depart from God, Jer.32:40; I John 3:9, and that he will never leave nor forsake them, Heb.13-5-6, and that he or every one that believeth, shall be saved, Mark 16:16, and shall not come into condemnation, for there is

no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Rom.8:1.

### **CONCERNING ASSURANCE OF SALVATION.**

Believers are to be exhorted to make their calling and election sure, II Pet.1:10, and this they may certainly attain unto, for God hath promised it, Christ hath prayed for it, and many of the Saints have attained unto it. I John 2:3,5; 3:14, &c.

2. Though there are many signs and evidences of the truth of grace, laid down in the Scripture; and such as Believers may find in themselves; as, Love to God and to his people; respect to all God's Commands; and hatred to, sorrow for, and power against all in-bred corruption, &c., yet the chiefest and most undoubted evidence is the Spirit itself, I John 3:24; 4:13, and the witness and sealing of it, Rom.8:15; Eph.1:13, which Believers have most commonly after they believe, and not at their first believing, Gal.3:14, and there may be a true Faith mingled with much Doubting, Matt.14:31, and many of the children of light may walk in darkness, and be ignorant of their state, Isa.50:10, yet such bruised reeds, God will not break, nor quench such smoking flax, {i.e., such weak and doubting Christians, or their Faith,} till he bring forth judgment unto victory, or help them to overcome. Matt.12:20-21.

3. It is possible also, that such believers as have attained unto a full Assurance, may afterwards {either through the hiding of God's countenance for trial of them; or by falling into some great sin, or by some sore and violent temptation, or through their remissness in Religious Duties, or the like} have their Assurance darkened, shaken, and weakened; and thereby their souls may be much troubled and discomfited, Psal.30:7; Cant.2:1-2; 5:2-3, &c., yet in their darkest and most doubting condition, they cleave unto the Lord, remembering his former dealings, acknowledging these doubts to be their infirmities; as they find and feel some workings of the

Spirit and Grace within them, and still continue in Prayer and other Ordinances, waiting upon the Lord till he return unto them, revive them, restore the joy of his Salvation, and settle them in their old estates, as he hath promised, for this read, Psalms 22, 51 & 77, throughout, Lamentations 3; Isa.8:17; 50:10, &c.

### **CONCERNING GROWTH AND PERSEVERANCE IN GRACE.**

Those that have true Grace, whether little or much, they should labour to grow therein, and to add one grace to another, going from strength to strength, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, and still pressing after the things that are before, endeavouring to be holy, merciful, and perfect, as God is, and to walk as Christ walked. II Pet.1:8; 3:18; Phil.3:11-14; II Cor.7:1; I John 2:6, &c.

2. Though there is to be a pressing after perfection, as also an attaining unto it in some sense, as Perfection of Justification, and of the Truth of Sanctification; and likewise comparatively some attain to more Grace than others, who are called perfect, by the Apostle, I Cor.2:6; Phil.3:15; Heb.5:14, yet the best of God's people, whilst they are on earth, have sin in them working in their members, and they offend in many things; knowing also, and doing but in part, {as the Apostles themselves acknowledged, Romans 7; Jam.3:2; I John 1:8-10,} and they that say they have no sin, but are perfect {or without sin} they will be found perverse, {as Job saith, 9:20,} and they deceive themselves, and the truth is not in them. I John 1:8, 10.

3. As there is a growing in Grace, so there is a persevering, and continuing, and holding on and out, in the will, way, and profession of Christ unto the end, without turning to the right hand, or to the left; and without back-sliding, or halting between opinions, or being formal and lukewarm in religion; but striving against sin, and seeking to overcome through many sufferings, and to run our spiritual Race, till we finish our

course, for to such doth Christ promise the Crown of Life, and in his grace and strength alone we must overcome; and therefore must always depend upon, and humbly implore his help, who is the Finisher, as well as the Author of our Faith, that we may be able to withstand all evils, and to stand complete in all the will of God, being not high minded, but fearing; nor doubtful-minded, but believing. Matt.24:13; Rev.2:10; 3:11-16; Heb.12:1,4; Phil.4:13; Col.4:12; Rom.11:20; Luke 12.29,32.

### **CONCERNING GOOD WORKS.**

They that do believe, and are God's workmanship created thereunto, are to be careful to maintain good works, which tend to the praise and glory of God, and the good and profit of men; and are also {as was intimated before} evidences of a true and lively faith in God, and of our love both to God and Men. Matt.5:16; Eph.2:10; Tit.3:8,14; Jam.2:17-18,22; John 14:21; I John 3:7; Gal.5:6.

2. Those works only are to be accounted good works which are commanded by God and agreeable to his Word; and not such as are devised and esteemed by men only to be so, and to offer unto God anything in his service which he requires not, is abominable to him, and unprofitable and sinful to them that do it. I Kings 11:7; Jer.32:35; Mic.6:6-8; Matt.15:9; Col.2:20-24; Tit.1:14.

### **CONCERNING BAPTISM.**

Outward Baptism, or Water-Baptism, is a solemn significant dipping into, or washing with water the body in {or into} the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost only, Matt.28:19, it signifies the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Christ, also the spiritual cleansing and washing of Justification, and Regeneration, {or Sanctification,} together with the Baptism, or pouring forth of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Rom.6:3-5; Col.2:12; Heb.10:22.



2. Though Baptism be not absolutely necessary to salvation, yet being commanded by Christ, it is the duty of all professing and visible believers, and penitent persons; men and women, to be baptized once, and that upon the first Believing and Conversion, and before they enter into a particular visible Church, or partake of the Lord's Supper, Acts 2:41,42, yet it is not Baptism, but an interest in Christ, that gives any a right to either; neither is it the proper work of Baptism to confer or work grace, but to seal, confirm and increase it, I Pet.3:21, much less are all those that are baptized true believers and saved. John 3:3,5; Acts 8:13,23.

3. But in this of baptism, as in many other cases, difference in persuasion and practice may well consist with Brotherly love and Christian communion. Phil.3:15; Romans 14, &c.

### **CONCERNING CHURCHES AND CHURCH-ASSEMBLIES.**

It is a Gospel-Ordinance for Saints to gather themselves together into Christian societies, or particular Churches, that they may the better perform such duties as they owe unto the Lord, and to one another, and it is the duty of all believers, if possibly and conveniently they can, to join themselves unto some such Church, and being joined, to continue members thereof, unless some necessary and good reason occasion the contrary; and then to depart with consent of the Church of which they are members. Song.1:7-8; Acts 2:47; 9:26-28, &c.

2. The particular visible Churches under the Gospel did not consist of whole Nations, Countries or Cities; nor of the generality and multitudes of either, but of such companies {many or few in them} that did receive and profess the doctrine of the Gospel, were converted and called to be Saints, separated from the world, both its sins and services; and united and given up to the Lord, and to one another, to live according to the will of God in all things. Acts 5:12-14; 17:4; 19:8-9; I Cor.1:2, &c.

3. Such particular Churches had, and still have distinct power, each within itself, of admitting and ejecting members, of choosing their own Officers, and of ordering all other matters relating to the Church, and none of them, nor their Officers were charged with the errors and evils of others, unless they were among themselves guilty of the same; neither have any of them, or their Officers any power over any other Congregation or Members; yet as those particular Churches are parts of the Universal Church or Body of Christ, which is his fulness, so they are all to be helpful to one another, and to walk by one and the same Rule. Acts 6:5; 14:23; I Cor.5:12; Revelation 2 & 3; Phil.3:15-16, &c.

### **CONCERNING CHURCH-OFFICERS.**

As Christ hath given extraordinary and ordinary Officers, as Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, and for the edifying of his body {or Church} in general; and this without any limitation of time, Eph.4:11-12; I Cor.12:28-29, so, for the feeding, teaching, ruling and ministering to the poor and sick of the Church, the Lord hath appointed Elders, {or Bishops which in Scripture language are all one,} Acts 20:17,28; Phil.1:1; Tit.1:5-7, and Deacons or Widows, Rom.16:1; I Tim.5:9-10, with other Helps, who are to be chosen by the Churches themselves, and ordained as formerly they were, either by Apostles, or some appointed by them, as Evangelists, or by some Teachers in those particular Churches. I Tim.4:14; II Tim.2:2; Tit.1:5; I Tim.5:21-22, &c.

### **CONCERNING THE LORD'S SUPPER.**

The Lord Christ also instituted and ordained for his Church and Disciples only, that special Ordinance called his Supper, or the Communion of his Body and Blood, to put them in remembrance of his Death, till he came again; and to confirm that spiritual Union and Communion they

have with him, and as an ordinance to convey more Grace unto their souls; and this, together with Baptism are, and may be accounted {though not so called in Scripture} Gospel-signs and seals of the Covenant of Grace; as Circumcision and the Passover were before unto the Jews. Matt.26:26-29; I Cor.10:16; 11:23-26; Rom.4:11; Col.2:11-12.

2. The command and example of Christ and his Apostles, are to be observed both in the giving and receiving of this ordinance; after the Bread and Wine are Blessed, {or set apart, and a blessing sought on them,} the Minister is to take both of the Bread and Wine himself, and to give of both kinds to the Disciples or Members of the Church, sitting or leaning, Matt.26:20,26, but to give it privately to persons upon their sick beds, or to keep back the wine from the People, or under pretense of humility to give it unto the Congregation kneeling, are contrary to the Institution of Christ. Acts 20:7; I Cor.11:20-23.

3. As the true Churches and Disciples of Christ should often partake of this ordinance, so those that are without Christ, his Covenant, and Church; who are ignorant, unbelieving, and ungodly, have no right thereto at all, and Christ forbids to give holy things to such; and they that eat and drink the same unworthily do both profane and pollute the name and ordinance of God, and eat and drink damnation to themselves, not discerning the Lord's Body. Acts 2:42; 20:7; I Cor.11:25-29; Matt.7:6.

### **CONCERNING PREACHING AND PROPHECYING.**

Preaching of the Gospel, or Evangelizing, which is to be to all Nations, and to every creature, is to be performed by such as are gifted, called, and sent, either immediately by Christ, {as the Apostles, and seventy Disciples were,} or by his Church, Acts 13:1-3, or, in case of Persecution, by such as are scattered Members, to whom God may open a door for the preaching of his word, to such as want the same. Acts 8:1-4; 11:19-21.

2. Propheying is another Gospel-Ordinance, which is either a fore-telling of some future things by divine Revelation, which is an extraordinary and peculiar gift of God, yet promised, John 16:13, and given to several in Gospel-days, Acts 11:27; 21:9-10; I Cor.14:26; Eph.4:11, or else it is a speaking unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort, or a teaching of believers to observe all things that Christ hath commanded, which is a distinct thing from Preaching, though of the same Nature, and doth more properly and peculiarly belong to the Church, and those that are within, as the other doth to the world, and those that are without. I Cor.14:22; Matt.28:19-20, compared with Mark 16:15.

### **CONCERNING PRAYER.**

Prayer is a special part of God's worship, being a pouring out of the soul in confessions, supplications, and thanksgivings to God through Christ, by the help of his Spirit. Eph.6:18; Jude 20; I Tim.2:1,8, &c.

2. Though that most excellent and comprehensive perfect Prayer, that Christ taught his Apostles, a Directory and Rule to Teach Believers to pray accordingly; and likewise that very Prayer may be used verbatim; yet Christ did not impose it upon them; nor tie them thereto, neither did Christ or his Apostles ever ordain or impose any other form, much less than should any other persons usurp this authority over the Church and people of God; and therefore all such as make, enjoin, or observe such human forms, follow the Traditions of Men, and not the Word of God. I Cor.11:1,23; II Cor.1:24; Mark 7:6-8. Though the Prayers of Unbelievers be abominable to the Lord, because of their sins, and their being out of Christ; yet it's their duty to pray, and it is lawful for believers to pray where unbelievers are present; we find our Saviour himself and many of his Saints, using divers gestures in prayer, as kneeling, lying on the face, standing; all very lawful and acceptable, if the heart be filled with true faith, love, sincerity, humility, and zeal to God.

## **CONCERNING SINGING OF PSALMS, IMPOSITION OF HANDS, AND OTHER GOSPEL ORDINANCES, NOT YET REPEALED.**

Singing of Psalms, {particularly Scripture-Psalms,} Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, is a continued Gospel-ordinance, and duty; and to be performed by all, but especially in the Churches. Matt.26:30; Eph.5:18-19; Col.3:16, &c.

2. Laying on of hands, is one of the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, and a Gospel-ordinance, practiced in the primitive times, {and not yet abrogated, as appears by any Scripture,} being practiced by those that were sent out of the Churches to preach the Gospel, Acts 13:3, or upon believers after their Baptism, in order to their receiving the Holy Ghost or the gifts thereof. Acts 8:17; 9:17; 19:6, or else for the healing of the sick. Acts 28:8, &c.

3. Visiting of the sick, and for the elders to anoint them in the name of the Lord, is a Gospel Ordinance and not repealed. Jam.5:14,15.

## **CONCERNING EXCOMMUNICATION.**

Another Ordinance continued in the time and churches of the New Testament, is a power given by Christ to deal with such members as walk disorderly, II Thes.3:6, that refuse to hear the Church, Matt.18:17, commit some scandalous sin, I Cor.5:1-13, or deny and destroy the Faith or Fundamentals of Religion, as the Resurrection, &c. II Tim.2:16-18; I Tim.2:20.

2. The Ordinance is to be solemnly performed in the name of Christ, by the whole Congregation, {yet ministerially by the Officers thereof,} and according to the nature of the offence, whether by admonition without ejection, I Thes.5:14, or ejection and casting out, till repentance manifests itself in the excommunicated person, and then

he is to be restored, I Cor.5:1-13 with II Cor.2:6-8, or else a utter and absolute excommunication, and rejecting of the person, till the coming of Christ. I Cor.16:22.

### **CONCERNING MAGISTRATES AND RULERS.**

Magistracy is an Ordinance of God, and Rulers or Magistrates {whether supreme or subordinate} are God's Ministers, reigning by, under, and for him, entrusted with the sword of Justice, for the encouragement and praise of such as do well, but a terror to evil works, or a revenger, and executor of wrath upon those that do evil. Rom.13:2,14; I Pet.2:14; I Tim.2:2; Prov.8:16-17; II Chron.19:6.

2. The Most High God, who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, who ruleth in the Kingdom of Men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, he exalteth and pulleth down, altereth and removeth kings and other rulers at his pleasure, Psal.75:6-7; Dan.4:25; II Chron.11:4; II Kings 9:3-7, sometimes giving bad rulers, and at other times taking away such as are good, in a way of Judgment, for the sin of a people. I Sam.8:16-19; Hos.13:11; II Chron.34:28.

3. Though the worst Rulers do not reign without the pre-science and permission of God, yet such Governors as rule contrary to the revealed will of God, and to the true end of Government, do rule without God's approbation, and are accounted by him as no Rulers, Hos.11:4; Ezek.34:5,10,21; Jer.5:1, and some of them are said in Scripture to have their power with, and to exercise it for the Beast, and therefore are called the horns of the Dragon, and of the Beast. Dan.7:20-24; Rev.17:17.

4. As it is unlawful for Rulers to command anything that God hath forbidden, and to compel men to obey the same, or to forbid anything that God commands; so it is lawful for the servants of God to disobey such commands. Dan.3:18; 6:10-11; Acts 4:19-20; 5:29.

## **CONCERNING ANTICHRIST.**

Though there were many Antichrists in the Apostles time, I John 2:18, yet there was one in a more special manner to come after those days, who is called the Antichrist, I John 2:22, the man of sin, II Thes.2:3, the Beast, the false Prophet, and the Destroyer. Revelation 13.

2. This Antichrist is one that sits in the Temple of God, assuming and exercising power above those that are called gods, {above Magistrates,} who beareth the Woman or the Harlot, the City Rome which was built upon seven hills, Rev.17:3,9,18, who, under pretense of being for Christ, doth indeed fight against him, continually seeking to destroy the true worship of God, Rev.13:7,11, who deceive the world by his miracles and lying wonders, Rev.13:13,14; II Thes.2:9, whose reign was to begin at the fall of the Roman Empire, II Thes.1:6,7, where together with him true kings were to arise out of that state, which are to give their power to him, Rev.17:12-13, all which faithfully and literally agrees to the Pope of Rome; and thus we may say concerning him, "is this the Antichrist that is to come or may we look for another."

## **CONCERNING THE CONVERSION AND CALLING OF THE JEWS.**

Though the partition wall between Jews and Gentiles was broken down by the Death of Christ, Eph.2:14-15, and now all true Believers, both Jews and Gentiles are brought into one fold and special fellowship, John 10:16; 11:51-52; Eph.2:16-18, yet is the generality a body of that Relation, the Jews, for their unbelief, hardness of heart, rejecting of Christ, and disobeying the Gospel, were rejected and scattered; so for the sake of their Fathers Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and for the fulfilling of the promises made to them, the Jews shall yet before the end of the world, be generally converted and reconciled to God. Rom.11:25-31.

*{Note: The latter-day conversion of the Jews was a common held belief amongst those, like Powell, that subscribed to the basic tenents of the Fifth Monarchy Movement.}*

2. Their conversion will be both a strange and a sudden thing, and therefore is often called and compared unto the resurrection from the dead, and to a nation born in a day. Ezekiel 37; Isa.66:8-9.

3. This glorious and great work of their conversion will be wrought in an extraordinary way, as their deliverance out of Egypt was, Mic.7:15; Isa.11:16, and seems to be by the appearing of the Son of Man, or of the sign of the Son of Man in the clouds of Heaven. Zech.12:10; Rev.1:7, Matt.24:30-31.

4. When the Jews are thus called many others will lay hold upon them and join with them, because of the miracles and the appearance of God among them. Zech.8:21-23.

5. They shall return out of all lands where they are now scattered into their own country, as they did out of Egypt and Babylon, they shall re-build the City Jerusalem, Jer.30:18, 31, 38-40, and shall dwell there and their posterities therein, and in the Land of Judah, Zech.2:12; 8:7-8; 12:6, and they shall partake in an eminent manner of the Spirit, and of his graces, Ezek.39:24; Zech.12:10, and be abundantly blessed with all co-eternal blessings; the first and chiefest power upon earth will be exercised by and among them, to the astonishment and destruction of their enemies. Mic.4:8; 7:16; Acts 7:1-6.

**FINIS**