

SERMON 16

THE CAUSES OF SALVATION AND VOCATION CONSIDERED

IN A SERMON PREACH'D ON LORD'S DAY, *DEC. 22, 1751,* TO THE CHURCH ASSEMBLING IN *CRISPIN-STREET,* *SPITAL-FIELDS,*

WHEREOF THE Late Revd. Mr. WILLIAM BENTLEY was PASTOR Published at their own Request

TO THE CHURCH

Assembling in *Crispin-Street*

Beloved Brethren in our common Lord,

YOUR Desire of this Publication is an Evidence that you approve of the Doctrine delivered in the Discourse. As I am persuaded, upon the most serious and deliberate Enquiry, which I have been able to make, that nothing is advanced, but what *strictly* agrees with Scripture, and, as to the Substance of it, hath been the common Faith of Christians, I was willing to comply with your Request; not with the least Expectation, that the Principles pleaded for, or my Manner of Treating on them, will meet with a favorable Reception from any considerable Number of Professors. My Acquaintance with the *prevailing* Sentiments and *polite* Taste of the present Age will not permit me to hope for either. But, if the Perusal of what you *candidly* heard, when delivered from the *Pulpit*, may be of any Service to establish you in the important Truths, which are the Subject: of this Sermon, that, with me, will much over-balance the highest Contempt, which the Adversaries of those *glorious* Truths may be pleased to cast upon it: For, if I am not *absolutely* a Stranger to myself, (which I would not be) I am desirous to assert and defend Evangelical Principles, and confirm the Faith of the Saints therein. My Persuasion that you wish for Success in every such Attempt emboldens me to acquaint you, that I have prepared an Answer to a Pamphlet on the Subject of Atonement, wherein the *Fundamental* Doctrine of the Satisfaction of Christ is entirely explained away. That Piece had not lain so long, as it has, without Notice taken of it, if I had not entertained Hopes, that some Person, better qualified for such a Service, would have undertook it. There are *some Remarks* upon it just now published: But, as the Author of that Performance is very far from answering my Wishes on that momentous Doctrine, I shall not suppress what I have drawn up in Answer to it: And, probably, I may acquaint the Reader with some of my Reasons for my Conduct in Relation to this Matter. You have my *Condolence* in your present Situation; and I shall rejoice in an Opportunity

to congratulate you on the happy Occasion, of a Supply with a Pastor every Way qualified *to build you up on your most holy Faith.*

I am Yours to serve in the Gospel of Christ, J.B.

2 TIMOTHY 1:9

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy Calling, not according to our own Works; but according to his own Purpose and Grace, which was given us in Christ before the World began.”

THE Zeal of the Apostle *Paul* for the Propagation of the Gospel, and his indefatigable Endeavors to spread the Interest of Christ drew upon him the keen Resentment of such, who were Adversaries to both. In Consequence of which, he was exposed to Penury, Reproach, and violent Persecution. But what he suffered, for the Sake of the Gospel, did not make him, in the least Degree, ashamed of it: Because he knew, that *it is the Power of God unto Salvation to everyone who believes: And, that therein is revealed the Righteousness of God, from Faith to Faith.* He exhorts *Timothy* to shew the same Resolution and Fortitude, in the Discharge of that important Service whereunto he was called in the Church of God. *Be not thou, therefore, ashamed of the Testimony of the Lord, nor of me his Prisoner, but be thou Partaker of the Afflictions of the Gospel according to the Power of God.* And, ***In the Text, he proposes to his Consideration various important Truths,*** in order to enforce the Exhortation, and animate him in his ministerial Work.

First. Two Acts of God towards, or upon us, are expressed: *Who hath saved us and called us, etc.*

Secondly. A negative Assertion, in Respect to those Acts: *Not according to our Works.*

Thirdly. A positive Assertion: But according to his own Purpose and Grace, which was given us in Christ before the World began.

First. Two Acts of God towards, or upon us, are expressed, in the Text.

I. *Who hath saved us.* This leads us to consider our State. To enquire what Salvation includes in it. And to shew, that Salvation is effected: Or that those Things are accomplished, which Salvation comprises, as it is here to be understood.

1st. Our State is wretched and deplorable. We have destroyed ourselves, and are obnoxious unto the greatest Misery: We are *wretched, and poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked.*

(1.) We are chargeable with original Guilt. *By one Man, Sin entered into the World, and Death by Sin: Death passed upon all Men, for that all have sinned, or, in whom all have sinned* (Romans 5:12). *By one Man’s Disobedience, many were made Sinners* (Romans 5:19). *Adam*, from whom we descend, was constituted our Representative; his Act of Transgression, therefore, was not his Act, as a private, but

a public Person: And *we sinned in him, and fell with him, in his Apostacy*. In Consequence of which,

(2.) We derive a corrupt Nature from him. *That which is born of the Flesh, is Flesh: And that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit* (John 3:6). It is not difficult to understand what is meant by *Flesh*; for, as it stands opposed to *that which is born of the Spirit*, it must mean corrupt and evil Dispositions of Mind. And, consequently, every natural Descendant of *Adam*, in his Conception and Birth, becomes the Subject of depraved Habits. *David* confesses his early Depravation: *Behold, I was shapen in Iniquity, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me* (Psalm 51:5). This Confession respects not the Sin of his Parent, but his own: Besides, it is as *ridiculous* to say, that *David's* Mother sinned in Conception, as to affirm, that she sinned in digesting her Food, the former being natural and involuntary, as well and as much as the latter.

(3.) We have contracted much Guilt. We were naturally under the Dominion of Sin: Servants to it, and it bore the Sway in us. Our Omissions of Duty have been many, and we performed no Branch of it, in that holy Manner which the Law requires; in numerous Instances, have acted directly contrary to the Command of God. *All have sinned and come short of his Glory: We have all had our Conversation in Times past, in the Lust of our Flesh, fulfilling the Desires of the Flesh, and of the Mind; and were by Nature Children of Wrath, even as others* (Ephesians 2:3). *For we ourselves also, were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers Lusts and Pleasures, living in Malice and Envy, hateful, and hating one another* (Titus 3:3). The Eruptions of Lust have been more and greater in some, than in others; but all have acted a criminal Part, and not been subject to the Law, the Rule of Action. So that every Man is far, very far, from being innocent in his Behavior.

(4.) We are condemned by the Law. *Cursed is very one, who continueth not in all Things written in the Book of the Law to do them* (Galatians 3:10). Every Deviation from the Rule of our Duty, and the improper Performance of it, subjects us unto the Law's Curse; and, therefore, as our Offences are innumerable, we must needs be in a very deplorable Condition, in Consequence of our multiplied Transgressions. So many as are our Sins, are the Curses due unto us on Account of them.

(5.) We are obnoxious to Divine Vengeance. There is no Exemption in this Case. *For, what Things so ever the Law saith, it saith to them that are under it, that every Mouth may be stopped, and all the World may become guilty before God* (Romans 3:19). If any Man pleads his Innocence, he necessarily rejects Christ, as a Saviour, and renounces that Salvation, which the Gospel reveals through his Blood and Righteousness, and openly declares that his Condition is such, as makes it unnecessary for him to crave the Exercise of pardoning Mercy in his Favor. All Men are worthy of Death, of eternal Death, which *is the Wages of sin, as the Gift of God is eternal Life*. These Hints are sufficient, if we have a Capacity of spiritual Discernment, to convince us of our wretched and miserable State and Condition in

some Measure. This is the sad State of us all: I and each of you are naturally in this perishing Condition.

2nd. Salvation, as it is here to be understood, implies the following Particulars.

(1.) Non-Imputation of Sin. This necessarily enters into, and is a considerable Branch of Salvation, for no Deliverance from deferred Penalty can be without it. *God was in Christ reconciling the World unto himself, not imputing their Trespases unto them* (2 Corinthians 5:19). Redemption supposes the Pardon of Sin: *In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins* (Ephesians 1:7). The Imputation of Sin is followed with Condemnation, and the Infliction of Punishment, and, consequently, Salvation implies a Discharge from Guilt.

(2.) Redemption from the Curse of the Law. This is a Consequence of the former. For, as the Imputation of Guilt is necessarily attended with, or brings us under an Obnoxiousness to the Law's Curse: So the Remission of our Sins supposes a Right unto Freedom from Condemnation. *There is no Condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus* (Romans 8:1). It cannot, with any Propriety, be said that we are saved, if we have no Right to Freedom from those Menaces, whereunto our Crimes justly exposed our Persons.

(3.) Deliverance from Divine Wrath, or Security from suffering the vindictive Displeasure of God. Our Misery is an Obnoxiousness to suffering his terrible Anger and Vengeance, and, therefore our Salvation must imply an *actual* Right unto Deliverance from his *fiery Indignation*, which would devour us.

(4.) A Right to Life and Blessedness. If we are left without a Title to Happiness, our Salvation is incomplete: For, that not only is Deliverance from Evil, or the Suffering of Punishment; but it is the Fruition of Good, and, therefore, a Right to eternal Life is no less included in the Idea of Salvation, than a Right unto an Exemption from suffering Punishment is therein contained. *That, being justified by his Grace, we might be made Heirs, according to the Hope of eternal Life* (Titus 3:7).

3rd. God hath saved us; or our Salvation, as it is inclusive of these Things, is effected already. (1.) Sin is expiated. According to ancient Promise and Prophecy, Christ hath *finished Transgression, and made an End of Sin* (Daniel 9:24) in its Guilt: *He hath removed our Transgressions from us, as far as the East is from the West* (Psalm 103:12). And those contrary Points will sooner meet, than the Persons of God's People and their Sins will meet in Judgment, to their Condemnation. *Once in the End of the World hath he appeared to put away Sin, by the Sacrifice of himself* (Hebrews 9:26): *When the Iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, there shall be none, and the Sins of Judah, and they shall not be found, for I will pardon them whom I reserve* (Jeremiah 50:20).

(2.) Redemption from the Law's Curse is obtained fully and effectually. *Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us* (Galatians 3:13). The penal Death of our Saviour, procured for us a Right unto a Freedom from

Condemnation; if not, we shall never have such a Right, but must forever lie under the dreadful Malediction of the Covenant of Works, and perish under that Curse.

(3.) Exemption from suffering Punishment. Right unto this is the certain and immediate Effect of his Sufferings and Death. If it is not, then, if ever, we have such a Right, that must: be the Fruit and Effect of something else, and not of his penal Death: What that can be, let us be informed. Until we are, we shall conclude with the Apostle: *Much more then being justified by his Blood, we shall be saved from Wrath through him* (Romans 5:9). If the Death of Christ, in a proper Sense, is the meritorious Cause of our Pardon, Right to Impunity must be the certain and immediate Consequence of it.

(4.) Right to Life is also what exists. Christ hath brought in an everlasting Righteousness for us, which is the Foundation of our Claim to future Blessedness: *That, being justified by his Grace, we might be made Heirs, according to the Hope of eternal Life*. As our Breach of the Law subjected us to Death, so our Saviour's Obeying it for us, as our Surety, gives us a proper Title and Claim to Life and Happiness, without the Intervention of any Thing, which can be named. Before I proceed farther, I beg Leave to observe,

[1.] Salvation precedes, and is the Foundation of Calling. We are saved in order to, or that we may be called. Our Vocation is among those Things, which were promised to Christ, in our Behalf, when he undertook to effect the Work of our Redemption: *When thou shalt make his Soul an Offering for Sin, he shall see his Seed* (Isaiah 53:10); *i.e.* he shall see them regenerated, sanctified, and made meet for Heaven, and in the Possession of it. As this was promised, upon his stipulating to offer himself a Sacrifice for our Sins: His Performance of that Engagement, procured for us a Right to Grace and Glory. Hence it is evident, that our Vocation follows upon the Impetration of our Salvation by his Death and Sacrifice.

[2.] It is certainly false, that what Christ obtained for us, was an Offer of Pardon and Salvation: Or a Declaration and Promise from God, that he would pardon and save us, upon our performing such, or the other Conditions. The Virtue, Efficacy, and Merit of the Redeemer's Blood and Righteousness are not dependent on any Thing in us; they result entirely from the Nature of his Sufferings, Obedience, and the Dignity of his Person, and, therefore, of themselves, without the Performance of any Conditions by us, are available to procure for us what Benefits were promised to us by the Divine Father, upon his Undertaking, as our Surety, to obey the Law and suffer its Curse: And, consequently, it is false, that Christ obtained for us only a Proposal, or verbal Grant of Salvation; and we are not left to acquire for ourselves a Right to Pardon, Peace, and eternal Blessedness, which many affirm we are.

[3.] God is the Origin, as Christ is the meritorious Cause of Salvation. It is *of him, that we are in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption* (1 Corinthians 1:30). The Father drew the Plan of

our Salvation. It springs from his infinite Love, and all the Branches of it were fixed and settled, in his infinitely wise and eternal Counsels. But more of this, by and by.

II. *Hath called us with an holy Calling*

1st. This Call is internal and effectual. It is not to be understood of an Invitation, or external Call, given to us in the Gospel to repent and reform, as many, in our Times, interpret it. This Vocation is an internal Work upon us. And it is the same as the Apostle expresses in these Words: *Being confident of this very Thing, that he which hath begun a good Work in you* (Philippians 1:6). *It is begetting us again. Quickening of us when dead in Trespasses and Sins.* And it is *creating us in Christ Jesus unto good Works.* Therefore, something is produced in us, except there may be a Regeneration without any Thing being generated. Unless Quickening's may be, without a Communication of Life. And, unless a creating Act may take Place, when nothing is produced, or brought into Being; neither of which can reasonably be supposed. It is effectual: *Thy People shall be willing in the Day of thy Power* (Psalm 110:3). *Every Man that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Christ* (John 6:45). None remain unwilling, when Divine Power is exerted to make willing. And no Man refuses to come to Christ, or believe in him, who receives gracious Instruction from, and is drawn by the Father.

2nd. It is a holy Calling. It may be fitly so represented; for,

(1.) It is an Implantation of a holy Principle in the Mind, but not an Expulsion of Sin. The Subjects of this Vocation are *the Workmanship of God created in Christ Jesus unto good Works.* The Author and End of this Work evince the Holiness of its Nature. And it is a *Meetness* for Heaven, and, therefore, it must be good, pure, and holy. But it is not an Expulsion of Sin. It deprives Sin of its Dominion, but leaves it its Being in the Heart. If any Man seriously thinks that he hath nothing of Sin in him, it is a *sad Evidence*, that he is destitute of Holiness, and hath in him nothing but Sin. *If we say that we have no Sin, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us* (1 John 1:8). This may be of Use to guide us, as a Rule, in the Examination and Trial of our Hearts. For, on one Hand, when we search for Evidences of Grace in ourselves, we are not to expect to find a Freedom from the Being and acting's of Sin in us, and, therefore, we should not conclude, that we have no Grace, because we have Sin: Which some are sometimes tempted to think of themselves, on Account of their Imperfection: And, on the other Hand, we must not imagine, that we are regenerate Persons, without we have some Evidence of Holiness in us; for, though the Being of Corruption consists with the Truth of Grace in the Heart, that can evidence to none his Regeneration. As an excellent Divine observes, *The Being of Cockle in a Field is no Proof that Wheat is there:* So Corruption cannot evidence to us the Being of Grace in our Souls. We may have the *Lust of the Saints*, and have none of their Graces. We may possess their *Deformities*, and be wholly destitute of their *Beauties*. This brings me to observe,

(2.) All the acting's of our Minds, according to this Principle, are holy and spiritual. The regenerate Part of a Believer *delights* in the Law of God, and *serves* it. And, therefore, we may know from what Principle the Acts of our Minds spring, by a proper Consideration of their Nature: Whether they arise from the *Flesh*, or from the *Spirit*. All *vain* Imaginations: All *irregular* Thoughts: All *disorderly* and *inordinate* Desires: All *evil* Tendencies in our Affections, take their Rise from the Flesh in us. And every pure, spiritual Act, springs from the heavenly Principle in our Souls. The Want of a due Attention unto this hath sometimes been the Occasion of *great Perplexities and distressing Fears*, to truly humble and holy Persons. And let us carefully remember this, that whatever we think of ourselves, and what Opinion so ever others may have of us; we are no *farther* holy, than this *spiritual Principle* is exercised in our Minds, upon Objects of a spiritual Nature, to which it is congruous. This, it may be, will furnish many of us with just Cause of great Humiliation, and convince us, that we have *sad* Reason to cry out; *Oh, our Leanness, our Leanness, the treacherous Dealers have dealt treacherously!*

Secondly. Neither Salvation, nor Calling, is according to our Works. Grace and Works are set in Opposition, whenever the Causality of our Salvation is treated of. They cannot be, therefore, *Con-causes* of it, *If it is of Grace, then it is no more of Works, otherwise Grace is no more Grace: If it be of Works, then it is no more of Grace, otherwise Work is no more Work. It is not of Works, lest any Man should boast.* (Romans 11:6, Ephesians 2:9).

Men have always endeavored to establish the Doctrine of Salvation, by Works, at least, in Part; and on this Subject they have expressed themselves variously, but much the same Thing is meant. It ought to be observed that Language is entirely arbitrary, and, therefore, variable, and may be changed according to the Inclination of Writers. But Principles are eternal Things, whether true or false. That which was once a Truth will forever remain such, and that which once was false can never become true. But a Change in the Mode of Language, whereby Doctrines are expressed, sometimes is taken for an Advancement of *new* Thoughts, or the Striking out of *new Light*, upon Subjects, natural, and, supernatural. Whereas no new Ideas are brought forth, and presented to View; they are no other than old Thoughts put into a *new Dress*, which makes not the least Alteration in their Nature; they are still the very same they always were, whether true or false. And, therefore, it is an Evidence of Weakness and Vanity in those Men, who seem willing to have it thought, that they make new and farther Discoveries, when they convey only *old* Notions, put into a later and more fashionable Garb, according to the Fancy and Humour of the Age, wherein they happen to live. Thus it hath fallen out on the Subject under our present Consideration: Sometimes it hath been said, that Works are a proper Condition of Salvation, on which it is suspended: Or it is by sincere Obedience, in Opposition to feigned: Or there is a Congruity and Fitness, in

Repentance and Obedience, to entitle us to the saving Benefits of Christ: Or, as the *modish* Authors of our Times speak, real, *i.e.* personal Holiness, or personal Worth, renders us fit Objects of pardoning Mercy, and of the Complacency or moral Approbation of God, which, they say, it was absolutely impossible that the Obedience and Sacrifice of Christ could do. Now it is easy to observe, that the same Thing is contended for, in these various Forms of Speech, *viz.* that Salvation and Happiness are the proper Fruits of our Repentance and Obedience, and not Effects obtained for us by the Righteousness and Sacrifice of Christ. For, it seems, the whole Efficacy of his Obedience and Sacrifice, in the Business of Remission and Acceptation with God, is wholly dependent on, and in Pursuance of a Divine Decree, that so it shall; it results from our good Dispositions and worthy Actions. *This is a Renunciation of the whole Gospel.* We are told, that the Grace of God confers, and the Death of Christ procured for us, *antecedent Blessings*, and that this is the *grand Point*, which the Apostle *Paul*, with so much Reasoning, proves, particularly, in his *Epistle to the Romans*. Well, what are these antecedent Blessings? Are they Pardon, Peace, Reconciliation, Acceptance with God, Regeneration, Sanctification, and a Right to future Blessedness? No. What are they then? They are nothing more than God's telling us, that he will pardon and save us, if we render ourselves, by a suitable Temper and becoming Behavior, the fit Objects of his moral Approbation. The Divine Declaration, that God will save us, if we fit ourselves for Salvation, is said to be owing to the Sacrifice of Christ; but our Right to Salvation results from that Fitness in us, and not from his Sacrifice.

And, God's acquainting us, that he will save us, upon that Fitness being found in us, is an Act of Favor, and is to be ascribed to his Grace; but our Title to Salvation arises from that Fitness in us to be pardoned and saved. Men may dispute, while they please; but the Truth is, it is Salvation itself that is the Thing intended by the Apostle, and not a Declaration, that God will pardon and save us: And he designs good Works, call them what you will, when he excludes them as a Cause of Salvation. If, therefore, any Works save us, they must not be good, but sinful Works.

I. *Neither is according to the Desert of our Works.* It ought to be observed, that, by Works, Obedience is intended, or Actions which are materially good. For, surely, no Man can be so stupid as to imagine, that a direct Violation of the Law merits the Divine Regard, and entitles the Offender to Benefits: And, therefore, Works must mean Duties performed, and not Sins committed, Now, Salvation is not according to the Desert of that Obedience, which Men endeavor to yield to the Law of God. For, though Duty is good, materially considered, yet it hath the Nature of Sin in it, by Reason of the Virtuosity of the Person who performs it. And so he demerits Punishment, even in Duty, not as he attends to Duty; but as he performs it not, in that holy Manner which the Law requires him to do it. And if the best Actions of Men render them worthy of Censure, because of the wrong Manner of their

Performance, it is *senseless* to imagine, that they merit the Favor of God, or thereby qualify themselves for the Reception of Benefits from him. How then can it be thought, that Salvation, or Vocation, is according to the Desert of our Works?

II. *Neither is according to the Nature of our Works* Such as we are in our natural Dispositions, such are all our Actions, as to their Kind. I do not mean, in Respect to the Matter of our Actions: Or that they are materially sinful. But what I intend is, that whatever we do, is, in its Kind, or as it is acted by us, congruous to the governing Disposition of our Souls. So that, in doing what is materially good, we are evil, and all our Actions have the Nature of Sin in them. Such as the Spring of Action is, such must the Action be, evil, if that is evil, though not materially, yet as proceeding from a corrupted Principle and Fountain. No Action that is properly good, can be performed by a Person, who is destitute of good Principles, any more than sweet Streams can flow from a bitter Fountain, which is impossible. *The carnal Mind is Enmity against God, it is not subject to his Law, neither, indeed, can be* (Romans 8:7). And, *without Faith it is impossible to please God* (Hebrews 11:6). It must be concluded, therefore, that Salvation is not according to the Desert, or Nature of our Works. And this leads me to observe two Things, with Respect to our Vocation.

III. *It is an Act of pure Grace or free Love.* For, prior to this Work upon us, we are not the Subjects of any good Dispositions, nor are capable of performing Service, in an acceptable Manner. And, consequently, our Vocation is the mere Effect of the Grace and Mercy of God. *Not by Works of Righteousness, which we have done, but of his Mercy hath he saved us by the Washing of Regeneration, and the Renewing of the Holy Ghost* (Titus 3:5). *But God who is rich in Mercy, for his great Love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in Trespasses and Sins, quickened us together with Christ* (Ephesians 2:4, 5, 6). *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who of his abundant Mercy hath begotten us again to a lively Hope, by the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead* (1 Peter 1:3).

IV. *Grace specifically differs from the best Thing that is in a natural Man.* An unregenerate Person may be humble, modest, affable in his Temper and Behavior; he may maintain strict Probity and Honor, attend unto religious Duties, and have what is lovely and amiable, as the young Man of whom we read in the Gospel, concerning whom it is said, that our Lord *loved* him, *i.e.* approved of his virtuous and just Behavior. But Grace is of a nobler Nature, than the most excellent Thing that is found in an unregenerate Person.

Regeneration is not a Work upon Dispositions which are in us previous unto itself, but at as the Implantation of Principles in us, which are entirely new. And, therefore, it is represented, as giving us a *new Heart*, and a *new Spirit* within us. This it is which distinguishes us from Persons unregenerate, and makes us truly excellent. Hence the Saints are said to be the *excellent in the Earth, in whom is all Christ's Delight*. The Fruits of the Spirit are in none, before they are born of the Spirit. Grace is not the

Excitation or drawing forth of natural Principles into Act, by Influences and Impulses from God; but it is a new Nature created in the Soul. For which Reason it is said: *If any Man be in Christ, he is a new Creature; old Things are passed away, and all Things are become new* (2 Corinthians 5:17). So that, there is no Congruity between Grace and those Principles, which are in us before its Production. Nor is it communicated to us, because of any Fitness in us for it, or because we are disposed to receive it, or act agreeably unto it. Faith, Hope, Love, Fear, Humility, Meekness, and all other gracious Principles, differ specifically from all that is in us, while we are in an unregenerate State. Nor is it possible, by any Operation whatever, to cause an unregenerate Mind to believe, hope, love God, or reverence and adore him, and yield a holy spiritual Obedience unto him. The Mention which some make of a Divine Influence, in Regeneration, means no more, than stirring up natural Principles unto holy Acts; which is far from Truth, and is absurd, for Enmity cannot be made to love; that involves a Contradiction. But, by the Allowance of a Divine Influence to excite corrupt Nature unto gracious Acts, many are imposed upon, and persuaded to think, that it is ancient Truth which is meant; but it is entirely a Mistake, which might be easily discerned, if too many among us were not foolishly credulous, and disposed to entertain a favorable Opinion of some Sort of Men, who court their Esteem. I am sure it is high Time for us to be upon our Guard, if we design to retain the Truth of the Gospel. For no small Number make sad Improvement, of those Modes of speaking on Evangelical Doctrines, which are now much come into Fashion. But I go on to consider,

Thirdly. The positive Assertion in the Text: God hath saved us, and called us with an holy Calling, according to his own Purpose and Grace, which was given us in Christ, before the World began.

I. *Purpose intends the Decree of God, which is called, the Counsel of his Will* (Ephesians 1:11); because of the Wisdom which is displayed therein, and because it is his good Pleasure, or the pure Result of his sovereign Will; he formed the Plan and Model of our Salvation, in his infinite and eternal Mind, and fixed upon all the adorable Methods, whereby it was accomplished. He willed not to impute Sin to us: *God was in Christ reconciling the World unto himself, not imputing their Trespases to them.* His Intention was, that Christ should come under the Law, obey it, and bring in for us an everlasting Righteousness. He decreed, that our blessed Lord Should bear our Sins, and become an atoning Sacrifice for them, that we might go unpunished, or escape that dreadful Wrath and Vengeance, whereunto we were obnoxious: And his Law and Justice sustain no Loss by our Pardon and Impunity. Again, he formed a Design and Resolution to communicate Holiness unto us, or to regenerate and sanctify us, and make us meet for the Fruition of himself.

II. *This is his own Purpose, properly his; for it is the Effect of his own Love without any external Motive and Inducement.* And it is his own Contrivance, peculiar to

himself. He only could determine in what Way it became him to recover us from Ruin, and bring us to Glory. So wonderful is the Method of our Pardon and Salvation, that the Nature of it evinces it to be the Contrivance, not of finite, but infinite Wisdom. Whether Holiness, Righteousness, and Justice, or Kindness, Grace, and Mercy, are more illustriously displayed therein, we are not able to say, but must eternally adore the infinitely wise Provision, which is made in the Scheme of our Salvation, for the astonishing Discovery and Exercise of each, in entire Harmony and Agreement: Mercy and Truth meet together: Righteousness and Peace kiss each other, in the Affair of our Redemption.

(1.) Salvation is according to this Purpose. The Father, in Pursuance of his own Decree and Christ's Undertaking, said our Iniquities upon him: And made him to be Sin for us. Agreeably to his everlasting Counsels, *when the Fulness of Time was come, he sent forth his Son made of a Woman, made under the Law, to redeem us that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons* (Galatians 4:4, 5). Our Saviour's being made a Curse for us, to redeem us from Condemnation, was according to this gracious Purpose. And the Expiation of our Guilt, by his Subsection of it, and Atoning for it, was the Accomplishment of the Decree of the Father, who eternally resolved upon our Remission. The whole Order of Salvation, in all its Branches, and in Relation unto all its Subjects, is according to that Plan, which was formed in the Divine Mind. For it is of the Father that we are in Christ Jesus, and he makes him unto us, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption. Hence all that our Saviour did and suffered, was the Fulfillment of the Father's Will, and the Discharge of that Work, which he gave him to do: *I came down from Heaven, not to do mine own Will, but the Will of him that sent me. I have finished the Work, which thou gavest me to do.* Our Salvation, therefore, or our Right to Pardon, Freedom from Condemnation, and Title to Life, arising from the Obedience, and Sufferings, and Death of our blessed Lord, is according to the wise, the gracious, and sovereign Will and Counsel of the Father. And, *herein be abounded towards us, in all Wisdom and Prudence.*

(2.) Vocation is according to this Purpose of God. The Subjects of it are the Objects of his eternal Choice unto Salvation. *God hath from the Beginning chosen you to Salvation through Sanctification of the Spirit, and the Belief of the Truth* (2 Thessalonians 2:13). Calling, therefore, is the Accomplishment of God's gracious Decree concerning us. And hence, we are said to be called according to his Purpose: *We know that all Things work together for Good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his Purpose.* Since it was the Determination of God to regenerate, sanctify, and make us meet for Heaven, or to *call us unto his eternal Glory*: Calling doubtless is effectual. For God did not purpose to work that in us, which he could not effect; nor could he design to produce Holiness in us by his powerful Influence upon us, if he knew our Nature and Make to be *unfit*, or

improper, to be operated upon by his infinite Power. And, consequently, this Vocation is effectual. God intended what he knew himself able to produce: He purposed to convey to us what he knew we were capable of receiving, though not of acquiring, even with Helps and Assistances afforded to us.

Capable we are of being wrought upon, by infinite Power; but capable we are not of being helped to see, because we are destitute of a visive Power; capable we are not of being assisted to act, because we have not Life, a Principle of Action. Capable we are not of being enabled to love God and Holiness, because we are Enmity against God, and all real Holiness. But we are capable of receiving, by Infusion, Light, Life, and a Principle of Love, though we are *Darkness*, are in a State of Death, and are Enmity itself against God. It was the Purpose of God to give us new Hearts and new Spirits, as his Promise evinces; and, when a new Heart and a new Spirit is given, we are capable of being assisted to act in a holy spiritual Manner, but not before: Any more than a Man can be assisted to see, without a visive Power, or be enabled to act without Life, or a Principle of Action, or than Enmity can be assisted to love. As the Purpose of God took Place, in our Redemption: So it shall be accomplished, in Vocation, in all its Objects. And this Work must be effectual in everyone, who is the Subject of it.

III. *Salvation and Vocation are according to "Grace", which was given us in Christ before the World began.*

1st. It is necessary here to enquire what is intended by *Grace*.

(1.) That sometimes means the Goodness, free Love, and Kindness of God. Thus in these Words: *By Grace are ye saved* (Ephesians 2:5). The sovereign and unmerited Favor of God is the Origin of our Salvation. That is the Fountain of all the Branches of our Recovery and Happiness. Election to Salvation was not of Works, but of Grace. The Constitution of Christ to be our Head, Mediator, and Saviour was an Act of free Favor. The Gift of Christ to us, and for us, was an amazing Instance of rich and glorious Grace. *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son* (John 3:16). It was an illustrious Act of Grace in God to deliver him up to Suffering and Death for us. *God commended his Love towards us, in that, while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us* (Romans 8:7). Our Redemption, or the Forgiveness of our Sins, is *according to the Riches of the Father's Grace*, as the meritorious Cause is Christ's Blood: Our Justification is a gratuitous Act: *That being justified by his Grace* (Titus 3:7). In a Word, all the Parts of our Salvation spring from the Fountain of God's good Pleasure, or his rich Mercy and Kindness. Pardon, Peace, Acceptation, Freedom from Condemnation, and our Right to eternal Life are all derived from the everlasting Love and Grace of God. Our Vocation is the Fruit and Effect thereof: *I have loved thee with an everlasting Love, therefore, with loving Kindness have I drawn thee*. And abundant Mercy is manifested in begetting us again unto a lively Hope. The rich Mercy and great Love of God are gloriously discovered,

or shine forth, in quickening us, when we are dead in Trespasses and Sins. Our Nature and Conduct are a full and irrefragable Proof of this important Truth.

We are Enmity against God, and have not the least Degree of a friendly Disposition towards him, nor any Desire of an Acquaintance with him, or of enjoying him, the Origin of Blessedness. To suggest, that Men naturally have any such Desire, or can have, is the ready Way to *flatter them into Hell*, I am bold to say it, though I am sensible, that it is absolutely contrary, to the *fashionable* Divinity of our Times. I use this Plainness and Freedom in Speaking, because I am more and more convinced, by various melancholy Things, which daily occur, that this is a Season, wherein, in an especial Manner, we ought to be *open* and *explicit*, in asserting Truth, if ever there was such a Season, since the *Christian* Name was known in the World. It is evident, that Salvation and Vocation are according to the free and unmerited Love of God. But I humbly apprehend, that is not designed here; my Reason for it is: This Grace was given us, which is a Mode of speaking, that is not properly used of the Love of God, itself. His Love was fixed upon us in Christ before the World began; but it seems to me not agreeable, strictly speaking, to say of Divine Favor, itself, that it was given us. And, therefore, I rather think, that by Grace here we are to understand, (2.) The Effects of Divine Love, which may be called Grace, because they spring from it. And, those Effects, are all spiritual, and eternal Blessings: Or Grace and Glory, which we receive from God in this World, and shall enjoy in the next. *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ blessed us with all spiritual Blessings, in heavenly Places, in Christ.* There is no spiritual Blessing, which is not included in this Act of the Divine Father. It comprehends all and everyone, Adoption, Pardon, Peace, Acceptation, Grace for our Sanctification, and Preservation in this State, and everlasting Blessedness, in the immediate Presence of God, hereafter.

2nd. This Grace, or these spiritual Blessings, were *given us in Christ*. This supposes that Relation, or Union, which subsisted between Christ and us, when this Act of the Father was put forth. He was our Head and Representative, and we were included in him, and represented by him. And, therefore, what was given to him for us, as standing in the Capacity of a Representative Head, with the strictest Propriety, may be said to be given to us in him. And this Act of the Father was a real Grant, Promise, and Donation of Grace, in that comprehensive Sense, which is above explained.

3rd. This Grant, or Donation of all spiritual Blessings, was *before the World began*: That is to say, in Eternity, or before the Commencement of Time. For this Phrase is used to express the everlasting Date of that to which it is applied: *In Hope of eternal Life, which God, that cannot lye, promised before the World began.* And the same Idea is expressed by another Phrase, which is much like to this, *viz.* before the Foundation of the World: *God blessed us with all spiritual Blessings in heavenly Places, in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the Foundation of*

the World (Ephesians 1:4). The Act of blessing us with all spiritual Blessings, is, therefore, of the same Date with our Election, which is eternal.

Our Non-Existence is no Objection at all to this Conferring of a Right upon us to these Blessings, any more than it is to our Election. For, if they who are not, may be chosen, they who do not at present exist, may have a Right conferred upon them unto Benefits, in one who represents them. If any shall say, this is a Collation of Right upon nothing, since they were not: I would say, God chose nothing, since they did not exist, who are supposed to be the Objects of the Divine Choice. Our Reception of Divine Blessings necessarily supposes our personal Existence; but the Conferring of a Right upon us to those Blessings, no more requires, or supposes, our present Existence, than the Divine Election of our Persons to eternal Salvation requires, or supposes, our present Existence. I confess, that I have been somewhat surprised, to hear some very intelligent Persons object, in this Manner, unto what is now pleaded for, and am persuaded, that, if they thoroughly examined, into the Nature, Force, and Consequence of Objections of this Sort, they would be convinced, that they are by no Means to be admitted. If our Faith in heavenly Mysteries is to be directed by, and accommodated unto, Rules, which pass for *Learning* among Men; I am satisfied, that it must be very incomplete, and in many other Particulars much corrupted, as well as in this Instance we have now before us. In order to set this Doctrine in as clear a Point of Light as I can, I would propose to Consideration the following Things:

(1.) Christ was constituted a Head to us, in Eternity, by the Divine Father, with his own Consent. I suppose it will be granted, that the Covenant of Grace and Peace, wherein the Business of our Salvation was settled, provided for, and secured, was entered into, in Eternity, by the Father, and Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Surety. That Covenant was not made or entered into with him in a *private* but *public* Capacity; or, therein he was appointed to be, and, in the *Repute* of the Father, he then was, the Head and Representative of all the chosen People of God. And, consequently, the Covenant of Grace not only had Relation unto, or concerned them, and respected their final Happiness; but it was made with them in him, as their Representative in that Transaction. I have always much approved of what the Assembly of Divines say on this Subject, *viz. That the Covenant of Grace was made with Christ, as a Head, and with all the Elect, in him, as his Seed.* Our Saviour was set up from everlasting, from the Beginning, or ever the Earth was (Proverbs 8:23): Which respects the Father's Designation and Appointment of him to be our Mediator and Head, unto which he consented, and became invested with that Office, tho' his human Nature did not then subsist, wherein he was, in the Time agreed on between the Father and himself, to do and suffer for us, all that which, in this Covenant he stipulated to do and suffer, in order to our Security, in Subordination to the Glory of all the Divine Perfections. Upon this Designation of the Father, and his own

undertaking to be our Mediator and Head, he became such in the *Divine Repute, and represented us*, notwithstanding his human Nature then subsisted not, and tho' we were not then personally existent. The Promises, therefore, which the Father made to him in this Covenant, that had Respect to us, or which express the Privileges and Blessings, which are to be received and enjoyed by us, are to be considered as made to us in him, as our Representative. If Christ was then constituted a Head, it must be concluded, that he then had Members, who were considered in him, or who were his Body, and in Union with him; for he was not a Head without Members. And it must be observed, that both the Natures of Christ are included in this his Relation to us as a Head: And, as the present Subsistence of his human Nature was not necessary unto his becoming a Head to *the Church of the First-born, whose Names are written in Heaven*, so our personal Existence was not necessary unto our becoming his Members. The certain future Subsistence of his human Nature was a sufficient Foundation for his Headship to us; and the certain future Existence of our Persons, was a sufficient Ground, for our becoming Members of him. If this Reasoning is not allowed of, for my Part, I am not able to discern how it was possible, that our Saviour should be a Head unto the Church of God, before the Time of his Incarnation. But, surely, it is not to be imagined, that the Church was without a Head, until Christ became incarnate. This is a farther Proof, that heavenly Mysteries are not to be limited by, nor accommodated unto, those Rules which are called *Learning* among Men; and may justly convince us that those Rules, of what Use so ever they may be in other Things, in divine Truths, are, not only useless, but pernicious: Which is a proper Reason for an utter Rejection of them in Evangelical Doctrines, let some Persons say what they please in their Favor. If we will form our Notions of the sublime Mysteries of Christianity, *by Rules of Art, or human Science*, which are allowed to be of Service in reasoning upon natural Truths, I am sure, our Conceptions concerning super natural Truths must be, not only exceedingly imperfect, but also, in various Instances, certainly false: The Reason of which is evident; those Mysteries are Truths which *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have entered into the Heart of Man* (1 Corinthians 2:9); *i.e.* they are Doctrines absolutely unknown to the human Mind, and are not inseparable from, nor have any Connection with, such Truths, as Men, by the utmost Stretch of Reasoning, can acquire the Knowledge of. All Objections, therefore, unto God's eternal Acts of Favor towards us in Christ, our Head, which proceed upon, or arise from this *Axiom*, That nothing can be predicated of a *Non-ens*, or what is not, or hath not present Being, are *fond*, and not of the least Weight.

(2.) The Father promised and gave, or made a Grant of, all those Favors and Blessings unto us in Christ, which are comprised in our full Salvation. The Covenant of Grace contains in it every saving Benefit: And, therefore, *David* says concerning that Covenant, *This is all my Salvation, and all my Desire* (2 Samuel 12:5). There is

one *grand* Promise of the Gospel, which is comprehensive of everything that is conducive unto, and wherein our final Felicity consists, *viz.* the Promise of eternal Life. This Promise was made in Eternity:

In Hope of eternal Life, which God, that cannot lye, promised before the World began (Titus 1:2). Pardon of Sin, and all that is therein included — the Acceptation of our Persons — Grace for our Regeneration, Sanctification, and Preservation in this World — and that Glory which we shall possess in the next, were promised by the Father to Christ, our Head, from everlasting, or before the World began, and unto us in him, as our Representative, in those federal Transactions which passed between the Divine Father and himself, as Landing in the Capacity of Mediator. What he did and suffered, in order to our Salvation, in his mediatorial Capacity, was in the Fulness of Time; but his Investiture with the mediatorial Office was before the Commencement of Time: And whatever spiritual Blessings we now receive by Faith, and all that Blessedness which we shall partake of in the future State, were given us, in Christ, in this everlasting Covenant.

(3.) Right to Grace and Glory, or unto all spiritual Blessings, arose from this Divine Grant and Promise of them to us in Christ, our Head. As by a Deed of Conveyance a Child unborn may become Heir unto an Estate, or as Right to an Inheritance arises to one not yet born by Virtue of a Deed of Conveyance, so Right to Pardon, Peace, Freedom from Condemnation, Acceptation with God, and unto Grace and eternal Glory, arises from the Divine Promise and Grant of those Blessings to us in Christ, our Head, in the everlasting Covenant. And this Grant was made to Christ on Conditions required to be performed by him, and which he stipulated to full. His Performance of these Conditions, therefore, confirms our Right unto those Blessings, and ascertains our Reception of them. They are free Gifts to us; but on the Part of our Saviour they are Debt, or he hath procured them for us by doing and suffering the Will of the Fathers; on Condition of which this Grant of them was made to him, as our Surety and Head. Hence he makes a Demand of Glory in Behalf of his People: *Father, I WILL, that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory, which thou hast given me* (John 17:24). This Right is not known to us, is not *actionable* or *pleadable* by us, until we receive Grace from God to make as *meet* for Heaven; but the foederal Transactions of the Father and Christ inverted us with a Right to all spiritual Blessings, tho' we knew it not, nor could plead it.

IV. *Salvation and Vocation are according to Grace, which was given us in Christ "before the World began".*

1st. Salvation is according to that Grace. The Bestowment of spiritual Blessings upon us in Christ did not prevent our Apostacy, and Ruin, in Consequence thereof. *Adam* was the Head and Representative of the Elect as well as of the Non-elect, and they are equally chargeable with his Offence: They, no left than the Rest, derive a

corrupt Nature from him, and nothing differ from them in the natural Dispositions of their Minds; they are Children of Wrath by Nature, even as others; and their Deportment is of the same rebellious Nature against God, as is the Behavior of the Non- elect; and, therefore, they come under a legal Charge of Sin, are under the Sentence of the Law's Curse, and are obnoxious unto, and worthy of, eternal Death: Consequently, the Grant of spiritual Blessings unto them in Christ, as their spiritual, foederal Head, did not prevent their Ruin and Misery by Sin; but it was a gracious and effectual Provision for their Recovery out of that miserable Condition, where into they are involved by Guilt, original, and that which they themselves contract. The Nature, Terms, or Articles, and Promises of the Covenant of Grace most evidently suppose our Misery, as we are included in, and are Transgressors of, the Covenant of Works: And it is no Contradiction to affirm, that, according to the latter, we are *lost, undone, and miserable*, and that, according to the former, we are *safe, secure, and saved*; because with our natural Head we are included in the Covenant of Works, and in our spiritual Head we are included in the Covenant of Grace, and both at the same Time. This cannot be denied, without denying that the Church was related unto Christ, as a Head, when the Covenant of Grace was made with him; which is, perhaps, what some may be inclined to deny; but they cannot do it, without destroying the proper Foundation of the Imputation of Sin to Christ, and of the Imputation of his Righteousness unto the Church of God. Our Salvation is according unto the gracious Promises made unto Christ, our Head, in this Covenant. Agreeably to the mutual Transactions of the Father and our Redeemer in the Covenant of Grace, he assumed our Nature into Union with himself, came under the Obligation of the Covenant of Works, obeyed that Law for us, and so brought in an everlasting Righteousness. The Father imputed our Guilt to him; he took it upon himself, or consented to bear it, and endured that Punishment, which, according to the Constitution of the Law, was due to us, as Transgressors of it. Thus, he bare our Guilt, and bare it away from us, and out of the Sight of God, as a Judge. Redemption, therefore, or the Remission of Sin, Peace, and Reconciliation, are according unto that Grace, which was promised, given, and granted to us, in Christ, in the everlasting Covenant; so also is the Justification of our Persons through the Righteousness of Christ, the Mediator of that Covenant. And, agreeably unto what was stipulated between the Father and the Son from everlasting, our Persons, while in a State of Unregeneracy, are preserved from many Dangers, which would be of fatal Consequence to us, and we are recovered from, or out of, it may be, some very threatening Sickneses and Disorders; and so we are, in the Dispensations of Providence, preserved until the Time appointed for our partaking of the Grace and Blessings of that Covenant, wherein is the Whole of our Salvation, and all our Desire, as spiritual Persons. Hence, we may learn, that none, who are included in the Covenant of Grace, are taken out of the World, before they receive Grace from God

to prepare them for the Fruition of himself, nor can die in a State of Unregeneracy. And, therefore, it is a vain Objection, which some have made to the Doctrine of our Right to Salvation and Happiness by Virtue of a Divine Grant in the everlasting Covenant, that, if we die unregenerate, we could not be admitted to Heaven; for the Objection supposes what is not supposable, nor can be; because, as this Grant intitles us to eternal Life, so it gives us a Right unto, and ensures our partaking of, Grace and Holiness, as a Meetness for the Enjoyment of it. The Promise of eternal Life, which was made by God, who cannot lye, before the World began, as it gave us an unalienable Right unto that State of complete Happiness, so it secured to us a Participation of that Purity and Holiness, which are necessary, as a Preparative for the Possession of that future Blessedness, and fully proves the great Impropriety and Impertinence of this Objection to our Right unto Salvation and everlasting Life, *prior* to Faith in Christ.

Sanctification is necessary to, and must precede, the Enjoyment of heavenly Bliss: *For without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord.* But Right to eternal Life as previous unto our Sanctification, and secures it.

2nd. Vocation is according unto Grace, which was given us in Christ, before the World began.

(1.) Those only are the Subjects of this Divine Work, to whom Grace was given in the everlasting Covenant: And, who those Persons are, it is easy to determine: They are the Elect, No more nor other than they are called to God's eternal Glory. Election to Salvation is the Ground and Foundation of Regeneration and Sanctification. This gracious Decree is the Fountain of all that Purity and Holiness, which Men receive as a Meetness for Heaven: God hath from the Beginning chosen you to Salvation, thro' Sanctification of the Spirit. Love to God is the Fruit and Effect of Divine Love to us. We love him, because he first loved us. Heavenly Attraction springs from an Interest in the Favor of God: *I have loved thee with an everlasting Love; therefore, with loving Kindness have I drawn thee.* Vocation is the Execution of the Decree of Election; and, therefore, they are parallel, and exactly of the same Extent. Some suppose, that the Influence of the Spirit of God upon Men, in order to Salvation, is of wider Compass than Election is: That Influence, therefore, and those Effects, whatever they be, which it produces, cannot evidence to any their Election of God: And, consequently, none can possibly know, that their Names are written in Heaven, or that they are chosen to Salvation, let their Convictions, Repentance, Trust, and Obedience be what they may: Which is a sufficient Proof of the Falsehood of this Supposition; for it is not consistent with the Will of God, which is that the Heirs of Promise should have a proper Foundation for strong Consolation. If any of those who embrace this Opinion have such Consolation, I am sure, their Experience is not founded upon, but contradicts, their Principles. Besides, this Opinion supposes, that Men who have no supernatural Principle in them, may be assisted to act spiritually,

which is impossible. That which opposes Grace, cannot be excited unto Act of Holiness, by any Impulse whatever.

(2.) Calling is the Communication of that Grace unto us, which was *given us in Christ, before the World began*. It was the Pleasure of the Father that *all Fulness should dwell in Christ: That, of his Fulness, we might receive, and Grace for Grace* (Colossians 1:19). The Donation of Grace to us, in Christ our Head, inverted us with a Right unto a Participation of it. And Regeneration is the Bestowment or actual Conveyance of that to us, which he received and had in keeping for us, as the Mediator of the Covenant of Grace. Vocation, therefore, is according to that Grace, unto which we had a *previous* Right, by Virtue of a divine Grant and Promise, in the everlasting Covenant. (John 1:16.)

(3.) That Grace, which was given us in Christ, is very comprehensive. For, it includes those spiritual Blessings which we receive now, and shall enjoy hereafter. Grace bears the Name of Glory: *But we all with open Face, beholding in as a Glass the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory* (2 Corinthians 3:18), *i.e.* from one Degree of Grace to another. And Glory is called Grace: *And hope to the End, for the Grace that is to be brought unto you at the Revelation of Jesus Christ* (1 Peter 3:12). It is so called, because it springs from the free Grace of God. Grace is the same in *Kind* with Glory, and is the Beginning of everlasting Life: *He that Believeth hath everlasting Life*, not only in Title, but also in the Seed and Beginning of it. So much Grace, therefore, as you have in your Hearts, *so much you have of Heaven*. And, if you are now Partakers of Grace, you shall enjoy future Bliss: For the Father *hath given Power to Christ over all Flesh, that he might give eternal Life to as many as he hath given him* (John 17:3).